



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY, AND TOURISM

***ZAMBEZI REGION AS A KEY TO WILDLIFE DISPERSAL IN KAZA: THE  
WAY FORWARD FOR BWABWATA NATIONAL PARK***

Date: 26 September 2022

## Location of Bwabwata National Park



## History and legal status of Bwabwata National Park

- The history of this protected area is complex, with various proclamations and policies affecting the North East Parks
- It consists of former Caprivi Game Park, Mahango Game Park and the Kwando Triangle, which in the past (Kwando Triangle) did not have explicit conservation status
- The area between the Kavango and Kwando rivers was first proclaimed as Caprivi Nature Park in 1963, mostly for strategic military reasons in view of independence struggles starting in Namibia, Angola and Zambia
- The Caprivi Nature Park had its conservation status elevated to that of Caprivi Game Park in 1968



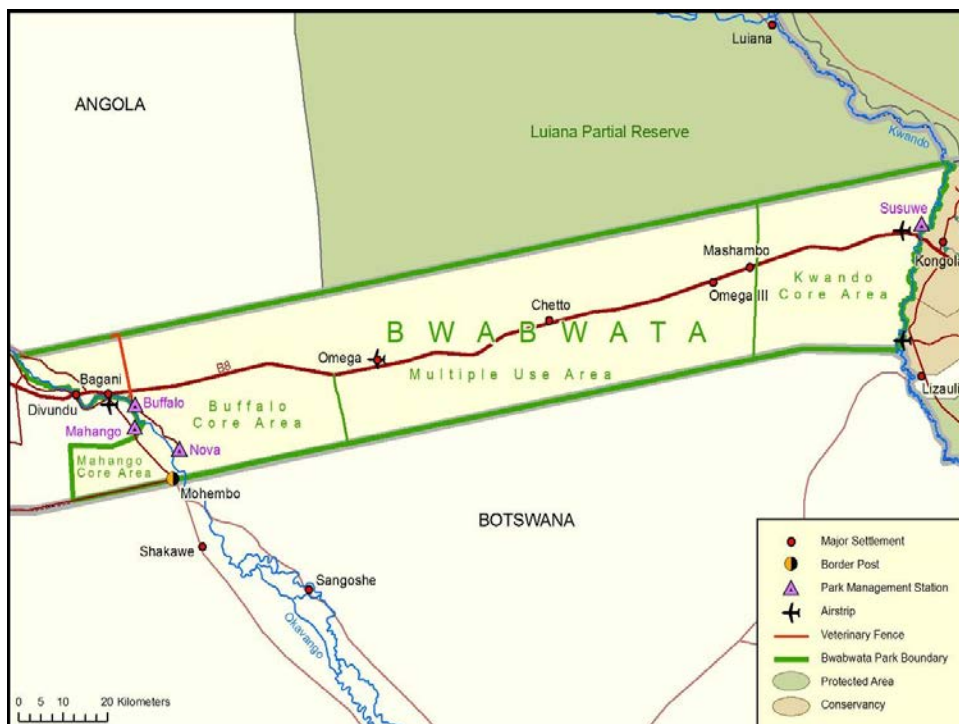
## History and legal status of Bwabwata National Park

- However, since its proclamation in 1968 up until the Independence of Namibia in 1990, the entire area was treated as a military zone by the South African Defence Force
- With Namibia's independence and upon the disbanding of the South African military in Namibia, the Khwe communities staying at military bases inside the park were allowed to continue living there



## History and legal status of Bwabwata National Park

- Mahango was proclaimed and officially gazetted in February 1989.
- Socio Ecological Survey done after Independence resulting in a new Vision for North East Parks
- The Bwabwata National Park, incorporating the Caprivi Game Park, Mahango Game Park and the Kwando Triangle was accordingly proclaimed in Government Notice 2014 of 15 November 2007.
- The park covers an area of 6,274 kilometer square or 627,400 hectares



## Cabinet Decision of 1999

- Caprivi Game Park is to be renamed Bwabwata National Park
- Mahango Game Park and Caprivi Game Park are to be merged to form Bwabwata National Park
- The eastern boundary of Caprivi Game Park is to be extended to the middle of the Kwando River, thus including the Kwando Triangle into Bwabwata National Park
- Three core areas (Kwando, Buffalo and Mahango) be zoned for special protection and controlled tourism
- The central area of Bwabwata National Park be zoned to provide for a Multiple Use Area of community based tourism, trophy hunting, human settlement and development



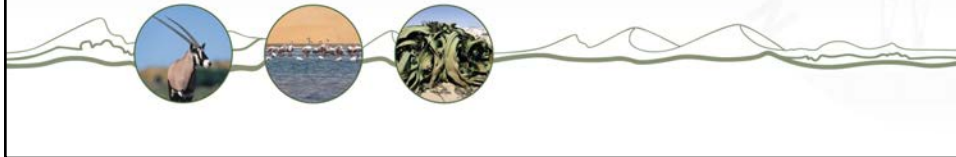
## Cabinet Decision 1999

- No cattle be allowed in Bwabwata National Park, nor any other game park in the north east of Namibia
- Communities neighbouring or living in the Bwabwata, Mamili, Mudumu and Khaudum be given conditional tourism rights in these parks such that they can establish, either on their own or in joint venture, tourism facilities in these parks
- Tender proposals to be implemented for developing a tourism lodge at Buffalo camp in the Buffalo Core Area



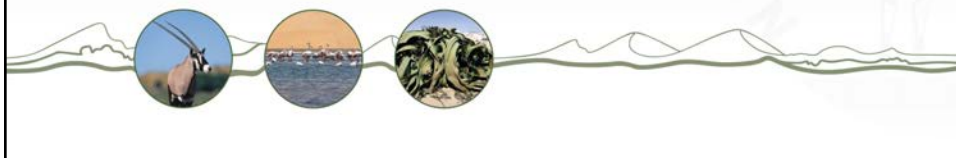
## The Issues

- Cattle in the Park
- Park residents and neighbours



## Cattle in Bwabwata National Park

- No cattle allowed in Bwabwata National Park mainly due to livestock disease reasons, but tourism as well
- The presence of cattle constitute a threat to the spreading of CBPP or lung sickness to the Eastern Zambezi and FMD to the Kavango East Region on the west and beyond
- Wildlife core areas (Mahango, Buffalo and Kwando) remain for special protection, conservation and tourism
- Cattle Removal Strategy developed and with Cabinet



## Park Neighbours and Resident Communities

- About 6 000 people live inside the Park (Managed Resource Use Zone/Multiple Use Area) mainly Khwe San community.
- The Khwe San community are thriving for recognition as Traditional Authority.
- On the eastern part of the Park is the Mashi Traditional Authority under Chief Joseph Tembwe Mayuni, recognized
- They say their jurisdiction in the Park goes up to Omega One (Multiple Use Area), from the Kwando River



## Park Neighbours and Resident Communities

- Mashi Traditional Authority has three conservancies (Kwandu, Mayuni, Mashi) neighbouring the Bwabwata National Park on the east
- Mashi communities actively participate in activities of the Bwabwata National Park and supports its establishment
- On the western part of the Park is the Hambukushu Traditional Authority under Fumu Erwin Munika Mbambo, recognized
- They say their jurisdiction in the Park goes up to the Kwando River, Zambezi Region from the Kavango River



## Park Neighbours and Resident Communities

- Communities of Hambukushu (Kamutjonga) neighbouring the Park has requested the MEFT for them to establish a conservancy west of Bwabwata National Park
- The Hambukushu Traditional Authority does not want and refuses to give them permission to go ahead
- In the absence of organized and legal bodies of community based conservation, Hambukushu community not actively involved, but they want too
- Hambukushu Traditional Authority demand government to give BNP for farming units (Small Scale Commercial Farms)



## MEFT consultation with Communities (Hambukushu)

- Emphasis is on conservation, tourism development and community benefits
- Kyaramacan Association representing resident communities established
- Conservancies represent park neighbours
- In 1999 and 2003, Minister Philemon Malima met with Fumu Mbambo and the Hambukushu community on the matter
- In 2006, Minister Willem Konjore met with Fumu Mbambo and the Hambukushu community on the matter
- In 2008 and 2011, Minister Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah met with Fumu Mbambo and the Hambukushu on the matter





## MEFT intervention with Communities (Hambukushu)

- In 2008, President Hifikepunye Pohamba met with Fumu Mbambo on the matter
- After that meeting the President directed that the Bwabwata National Park should remain as proclaimed and as per Cabinet Decision of 1999.
- The President however directed that the launch of the Park should be put on hold (MEFT cancelled the launch)
- In 2009, the Minister established the Bwabwata Technical Committee (BTC) (different stakeholders) to advise the Minister on important issues related to the management and development of the Bwabwata National Park (Fumu refuses to nominate member). The BTC was chaired by the Permanent Secretary.

## MEFT consultation with Communities (Hambukushu)

- In 2013, Minister Uahekua Herunga met with Fumu Mbambo and the Hambukushu community on the matter
- In 2018, Vice President Nickey Iyambo met with Fumu Mbambo on the matter
- In 2015 and 2019, Minister Pohamba Shifeta met with Fumu Mbambo and on the matter
- In 2021, MEFT organized consultative meetings on the Bwabwata cattle issue. In a specific meeting held on the 12 May 2021, the Mukwe Councilor and some representatives from the Hambukushu Community walked out of the meeting just after the official opening
- Several other meetings were held by officials of the MEFT with the Hambukushu Community



## Consultation of the Hambukushu Traditional Authority in the Management of the Bwabwata National Park

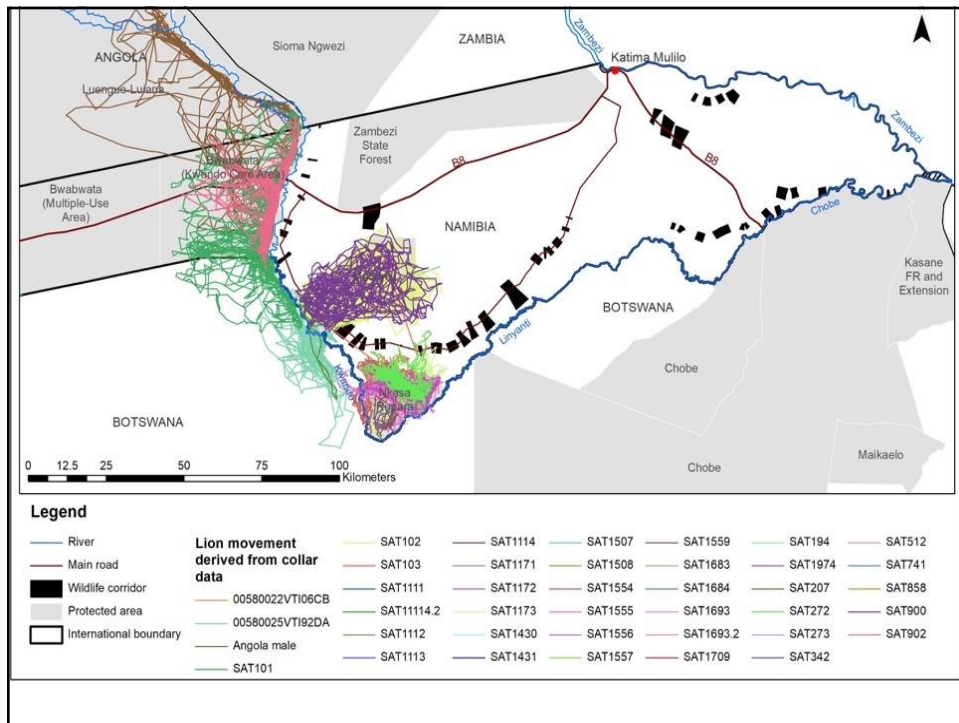
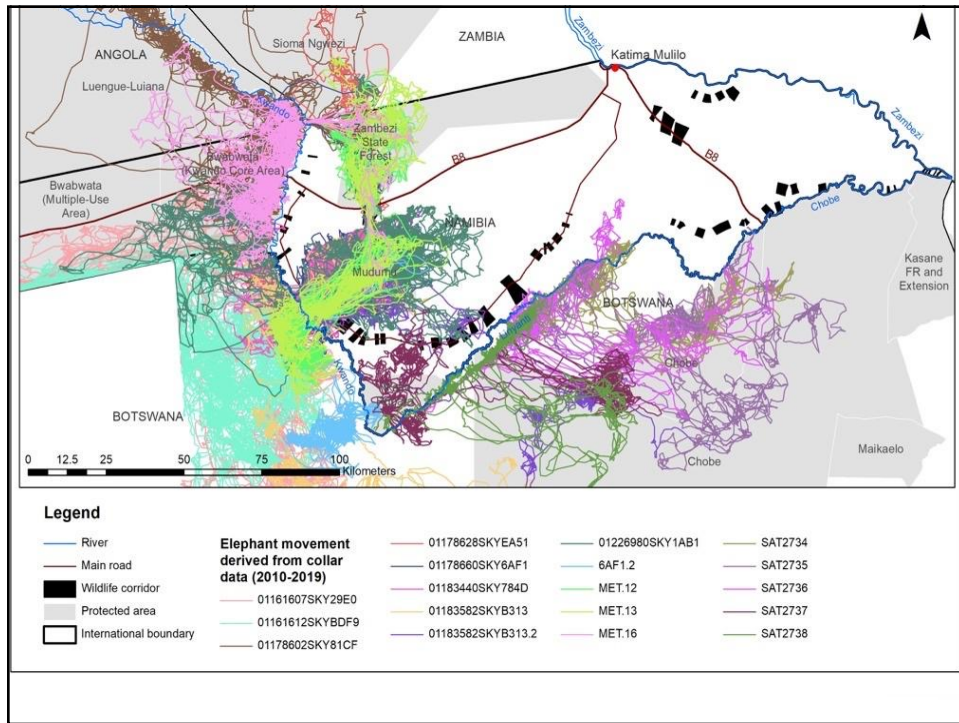
- Structures for community consultations in the management and development of the Bwabwata National Park have been created, namely the Bwabwata Technical Committee which have been replaced by the Bwabwata Advisory Committee. The Hambukushu Traditional Authority has been invited to these structures but are yet to make nominations. MEFT and the other stakeholders awaits for them to fully participate
- Establishment of a community based conservation body by the Hambukushu Community will even strengthen their participation, and more important benefit flow to the Hambukushu Community

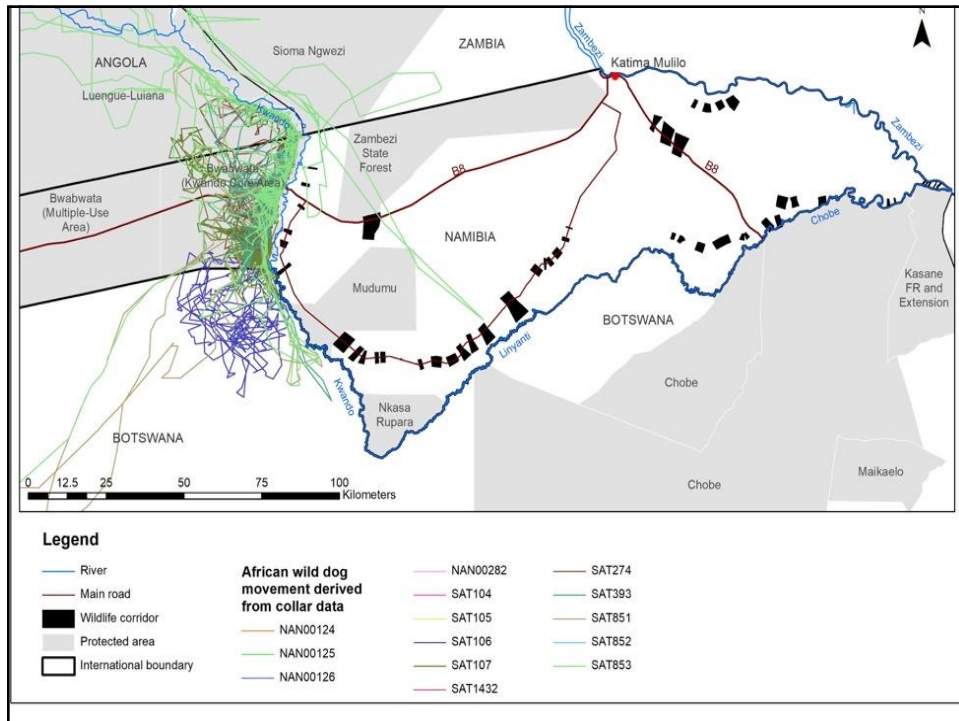


## Economic and Conservation opportunities for Bwabwata National Park

- Bwabwata NP is the most visited park in north eastern Namibia
- Tourism holds major socioeconomic potential for the park
- The park offers income to local residents, jobs and business opportunities to communities and entrepreneurs, and economic benefits to the region and Namibia as a whole
- Major transboundary movement area for wildlife







## Way Forward

# BWABWATA REMAINS A NATIONAL PARK

The footer features three circular images arranged horizontally. The first image shows a kudu antelope in a savanna setting. The second image shows a sunset or sunrise over a body of water. The third image shows a close-up of a lion's head. The background of the slide has a faint watermark of a lion and the text 'BWABWATA NATIONAL PARK'.

Thank you