



Keynote Speech by

Honourable Bernadette Jagger

Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism, MP

**On the occasion of the Final Stakeholder Dialogue of the
Resource Mobilization for Biodiversity Conservation project
(ResMob)**

Time and Date: 08:30, Tuesday 25th September 2018

Venue: Hilton Hotel, Windhoek

Dr. Malan Lindeque, Chairperson of the Sustainable Development Advisory Council,

Distinguished representatives from different private and public institutions,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all on behalf of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to this the final stakeholder dialogue of the Resource Mobilization for Biodiversity Conservation project.

This is a project being jointly implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ). The project is financed by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB).

With the project set to come to an end later this year, it was considered an opportune time to renew contact and to update you all as key stakeholders on the progress and achievements of the project, while also soliciting your inputs as we finalize the key outputs of the project.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Project has played a valuable role in supporting the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in the areas of natural capital accounting, the economic valuation of ecosystem services and the development of economic instruments for biodiversity conservation. These are issues prioritized in our Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2013-2022) and they are further reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals. Target 15.9 of the SDGs reads and I quote “*By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts*”. With 2020 fast approaching, the time has come for us to put in place the measures and systems that will allow us to achieve this target.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to inform you here today that we have made considerable progress in developing these measures and systems. You will hear later today about the work we have undertaken, which has focused on:

(i) Demonstrating the value of nature – knowing the true value of nature is essential to help us understand the dependence of economic development on natural resources and the need for us to invest in nature and environmental protection.

(ii) Showing the baseline expenditure on biodiversity in Namibia and future needs – of course a baseline is essential to know where we are starting from. If we are to increase our spending on biodiversity, we

first need to get an accurate picture of what we are currently spending and the trends in this expenditure.

(iii) Potential biodiversity financing solutions – across the world, Governments are reducing overall expenditure while Namibia is also experiencing declining investment from many donors partners given its classification as an upper middle income country. What can we do in this context to generate alternative and innovative sources of finance to stimulate investment into the protection of the environment and nature?

In addition, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Even though this is the final stakeholder dialogue of the Resource Mobilization Project, we are busy developing a follow-up project known as the Bioeconomy Project, which will focus on developing an economy based on the commercialization of indigenous animals and plants in selected landscapes. We look forward to sharing the progress in developing this project with you today and receiving your inputs so that it is reflective of our national priorities and improves the livelihoods of our rural communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Without giving away too much regarding the results of the studies we have undertaken, allow me to summarize a few key take home messages that we would like you to keep hold of after today's dialogue:

- The value of ecosystem services in Namibia exceeds N\$13 billion per year;

- Total biodiversity expenditure from all sources is slightly more than N\$1 billion per year in Namibia;
- To fully achieve the targets of our Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, it is estimated that we need to double the level of investment in biodiversity.

These are significant findings and important pieces of research to guide us as we seek to finalize the major outcome of this Project, which is the Resource Mobilization Strategy for Biodiversity Conservation. This strategy aims to identify and implement a range of innovative financing instruments that can increase revenue and funding towards biodiversity conservation and broader environmental protection.

Through the consultative process, the most promising biodiversity financing instruments we have identified so far are:

1. Payments for ecosystem services
2. Raising park entrance fees, particularly for international tourists
3. Biodiversity offsetting
4. Identification and introduction of environmental levies for re-investment into environmental protection
5. Eco-labelling
6. Funds raised from lotteries and gambling
7. Leveraging public and donor funding and
8. Green finance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are all aware of the difficult economic and financial climate we are facing but it is incumbent upon all of us to come up with innovative solutions to mobilize resources to address the critical environmental challenges we are facing. Here I refer to issues such as human wildlife conflict, inadequate infrastructure in our protected areas, the financial sustainability of our community-based natural resource management programme and improvements in our waste management systems and practices.

If we can implement some or all of the financial instruments we have identified in our draft strategy, I am confident that we will be able to maintain and even enhance the health of our environment and ecosystems for the benefit of our future generations. I therefore encourage all of you to give your inputs and ideas here today to further enhance and enrich the draft strategy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to thank the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) for its ongoing support to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, and in particular the Resmob Project.

I thank all of you in advance for your active participation here today and I wish you fruitful and enlightening deliberations during this our final stakeholder dialogue meeting.

I thank you for your attention.