



# COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS FOR CONSERVATION SITE STRATEGY

## ENGAGING LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN AFRICA



# OKAVANGO DELTA

OCTOBER 2020



Flanders State of the Art

PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS FOR  
CONSERVATION (COMPACT) REPLICATION PROJECT  
AT THE PANHANDLE OF THE  
OKAVANGO DELTA WORLD  
HERITAGE SITE,  
BOTSWANA

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<b>UNDP Contact Person</b>	GEF/SGP National Coordinator Ms. Abigail Lillian Engleton
<b>Consultant</b>	Prof. O. T. Thakadu Okavango Research Institute Maun Botswana e-mail: othakadu@ub.ac.bw
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# List Of Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>BCCT</b>	Bukhakhwe Cultural Conservation Trust
<b>BTO</b>	Botswana Tourism Organisation
<b>CBNRM</b>	Community-Based Natural Resources Management
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CHA</b>	Controlled Hunting Area
<b>CORB</b>	Cubango-Okavango River Basin
<b>COMPACT</b>	Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation
<b>DEA</b>	Department of Environmental Affairs
<b>DMS</b>	Department of Metrological Services
<b>DNMM</b>	Department of National Museum and Monuments
<b>DWNP</b>	Department of Wildlife and National Parks
<b>FMD</b>	Foot and Mouth Disease
<b>CBPP</b>	Contagious Bovine Pleuro-Pneumonia
<b>FR</b>	Forest Reserve
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>HWC</b>	Human-wildlife Conflicts
<b>ICT</b>	Itekeng Community Trust
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>KAZA</b>	Kavango Zambezi
<b>LCB</b>	Local Consultative Body
<b>MABPS</b>	Man & Biosphere Programmes
<b>MENT</b>	Ministry of Environment Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism
<b>MLG</b>	Ministry Local Government
<b>MLGLH</b>	Ministry of Local Government, Lands and Housing
<b>MLGRD</b>	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
<b>MLH</b>	Ministry of Lands and Housing
<b>MLHE</b>	Ministry of Land, Housing and Environment
<b>MOMS</b>	Management Oriented Monitoring System
<b>MYT</b>	Makgobokgobo Youth Trust
<b>NBSAP</b>	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
<b>NCONGO</b>	Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NRP</b>	Natural Resources Programme
<b>NTDP</b>	Ngamiland Tourism Development Plan
<b>NWDC</b>	North West District Council
<b>OCT</b>	Okavango Community Trust
<b>OD</b>	Okavango Delta
<b>ODIS</b>	Okavango Delta Information System
<b>ODMP</b>	Okavango Delta Management Plan

<b>ODRS</b>	Okavango Delta Ramsar Site
<b>OJCT</b>	Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust
<b>OKACOM</b>	Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission
<b>OPCT</b>	Okavango Panhandle Community Trust
<b>OPT</b>	Okavango Polers Trust
<b>ORI</b>	Okavango Research Institute
<b>OUV</b>	Outstanding Universal Value
<b>OWMC</b>	Okavango Wetland Management Committee
<b>PA</b>	Protected Area
<b>PRA</b>	Participatory Rural Appraisal
<b>RRA</b>	Rapid Rural Appraisal
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Committee
<b>SAP</b>	Strategic Action Programme
<b>SARAMSAR</b>	Southern Africa Ramsar Sites
<b>SAREP</b>	Southern Africa Region Environmental Programme
<b>SGP</b>	Small Grants Programme
<b>TAC</b>	Technical Advisory Committee
<b>TCT</b>	Teemashane Community Trust
<b>TDA</b>	Tourism Development Area
<b>TDN</b>	Tourism Development Node
<b>TLB</b>	Tawana Land Board
<b>TOCaDI</b>	Trust for Okavango Cultural and Development Initiatives
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nation Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organisation
<b>VDC</b>	Village Development Committee
<b>WCP</b>	Wildlife Conservation Policy
<b>WH</b>	World Heritage
<b>WHC</b>	World Heritage Committee
<b>WHS</b>	World Heritage Site
<b>WMA</b>	Wildlife Management Area
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund

# Executive Summary

The purpose of this strategy is to provide a planning framework to guide the implementation of the COMPACT replication project in the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site (WHS) in Botswana. The strategy is developed by the Ministry of Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism through the Department of National Museum and Monuments and Department of Environmental Affairs. This is implemented in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme through the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF/SGP), the World Heritage Centre of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and with financial support from the Government of Flanders (Belgium).

The COMPACT model in Botswana is part of a UNESCO initiative “Engaging local communities in the conservation and management of World Heritage Sites in Africa”. The development of the strategy followed the adoption of the three closely linked core elements of the COMPACT model, being baseline assessment, conceptual model and site strategy. It is underpinned by three COMPACT guiding principles to support its effective implementation, participation, landscape approach, and adaptive management.

The strategy has been developed through extensive community consultations through kgotla meetings, focus group discussions, and key informants’ interviews with different resource users within the Panhandle and stakeholder workshops. The North West District Council and the District Development Committee were briefed and consulted on the Strategy. The public consultations report and extensive review of existing and previous works, together with other strategic frameworks such as relevant management plans were used to inform the development of this strategy. The strategy seeks to engage all relevant stakeholders in the management of the Okavango Delta World Heritage site’s natural, cultural and heritage resources in the Panhandle area, and concomitantly contribute to inclusive social and economic development and the quality of life of communities, whilst fully respecting the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage Site.

The COMPACT site strategy outlines six (6) priority areas guiding the sustainable management of the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS from 2020 to 2024.

The priority areas, informed by the threats, challenges and opportunities affecting the area’s biodiversity:

**Priority Area 1:** Increasing community awareness and knowledge of the Panhandle’s natural and cultural heritage assets

**Priority Area 2:** Protecting and ensuring sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage assets of the landscape.

**Priority Area 3:** Increasing stakeholders’ capacity and skills to use the Panhandle’s natural resources sustainably

**Priority Area 4:** Achieving effective management of the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS

**Priority Area 5:** Increasing diversification and improving sustainable livelihoods opportunities for local communities and user groups

**Priority Area 6:** Developing destination marketing for the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS

The priority areas translate into six (6) strategic goals, with each goal having several corresponding objectives and intervention strategies. The strategy recommends as part of modalities of implementation a permanent local governance structure to support involvement of stakeholders and local communities in the conservation and stewardship of the WHS, being the Local Consultative Body (LCB). The LCB, guided by this strategy will facilitate provision of small-grants for community-based conservation and livelihood projects as well as for targeted capacity building, networking and exchange activities. The strategic document highlight potential risks that the COMPACT project implementation must be cognisant of in the landscape, as these may impact on the achievement of the objectives. COMPACT project must therefore take proactive measures to minimize any potential risks that may also negatively impact the project’s timelines.



**Aerial View of the Okavango Delta**



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The need for active multi-stakeholder involvement and participation in conservation of biodiversity resources and protected areas management is no longer debatable. This is necessary for local communities that are living within the landscapes where the protected areas and resources are found. International organizations, for example, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDP), and the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme (MABPS), have emphasised the need to integrate conservation and sustainable development objectives (Baird et al, 2018; Larsen, 2012; Murphy, 2010).

Implementation of community-based initiatives worldwide has shown that when local communities are empowered to co-manage environmental resources and derive benefits from this conservation of biodiversity and protected areas can be enhanced assured.

The World Heritage Convention has evolved overtime to embrace community participation and engagement in the process of World Heritage sites designation. In 2007, the World Heritage Committee adopted a strategic objective on community engagement, thereby underscoring the key role played by local communities in the conservation of World Heritage sites. In 2015, the Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention was adopted. This shift necessitates for mechanisms that facilitate meaningful and active participation of local people site nomination management and conservation of World Heritage Sites, capacity strengthening and ensuring benefit sharings and support sustainable livelihoods.

Community Management of Protected Areas for Conservation (COMPACT) was established as an innovative approach towards community engagement and co-management of World Heritage Sites and other globally significant protected areas. The COMPACT model, having been piloted globally, including six (6) World Heritage Sites in Africa, is being replicated within the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site, Botswana focusing on its panhandle area. This work is conducted under a UNESCO World Heritage initiative "Engaging Local Communities in the Management of the World Heritage Sites in Africa". The long-term goals of the COMPACT replication project in the Panhandle of Okavango Delta World Heritage site are: i) establishing the COMPACT community conservation programme constituting a permanent structure to support involvement of local communities in the conservation of the World Heritage site, ii) providing small-grants for community-based conservation and livelihood projects, and iii) supporting targeted capacity building, networking and exchange activities.

## 1.2 CBNRM in Botswana

Community participation in conservation is not new in Botswana. In 1989, the Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) programme, being "a development approach that incorporates natural resources conservation" (Government of Botswana, 2007, p. ii) was initiated in northern Botswana. The programme later spread throughout the entire country, with about 145 community-based organisations (CBOs) reported in 2016 (Centre of Applied Research, 2016). Northern Botswana, especially Ngamiland district, is a hive of active CBNRM CBOs, some of which are operating within the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site. Implementation of COMPACT replication project in the Okavango Delta

WHS is thereby implemented mostly within local communities either already engaged in the CBNRM programme or are those aware of the programme.

Both the conceptual origins of the CBNRM and COMPACT assume that local communities' active participation in management and conservation of natural resources and protected areas improves the effectiveness of these strategies. They postulate that when communities are empowered to manage resources within their areas, and they derive benefits that will contribute to livelihoods improvements from such management and conservation, resource sustainability will be ensured. The CBNRM programme in Botswana has been implemented in the wildlife management areas (WMAs), mostly been buffer zones around national parks and game reserves. The COMPACT programme operates project within a WHS or other globally recognized protected areas, such as Biosphere Reserves property. The modalities of operation are similar, only that COMPACT could be viewed as a form of CBNRM in a WHS or property.

### 1.3 COMPACT Replication Project in the Panhandle

The COMPACT replication project at the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site comes also as an initiative to respond to the Decisions of the World Heritage Committee: to expand and strengthen programmes which accommodate traditional resource use for livelihoods, user access rights, cultural rights and access to opportunities to participate in tourism sector, while keeping up with the World Heritage site's Outstanding Universal Value (World Heritage Committee, 2014). The project further supports "continue efforts to address a range of other protection and management issues including governance, stakeholder empowerment, management planning, management capacity and control of alien invasive species" as requested by the World Heritage Committee, 2014, p. 7). at the time of inscribing the Okavango Delta on the World .

The Government of Botswana (through Department of National Museum and Monuments and the Department of Environmental Affairs), collaborating with the GEF Small Grants Programme, and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre initiated a preparatory process to develop planning frameworks for the implementation of the COMPACT replication project at the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site.

The preparatory process has entailed production of an inception report a scoping report, a baseline assessment a conceptual framework/model report. The Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site COMPACT Strategy is the culmination of this process. The Strategy must therefore be read in conjunction with the

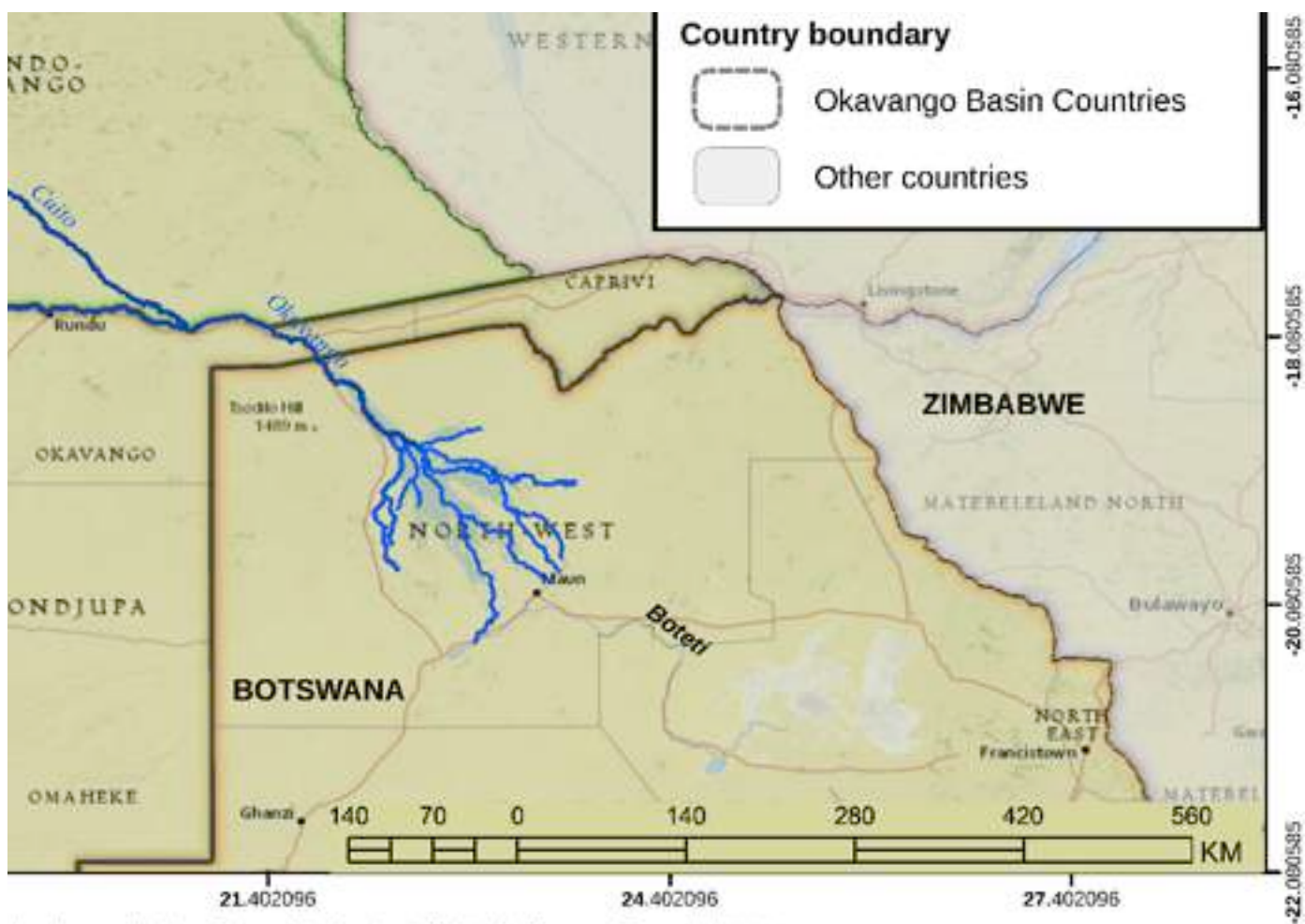
preceding reports indicated above. The Inception Report outlined the methods and approaches used in executing the project. The second report captures the situational/scoping analysis based on multi-stakeholder consultation process, i.e., the consultation and scoping exercise. The situational analysis synthesized the issues, concerns and challenges from the perspective of the stakeholders relating to a variety of issues within the Panhandle. These includes among others threats to the biodiversity and environmental resources and integrity of the area, effects of anthropogenic activities on the landscape and livelihoods, conflicts such as land use and Human-wildlife interaction, resource utilisation, policies, climate change, CBNRM and tourism related matters.

The baseline assessment detailed the baseline socio-economic data, critical natural, cultural, and heritage assets and their status. The conceptual model depicted the site level processes that impact the site condition. The conceptual model further informed the development of the strategic framework, being the outline of the COMPACT Site Strategy. The strategic framework is now being elaborated in this report.

This strategy guides implementation of the COMPACT conservation programme in the Panhandle area, keeping with Okavango Delta World Heritage Site's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of exceptional biodiversity and scenic values. The report also presents a structure to support involvement of local communities in the conservation of the World Heritage Site and to provide small grants for community-based conservation and livelihood initiatives as well as targeted capacity building, networking and exchange activities.

### 1.4 Project Area Description

The Okavango Delta is situated in the Ngami-land District, North Western Botswana. The Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta in Botswana is part of the Okavango River Basin that has the bulk of its catchment area in Angola (Figure 1.1).



<https://www.odis.uibw/>; Prepared by Anastacia Makati; At: Okavango Research Institute graphic, Esri, DeLorme, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, IPC; (ESRI, 2020)

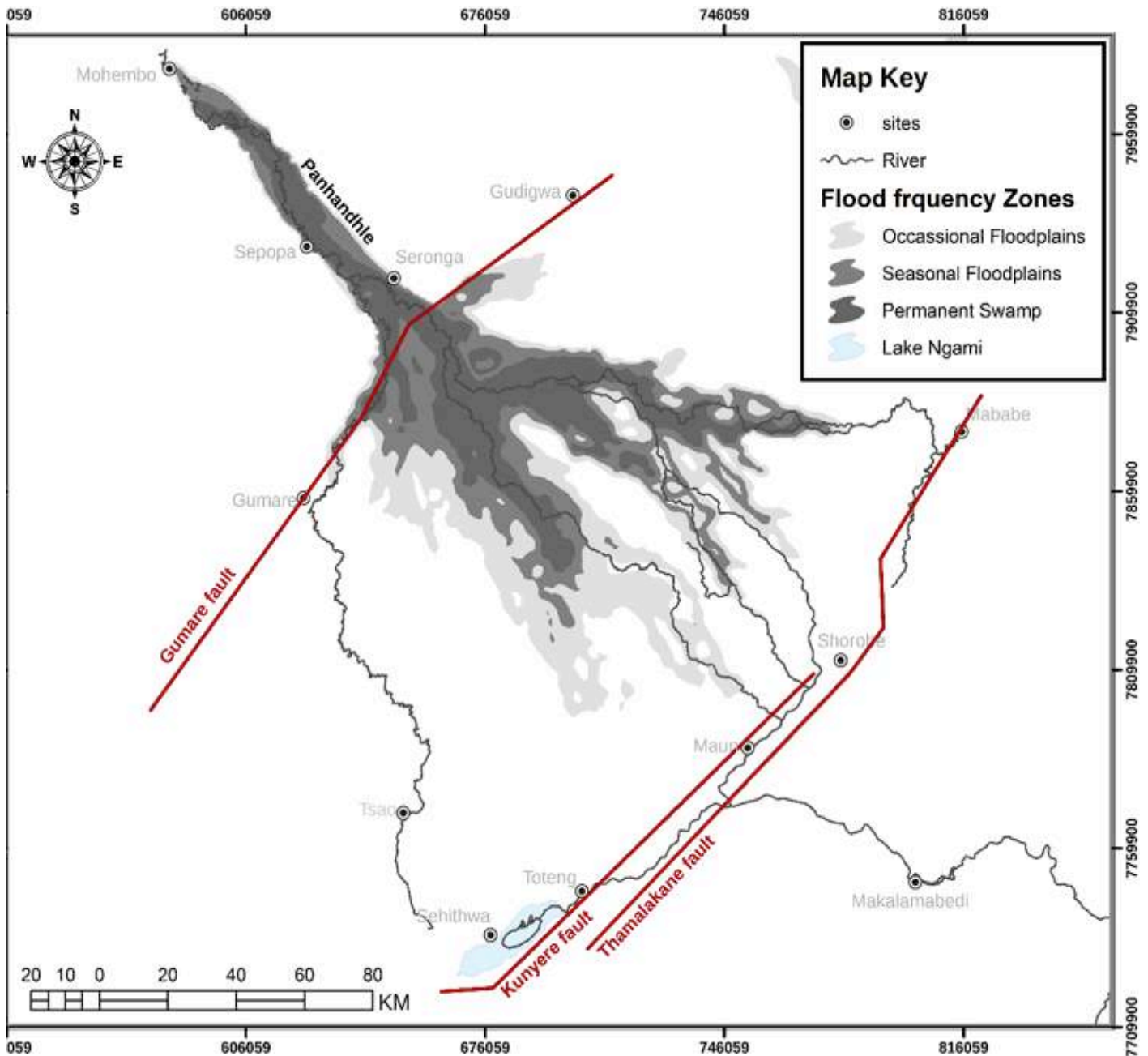
### Figure 1.1. Okavango River Basin

The Panhandle area is situated between the Popa Falls on the Kavango River in Namibia, being the northern terminal end of the Panhandle, and extends downstream to Seronga in Botswana. The Gumare fault divides the Panhandle from the alluvial fan (Figure 1.2).

The Panhandle, being the Okavango River is about 120 km in length and 15-20 km wide.

It consists of a single meandering river surrounded by vast floodplains.

In the upper Panhandle reach, the channel is about 3-5 m deep, and decreases to about 4 m deep at the lower end. The total area of the Panhandle is 820 km<sup>2</sup>. It receives on average about 10,100 mm<sup>3</sup> of water annually at Mohembo, with a range of 6,000 to 16,400 mm<sup>3</sup>.



**Figure 1.2 Panhandle and Okavango Delta**

The Okavango Delta is a Ramsar site, designated in 1996 under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Under the Convention, the Delta is considered a wetland of international importance and of significant value locally and globally. Part of the Okavango Delta Ramsar Site (ODRS) was inscribed as the 1000<sup>th</sup> World Heritage Site 2014 and included on UNESCO's World Heritage List in June 2014 under criteria (vii) (ix) and (x) due to its exceptional scenic, ecosystem and biodiversity values (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1432>). The inscribed World Heritage property encompasses an area of 2,023,590 ha with a buffer zone of 2,286,630 ha. As a World Heritage site, it is a protected World Heritage Convention as a common heritage of humankind. The conservation and management strategies of

the site are cultural and natural heritage site of international importance under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention.

The double international designation status underscores the significance of the Delta to biodiversity conservation globally and demonstrates the importance of integrating conservation and preservation objectives with sustainable use of the wetland.

In terms of ecological zones, the upper Panhandle is classified as a riparian woodland (from Mohembo to Sepopa) while the lower Panhandle (Sepopa/Gumare to Seronga) is mainly permanent swamps. The Panhandle has exceptionally high vegetation therefore guided by the Convention and the WHS' statement of Outstanding Universal Value.

variability, and a diversity of ecosystems and habitats, being a home to a variety of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife.

Elephants are dominant species in the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta. It is estimated that in 2010, there were 15,429 elephants in an area of 8732 km<sup>2</sup>. The combined estimates of 2018 for NG10, 11, 12 and 13 indicated a total of 15,242 elephants, with almost 80% (n = 12010) concentrated in NG11 and 10 (Chase, Schlossberg, Sutcliffe & Seonyatseng, 2018). Other species include zebra, wildebeest and these concentrates much along the Panhandle on floodplains for dry season grazing and water.

Cheetah, leopards, wild dogs and lions are common in the area and causes livestock depredation. The Panhandle is considered key breeding site for the Nile crocodile. Other water dependent species common in the Panhandle includes the Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsipymnus*), Red Lechwe (*Kobus lechwe*) and Sitatunga (*Tragelaphus speckii*). The Panhandle area is key for fish production, mainly the off-channel lagoons and a variety of bird species with nesting sites within the Panhandle

### 1.5 Land Use

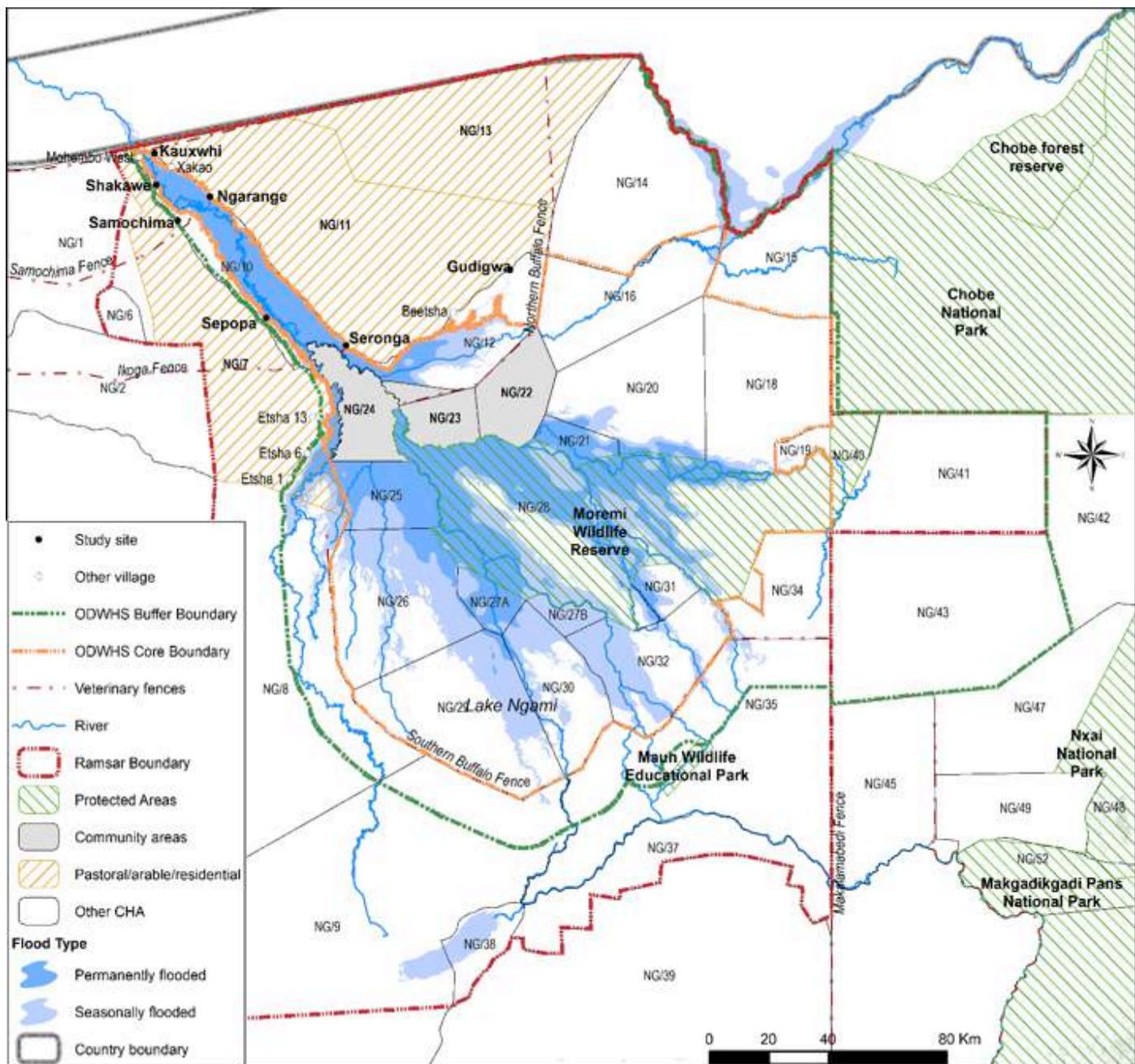
The Panhandle is situated in the Ngamiland West, and comprises two sections separated by the Okavango River, being the eastern and the western side.

The settlement pattern signifies reliance of the local populace upon the Okavango River for domestic water. The mainstay livelihoods activities within the Panhandle communities includes arable and pastoral farming, subsistence fishing, and collection of veldt products, crafts and tourism.

All land in the Panhandle is tribal land, administered through the Tawana Land Board. The Panhandle falls within Controlled Hunting Area (CHA) NG10, and it is bordered on the western side by NG7, with the eastern side being NG 11, NG12, and NG13 and the southern tail end being NG24 (Figure 1.3). The Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site lies within Zone 1 of the Ngamiland District Planning Zones, occupying an area of 5 750 km<sup>2</sup>, translating into 5.27% of the district area. The area tourism attraction includes the Panhandle area now being part of the larger Okavango Delta World Heritage Site, abundance and diversity of fish stocks; the wildlife associated with the river and its wetlands; abundant birdlife; crocodile breeding areas and relatively large numbers of elephants.



**Okavango River**



**Figure 1.3 Land Use around the Panhandle**

## 1.6 Biophysical Environment

In terms of the bio-physical environment, the Panhandle area is rich in biodiversity, such as wildlife. The area is a home to the giant reptiles and breeding grounds to the same. The area is rich in bird species, water dependent wildlife and the channel is considered key for birdlife. The area supports high fish diversity, more so due to the permanence of water in the river channel.

The area has diverse ecological zones and is considered one of the areas with exceptionally high vegetation variability, with a diversity of ecosystem and habitats. This makes the Panhandle area an ideal home to a variety of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. Plant diversity is high in the Panhandle, with 77 plant species identified in the upper Panhandle and 131 plant species in the lower Panhandle. The physiography of the area presents diverse eco-regions and island types. In terms of hydrology, the Panhandle plays a key role as a conduit of water and sediments to the Delta fan.

The diversity in the bio-physical presents the Panhandle as an area with unique tourism potential, a characteristic already realised through various planning documents relevant to the area and the region.

### 1.7 Tourism

Owing to the uniqueness of the area, it has been suggested that the Panhandle be marketed as a water-based tourist destination within a rural setting. However, to grow tourism in the area, there is a need to upgrade the road infrastructure leading to the area, for example, the main Maun – Shakawe tarred road and the Mohembo – Gudigwa road. The current bridge development in the Mohembo area will also help smoothen traffic movement within the area to facilitate tourism. The Panhandle therefore offers potential for COMPACT replication implementation in that the local communities, through the Trusts, could venture into tourism in the area such as avi-tourism, boat cruises, campsites and cultural tourism. Attempts must also be made to make other stakeholders such as the funding agencies (e.g., CEDA, LEA) to the area to inform the communities on their services.

There is much potential for sustainable culture and heritage-based tourism have potential to flourish in the area. This is so because of diversity of rich ethnic and cultural groups found co-existing within the area. Eight (8) cultural landscapes of the San in the Ngamiland West, between Mohembo West and Gudigwa have been documented in literature (See Matswiri, 2017). These are areas which communities expressed readiness to use for cultural tourism. The communities also expressed willingness to venture into tourism as an alternative to failing agriculture production in the area, but there are several factors that prevent them from participating in the industry. These include among others the following:

- Lack of capacity and resources to venture into the tourism industry.
- Marginalisation of citizens in accessing prime concession areas within the Delta.
- Protracted processes and procedures for acquisition of tourism enterprise licenses.
- High start-up capital for tourism ventures, and complex funding requirements within citizen funding schemes
- Inadequate land for tourism ventures

These challenges need to be addressed to ensure active citizen participation in the tourism industry. The current provision to undertake agro-tourism in agricultural land is a step in the right direction towards resolving the problem of land and land use. It is important that the requirements of the agro-tourism guidelines are disseminated widely to the local communities for wider awareness, knowledge and potential benefit.

### 1.8 CBNRM Trusts

Communities in the Panhandle have formed Trusts to benefit in the CBNRM program within the region, and the implementation of the COMPACT will facilitate community participation and benefit. There are 14 CBO Trusts in the Panhandle area established to benefit from the areas adjoining NG10 (Table 1.1) and other resources within the Panhandle. Among these, only the Okavango Community Trust is fully operational with the rest being either partially or non-operational. The Okavango Community Trust and Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust were established as part of the initial CBNRM community based organisations (CBOs) guided by the land use and development plans for WMAs in tribal land (1991) and the management plan for CHAs allocated to communities in Ngamiland wildlife management areas (1995).

They were among the first CBOs established under the CBNRM programme in the Ngamiland District. COMPACT implementation must initially work towards resuscitating the non-operational Trusts in the Panhandle. Shaikarawe Community Trust and the Makgobokgobo Youth Trust are not yet registered.

Registration of the former was delayed by a requirement to procedurally resign its membership from Teemashane Community Trust (Table 1.1). The latter, that is Makgobokgobo Youth Trust, is new and was allocated NG23A in September 2019 through a Presidential Directive.

**Table 1.1 Community Trusts in the Panhandle**

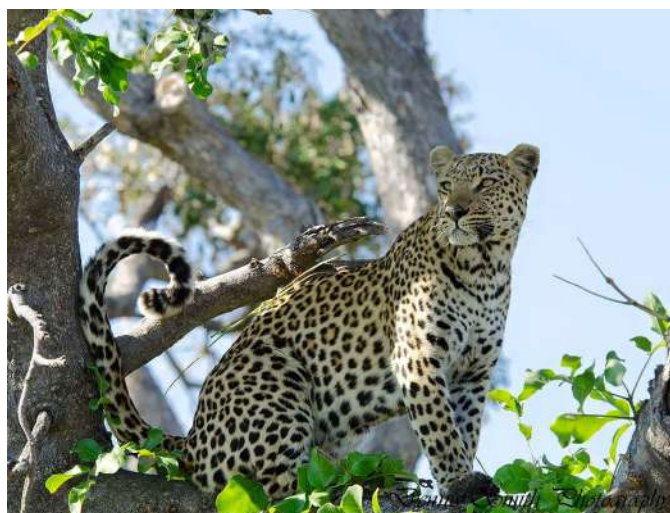
Trust	Villages/Settlements	Controlled Hunting Area	Trust Status
1. Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust	Jao, Ikoga, Etsha 3, Etsha 6, Etsha 13	NG 24	Operational
2. Okavango Community Trust	Seronga, Gunotsoga, Eretsha, Beetsha, Gudigwa	NG 22, 23	Operational
3. Bukhakhwe Cultural Conservation Trust	Gudigwa	Gudigwa, NG 12	Not operational
4. Tcheku Community Trust	Kaputura, Tovere, Kyeica	NG 13	Not operational
5. Okavango Panhandle Community Trust	Shakawe, Mohembo West, Samochima, Nxamasere, Xhauga	Game farm at Tsitalaga island	Not operational
6. Itekeng Community Trust	Ngarange*, Mogotho*, Sekondomboro*, Xakao*, Kauxwi*, Mohembo East*	NG 11	Not operational
7. Teemashane Community Trust	Mohembo East*, Mohembo West, Kauxwi*, Xakao*, Sekondomboro*, Tobere, Ngarang*e, Mogotho*, Shaikarawe	NG 11	Not operational
8. SETHAMOKA Community Trust	Sepopa, Tamachaa, Mowana, Kajaja	NG 7	Partially operational
9. Okavango Polers Trust	Seronga	NG 10, 11	Partially operational
10. Makgobokgobo Youth Trust	Seronga, Gunotsoga, Eretsha, Beetsha, Gudigwa	NG 23A	Partially operational
11. Okavango Panhandle Nature Conservation	Samochima, Xhauga, Nxamasere, Kajaja	NG 7	Not operational
12. Okavango Knowledge Trust <sup>1</sup>	Etsha 1 to Gudigwa	Shakawe	Not operational
13. Shaikarawe Community Trust	Shaikarawe	NG 7	Formation stage
14. Ngamiland Basket Weavers Trust	Etsha 6	-	Partially Operational

**Note. 1Trust coverage is beyond the Panhandle as it incorporates all settlements and villages in the Okavango Sub-district. \*Settlements/Villages with overlapping membership within Trusts**

While communities are ready for CBNRM implementation through the COMPACT replication project in the area, it is necessary that prior to implementation, existing Trusts must be harmonised to ensure that there is no overlapping membership across villages and Trusts. The current Trusts set-up have revealed overlaps in village/ settlements membership, hence the need of addressing these prior to implementation. Much of the overlap is found between Itekeng and Teemashane Community Trusts (Table 1.1). The COMPACT site strategy must prioritise addressing these overlaps as a precursor activity.

### 1.9 Socio-Economic Issues

The socio-economic baseline assessment revealed that the COMPACT replication project will be implemented in an area reeling from high unemployment, more so that the majority within the productive population are not working. Poverty is also rife in the area. Compounding these, is the high incidence of Human-wildlife conflicts in the area, mainly elephants, which destroys crops, fences, property and threatens human life. There are also predators in the area which destroy livestock. Issues of Human-wildlife conflicts in the area needs to be addressed, including but not limited to promoting co-existence and reviewing compensation guidelines and fees. Suggestions are that these must reflect the market value of the resource, more so considering the traditional value that is often neglected when undertaking valuations.



Leopard in the Jao Concession

### 1.10 Threats

The Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site is reeling from several threats and challenges. The consultation, scoping exercise and the baseline assessment revealed several threats which must be mitigated against in COMPACT replication project implementation. Some of these threats, though raised by the local communities during consultations, have been highlighted in a number of planning and strategic documents such as the Management Plan for the Okavango River Panhandle (2001), Ngamiland Tourism Development Plan (2007), the Okavango Delta Management Plan (2008), Ngamiland Intergrated Land Use Plan (2009), and the Mid-term Review and Gap Analysis of the Okavango Delta Management Plan (2013). The threats are:

- Unsustainable use of veld and natural resources.
- Uncontrolled bushfires in the Okavango River and sandveld.
- Habitat (terrestrial, riverine and riparian) degradation due to high elephant population in the area and boats within the river system.
- Water pollution due to oil spillages, improper liquid waste management and littering.
- Invasive alien plants (e.g., floating water fern - *Salvinia molesta* Mitchell), leading to blockage of river channels.
- Protection of biodiversity hotspots such as key breeding sites for birds and fish.
- Human-wildlife conflicts, especially elephants and predators.
- Potential impact of human activities on natural resources values, such as the impact of recreational activities (spot fishing, houseboats, e.t.c) on key ecological riverine zones.
- Climate change impacts on natural resources and livelihoods.



## Effects of veld fires in the Panhandle Area

A new and recent threat in the area is the mysterious death of about 281 elephants. The latest investigations indicate that the elephants may have been killed by neurotoxins in water drunk by the elephants in one of the water pools in the area.

Tests detected cyanobacteria neurotoxins (blue-green algae) as the cause of the elephants' death, together with one horse. Initial investigations ruled out anthrax and poaching as possible causes. In October 2020, another unexplained cases of fish mortalities were reported along the Panhandle area, between Shakawe and Sekondomboro. While the cause of mortalities are not yet known, traditional knowledge has it that there were similar occurrences in past during the month of October.

Experts in fisheries resources view it as an uncommon occurrence, more so that fish mortalities may be expected during fresh inflow of water from the upper basin.

The threats identified formed the basis of the COMPACT site strategic planning. The results chains to address the threats were mapped and formed the basis of a conceptual model.

The conceptual model, presented in the baseline report, is a graphical representation which captured site level processes, threats and opportunities for effective interventions. The conceptual model identified the major threats affecting the landscape and consequently prioritising actions to address them for positive landscape impacts.

## 2. Institutional and Policy Environment

### 2.1 Government Institutions

The Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism (MENT) is the custodian of the World Heritage Convention of 1972 in Botswana. The key implementing Ministry for the COMPACT site strategy will therefore rest with the MENT. Generally, the Ministry is mandated with the coordination of policies, strategies and programmes that promote conservation and tourism development in Botswana. The Ministry's strategic agenda is to protect and conserve the environment and promote investment opportunities to derive maximum socio-economic benefits from natural sustainable use of resources.

The Ministry's core business includes the following: conservation and management of wildlife resources; conservation and management of forestry and range resources; provision of weather and climate data and information; development and promotion of sustainable tourism industry; sustainable waste and waste water sector development; prevention and control of pollution; and, coordination of environmental issues.

There are seven (7) departments under the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, Conservation and Tourism. The Ministry departments are directly or indirectly involved in CBNRM development as well as the promotion of the community-based tourism and conservation activities in the country. Since the COMPACT replication project is a type of CBNRM in a WHS site, these Departments will continue to spearhead the implementation of COMPACT projects in the Panhandle site of the Okavango Delta WHS, spearheaded by the Department of National Museum and Monuments.

COMPACT replication project at the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site will be implemented within an enabling institutional and organisational support network that is already in place. There are existing government institutions with portfolio responsibilities direct or indirect into the area.

There are also structures at District and sub-district level such as the Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) whose key responsibilities and task is CBNRM implementation and monitoring. An advantage for COMPACT replication project implementation in the Ngamiland district is that the District is a home to numerous CBNRM Trusts. This has made the structures in place to be conversant with prevailing CBNRM issues and hence ready to extend their experience and expertise in the COMPACT replication project, seen as the CBNRM in a WHS.

The collaboration within and across government sectors (e.g., wildlife, agriculture, land use planning, Human-wildlife conflicts, cultural and heritage resources, and tourism) and local communities, civil society and researchers is essential for building a long-term, effective strategy that will contribute to sustainable development. This will foster peace and security, care for nature, cultural diversity, inclusive social and economic development and the quality of life of communities, whilst fully respecting the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage site.

The biggest challenge within government institutions has been implementation and coordination. The ODMP mid-term review found that there was no concerted effort to overcome the key problems hampering the implementation of the plan. It cited amongst several issues regarding coordination among planning authorities as one of the areas of concern.

The establishment of the Local Consultative Body, which will bring together all stakeholders, as part of this project will go a long way towards ensuring effective project implementation. Notwithstanding this new structure, it is vital that DNMM consider committing an officer to coordinate WHS activities and implementation of this Strategy on site at the Panhandle to facilitate smooth implementation. The site needs a dedicated officer as it is the case at the Tsodilo Hills WHS.

## 2.2 Partner Organisations

There are other partner organisations in the Panhandle area actively involved with local communities or in conservation. These are:

### ***United Nations Development Programme***

The UNDP, through the Global Environment Facility GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), continues to be a partner in supporting national priorities and actions towards driving the sustainable development agenda in Botswana. The development of the COMPACT site strategy for the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS is funded through the UNDP GEF-SGP facility. The Country Programme Strategy (CPS) indicates that 70% of the grant resources allocated for Operational Phase 7 will be reserved for the three selected landscapes (UNDP GEF-SGP, 2019). For the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta WHS, the funding will provide small-grants for community-based conservation and livelihood projects as well as targeted capacity building, networking and exchange activities. The grants will be open for NGOs, research institutions as well as community Trusts in the area to support community-based activities intended to strengthen biodiversity conservation in and around the target World Heritage Site.

### ***The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission***

The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) is implementing a GEF funded project, aimed at strengthening joint management and cooperative decision making on the sustainable utilisation of natural resources to address livelihoods and socio-economic development challenges in the Cubango-Okavango River Basin (UNDP GEF, 2017). Specific to Botswana, community-based climate change adaptation demonstration projects are being conducted within the Maun area (100 km radius) and the Panhandle, specifically Shakawe. (OKACOM, 2019, NCONGO, 2020). The Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (NCONGO), a local NGO, was designated as the Botswana partner to implement the demonstration interventions. The demonstration projects are focused on horticultural production with a view to linking tourism and other higher markets demands available in the area (OKACOM, 2019).

### ***The Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organisations***

The Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (NCONGO) is an umbrella body of Ngamiland based NGOs/CBOs and was established in 2008. The organization, based in Maun, works with local stakeholders and communities on issues of CBNRM, NGO/CBO capacity building, advocacy and socio-economic development. It represents an expanding membership of over 50 NGOs/CBOs within the Ngamiland district. NCONGO, as a volunteer-driven organization coordinates the efforts and advocates and lobby for the needs of CBOs. It also facilitates networking and communication between the regions' non-state actors and strengthens the links with government to enable real change.

NCONGO members in the Panhandle includes the Okavango Community Trust, Okavango Panhandle Community Trust, Okavango Poler's Trust, Sethamoka Trust, Tcheku Community Trust, and TOCaDI.

## **Trust for Okavango Cultural and Development Initiatives**

The Trust for Okavango Cultural and Development Initiatives (TOCaDI) was established in Shakawe in 1998 with a mission to build capacity of the San and other minority groups in the Okavango sub-district to respond to their own challenges. This is meant to enable the marginalised groups to plan and implement their own culturally sensitive and sustainable programmes that will lead to an improvement in the quality of life. TOCaDI serves people in the Okavango sub-district, with a reach to about 21 villages and settlements situated on both the eastern and western side of the Panhandle. The TOCaDI works to empower communities to become self-reliant and improve their standards of living. As part of the Kuru Family of Organisations, TOCaDI works to address the needs of the San people considered to be a marginalised community.

Other partners in the area includes the Okavango Research Institute and the EcoExist. The two mainly conduct applied research in the area. These offer COMPACT project implementation in the area opportunities for strong synergies in areas such as training, capacity building, research and monitoring.

These partner organisations are an added advantage in undertaking complimentary and synergistic projects and programmes. Most policies and legislation within the MENT have advocated for local community involvement, non-government organisations (NGOs) and private sector participation and input in interventions geared towards natural resources management and conservation. Some of these actors, such as the NGO community, have networks and project partners and donors working at regional and international level. The NGO community also helps in advocacy and lobbying at grassroots level.

The presence of broad-based partners and actors in the District and project area can ensure effective and efficient COMPACT implementation within the WHS property. Formation of the Local Consultative Body (LCB) that will bring all the stakeholders and

partners together will be necessary at all stages of the project. It is envisaged that with all the stakeholders taking part in the Local Consultative Body, and working in synergies, the aspirations of increasing the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation in the WHS while helping livelihoods of local people to improve will be realised in the long term.

The challenges with civil society organisations (e.g., NGOs) and academic institutions is funding. It is commendable that there is funding available that can be accessed by civil society and academia to carry on some of the interventions needed under this Strategy during the first three (3) years.

## **2.3 Policy and Legislative Framework**

The COMPACT model, being implemented in the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS, is aligned to several global, regional, national and district-wide legal, policy and strategic frameworks. At global level, the COMPACT model and project is aligned to the provisions of the World Heritage Convention and the Sustainable Development Goals, which are informed by the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development. Specifically, the COMPACT strategy and project aligns to the SDG of 'ending poverty in all its forms everywhere' (Goal 1, Target 1.5); ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture (Goal 2); making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (Goal 11) and protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (Goal 15). Specifically, Goal 11 explicitly target "strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage", which is perfectly addressed through the implementation of COMPACT project in the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS. The COMPACT replication project also directly addresses the concerns raised by the World Heritage Committee during inscription of the Okavango Delta as a WHS in 2014. The WHC raised the need to:

i) expand and strengthen programmes which accommodate traditional resource use for livelihoods, user access rights, cultural rights and access to opportunities to participate in the tourism sector, in keeping with the property's Outstanding Universal Value; and  
ii) continue efforts to address a range of other protection and management issues including governance, stakeholder empowerment, management planning, management capacity and control of alien invasive species (World Heritage Committee, 2014, p. 159).

Regionally, the COMPACT project fits into the aspirations of the OKACOM, being conservation, development and utilization of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin water resources. OKACOM also promotes integrated transboundary management of the Basin, which aligns to the COMPACT principle of landscape. The landscape approach, as espoused by the COMPACT model, recognizes that conservation is most effective at the level of ecosystems and large landscapes as there is connectivity among habitats and ecosystems. The COMPACT project also aligns to the SADC protocol on Shared Water Courses System which fosters closer cooperation for judicious, sustainable and coordinated management, protection and utilization of shared water courses and advance regional integration and poverty alleviation in the region.

Nationally, the COMPACT project will contribute to the Vision 2036 pillar on Sustainable Environment, which advocates for sustainable and optimal use of natural resources for economic transformation and upliftment of people's livelihood. The pillar further underscores the need for communities' active involvement in management, implementation and allocation of benefits from natural resources, which is the very essence of the COMPACT model. Other areas espoused by the Vision document are putting value in traditional knowledge systems, the role of research in identification and development of marketable products and addressing invasive species.

The COMPACT model also aligns to the NDP 11 which highlighted that the listing of the Okavango Delta as a WHS will enhance socio-economic livelihoods of local communities living in the Delta.

The Plan further enlisted continued development, preservation and opening of cultural heritage sites for cultural tourism for the benefit and empowerment of local communities. The recent mid-term review of the NDP 11 also indicated that local communities living in wildlife areas will be empowered in human-wildlife conflict mitigations and facilitated to develop co-existence strategies. Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan (ERTP), which among other things is aimed at building the resilience of the economy, recognizes that the tourism industry is the hardest hit by COVID 19 pandemic due to closure of international travel and borders. To this effect, the ERTP will facilitate development and growth of the tourism industry, especially domestic tourism. The COMPACT project will leverage on this tourist niche.

At district level, a number of management plans and strategies have underscored the importance of the Panhandle to conservation and preservation of the Okavango Delta. This is so because the Panhandle, being the Okavango River, plays a key role as a conduit of water and sediments to the Delta fan. The COMPACT project is aligned to various district planning and strategic documents such as the Management Plan for the Okavango River Panhandle (2001), Ngamiland Tourism Development Plan (2007), the Okavango Delta Management Plan (2008), Ngamiland Integrated Land Use Plan (2009), and the Mid-term Review and Gap Analysis of the Okavango Delta Management Plan (2013).

Generally, policy and legislative review has revealed multiple policy and relevant legislation pertinent to the natural resources sector and to guide implementation of the COMPACT replication project in the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS.

The policy environment, mainly in terms of natural and environmental resources is enabling and adequate, with most policies targeted to same actors. The fact that most policies are housed within the same parent Ministry, i.e. the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism (MENT) helps to smoothen the implementation process. Most natural resources management related institutions, implementing different sectoral policies are within MENT. Since COMPACT replication project is of great interest to the WHC and not only as a national initiative, but it is also necessary that coordination continue to come from highest office within the MENT for maximal effect, impact and coordination.

Policy review revealed some shortcomings such as protracted policy formulation process, outdated policies and dependence on draft policy instruments. There are also key strategic documents that are still pending approval, such as the CBNRM guidelines, CBNRM Act, and CBNRM strategy. New management plan of the Okavango Delta WHS is also under review. Approval of these key legislative and strategic document will strengthen COMPACT replication project implementation.

## 2.4 Stakeholder Analysis

The stakeholder analysis exercise was conducted, guided by the stakeholder-led-stakeholder categorization method (Reed et al., 2009). Through this approach, the stakeholders themselves categorize stakeholders in categories which they have created. This was done based on primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholder categorization. A primary stakeholder was described as an intended direct beneficiary of a target project, i.e., those groups or individuals whose benefit will come through achieving project purpose.

A secondary stakeholder has no direct benefit in the project or project area but is affected by what takes place in the form of activities at the landscape level. These form an integral part of the decision-making informing developments at landscape level. These are agencies which will be involved in the delivery of the project, which may be from the public sector, non-government organizations or the private sector. Tertiary or external stakeholders are those not directly involved but have interest in the outcome of the project. This process resulted in the development of the stakeholder matrix (Table 2.1).



**Participants During the Stakeholder Engagement Workshop.**



**Panhandle Community Trusts**



**Table 2.1. Okavango Panhandle Stakeholder Matrix**

**STAKEHOLDERS – COMPACT REPLICATION PROJECT: PANHANDLE OF THE OKAVANGO DELTA WHS**

PRIMARY	SECONDARY	TERTIARY
<b>Panhandle Communities (Morafe)* Community Trusts</b>	<b>Ministries</b>	<b>Research Institutions/Projects</b>
- Okavango Jakotsha Community Trust (Jao, Ikoga, Etsha 3, Etsha 6, Etsha 13)	MENT Local Government & Rural Development	- Okavango Research Institute - BUAN
- Okavango Community Trust (Seronga, Gunotsoga, Eretsha, Beetsha, Gudigwa)	Non-government organizations	- KAZA
- Bukhakhwe Cultural Conservation Trust	- NCONGO	- EcoExist
- Tcheku Community Trust (Kaputura, Tovere, Kyeica)	- TOCaDI	
- Okavango Panhandle Community Trust (Shakawe, Mohembo West, Samochima, Nxamasere, Khauga)	Government Departments & Agencies	Every River Has its Own People
- Itekeng Community Trust (Ngarange, Mogothono, Sekondomboro, Xakao, Kauxwi, Mohembo East)	- Department of Wildlife & National Parks	International/Regional NGOs/Agencies/ Organizations/Conventions
- Teemashane Community Trust (Mohembo East, Mohembo West, Kauxwi, Xakao, Sekondomboro, Tobere, Ngarange, Mogothono, Shaikarawe)	- Tawana Land Board	- Conservation International
- SETHAMOKA Community Trust (Sepopa, Tamachaa, Mowana, Kajaja)	- Department of Mines	- OKACOM
- Okavango Polers Trust (Seronga)	- Department of Environmental Affairs	- UNDP
- Makgobokgobo Youth Trust (Seronga)	- Department of National Museum & Monuments	- CITE

- Okavango Panhandle Nature Conservation Samochima, Xhauga, Nxamasere, Kajaja)	- Botswana Tourism Organization	- IUCN
- Okavango Knowledge Trust - Shaikarawe Community Trust .- Ngamiland Basket Weavers Trust	- Department of Water & Sanitation/Water Utilities Corporation	- UNESCO World Heritage Committee
Fishers Associations	- Department of Waste Management and Pollution Control	
Boiteko Syndicate	- Department of Forestry & Range Resources - Department of Tourism	
Mohembo Fishers Association	Technical Advisory Committee	
Mmamasilo-a-noka	Private Sector - Tourist Facilities	
Ngororo	Shakawe River Lodge	
Okavango Horticulture Farmers Association	Drotskys Cabins	
OWMC	Xharo Lodge Jumbo Junction Dithapi Nxamesere Lodge Swamp Stop Guma Nguma Lodge MmaPula (Beetsha) HAWK MoPhiri The Boat Sethabi Shakawe Sands	

# 3. Strategic framework

## 3.1 Vision Statement

A vision statement for the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta World Heritage Site was developed. In developing the vision, the OUV statements of the Okavango Delta WHS were considered important for inclusion, as well as socio-economic livelihoods and the resources, together with the culture and well-being. The vision was coined as:

The Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS's natural resources will be sustainably managed and its outstanding natural beauty, significant ecological and biological processes and conservation of the rich biodiversity are maintained and improved for the socio economic, environmental and cultural *well-being* and benefit of the local communities as stewards.

## 3.2 Mission Statement

To promote the protection and conservation of the OUV of the landscape and sustainable utilisation of the natural and cultural heritage resources through a stakeholder collaborative responsibility.

## 3.3 Priority Areas

The Strategy identifies six (6) priority areas of focus for ensuring sustainable management of natural assets and maintenance the OUV of the Panhandle of the

Okavango Delta World Heritage Site for the socio-economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the local communities. The priority areas in the strategic plan will be addressed over the five-year plan period. These are:

**Priority Area 1:** Increasing community awareness and knowledge of the Panhandle's natural and cultural heritage assets for conservation and sustainable use.

**Priority Area 2:** Protecting and ensuring sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage assets of the landscape through active stakeholder participation and collaboration.

**Priority Area 3:** Increasing stakeholders' capacity and skills to use the Panhandle's natural and cultural resources sustainably.

**Priority Area 4:** Achieving effective management of the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS through shared governance between and among all stakeholders

**Priority Area 5:** Increasing diversification and improving sustainable livelihoods opportunities for local communities and user groups through value addition for optimum returns.

**Priority Area 6:** Developing destination marketing for the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS



The Priority Areas will be achieved through a collaborative effort between and among diverse stakeholders in and out of the area. As a result, the strategy seeks to engage all relevant stakeholders in the management of the Panhandle's natural and cultural heritage assets. These stakeholders include the Panhandle local communities, business and tourism industry, government, funding and donor agencies, academic institutions and other landowners in the area.

### 3.4 Guiding Principles

This strategy has been developed following the principles and guiding pillars of the COMPACT approach. The Guiding Principles inform all COMPACT implementation, governance and management activities. As values held by all, the Guiding Principles will be core to the implementation to the Strategic Plan. These are:

#### 3.4.1 Participation

COMPACT model values meaningful participation and effective engagement of all stakeholders, with emphasis on local and indigenous communities at all phases of World Heritage life cycle. The three underlying key principles in COMPACT participatory approach are: 1) ownership and responsibility, 2) power sharing, 3) co-management, 4) community-led governance and 5) sustainable commitment (Brown & Hay-Edie, 2014). For success of COMPACT, the project must support multiplicity of stakeholders, including local communities in the stewardship of the protected area within their immediate environs and beyond.

#### 3.4.2 Landscape approach

The landscape approach acknowledges connectivity among ecosystems and the increasingly widespread and complex environmental, economic, social and political challenges that transcends traditional and man-made boundaries (Arts et al., 2017).

A piece-meal approach towards addressing these will not be effective and sustainable, but rather 'taking conservation to scale' is regarded as the way forward. In landscape approach, all areas matter in ensuring connectivity across the landscape.

#### 3.4.3 Adaptive management

The COMPACT program is a product of adaptive management approach as it evolved overtime, being tested in diverse socio-ecological settings (Brown and Hay-Edie, 2014). This pillar will continue to inform, define and guide COMPACT implementation in new settings and projects. Adaptive management is described as a rigorous approach for learning through deliberately designing and applying management actions as experiments to better understand the ecosystem in order to achieve results in uncertainty (Murray & Marmorek, 2004).

These guiding principles will continue to be embraced during the implementation of the strategic plan. The COMPACT implementation in the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta WHS will be participatory, with protection and management focused beyond the core area and management actions undertaken adaptively.

### 3.5 Strategic Goals

Drawing from the six (6) Strategic Priority Areas, the corresponding Strategic Goals were developed as follows:



***Strategic Goal 1: To increase community knowledge and awareness of the Panhandle's natural and cultural heritage assets for conservation and sustainable use – Effective stakeholder engagement require*** -

raising awareness of the link between the state of the Panhandle's landscape, natural assets and sustainable socio-economic livelihoods. The need to promote awareness and knowledge of environmental stewardship among local communities living with the natural resources is imperative. This goal therefore aims at raising and instilling environmental awareness, consciousness and actions that can be taken by individuals to protect natural resource values.

To achieve the goal, the following specific objectives will be pursued:

**1.1** To promote environmental education, awareness and public participation in the stewardship of the landscape.

**1.2** To raise awareness of the process and benefits of the Okavango Delta World Heritage site.

**1.3** To raise awareness on the Panhandle's biodiversity threats and opportunities for collaborative management and benefit sharing.

***Strategic Goal 2: To protect and promote sustainable use of natural assets and cultural heritage of the landscape through active stakeholder participation and collaboration***

- This objective entails a pursuit of actions that both protect and preserve the landscape and natural assets that are under significant stress, and facilitate sustainable community use of the natural resources without impairing their utility for future generations. Actions that are designed to protect species and ecosystems by increasing landscape resilience will be pursued, focusing on understanding and assisting biodiversity to adjust to the longer-term impacts of threats.

The development of action plans will remain a priority for threatened species and ecosystems, management approaches will also enhance efforts to better manage species at risk by implementing actions that maintain and improve habitat conditions and reduce threats in the landscapes.

The objectives informing the strategic goal are:

**2.1** To ensure effective planning and regulation of the natural, biodiversity and cultural heritage assets in the landscape.

**2.2** To minimise the negative impacts of development infrastructure and activities on the natural and cultural resources and the landscape of the Panhandle.

**2.3** To protect forest resources within the Panhandle landscape.

***Strategic Goal 3: To increase stakeholders' capacity and skills to use the Panhandle's natural resources sustainably***

- Engagement of key stakeholders in the use of the Panhandle natural and cultural assets is a major priority. This engagement must target improvements in the capacity and skills of key stakeholders to protect the natural and cultural assets while also helping the community to realise the benefits of sustainable use of the natural resources. Public participation is one of the essential elements in the design and implementation of landscape objectives.

The following objectives will guide the attainment of the strategic goal:

**3.1** To develop appropriate skills that prepares local communities for participation in all aspects of the entrepreneurial opportunities in the Panhandle.

**3.2** To enhance community resilience through value addition for natural and cultural heritage resources-based enterprises.

**Strategic Goal 4: To improve management effectiveness of Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS through shared governance between all stakeholders**

- This will entail the assessment of how well the protected area is being managed - primarily being the extent to which management is protecting values and achieving goals and objectives. Effective management of the natural resources of the landscape requires the active engagement of all stakeholders, including the general public. The Strategy calls for effective methods of partnership, engagement and agreement between public authorities, the general public, voluntary organisations and interest groups to promote sustainable landscape management, protection and planning.

Due to the transboundary nature of Okavango River, being part of the Okavango River Basin, the strategy underscores the need to foster collaborations with upstream and headstream communities and institutions. This will be pursued through existing structures such as the OKACOM. Other grassroots transboundary initiatives previously in place must be considered such as 'Every River Project'.

The underlying objectives are:

- 4.1** To facilitate establishment and meetings of the Local Consultative Body.
- 4.2** To develop and implement a natural resource management research plan that identifies knowledge gaps and research priorities around the state of the Panhandle natural and cultural assets.
- 4.3** To promote and support innovation in natural resource management.
- 4.4** To promote collaborative activities for natural resource management among all stakeholders to take advantage of all potential synergies in natural resources management activities.

**Strategic Goal 5: To increase diversification and broaden sustainable livelihoods opportunities for local communities and user groups through value addition for optimum returns**

- The mainstay livelihood activities for the Panhandle communities is subsistence agriculture, both arable and pastoral. Additional livelihood activities that will diversify the current ones will be pursued to enable communities to have more options and make their livelihoods sustainable. Ecotourism plays a great role in natural resource management by generating income for the local communities and diversifying their livelihoods. Community based enterprises projects can be successful in motivating local communities to reduce their exploitation of wild plants and animal species, to help control poaching by outsiders, or to set aside part of their farm or grazing.

The objectives to achieving the strategic goal are:

- 5.1** To identify and implement sustainable community livelihood projects in line with the management objectives of the Site.
- 5.2** To improve livelihoods through diversified and inclusive economic opportunities.



**Community Workshops**



**Promotion of Baskets from the Panhandle Area**

***Strategic Goal 6: To develop destination marketing for the Panhandle portion of the WHS***

The Ngamiland Tourism Development Plan has recommended that the Panhandle Tourism Development Area be marketed as “An Okavango River-based, activity orientated experience in a semi-wild but rural experience with easy vehicular access for self-drive tourists”. Promotion of a tourism image for the Panhandle in this way will help inform tourists of the experience that they are likely to have in the Panhandle Tourism Development Area (TDA) landscape. The destination marketing strategy must create a strong brand message that continues to widen the appeal to domestic and international visitors, while building on the existing activities that has proven successful for the destination.

**6.1** To develop and implement destination marketing strategy focused on river-based and cultural activities.

**6.2** To increase brand awareness through social media by using national influencers and brand ambassadors.

The strategic framework is presented in Table 3.1, with each Strategic Goal followed by the respective objectives. Each objective has a number of interventions aligned to it. The interventions are activities that must be performed to bring about the desired outcomes. The key performance indicators serves as measures to evaluate the performance of the project against its strategic objectives. These will be useful in monitoring and evaluation.

The strategic plan is a five (5) years plan commencing 2020, and the timelines are indicated as milestones to delineate a point in a project schedule when the activity anticipate what the project is supposed to achieve at a pre-set date. The milestone basically denotes the time when the project activity should have been achieved.

The Strategic Plan will be implemented on a fiscal year schedule, with a planning horizon of five (5) fiscal years covering October 2020 to September 2025. Each fiscal year represents a stage in plan implementation.

Objective	Intervention	Outcomes	Key Performance Indicator	Responsibility	Milestone
<b>Strategic Goal 1: To increase community knowledge and awareness of the Panhandle's natural and cultural heritage assets for conservation and sustainable use</b>					
1.1 To promote environmental education, awareness and public participation in the stewardship of the landscape	1.1.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy in support of the COMPACT project and strategy for the Panhandle	Community awareness and appreciation of the COMPACT project	• Communication strategy and plan developed and implemented	DNMM DEA TAC LCB	January 2021
	1.1.2 Develop programmes to communicate the benefits of OD WHS status to all stakeholders	Stakeholder appreciation of the Panhandle as part of the OD WHS	• Number of programmes targeted to different stakeholders/resource users	DNMM DEA TAC LCB	March 2021
	1.1.3 Develop and implement awareness campaigns for the communities and other relevant stakeholders on use and the control of bush fires	Reduction on the frequency of uncontrolled bush fires in the landscape	• Number and types of stakeholders reached	DFRR DNMM DEA TAC LCB	December 2021
1.2 To raise awareness of the process and benefits of the Okavango Delta's WHS	1.2.1 Identify appropriate partners for further development and implementation of its communication and public awareness strategy	Community awareness and appreciation of the landscape and its biodiversity and benefits.	• Number of partners delivering awareness-raising activities	DNMM NGOs TAC LCB	December 2021
	1.2.2 Establish working partnerships with NGOs, government organizations, development assistance agencies and the private sector to roll environmental education		• Number of synergies and partnerships formed to conduct environmental education	LCB DNMM TAC TOCaDI NCONGO	March 2021

	1.2.3 Support environmental education and awareness projects			• Total annual expenditure on awareness-raising	GEF SGP/LC LCB NSC	December 2021 (Continuous)
1.3 To raise awareness on the Panhandle's biodiversity threats and opportunities for collaborative management and benefit sharing	1.3.1 Raise awareness of the landscape's natural and cultural values, the threats and opportunities for management among different stakeholder groups	Informed and conservation conscious communities and stakeholders		• Number of campaigns conducted	DNMM/DEA TAC LCB	April 2021
	1.3.2 Develop and implement programs to increase understanding about good natural and cultural resources management practices			• Number of programs developed and implemented	GEF SGP/DEA LCB	April 2021
<b>Strategic Goal 2: To protect and promote sustainable use of natural assets and cultural heritage of the landscape through active stakeholder participation and collaboration</b>						
2.1 To ensure effective planning and regulation of the natural, biodiversity and cultural heritage assets in the Panhandle	2.1.1 Compile detailed inventory and baseline of natural, biodiversity and cultural heritage assets	Natural, biodiversity and cultural heritage of the landscape conserved		• Inventory and baseline of natural, biodiversity and cultural heritage assets	DFRR DEA/DNMM TAC LCB	June 2021
	2.1.2 Conduct studies on bush fires and map fire prone areas			• Report and mapping on bush fires in the Panhandle landscape	DFRR Research Institutes DRFF LCB	December 2022
	2.1.3 Develop rules, code of conduct and guidelines for use of different resources and landscapes			• Land and natural resources utilisation rules and guidelines	DFRR DEA/DNMM TAC LCB VDC	September 2021

	2.1.4 Review and update the existing fishers and boat users' guidelines		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised guidelines for fishers and boat users</li> </ul>	DWNP (Fisheries) DWA Fishers Associations Tourist Operators	December 2021
2.2 To minimise the negative impacts of development infrastructure and activities on the natural resources and landscape of the Panhandle	2.2.1 Enforce and monitor compliance with the Panhandle development code and review/update where necessary	Activities on the landscape meet environmental, social and economic standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with development codes along the Panhandle</li> <li>Revised guidelines on developments along the Panhandle</li> </ul>	NWDC DEA/DNMM Tawana Land Board LCB DWS	December 2022
	2.2.2 Develop rules and guidelines for use of river system activities and developments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines for the water/river based activities developed and enforced</li> </ul>	DWA/DEA DNMM LCB NWDC BDF BPS Fishermen association Tourist Operators	June 2022
	2.2.3 Effectively monitor the impacts through adaptive management approach	The estate's natural, cultural values are maintained and, where necessary, restored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports on the number and extent of adaptation plans and activities in the Panhandle that address the vulnerability and adaptive capacity of natural assets</li> </ul>	DEA/DNMM TAC LCB NWDC DWS NGOs	October 2025 (Continuous)
	2.2.4 Measure, monitor changes in the natural resources condition		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of resource condition reports available</li> </ul>	DNMM/DEA DWA DFRR LCB	October 2025 (Continuous)
	2.2.5 Collaborate with different resource user groups to identify and advance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and types of threats identified and addressed</li> <li>Number of stakeholders addressing threats</li> </ul>	DNMM/DEA DWA DFRR LCB	

	<p>opportunities for protecting natural and cultural resource values of the Panhandle and minimize the adverse impacts of resource activities on the environment</p> <p>2.2.6 Develop and implement veld fires management strategy</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced incidences of uncontrolled fires in the Panhandle landscape</li> </ul>	<b>DRFF</b>	October 2021
<p>2.3 To protect forest resources within the Panhandle landscape</p>	<p>2.3.1 Facilitate establishment of community forest reserve in Shaikarawe</p> <p>2.3.2 Develop management plan for the community forest reserve</p> <p>2.3.3 Facilitate allocation and gazettement of community forest reserve</p>	<p>Conservation of forest resources and habitats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake feasibility study on the establishment of community forest reserve</li> <li>• Community Forest Reserve Management plan developed or revised</li> </ul>	<p>DFRR TLB DNMM/DEA LCB</p> <p><b>DFRR</b> TLB DNMM/DEA LCB</p>	<p>June 2021</p> <p>June 2022</p>
<p>2.4 To facilitate transboundary collaborations and engagements in natural and cultural resources management</p>	<p>2.4.1 Promote transboundary dialogue in natural and cultural resources management across boundaries</p> <p>2.4.2 Utilise opportunities for collaborative meetings to promote and advocate for transboundary river basin management</p> <p>2.4.3 Support and participate in initiatives to develop WHS in Namibia and Angola</p>	<p>Enhancement of natural resources management at landscape level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in initiatives towards establishment of WHS in Namibia and Angola</li> </ul>	<p><b>DNMM</b> DEA LCB OKACOM</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>April 2022</p>

**Strategic Goal 3: To increase stakeholders' capacity and skills to use the Panhandle's natural and cultural heritage resources sustainably**

<p>3.1 To develop appropriate skills that prepares local communities and other stakeholders for participation in all aspects of the entrepreneurial opportunities in the Panhandle</p>	<p>3.1.1 Develop a collaborative arrangement for capacity building between government, Trusts, civil society and private sector</p>	<p>More effective community organizations &amp; institutions Strengthened individual skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community capacity needs assessment report</li> <li>• Number and type of capacity training programs developed and management</li> </ul>	<p>DNMM LCB CBOs</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
<p>3.1.2 Harmonise and re-align Trust membership within the Panhandle</p>	<p>3.1.2 Harmonise and re-align Trust membership within the Panhandle</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of Trusts' village membership and re-alignment</li> </ul>	<p>TAC LCB CBOs</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
<p>3.1.3 Empower, support and capacitate CBOs Trusts in project development and management, business management and governance</p>	<p>3.1.3 Empower, support and capacitate CBOs Trusts in project development and management, business management and governance</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of training opportunities conducted with CBOs on project development</li> </ul>	<p>DNMM NGOs LCB CBOs</p>	<p>October 2025 (Continuous)</p>
<p>3.1.3 Facilitate CBO Trust to develop benefit sharing plans</p>	<p>3.1.3 Facilitate CBO Trust to develop benefit sharing plans</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of CBOs with benefit sharing plans</li> </ul>	<p>DWNP LC TAC LCB</p>	<p>October 2021</p>
<p>3.2 To enhance community resilience in natural and cultural heritage resources-based enterprises</p>	<p>3.1.4 Support local community action working to enhance the state of the landscape assets</p>	<p>Sustainable use of resources by the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of CBOs engaged in sustainable natural and heritage resources management</li> </ul>	<p>DNMM/DEA TAC NGOs GEF SGP LCB</p>	<p>December 2022</p>
<p>3.2.1 Identify and implement different local natural and cultural heritage resources-based enterprises and emerging ones</p>	<p>3.2.1 Identify and implement different local natural and cultural heritage resources-based enterprises and emerging ones</p>	<p>Diversified and sustainable livelihood activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory of natural and cultural resource-based enterprises in the Panhandle</li> </ul>	<p>DNMM/DEA Research Institutes CBOs NGOs</p>	<p>December 2021</p>

	<p>3.2.2 Support to existing natural resources-based enterprises (crafts, basket-weaving) and their markets together with new and emerging ones, e.g., paper making from elephant dung</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancement of existing natural resources based enterprises</li> <li>• Identification of markets of re-source-based enterprises</li> </ul>	<p>DNMM/DEA BTO TAC NWDC NGOs</p>	<p>September 2025</p>
<p>3.2.3 Identify and implement projects related to enhancing community-based food security, e.g. permaculture projects, bee keeping, conservation agriculture etc. which take climate change projections into account.</p>	<p>Community livelihood enhanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of sustainable community food security projects established.</li> </ul>	<p>MDFS, DCP-ES BUAN</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	
<p>3.2.4 Develop and implement entrepreneurial capacity development initiatives</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of different enterprises developed and sustained</li> </ul>	<p>DNMM/DEA LCB NGOs</p>	<p>September 2025</p>	
<p>3.2.5 Explore potential markets and market outlets in the region and globally, in collaboration with existing marketing agencies in Botswana</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markets identified for different products</li> </ul>	<p>LCB NGOs</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	
<p>3.2.6 Develop branding and packaging of new products</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of products branded</li> </ul>	<p>LCB NGOs</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	

3.3 To promote mitigation of threats to community livelihoods	3.3.1 Develop Human-wildlife conflict mitigation and co-existence strategy	Improved attitudes towards wildlife	Human-wildlife conflict and coexistence strategy	DWNP LCB	October 2021
	3.3.2 Support mitigation measures in human-wildlife conflict			DWNP LCB	December 2020
	3.3.3 Empower local communities in HWC mitigation strategies			DWNP	June 2021
	3.3.4 Promote and support climate smart agriculture			DCP DAP LCB	December 2020
	3.3.5 Develop the capacity of stakeholders to detect, prevent and suppress bush fires in their locality			DFRR LCB CBOs	December 2020
<b>Strategic Goal 4: To improve management effectiveness of Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS through shared governance between all stakeholders</b>					
4.1 To facilitate establishment and meetings of the Local Consultative Body	4.1.1 Mobilise the launch of the LCB	Active and meaningful stakeholder involvement and participation in the management of the landscape	Minutes/records of LCB meetings	LC DNMM/DEA COMPACT project stakeholders	October 2020 (Continuous)
	4.1.2 Schedule meeting for the LCB				
4.2 To develop and implement a natural resource management research plan that identifies knowledge gaps and research priorities and embraces indigenous knowledge and practices around the state of the Panhandle natural and cultural assets	4.1.3 Facilitate meetings of the LCB	Biodiversity conservation priorities along the landscape	Biodiversity baseline information for future monitoring and evaluation	DNMM/DEA Research Institutes LCB	December 2021
	4.2.1 Develop and implement research projects to determine a baseline for biodiversity resources in the Panhandle				
	4.2.2 Employ adaptive management in decision-making		Reports on biodiversity monitoring and evaluation	DNMM/DEA LCB	September 2025 (Continuous)

4.3 To promote and support innovation in natural and cultural resource management	4.3.1 Undertake pilot projects, support and document best practices	Increased and sustainable natural and cultural resources projects	• Best practice documentation	DNMM/DEA DFRR DWNP LCB	December 2023
	4.3.2 Develop and implement programs to increase understanding about good and sustainable natural and cultural resources management practices		• Number of programs developed and implemented	DEA DNMM NGOs	September 2021
4.4 To promote collaborative activities for natural resource management among all stakeholders to take advantage of all potential synergies in natural resources management activities	4.4.1 Develop and implement community-based monitoring and evaluation tools, e.g., MOMS	Sustainable resource management and utilization by the community	• Type and number of tools used for community-based monitoring and evaluation	DNMM/DEA DWNP TAC	June 2021
	4.4.1 Conduct needs assessment, empowerment and capacity development for local governance structures.	Improved and effective governance	• Capacity needs assessments and training report	DNMM/DEA Training Institutes/ Organisation DWNP MADFS NWDC, S&CD TAC	September 2022
	4.4.1 Empower and develop the capacity of CBOs, local NGOs, and vulnerable groups e.g., women, San communities	Effective broad-based participation in socio-economic livelihood activities	• A comprehensive capacity-building programme	DNMM/DEA Training Institutes/ Organisation	December 2024

	4.4.4 Revitalise, support and sustain existing and emerging resource user associations, e.g., Okavango Fishers Association	Functioning and effective resource user groups	• Number and types of resource users supported	LC DFRR DEA LCB River Users' Associations	June 2021
<b>Strategic Goal 5: To increase diversification and broaden sustainable livelihoods opportunities for local communities and user groups through value addition for optimum returns</b>					
5.1 To identify and implement sustainable livelihood projects in line with the management objectives of the Site	<p>5.1.1 Carry out an inventory of cultural practices and heritage sites in the various communities in the Pan-handle</p> <p>5.1.2 Identify cultural practices and heritage sites that may be of interest to tourists and visitors</p> <p>5.1.3 Explore potential markets where cultural practices could be exhibited or performed.</p> <p>5.1.4 Facilitate and promote protection and preservation of intellectual property rights of different ethnic groups</p> <p>5.1.5 Establish and improve cultural tourism-based enterprises in the area</p>	Diversification to non-consumptive tourism products for improved livelihoods through diversified economic products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory of cultural practices and heritage sites</li> <li>• Number and type of non-consumptive tourism enterprises</li> <li>• Registration of IP rights</li> </ul>	DNMM DEA BTO DoT CBOs NGOs CIPA	December 2021

<p>5.2 To improve livelihoods through diversified, and inclusive economic opportunities</p>	<p>5.2.1 Identify products for value chain development, increased entrepreneurship, economic productivity, and improved service delivery</p> <p>5.2.2 Identify and support diversification in sectors that offer potential for job creation and business opportunities</p> <p>5.2.3 Establish strategic Public-Private Partnerships with district and local businesses</p> <p>5.2.4 Build capacity to establish and manage small enterprises, especially vulnerable groups such as women in crafts and San communities</p>	<p>Improved socio-economic livelihoods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and type of products improved</li> <li>• Number of new bussiness identified and job opportunities created</li> <li>• Report of PPP established</li> <li>• Capacity needs assessment for small enterprises</li> <li>• Inventory of NTFP and agriculutral produce within the Panhandle</li> <li>• Feasibility report for NTFP value addition</li> </ul>	<p>DNMIM/DEA NGOs Research Institutes/ Organisations</p> <p>NGOs TAC CBOs</p> <p>BTO TAC</p> <p>NWDC DNMIM/DEA NGOs</p> <p>DFRR ORI/EcoExist</p> <p>DFRR ORI/EcoExist NGOs</p>	<p>September 2022</p> <p>December 2022</p> <p>January 2023</p> <p>September 2025 (Continuous)</p> <p>December 2020</p> <p>December 2020</p>
<p>5.3 To promote programmes that support value addition for non timber forest products (NTFP) and agricultural produce</p>	<p>5.3.1 Initiate research into on resources with potential to produce goods, extracts, produce or material i.e., essential oils and essences.</p> <p>5.3.2 Identify NTFP in the Panhandle</p> <p>5.3.3 Assess NTFP and agricultural products for potential value addition</p> <p>5.3.4 Identify markets for value added NTFP</p>				

Strategic Goal 6: To develop destination marketing for the Panhandle portion of the WHS					
6.1 To develop and implement destination marketing strategy focused on river-based and cultural activities	6.1.1 Conduct Product/Destination Audit	Increased number of tourists to the Panhandle area	• Audit report	BTO DoT LCB	June 2021
	6.1.2 Develop a tourism branding to focus on river-based activities in collaboration with tourism partners		• Branding report	BTO DoT LCB	December 2021
	6.1.3 Create, support and implement destination marketing initiatives		• Destination marketing plan produced and implemented	BTO DoT LCB	September 2025 (Continuous)
	6.1.4 Promote the Panhandle tourist destination		• Number of events attended and platforms used for the promotion of the Panhandle	BTO DoT LCB	September 2025
6.2 To increase brand awareness through social media by using national influencers and brand ambassadors	6.2.1 Benchmark with other WHS in the country and region		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of exchange visits undertaken with different stakeholders</li> <li>• Number of hits and comments on different social media platforms</li> </ul>	BTO DoT LC LCB	September 2021
	6.2.2 Promote partnership marketing				
	6.2.3 Promote targeted marketing				
	6.2.4 Develop a website and other social marketing platforms for marketing				

## 4. Resources Mobilisation and Partnerships

*The strategic interventions proposed in this strategy will be initially funded through the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF/SGP) implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with additional funding from UNESCO. The fund will provide support to the COMPACT project in the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta WHS for a maximum of three years.*

The strategic plan, apart from giving strategic guidance on initiatives identified, it will further be used to guide grant-making and other activities for the duration of the strategy. The grant-making proposals will be informed by different projects activities and sets of indicators for the strategic priorities identified. The grants will be open to civil society organizations, community-based organisations, research institutions and other stakeholders supporting involvement of local communities in the conservation of Panhandle area of Okavango Delta WHS. The small-grants will support community-based conservation and livelihood projects as well as targeted capacity building, networking and exchange activities

The following criteria are proposed for the evaluation of the grant applications:



- The projects should address the thematic area of natural and cultural resources management in the context of COMPACT and/or livelihoods enhancement within the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS. Activities related to support priority areas need to be assessed on their merits.
- The projects need to clearly demonstrate their expected impacts in terms of the targets, especially with respect to natural resources conservation, sustainable management and livelihood enhancement.
- To ensure sustainability of projects financed through the GEF/SGP, there is a need to support community projects which have been planned and are implemented jointly with the private sector. The other funding partners will likely support implementation of the project even after the GEF/SGP funds are exhausted.

The funding proposals must demonstrate the following key considerations:

- Support for community upliftment and conservation awareness programs which will create environmental awareness to the community and job creation opportunities. COMPACT projects promote community stewardship and hence projects proposed must showcase how pro-environmental behaviors will be promoted and enhanced.
- Community participation and active involvement and engagement throughout all project phases, i.e., design, implementation and monitoring. This approach will facilitate project sustainability as it would be owned by the communities. Projects must demonstrate deliberate intention of working with communities and not for communities. To this effect, proposals must have an endorsement and a statement of participation and commitment from the target community, (user)-group and/or association.

- Sharing of best practices, lessons learned, and knowledge gained from project implementation. All projects proposal must include a dissemination plan and about 15% of funding proposed must be reserved for dissemination activities.
- Demonstrate inclusivity of vulnerable and marginalised groups such as women, children, youth, the disabled, and certain ethnic groups (e.g., the San communities, in case they are within or adjacent the proposed project area). Proposals must showcase how these groups are or will be factored in during project design, implementation and monitoring.
- Capacity building of the locals and skills transfer and development. The proposals must be explicit on the level at which skills will be developed, i.e., individual, organisational, community or system level.
- Building sustainable communities as opposed to dependent communities. This can be promoted by working with CBOs or associations to define their local priorities, to modify attitudes and practices that exclude people from economic decision-making and developing the capacities to making conservation programmes to serve community goals.
- Demonstrate relevance and fit to district plans and strategies and must be supported by the relevant district structures.
- Demonstrate that project provides synergy and holistic fit with other projects, initiatives, programmes and organisation's overarching policies. This must be interpreted within the strategic portfolio outlined through this strategic document. This is necessary to ensure that every project is contributing towards the achievement of the mission of the COMPACT project within the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS.

Projects targeting landscape than the actual core and buffer area of WHS could still be entertained and considered accordingly. This is so because one of the COMPACT core principles is landscape approach.

The principle acknowledges the connectivity and interconnectedness among and between ecosystems and multiplicity of stakeholders. However, these project proposals must be compelling and novel to warrant going beyond the core and buffer zone of the WHS.

COMPACT funding can be supplemented by leveraging co-financing from several funding sources available such as government, private sector and development partners. The biggest challenge with the funding landscape in

Botswana is that since the country attained the upper middle-income country, there are fewer donors willing to invest their funds in Botswana. This situation might increase with the transformation agenda of becoming a high-income country by 2036.

However, the MENT houses several funds for environmental conservation initiatives such as the National Environmental Fund, and the Conservation Trust Fund. Others could be accessed through the private sector (e.g., ABSA Botswana, FNB Foundation, Debswana Corporate Social Investment Fund) and development partners (USAID, British Council, UNDP, and the Grant Assistance for Human Security Projects from the Government of Japan). Considering that different donors have different funding priority areas, scope and focus, there is a need to explore these for complementary resource mobilization and/or diversification. It is also important that they explore new avenues for financial support.

In the long-term, community based organisations must aim for financial self-reliance by generating income through income-generating activities and/or using available resources to generate funds.



**Fishing project in the Panhandle**



# 5. Modalities of Implementation

*The modalities for implementation of the COMPACT Replication Project at the Panhandle of Okavango Delta WHS will follow the general guiding principles that advocate for 'a decentralized, democratic and transparent' process. The governance structure will have a Local Coordinator, Local Consultative Body at site level and links at national level through the National Steering Committee.*

## 5.1 Local Coordinator

The Local Coordinator (LC) will serve the role of overall planning and implementing the COMPACT programme and serve as a key link between local communities and different stakeholders and the COMPACT decision-making structures. The LC is responsible for the achievement of the objectives established in the COMPACT site strategy. According to Brown and Hay-Edie (2014), the Coordinator will also manage the small grants portfolio for COMPACT, as well as spearheading various capacity-building activities. While currently this role will continue to be served by the National Coordinator, Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme based in Gaborone, future recruitment will be guided by the requirements:

- A relevant university degree that covers natural resource management
- At least three (3) years of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) working experience
- Understanding and knowledge of the local (district), national and international context.



- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse stakeholders in an atmosphere of fairness and neutrality and the ability to build and maintain trust with and between them.
- The ability to facilitate multi-stakeholder processes and participation using participatory methodologies such as PRA, RRA and others.
- A proven track record of project management inclusive of implementation tracking, monitoring and evaluation and progress reporting.
- An understanding of the principles of active adaptive management and evidence of their application; and
- A proven track record of managing programme finances inclusive of budgeting, procurement and expenditure tracking.

## 5.2 Local Consultative Body

The Local Consultative Body (LCB) assists in ensuring that dialogue, coordination and consensus-building takes place among key stakeholders at the level of the protected area (Brown & Hay-Edie, 2014), in this case the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS. The LCB recommend grant proposals to the SGP National Steering Committee as well as representing a set of key project stakeholders in the landscape, such as relevant protected area management authority, local communities, NGOs, active in the area, local research institutions, government, private sector and donors.

The guiding general prescription of the character of the LCB is as follows:



- Representative of the key diverse actors concerned with site and surrounding landscape: It may include representation from agencies responsible for the management of the site (in this case Department of National Museum and Monuments and Department of Environmental Affairs), the traditional leadership from within target communities, local NGOs, academic, local and central government, the private sector, donors and political representation.
- Voluntary: Service to the LCB will be voluntary, without expectation of compensation or allowance, though reimbursements of certain expenses such as transport may be considered on case by case.
- Independent: Members should serve in their capacity as individuals, or as representative of a community, organisation or business, but not as a representative of a political or administrative entity.
- Active: Members should be prepared to be actively involved beyond simply attending periodic meetings. They must be actively engaged in project review, site monitoring, capacity building workshops and exchanges, and may serve as mentors to community groups.
- Long standing: The consistency ensured by a long-term structure is important. At the same time, the membership should change regularly, according to fixed terms of service, in order to bring in fresh perspectives. The term of service for the LCB shall be three (3), with individual representatives eligible for re-election for two (2) consecutive terms only.



During the Stakeholder Engagement Workshop and OWMC meetings, it was resolved that the LCB for the Panhandle at the Okavango Delta WHS shall consist of the following:

- Two members from each community Trust in the area.
- Representatives from user groups, e.g., local Fisher associations, crafts, etc.
- Indigenous group in the area will be represented by TOCaDI, a local NGO, and NCONGO.
- Traditional/Tribal leadership will be represented through their respective oversight responsibilities, i.e., dikgosi (chiefs) heading a cluster of communities will represent them accordingly, i.e., Senior Chief Representatives.
- Local research institute, currently being the Okavango Research Institute, University of Botswana, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUAN) and the EcoExist.
- Representation from local tourism facilities. Representation will be provided through HATAB.
- Local and central government representative with portfolio responsibility in the area. In this case the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) working with CBNRM trusts in the area will serve the purpose.
- Members of the OWMC clusters based within the Panhandle communities.
- One elected representative from Okavango Sub-district Council from within the area to represent North West District Council.

The membership to the LCB will be reviewed from time to time to cater for the changing stakeholder landscape and new and emerging user groups.

The stakeholders advocated for a new locally based structure against existing ones such as the OWMC, which is specific to the broader RAMSAR site. They indicated that the people living in close vicinity to the property/site are best placed to advocate for the area and make informed decisions on the same.

The stakeholders settled for the LCB structure as it is made up of diverse stakeholder operating within the landscape. This provide for diversity of multi-stakeholder perspectives as well as providing a forum for improving cooperation and forging partnerships at landscape level. Since the LCB membership is mostly drawn from key stakeholders in the Panhandle area, it would be ideal to use Shakawe for easy access and meetings. The LCB is also a structure that has being deemed innovative within the COMPACT model (Brown & Hay-Edie, 2014).

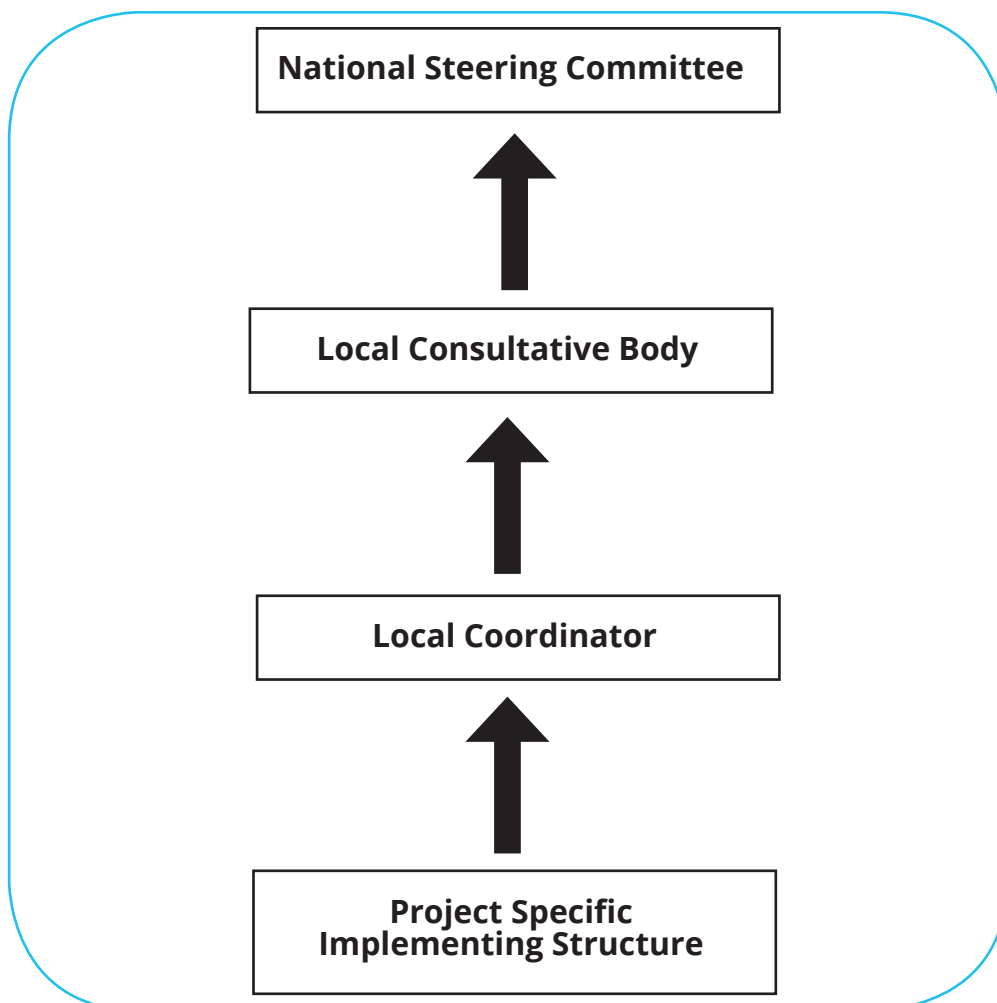
### 5.3 National Steering Committee

The National Steering Committee (NSC) is part of the SGP structure in each of the countries where it operates (Brown & Hay-Edie, 2014).

It is a multi-stakeholder body operating at national level and responsible for final decisions regarding small grants financed by the GEF. It offers an additional layer of neutrality and rigor to the review and approval of grants recommended by the Local Coordinator and the LCB by virtue of operating at national level. Membership to the NSC is also guided by the characteristics of representativeness, voluntarism, independence, active consistency. The existing NSC operating in Botswana at any time, being part of the SGP structure will continue to serve this purpose.

### 5.4 Summary Modalities of Implementation

The structures indicated in the preceding sections are summarized in Figure 5.1 below.



**Figure 5.1 Structures for implementation of the Panhandle of the Okavango Delta WHS COMPACT Site Strategy**



**The Okavango Delta, Communities and the livelihood of people living in the panhandle area.**

# 6. Information, Knowledge Transformation and Communication

*Knowledge translation, as core process to ensuring maximal impact to policy, people, practice and programming, will be an integral component of realizing the COMPACT site strategy. It is recommended that a communication strategy be developed at the onset of project launch to guide and inform communication planning and programming within the project area for wider influence and impact. The strategy will be premised on the intent to telling the COMPACT story and concept, facilitating knowledge sharing and understanding, communicating successes and lessons learned, thereby raising the profile and understanding of COMPACT as a tool to supporting sustainable rural livelihoods and ensuring stewardship of the World heritage property.*

In implementing the proposed Communication Strategy, opportunities to expand the project's communication frontiers will be harnessed by collaborating directly with local, national and regional, international initiatives and events, other COMPACT projects to add value to the project's knowledge translation interventions.

The strategy must outline how knowledge management will be harnessed to create, identify, capture, and share knowledge amassed from research and other platforms to the different stakeholders.

It is envisaged that several studies will be undertaken during the course of implementing this strategy. For these studies to make meaningful impact, they must be translated to suit diverse stakeholders' needs and literacy levels. Effective knowledge translation depend on several factors such as adequate understanding of the stakeholder contextual environment, which in turn informs dissemination and packaging of the research findings to suit stakeholder characteristics (Thakadu, Ngwenya, Magole, Chimabari, 2015). The latter also determine the choice of information delivery and approaches for maximal knowledge translation impacts. Successful knowledge translation and social change demand active stakeholder participation and engagement. Therefore the communicative processes developed through the communication strategy must speak to these issues.



# 7. Research, Development and Innovation

*It is necessary that implementation of this strategy is not done through business-as-usual approach and attitude, as it will demand innovativeness and creativity. The strategy will be implemented under the new normal brought about by the COVID 19 pandemic, thereby underscoring the need to cultivate deliberate resilience at community, family and individual level. It also calls for flexibility and productivity in delivery and approach to work. For technical advisory teams (who are mostly TAC members) and NGOs in the area, their key role is to act as conduits for innovation during implementation, bringing new ideas and approaches to the COMPACT programme and practice. It is further expected that these partners will work with a focus on each stage of the strategy demonstrating commitment to collaboration, innovation, performance, accountability, problem-solving, and information-sharing.*

A potential for innovation is in the area of crafts production within the Panhandle communities. A study in the Ngamiland NGOs decried lack of innovation, new designs and techniques in the crafts (Terry, 2001). Baskets from Botswana are regarded finest in Southern Africa as they have unique designs representing animals and nature. Crafts, in the form of baskets are common in the Panhandle, mainly the Etsha communities. It is necessary to explore the potential of patenting the knowledge, skills and designs for protection and community benefit.

Crafts marketing must also go beyond traditional marketing approaches where producers expect transit visitors to purchase their products. Producers must be facilitated to use information communication technologies (ICT) to market their products. There is potential for all crafts producers to jointly brand their products and increase brand awareness and marketing through social media platforms and internet. There is potential to create websites dedicated to marketing crafts from the Panhandle to target international markets.

Project proposals submitted through the COMPACT programme must include those that can assist local communities to produce innovative crafts. Attempts to develop a nursery aimed at promoting regeneration of important species in basketry was initiated in Etsha 6 in 2010. This serves as an example of innovative projects that address natural resources depletion and must be encouraged in the project area.

Veld products research and development must be undertaken more so that this strategy calls for value addition to existing natural resources products for commercialisation and entrepreneurship. The move towards entrepreneurship and developing innovative means of generating funds by local communities will go a long way to enhance their financial capacity and sustainability. When this trickles down to household and individual level, it will contribute to long-term positive impacts on community livelihoods and promote diversified livelihoods, thereby enhancing resilience.

# 8. Monitoring and Evaluation

*Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and adaptive management are important elements of the CO-MAPCT site strategy and its implementation. The COMPACT site strategy and related performance measures will be monitored and evaluated as part of the annual planning process, while also serving as a continuous process. The approach that is used for planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation and reporting on progress towards the achievement of targets must be aligned with the existing government-wide monitoring and evaluation system.*

This alignment will ensure that the COMPACT is integrated into the routine work of government and that performance against targets is subject to established monitoring systems. The MENT, through the Department of National Museum and Monuments and the Department of Environmental Affairs, will be the coordinating focal point, working with relevant spheres of government, the private sector, NGOs and civil society.

The monitoring and evaluation exercise will be followed by strategy review meetings held with the Local Coordinator and Local Consultative Body. Additionally, the Local Coordinator will hold a strategy review session each quarter with different implementing partners and stakeholders to review site-wide progress. Progress on the Strategic Plan will be presented and discussed with the Local Consultative Body at its regularly scheduled meetings. Monitoring will be undertaken at three levels, being 1) priority area or strategic goal, 2) individual project and 3) technical support. Evaluation shall rely upon results of monitoring as well as attainment of key performance indicators.

To ensure inclusive and effective monitoring and evaluation process is, all the implementing stakeholders' capacity in monitoring and evaluation must be strengthened. Prior to project implementation, user friendly monitoring and evaluation tools, templates and materials must be developed and implementers trained on their use. Some of the existing monitoring and evaluation tools must be adapted to fit the users' needs, but not compromising the quality of information required. For CBOs, there is an existing Management Oriented Monitoring System (MOMS) tool which has been adapted for a variety of monitoring actions including on game sightings, rare species, problem animals, village mapping and other aspects (Mbaiwa, 2015). A community-based monitoring tool such as this one, can be extended to include monitoring of bush fires and be developed to include indigenous knowledge systems. Bush fires surveillance can be tracked also on real time basis using satellite-based remote sensing to detect, monitor the intensity and direction of bushfires. In so doing, local communities' indigenous knowledge on fire surveillance must be considered to enhance monitoring.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually, considering progress on each fiscal year's Implementing Actions, budget considerations, as well as changing business, economic and other factors. The annual strategic planning update process will commence each March in order to align with the annual government budget planning cycle, which begins each April.

# 9. Risk analysis and Management

*There are potential risks that the COMPACT project implementation must be cognisant of in the landscape as these may impact on the achievement of specific objectives. It is essential that project implementation takes proactive measures to minimize any potential problems that may negatively impact the project's timelines. A list of some of the most apparent risk is tabulated (Table 7.1) based on the natural, socio-economic, institutional and political dynamics.*

While some of the risks are macro issues such as natural disasters (e.g., climate change) and global pandemics such as COVID 19, they also have an external and international dimension. Internal risks includes internal village/trust/resource use based conflicts and potential loss of species.

Most of the risk are perceived to be of high impact hence the need to address them through specified risk management strategies indicated.

It is recommended that a Risk Management Strategy that will identify, analyse and respond to risk factors throughout the life of the project and in the best interest of the COMPACT project objectives be developed. The strategy will further determine the appropriate structure for carrying out risk assessment.

Notwithstanding this, the projects promoters and implementers must consider the potential risks at project design. All grant proposals must indicate possible risks and demonstrate how they will address them accordingly. The risk analysis and management must be factored into projects from project design and implementation.



Risk	Probability of occurrence					Risk Impact					Mitigation
	L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H		
<b>Natural</b>											
Climate Change and Potential Effects Environment and Livelihoods Resources		★				★					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote more sustainable uses of land and forests</li> <li>Introducing forest conservation, agroforestry and forest-based enterprises for diversification of rural incomes</li> <li>Developing and using varieties and species resistant to pests and diseases</li> <li>Promote use of crop varieties with increased resistance to heat shock and drought</li> <li>Promote conservation agriculture</li> </ul>
Drying of the Okavango River		★				★					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure transboundary cooperation through OKACOM</li> <li>Ensure maintenance and improve sustainable abstraction and balance the needs of society and the environment</li> </ul>
Invasive Alien Plants		★				★					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake assessment and mapping of invasive alien plants in the Panhandle area, control and monitoring programmes in collaboration with local communities</li> <li>Capacity building on control and detection of new invasive species</li> <li>Facilitate boat and vehicle washing facility at all boat stations or access points within the Okavango River</li> <li>Engage communities and the IKS in invasive alien plants control programs conducted within the Okavango River</li> </ul>
Wildlife Diseases		★				★					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building for early detection of wildlife diseases, control measures and monitoring</li> </ul>
Livestock Diseases			★								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Location of boreholes areas in the sandvelt to reduce live-stock-wildlife interactions and potential disease spreading</li> </ul>

<b>Socio-economic</b>	
Human-wildlife Conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location of boreholes areas in the sandvelt to reduce live-stock-wildlife interactions and potential disease spreading</li> <li>• Ensure regular and prompt maintenance of veterinary cordon fences to keep buffaloes from livestock areas</li> <li>• Ensure that communities living with wildlife realize significant benefits from wildlife and other components of biodiversity by promoting and supporting CBNRM/ COMPACT program</li> <li>• Undertake public awareness campaigns on livestock disease control strategies with local communities and the importance of vaccination programs</li> <li>• Ensure arable fields are not allocated along the traditional wildlife corridors</li> <li>• Maintain existing wildlife corridors identified in the Panhandle area</li> <li>• Undertake feasibility studies of electrifying veterinary cordon fence to reduce human elephant conflict in the Panhandle area</li> </ul>
	★
	★
	★
Internal Village/Trust/Resource use Based Conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building for all Panhandle CBOs to facilitate effective management and governance of CBNRM/COMPACT programs</li> <li>• Ensure the integrity of local community institutions through continuous capacity building and strengthening</li> <li>• Strengthen community leadership and control over natural resource use by promoting and improving CBNRM governance</li> <li>• Facilitate and empower existing bodies (e.g., Fisheries Associations) to resolve conflicts and promote co-management in the Panhandle's resources such as fisheries</li> <li>• Promote and support the associations through capacity strengthening to ensure its sustainability</li> </ul>
	★
	★

Pandemics		★				★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote diversified livelihood strategies</li> <li>Promote local tourism in CBNRM/COMPACT areas</li> </ul>
Inadequate Capacity Among CBOs and NGOs			★			★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building for all Panhandle CBOs to facilitate effective management and governance of CBNRM/COMPACT programs</li> <li>Support NGOs to provide guidance to COMPACT communities</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional</b>							
Ineffective Institutional and Management Processes		★			★		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish viable institutional arrangements to support integrated resource management of the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta WHS</li> <li>Strengthening institutional capacity needs assessment study for government and partner institutions involved in the management and conservation of the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta WHS</li> <li>Ensure cooperation and coordination between all the stakeholders managing the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta</li> </ul>
<b>Financial</b>							
Inadequate financial resources		★				★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure effective management of available financial resources</li> <li>Diversify funding sources and donors with similar or complementary interest</li> </ul>
Fraud, financial mismanagement and misappropriation			★			★	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain adequate internal controls and policies for the management of finances</li> <li>Establish appropriate financial policies and proper accounting controls</li> <li>Capacity building for financial records keeping</li> <li>Ensure vigilance in monitoring financial assets against program budgets</li> <li>Ensure qualified personnel are recruited to handle finances</li> </ul>

Political						
Conflicting Land Use Policies		★				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support multi-sector collaboration in planning and implementation of the management needs of the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta WHS</li> <li>• Facilitate harmonizing legislation and policies applicable to ODRS</li> <li>• Ensure flexibility in implementation of national policies given the peculiarities of the Panhandle area of the Okavango Delta WHS</li> </ul>
Inadequate of Political Will	★					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate approval of CBNRM Act, guidelines and CBNRM strategy</li> </ul>
Erratic and Frequent CBNRM Policy Changes	★					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate approval of CBNRM Act, guidelines and CBNRM strategy</li> </ul>
Regional Political Unrest and Conflicts		★				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued support and engagements in regional protocols</li> </ul>

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**Mr Ompabaletse Vasco Baiteseng**  
 Regional Coordinator  
 North West Region  
 Department of National Museum and Monuments.

**Physical Address:** Rural Administration Centre, Office 105  
**Phone:** +267 6861852/2966  
**Email:** obaitsiseng@gov.bw  
 Private Bag 017, Maun, Botswana

**Ms Abigail Lillian Engleton**  
 National Coordinator  
 Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme

**Physical Address:** UN Building  
 Government Enclave Corner Khama Crescent and President Drive  
**Fax:** +267 3956093  
**Phone:** +267 3633700  
**Email:** abigail.engleton@undp.org  
 P o Box 54, Gaborone, Botswana