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THE DREAMER

Newsletter of the Directorate of Environmental Affairs

Communal rights needed to save the land



PERMANENT Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ms Ulitala Hiveluah (second left), at the launch of 'Policy Factors and Desertification, Analysis and Proposals'. With her are (from left): Dr Chris Brown, Head: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Richard Dewdney, from Napcod, who prepared the report and Dr Mary Seely of the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia. Photo: The Namibian

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WINDHOEK: -THERE IS no point empowering communities or giving farmers new information, technology and skills to manage natural resources if Government policies continue to encourage overuse and constrain good management.

This was said by Ministry of Environment and Tourism Permanent

Secretary, Ms Ulitala Hiveluah, at the recent launch of a new document on desertification prepared by the Namibian Programme to Combat Desertification (Napcod).

Entitled *Policy Factors and Desertification - Analysis and Proposals*, the comprehensive document seeks to inform decision-makers of the impact of policy factors

on desertification and makes recommendations for reform.

Hiveluah explained that there was a close link between land degradation and the economic incentives provided by Government policies. This was extensively outlined in the Napcod report, which called for a number of changes in Government Policy.

"I firmly believe that adapting policies to modify economic incentives will change the way natural resources are used," she stated. Hiveluah commented that the report made several key recommendations.

"Firstly, on land reform, the National Land Policy and Communal Land Bill should prioritise the introduction of exclusive land tenure at the community level with user rights to all natural resources on the land conditional on sustainable use."

"This is the single most important policy reform needed to prevent degradation," she said.

According to Hiveluah, other necessary changes included:

- the need for the *resettlement policy* to be consistent with land reform policy and to be reoriented towards expanding existing communal areas. It should encourage large communal
- farmers to move to commercial land to assist the poor majority of small, subsistence farmers;
- the need to introduce a *progressive natural resource user fee* collected and spent at the community level. This would reduce overstocking and degradation by imposing a cost on use, and would also provide an income base for local development;
- an *increase in water prices* to full cost-recovery levels more quickly than is currently envisaged,

especially in urban areas;

- the *replacement of livestock drought relief subsidies*, which have encouraged overstocking, with increased spending on land reform or destocking and restocking schemes.

CONSERVANCIES

The Permanent Secretary used the example of conservancies to explain the need for economic incentives. She pointed out that before conservancy legislation was passed in June this year, there was no tenure mechanism to enable communities to gain benefits from the proper management and utilisation of wildlife.

Hiveluah added that communities also had no incentives to manage their wildlife resources sustainably because they could neither legally harvest animals nor stop others from taking their game.

"Wildlife remained exclusively the property of the State. At the same time as being denied any benefits from wildlife, communities have had to bear all the costs which wild animals can impose: lost livestock and damage to crops and water installations. In this context, it is a great tribute to the values and tolerance of rural communities that any animals at all are left," she commented.

Meanwhile, commercial farmers have enjoyed tenure over wildlife for almost 30 years. The result has been that the number of wild animals has doubled.

Hiveluah said that the Ministry would like to see this success repeated in communal areas. "The new conservancy legislation gives similar rights over wildlife to communities which form themselves into a conservancy managed by a conservancy committee. "This will give communal farmers the same incentive to conserve wildlife as commercial farmers.

There are a number of guiding principles of the conservancy programme which I believe could be applied to the management of other natural resources in communal areas", stated Hiveluah.

"I therefore strongly support the call from Napcod to make community tenure the principal form of land tenure in communal areas.

"My Ministry will work with the Ministry of Lands to ensure that community tenure is included in the National Land Policy and the Communal Land Bill. Within my own Ministry, the principles of community tenure are also being extended to forestry resources through the communal forest reserve concept.

"I also support the call to extend land tenure to include user rights to all natural resources on the land. It is inefficient and confusing for communities to have to negotiate separately with individual Ministries for access to agricultural land, water, wildlife and forestry resources. One institution at the community level should be established to manage all natural resources. The conservancy committee may act as a useful model for such an institution."

She concluded by saying that Napcod's efforts to try to promote policy changes would include meetings with permanent secretaries, and briefing sessions with the two houses of Parliament and Regional Councils.

ABOUT NAPCOD

Napcod is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development with financial assistance from the German aid agency, GTZ. Copies of the report, both full and in summary, are available from the DEA or DRFN.

Purros Community Campsite attracts hundreds of visitors

■ by Immanuel Nghishoongele

DEA ECONOMISTS Immanuel Nghishoongele and Caroline Ashley accompanied the manager of Namibia's Community-Based Tourism Association (NACOBTA), Maxi Louis to the Purros campsite, Kunene Region, at the end of May.

The campsite opened in August 1995, so statistics were calculated for the 10 month period until the end of May 1996. Raw data relating to visitors at the campsite was collected and taken to Windhoek for analysis. This will make the data more useful and easier to interpret.

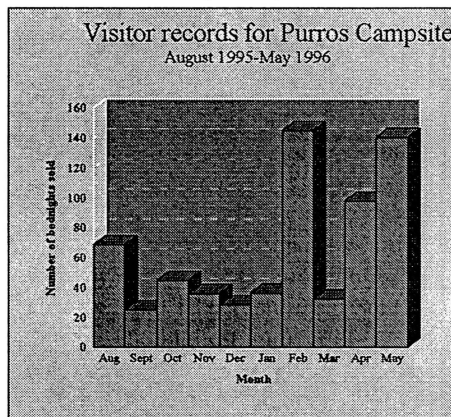
Some Survey Results

Over the 10-month period since the campsite opened, 481 people visited the camp-site.

In total, 124 groups visited the campsite, averaging four people per group.

The visitors were divided into three nationalities - Namibian, South African and overseas (overseas and other African countries excluding South Africa). Out of the total number, 54 percent of visitors came from overseas, 29 percent from Namibia and 17 percent from South Africa. The highest number of Namibians (42 percent) came in May whereas the highest number of South Africans visited in April.

In total 163 *site nights* were sold. That means the *occupancy rate* (refer to meaning of key terms below)



varied from 8.9 percent in September, to the maximum of 40 percent in May, being the peak month. The 481 visitors spent a total 656 *bed nights*. This means that the average length of stay is just over one night.

Visitors were asked whether their visit was for government (official), tour or private purposes. During that ten-month period, 73 percent of visitors were on private visits, 26 percent on tour group visits and the remaining 2 percent were government officials.

Conclusions

There are two ways in which the campsite can increase its profit. One is to increase the length of stay, for example by engaging in activities which would make the visitors stay for more than one night. The other way is to increase the number of visitors - the leaflets which are distributed now will go a long way towards making the campsite known. There is, however, little potential to increase the price, unless new services are included or added.

Meaning of some key terms

Bed night: One person staying for one night. For example if three visitors spend one night at the campsite, this will count as $3 \times 1 = 3$ bed nights. Bed nights are used if one wants to calculate one's revenue, because people pay the price per person per night.

Site night: One group staying at the campsite for one night. For example if two groups of visitors spend one night at the campsite, this will count as $2 \times 1 = 2$ site nights, because each group spends the night at its own site. Site nights are used in calculating the occupancy rate.

Occupancy rate: How full is the campsite? 100 percent occupancy rate means the campsite is fully-occupied. 50 percent means on average each site is used half the time. The occupancy rate is calculated by dividing the total number of site nights sold by the number of site nights available. For example, during August, 13 site nights were sold but there were 90 (3 sites x 30 days) site nights available, so the occupancy rate was 14.4 percent.

NEW BOOK ON BIODIVERSITY IN PROGRESS

■ **By Phoebe Barnard**

MEMBERS OF the National Biodiversity Task Force are burning the midnight oil to finish writing draft sections of an upcoming book on Namibia's biological diversity.

The book, entitled the Biodiversity Country Study, will be sent to UNEP as part of our obligations as signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and will be distributed within and outside Namibia. Main authors from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) are Mike Griffin, Chris Brown and Phoebe Barnard (editor), with input from other MET staff.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, National Botanical Research Institute, Department of Water Affairs, National Museum of Namibia and Desert Research Foundation of Namibia are also major contributors. The book is not just by biologists - environmental lawyers Jan Glazewski and Napoleon Kanguuehi from the DEA have written a chapter on policy and legislation, and an entire flock of resource economists have estimated the values of biological resources, of biodiversity or ecosystem processes and the costs and benefits of conservation.

A public review workshop is planned for late September to get feedback on the draft book. All are welcome to attend, and MET staff are especially encouraged. Some MET staff will be asked to referee short sections in the near future. If you would like to volunteer for this task, please contact Phoebe immediately on 249015 or 232313. Please participate in this process to make this book informative, accurate and useful for planning.

Our neighbour, South Africa, is now gearing itself up to implement the Biodiversity Convention, which they recently signed and ratified. I attended a two-day meeting in Pretoria to see how they are going about it. While the botanists in South Africa are well-organised, zoologists there agreed that they are much less so. We discussed a number of important collaborative projects that might be pursued in the future.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Other activities in the Biodiversity Programme include a study, run jointly with the Ornithology Section of the MET, to map the distribution of our endemic birds and estimate population size within and outside protected areas. Tony Robertson and Alice Jarvis of Glasgow University are carrying out this study, and are experts both on Namibian endemic birds (by now!) and the techniques for mapping them (see report elsewhere).

In another project, run jointly with the Directorate of Forestry, Dr Antje Burke is providing biodiversity input into the planning, training and analysis activities of the National Forest Inventory. Among other things, she has helped write a training manual and plan for a database of woodland habitat photographs to be taken during the inventory. These will provide a useful database for studies of vegetation communities and habitat change.

Maps for Africa!

The Biodiversity Programme has commissioned a number of full-colour maps of Namibia from the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), which falls under the Directorate of Forestry. They feature:

- rainfall (long-term mean)
- soil types
- altitude (300 m contour)
- vegetation types
- landforms
- protected areas
- wetlands and rivers
- major land uses
- human population density
- political regions
- magisterial districts

These maps will illustrate the upcoming Biodiversity Country Study book. Thereafter, they can be used for any similar purpose.

For more information about this process, please contact Timo Mufeti at the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) or Phoebe Barnard at the DEA.

HÄGAR THE HORRIBLE

BY DIK BROWNE



Biodiversity 'Hotspots' Mapped

■ By Alice Jarvis

IN RECENT months, some of you may have come across two British biologists, Tony Robertson and Alice Jarvis.

They are currently working as consultants on a project under the Namibian National Biodiversity Programme entitled "Mapping Biodiversity hotspots and evaluating the status of Namibia's endemic birds".

This work follows on from a six-week pilot study in 1993. The idea behind the project is to undertake field surveys of 10 endemic/near endemic bird species and then to use GIS computer mapping techniques to produce estimates of their total population sizes and numbers. Species covered are white-tailed shrike, Monteiro's hornbill, rockrunner, Carp's tit, Herero chat, violet woodhoopoe, Ruppell's parrot, Ruppell's korhaan, barecheeked babbler, and Hartlaub's francolin.

This will provide information needed to assess the viability of these populations, adequacy of protection and to indicate potential threats to those species.

Six months of successful (and occasionally eventful) fieldwork has just been completed resulting in almost 2 500 km of line transects throughout Namibia! They are now busy number-crunching in Windhoek and a Research Discussion Paper should be in draft form by January. Many thanks for the help and cooperation received from all MET staff involved.

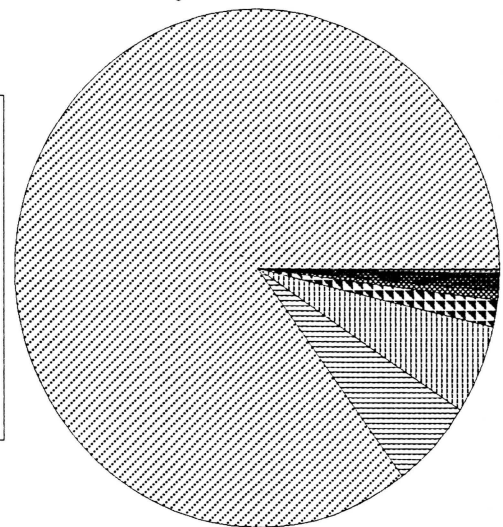
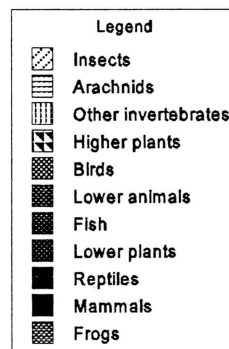
Tony and Alice have a variety of previous experience, and have conducted research in Zambia, Rwanda and Namibia.

Kingdom of the creepy crawlies

Did you know ?

There are somewhere between 5 million and 30 million species on Earth. Only about 1.5 million of these have been described scientifically. Large animals such as birds, mammals, fish, and reptiles make up only a tiny fraction:

Species diversity in Namibia



Source: Eugene Marais, National Museum

And what good are they ?

Small, seemingly unimportant things like insects, mosses, fungi, bacteria, and earthworms are by no means useless -- in fact, we humans would soon be dead without them! Think for a minute of all the fruits you eat which are pollinated by insects. Many insects help turn waste into rich, fertile soil. Bacteria break down wastes, help us digest foods, and cycle nutrients in the global environment. Fungi break down waste, and some types (mycorrhizae) assist in the growth of trees and other plants.

In a dry country with infertile soils, we must do everything possible to conserve these 'lowly' organisms which keep our land productive. Careless development and habitat destruction can lead to barren soils and disrupted ecosystem process -- causing desertification, hunger, and poverty. 'These 'lowly' species are a critical part of our earth's life-support system.

Environmental Profile of Caprivi

■ By Carole Roberts

MANY PEOPLE involved in development work are convinced that their efforts should generate a *sustainable product* - sustainable with respect to human, economic and natural resources. This, however, is a difficult goal to achieve if background information on these resources is scant.

The Environmental Profile Project aims to provide broad environmental information which can be integrated into and assist with development planning.

In 1994, the governments of the Netherlands and Namibia signed an agreement to set the Environmental Profile Project in motion. It was decided to tackle the task region by region, starting with Caprivi.

Work started on the Caprivi Profile in January 1995 with the arrival of Bert Toxopeus and Gracie, his cherished Landrover, to help with planning. Bert is from the Netherlands International

Institute for Aerospace Survey and Earth Science (ITC).

Assisted by colleagues from ITC and the DEA, workshops were convened in Windhoek and Katima Mulilo. They served to inform people about the project, capture issues, problems and information to be covered by the Profile, and to identify potential contacts and contributors.

Having a clear idea of issues to be addressed by the profile, Bert returned to Holland (leaving Gracie in the hands of a local gearbox specialist) until early in 1996 when a co-ordinator for the project, John Mendelsohn, was identified. Bert worked with John to plan the project in detail. Data collection and assemblage then started in earnest. Some of the data is being gathered from secondary sources, while other data is being collected in the field and from survey materials such as aerial photographs and satellite images.

Several people are being contracted to assist with this process. Besides ITC, local organisations are working in collaboration with the project to attain similar goals. Data being collected includes climatic, hydrological, vegetation, soil, topographic, demographic, wildlife, land tenure and economic. Wherever possible, efforts are made to record co-ordinates or

other geographical information so that all the data can be mapped.

Analysis on the data will begin later this year with a focus on spatial aspects. This will help to pinpoint areas where the supply of and demand on environmental resources is now in conflict or harmony, or is likely to be in the future.

Bert will join us again for some of the analysis (and once more be reunited with Gracie who is at present recuperating on a farm just south of Windhoek after a traumatic trip to Caprivi earlier this year).

The Caprivi Profile will be complete within the first half of next year, offering two tangible products:

- a bank of data on environmental resources in the Caprivi, the requirements of these resources and the issues surrounding them and
- a publication describing baseline environmental conditions in the Caprivi, highlighting present and potential issues and prospects.

The data will be made available to interested parties for planning and development of the region. It is hoped that by then a permanent DEA employee will be in place to manage the data base and service the needs of users.

Institutional relationships, capacity and sustainability

Lessons learned from a community-based conservation project,
eastern Tsumkwe District, Namibia, 1991-96

by
BRIAN JONES



Division of Environmental Affairs
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NEW RESEARCH DISCUSSION PAPER PRODUCED

BRIAN JONES of the DEA has just published the long awaited document entitled: **Institutional relationships, capacity and sustainability - Lessons learned from a community-based conservation project, eastern Tsumkwe District, Namibia, 1991 - 1996.**

The document has been produced as a DEA Research Discussion Paper (number 11).

Copies of this RDP will be sent to most outstations in the near future. If you would like a copy, however, visit the DEA offices, Sixth Floor, Capitol Towers Building, Levinson Arcade, Windhoek or write to Linda Baker at Private Bag 13306, Windhoek.

DEA attends Wilderness Conference

A MET task force is to be convened to identify possible wilderness areas in Namibia, following a successful Wilderness Symposium held at the Waterberg Plateau Park during June.

The symposium attracted about 100 delegates from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Namibia. The Namibian delegation included representatives from Government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Ably organised by Waterberg's Trygve Cooper, the meeting aimed at deliberating wilderness in the context of Namibia's needs and circumstances.

DEA environmental lawyer, Jan Glazewski along with Dr Hu Berry of Research, was asked to prepare a summary of the symposium.

According to the summary, the main findings of the meetings were that:

- Namibia has tremendous potential to pioneer and develop the concept of wilderness and to be a forerunner in Africa. Although the wilderness concept can be developed within and outside protected areas, it was decided to focus on developing wilderness *inside* protected areas.
- The development of the wilderness ideal must take into

account the unique cultural diversity which characterises Africa in general and Namibia in particular.

- Any initiative regarding wilderness must take into account Namibia's colonial past and its history of land dispossession. Above all, the needs, desires and aspirations of Namibian people regarding land use must be taken into account.

of the legal protection of protected areas in Namibia, including national parks, nature reserves and contractual parks. It was also recognised that we need a spectrum of other protected areas, including sites of significant cultural, historical or scientific interest and that wilderness is one of these categories.

- a baseline study, or *inventory*, be carried out to demarcate candidate wilderness areas in Namibia. The initial focus should be on areas falling within existing protected areas and that the promotion of wilderness areas outside such areas be put on hold. Decisions regarding wilderness *outside* protected areas should be community-based.



- The economic value of wilderness goes beyond financial value. Economists now include all humanly perceived values such as including financial, spiritual, cultural and heritage value in measuring the value of wilderness. These values should be maximised.

The summary also makes several important recommendations:

- there is a need to *give legislative recognition and legal protection* to the concept of wilderness. This should be done during the revision

- that the Permanent Secretary be asked to convene a task group from the MET, with additional outside members as appropriate. The function of the group would be to set guidelines for determining criteria to be applied in formulating the baseline study or inventory. Suggested members of this group were **Dr H Kojwang, Ben Beytell, Dr Hu Berry and Trygve Cooper.**

- That the MET Planning Committee be informed of these developments.
- The DEA would like to congratulate Trygve and Trish Cooper on an excellent, meticulously organised symposium.*

Cattle numbers, biomass and productivity in commercial farming areas

■ by John Motinga

THE RESOURCE Accounting Project attached to the DEA recently produced a note on *Cattle Numbers, Biomass and Productivity in Commercial Farming Areas of Namibia, 1915 - 1994.*

Prepared by economists Dr Glen-Marie Lange, Jon Barnes and John Motinga, the note forms part of the team's project to document the status of the nation's resources and their current economic use. Livestock and land accounts feature prominently in the project. Issues related to rangeland degradation and stock numbers will be analysed in a systematic framework.

The new document investigates trends in cattle numbers, changes in cattle biomass and productivity of livestock in commercial areas from 1915 to 1994, but concentrates in the last 40 years as more data is available during this period.

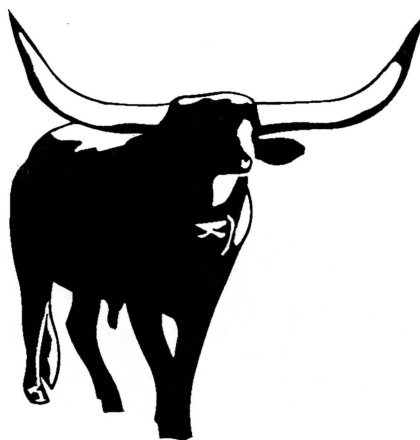
The investigation will help to broaden our understanding of issues related to long term carrying capacity, land degradation and rangeland management. A proper understanding of these related issues will help in the formulation of effective agricultural development policies.

Preliminary Findings

During the last 40 years, there has been a *decline* in cattle numbers on private land by almost 50 percent. During the early twenties and thirties, however, a significant stock-building

took place, which is described by some as a result of development of essential infrastructure during that period.

The availability of more waterpoints and camps in commercial areas availed new grazing land. It is difficult, however, to explain the tremendous decline which occurred in the latter half of the century.



Bush encroachment could have led to this decline with a subsequent reduction in carrying capacity of farmland.

In the past it was believed by some that although cattle numbers are declining, the cattle biomass on the land may even have increased, as the average weight of individual animals has increased.

By using data on the slaughter weights, the note shows that average weights have *not* increased as claimed. Biomass is likely to have declined along with numbers in the latter half of the century.

The study found, however, that amidst declining livestock numbers, cattle productivity, (which is measured as numbers sold per total herd number), has risen over the last 20 years by about 30 percent.

Thus an increase in herd productivity has compensated for the fall in cattle numbers. Again this is not conclusive since further questions have to be answered.

The following questions are raised from preliminary results of the note:

- How can we explain and interpret the decline in cattle biomass on commercial farms? To what extent is the decline the result of rangeland degradation or reduced long-term carrying capacity of the land? To what extent is the decline in cattle numbers a management strategy aimed at achieving higher rates of off-take which compensate for lower cattle numbers?
- What are the implications of these results for long-term carrying-capacity and perhaps economically sound stocking rates in these areas? Seeing that the decline in cattle numbers appears to have levelled off in recent years, could these current stocking levels be interpreted as the appropriate long-term stocking levels?
- What are the implications for economically viable rangeland management?

The preliminary findings have been circulated to a number of interested people for comments on these questions. Further work will be tailored to the responses.

■ *John Motinga is a Resource economist who has been seconded to the Resource Accounting Project from NEPRU.*

If you would like to have your say in The Dreamer, then write to:
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DEA Staff News

ARRIVALS

Cecilia Stephanus, 26, is on loan from the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture. She is currently cataloguing the DEA library books and putting them on computer. Born in Windhoek, Cecilia completed her schooling at Shifidi High School. In her spare time she enjoys reading, watching television, socialising and dancing.

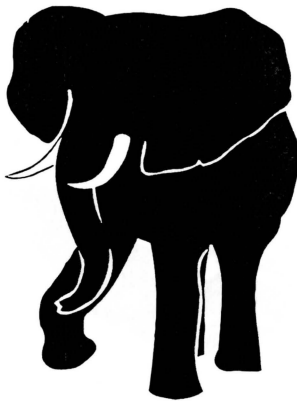
DEPARTURES

Alfred van Kent former chief development planning officer, has left the DEA after four years of service. Alfred was one of the first members on the DEA team, having started way back in 1991. His duties included toxic waste and pollution management.

Alfred has taken up a position of Director of Science and Technology within the Ministry of Higher Education.

The DEA wishes him all the best in his new career.

Phillip Shimi shadow economist to Caroline Ashley, has left for a position as an economist at the Bank of Namibia. The popular, fun-loving Phillip is still in the Capitol Towers building, and regular contact will be maintained



ABOUT DESERTIFICATION...

Desertification is land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry, sub-humid areas, resulting mainly from *negative human impacts* combined with difficult climatic and environmental conditions.

Although there is uncertainty about the exact extent, causes and costs of land degradation, it is an undisputed fact that land degradation has - and is - taking place at an alarming rate.

The report states that often over-use of natural resources, which results in degradation, is due to a lack of secure, exclusive tenure over land and natural resources. It adds that the introduction of secure, exclusive tenure at the community level is the single most important policy reform needed to prevent degradation.

Other key policy changes needed relate to a resettlement policy, water pricing, the introduction of natural resource user fees and livestock drought relief subsidies.

How many people does it take to change a light bulb?

A DEA Internet "Surfer" found a file listing hundreds of "How many (insert your word here) does it take to change a light bulb?" jokes in it. Bearing in mind the number of economists, consultants, lawyers etc in the DEA, we selected a few pertinent jokes for your amusement. Here goes:

Q: How many *civil servants* does it take to screw in a light bulb?

A: 45. One to change the bulb, and 44 to do the paperwork

Q: How many *consultants* does it take to change a light bulb?

A. I'll give an estimate for you a week from Monday.

B. We don't know. They never get past the feasibility study.

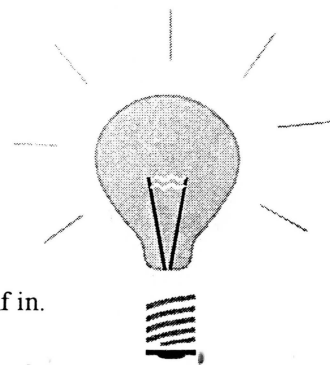
Q: How many *economists* does it take to screw in a light bulb?

A. Two. One to assume the ladder and one to change the bulb.

A. None. If the Government would just leave us alone, it would screw itself in.

Q: How many *lawyers* does it take to change a light bulb?

A: 65. 42 to sue the power company for insufficiently supplying power, or negligent failure to prevent the surge that made the bulb burnout in the first place, 14 to sue the electrician who wired the house and nine to sue the bulb manufacturers.



A whale of a story...

DR CHRIS BROWN, Head: DEA, attended the 48th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission in Aberdeen, Scotland during June this year. Below is a summary of his report on the meeting:

Background

The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling was completed and opened for signature in 1946, and came into force in 1948. The purpose was for the conservation management of whale resources and the regulation of whaling activities to secure sustainable and optimal off-takes.

The Convention makes provision for the creation of an "International Whaling Commission" (IWC) consisting of a representative of each contracting government, which manages the Convention. The IWC carries out and commissions research and monitoring, and publishes information on whales and related issues. It can amend provisions of the schedule, including matters of conservation and utilisation, fixing protected and unprotected species, open and closed seasons, open and closed waters - including sanctuaries, size limits and maximum catches, equipment which may and may not be used and statistics which must be collected and reported.

The Convention states that decisions to amend provisions of the schedule must be to further the purpose and objectives of the Convention, must be based on scientific evidence and must take into account the interests of the consumers of whale products and the whaling industry.

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Convention, any contracting government may grant its nationals a special permit for the killing of

whales for scientific research.

Subsequent events

Several significant events and schedule amendments have taken place since the entry into force of the Convention. The most significant have been:

- the growing public sentiments in most of Europe, USA, Australia and New Zealand for the full and total protection of whales, and the emergence of NGO pressure and action groups;
- the involvement, as observers, of NGOs within the IWC meetings and the media support given to these groups;



- the shift within many member governments from a position of sustainable use to one of protectionism;
- a moratorium on all whaling, with the exception of some communal subsistence whaling by aboriginal groups and whaling for scientific research, with many countries also objecting to both exceptions;
- the establishment of a southern ocean sanctuary.

There has been a gradual shift within the IWC to move the convention *away* from sustainable use of whales, based on scientific information, to a position of overall protection. This has been achieved because the original group of whaling and maritime nations in the convention has been enlarged by the ratification of a wider group of countries, which has as their main interest the full

protection of whales. This group is now larger than the group of nations which supports whaling, such as Japan and Norway.

The 48th IWC Meeting

The meeting was attended by 29 member countries, 5 non-member observer countries, including Namibia (and Zimbabwe!), 7 inter-governmental organisations and 92 NGOs, most of which have protectionist agendas.

An important position emerged at this meeting. At past meetings the protectionist countries have led the whaling nations to believe that, if a number of criteria are met, such as sound assessment of stocks and humane killing methods, then they would support the sustainable use of whales. At this meeting, it emerged that the protectionists have *no* intention of supporting any consumptive use of whales for *any* purpose.

Other topics of discussion included:

- humane killing
- whale watching as an alternative to consumptive whaling
- whale meat and products
- mechanisms to address the plight of small Cetaceans, including dolphins and porpoises
- Aboriginal subsistence whaling
- comprehensive assessment of whale stocks.

Dr Brown's main recommendation was that Namibia should not enter the arena of international politics over whaling. There is too much sentiment, which could have spill-over effects to other resource issues such as seals and elephants, and Namibian is not a whaling nation anyway.

- *The topic is complex, and for anyone wishing to obtain more detailed information on particular aspects, two files are held in the DEA Library containing reports, statements and publications on a wide range of issues covered by the convention.*

The Schubert Haus Times

Newsorgan of Windhoek's Premier Research Institute

ENDANGERED!

Survivors

Yet another species has been added to the growing list of endangered animals. Down to a permanent population of four by the end of this month, supplemented by occasional migrations from outside, *Homo sapiens schuberthausiensis* is on the brink of extinction.

This species is characterised by its voracious appetite for processed wheat, sugar, fat and egg combinations. Consumption of these products usually forms part of a ritual involving hot herbal beverages and loud vocalising. Unsuspecting outsiders are often coerced to materially support this ritual in exchange for services rendered. Famous for their strong views on certain lower life forms and "lekker places for a braai", members of this species have often been described as elitist and snobbish, mainly by their less fortunate subspecies.

As part of an ongoing campaign to ensure the survival of this species, efforts are being made to translocate them to a more benign environment but it remains to be seen if this kind of ex-situ conservation will be successful.



What's happening at Schubert Haus

The happy SH crew has been up to their usual tricks. Trading in ECUs (Edible Cake Units) reached an ultimate high in June when we managed to have our cake and eat it

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every day for two solid weeks! Since then volume has slumped, possibly due to the fact that either one or both of the main traders were out of town at times. Dorothee's Zoo is doing well with new arrivals almost on a weekly basis now. And of course - we finally got our new computers thanks mainly to a superhuman effort from Pauline.

As far as business is concerned, Mike is working hard on his checklists and annotated bibliographies and Holger, when he is not jet-setting, is trying his hand at a wetland strategy for Namibia and management plans for our Ramsar sites. HO, when not campaigning for dog box of the year (see item later), is attempting to coordinate our rhino conservation effort. Dorothee is

turning into quite a computer boff, producing picture perfect reports and running the finances for the specialist scientists. On top of that she also induces pythons to breed and wrestles parasite infested leguaans. At the moment we also have Wilma, a student, who is trying her best to keep smiling whilst doing all the arduous tasks dumped on her.



ECEP Course

Holger recently had the fortune to be selected as the only Namibian to attend a course on watershed and

wetland management. The course formed part of a CIDA sponsored Environmental Capacity Enhancement Project (ECEP) and was held at Club Makokola on the southern part of Lake Malawi. Run over two weeks, the course covered important aspects of watershed (we call them catchments) management such as planning, needs assessment, water law and policy, watershed analysis etc. Only half a day was devoted to wetlands. Thirty participants from eleven southern African countries took part; most of these came from a water supply background i.e. Water Affairs with the conservation minded people being slightly outnumbered. This was however quite interesting as it provided an opportunity to see the other side of the coin - the one with the *We need water for the people and *** the rest* stamped on it.

Some parts of the course proved to be quite fun, for example, on one occasion we were randomly assigned to groups of "Community" and "Consultants" where the object of the exercise was for the consultants to supply the community with a watershed plan. Yours truly ended up being assigned the role of a rural community health person. Taking the role play one step further, I decided that usually rural clinics are run by missionaries - complete with dog collar and all. Of course this had the end result that everybody took their role quite seriously with heated debates the order of the day (evening actually). The irrigation farmer didn't want to reduce the size of his fields, the cattle rancher wouldn't destock, the village women's (enacted by a man) babies were dying of water borne diseases etc etc. I'm glad I wasn't a consultant. They got their revenge in the end though, thrashing the poor rural community on the beach volleyball court.

One of the major side attractions was the bargaining for curios. Yours truly ended up less takkies, shorts, T-

shirt and, believe it or not, underwear. It appears that clothing is of greater use-value than money in Malawi but at 18 Kwachas (\pm N\$6) for a beer some of us were quite relieved that there were alternative ways to procure some memorabilia. Club Mak was soon rechristened to Club Expensive - the price of beer being one example, on one occasion they charged us 60K for a packed lunch that consisted of one banana, one naartjie, a dry roll and a piece of roast chicken! Enquiries in the nearest fishing village revealed that the cost of this would not have been more than 15K. Of course, some intrepid individual soon found out that beers were available at 7.5K in the fishing village next to Club Mak so we just frequented the "local" pub instead of the exclusive one.

Well, all good things come to an end although some participants had serious doubts whether the plane would actually make it due to the serious overweight problems. At a rough guess at least half the ebony forests of Malawi were on the plane - the record was held by X from South Africa who checked in with 75kg of luggage. The pilot earned himself a rousing round of applause on take-off and landing. Was it worth it? Absolutely!



Editorial

The Times has been resurrected! After relentless pressure from news starved colleagues the editor has decided to re-enter the high pressure, high workload, low pay world of newsletter publishing. Due to a slump in reader figures (3 at the last Price-Waterfowl audit) it has been decided to join forces with a similarly distinguished publication and to present the SHT as a supplement to the *DEA Dreamer*. I am positive that this will at least double our circulation figures with some optimists even suggesting a

quadrupling!!

Lots of events have happened since the last issue of the SHT (if memory does not fail me it was sometime in 1993 - perhaps some of the longer-serving members of staff can help me out here) and monetary constraints prohibit us from recounting all happenings since then. This may well be the last issue of the Times as the move to LTA is now well and truly on. This raises the question of what will happen to the Times. Rumours are that it will appear under a new name (*The Third Story* has been suggested) but with similar content.

Get well soon!

Schubert Haus supremo Mike was taken ill recently while preparing for a fieldtrip. Mike is convalescing at home after having gall stones removed last week. Get well soon Mike! 🐾

Happy retirement

Schubert Haus gardening expert Venasio Jambazulu will be retiring at the end of August after 18 years of service with the Ministry. We wish him a happy retirement and all the best for the future! ♣

Dogbox of the month award

This month one candidate stood head and shoulders above the rest. His list of mishaps reads like the "Who is who of disasters". On his first day back at work HO lost his keys, then he embarked on an illfated game capture operation involving a crashed helicopter and several rhino fatalities. Fresh out of rhinos he was stuck in jail for not having a trip authority which prompted him to lock his keys in his office. After struggling for half a day to get the door open the keys were discovered at home! Certainly a candidate for dogbox of the year!

A close second was the circular urging Ministries to save paper by printing on both sides - printed on one side only!