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“World Food System —
A Contribution from Europe”

Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Management in Namibia

KIRSTEN PROBST

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Germany

Abstract

Namibia's unique landscapes and biodiversity are invaluable assets attracting thousands of tourists each year and earning substantial revenue for the national economy. Besides the value for tourism, biodiversity is essential for maintaining production systems, food security, income generation, and the provision of ecosystem services. However, natural resources and ecosystems are under substantial pressure by unsustainable land-use practices, deforestation, overstocking, habitat destruction and uncontrolled development reducing income possibilities of the population in the long term. As an arid country Namibia is depicted as highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change which aggravate the effects of existing human-induced stresses on ecosystems. The Namibian government has not yet been able to create, to a sufficient extent, the support framework necessary for the sustainable management of natural resources.

The "Biodiversity and Sustainable Land Management Project" supported by the German Government through GTZ is implemented in cooperation with the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). It aims to improve the legal and institutional framework to promote the sustainable management of natural resources by public and private users. The project focuses on (i) the improvement and implementation of selected statutory frame conditions, (ii) strengthening of MET's capacity and service delivery, and (iii) the addition of value to biodiversity by means of biotrade and bioprospecting. The presentation describes important achievements and illustrates how the project supports all four dimensions of capacity development to strengthen Namibian partners to develop, implement and oversee sustainable natural resource management practices: through system development, cooperation and network development, organisational development and human resources development.

Keywords: Biodiversity, biotrade, capacity development, environmental policy framework, natural resources management