



© Wilderness Safaris, Skeleton Coast, Namibia

8.14 Namibia

Protected and conserved areas in Namibia⁷³

Namibia has 148 protected areas covering 313,534 km² of the land and 9,646 km² of the ocean (UNEP-WCMC & IUCN, 2019o).

To protect its rich biodiversity, Namibia has established a system of 21 state-managed protected areas with the goal of protecting and conserving biological diversity, and also generating much needed revenue through tourism. These protected areas are being complemented by strong community-based natural resource management through communal conservancies. Remarkably, the entire coastline of Namibia is protected. Namibia has a rich marine ecosystem, as a result of the Benguela upwelling system, which brings the nutrient rich waters from around 200–300 m deep and fuels high rates of phytoplankton growth, making it one of the most productive marine ecosystems in the world.

Transboundary protected and conserved areas

Namibia includes part of three transboundary conservation areas, namely /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld TFCA, Iona Skeleton Coast TFCA and the Kavango Zambezi TFCA.

Policy context

A comprehensive report on legislation and policy related to protected area management, governance, and equity was undertaken by the BIOPAMA programme. It identified 31 relevant laws and policies in Namibia (Tessema, 2019).

Key species⁷⁴

While Namibia has generally had a relatively lower number of species compared to those countries with wetter climates, it does have a high level of endemism, particularly among plants, invertebrates, reptiles and frogs. Namibia is home to 50 species of amphibians (12 endemic), 618 species of arachnids (11 endemic), 592 species of birds (2 endemic), 114 species of fish (8 endemic), over 6,400 species of insects (24 endemic), 229 species of mammals (7 endemic), more than 4,000 species of plants (14 endemic), and 254 species of reptiles (28 endemic).

Pressures and threats⁷⁵

The main threats to biodiversity in Namibia are: unsustainable water use (large-scale irrigation, pollution, damming and over-abstraction of groundwater); impacts of climate change (increased drought and flood events, shifts in species distribution, and impacts on vulnerable ecosystems); extractive industries (expansion of mining and prospecting in ecologically sensitive areas); unsustainable land management (soil erosion, land degradation, deforestation and bush encroachment); alien invasive species; illegal harvesting and trade of wildlife and plant resources; human-wildlife conflict; and uncontrolled bush fires.

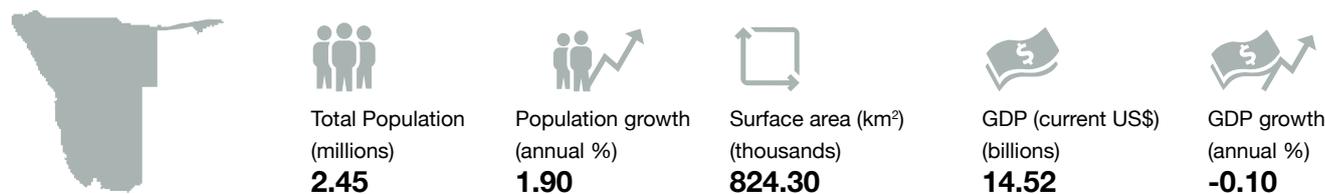
Many of these threats are driven by the expansion of urban areas and increasing industrialisation, leading to increasing demand for resources and services and increasing the types and volumes of waste and pollution.

⁷³ The section draws on information contained in Namibia's Sixth National Report to the CBD (Republic of Namibia, 2018).

⁷⁴ The section draws on information contained in Namibia's Fifth National Report to the CBD (Ministry of Environment & Tourism, Republic of Namibia, 2014).

⁷⁵ The section draws on information contained in Rwanda's Fourth National Report to the CBD (Republic of Rwanda, 2009).

Figure 8.27 Namibia Summary



Source: The World Bank Group, 2018.

Area Protected:

148 protected areas



covering **313 534 km²** of land



covering **9 646 km²** of ocean

Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN, 2019o



229 mammal species

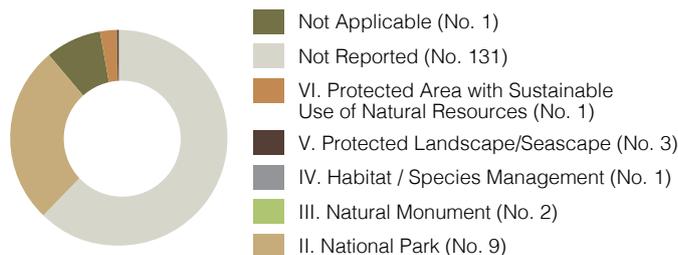


592 bird species



254 reptile species

Protected and conserved areas in Namibia in IUCN Management Categories



Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019o).

Coverage of protected areas in Namibia

Type of protected area	Area protected or conserved*	Area protected or conserved**
Terrestrial and inland water	37.89%	17.00%
Coastal and marine	1.71%	-

* WDPA dataset

** From 2014 National Report on Biodiversity

Source: Ministry of Environment & Tourism, Republic of Namibia (2014); UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019o).

Protected and conserved areas designated as global sites of importance in Namibia

Global designation	No. of sites
UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Natural or Mixed)	1
Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites)	5

Source: Ramsar (2019); UNESCO (2019a, 2019b).

National designations of protected and conserved areas in Namibia

National designation	No.	Area (km ²)
Private Reserve	2	2 887
Community Forest	33	31 998
National Park	19	137 446
Marine Protected Area	1	9 492
Communal Conservancy	79	160 425
Concession	7	14 535
Forest Reserve	1	1 485

Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019o).

Priority areas for conservation

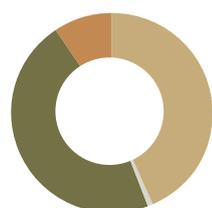


19 sites

Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas

Source: BirdLife International (2019c).

Protected and conserved areas in Namibia in IUCN Governance Types



- Not Reported (No. 3)
- D. Governance by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (No. 112)
- C. Private Governance (No. 2)
- A. Governance by Government (No. 31)

Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019o).

Figure 8.28 Mauritius protected areas

