

Ex Post-Evaluation Brief

NAMIBIA: Bwabwata Mudumu Mamili Parks – Phase I



Sector	Biodiversity (41030)	
Project/Client	Bwabwata Mudumu Mamili National Parks, Phase I BMZ No. 2004 65013*	
Programme executing agency	Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)	
Year of sample/ex post evaluation report: 2013/2013		
	Appraisal (planned)	Ex post-evaluation (actual)
Investment costs (total)	EUR 3.00 million	EUR 5.46 million
Own contribution	EUR 0.44 million	EUR 2.54 million
Co-financing	./.	EUR 0.43 million
Funding, of which budget funds (BMZ)	EUR 2.56 million EUR 2.56 million	EUR 2.49 million EUR 2.49 million**

* random sample 2013; ** less residual funds of EUR 64,000

Short description: The project supported the Namibian *Ministry of Environment and Tourism* (MET) in the set up and management of a conservation area (Bwabwata Mudumu Mamili Parks, BMMPs) in the North-East of the country (Caprivi Strip). The project was appraised in two phases, with phase I (hereinafter "Project") being the subject of this ex post-evaluation, which comprised infrastructure and equipment support to the parks; associated consulting services were provided in cooperation with local non-government organizations (participatory park mgt., support to local communities in generating income). The project area is part of the *Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area* (KAZA).

Objectives: Overall objective: Contribute to ecological consolidation by maintaining the corridor function for wildlife movements and the economic development of the *Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area* (KAZA) and enabling the local population / neighbouring communities to participate in its economic use (indicators: development of wildlife stocks and income from the management of the conservation area to adjacent communities/ park inhabitants). Project objective: Effective park administration including adequate consideration of the park inhabitants' and neighbours' interests, thereby creating conditions for enabling the inhabitants and neighbours to participate in the economic utilisation of the park. (Indicators: *management effectiveness score*, mgt. plans and establishment of forums for joint conservation management; tourism development plans to use park for).

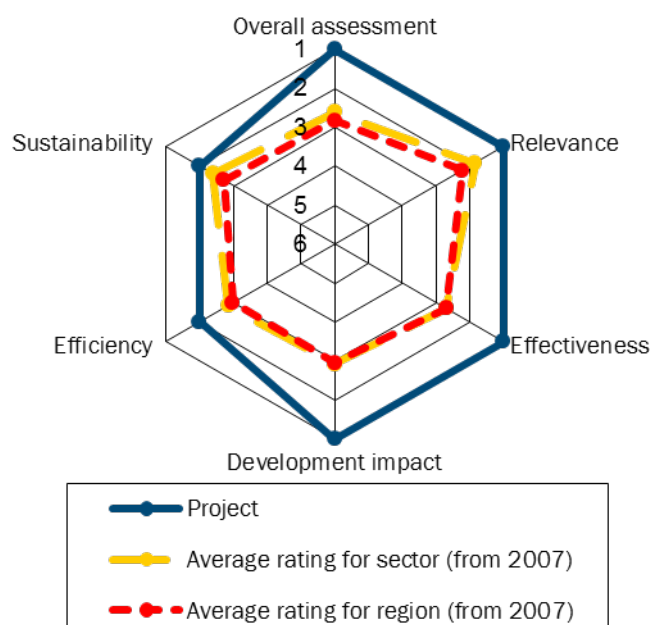
Target group: park inhabitants and neighbouring communities.

Overall rating: 1

The participatory approach adopted by the Namibian government for the project, referred to as *Community-Based Natural Resource Management* (CBNRM), aims to protect and use the natural resources in the project region while at the same time taking adequately into account the interests of the local population. This has contributed to improved biodiversity protection and the recovery of wildlife stocks in KAZA. The CBNRM principles continue to be respected by the responsible MET; it is realistic to expect higher budget allocations in the future. The sustainability of the impact can thus be assumed.

Points to note: the integrative and holistic approach – applied for infrastructure and capacity-development is exemplary by regional standards.

Rating by DAC criteria



EVALUATION SUMMARY

Overall rating

The project (phase I) is rated "excellent", as conservation and natural resources use planning in the project regions could be implemented with extensive attention to the local population's interests and the park inhabitants' increased participation in the legal commercial use of natural resources. It has also contributed to an improved protection of both biological diversity and the wildlife stocks in the KAZA region.

Rating: 1

Relevance

The project is based on **the Namibian government's initiative to establish a** conservation area in the Kavango and Caprivi regions. This area was intended to improve the protection of natural resources while developing tourism with the involvement of the local population ("*Caprivi Vision*" 1998). The original objectives then and now largely correspond to the Namibian government's priorities (cf. signing of KAZA agreement 2011, National Tourism Development Strategy and current *National Development Plan IV*). Project planning of the, but particularly its implementation, was complementary to projects of other donor organisations (in particular UNDP/ GEF) and NGOs. High synergies in the implementation are especially evident in the close cooperation at working level with project representatives of an UNDP/GEF financed project that was implemented in parallel and with various NGOs.

The **project's relevance of the** remains very high with view to the protection of natural resources - and especially to safeguarding the wildlife corridor function between Botswana and Angola and to protecting the unique natural habitat between the Okavango and Kwando rivers. The BMMPs and their neighbouring conservancies are today an essential part of the KAZA. In planning and implementation, the project corresponds to a large extent with the current objectives and guidelines of the BMZ (BMZ concept 164 - Biological Diversity). The Kavango / Caprivi project region continues to constitute a disadvantaged region with considerably higher levels of poverty than the national average. The San ethnic group, which makes up the majority of the park inhabitants, is regarded as the portion of Namibia's population most affected by poverty.

Sub-Rating: 1

Effectiveness

As part of the initial planning, no explicit **project objectives or targets** were defined for the individual phases of the project, only for the overall intervention (i.e. both phases). At the end of the 2011 project and before the start of the phase II measures, the project objectives were largely achieved based on the indicators defined at the start (joint development and implementation of management plans and creation of forums for joint management of the parks

and the neighbouring territories; drawing up of a plan to use the park for tourism; creation of procedures for awarding concessions to use the resources in the park): Out of the territories adjoining the park, 72% are managed in an environmentally friendly manner. As a result, the target of 85% has not yet been reached. In the area under the Hambukushu Traditional Authority, in particular, resistance, which was already evident in the initial stages, continues to come from the politically influential leadership (see also "Sustainability" section); as a consequence, parts of that particular territory are still used for grazing purposes. The park administration and housing premises financed from FC funds appear to be crucial for ensuring reasonable working conditions for park administration staff, as was clearly demonstrated by the contrast between the four "old" administration and accommodation buildings and the new Mahango station. **Park administration quality** has also increased considerably in the BMMPs – in comparison to other parks. The *Management Effectiveness Assessment of Namibia's Protected Areas Monitoring Tool (NAMETT)* score is used as an indicator. This score was determined during a UNDP/GEF sponsored project throughout Namibia; it records the quality of the park administration on the basis of a structured questionnaire. During project implementation between 2004 and 2009, this score improved more strongly in all parks in the project region than in other Namibian national parks and nature reserves, and far exceeded the targets set for the project. This trend also continued after 2009.

Of particular note is the holistic approach to the planning of the infrastructure measures with regard to both process and results. This can be primarily attributed to the deployment of a qualified consultant, who was in charge of coordinating individual project activities by a single responsible party and supporting the consultative process prior to formally establishing the park; equally the FC-financed investment costs support - with its signal and leverage impact – was essential. The proclamation of the Bwabwata National Park by the Namibian government, achieved in 2007, was a project requirement that, according to statements by project participants, contributed decisively to the formal establishment of the park; it created necessary "launching pad" for effectively improving the parks' management.

In retrospect, the original **estimation of the investment required** for the parks appears too low. During project implementation, gaps arising were partly closed by additional funds from the budget of MET as well as from the official Namibian *Game Product Trust Fund* and private donations. Although the higher own contribution can be viewed positively as a form of increased *ownership*, important investments (e.g. third access bridge in Mamili) could not yet be implemented. The two bridges financed from the own contribution should be submitted to a technical inspection at least in the medium term. Overall, the objectives formulated for both phases were largely achieved in the present phase (see above); phase II will thus focus on the requirements for institutional consolidation and additional infrastructure.

Sub-Rating: 1

Efficiency

Efficiency in project implementation (design and specific costs): In total, the specific construction costs (park administration building, Mahango Station and staff accommodations) appear reasonable; however, it was not possible to build as many staff houses as planned – due to unexpected building cost increases in the course of the project as well as overall implementation delays. The implementation consultant's role is particularly worth mentioning: This consultant provided project management, technical planning and construction supervision support to the project executing agency, as well as in terms of park management tools and concession procedures. The time period considerably exceeded the agreed contract term by more than three years, and was extended at no extra cost. This constituted a very important contribution to effective project management.

Efficiency in operation: Income from the parks (tickets sales, proceeds from concessions) does not go directly to the park administration. The operating costs and a portion of the capital costs are still covered exclusively by allocations from the national budget. Investments are also financed from the public *Game Products Trust Fund (GPTF)*, which is funded from hunting concession proceeds. The park inhabitants and park neighbours incur costs through damage to fences and crop shortfalls caused by increasing levels of animal movements, especially along the corridor on the Zambezi River. These damages are offset mainly by proceeds from hunting concessions and compensation payments from the MET. According to survey data by the umbrella organisation for conservancies (NASCO), the proceeds cover the costs incurred. This was confirmed in conversations with representatives of the park inhabitants' association (*Kyaramacan Association*). In the opinion of this group, the economic benefits cover the costs as a whole. The project contributes to the development of nature-based tourism in Namibia. In total, the tourism industry in Namibia in 2012 contributed an estimated USD 2.4 billion or 20.5% (2008: 14.5%) to GDP and accounted for up to 27% (2009: 18.2%) of total employment. Since the benefits of maintaining biodiversity in the BMMPs and the contribution to species Conservation in neighbouring countries cannot be quantified, no exact figure can be determined with view to an input – outcome/impact ratio. Given the high growth rates and the key geographical location (corridor function) for biodiversity conservation – esp. the consolidation of wildlife stocks in the neighbouring regions (especially in Angola) – in relation to the investment sum of EUR 5.46 million, **overall economic efficiency** is estimated to be high.

The assessment must take into account that the project was undertaken in a complex institutional environment – against a background of potential tensions between various sections of the population and in a notably disadvantaged region that has been significantly impacted by the civil war in neighbouring Angola. From today's perspective, there is no competitive option to the implemented concept of a transfrontier conservation area.

Sub-Rating: 2

Impact

Economic sub-objective: While neighbours can participate in the economic benefits of resources in protected regions through the conservancy administration and the municipal forests, the inhabitants of national parks currently have no comparable legal basis¹. By actively supporting the process for the proclamation of the Bwabwata National Park and drawing up the Concessions Directive for the park, the project contributed to ensuring that the community of park inhabitants is recognised through their association (*Kyaramacan Association*) as the legitimate contact partner for the government. The project also helped to ensure that this association was granted the rights to utilise natural resources in the park. The concessions currently granted to the *Kyaramacian Association* (two hunting concessions, camping site in the park, which is to be developed into a lodge, harvesting of Devil's Claw) secure up to 580 jobs (85 as employees of the *Kyaramacan Association*, including as local game wardens, and around 500 for controlled collection of Devil's Claw – subject however to temporary restrictions). Pertinent income trends for the inhabitants and neighbouring communities were estimated during the course of the project. Based on that information, real income appears to have increased by 2.4% p.a. between 2006 and 2010. The income accrued to the park inhabitants through the *Kyaramacan Association* and to the park neighbours through the conservancy administration is estimated at NAD 14 million in total. Although more recent verifiable information is not available, the income situation has reportedly at least stabilised since then.

The contribution to **the ecological sub-objective** is even more important. The economic participation of the park inhabitants and park neighbours leads to increase the acceptance of the park and generates incentives for controlling resource use - and thus their improved protection (through patrolling activities by *conservancies'* employees or the *Kyaramacan Association*); it also creates opportunities for compensating the damage caused by wildlife. Before the start of the project, the nature reserves were completely separated from the adjoining Botswanian territory by a veterinary fence. Even though only a partial opening of the fence between Botswana and Namibia could be achieved during the course of the project, this step has secured the park's corridor function. The increase in wildlife movements through the park and the rise in wildlife stocks in the Caprivi region among various key species in the project region are also confirmed by aerial- censuses conducted in 2004 and 2009 (buffaloes from 3262 to 9633, elephants from 860 to 3450, kudus from 98 to 151, lions from 4 to 23)². Although there is no precise data on vegetation coverage, reports indicate that this has stabilised through improved park management (controlled fires, firebreaks).

The **exemplary character of the CBNRM approach** in the BMMPs was confirmed during conversations on site. This approach can serve as a model for the entire KAZA region. In addition, the creation of the Concessions Directive and the establishment of a *Concession*

¹ Bwabwata is the only Namibian national park with human inhabitants inside its borders.

² Comparable data from more recent aerial-based censuses are not available. On the basis of sightings in the parks and according to statements of game wardens, the figures have at least stabilised since 2009.

Unit in the MET, which is also responsible for the awarding of concessions in other Namibian parks, have had a positive impact beyond the project region.

Sub-Rating: 1

Sustainability

The following sustainability risks continue to exist:

Approximately 60% - 74% of the **financing needs for the park's administration costs** are currently covered, and this financing depends exclusively on budget allocations. Given the positive economic trend in general and the Namibian budget as a whole (especially that of the MET), the financing risk appears to be manageable in principle. Nonetheless to secure the effects for the long term, further funds are especially needed for additional investments, both in terms of infrastructure (third bridge in Mamili) and of equipment (replacement investments for the motor vehicles that were procured in the project). Should the NGOs, who are currently active in the area, cut back their commitment, the Namibian government would also have to provide more funds to support the various park neighbour committees.

Although the **guidelines and management plans** that were drawn up in the project are used by the park administration, they have not (yet) been fully implemented or do not yet have the required legal status (especially the strategic management plan and the Concessions Directive). As a result, there is a certain risk of political influence being exerted on administrative processes that might possibly reduce, but not endanger, the sustainability of the aforementioned effects.

It was not possible to complete the process of **integrating all park neighbours** into the management of the Bwabwata National Park, as the Hambukushu *Traditional Authority* (TA) continues to block such efforts. According to information from various sources, the conflict is attributable to the economic interests (grazing pastures) of the local TA and can essentially be managed using established procedures, even though there is no sign of the issue being resolved in the foreseeable future: although livestock farming has increased in Bwabwata NP, there is no significant overall risk for the foreseeable future given there are only around 2000 cattle in the entire park.

Sub-Rating: 2

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and overarching developmental impact. The ratings are also used to arrive at a final assessment of a project's overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

1	Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations
2	Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
3	Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
4	Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results
5	Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
6	The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated

Ratings 1-3 denote a positive or successful assessment while ratings 4-6 denote a not positive or unsuccessful assessment

Sustainability is evaluated according to the following four-point scale:

Sustainability level 1 (very good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to continue undiminished or even increase.

Sustainability level 2 (good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline only minimally but remain positive overall. (This is what can normally be expected).

Sustainability level 3 (satisfactory sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline significantly but remain positive overall. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability of a project is considered inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation but is very likely to evolve positively so that the project will ultimately achieve positive developmental efficacy.

Sustainability level 4 (inadequate sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project is inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation and is very unlikely to improve. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability that has been positively evaluated to date is very likely to deteriorate severely and no longer meet the level 3 criteria.

The overall rating on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Ratings 1-3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while ratings 4-6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the overall objective ("overarching developmental impact") and the sustainability are rated at least "satisfactory" (rating 3).