



VOTE 18

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

2018/2019 FINANCIAL YEAR

BUDGET SPEECH

BY

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MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, 2018

18 April 2018

**Comrade Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members of this August House,**

On behalf of my Colleague, Deputy Minister Cde. Bernadette Maria Jagger and on my own behalf, I would like to thank H.E. the President Dr. Hage Geingob for the trust and confidence he has vested in us to contribute positively towards achievement and fulfilling the mandate of this social and economic Ministry. Further allow me to express our appreciation to the Hon. Minister of Finance for the fair allocation of scarce resources during this difficult period.

Hon. Chairperson,

Despite severe economic constraints the Ministry of Environment and Tourism has made rigorous efforts to deliver quality services to the public during the 2017/2018 financial year.

Hon. Chairperson,

The Government through the Ministry of Environment and Tourism with support from other law enforcement agencies have been hard at work in the implementation of measures and tactics to fight poaching in our National Parks and other wildlife areas in the country. Namibia experienced high levels of elephant and rhinoceros poaching in the past few years. In response to this, in the current financial year, a National Strategy on Wildlife Protection and Law Enforcement was approved.

This strategy provides for specific measures and approaches on how to deal with the issue of wildlife protection and law enforcement in the country and is being fully implemented. Legislation that deals with wildlife protection and law enforcement matters, the Nature Conservation Ordinance, 1975 (Ordinance 4 of 1975), was also amended to increase fines and penalties for poaching of rhinos and elephants and other related offences which will enhance their deterrent effect.

Similarly, the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act, 2008 (Act 8 of 2008) was amended to increase fines and penalties in possession of wildlife products, more particularly rhino horns and elephant tusks. In this financial year, we have seen a decline in poaching of rhinos and elephants.

In 2017, thirty two (32) rhinos were poached compared to sixty one (61) in 2016, while for elephants twenty two (22) were poached in 2017 compared to one hundred and one (101) in 2016. In the financial year 2018/2019, Government will continue to fund efforts aimed to reduce poaching levels to insignificant levels to protect our national heritage.

Hon. Chairperson,

Conservancies in the communal lands have made important contributions to community livelihoods, biodiversity conservation and tourism development, although more still needs to be done. However, the governance in conservancies need urgent attention and will be addressed without delay.

We shall continue to develop conservancies as a sustainable conservation and tourism development programme from which our rural communities can derive equitable social and economic benefits.

Human Wildlife Conflict is an ongoing conservation challenge. Some local communities have lost their crops and livestock as a result of this conflict. The Government continues to invest funds in the development and implementation of the Human Wildlife Conflict mitigating measures to curb the losses associated with Human Wildlife Conflict.

Hon. Chairperson,

It is a known fact that tourism is an important industry in Namibia. It currently contributes significantly towards the Gross Domestic Product, making it a valuable sector within the country. Unlike other segments that have not been spared by the tough economic challenges the country is going through, the tourism industry has witnessed tremendous growth over the past two years. This tells us of the resilience within the industry and the key role it can play towards the attainment of the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP), National Development Plan (NDP5) and the ultimate success of Vision 2030.

Hon. Chairperson

The Annual Tourist Statistical Report for 2016 has been finalised, launched and disseminated for tourism planning purposes. In this report the country recorded 1,469,258 tourist arrivals which is an increase of 81,485 from 2015. Of the increase, the German market continued showing an increase in

overseas arrivals. The 5th Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) was finalized, launched and distributed. The TSA reflect the tourism contribution to GDP and employment in the sector.

Hon. Chairperson

The Ministry, is implementing two important strategies on tourism development, namely National Sustainable Tourism Growth and Development Strategy and the National Tourisms Investment Profile and Promotion Strategy. These strategies were launched and operationalised in 2017/2018 financial year, as a result two national tourism bodies (Inter-Ministerial Committee on Tourism Development and the National Tourism Competitiveness Advisory Council) were established to fill the gaps identified in the tourism sector. Through these bodies the ministries will be able to address cross-cutting issues through Offices, Ministries and Agencies and other stakeholders. These initiatives are aimed at enhancing our competitiveness as a destination globally.

Hon. Chairperson,

Cabinet approved a National Solid Waste Management Strategy in November 2017 to improve the overall management of waste in the country so that Namibia becomes the leading country in Africa in terms of standards of waste management by 2028. Developing waste management infrastructure, increasing human resources capacity, promotion of waste minimization and recycling, and raising awareness for behavioural change among our citizens will be the key focus areas of this Strategy.

Hon. Chairperson,

The Environmental Management Act (EMA), 2007 (Act No. 7 of 2007) remains the country's foremost piece of legislation to minimize the impacts from development on our environment. The implementation of the EMA was intensified during this financial year 2017/2018, which culminated in the review of 393 out of 566 Environmental Impact Assessment Reports received. This includes countrywide inspections and the issuance of compliance orders to 18 environmental offenders.

It is also during this reporting period in which engagement with stakeholders was scaled-up, resulting in the gazetting of 22 competent authorities that are obliged to compile their own Environmental Plans to address environmental abuse, pollution and waste management concerns in the country.

As part of raising awareness on EMA, tailor-made sessions were held with Parliamentarians and Cabinet members focusing on the key provisions of the EMA. Significant progress was made during the period under review in clamping down on illegal sand mining operations and in improving operations at waste disposal sites.

In line with business process re-engineering, the development of an online application system for environmental clearance is also now at an advanced stage and will be launched during 2018. The operationalization of this system will improve efficiency and accessibility in terms of service delivery.

Hon. Chairperson,

It is a well-known fact that Namibia is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change. We are now seeing the impacts that the changing climate is having on the very fabric of our society and economic development. Now more than ever, we need to build our resilience to climate change so that we ensure our water, energy and food security.

In this respect, I am pleased that we have been able to mobilize support through the Environment Investment Fund from the international community to do just this. During the period under review we were able to mobilize projects and investments worth approximately N\$1.1 billion to strengthen our climate resilience, including:

- Two Projects on climate resilient agriculture and Community Based Natural Resource Management, which are being implemented through the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia with funding from the Green Climate Fund worth N\$116 million each. These Projects will benefit an estimated 76,500 communal area residents and 21,000 small scale farmers in our rural areas.
- Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Energy Financing Programme. This Programme is a partnership of the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia with the French Agency for Development and is facilitating access of entrepreneurs and SMEs to “green” investments in areas such as renewable energy systems, energy efficiency, sustainable tourism and agriculture through environmental credit lines worth approximately N\$655 million.

- These are important green economy sectors with potential for employment creation and value addition to our natural resources.

Hon. Chairperson,

- Approximately N\$72 million for the development of pilot rural desalination plants using renewable power and membrane technology in Grunau and Bethanie through the Adaptation Fund.
- Approximately N\$156 million for the Namibia Integrated Landscape Approach for Enhancing Livelihoods and Environmental Governance to Eradicate Poverty Project through the Global Environment Facility. These Project will seek to support poverty eradication efforts through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in target landscapes.

Environmental Investment Fund or EIF of Namibia continues to play a pivotal role in mobilizing financial resources in both grants and green credit lines.

Hon. Chairperson,

This year alone, the EIF stands to access N\$300 million in grant funding from the Green Climate Fund to fortify climate adaptation in important sectors such as agriculture and renewable energy. While the EIF has done exceptionally well in proving its capacity in resource mobilization for the most vulnerable sectors to environmental degradation caused by climate change, these resources are not sustainable to the EIF as it merely receives administration fees from these projects.

While the EIF continues to enjoy a good reputation at the Green Climate Fund and amongst the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, our development partners have continuously raised concerns around the inadequate capitalization of the EIF. They have further questioned our government's commitment towards supporting the objectives of the EIF. The budget allocation to the Fund for the next financial year 2018/2019 is a mere N\$5 million.

Hon. Chairperson,

It is therefore important as we plan to ensure that a vehicle as important as the Environmental Investment Fund is adequately and strategically capitalized so as to continue bringing in financial resources for the country. I would particularly call on all Offices, Ministries and Agencies involved in the management of waste in Namibia to assist us to ensure that measures on polluting products such as plastic bags, lubricant oil and batteries can be turned into a revenue source that can contribute towards environmental investments.

Hon. Chairperson, Hon. Members,

Allow me now to present to this August House the budgetary allocation for the current financial year 2018/2019 under the theme, "Shared Prosperity" as indicated by the hon. Minister of Finance during the 2018/2019 budget statement.

BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS:

The Ministry has been allocated an amount of four hundred and two million, sixty-four thousand Namibian dollars (N\$402,064,000) for 2018/2019 FY

This amount represents:

- Three hundred and thirty-seven million, eight hundred and forty-three thousand Namibian dollars (N\$337,843,000) for the Operational Budget and
- Sixty-four million, two hundred and twenty-one thousand Namibian dollars (N\$64,221,000) for the Development Budget.

Programme 1: Wildlife and protected area management

An amount of one hundred and seventy eight million, six hundred and fourteen thousand Namibian dollars (N\$178,614,000) is allocated to this programme. MET aims to establish and implement measures and strategies for the protection and conservation of wildlife to reduce wildlife crime.

Our emphasis among others shall be to create long term sustainability, good governance and proper management of Community-Based Natural Resource Management programme, for the benefits of our people. Human Wildlife Conflict shall be managed in a way that recognise the rights and development needs of people while recognising the need for biodiversity conservation, leading to reduction in human wildlife conflict incidents.

Programme 2: Protection and management of key species and natural habitat

A total of twenty-six million, three hundred and fifty nine thousand Namibian dollars N\$26,359,000 is allocated to this program. The purpose of this programme is to improve the efficiency in protecting and managing key species and natural resources, sustainable utilization of wildlife resources and other scientific services aimed at improving the natural resource base for economic development.

Programme 3: Tourism Growth Development and Gaming Regulations

This programme is allocated with twenty-one million, nine hundred and thirty-six thousand Namibian dollars (N\$21,936,000). These funds are allocated to ensure that the tourism and gaming industry is supported, regulated and contributes to the socio-economic development in Namibia.

These funds will also be used for tourism marketing, promotion and awareness, to improve the geographic spread of tourists and the benefits from tourism through implementation of National Sustainable Tourism Growth and Development Strategy.

Programme 4: Environment and Natural Resources Protection

A total of twenty-two million, seven hundred and sixty-three thousand Namibian dollars (N\$22,763,000).this programme is responsible for environmental affairs such as Environmental assessments, Waste

management and pollution control, and Environmental inspections, Biodiversity and sustainable land management initiatives. These funds will be used to provide environmental planning and management, and to monitor compliance and implementation of our Environmental Management Act at local and regional level.

Programme 5: Infrastructure and development, Maintenance, Monitoring and Evaluation

An amount of seventy four million, four hundred and twenty-seven thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$74,427,000) is allocated to this programme which focuses on effective and efficient planning and technical services. The funds allocated are for maintenance, upgrade and development of new infrastructure that are critical for our protected area network especially in terms of mitigation of human wildlife conflict (such as fences, water points) and others that contribute to better environmental management e.g. sewerage systems and roads for tourism development.

Programme 6: Policy Supervision and Support Services

An amount of Seventy-seven million , nine hundred and sixty-five thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$77,965,000) to this programme, whose primary activity is policy coordination and administration of finance and human resources. Key priority spending program for 2018/2019 is on E-governance in order to pave way for the successful implementation to Human Capital Management System. Also funds will be used to implement the Harambee Prosperity Plan and the Directives from the Prime Minister.

Honourable Chairperson, Honourable Members,

Before I conclude, allow me to thank my Colleague the Deputy Minister, the Permanent Secretary, the management and the entire staff of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for their commitment and hard work that have enabled us to live up to our mandate. May I also thank all the stakeholders for the roles they have played in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism towards the execution of the Ministry's mandate.

Honourable Chairperson, Honourable Members,

Finally once again, I thank the Honourable Minister of Finance for allocating Three hundred and thirty-seven million, eight hundred and forty-three thousand Namibian dollars (N\$337,843,000) for the Operational Budget.

I also thank the Honourable Minister of the Economic Planning for allocating Sixty-four million, two hundred and twenty-one thousand Namibian dollars (N\$64,221,000) for the Development Budget.

I now kindly, ask this Honourable House to approve an amount of Four hundred and two million, sixty-four thousand (N\$402,064,000) for the execution of the mandate for the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for the 2018/2019 financial year.

I thank you