



# NNF Newsletter

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### NNF aims to:

Promote sustainable development.

Conserve our biological diversity and natural ecosystems.

Promote the wise and ethical use of natural resources.

## Local knowledge and local dogs – protecting livestock from predators in the southern Kunene region

Farmers in southern Kunene report that black-backed jackal and cheetah numbers are increasing in the region, and that livestock are often lost to these predators. These losses usually occur during the day, as the livestock graze on the communal rangelands. Although herders accompanying the livestock can prevent many of these losses, herders are not always reliable and many of the farmers cannot afford to pay salaries. The Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-Namibia) have started a project with funding from the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA-Namibia) to determine if there's a solution to these problems that is practical, affordable and effective. If one drives through the region and takes the time to observe the herds of goats and sheep, you are likely to see dogs with the flocks. These dogs are formally known as livestock guard dogs. Dogs have been used for the purpose of guarding livestock for nearly as long as they have been domesticated. The ancient practice of raising guard dogs is exceptionally simple, as it uses

the natural bonding process that begins when dogs are young. Dogs that interact closely with livestock from a young age (6-12 weeks old) will start to identify with the goats and sheep as their family. The best dogs will come from a line of working dogs, which are known to defend livestock effectively. Although Eurasia is famous for producing guard dog breeds, the Damara people in southern Kunene have been quietly raising and training livestock guard dogs for generations. Using livestock guard dogs is therefore the kind of locally applicable solution to human-predator conflict that we were looking for. The process of breeding dogs and concurrently educating the local people is a worthy challenge. Whilst using livestock guard dogs is not a new concept to the people of southern Kunene, caring for them is. Therefore farmers that are looking for guard dogs will be educated on dog health, dog food will be locally available, and dogs will be vaccinated against common diseases and treated for ticks and fleas.



Left: 'The matriarch' plodding along with the herd

“COMMITTED TO CONSERVATION”





Above: Ripper Furrowing *Faedherbia Albida*

## Mahahe Conservation Agriculture Project

This NNF and Namibia Resource Consultants (NRC) community conservation agriculture project, situated at Mahahe nearing to Namibia-specific its previous method of use become a "Centre of Excellence" to showcase designed, tested and farmer-accepted in the period specifically to assist farmers in dealing rainfall and degraded soils thus substantially the same time, being best practice for the deforestation. In addition to the fully participating provided for the community, who will actually be involved in the project's crop production and benefit accordingly, the Centre will provide exposure to, and training in, NSCA to local farmers and agricultural extension technicians.



Above: Planting Alley Cropping

ing planting basins. It is intended to the NSCA system which has been North Central region over a 6-year with Namibia's low and intermittent increasing their crop yields, whilst at reversal of both soil degradation and

patory train-

The NRC/CONTILL project in North Central and Kavango with its eventual 500 farmer partners raised their yields from 300 kg/ha (national average) to 1800 kg/ha (600%) and more using NSCA. It is important that this impetus is not lost and it is hoped that Mahahe will pave the way for other such Centres of Excellence to demonstrate, in a sustainable way, the all-round advantages of a CA system that deals effectively with Namibia's difficult conditions, both natural and man-made.



Above: Maize Mahangu Cowpea

### NSCA is based upon:

- ripper furrowing; where the sub-surface hard pan is broken to allow deep rooting whilst the furrowing enables in-field water harvesting where rainfall is concentrated in the base of the furrow, increasing moisture by 75%,
- kraal manure, and fertiliser in the initial stages, are placed in the furrow where the crop is planted. Constant traffic is practised where the same lines are used each season to create fertility build up. Crop rotation using the local leguminous cowpea is also practised.

In addition, Alley Cropping with *faedherbia Albida* (Anaboom, Winter Thorn and also called the "Fertiliser Tree"), will be introduced in Namibia for the first time. At Mahahe rows of the tree will be planted 8 metres apart with the crops grown in between. It is expected that as the trees mature they will supply all of the crop's nutrient requirements. The project is funded by the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, administered by the NNF and run by NRC.



## Fisheries Project Receives Grant

The "Integrated Co-Management of the Zambezi/Chobe River Fisheries Resources" project recently received a grant from the European Union (EU) to continue for a period of four years. The fisheries project initially started in 2006 and the second phase ended in December 2012. The rivers are shared by Namibia, Botswana and Zambia, thus a community-based management approach across international borders is crucial. One of the outcomes from previous consultative meetings is the clear support from all stakeholders for the establishment of Fish Protected Areas (FPAs) within conservancies to promote local generation of the fish stocks and the outward migration to seed adjacent water bodies.

## NNF Staff News

Andrew Malberbe has joined NNF as a Consultant, overseeing the MCA Tourism programme in the southern Kunene region.

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