



*Republic of Namibia*

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Technical meeting transboundary  
cooperation Okavango Delta Maun,  
Botswana 3-4 June 2019

Possible extension of Okavango  
Delta, a Namibian perspective

Presented by:

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# Background

- Okavango River, the Namibian Trajectory: the river passes through Namibia forming the borders between **Namibia and Angola** as it flows eastwards from **Kavango West Region** through **Kavango East Region** and eventually crossing the Namibian borders into Botswana where it forms a delta
- The Kavango River (in Namibia) as an extension of Okavango Delta (in Botswana) is one of the site that is on the Tentative List for nomination to the World Heritage Listing for Namibia since 2016.

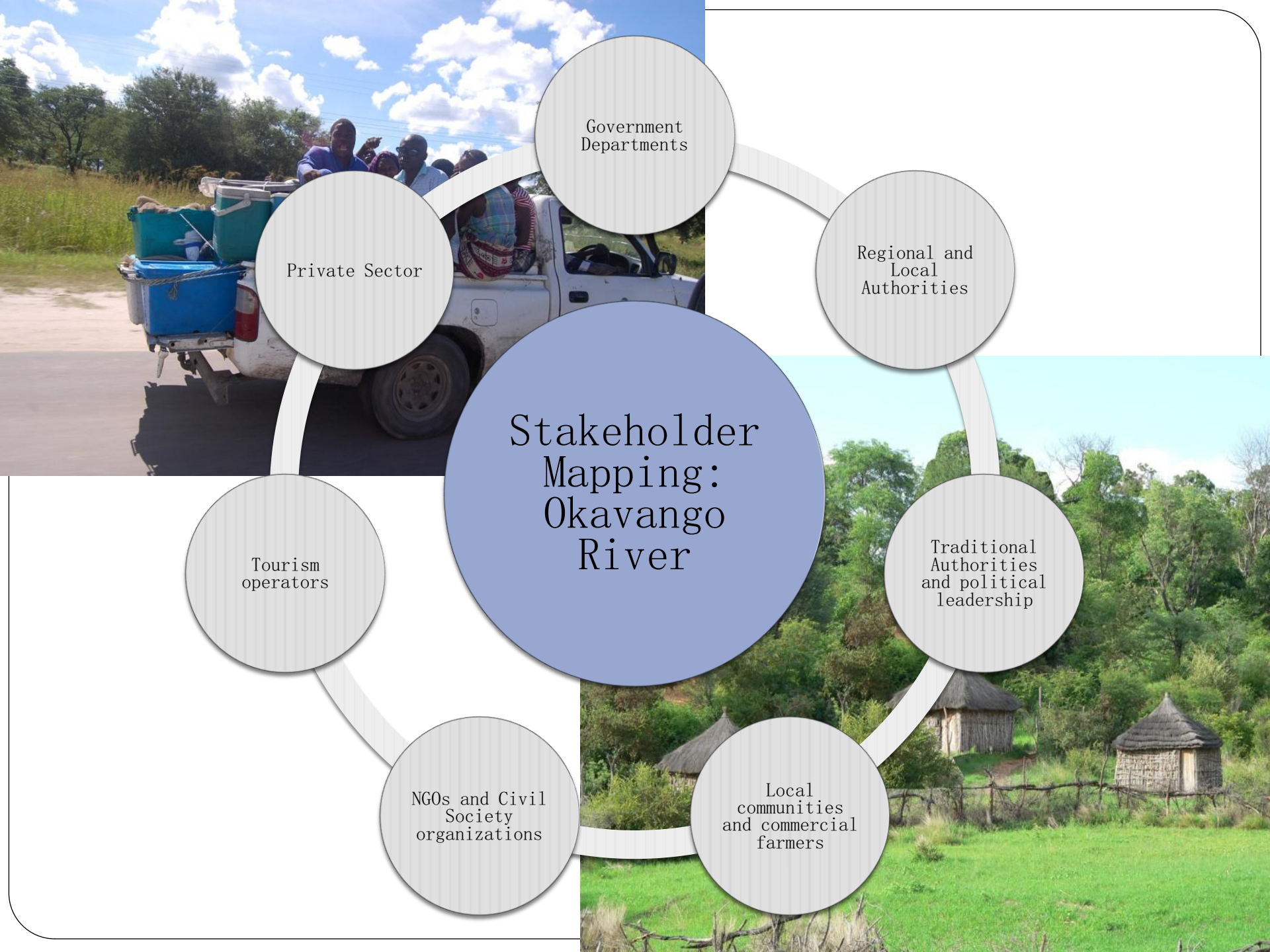


## Key milestones Re: Possible Extension

- *1. A meeting between the governments of Botswana and Namibia during the state visit of Botswana's Former Head of State to Namibia, the Minister of Environment, Natural Resource Conservation and Tourism of Botswana met the Namibian Minister of Education, Arts and Culture. The two Ministers discussed the possibility for Namibia to Nominate Okavango River as an extension to the Okavango Delta*
- 2. The Namibian Delegation to the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the 1972 Convention met with the delegations from Botswana (the convener) and Angola, in Manama, Bahrain on 28 June 2018
- 3. Subsequently, the three States Parties attended a meeting with the Africa Unit of the World Heritage Centre (Convener) and IUCN on the same issue on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2018.

## Progress since Bahrain

- The Namibian delegation to the 42<sup>nd</sup> session debriefed with the Namibian National Committee for the implementation of the 1972 Convention
- The committee, at its ordinary meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018 set up a team with a mandate to "*carry out a preliminary environmental and socio-cultural impact assessment of the extension of the Okavango Delta to include the Namibian part; and ensure proper consultations with relevant stakeholders*"
- The process was concluded and a report was presented to the committee, some initial findings will be shared in this presentation



# Stakeholder Mapping: Okavango River

Government  
Departments

Regional and  
Local  
Authorities

Traditional  
Authorities  
and political  
leadership

Local  
communities  
and commercial  
farmers

NGOs and Civil  
Society  
organizations

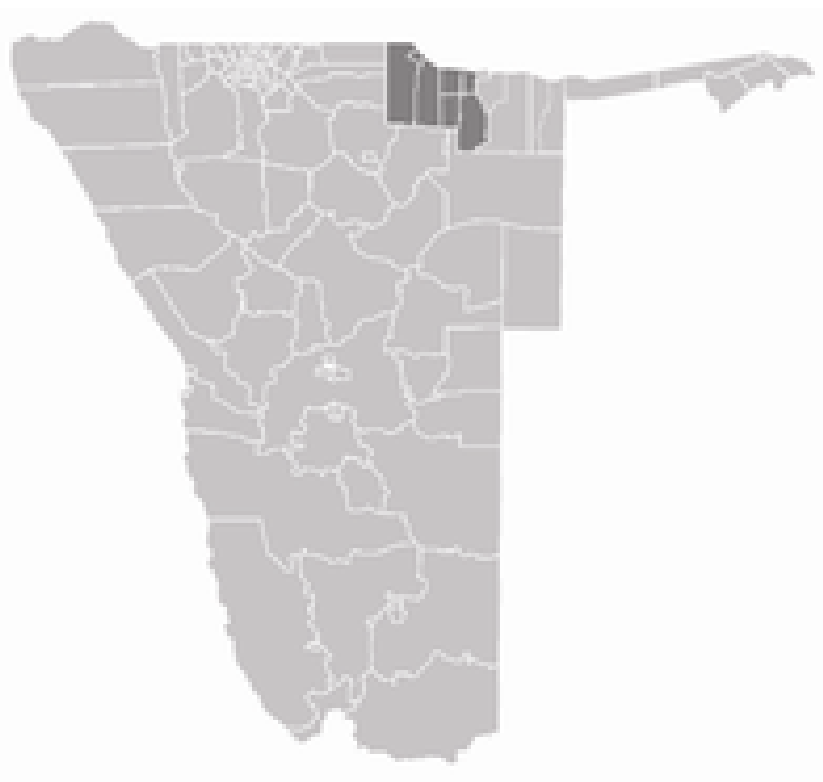
Tourism  
operators

Private Sector

# Demographic data of the affected regions

- **Kavango East** is an area of 25,576 km<sup>2</sup> housing a population of 115,447 people
- **Kavango West** covers an area of 25,166 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 107,905 (Namibia Census Report of 2011).
- These two regions were formerly one, until the adoption of the recommendation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Delimitation Commission to have the two regions divided into two in order for government to bring its services closer to the people.

# Maps depicting the boundaries of Kavango East and Kavango West Regions





# Key questions

- What kind of benefits does inscription on the World Heritage List bring?
- What impacts are likely to emerge should the site be inscribed?
- How do the benefits accrue to stakeholders?



## ...Key questions Cont/

- What possible implications would World Heritage Listing have on activities currently taking place in and around the property proposed for world heritage nomination?
- Would there be possible mitigation measures of the negative impacts?

# Findings: Preface

- Like many other countries, Namibians use wetland areas for different reasons.
- The findings will present different uses of the Kavango River by the people living in its proximity and by extension the entire Namibian nation. The section is divided in 3 subsections presenting the findings of the study.

## Findings: 1. Economic activities

- There is a wide range of economic activities taking place in the target area of which some are primarily reliant on the river as a source of water.
- These include medium to large scale government owned enterprises, private sector entities as well as community owned business initiatives.
- – Hospitality (canoe rides and boat trips);
- – Fish Farming
- – Fisheries research institute
- Agronomic businesses

## ...Findings: 1. Economic activities Cont/

- Namibia adopted the Green Scheme policy in 2003. This is an initiative to encourage the development of irrigation based agronomic production in Namibia in order to increase the contribution of agriculture to the country's Gross Domestic Product.
- – Green Scheme Farms: two in Kavango West and one in Kavango East (These are fully reliant on the river as the source of water used in these irrigation farms).

# Images from some of the Green Scheme Farms



## ...Findings: 1. Economic activities Cont/

- There are also a number of other small-scale initiatives in the areas adjacent to the river. Some are assisted by the government through the regional councils while others were initiated individually without government assistance



# A new garden in preparation at Rundu Beach, Kavango East





# Bricks making plant



One of the business initiatives visited is a brick making plant located in Kapako Constituency. This plant relies on the river for extraction of sand used in making bricks

## Findings: 2. Socio-Cultural Activities

- The local communities, traditional authorities and all interested parties consulted on the possible extension of the World Heritage Status of Okavango Delta indicated that the Kavango river is their natural heritage resource which they *inherited* from past generations.
- They have stated that they maintained the river by using traditional conservation methods for sustainable utilization for the benefit of current and future generations.
- **Recreational use:**
  - i) swimming,
  - ii) wato (canoe) competitions,
  - iii) learning to swim and saving each other from drowning,
  - iv) learning to hold a breath,
  - v) competing amongst each other swimming under water while holding on your breath.
  - vi) swimming while collecting fish and counting who collected the most.

## ...Findings: 2. Socio- Cultural Activities Cont/

- The Kavango river is also used by the local communities to perform a number of rituals that are culturally only performed at the river.

## Findings: 3. Conservation of Natural Resources

- Namibia has embraced the concept of Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) policy.
- This policy is based on a principle that communities receive direct benefits through the protection and sustainable use of natural resources.
- For Kavango river, this creates new opportunities for local communities to benefit from the spin-offs of this policy through conservancies

## ...Findings: 3. Conservation of Natural Resources Cont/

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# Conclusion

- From the analysis of the findings of the preliminary study, the national committee concluded that more work is required before Namibia can submit her position paper. The recommendations and action plan will provide details

# Primary/Key Recommendations

- It is recommended that:
- 1. a comprehensive Environmental and socio-cultural impact assessment be carried out
- 2. a full a full stakeholder mapping be carried out
- 3. Regional consultations (to include all stakeholders) to conducted (1 in each region)



# Way forward/action plan

Comprehensive Environmental and social-cultural impact assessment

1. Source funding and technical backstopping
2. Develop TORs
3. Appoint Consultant
4. Produce final report

Full consultation of all stakeholders

1. Carry out a comprehensive stakeholder mapping
2. Organize regional consultations (1 in each region)

Endorsement

1. Present the findings to Executive
2. Draft and submit Namibia's position paper to WHC and the other countries
3. Follow up on actions emanating from the position paper

- I THANK YOU !!!

- KEALEBOGA

- PULA !!!