



MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND TOURISM

**MOTIVATION
FOR BUDGET ALLOCATION TO VOTE 18:
APPROPRIATION BILL**

2025/2026 FINANCIAL YEAR

BY

**HON. INDILENI DANIEL, MP
MINISTER**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY,
WINDHOEK,
6 MAY 2025**

**Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House
Committee,
Honourable Members**

1. INTRODUCTION

With great respect, humility and a deep sense of duty and responsibility, I rise before this distinguished august House to present Vote 18 – the Budget for the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism for the 2025/2026 financial year.

The Ministry of Environment, Tourism and Forestry, is mandated in terms of Article 95 (l) of the Namibian Constitution to ensure the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity and the utilisation of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future.

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism has a major role to play in ensuring the sustainable utilisation of all of our natural resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that derived therefrom.

**Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House
Committee,
Honourable Members**

2. VOTE ALLOCATION FOR THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR 2025/26

I am pleased to announce that the Ministry has been allocated a total of **seven hundred and ninety-seven million, six hundred and twenty-six thousand Namibian dollars (N\$797,626,000)** for the 2025/2026 fiscal year.

This allocation comprises the following:

Seven hundred and twenty-seven million, six hundred and twenty-six thousand Namibian dollars (N\$727,626,000) is for the **Operational Budget**; and

Seventy million Namibian dollars (N\$70,000,000) designated for the **Development Budget**.

This year's allocation represents a **16.37% increase** in operational funding and a **30.1% reduction** in the allocation for the development budget when compared to the 2024/25 financial year. Taken together, these results in an overall increase of **9.93%** in the Ministry's total budget allocation.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Honourable Minister of Finance, as well as the Director-General of the National Planning Commission and their teams, for recognising the critical mandate entrusted upon our Ministry to ensure sustainable development,

environmental protection, wildlife conservation, climate change mitigation, and tourism development, amongst others, and for this notable budget increment.

While this allocation remains below what is required to fully implement all planned programmes and initiatives, we remain committed to delivering maximum value from this allocation. We will continue with our quest for **efficiency, strategic resource utilisation, and high-impact outcomes** for our environment and communities.

Furthermore, the current allocations and initiatives are aligned with the international, continental, regional, and national frameworks such as Sustainable Development Goals, Vision 2030, National Development Plan 6, the 2024 SWAPO Party Manifesto and our Ministry's recently approved Strategic Plan.

Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

PROGRAMMES

Allow me to now outline some of the Ministry's notable achievements, persistent **challenges** and strategic **priorities** under each six key programmes.

PROGRAMME 01: WILDLIFE AND PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT

The Wildlife and Protected Area Management Programme has been allocated three hundred and forty-six million, and ninety-five thousand Namibian dollars (N\$346,095,000)., focusing on national park management, wildlife protection, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, and Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management Programme.

A key initiative under this programme is the upgrade of the Etosha National Park boundary fence, an eight hundred and twenty-four (824) kilometers perimeter spanning Oshikoto, Oshana, Omusati, Otjozondjupa and Kunene Regions. Originally built in the 1970s, sections have deteriorated over time. Since 2020, efforts have been underway to reconstruct the entire fence, with One hundred and forty-seven (147) kilometers completed and with six hundred and seventy-seven (677) kilometers remaining.

The Ministry is utilizing its own resources, along with staff members, National Youth Service personnel, and community representatives, to advance this project.

To mitigate human-wildlife conflict, several preventative measures have been implemented, including protecting water

infrastructure from elephant damage, constructing predator-proof kraals, collaring and monitoring conflict-causing species, and developing elephant-friendly water sources.

During the 2024/2025 financial year, nearly nine million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 9,000,000) was distributed to eighty-six (86) Communal Conservancies to compensate for livestock and crop damages caused by wildlife. Additionally, three million four hundred and forty three thousand, four hundred and seventy Namibian dollars (N\$ 3,443,470) was provided to communities outside conservancies for loss of life, injuries, and further damages resulting from wildlife interactions.

**Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House
Committee**

Honourable Members,

We recognize the challenges posed by elephants, crocodiles, buffaloes, and predators like lions, leopards, and hyenas. This year, our focus is on practical solutions, including alternative water points for elephants, protection walls for community water sources, and predator-proof kraals to safeguard livestock.

Additionally, we are enhancing crocodile enclosures, supporting monitoring teams with camping allowances, and ensuring

vehicle maintenance and fuel availability for effective wildlife conflict management.

Despite the 83 recorded rhino poaching cases and 9 elephant poaching incidents in 2024, the Ministry remains resolute in combating illegal wildlife killings and plant poaching. To strengthen conservation efforts, 50 young Namibians will be recruited into the Anti-Poaching Unit, focusing on protecting rhinos, elephants, and pangolins, which are among the most threatened species.

Namibia currently has 86 conservancies, benefiting approximately 300,000 people through conservation-linked livelihoods and employment. This year, the focus is on enhancing conservancy management, ensuring compliance and good governance, and supporting wildlife management activities to improve community well-being and job creation.

Funding for this initiative is complimented by the German Government (KfW & GIZ), the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), and Namibia's Game Product Trust Fund.

Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

PROGRAMME 02: PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF KEY SPECIES AND NATURAL HABITATS

This programme of the Ministry is allocated a total of **forty-five million six hundred and twenty-two thousand Namibian dollars (N\$45,622,000)**. This programme area is aligned to environmental conservation and adoption of sustainable practices to protect our natural resources for future generations.

The program provides for **wildlife monitoring** and **research** to guide the sustainable utilisation and conservation of wildlife species across Namibia. The programme further provides for the dedicated conservation and management of high-value species such as elephants, rhinos and pangolin, which are facing extinction risk as a result of increasing levels of poaching.

Aerial and ground-based wildlife surveys were conducted to assess the status of wildlife in selected communal area conservancies and in the state-protected areas, while more than two hundred black and white rhinos were captured and dehorned, a measure we are applying to protect the rhino from poachers.

To support wildlife-based economic activities in both protected areas, communal conservancy areas and on freehold land, the Ministry captured and translocated fifty-seven (57) wildlife

consisting of plains zebras, giraffes and oryx to various conservancies and Protected Areas while two-hundred and forty (240) plains zebra were captured and translocated to selected beneficiaries under the Wildlife Breeding Stock Scheme. More than one hundred job opportunities were created through the existing and new tourism concessions the Ministry awarded to the communities living inside and near the state-protected areas.

As tourism concessions provides for improved livelihoods, economic benefits and employment for our people, seven (7) concessions in National Parks were awarded in 2024, and eleven (11) are planned to be awarded during this financial year. I am aware that there are specific concessions that have raised some public outcry. However, these matters are receiving attention of the Ministry.

**Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House
Committee,
Honourable Members,**

**PROGRAMME 03: TOURISM GROWTH AND
DEVELOPMENT AND GAMING REGULATION**

This programme is allocated **fifty-one million, two hundred and fifty-five thousand Namibian dollars (N\$51,255,000).**

This programme focuses on creating a conducive and enabling environment for the sustained growth of the tourism and gaming industries so that it contributes to the socio-economic development of the country.

The Implementation of the Namibia's Tourism Sector Recovery Plan 2022-2024 recorded notable achievements especially the re-emergence of the tourism industry. The latest Tourist Statistical Report (2023) showed that tourist arrivals have bounced back from a 169 565 during pandemic to 863 872 in 2023.

Under this programme the Ministry will also be formulating the National Spatial Tourism Development Master Plan; review the National Tourism Policy; and develop the Tourism Act to ensure a conducive environment in order to attract and encourage new investments as well as ensure product diversification and sustainability.

In addition, the Ministry aims to develop the National Gaming Policy for Industry to guide the development and management of the gaming sector in Namibia. The programme further provides for the establishment of the National State Lottery to contribute to State revenue and to advance any national cause.

Despite the financial challenges, the Namibia Tourism Board plans to explore new markets such as Asia, Middle East (UAE) and North America to market Namibia as a preferred tourist destination.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

**PROGRAMME 04: ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL
RESOURCES PROTECTION**

This programme is allocated a total amount of **one hundred and eighty-nine million, one hundred and twelve thousand Namibian dollars (N\$189,112,000)**. This is the second biggest programme of the Ministry and involves the implementation of the Environmental Management Act, 2007 (Act No. 7 of 2007), Forest Act (Act 12 of 2001), and the Access to Biological and Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Act (Act 2 of 2017) for sustainable forest management, environmental management and economics, benefit-sharing of indigenous natural resources, sustainably managed biological diversity, and the implementation of various multilateral environmental agreements.

To address these challenges, the Ministry has developed several strategic initiatives:

Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) System Modernisation: The online ECC processing system will be revamped during this financial year to enhance transparency, accountability, and functionality. This digital transformation will streamline application processes, reduce processing times, and improve communication with stakeholders.

Legislative Reform: The Ministry is actively amending the Environmental Management Act to address critical regulatory gaps.

The Ministry has been taking measures to enhance compliance with the Forestry Act, in terms of sustainable management.

The Ministry aims to focus on the following Strategic Priorities 2025/2026

- Amendment to the Forest Act and its regulations
- Finalise forest and veld fire management plan
- Compile the Forest and Botanical Research strategy
- Implement measures to curb plant poaching,
- Wildfire management and promotion of bee-keeping
- Tree planting
- Law enforcement and crime prevention

The operationalisation of the Access to Biological and Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge (ABS) office

under the Access to Biological and Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge Act (ABS Act) in this financial year is therefore an important priority for the Ministry. Its regulatory functions include issuing access permits based on benefit-sharing agreements with the traditional knowledge rights holders of resources, as well as the export and material transfer arrangements of said materials.

Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,

The Access to Biological and Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge Act (ABS Act). The ABS Act provides us with an invaluable tool to leverage our rich biological and genetic resources beneficiation for all Namibians.

Over the past decade, Namibia secured N\$4 billion in climate funding, with current projects valued at N\$1.3 billion. Despite these investments, climate change continues threatening water security, agriculture, biodiversity, health, and infrastructure.

Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,

PROGRAMME 05: INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, AND MAINTENANCE

This programme is allocated **Thirty-three million, seven hundred and forty-eight thousand (N\$33,748,000)** and is central in ensuring effective delivery of the Ministry's mandate. The Program provides for development, rehabilitation and maintenance of critical infrastructure, while also ensuring that programmes, projects and related activities are timely executed by agreed standards, qualities and specifications.

The following are the planned projects under this programme for the Financial Year 2025/2026.

Upgrade of 214 km tourist road in the ENP from gravel to a low seal Volume from Okaukuejo-King Nehale Gate via Namutoni, including Halali Detour, with a Financial contribution from Roads Administration Fund. Similarly, this provides for the upgrade of tourist roads in Sesriem, Namib-Naukluft Park.

Four million four hundred eighty thousand (N\$4,480,000) has been allocated to support the construction, maintenance, and upgrading of park boundary fences within Conservation Areas and water facilities within protected areas.

- Repair and electrification of Elephant and predator-proof fence for Kaross Section, Etosha National Park.

- Procurement of fencing materials for Etosha National Park and Mahango National Park.

The programme further provides Forty-two million (N\$42,000,000) for renovation of the ministry Headquarter and the following regional offices and staff houses to ensure operational excellence:

- Renovation of staff houses and offices at Hardap Game Park, Namutoni, Keetmanshoop, Karasberg, Oranjemund office, Kanovlei and Ngoma.
- Restoration of water supply to Galton Gate through installation of new boreholes pumps, Etosha National Park West Entrance
- Drilling and equipping a new borehole in Mahango National Park.

The Ministry of Environment Tourism has equally made Budgetary provision towards the review and Development of Namibia Tourism information Management System.

To promote cultural tourism and participation of local communities in tourism activities. Five million two hundred ninety thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$5,290,000) budgetary allocation is made toward basic infrastructure for sewer, water and electricity networks and ablution facilities for Etosha Carnival at Kangonde Pan, Oshikoto Region to ensure hygiene and safety of visitors at the pan.

**Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House
Committee,**

Honourable Members,

**PROGRAMME 06: POLICY COORDINATION AND SUPPORT
SERVICES**

This programme is allocated **One hundred and thirty-one million, seven hundred and ninety-four thousand (N\$131,794,000).**

The programme aim is to ensures full compliance with statutory requirements from the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG), and provides essential policy coordination and administrative support to enhance institutional performance and alignment with national goals. This programme includes activities related provision of administrative support services, including financial, human resources management & development and auxiliary services functions of the Ministry.

Also included under this programme is the oversight of the implementation of thirty (30) apprenticeships, fifty (50) internships, and twenty-five (25) graduate internships for the 2025/2026 financial year, aimed at enhancing youth employability, promoting economic empowerment, and addressing broader socio-economic challenges such as unemployment and skills gaps.

**Honourable Deputy Chairperson of the Whole House
Committee,
Honourable Members,**

Before I conclude, allow me to express my sincere appreciation to my predecessors, Hon. Pohamba Shifeta, former Minister of MEFT, and Hon. Heather Sibungo, former Deputy Minister, for their dedication, vision, and hard work in laying a strong foundation upon which we continue to build. I also extend my gratitude to the Executive Director, management, and the entire staff of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism for their unwavering commitment and efforts.

Additionally, I thank the Honourable Minister of Finance for allocating **Seven hundred and twenty-seven million, six hundred and twenty-six thousand Namibian dollars (N\$727,626,000)** for the Operational Budget and the Director-General of the National Planning Commission for the **seventy million Namibian dollars (N\$70,000,000)** designated for the Development Budget. Their recognition of the Ministry's mandate is deeply appreciated.

I now respectfully request this Honourable House to approve the total budget allocation of **seven hundred and ninety-seven million, six hundred and twenty-six thousand Namibian dollars (N\$797,626,000)** for the 2025/26 financial year.