

## Alternative Monitoring and Managing Approaches of the 2nd biggest MPA in Africa

15.04.2024, 09:00-09:50, Multifunctional Room 1

**Lead:** Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)

**Co-organizers:** Blue Marine Foundation, Blue Action Fund, The Namibian Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB)

*The 9,500 km<sup>2</sup> Namibian Islands' Marine Protected Area (NIMPA) is an iconic area of outstanding marine biodiversity, supporting globally significant populations of seabirds and marine mammals, and important marine industries. Despite being Africa's second largest MPA, it is threatened by overfishing, mining, green hydrogen, oil and gas extraction, and large-scale aquaculture. A new non-profit organisation, The Namibian Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB), was established in 2022 to support the government in its monitoring and management efforts in the long run. It also setting up a young professional marine biodiversity managers program to equip the Namibian youth with hands-on conservation experience and build future conservation leaders.*

*The side event aims to discuss the current challenges facing the NIMPA and the efforts being made by the Namibian government and its partners to address these challenges. The event also aims to showcase the importance of collaborative and innovative management approaches in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the NIMPA. Panelists equally highlight achievements and positive learnings as well as challenges and how to further improve, drawing conclusions for sustainable and collaborative MPA management approaches.*

*The goal is to inspire other countries and stakeholders to adopt similar approaches in their own marine protected areas to ensure the conservation of our oceans for future generations.*



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## **SIDE EVENT AGENDA**

### **Facilitator Jo Coumbe (Blue Marine Foundation)**

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| 09:00 09:05   | Introduction to speakers  |
| 09:05 – 09:10 | <p><b><i>Introduction to Namibian Islands' Marine Protected Area (NIMPA)</i></b></p> <p><i>The waters off the coast of Namibia are among the most productive in the world. The 9,500 km<sup>2</sup> Namibian Islands' Marine Protected Area (NIMPA) covers 1.7% of Namibia's EEZ and is characterized by rich and unique biodiversity, the NIMPA has the potential to be a world-class MPA and an exemplar on the African continent.</i></p> <p><i>Since the NIMPA's gazettelement in 2009, insufficient government resourcing, and management integration of communities have failed to protect the marine environment. The situation is dire; without effective management, the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME) is degrading rapidly, which will in turn negatively impact coastal communities. The Namibian government is being supported through the NIMPA+ Project, financed by Blue Action Fund, Oceans 5 and Sharks Conservation Fund focusing on strengthening the management of NIMPA to secure important populations of biodiversity and marine ecosystem services, in turn securing income opportunities for coastal communities and diversifying their livelihood opportunities, while working towards the designation of two new MPAs at the national level.</i></p> |



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|               | <p><i>NIMPA+ is implemented through a consortium of local, national, and international partners and is developing and implementing a new management framework for the MPA, including collective and innovative management approaches, and sustainable financing.</i></p> <p><i>NIMPA+ short video – <a href="#">NIMPA+ Project Launch (youtube.com)</a></i></p> <p><i>Lead of input: Carolin Mutorwa, Senior Technical Advisor at Namibia Nature Foundation</i></p>  |
| 09:10 – 09:15 | <p><b><i>Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB)</i></b></p> <p><i>Over the past decades, there has been a dramatic decline in seabird populations in Namibia and South Africa. At the turn of the 20th century, the species numbered in the millions globally, but has since declined to an alarming 9, 600 breeding pairs in Namibia and South Africa (NAMCOB and MFMR 2023 census, unpub. and DFFE, 2023 census). Seabirds indicate ocean health and provide insights into fish populations and marine food webs. Namibia reacted and established a new NGO, the Namibian Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB) to support the Namibian government in NIMPA’s long-term management and monitoring.</i></p> <p><i>NAMCOB’s goal is to conserve seabirds on the Namibian coast and in its marine exclusive economic zone, with emphasis on the most threatened species. <a href="#">Home   NAMCOB</a></i></p> <p><i>Lead of input: Sharon Kahunda, Namibia’s Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB)</i></p> |



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| <p>09:15 – 09:20</p> | <p><b><i>Delivering an effective Management framework through partnerships</i></b></p> <p><i>Despite the NIMPA being gazetted in 2009 and a draft management plan being produced in 2010, the plan was never finalised. Globally, delivery of Management plans is often hindered by lack of Government funding and capacity, and often plans are too unrealistic leading to ineffective implementation and management. The draft NIMPA Management plan had 35 pages of actions that were poorly defined, with all the deliverables being the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, whose resources were already overstretched. The NIMPA+ consortium supported the Ministry to redraft the Management Plan, consulting with local stakeholders and other Government divisions to address the challenges in the original draft. The new plan is collaborative and SMART and will form part of the management framework to achieve an effective protected area with community support that will deliver the NIMPA vision of conserving biodiversity for the benefit of Namibians now and in the future.</i></p> <p><i>Lead of input: Judith Brown, Projects Director at the Blue Marine Foundation</i></p> |
| <p>09:20 – 09:25</p> | <p><b><i>Importance of co-management approach</i></b></p> <p><i>The NIMPA+ project is a locally led initiative building on the terrestrial management expertise that the Namibia Nature Foundation has built over many years and expanding this to the marine environment. Bringing in technical input from a range of other local and international organisations brings a wide skillset including media, data management and marine and seabird conservation expertise. This combined strong portfolio of specialisations also facilitates opportunities for local training and strengthening capacity within both the local Government</i></p>   |



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|                     | <p><i>departments and community. Creating a co-management approach with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, other Government departments, and local organisations ensure that the capacity to deliver the NIMPA as a world-class MPA is achieved through collaboration between all partnership members.</i></p> <p><i>Lead of input: Judith Weigand, Programme Director at Blue Action Fund</i></p>  |
| <p>09:25– 09:30</p> | <p><b>Achieving a Sustainable Blue Economy</b></p> <p><i>Substantial rebuilding of marine life, through effective protected areas requires sustained effort and financial support. Lüderitz, the coastal town bordering the NIMPA, is a remote and small community with limited opportunities for employment and diversification of the economy. Therefore, to address the financing gap that is needed to effectively manage the NIMPA, delivering marine protection alongside supporting the local community we need to create and apply innovative financing mechanisms. These can broadly include investments, insurance, blended finance, and nature markets. These different options have been explored in the local context to determine appropriate opportunities to ensure the efficacy of the NIMPA is maintained into perpetuity.</i></p> <p><i>Lead of input: Angus Middleton, Executive Director at Namibia Nature Foundation</i></p> |
| <p>09:30– 09:35</p> | <p><b>A framework for the future</b></p> <p>To support the local community, alongside the implementation of the NIMPA, scoping of opportunities for business development and providing the associated training is key. Local community members, especially from the Shack</p>  |



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Dwellers Federation will be trained in producing products, business and financial literacy, sales and marketing. Potential businesses (e.g. use of kelp by-products, mariculture) will be set-up as a cooperative and part of the income through sales will be reinvested into the community.

Reviewing the state of ocean literacy content in the junior and senior secondary school curriculum provides a baseline from which to expand educational outreach in areas where there is currently a gap. The Ocean Literacy toolkit development is a collaborative initiative with participants from various Government departments, teachers, and NGOs, each providing ocean literacy content and ideas on how to best roll out across the country. The toolkit will build awareness and ownership of Namibia's special marine life and the importance of conserving it alongside the sustainable use of marine resources.

Lead of input: *Carolyn Mutorwa, Senior Technical Advisor at Namibia Nature Foundation*

09:35– 09:50

Q&A