

NAMIBIA - 1NA004

1. Country: Namibia
2. Date: 24/7/95
3. Ref: 1NA004
4. Name and address of compiler:
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5. Name of wetlands: Etosha Pan, Lake Oponono, and the Cuvelai drainage.
6. Date of Ramsar designation: 19 June 1995
7. Geographical coordinates: Between 17⁰24' and 19⁰15'S, and 14⁰ and 17⁰E
8. General location: Central northern Namibia, encompassing Etosha National Park and the former Owambo region.
9. Area: 3 000 000 ha
10. Wetland type: B2, B4, B8, B10
11. Altitude: 1200m a.s.l. average
12. Overview: The site consists of Etosha Pan and its associated smaller pans, the ephemeral rivers feeding the pans, Lake Oponono and the inland Cuvelai delta which is also seasonal.
13. Physical features: The geology consists of sand and calcrete of Tertiary origin, with suboutcrops of the Karoo and Damara sequences. The seasonal rivers of the Cuvelai delta drain into Lake Oponono which in turn drains into the Etosha Pan via the Ekuma river. From the east the Omuramba Owambo feeds Fishers Pan, one of the smaller pans associated with the system. Annual rainfall in the area ranges from 255 to 828mm.
14. Ecological features: The main habitats in the area are the pans, seasonally flooded grasslands, palm tree savanna, Ruacana woodlands and dry bush savanna. The main vegetation changes according to these areas.
15. Land tenure/ownership of:
(a) site: State land
(b) surrounding area: State land, commercial farms.
16. Conservation measures taken: About one half of the site is protected in the Etosha National Park.
17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: The possibility of establishing some game reserves in the former Owambo region is being investigated.
18. Current land use:
(a) site: Tourism, wildlife viewing, subsistence farming, fishing, livestock husbandry.
(b) surroundings/catchment: As above but also commercial farming.
19. Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects:
(a) at the site: The Cuvelai system supports about 45% of Namibia's population who exist by means of subsistence farming and fishing on the floodplains and seasonal wetlands.
(b) in the surroundings/catchment: The Cuvelai system drains out of Angola so any activities in that

country will affect the system in Namibia.

20. Hydrological and physical values: With an area of approximately 50 000km² the site and surrounding area play an important role in the hydrology of the area. Most of the people living in the area rely on the seasonal ponds and shallow wells for their water.

21. Social and cultural values: The Cuvelai system is extensively fished during the wet season by the local people. The Etosha National Park is one of the prime tourist attractions in Namibia.

22. Noteworthy fauna: The Etosha Pan serves as a breeding ground for flamingos in good rainy seasons. The park supports populations of several rare and endangered large mammals such as black rhinoceros *DICEROS BICORNIS*, African elephant *Loxodonta africana* and roan antelope *Hippotragus equinus*.

23. Noteworthy flora: Several plant communities are found in the area (see 14. above). Wood is the main construction material in the area and deforestation is a big problem in some places.

24. Current scientific research and facilities: The Etosha Ecological Institute in Okaukuejo is the base station for all research in the area.

25. Current conservation education: All rest camps in the Etosha National Park have small interpretation centres.

26. Current recreation and tourism: The park is one of the best areas in Namibia for game viewing.

27. Management authority: Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Private Bag 13306, Windhoek, Namibia.

28. Jurisdiction: As above.

29. Bibliographical references: See attached list. A two-volume dedicated issue of Madoqua is in preparation.

30. Reasons for inclusion: 1a, 1c, 2a, 3a, 3b.