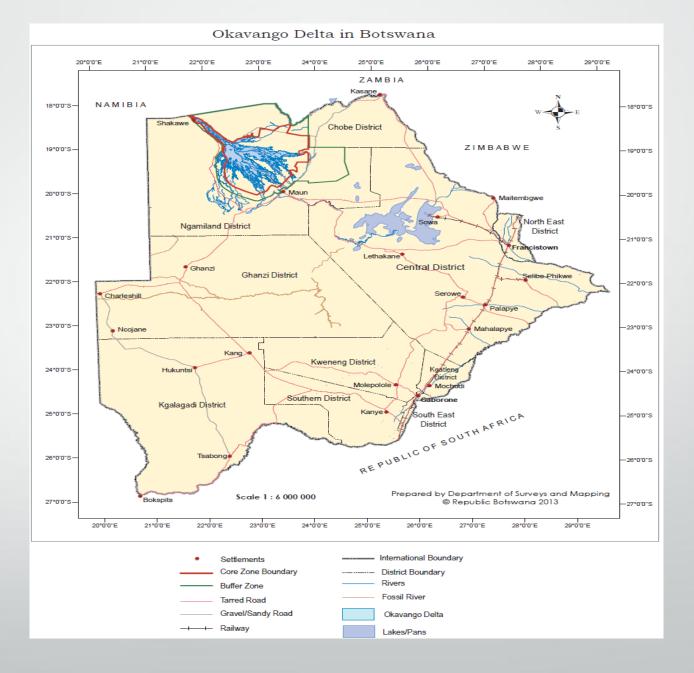
EXPERT MEETING: TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION FOR PROTECTING THE CUBANGO-OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN & IMPROVING THE INTEGRITY OF THE OKAVANGO DELTA WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY 3-4 JUNE, CRESTA HOTEL, MAUN, BOTSWANA OKAVANGO DELTA WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY -HISTORY, GOVERNANCE & CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES

Mr Jobe Manga/Ms Gertrude Matswiri

LOCATION OF OKAVANGO DELTA -BOTSWANA

 Situated in the North West Part of Botswana (Ngamiland)



ORIGINS OF THE OKAVANGO RIVER

- Part of the Okavango River Basin which forms part of Angola, Botswana and Namibia
 - Comprises the lower reaches of the 1000km long Okavango River, Southern Africa's third largest, which originates in the Angolan highlands as two rivers, the Cuito and Cubango and flow south-eastwards briefly through Namibia's Caprivi strip before entering Botswana.
- Perennial flooding activity continually maintains and shapes the delta system.
- The river divides and its channels fan out forming an inland delta of about 15000 square kilometres
- The countless islands between the waterways give rise to diverse ecosystems which in turn form the resource base not only for large populations of African mammals, birds and other small animals and also for the livelihood of people.



- Regional capital
- Region, district or provincial border

International boundary



REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Trans boundary water resource
- Important wetland recognised nationally, regionally and internationally
- Part of the Okavango River Basin
- Part of the Kavango Zambezi Trans frontier Conservation Area (KAZA)

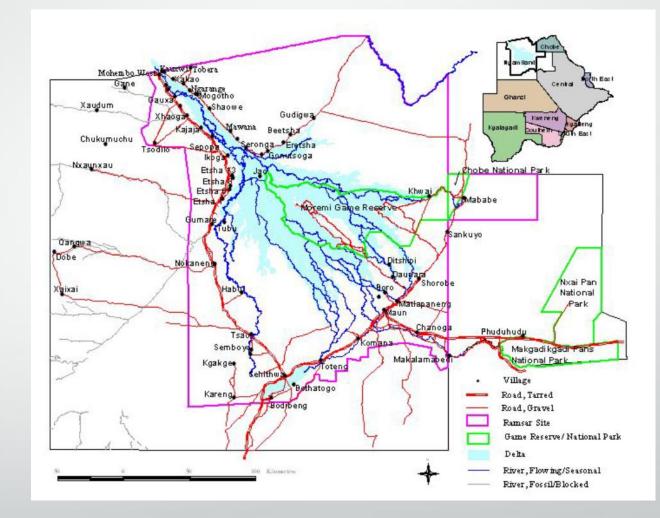


INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Ramsar Site 1996
 - 5 500 000 ha

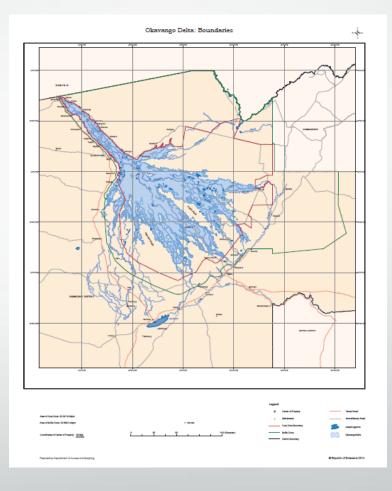
Ramsar sites are recognized as wetlands of international significance vital for biodiversity conservation and are listed in the Ramsar list if they fulfil one or more of the nine criteria.

The Okavango Delta System designation as a Ramsar site is based on it being a wetland of international importance containing representative, rare or unique wetland type, sites of international significance for conserving biological diversity and supporting water birds and applies to criteria 1to 6 of the nine criteria.



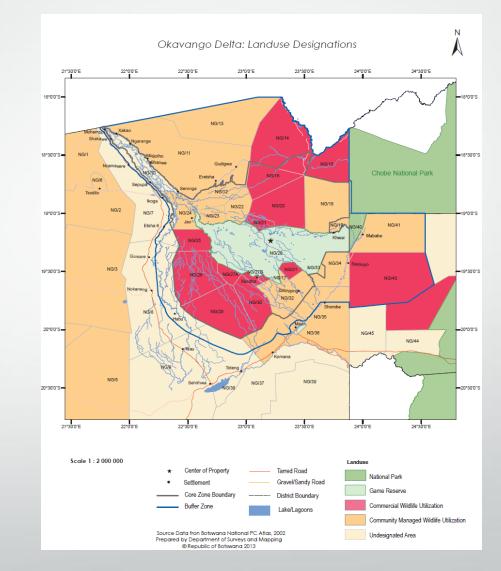
INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

- World Heritage Site June 2014
- 2,023,590 ha with a buffer zone of 2,286,630 ha
 - Natural Site
 - Criteria (vii), (ix), (x)



LAND USE IN THE OKAVANGO DELTA

- It is divided into Wildlife
 Management Areas (WMAs)
- These have been further divided into Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs)
- Commercial Wildlife Utilization
- Community Managed Wildlife Utilization
- Community Based Natural Resources Management Programme
- Non-Consumptive/Photographic



Regional and International Governance

- The Okavango Delta's conservation is under both Regional and International bodies;
 - Kavango- Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area
 - The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission
 - UNESCO World Heritage Convention
 - Ramsar Convention

National Governance

Key government ministries responsible for the Delta

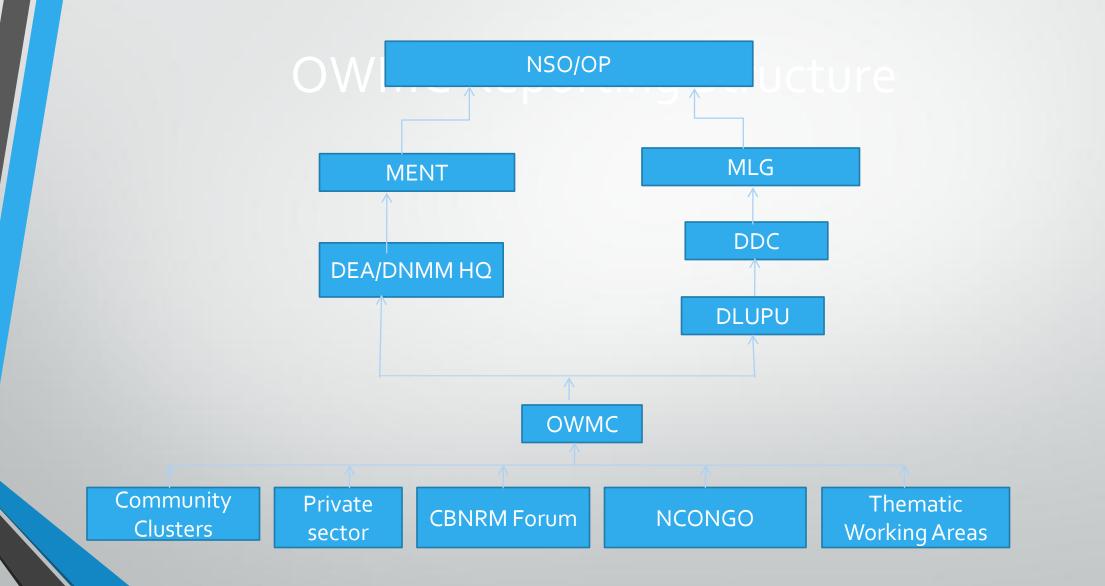
- Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism
- Ministry of Land Management, Water & Sanitation Services
- Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food Security.
- Ministry of Employment, Labour Productivity and Skills Development.
- Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

GOVERNANCE – LOCAL LEVEL

- The Okavango Delta Management Plan was adopted in 2008 as an integrated plan to coordinate activities in the Delta.
- Okavango Wetlands Management Committee (OWMC) established as a district structure to guide implementation of the ODMP
- guides the implementation of the Okavango Delta Management Plan(ODMP) and production of State of Conservation Reports.
- responsible for the coordination of sectoral activities which is geared towards the overall prudent management of the natural resources in the property.
- Committee used to guide the implementation of World Heritage Committee and the Ramsar convention Recommendations

THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

- The establishment of OWMC is provided for in the Draft National Wetlands Policy of 2000
- The Committee comprises of all government ministries in the district, NGOs, local community members, private sector, Researchers.



CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES

- Lack of wildlife monitoring programme
- Animal sanitation and diseases
- Management & governance
- Engagement of local communities & Indigenous peoples
- Invasive/alien freshwater species
- Management systems/management plan
- Mining
- Upstream and downstream developments
- Climate Change

INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE OKAVANGO DELTA WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

- An analysis and conclusion of the state of conservation report by the WHC & IUCN state that: although the ODMP of 2008 provide a management framework for the area, it predates the property inscription on the World Heritage List
- The WHC & Advisory Bodies noted that the process could provide an opportunity to explore the options for an integrated management of the site under both Ramsar and World Heritage designation
- The review of the plan is geared towards addressing issues of governance, management, community involvement in utilization, conservation & management of the World Heritage property

ODMP REVIEW PROJECT

- State Party has been asked to strengthen the existing programmes (CBNRM) of community involvement in the utilization, conservation & management of the property and the benefit of citizens in the tourism industry within the property
- The intention is to address these through the review of the ODMP

COMPACT PROGRAMME – Replication in the Okavango Delta World Heritage site

- COMPACT- Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation Programme
- Testing in diverse settings, an innovative model for engaging communities in conservation
- Demonstrates that Community-based initiatives can significantly increase the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in globally significant protected areas while helping to improve the livelihoods of local people

COMPACT PROGRAMME

- It is an initiative of the UNDP/Global Environmental Facility Small Grants Programme (SGP), the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and other partners
- SGP channels financial and technical support directly to community –based organisations (CBOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and indigenous peoples organization in developing countries for activities that conserve and restore the environment while enhancing peoples wellbeing and livelihoods
- Replication of the programme in the Okavango Delta World Heritage site
- Partnership between UNESCO World Heritage Centre, UNDP GEF/SGP, NATIONAL MUSEUM, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

OTHER INITIATIVES BY THE STATE PARTY

- CBNRM Programme review
- CBNRM Coordination office
- Citizen empowerment in the tourism sector
- Increased funding opportunities e.g NEF

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The three State Parties are signatory to World Heritage Conventions, therefore the need to utilize the opportunities provided for by the convention to further strengthen the protection of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin i.e working towards establishing a transboundary Ramsar site and World Heritage Property.
- Establishment of a network or information sharing centre (Ramsar & World Heritage initiative for the three countries) is important to us.

