



Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism
Republic of Namibia

Ministerial Statement by
Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, MP
Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism
to the National Assembly
On the current status of Human Wildlife Conflict in the
Country.

13 April 2023

WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Honourable Speaker,
Honorable members,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide an update to this august House on the state of human wildlife conflict in the country.

Human wildlife conflict is a serious issue within our communities. The incidences of Human Wildlife Conflict have intensified following our successful wildlife management strategies that has led to growth in wildlife populations outside protected areas.

The situation is worsened by reoccurring droughts across the country leading to increased competition over resources and space between people and wild animals. Other factors contributing to this include the continued encroachment by human in wildlife habitats.

Honourable Speaker,
Honorable members,

I wish to remind the house that the overall principle behind the country's conservation of natural resources is enshrined in the country's constitution that such resources are protected to benefit the country's current and future generations.

This is the basis of our investment in trying to ensure that the cost of co-existence must not outweigh the benefits. One avenue to derive such benefits is through the community-based conservation programme that has created employment and income generation opportunities.

Through the conservancy programme a total of three thousand and forty Eight (3548) jobs were facilitated comprising of Nine Hundred and Ninety Eight (998) community members employed in conservancies; Seven Hundred Seventy Four (774) full time and 62 part-time employed in joint venture tourism enterprises; one Hundred and thirty (130) full time and one hundred and eighty eight (188) part time employed in the conservation hunting sectors while the remaining are employed in small and medium enterprises.

Furthermore, conservancies generate cash income and in-kind benefits for rural communities totaling to N\$91.7 million benefiting over two hundred and thirty-eight community members (238,701) of this. The Ministry is also engaged in providing meat to community and national events to the value of over N\$ 9,2 million.

Honourable Speaker,

Honorable members,

Incidences of Human Wildlife Conflict however remain a concern as they seem overshadow the benefits as well as opportunities created for Namibians.

These incidences mainly involve infrastructure damages, livestock losses, crop damages, in some unfortunate incidences loss of life and injuries to people.

These incidences all affect the livelihoods of our people. To manage and address the impact of Human Wildlife Conflict, the Ministry has developed the National Policy initially implemented in 2009 and revised in 2018.

The Policy provides for specific interventions to manage specific conflicts in different areas. The Policy also provides for offset payments for damages and losses incurred by communities.

The Ministry has since 2019 paid offset amounts to losses caused by wild animal amounting to Twenty-four million, one hundred and sixty thousand and one hundred and sixty two Namibian dollar (**N\$24 168 162**). Consequently the Ministry has paid over N\$2, the 9 million for livestock losses; N\$2,5 million for crop damages; N\$640 thousand for injuries sustained by people; N\$3.3 million for loss of life from 2019 to date.

Within the same period, the Ministry has administered 33 claims for loss of life of which 15 were in 2022 and 4 so far in 2023 with crocodiles, hippos and elephants being the main culprits.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our sympathy on behalf of the Ministry and government in general to those who have lost their loved ones as a result of wildlife.

In terms of crop damages, 2,637 hectares was destroyed by wild animals of which 270 hectares was recorded in 2022 and 60 hectares so far in 2023 mainly by elephants.

A total of 862 livestock were killed by predators mainly crocodiles, hyenas, lions, wild dogs, leopard and jackals of which 204 was recorded in 2022 and 9 in 2023 to date.

A total of 54 people were injured within the same period, 15 in 2022 and 3 in 2023 to date.

In closing Honourable Speaker,

Honourable Members,

Together with other stakeholder we are involved and implementing measures such elephant and lion collaring; early warning system; lion ranger programme; construction of predator proof kraals; translocation of problem causing animals; declarations and putting down of problem causing animals and wildlife population management. The Ministry will host a national conference in May 2023, where stakeholder will dissect the issue of human wildlife conflict and propose long lasting solution to address it. I would like to urge communities and property owners in human wildlife conflict prone areas to put in place preventative and mitigation measures.

I thank you