



# Environmental Investment Fund

**10<sup>TH</sup>**  
**YEAR**  
**ANNIVERSARY**

Environmental Investment Fund  
of Namibia | ensuring sustainability

**CELEBRATING 10  
YEARS OF ENSURING  
INCLUSIVITY**



**Environmental Investment Fund  
of Namibia** | ensuring sustainability



## FOREWORD

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I am proud to announce that 10 years after its establishment, the EIF is today one of the fastest-growing green and climate financing institutions in Africa.

– Pohamba Shifeta



Pohamba Shifeta

# ‘I’m Proud of the EIF leadership’

Allow me to begin by stating that the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) is an important contributor to economic growth, poverty reduction and employment creation.

Our mandate is very broad, and the ministry 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 arise as a result.

In terms of Article 95(L) of the Namibian Constitution, we are duty bound to protect our environment and all that encompasses it, but also to ensure that our local communities who are the custodians of these unique and rich endowment of natural resources continue to benefit from them.

Hence the establishment of the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia.

The EIF was founded by the creation of the EIF Act 13 of 2001 and mandated to raise funding for investments into projects and programmes that promote sustainable development.

I am proud to announce that 10 years after its establishment, the EIF is today one of the fastest-growing green and climate financing institutions in Africa.

Also, I am confident that, through the EIF, we are on the right track towards improving the living standards of our people as a result of deliberate government interventions that put livelihoods at the centre of our development agenda and the overall attainment of the global commitment through the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It goes without saying that the EIF’s accreditation

by the Global Climate Fund (GCF) in 2016, as a direct access entity for country level programme delivery, played a significant role in bringing us to this point in our achievements.

To date, the fund as a consequence has raised more than N\$640 million for climate action grants and readiness support from the GCF for the country for numerous projects.

Allow me to highlight some of these interventions.

Sunref is one of these projects the EIF has successfully implemented and for which it has attracted more funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Sunref stands for the Sustainable Utilisation of Natural Resources and Energy Financing.

In most cases, these activities happen in rural communities, and our directives to the EIF, which is a state organ, has been for the entity to target rural communities for developmental initiatives.

Today we have more funding taking place in those communities.

They have conservancies where we have erected solar-power technologies, as well as financed most of the sustainable transition programmes for these conservancies and community forests.

The Nilaleg project is one of the most successful, being carried out by the EIF and the ministry.

We have managed to bring those rural communities – especially women – who are in crop farming as well as general farming, into the mainstream.

We train them, as this project has a capacity training element, but we also provide financing for

activities relevant to the current situations, but in line with the climate-change situations in these regions.

We have managed to train the communities in the sustainable utilisation of natural resources, with the emphasis on ensuring their survival during droughts and minimal rains.

Another project, the Sustainable Development Awards, have been established to inspire communities that are into projects related to climate-change mitigation.

We want to promote those kinds of projects to mitigate the impact of climate change, especially in rural areas.

Since their inception, the awards have motivated project proponents to lean towards climate-resilient programmes.

We are delighted that last year the EIF attained re-accreditation from the GCF.

The re-accreditation for a further five-year period came after the initial five-year period lapsed in June 2021.

This re-accreditation was preceded by a rigorous institutional review and assessment of the EIF by the GCF, and it demonstrates the commitment and cooperation between the government of the republic of Namibia, but more specifically, the MEFT, Ministry of Finance and the EIF management.

*I’m proud of the leadership of the EIF.*

POHAMB A SHIFETA

## From the editor’s desk

# Let’s do it again

As we celebrate a decade of the Environmental Investment Fund’s existence and its relentless pursuit for excellence, one cannot help but look ahead with optimism to what the future holds.

But it is not easy to successfully plan the future without a clear reflection and comprehension of where we come from.

Climate change, for example, remains one of the world’s biggest troubles.

It is a well-known fact that over the past years Namibia has not been spared, having experienced climate-change impacts in the form of persistent and devastating droughts, floods and water scarcity – all of which have threatened the livelihoods of citizens and the developmental progress of the nation during the past 32 years.

Also, the fact that agricultural land, which is good for our food security, involves only 9%, and the negative impact thereof, cannot be overlooked.

But as a nation, we are lucky that when our founding fathers and mothers were crafting the country’s Constitution, environmental issues took centre stage, and that paved the way for the enactment of environmentally considerate policies and legislation.

For context, in 1992, at the height of rapid global industrialisation and its associated natural resource depletion, driven by the developed world, founding president Sam Nujoma presented the Namibia Green Plan to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at the Rio World Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

With a sense of pride, I must say that Namibia was the first country to do so, at that time, and it appeared to be a very strategic gesture from a new sovereign state.

But the history behind the development of the document proved to be more far-reaching than initially imagined – with the founding father stating that upon his return from a three-decade long exile, he could barely recognise his homestead as a result of deforestation among other factors.

Fast forward to today, and the progress and results we have made in our quest for sustainable environmental management and climate change mitigation will be attributed to the robust planning frameworks we have implemented through the effective domestication of global commitments.

In concurrence with a recent statement by



Lot Ndamanomhata

president Hage Geingob, the Environmental Management Act, the National Policy on Climate Change, the National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, and the draft sustainable blue economy policy – which are aligned with the national development plans (NDPs), Harambee Prosperity Plans (HPP I and HPP II) and Vision 2030 – have gone a long way to position Namibia at the forefront of the climate-change debate and climate action.

More recently, a February 2020 Cabinet decision CCOPP/14.02.20/007, which took note and supported the high-level panel on the Namibian economy presentation, titled ‘New Green Economy 2030 Programme’ as one of the interventions to propel economic growth in Namibia, is highly commendable and in line with the EIF’s growth agenda for the next 10 years.

Besides having low carbon outcomes, the programme is characterised by maintaining,

enhancing, and where necessary and feasible, rebuilding natural capital as a critical economic asset and source of public benefits – especially for poor and disadvantaged Namibians.

That said, it is high time that all Namibians from all walks of life join the EIF crusade for an environmentally prudent and socio-economically sound populace.

*Happy 10th anniversary, EIF.*

Here is to another decade of commitment and excellence.

**Lot Ndamanomhata**  
Manager Corporate Communications

The Fund is one of the few state-owned enterprises that has successfully blend a financing approach that takes into consideration the three main pillars of sustainable development, that is social, economic, environmental consideration.

### Achievements of the Fund

**44** Natural resource based enterprises created in 23 constituencies



**163** Boreholes rehabilitated benefiting more than 77 000 people who have access to portable drinking water.



**950** 950 opportunities created, mostly rural based including seasonal ones



**40 MW** Combined installed capacity through solar plants

**36** Students supported at undergraduate and postgraduate level

**258** Grants approved for different environmental projects

As evident below, these have been achieved by implementing actions towards livelihood protection, financing of sustainable business concepts, and ensuring environmental protections.

**N\$ 6 million**  
Income generated from enterprise

**N\$ 1,7 Billion**  
Mobilised from Development Partners



**238 000** People benefited from the project both directly and indirectly



**240 256** Hectares of land under conservation



**N\$583** Million worth of grants disbursed

**162** Households retrofitted with solar home appliances

**3 277.6 ha** Area under conservation agriculture (Ripping service)



# ‘It has been, and still is, a fulfilling journey’

...The youngest CEO in SOE circles reminisce on his time at the helm of the EIF

• JEREMIAH NDJOZE

TEN years after his appointment as the first employee of the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia, and at the time the youngest chief executive officer (CEO) of a state-owned enterprise (SOE) in Namibia, Benedict Libanda looks back at his journey as one with a scary start, yet a fulfilling and glorious continuance.

In an exclusive interview with Desert Radio’s ‘Breakfast in the Desert’ recently, he said: “I was untested in leadership and executive skills. But you know, it has worked out after 10 years.

“I was the first staff member of the EIF, and now we are more than 53 full-time staff members, and about 10 contract-based staff members.

“We started on a balance sheet of N\$15 million, and 10 years later we’ve got a portfolio of projects worth N\$1,7 billion.

“It has been a roller-coaster ride with ups and downs, and a lot of learning and catching up. But yes, a lot has been done over the past 10 years.”

Still the youngest CEO in the country’s parastatal sphere, the man who refers to himself as a “veteran youth”, owing to his youthful exuberance and positive slant on youth empowerment, describes his time at the EIF as an honour.

“I hope I have motivated a lot of young people and created pathways for those who are coming after me to be hopeful as well as ambitious to take on such responsibilities.

“We strive for excellence, but nothing is always excellent. We learn by making mistakes, and I think it has been a fulfilling 10 years,” he said.

Libanda is likely to be found donning a suit on any given day, but that, he says, is mostly for the boardroom. Outside of work, one would hardly recognise him, he said.

“I wear my floppy hats and All-Star sneakers and go public places.

“I love networking and talking to people, because that is how you engage new knowledge and happenings around you, unlocking new opportunities and making new friends.

“That’s what I do over the weekends and during my free time,” he said.



Benedict Libanda, CEO speaking at the grant handover ceremony of the CBNRM EDA Project, November 2021.

When not working or networking, he said he is reading. “I have been reading a lot of books, ranging from political writings to those aligned to my profession, such as climate financing.

“But ‘Art of War’ is one of the books that influenced my thinking and opened up my whole imagination on how theories are linked to practice.

“It has also taught me how certain acts change the course of the world,” he said.

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Being a young executive and family man can be tough to balance, Libanda said.

“Once you lose that balance a lot of social challenges can emerge. Family is one of the most important social aspects of your life, and, as such, one needs to make time for family.”

“It is not easy. It takes a lot of planning, thinking and compromising. Not everyone will be happy,

but then you cannot please everyone.

“What is important is that you are in a good state of mind and health to do what is needed and required of you,” he said.

With rewards, however, often come challenges, he said.

“I think the most important thing to do is to not be afraid to fail. Failure is a step forward to greatness. That is number one.

“Number two is that we still have role models in this country to enquire from.”

These, he said, are people like the CEO of the Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF), David Nuyoma, and the current ambassador to France, Albertus Aochamub, on whose doors he constantly knocks.

“It is quite a challenging field, but one should not forget to seek help. Also, when challenges come, do not avoid them, because challenges create opportunities,” Libanda said.



We started on a balance sheet of N\$15 million, and 10 years later we’ve got a portfolio of projects worth N\$1,7 billion.

It has been a roller-coaster ride with ups and downs, and a lot of learning and catching up. But yes, a lot has been done over the past 10 years.

- Benedict Libanda

## GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

Libanda revealed that upon the formation of the EIF, The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and the Ministry of Finance introduced environmental taxes, the collection of which were to be used for reinvestment in projects on environmental awareness, climate change, and others.

“We also use part of the collections to leverage international funding so that we can attract more funding from outside the country, because we do have a base seed capital that is coming from domestic sources,” he said.

“We have accessed more than N\$40 million from the Green Climate Fund (GCF). We are talking of about N\$600 million that has impacted more than 200 000 Namibians in terms of direct and indirect beneficitation,” he said.

“To make it simple for people to understand, we introduced projects such as solar lighting, water provision through which we refurbish diesel-powered water points, and solar powered boreholes,” he said.

Through the fund the EIF, according to Libanda, constructed green houses for small-scale agricultural systems, and further introduced resilient livestock to identified communities.

The fund has financed 36 students who took up master’s and doctorate programmes, as well as managed to finance renewable energy projects to a maximum output of 25 megawatts in combined energy output.

“We had a line of credit with a French development agency – which closed in May this year – for three years. It deployed more than N\$850 million, mainly for renewable energy assets, sustainable agriculture, as well as sustainable tourism,” he said.

# Early warning system deal signed

• JEREMIAH NDJOZE

IN a deliberate quest to counteract Namibia’s increased intensity of climate risks, which is said to have increased in frequency over the last decade, the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia and the Namibia Meteorological Services (NMS) have entered into an agreement which would result in the development of an early warning system (EWS) for the Kunene region.

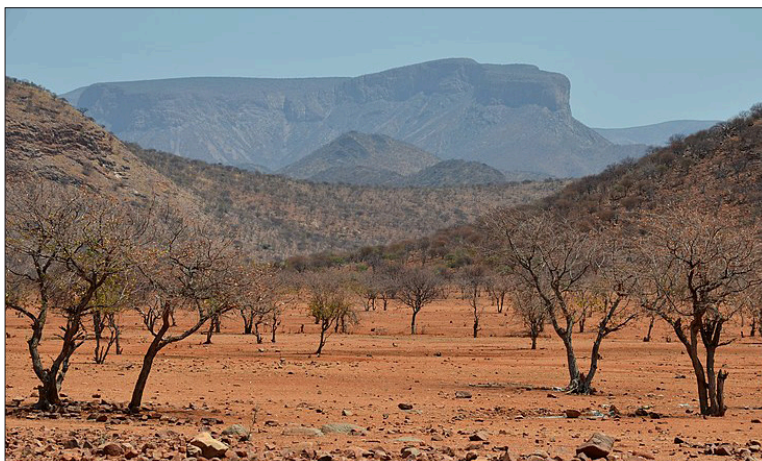
According to the signatories, an early warning system – which is an adaptive measure for climate change, using integrated communication systems to help communities prepare for hazardous climate-related events – is extremely important, after systemic risks impacted negatively on the development gains achieved by the country in the last 32 years.

These risks, according to EIF chief executive officer (CEO) Benedict Libanda, have been exacerbated by the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as the current prevailing economic downturn.

“The Kunene region is one of the most vulnerable regions in the country, and is severely affected by climate-related shocks, particularly the prolonged devastating droughts, which have culminated in the loss of people’s livelihoods particularly due to livestock mortality,” Libanda said during the recent signing ceremony in Windhoek.

## EWS SAVES LIVES, ECOSYSTEMS

Many people in the Kunene region depend on livestock farming, community-based natural resource management



(conservancy and community forest-related tourism) and the use of biodiversity products for their daily needs.

“A successful EWS saves lives and jobs, ecosystem and infrastructure, and supports long-term sustainability. In fact, early warning systems can also assist in planning, saving money in the long run, and protecting economies,” Libanda said.

The CEO said the fund, through the Irema project, which is implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, is busy rounding off the consultancy work that developed an EWS tailored for the Kunene region to the tune of N\$950 000.

Libanda said through the project’s partnership with MTC, four automated weather stations have been procured at a cost of N\$800 000.

These stations would be installed at the project’s anchor project areas, such as Warmquelle, Fransfontein, Kamanjab and

Bergsig in the Kunene region,” he said.

“However, we still need to mobilise more resources and prioritise investment in adaptation and early warning early action.

“This system will not only help decision-makers in making informed decisions, but will lead to increased availability and access to early warning information as stipulated in the Sendai Framework,” he said.

Libanda called on other partners to join the alliance for collective action on adaptation.

## PIVOTAL ROLE

The executive director of works and transport, Ester Kaapanda, says the Kunene region has been devastated by prolonged drought for over four years, which is a clear indication that farmers need to adopt climate change-resilient farming practices for sustainability.

“As a nation, we can impact positively



Ester Kaapanda, Executive Director of the Ministry of Works and Transport and Benedict Libanda, CEO of the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia and their team of officials at the signing ceremony of the Early Warning System (EWS) for Kunene Region under the IREMA Project.

on people with developmental projects through cooperation between government entities and private institutions.

“This memorandum of understanding is a perfect example of such a partnership, which aims to improve the livelihood of communities in the areas of interest,” she says.

Kaapanda says the ministry, through its meteorological services division, plays an important role in the production and distribution of climate and weather information. “Hence the involvement of the ministry in this project to provide the necessary expertise in terms of daily and seasonal forecasts, including for extreme events and capacity building,” she says.

The Irema Kunene project aims to set up meteorological instruments in the form of manual and automated rain gauges, and automatic weather stations in collaboration with MTC.

The addition of these stations will ex-

pand the meteorological services station network and improve the precision of weather forecasts issued for the project area, she says.

## AT A GLANCE

The venture conforms to the mission of the EIF to promote sustainable economic development of Namibia through investment in and promotion of activities and projects that protect and maintain the natural and environmental resources of the country.

The development of an early warning system tailored for the Kunene region would not only assist communities and public institutions in their planning, but would also help preserve essential financial resources in the long run, thereby protecting the local and national economy.

Early warning information empowers people to take action prior to disasters.



# Nilaleg disburses N\$6,8m in grants



Hon. Pohamba Shifeta hands over a grant to one of the beneficiaries of the NILALEG Project at the grants handover ceremony in Kunene Region, November 2021.

## • JEREMIAH NDJOZE

“I AM confident that if the Nilaleg project is successfully implemented, it would result in a paradigm shift among our rural communities in the targeted areas, and subsequent positive impacts for this region and others where it will be implemented.”

This was according to Kunene governor Marius Sheya, who expressed optimism in the Namibia Integrated Landscape Approach for Enhancing Livelihoods and Environmental Governance to Eradicate Poverty (Nilaleg) project on 19 November 2021 at the Okatjandja Kozomenje Conservancy at Okorosave village in the Kunene region. He handed over 10 grants with a combined value of N\$6,8 million at the occasion.

The grants were presented to the beneficiaries under three investment windows, which are crop and rangeland management, agroforestry and nature-based enterprises.

Introducing the overview of the Nilaleg project was project manager Jonas Nghishidi.

He said the “project aims to promote an integrated landscape management approach in key agricultural and forest landscapes, reducing poverty through sustainable nature-based livelihoods, protecting biodiversity and restoring forests as carbon sinks, and promoting land-degradation neutrality”.

In delivering a statement on behalf of the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia, chief executive officer (CEO) Benedict Libanda said the project is unique in many ways.

“It firstly utilises a landscape approach to addressing environmental and climate-induced threats to Namibian livelihoods. This approach seeks to provide tools and concepts for managing land to achieve social, economic, and environmental objectives in areas where agriculture, forest management, and other productive land uses compete with environmental and biodiversity goals”.

## Key impacts of Nilaleg grant facility:

Total grants disbursed under each investment window (first call for proposals):

- Agroforestry – N\$1 239 447,80
- Crop/Rangeland Management – N\$4 087 289,71
- Nature-Based Enterprises – N\$1 472 000
- The aggregated number and value of grants per targeted landscape is as follows:
- Zambezi – 3 grants, valued at N\$2 009 200
- Ruacana – 2 grants, valued at N\$1 344 417,71
- Omaopanga – 1 grant, valued at N\$685 883
- Okongo – 4 grants, valued at N\$2 789 235,80

In the meantime, the EIF issued a second call for proposals on 10 September, which closed on 12 November 2021.

The grants management team is currently busy evaluating the submissions with the aim of awarding more beneficiaries.

Expressing delight at the handover ceremony was Anne Madzara, the interim United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) deputy resident representative, who said the project speaks directly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

“This project directly contributes to Sustainable Development Goal number 15, which deals with ‘Life on Land’. This goal seeks to take immediate and substantial steps to eliminate natural habitat destruction, stop biodiversity loss and, by 2023, protect and avoid the extinction of endangered species,” she said.

She said the integration of various partners in the initiative must continue to be at the heart of the proponents’ strategy.

“We should have the humility to acknowledge the essential role of other actors, while maintaining full awareness of our unique convening power. The grants being extended to communities today are therefore a clear demonstration of a strong commitment to partnerships that facilitate the voice and agency of local communities,” Madzara said.

In his keynote address, minister of environment, forestry and tourism Pohamba Shifeta said he did not doubt that the grants would meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries.

“It is without a doubt that these grants will help enhance the livelihoods of our people and assist in meeting the expected outputs of the project through the reduction of poverty, protecting and restoring

forests as carbon sinks, biodiversity conservation and promoting land degradation neutrality,” the minister said.

Shifeta said the initiative is on the right track towards improving the living standards of people as a result of deliberate government interventions that put livelihoods at the centre of its development agenda and the overall attainment of global commitments through the SDGs.

His sentiments were echoed by the executive director of environment, forestry and tourism, Teofilus Nghitila, in his closing remarks.

“As a government, we continue to count on your usual support and appreciate the important role you continue to play in disseminating information and ensuring it reaches the intended recipients,” he said.

## AT A GLANCE

The Nilaleg project is funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) through the UNDP to the tune of around US\$11 million.

The project aims to reverse environmental degradation and maximise sustainable livelihoods based on nature through the integrated management of Namibia’s rural landscapes. The Nilaleg project grant facility highlights the EIF’s and ministry’s commitment to enhancing livelihoods and environmental governance through natural resource management.

It further highlights the efforts made under multilateral agreements towards addressing Namibia’s development challenges.

# Kunene farmers trained on early warning system

## • STAFF REPORTER

ALTHOUGH it is not possible to predict what effect the future climate would have, it is of the utmost importance to explore and utilise relevant tools to capture and disseminate accurate information to manage extreme climate risks.

This was said by Lot Ndamanomhata, the Environment Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia’s spokesperson, at a two-day training workshop on community-based early warning systems at Khorixas in January.

“To be prepared for looming adversities brought about by climate variability, there is a need to shift from being reactive and to become more proactive,” he said in a media statement.

A well-functioning early warning system is an adaptive measure for climate change, which uses integrated communication systems to help vulnerable communities prepare for hazardous climate-related shocks, Ndamanomhata said.

The training programme was presented under the Green Climate Fund-financed project titled Improving Rangeland and Ecosystem Management (Irema) practices of smallholder farmers under conditions of climate change at Sesfontein, Fransfontein, and Warmquell in the Kunene region.

The programme, which is implemented by the EIF of Namibia, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, is aimed at reducing the vulnerability of smallholder farmers under climate-change conditions by safeguarding natural resources to sustain agricultural production systems.

The Kunene region is one of the most vulnerable regions, and is severely affected by climate-related shocks, such as recurrent droughts.

Over the past decade, small-scale farmers in the region have endured recurrent droughts and floods, which have culminated in the loss of their



Participants receiving training on the early warning system in Khorixas, Kunene region January 2022

primary source of livelihood.

Many people in the region depend on livestock farming, community-based natural resource management, and the use of biodiversity products to meet their daily needs.

Natural resource-based livelihoods are vulnerable to climate change to some extent.

Namibia continues to observe ongoing natural variability and changes in rainfall patterns –

hence the dominant extreme weather conditions in recent years.

Ndamanomhata said a well-functioning early warning system is an adaptive measure for climate change, which uses integrated communication systems to help vulnerable communities prepare for hazardous climate-related shocks.

“Such a system can save lives and livelihoods, safeguard productive land and infrastructure, and

support long-term sustainability,” he said.

The chief scientific officer in the agriculture ministry for the Kunene region, Charlie Mwaetako, said the workshop presented the communities with knowledge on how to implement and maintain an effective early warning system, with the objective of strengthening the resilience of local agricultural farming systems for enhanced food and nutrition security.



# EIF handles over N\$1,7b in 10 years

... GCF accounts for N\$640 million of total funding

## • JEREMIAH NDJOZE

THE Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia has successfully attracted and mobilised an overall investment of more than N\$1,7 billion in Namibia since its inception.

This is according to the fund's chief operations officer (COO), Karel Aribeb. He said this as the fund is preparing to celebrate its 10th anniversary under the theme 'Celebrating 10 Years of Inclusivity'.

The above-mentioned investments, according to the COO, were primarily raised from multilateral and developmental funding institutions and partners.

"The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has financially supported the EIF of Namibia with an amount of more than N\$640 million in grants for climate-change adaptation interventions in Namibia," Aribeb said.

He further revealed that – to date – the fund has disbursed grants valued at more than N\$535 million, and ensured that more than 240 256 hectares of land are under conservation, while 71 grants were approved for different environmental projects.

The fund further created 950 employment opportunities, mostly rural based, while the installation of 120 seasonal and retrofitted boreholes with solar panels is said to have benefited more than 77 000 people, who now have access to potable drinking water.

The COO said the fund went on to explore the possibilities nature-based enterprises (NBEs) present as ventures that can be exploited to support biodiversity utilisation, conservation and equitable benefit sharing from derived resources.

To this end, 44 green businesses that have the dual potential of conservation and income generation to local communities were created.

Still on the green side, 162 households were refurbished with solar home appliances, and have attracted N\$820 million for a concessional Green Credit Line with a participating commercial bank from Agence Francaise de Development (AFD), under the Sunref project in Namibia.

"Recently, the fund launched the SDG Impact Facility, which aims to provide mentorship grants and debt financing to women and youth in business, social enterprises and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)," he said.

Expanding on the GCF, Aribeb revealed that to date the resources accessed by the EIF includes climate-resilient agriculture in three of the vulnerable extreme northern crop-growing regions (Crave) project, with a total GCF grant envelope amounting to N\$9,5 million, while the Namibian government contributed N\$500 000.

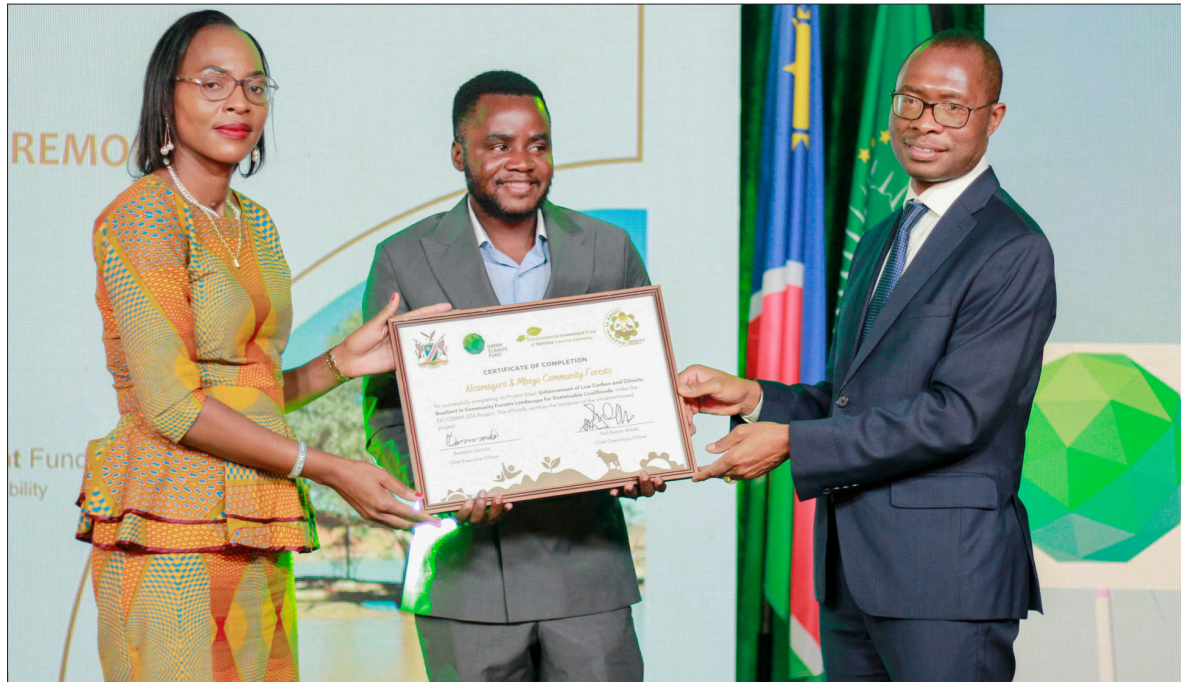
"This project aims to reduce climate vulnerability and increase the adaptive capacity and resilience of vulnerable small-scale farming communities in the specified areas, who are threatened by climate variability and change," Aribeb said.

The project is being executed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform through an agreement with the EIF.

This is a five-year investment that covers the implementation period from 2016 to 2022.

Another project which benefited through the GCF is appropriately titled 'Empower to Adapt'.

"The project is an enhanced direct-access modality that empowers communities living within the community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) network of Namibia with the knowledge, skills and financial



Hon. Ipumbu Shiimi, Minister of Finance and Hon. Heather Sibungu, Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism with Mr. Lukas Mandema who represented the Ncamagoro and Mbeyo Community Forests at the Grants Handover Ceremony



Chief Operations Officer (COO), Karel Aribeb

resources required to reduce vulnerabilities and build resilience to climate-induced impacts, like prolonged drought and natural resource depletion," the COO said.

The project is being financed entirely by the GCF to the tune of \$10 million, and to date about N\$126 million has been allocated in climate-change adaptation funding directly to 33 community-based projects, while its support covers a combination of 38 conservancies and community forests.

"The five-year project has made it possible for thousands of Namibians residing in rural areas to secure access to potable drinking water," said Aribeb.

Mindful of the extremely vulnerable environmental conditions in the greater Kunene region, the EIF, through funding from the GCF, embarked on an initiative aimed at improving rangeland and

ecosystem management practices of smallholder farmers under conditions of climate change in the Sesfontein, Fransfontein, and Warmquell areas of the region.

Known as Irema, this venture, according to the EIF, received a GCF cash injection of N\$9,3 million, and the Namibian government matched the disbursement with a contribution to the tune of \$700 000.

"Key activities include the development of an early warning system for disaster-risk management, solar-retrofitting, and the rehabilitation of up to 20 boreholes, as well as the development of about 300 backyard gardens," Aribeb said, adding that through this intervention the Warmquell and Khwarib Green Schemes were also rehabilitated.

The youngest of the GCF investments is centred on building the resilience of communities living in eight land-

"The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has financially supported the EIF of Namibia with an amount of more than N\$640 million in grants for climate-change adaptation interventions in Namibia.

– Karel Aribeb

scapes threatened under climate change through an ecosystem-based adaptation approach.

"This intervention seeks to increase climate-change resilience of eight productive communal area landscapes in 13 of Namibia's political regions, through the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation actions that strengthen social and ecological systems to sustain



The Empower to Adapt: Creating Climate Change Resilient Livelihoods Through Community Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia (CBNRM EDA) Project officially handed over sixteen (16) completed projects, at the Windhoek Country Club Resort and Casino, in Windhoek last year.





# EIF launches urban agriculture grant



“The urban agriculture is as a result of multilateralism and partnership between the Namibian government, the UNDP, and the government of Japan, and it is only through agriculture that Namibians can empower themselves – especially those in urban areas.

– Margaret Matengu

## • JEREMIAH NDJOZE

THE Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF) held an urban agriculture grant e-voucher card issuance and terminal roll-out in Windhoek in March, with financial support from the Japanese government.

The event was held in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as part of assisting four regions identified to benefit from the e-voucher card issuance and terminal roll-out.

The urban agriculture programme, which is funded to the tune of N\$2 million (N\$500 000 per region), will support 56 beneficiaries, of which 13 are in Windhoek, 13 at Swakopmund, 17 at Rundu, and 13 at Maltahöhe.

EIF representative Karel Aribeb highlighted the background of the Build Back Better (BBB) programme, and thanked the Namibian government and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for conceptualising the programme, and the Japanese government for funding it.

“The EIF is ecstatic about this project, not only from a grant management perspective because it talks about food

security, but more so on urban agriculture, as most interventions are geared only towards rural food production,” Aribeb said.

The BBB programme aims to improve the production of nutritious, high-value produce, such as vegetables and fruits, to address nutritional deficiencies affecting urban and peri-urban households.

This initiative is being implemented in collaboration with the Windhoek municipality (Karas Region), the Swakopmund municipality (Erongo Region), the Rundu Town Council (Kavango East region), and the Daweb constituency (Maltahöhe) of the Hardap region.

Margaret Matengu, the acting director of agricultural production, extension and engineering services, echoed Aribeb’s sentiments.

“The urban agriculture is as a result of multilateralism and partnership between the Namibian government, the UNDP, and the government of Japan, and it is only through agriculture that Namibians can empower themselves – especially those in urban areas.”

She urged the beneficiaries to work hard and take advantage of the grant and training they will receive to uplift their

families’ livelihoods and create income for themselves.

Activities to be sponsored include horticulture, backyard gardening, poultry production, fodder production, agroforestry, orchards, vermicomposting, and smart agricultural concepts.

The next roll-out was scheduled to take place at Rundu, the same day, and then at Maltahöhe on 22 March.

## GOING SOUTH

The 22 March 2022 urban agriculture grant e-voucher card issuance and terminal roll-out event was hosted at Mariental as part of the four regions identified to benefit from the project.

The roll-out in the Hardap region will cover Maltahöhe (Daweb constituency), Mariental (Mariental constituency), the Gibeon district, and 14 beneficiaries have been identified to benefit from the project, titled ‘Strengthening Namibia’s food systems to recover from emergencies and disease-related shocks through the Build Back Better (BBB) programme’.

Delivering the welcoming remarks was Salomon Boois, the regional councillor for the Aranos constituency.

Boois expressed his appreciation of the opportunity for the inhabitants of the region, and urged the EIF to partner with the Hardap Regional Council to come up with projects that are tailor-made for the challenges facing the region.

Speaking on behalf of the EIF, Aribeb gave an overview of the BBB programme.

Said Aribeb: “This urban agriculture e-voucher system is meant to make accessibility of services to urban farmers much easier, as this is a digitalised service, and to additionally improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers in urban and peri-urban areas through income.”

Delivering the keynote address, the regional councillor for the Rehoboth Rural constituency and chairperson of the Hardap Regional Council, Gershon Dausab, urged beneficiaries to use the opportunity made available to them to demonstrate that the inhabitants of the Hardap region are capable.

“Resources are limited, and I urge you to ensure you commit to executing your project to the best of your abilities,” he said.

The chairperson said the regional council would commit to see how best it could be of support to the selected

beneficiaries with the execution of their projects.

He called for a unity of purpose between the EIF and the regional council, which would result in the development and financing of project proposals for the unique development of the Hardap region.

One of the beneficiaries, Penias Topnaar, said: “I am very happy about this grant as it would greatly assist me in extending my existing infrastructure and be able to grow more food for not only myself and my family, but possibly to sell and generate additional income which would improve my standard of living.”

In her closing remarks, Deensia Swartbooi, the regional councillor for the Mariental constituency, extended her gratitude to all the project’s proponents and partners.

“You have given our people hope to realise their dreams of becoming urban small-scale farmers through the e-voucher system.

“To you, the beneficiaries, we as the regional council want to see results.

“We want to see you creating employment opportunities and improving livelihoods with the grants you are receiving here today,” she said.

# ‘We were worried’

## • JEREMIAH NDJOZE

“WE were really in need of this kind of assistance, thank you Irema.”

These were the words of Edmund Haradoëb, one of the beneficiaries of the Environmental Investment Fund’s ‘Improving Rangeland and Ecosystem Management (Irema) Practices of Smallholder Farmers under Conditions of Climate Change’ project at Sesfontein, Fransfontein, and Warmquelle in the Kunene region.

The five-year project (from 2019 to 2024), which is implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, aims to reduce vulnerability and build the resilience of smallholder farmers to cope with the negative effects of climate change in the Kunene region.

In November 2020, the project, through the ministry, facilitated the handover of 425 goats to 20 vulnerable farmers, of which 12 are female.

Each farmer received 20 does (female goats) and one buck (male goat).

The value of these goats was estimated to be around N\$900 000, including a starter pack of remedies that each farmer received.

The handover also included drought relief fodder valued at N\$1,2 million.

This fodder was distributed to more than 2 500 farmers as part of the Irema project’s interim intervention in supporting farmers to cope with the devastating and prolonged drought in the region.

To Haradoëb, this intervention came right on time.

He says he was “very worried as the country



Farmers under the IREMA Project were capacitated on the on small stock farming

## ... Irema project in Kunene said to be right on time

was already faced with many challenges”.

Haradoëb is one many farmers who were on the verge of giving up, but is now facing the future with optimism.

“I have lost my goats, cows and donkeys due to the worst drought we experienced over the past years. From this breeding flock, I will be able to buy cows and donkeys, and return to the way we used to farm. That is our biggest desire,” he says.

To ensure productivity of the small stock received, the project team, together with technical staff members from the ministry, in collaboration with Agribank’s advisory services last week offered a three-day training session, which provided beneficiaries with both theoretical and practical skills.

Constancia Somes, another beneficiary, hailed the training workshop as inspiring.

“I consider myself lucky to be part of this training, as I have learnt a lot. I feel inspired

and motivated to continue farming again,” says Somes, who reported she had lost one of her goats to a predator.

Speaking at the training workshop, the EIF’s Chief Operations Officer, Karel Aribeb, commended the commitment of the fund to support farmers in the Kunene to cope with drought effects.

He, however, warned farmers to be extra careful of stock theft and predation.

In her closing remarks at the event, Mirjam Kaholongo, Irema’s national project manager, urged all beneficiaries to take good care of the goats and comply to by-laws, protocols, and the signed revolving agreement.

“It is my desire that these goats will have the intended impact on your livelihood and that they will multiply so that their offspring could benefit other community members in your region” she said.

To ensure the goats are used for their intended

purpose, a revolving agreement was signed between the ministry, Irema and the beneficiaries.

The agreement ensures the sustainability of the intervention.

As per this agreement, beneficiaries are expected to revolve the first 10 does after 18 months, and then 10 does after 36 months.

The Irema project will still distribute more than 2 000 goats to vulnerable farmers in the Kunene region.

Among other things, the project promotes climate-resilient development through supporting adaptation interventions, including sound rangeland management, the rehabilitation of boreholes, rehabilitation of the green schemes, the provision of fuel-efficient stoves, the supply and installation of drip irrigation systems, drought resilient seeds at household level, and the development of an early warning system tailored for the Kunene region.



# EIF ‘a real lifesaver’

Let's keep the revolving scheme going – Haradoes



The EIF's Small-stock Revolving Scheme is contributing positively the upliftment of livelihoods in the Kunene. Pictured above are some of the beneficiaries and the goats.

## • JEREMIAH NDJOZE

MAGRIETHA Haradoes from Uitkoms in the Kunene region is a beneficiary of the Environmental Investment Fund's small-stock revolving scheme (SRS), which she calls "a real lifesaver".

Uitkoms is situated north-east of Nimmerrus near Khorixas in the former Damaraland.

Khorixas has about 6 000 inhabitants who suffer from a lack of economic development and employment oppor-

tunities. This leads to frustration and outward migration among many of the town's young people.

The unemployment rate at the town is estimated to be around 70%.

Haradoes says prior to receiving 21 goats through the programme, of which 20 were nannies and one a buck, she had no income amid the region's ongoing drought. She says while some of the goats may have died as a result of the drought, the past kidding season saw her small stock grow to 54 goats.

"Initially some died, and only 14 from the original donation remained.

"However, these went through a kidding season and doubled, after which the second generation also went through their kidding season, adding up to the current number," Haradoes says.

She says rearing animals does, however, come with various challenges.

Her goats are currently dogged by a parasite infestation, she says.

"We are in dire need of dip medicine since our goats are experiencing produc-

tion losses through ticks and flies, and diseases associated with these pests," she says.

Haradoes says she is positive and awaiting a visit from the EIF team later this year.

"They were supposed to come and assess our performance in June, but could not make it. We have been told they are on their way," she says.

Haradoes was part of a group that received stock in June 2021, and in January next year she is expected to

return 10 goats to ensure the continuity of the revolving scheme and for more citizens to benefit from it.

"We are definitely set to meet that target," she says, urging all other beneficiaries of the project to ensure they protect what they have been entrusted with.

"To those who are yet to benefit, please take good care of the stock, even if you have to get shepherds, to ensure more people benefit from the scheme," Haradoes says.

## EIF grants on camera



Fransfontein Community, Kunene Region.



Retrofitted borehole in Kunene Region.



Complete Solar installation at the Mashare Agricultural Development Centre, Kavango East.



Hydroponic Farming and Green house at the Okongo Community Forest, Ohangwena Region.



Complete Solar Installation at the Sorris Sorris Lodge, Kunene Region.



Some of the 35 tractors procured and deployed with their implements (CA rippers) for Kavango East, Kavango West and Zambezi regions to lender CA services to both horticulture and rain-fed farmers.



# IREMA impacts on livelihoods at Warmquelle

THE Kunene region in north-western Namibia might be one of the most vulnerable to change and adaptability in the entire country, but it remains habitable. As such, the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia has moved in with a project aimed at improving rangeland and ecosystem management practices of smallholder farmers under condition of climate change at Sesfontein, Fransfontein, and Warmquelle. Four years later, the initiative known as Irema is bearing fruits, impacting positively on the lives of its beneficiaries and their communities. This project provides interventions such as a small stock revolving scheme, drought-tolerant seeds, garden tools and agroforestry seedlings.

Irema has been funded by the Global Climate Fund (GCF) to an amount of N\$9.3 million – with a N\$700,000 government contribution.

Freelance journalist **Jeremiah Ndjoze (JN)** speaks to **Eben Swanepoel (ES)**, who is one of the fund's beneficiaries through his project, known as Kunene Fresh Produce, to establish the degree to which the fund has benefited his venture and the overall impact on the community at large. Swanepoel's project is situated at Warmquelle, about 150 kilometers, west of Opuwo.

**JN: Kunene Fresh Produce is one of the beneficiaries of the Irema project by the EIF, with financial support from the Global Climate Fund (GCF). When did you learn of the fund and what benefits did your project draw from the disbursements?**

**ES:** We heard of this project at the beginning of the year and submitted our applications, following the workshop at Khorixas. Thereafter, we received the drought-tolerant seeds. We used these seeds to further expand our plantation, and I must say that our project has grown significantly from where we were. However, there is still a need for further development, because, with the growth came an increasing demand for our fresh produce. Be that as it may, we are thankful for the GCF assistance.

**JN: You are talking about an increase in demand. To what extent**



Eben Swanepoel

**has this demand increased? What was the size of your market then; and how is it now?**

**ES:** Initially, our products were only supplied to members of our community. After receiving the seeds, we are now supplying the schools and lodges in our vicinity. Sadly, though, we are not moving a lot of weight, because our cultivation area is rather small. As such, we need to expand so as to enable us to supply more schools and businesses, going forward. The idea is to ensure that these establishments get a regular supply of veggies, despite the challenges.

**JN: How many members do you have in your project and how are you planning to ensure the project's longevity?**

**ES:** We are currently four: two fulltime, and two temporary. The idea, however, is to expand the project so that we can employ more young people.

**JN: Having tasted what looks like success in the horticultural field, what would you like to say to the government and other likely donors?**

**ES:** To the government I want to say that we are currently going through a difficult time as a nation in terms of food security, and what can move us forward is venturing into the horticultural produce space. I, therefore, would like to urge the government to strengthen their support to rural communities where many are faced with an array of problems.



**JN: What impact did this project have on the livelihoods of people in your area?**

**ES:** The community really struggled to make ends meet. There was

not much in terms of horticultural produce in our area. Following the assistance from the EIF, we are now extending this help to vulnerable children and the elderly through

donations from our surplus products.

In short, this project has impacted positively on the livelihoods of the general population in our area and we are grateful.



## ‘Happy anniversary, EIF’



Talita Litwayi  
Assistant Climate Change  
Programming Specialist

“May the journey of corporate success continue in the coming years. Wishing you a very happy anniversary, EIF.”



Salome Naivela  
Support Consultant  
(Stakeholders Engagement & Administration) EDA Project

“Happy tenth anniversary, EIF. Wishing you continuous success and innovation.”



Shivute Nangula  
IREMA Long-term Project  
Support Consultant

“To all executive members of the EIF, thank you for taking the company to a new level of success. May the coming years be similarly successful. Cheers.”



Kredula Shimwandi  
Professional Intern: Gender & Data Management

“From the team that deals with gender and climate change, we are increasingly happy to be a part of an organisation that is always striving for better and new heights.”



Mvute Uunona  
Finance and Administrative  
Assistant

“Thank you for being such an important part of my success. I am so honoured to be a part of this team.”



Lizl Timbo  
Manager Human Resources

“It has been an honour to be part of this milestone. Congratulations EIF. Here is to ten more years of growth, expansion and impactful influence.”



Bryan Gaomab  
Project Manager: EbA Project

“I am happy to be part and parcel of a great team, which is implementing climate-change interventions. Let us keep up the good work.”



Justina Andreas  
Professional Intern:  
Procurement

“Congratulations on this monumental occasion. Happy birthday, EIF.”

### • STAFF REPORTER

Researchers say creating a work environment in which employees are happy and optimistic could generate benefits for any company.

A study by the University of Warwick has found that happiness makes employees about 12% more productive.

Thus, creating a work environment that promotes happiness in all employees could boost any entity's bottom line and success rate.

This ‘happy employee’ formula is seemingly one that folks at the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) has come to embrace.

Amid ongoing celebrations, the parastatal's employees were recently caught on camera, and had nothing but praise for the institution's achievements.