Etosha Pan to the Skeleton Coast

Conservation Histories, Policies and Practices in North-west Namibia

Edited by Sian Sullivan, Ute Dieckmann, and Selma Lendelvo

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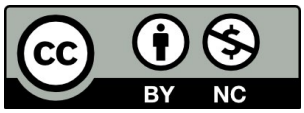

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2. Spatial severance and nature conservation: Apartheid histories in Etosha-Kunene

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Abstract

We review conservation policy and legislation and its impacts under the territory's post-World War 1 administration from Pretoria, prior to the formalisation of an Independent Namibia in 1990. We trace the history of nature conservation in Etosha-Kunene during the times of South African government. In the initial phase "game preservation" was not high on the agenda of the South African administration, which focused instead on white settlement of the territory, requiring a continuous re-organisation of space. After World War 2, the potential of tourism and the role of "nature conservation" for the economy was given more attention. Fortress conservation was the dominant paradigm, leading to the removal of local inhabitants from their land. Shifting boundaries of Game Reserve No. 2 characterised the 1950s up to the 1970s: part of Game Reserve No.2 became Etosha Game Park in 1958 and finally Etosha National Park in 1967, which in its current size was completely fenced in 1973. The arid area along the coast was proclaimed the Skeleton Coast National Park in 1971. Alongside these changes, new allocations of land following the ideal of apartheid or "separate development" were made, "perfecting" spatial-functional organisation with neat boundaries between "Homelands" for local inhabitants, the (white) settlement area and game/nature. Land, flora and fauna, and people of various backgrounds were treated as separable categories to be sorted and arranged according to colonial needs and visions. A new impetus towards participatory approaches to conservation began to be initiated in north-west Namibia in the 1980s, prefiguring Namibia's post-Independence move towards community-based conservation.

2.1 Introduction

As outlined in Chapter 1, in 1907 the German colonial administration proclaimed a large area of north-west Namibia, which we are calling "Etosha-Kunene", as one of three Game Reserves in German South-West Africa. This area was by no means an "untamed wilderness" but rather inhabited by Indigenous groups speaking different languages, with a diversity of animal and plant species, waters, soils, and so forth. The proclamation of Game Reserve No. 2 can be seen as the beginning of a long and varied history of colonial nature conservation in Etosha-Kunene with shifting objectives, policies and practices that had tremendous influence on its human and beyond-human inhabitants.

In this chapter, we trace the history of nature conservation in Etosha-Kunene during the post-World War 1 South African administration of "South West Africa" (SWA), formally from 1920–1990. In the initial phase (Section 2.2), nature conservation was not high on the agenda of the South West African Administration (SWAA). The focus changed gradually from the 1950s when white settlement of the territory had almost reached its limits, and nature conservation and its potential for tourism and for the economy were given more attention (Section 2.3). During the 1960s, the appointment of the Commission of Enquiry into South-West Africa Affairs (called the Odendaal Commission after its Chairman Frans Hendrik "Fox" Odendaal) changed the direction to some extent (Section 2.4). The Odendaal Plan entailed perfecting spatial-functional organisation with neat boundaries between "homelands" for the various local inhabitants, the (white) settlement area and "game"/nature. This re-organisation of space and its partly unforeseen effects necessitated more "nature management"

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and “game farming”, and led to increasing economic dependency, especially of those who were not allocated a “homeland” (e.g. Hai‖om). “Kaokolanders” (ovaHimba, ovaHerero, ovaTjimba, Dhimba, and others[1]) and oshiWambo-speakers retained access to former “Reserve-lands” (which were expanded in the case of “Kaokoland”). The new “homeland” of Damaraland (re)connected several former “Native Reserves” (Okombahe, Otjohorongo, Fransfontein, Sesfontein) inhabited by Damara/ǂNūkhoen, ovaHerero and Nama. All were subjected to heavy restrictions on mobility and property ownership.

Chapters 1 and 2 thereby provide an outline of colonial histories and legacies, the re-organisation of spaces, and the reshuffling of human and non-human inhabitants in Etosha-Kunene, comprising the conservation legacy Namibia faced after Independence in 1990, as considered in Chapter 3.

2.2 1915 until the 1940s: The initial phase of South African administration—spatial organisation, settlement and game preservation

2.2.1 Spatial organisation: The red line, “native reserves” and settlement

German administration in SWA was terminated during World War 1 by the peace treaty of Khorab in 1915, when South Africa imposed martial law on the former German colony.[2] The German Proclamation of 1907 regarding game reserves was repealed by Ordinance 1 of 1916, which amended and reconfirmed the borders of Game Reserve No. 2.[3] Alongside this ordinance, Proclamation 15 of 1916 decreed that no person can ‘cross the line marking the Police Zone [i.e. the southern and central parts of the territory under formal colonial government] without permission’.[4]

After the German surrender in 1915, a large number of people classified as ovaHimba, ovaHerero, ovaTjimba and Nama under the leadership of Vita Thom and Muhona Katiti (see Chapter 1) returned with their cattle from southern Angola to the Kaoko area,[5] causing disruption and the dislocation of local communities. Subsequently, Major Charles N. Manning, the first Resident Commissioner of Ovamboland, undertook two administrative journeys into north-west Namibia in 1917 and 1919, continuing the pre-existing German impetus of government and control based on a typical suite of statecraft technologies. These included: reducing the availability of firearms;[6] controlling the hunting of game; demarcating ethnic groups and identifying political leaders associated with them;[7] and controlling movement and trade.[8] Part of his mission was to disarm inhabitants of the area and to make ‘it clear that local hunting and trading in game products were to be unacceptable’.[9]

In 1920, South Africa was granted a League of Nations Mandate to administer South-West Africa, providing a safer foundation for the administration’s future policy. The administration was now less dependent on international opinion and could follow its actual colonial interests and the requirements of a settler economy. With the change of government, the Kaoko Land and Mining

1 Friedman (2014[2011])
2 Dierks (1999: 93)
3 Dieckmann (2007a: 119)
4 Silvester *et al.* (1998: 3)
5 Jacobsohn (1998[1990]: 14), Bollig (1997: 19)
6 *Ibid.*, p. 22
7 Rizzo (2012: 16)
8 See discussion in Hayes (2000), Rizzo (2012) and Sullivan (2022). Manning’s journey is mapped and annotated on the map linked here: https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/wp4-spatialising-colonialities
9 Bollig & Olwage (2016: 66)

Company (*Kaoko Land und Minengesellschaft*, KLMG, see Chapter 1) was formally nullified:[10] '[o]nly four farms had been surveyed and sold and they were never occupied'.[11]

The border of the Police Zone became clearly defined in the Prohibited Areas Proclamation 26 of 1928. Established under German colonial rule initially as a cordon of military-veterinary stations to control human and livestock mobilities following the rinderpest epidemic of 1897 (Chapter 1), by 1907 it was represented as blue line on a map,[12] becoming a red line drawn on maps of the South West Africa Administration (SWAA).[13] Henceforth, the Police Zone border became known as the Red Line which,

> physically mark[ed] the transition between "white" European southern Africa and the "black" interior, between that which was "healthy" and that deemed "diseased" [...] the line drawn between what the colonial power defined as "civilization" and what it considered "the wilderness".[14]

The Red Line was 'reinforced by a chain of police outposts placed at intervals along its length'.[15] For Kaokoveld in the north-west, regulations were administered from Ondangwa and 'enforced by numerous police patrols into the area'.[16] The Red Line functioned increasingly as a veterinary border,[17] not only separating settlers from "natives", but also aimed at keeping livestock populations on both sides apart from each other.

In addition to the Red Line from east to west, other measures for the spatial segregation of inhabitants were established. A Native Reserves Commission (the body responsible for developing segregation as policy) was set up in 1920, recommending that:

> (i) the country should be more clearly segregated into black and white settlement areas; (ii) squatting on white farms should be prevented; (iii) there should be more efficient control of the reserves; (iv) reserves which were recognized by German treaties should be maintained but the temporary reserves established during the military period should be closed; (v) new reserves (which did not disturb "vested rights") should be established; and (vi) further land should be earmarked for further extension of these reserves.[18]

A few "native reserves" had been established by the German administration, but the number was now extended with reserves set up in most of the settler farming districts. In Etosha-Kunene, the German "native reserves" of Sesfontein and Fransfontein were retained, with some farms north and north-west of Outjo serving as reserves in the 1920s and early 1930s. The farm Aimab, for example, was used as an "Ovambo reserve" until the 1920s,[19] and Otjeru, originally including several farms, was also an Ovambo reserve from German times until the late 1930s.[20] In the 1930s, these reserves were dissolved[21] and their inhabitants had to move to Fransfontein, native reserves in other districts, or outside the Police Zone, unless they took up regular employment.[22] In 1923, three native reserves were established in Game Reserve No. 2, in the north-east of Kaokoveld near the Kunene River, with different 'chiefs of Kaokoland's pastoral population': namely (from west to east)

10 Hayes (1998: 173)
11 Rizzo (2012: 16). This nullification apparently caused 'a major lawsuit against the South African government in the high court of the Völkerbund in Geneva' (Bollig 1997: 23); also Hesse (1906)
12 Miescher (2009: 84 and map)
13 Miescher (2012: 2)
14 *Ibid.*, p. 10
15 *Ibid.*
16 Bollig (1997: 28)
17 Details in Miescher (2009: ch. 4)
18 Emmett (1999: 101)
19 NAN, LAN 579, 1379, Klein Omburo nr. 148, Outjo: General File, 18.8.1920, Magistrate, Outjo, to Secretary, Windhoek, in Dieckmann (2013: 259)
20 Established for oshiWambo-speaking people, although other language groups stayed there too—for more details see Miescher (2006), also Miescher (2009: 236ff)
21 *Ibid.*
22 Schnegg (2007: 258)

Kakurukouye, Vita Thom and Muhona Katiti.[23] The Native Reserves Commission also defined the conditions for movement between native reserves, farms and urban areas. The reserves provided a necessary source of labour for settlers. Bushmen were not assigned any land, because the Native Reserves Commission considered 'that "the Bushmen problem [...] must be left to solve itself", and "any Bushmen found within the area occupied by Europeans should be amenable to all the laws"'.[24]

The native reserve policy south of the Red Line was closely connected to the settlement policy. Since the early 1920s, South Africa was interested in relocating poor white South African citizens to its new colony, and therefore set up a settlement programme offering extraordinarily favourable conditions: munificent provisions for loans, low minimal capital requirements and help with transportation into the area.[25] New laws to regulate the flow of labour and control the Indigenous population were imported from South Africa.[26] The Masters and Servants Proclamation (no. 2 of 1916 and amendments) aimed at the 'systematization, formalization and centralization of labour relations',[27] and the Vagrancy Proclamation (25 of 1920 and amendments) made it an offence for black people to move around in the Police Zone, unless they could show 'visible lawful means of support', set at either 10 cattle or 50 small stock.[28]

At the end of the 1920s, about 1,900 Afrikaners who had earlier trekked from South Africa to Angola (see Chapter 1), were offered the possibility to move to South West Africa. The majority were first resettled in the so-called Osire Block, east of Otjiwarongo, but in 1937 many of them moved to the Gurugas Block in the north-west of Outjo District (now in Kunene Region),[29] where farming conditions were better.[30] This resettlement happened despite the fact that in the mid-1930s, the Land Settlement Commission had to admit that the generous settlement policy, initiated in 1920 and offering extensive aid to the farmers, was largely responsible for the unsound position in which the farmers often found themselves, as they had often overcapitalised their operations and lived beyond their means. Therefore, from 1935 onwards, farms were usually allocated for a period of one year without financial support, the capability of a farmer to manage the land during the first year being decisive for prospective tenure.[31]

The Annual Report on Land Resettlement of 1937 stated that:

> [t]he rate of progress of land settlement at present cannot be maintained much longer, as most of the land suitable for settlement purposes has been disposed of. There are un-surveyed areas in the Outjo, Swakopmund, Maltahöhe and Warmbad districts which it is proposed to cut up into farms during the course of this year, and these holdings will be made available for settlement purposes. When these have been disposed of there will remain very little land for further settlement.[32]

Despite the concerns stated in the report, more land was made available until the early 1960s in the Outjo and Grootfontein districts through shifting the police zone and Game Reserve No. 2 boundaries and de-proclaiming Game Reserve No. 1 (see Section 2.3.2):[33] the north-westerly extension of the settler farming area is reviewed in Chapter 13.

Increasing settlement had severe consequences for local inhabitants in Etosha-Kunene, both north and south of the Red Line. Many were driven from their land south of the Red Line in order to make space for white settlement.[34] At the end of the 1920s, for example, a major portion of

23 Bollig (1997: 24, 26), Bollig & Heinemann (2002: 280), Rizzo (2012: 3)
24 In Gordon (1992: 91)
25 Silvester *et al.* (1998: 14)
26 Dieckmann (2007a: 117)
27 Emmett (1999: 76)
28 Dieckmann (2007a: 125)
29 NAN LAN 1/1/89 53, Vol IV, Dieckmann (2007b: 162, 2013: 260)
30 Dierks (1999: 105)
31 Emmett (1999: 94f)
32 LAN 1/1/89 31, 53 Vol. III, cited in Dieckmann (2013: 260)
33 Kambatuku (1996), Sullivan (1996), Dieckmann (2013: 260)
34 Bollig (1997: 7, 25)

southern 'Kaokoland' Herero were forcibly removed from an area around Okavao situated today within Etosha National Park (ENP), north-westwards to Ombombo in the south-eastern part of Kaokoveld,[35] so as to make the Police Zone border impenetrable for people and livestock:[36] see Chapter 14. In total, 1,201 people were removed, together with 7,289 cattle and 22,176 sheep and goats.[37] In the SWA Annual Report of 1930 it was thus reported that,

> [c]hanges in regard to the settlements of natives have recently been carried out in the Southern Kaokoveld. Scattered and isolated native families, particularly [but not only] Hereros, have been moved to places where it is possible to keep them under observation and control. With few exceptions, these natives are well satisfied with the new localities. They also realize the advantage of being controlled by one chief. […] All stock has been moved north over a considerable area in order to establish a buffer zone between the natives in the Kaokoveld and the occupied parts of the Territory which remain free of the disease [lungsickness].[38]

Strict boundary controls in the north-west protected the commercial farming areas, such that any move into the Kaokoveld required 'a pass from the local administration' and 'Kaokolanders' had to apply for passes to the police post at Swartbooisdrift/Tjimuhaka on the Kunene River: these applications were sent on for approval 'to the office of the Native Commissioner at Ondangwa', with movement of livestock across international and internal boundaries prohibited.[39]

Further east, in the Outjo and Grootfontein area, the so-called "Bushmen problem" that began under the German colonial regime (see Chapter 1) continued to trouble the administration: a number of proclamations were either newly enacted or amended to better handle the problem. Proclamation 11 of 1927 sought to prevent squatting by limiting the number of people allowed to reside on a farm to five 'native families'.[40] The Vagrancy Proclamation (32 of 1927) was also amended,[41] and prison terms for vagrancy were *inter alia* increased from three to 12 months. The Arms and Ammunition Proclamation was revised to include Bushman bows and arrows under the definition of firearms, making their possession henceforth illegal (by Government Notice 2 of 1928); yet this proclamation seemed to lack the necessary precision for extensive implementation. No fees for licences were ever fixed, nor did Bushmen ever bother to apply for licences.[42] During the 1930s and 1940s, discussions about where to resettle the Bushmen took place with different suggestions of "Bushman reserves". One suggestion was of a "Bushman reserve" overlapping Game Reserve No. 2, with the Assistant Secretary of the Administration suggesting the establishment of a reserve for Bushmen should go hand in hand with maintenance of the Game Reserve, and that Bushmen should have access to game. It was thought that if Bushmen were allowed to roam and hunt over portions of the Game Reserve, it might provide a solution to the "problem" of the Bushmen's nomadic lifestyle,[43] although in 1941 this initiative was dropped.

Yet, the idea of keeping "natives" and settlers in separate areas was not only impeded by the mobility of local inhabitants with or without livestock, but also due to the grazing needs of settler farmers with their livestock, especially during periods of drought. In the 1930s, the South African Administration contemplated settling white farmers in the "neutral zone" north of the Police Zone border,[44] from which local inhabitants had been progressively cleared since the early days of establishing a militarised veterinary cordon during the rinderpest epidemic of 1897 (see Chapter 1). In the early 1940s, the administration started awarding grazing licences north of the

35 Heydinger (2021: 11, 21) citing Hoole (2008)
36 Bollig (1998: 166, 2006: 59)
37 Bollig (1998: 166, 170)
38 NAN SWAA (1930: 14); see discussion in Sullivan (2022: 16)
39 Bollig (1997: 25)
40 Dieckmann (2007a: 125)
41 NAN SWAA A50/27, 1927, Proclamation no. 32.
42 Gordon (1992: 129–30), Dieckmann (2007a: 125–26)
43 SWAA A 50/67, n.d. (mid of 1940), in Dieckmann (2007a: 144)
44 Bollig (1998: 166)

Red Line for which farmers could apply (see Chapter 13).[45] Farmers were not only dependent on sufficient grazing but also on cheap farm labourers. Ovambo and other migrant workers coming from the north strongly rejected farm labour due to poor wages, rations and bad treatment as well as the need to split up into smaller groups. They were therefore mostly channelled to mines, railway construction and the Works Department, at least prior to the depression in the early 1930s.[46] Bushmen and Damara/ǂNūkhoen living in the settlement area had to fill the farm worker gap.

2.2.2 Nature conservation and Game Reserve No. 2

As can be seen, the settlement programme was the focus of the South African administration up to the 1950s, with nature conservation playing a relatively minor role.[47] Joubert comments on the years from 1915–1947 that,

> virtually no progress was made regarding conservation as a whole. Various Ordinances were proclaimed but enforcement in the vast area of SWA was virtually impossible, especially since no officials directly responsible for nature conservation existed.[48]

Nature conservation during this period mainly implied "game preservation" and was embedded in the whole colonial enterprise, meaning that the history of nature conservation needs to be read in conjunction with these other measures of spatial-political organisation. Sometimes interests related to nature conservation had to be negotiated with other branches of colonial administration due to contradicting objectives; sometimes interests went in the same direction and initiatives taken were mutually dependent.

In 1921, the Union's first Game Preservation Proclamation (13 of 1921) for South West Africa was issued, based on the legislation of the original German administration of 1902.[49] This Proclamation made the South African police responsible for regulating hunting and game protection,[50] as had also been the case in the German colonial period (see Chapter 1).[51] The proclamation was repealed and replaced in 1926 by Game Preservation Ordinance (5 of 1926).[52] The list of protected game species was extended,[53] hunting on crown land 'with exception of dignitaries and officials on duty in rural areas' became prohibited, and hunting restrictions on settler farms were applied.[54] In 1928, the Prohibited Areas Proclamation mentioned above re-proclaimed Game Reserves Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and defined their borders.[55] The post of Game Ranger of Game Reserve No. 2, up to that date assumed by a Captain Nelson, was abolished and the Native Commissioner of Ovamboland, Carl Hugo Linsingen ("Cocky") Hahn (son of the Rev. Carl Hugo Hahn mentioned in Chapter 1), took over and acted as a part-time Game Warden.[56] Through border changes of Game Reserve No. 2, 47 farms in the south-east of Etosha were either created or existing farms cut out of the game reserve (see Figure 2.1).[57] Only in 1935 was private farm ownership within the boundaries of Game Reserve No. 2 finally terminated (with one exception—a small piece of land close to Okaukuejo).[58]

45 Levin & Goldbeck (2013: 14); also Kambatuku (1996), Sullivan (1996)
46 Emmett (1999: 176, 188)
47 Joubert (1974: 35), Botha (2013: 235)
48 Joubert (1974: 36)
49 *Ibid.*, p. 35, Germishuys & Staal (1979: 113)
50 Bridgeford (2018: 14)
51 Muschalek (2020[2019]: 101)
52 Joubert (1974: 35), Germishuys & Staal (1979: 113)
53 *Ibid.*, p. 113
54 Botha (2005: 179)
55 NAN SWAA A511/6 Game Reserves–Boundaries and Fencing (1927–1954): Prohibited Areas Proclamation, 1928, second schedule: Definition of Game Reserves.
56 Dieckmann (2007a: 145–46)
57 *Ibid.*, p. 145
58 *Ibid.*, p. 75, Berry (1980: 53)

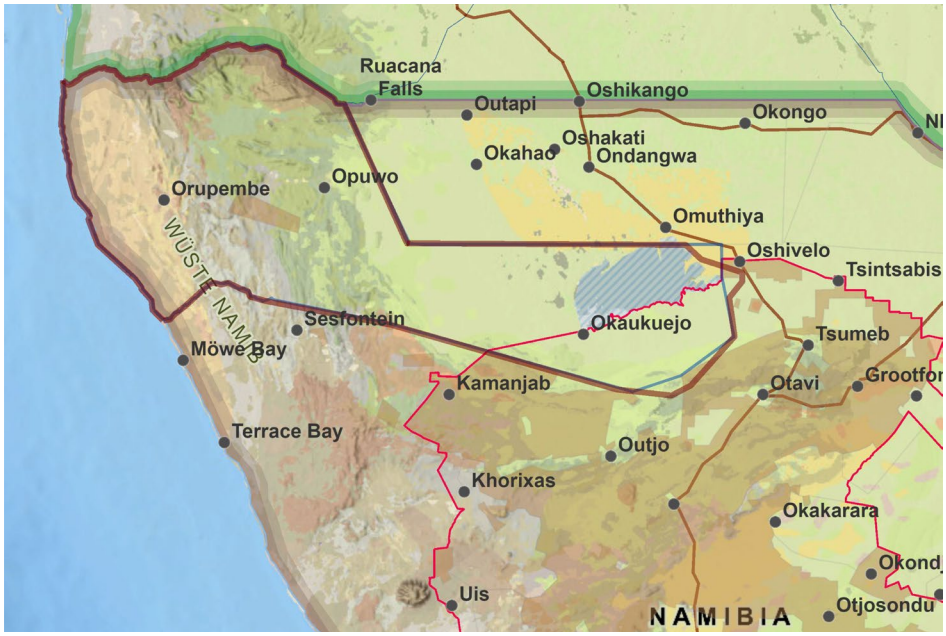

Fig. 2.1 Map of the Game Reserve No. 2 boundary in 1907 (brown border) and 1928 (blue border), with the police zone border of 1937 (red), freehold farmland in this year (shaded in brown) and main roads (brown lines). © Ute Dieckmann, data: Proclamations NAN, Atlas of Namibia Team 2022, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

Although the focus in the context of nature conservation during these years was mainly on wildlife, in 1937 the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance (19 of 1937) was gazetted, including for the first time the protection of plants (other than *Welwitschia mirabilis*, which had been protected since 1916).[59] Combining flora and fauna, this legislation implied that the administration had started to move towards a more holistic approach of "nature conservation" embedded in global discourses.[60] World War 2, however, stopped any further developments in this regard for almost a decade.

The south-eastern area of Game Reserve No. 2, where Hai‖om continued to be accepted as inhabitants, was called Namutoni Game Reserve, Etosha Game Reserve or Etosha Pan Game Reserve in the 1920s until to the 1940s: according to Miescher the name was streamlined to Etosha Pan Game Reserve in 1948.[61] Officers from the respective police stations reported on this area in their monthly reports. In the 1920s, around 1,500 Hai‖om were estimated to be living around Etosha Pan.[62] At the time, the boundaries of Game Reserve No. 2 were not marked well, let alone fenced. In these years, a number of Hai‖om from Etosha Game Reserve were employed in the Bobas mine near Tsumeb, or as seasonal workers on farms.[63]

Some problems with regard to the frontier situation and the control of mobility had already been noticed in the early years of the South African administration. For example, the game warden of Namutoni remarked in 1924:

> [s]tock thefts on the border of the Reserve and Outjo district have been going on for some years. Bushmen residing for a certain period of the year in the district of Outjo cross over to the Reserve for a time, they are all over the country, even entering the Kaokoveld.[64]

59 Joubert (1974: 36)
60 In 1933, colonial powers had agreed upon the 'Convention Relative to the Preservation of Fauna and Flora in their Natural State', one of the first nature conservation agreements for Africa. The Union of South Africa and the United Kingdom were among the signatories (van Heijnsbergen 1997: 16).
61 E.g. see NAN NAO 33/1; Miescher (2009: 312). To avoid confusion about these various names we consistently use the term Etosha Game Reserve when referring to this area in this period.
62 Lebzelter (1934: 83)
63 SWAA 50/26, 20.8.1926, in Dieckmann (2007a: 155)
64 ADM 128 5503/1, 30.1.1924, in Dieckmann (2007a: 145)

Hunting by Hai‖om within Etosha Game Reserve was generally not regarded as a problem, as indicated in game warden reports in 1926: '[t]he amount of game shot by Bushmen is by no means decreasing the game'.[65] Certain limitations were officially in place: no firearms, no dogs, no shooting of giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis angolensis*), eland (*Taurotragus oryx*), impala (*Aepyceros melampus*) and 'loeffelhund' (bat-eared fox, *Otocyon megalotis*),[66] although hunting with rifles occasionally took place.[67] Hai‖om in the reserve were also in possession of livestock but there was uncertainty among the officers about how much livestock was allowed: it was decided then that "Bushmen" should not keep more than 10 head of large and 50 head of small stock per person within the reserve.[68] In October 1937 the monthly return of Namutoni reported 84 cattle, eight donkeys (excluding 40 donkeys of an Ovambo man at Osohama) and 92 goats in the vicinity of Namutoni, with two men reported to have 20 and 23 head of cattle, exceeding the allowed number of 10 head of large stock per person.[69] In 1939, the number of livestock of Hai‖om at only three waterholes in the vicinity of Namutoni, within the game reserve, was reported to be 98 cattle, four donkeys, and 204 goats. The Station Commander asked the men to reduce their stock, which reportedly took place afterwards.[70]

The separation of game from livestock had evidently not yet taken place. The Red Line ran along the southern edge of the pan, while the southern border of the game reserve—marking also the northern border of settlement—was situated further south. Hai‖om were partly integrated into the colonial system and in general not regarded as "proper Bushmen". Lebzelter observed in the 1920s:

> [t]hese people usually dress in European rags, use Christian names without actually being proselytised, but are always ready to dance for distinguished guests in their traditional clothes and have their picture taken. They are well on the way to becoming saloon bushmen and are gradually getting into the tourist business [...][71]

Ironically though, they were portrayed as 'the African Bushmen' and 'the most primitive race on earth' by the Denver African Expedition,[72] which visited the Etosha area from September 1925 until January 1926. The expedition's members claimed to have discovered 'the missing link' in the Hai‖om residing there, making a film called 'The Bushman' and taking around 500 still photos.[73]

Indeed, the number of Hai‖om living in Etosha Game Reserve in the years before World War 2 is not clear. The monthly and annual reports were written by people responsible for different areas (e.g. Namutoni or Okaukuejo), which also included land outside the Game Reserve. Additionally, the accounts given are based entirely on estimates, since the officers were lacking detailed knowledge of Hai‖om living in their areas.[74] The only 'complete' accounts for the Game Reserve were given in Hahn's annual reports. In 1942, for example, he estimated around 605–770 'Bushmen' to be living in Etosha Game Reserve.[75]

Beyond the area of Hai‖om habitation, in these years thousands of "Kaoko pastoralists", as well as Khoekhoegowab-speaking Puros Dama, !Narenin, ‖Ubun and Nama, were also living within and moving through the Kaokoveld part of Game Reserve No. 2 (see Chapters 6, 12, 13 and 14). In the late 1930s to 1940s, Africans including 'BergDama' (Damara/ǂNūkhoen) were repeatedly and forcibly moved out of the western areas between Hoanib and Ugab Rivers,[76] although inability

65 SWAA A50/26, 20.8.1926, in Dieckmann (2007a: 151)
66 NAO 33/1, 17.9.1928, in Dieckmann (2007a: 151)
67 *Ibid.*, p. 152
68 NAO 33/1, 10.8.1929, 17.10.1929, in Dieckmann (2007a: 153)
69 NAO 33/1 Monthly Return October 1937, in Dieckmann (2007a: 154)
70 *Ibid.*, p. 155
71 Lebzelter (1934: 82) in Gordon (2002: 221, 228, Gordon's translation)
72 Gordon (1997: 1)
73 Gordon (2002: 216)
74 Dieckmann (2003: 49–50)
75 NAO 11/1, Annual Report of the Native Commissioner Ovamboland 1942.
76 Miescher (2012: 152)

to police this remote area meant that people moved back as soon as the police presence left:[77] see Chapters 12 and 13. OvaHerero connections with landscapes to the west of Etosha Pan were also disrupted (see Chapter 14).[78] Correspondence in 1928 by Hahn to the administrator of SWA provides some indication of Hahn's thinking regarding the connections between local inhabitants, and conservation and tourism visions for Kaokoveld. Predating by some five decades proposals in the 1980–1990s for local people and ex-'poachers' to become 'Community Game Guards' (see Chapter 3), Hahn travelled in this year to the Kunene River in the vicinity of Ruacana Falls, designating 'the old and experienced Ovahimba hunter headman Ikandwa as an informal warden' to support 'the replenishment of game'.[79] Historian Patricia Hayes writes that Hahn:

> wanted to transform the area into a sanctuary, which would offer "fine opportunities for tourists and sportsmen to shoot trophies under special licences and instructions". This tied in with wider objectives of policing cattle movements in the area and an attempt to stabilise groups in reserves in northern Kaokoland to act as a buffer with Angola. Hahn argued that the administration should proclaim it a reserve and protected area, and run it on similar lines to the Kruger National Park. It was capable of surpassing the best game reserve in South Africa [Kruger] and creating "a real tourists' paradise in SW [i.e. South West Africa]". Game was disappearing elsewhere except in the Namutoni Reserve (Etosha), but "the flat and almost colourless country is not in any way to be compared with the wonderful variety and grandeur all along the Kunene".[80]

The idea to develop Game Reserve No. 2 or parts thereof along the model of the Kruger National Park had thus already started during the early phase of the South African Administration. In the 1930s, when tourism began to increase in the area around Etosha Pan, the idea was iterated for the Etosha Game Reserve. Hahn reported for the tourist season of 1937 that around 500 visitors had visited Okaukuejo:

> [t]hese people [visitors] arrive there dusty and thirsty and there being no facilities for them to camp, they simply squat on his [the police sergeant stationed there] doorstep, with the result that out of sheer humanity he had to offer them a cup of coffee or tea, and some even ask for it. […] As there is such a tremendous increase of visitors annually, I consider the time has come for the Administration to consider suitable camping provisions at this place […] It is evident from the number of Union and foreign visitors visiting the pan, that its existence is becoming more and more known, and people who have visited the Kruger Park expect to find the same facilities here as exist there, consequently there is great disappointment when they come here.[81]

World War 2, however, put the realisation of any further development of the Game Reserve on hold.

2.2.3 Post-World War 2: Change of policy, reserves and settlement

After the war, extensive provision was made for the support of war veterans. Ex-soldiers were given land and could qualify for additional loans for such things as building houses and to purchase breeding stock. Part of Etosha Game Reserve was cut off and made available for settlement and the Police Zone border was shifted[82] in order to provide more farmland for white settlers; boreholes were drilled and grazing licences could be obtained by interested settlers. A large amount of land in the western part of Outjo district—formerly one huge farm of 247,346 ha—was made accessible to settlers. Aruchab, as the farm was called, had been allotted to the Imperial Cold Storage and Supply Company in 1924, which used it for cattle. In the second half of the 1940s, the farm land was

77 Sullivan & Ganuses (2020: 309–11)
78 Hoole (2008)
79 Hayes (1998: 183–84), drawing on NAN A450 Vol. 14 4/1, Big Game in Ovamboland by C.H.L. Hahn, undated.
80 *Ibid.*
81 NAN SWAA A 511/10 Etosha Pan Game Reserve Tourists Facilities, District Commandant, Omaruru, to the Commissioner SWA Police, 11.7.1938.
82 Proclamation 375 of 1947, Miescher (2009: 279–80)

surveyed and divided into about 40 farms, most of them allotted immediately afterwards.[83] Apart from the World War 2 ex-soldiers, settlers from the southern regions of Namibia moved to the district since the south had suffered from enduring drought.[84] Settlement and game conservation were at times in conflict. For instance, and in stark contrast to later policies, the Chairperson of the Game Preservation Commission reportedly responded to a request that game on white farms be declared the owner's property that this was 'preposterous', and that the mostly Afrikaner farmers 'would simply destroy game'.[85]

Policy and practice regarding Game Reserve No. 2 also changed noticeably, probably due to reasons that included: the take-over by the National Party in South Africa and its policy of apartheid; an increasing interest in tourism; and a broader approach to nature conservation including the role of national parks. South African historian William Beinart notes that the concept of a National Park changed in the southern African context after World War 2, to increasingly denote land set aside for animals and plants and free of human habitation:

> [i]nitially, the settler concept of a national park could allow for continued occupation by picturesque "native" people. But particularly after the Second World War, [...] a national park came to mean a preserve for plants and animals free of human habitation. [...] most of the people were removed and the park became a preserve for rangers, scientists and mostly white visitors.[86]

This concept also found its way to Namibia but was not yet implemented in Etosha-Kunene, where thinking about how to deal with human inhabitants and protected areas remained ambiguous.

In 1947, Kaokoveld was proclaimed a native reserve (the Kaokoland Reserve) (expanding the three reserves in the north of the territory established with separate headmen in 1923—see Section 2.2.1), but remained part of Game Reserve No. 2 for the time being.[87] From this time onwards, Kaokoveld was administered from Opuwo (Ohopoho). Developments regarding tourism centred for the next decades on the area around Etosha Pan. In the same year, Andries A. Pienaar, an author of adventure stories set in the wild (known as Sangiro), was appointed as the first full-time additional Game Warden for South West Africa (additional to his role as the Secretary of State). He was supposed to write a book in order to promote the wildlife of the territory.[88] Stationed in Otjiwarongo, he was in charge of Game Reserve No. 2 which previously had been managed by the Native Commissioner of Ovamboland.[89]

In 1948, and in a context in which Kruger National Park in South Africa had reached saturation point during peak tourism periods, a National Publicity Conference adopted a resolution for the 'developments of smaller National Parks', in which the conference urged the National Parks Boards, the SWAA, the Natal Provincial Administration, the Union Government Forest Department and the Orange Free State Provincial Administration:

> to develop national parks (other than the Kruger National Park and the Hluhluwe Game Reserve, which are reasonably developed) so that they may be made accessible to tourists and thereby increase their knowledge and love of wild life.[90]

Soon afterwards in 1949, an article on the 'Etosha Pan Game Reserve', prepared by an officer of the SWAA for a publisher in Johannesburg, stated:

83 Dieckmann (2013: 260)
84 *Ibid.*
85 Botha (2005: 174, 180)
86 Beinart (1989: 156)
87 Rizzo (2012: 1); also Owen-Smith (1972)
88 Berry (1997: 7)
89 de la Bat (1982: 14), Bridgeford (2018: 15)
90 NAN SWAA A 511/10 Etosha Pan Game Reserve: Tourist Facilities, South African Publicity Association to the Secretary of S.W.A., 22.1.1948.

> [p]erhaps one should also mention the Bushmen, although nowadays they are no longer classed as "game"! They certainly fit into the picture and help to give to the Etosha Pan something of the atmosphere of the old wild Africa that is fast disappearing everywhere [...][91]

This idea to promote the 'Bushmen' in Etosha as the 'old wild Africa', however, was not pursued further.[92]

Also in 1949, a Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen was appointed to 'go into the question of the preservation of Bushmen in South West Africa thoroughly and to recommend what action the Administration should take in the matter'.[93] This commission was not directly linked to nature conservation or the Etosha Game Reserve but rather more generally to 'Bushmen' control and spatial segregation. Its impact on Hai‖om was tremendous. P.J. Schoeman, who later became Game Warden of SWA, was a member (see Section 2.3.1): his ideas and involvement were crucial for developments to come.[94] The establishment of the commission was motivated in the following way:

> [w]hat the Administration wanted was to create conditions where the Bushmen would be able to lead their ordinary lives with a sufficiency of the necessities of life available for them, and where they would be given every opportunity to preserve their separate identity and thereafter to work out their own destiny with the sympathetic help of the Administration.[95]

Moreover, the commission was asked to make 'a survey of vagrant Bushmen in the Police Zone and to make recommendations for placing them in Reserves'.[96] The proposal of a 'Bushman reserve', already discussed in the 1930s,[97] was on the agenda again, but now against the background of the apartheid system in South Africa. In their preliminary report, the commission again suggested a 'Bushman reserve' overlapping the Etosha Game Reserve, proposing a location south of 'Ovamboland', including the Etosha Pan and to its west: areas not regularly used by Hai‖om due to the lack of permanent water.[98]

The investigations during two journeys of the commission led to the following description of Hai‖om given in the report under the heading 'Who are the Bushmen':

> [a]t all the places where the Heikum Bushmen were questioned, they informed us that before even the Europeans came to the territory they had already intermarried with the Ovambos, Damaras and Hottentots [Nama]. All that has remained Bushman amongst them is their wonderful folklore, their mode of livelihood (game and veldkos), their bows and arrows and a few tribal customs, amongst others, burial ceremonies, feast of the first fruits and the initiation ceremonies for girls.[99]

The ideal underlying these considerations and conclusions was evidently that people must be neatly sortable into clear-cut categories: a concept that had already led early explorers and colonisers to try and impose conceptual order upon a foreign and confusing human world, as discussed in Chapter 1. For Hai‖om, it seems that an idea of purity counted against their "preservation". Although the category "Bushmen" is now often construed as a 'myth',[100] the message underlying the commission's description above is self-evident. Hai‖om were not considered to be "prototypical Bushmen", with the investigations concluding that it would not be worthwhile 'to preserve either

91 NAN SWAA A511/1, 9.5.1949.
92 Dieckmann (2007a: 188). Later, however, this idea played out in the construction of ovaHimba as representative of an 'old wild Africa' (see, for example, Jacobsohn 1998[1990]).
93 NAN SWAA A 267/11/1 1956: Report of the Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen in South West Africa, 1950: 2.
94 Dieckmann (2007a: 189)
95 NAN SWAA A 267/11/1. 1956. Native Affairs-Bushmen Reserve. The justification for the appointment of the Odendaal Commission in the 1960s is strikingly similar to this emphasis on preserving separate identities (see Section 2.4).
96 NAN SWAA A 267/11/1 1956: Report of the Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen in South West Africa, 1950: 2.
97 Dieckmann (2007a: 135–44)
98 NAN, map: San reserves proposed by the 'Kommissie vir die Behoud van die Boesmanbevolking in Suidwes-Africa 1950'. Windhoek 1951.
99 NAN SWAA A267/11/1 1956: Report of the Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen in South West Africa: 5-6.
100 Gordon (1992), Gordon & Sholto Douglas (2000)

the Heikum or the Barrakwengwe [Khwe] as Bushmen': '[i]n both cases the process of assimilation has proceeded too far'.[101]

2.3 1950s until 1969: The professionalisation of nature conservation, local inhabitants and shifting borders

The attention the administration placed on game, nature and the potential of both for tourism, increased gradually. By the 1950s, white settlement of the territory had almost reached its limits with environmental outcomes (for e.g. soil degradation in some contexts) becoming obvious,[102] leading to game preservation/nature conservation being increasingly institutionalised and professionalised.[103] During this period, the general concept of a Game Reserve was refined, implying certain limitations mainly regarding hunting. The concept of Game Parks (later also covering National Parks) was also legalised and implemented, and the question of human habitation within protected areas was re-considered. All these efforts continued to be entangled in diverging and changing ideas from various sides as to how to develop the territory. In this section we focus first on changes in direction towards "nature conservation" (Section 2.3.1), followed by an elaboration of legal boundary changes in Game Reserve No. 2 leading to the establishment of Etosha National Park in 1967, again with further boundary changes (Section 2.3.2).

2.3.1 The institutionalisation of game preservation/nature conservation and the (incomplete) severance of people from parks

In 1951, Ordinance 11 on Game Preservation was issued, providing for the establishment of a Game Preservation and Hunting Board to advise the SWA Administrator. The ordinance included the appointment of game wardens as honorary or public service officers,[104] and involved regulation of hunting on freehold (white) farms including restrictions on the amount of game that could be taken, the length of the hunting season and penalties for infractions; although Article 27 allowed the administrator 'to permit visiting dignitaries "to hunt any game in open season"'.[105] It appears 'that Africans were generally allowed to utilise wildlife resources in their communal areas' until restrictions were imposed by this Ordinance.[106]

During the same year, hunter, writer and anthropologist P.J. Schoeman—a member of the Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen in South West Africa (see Section 2.2.3)—succeeded Pienaar (who had not managed to publish a book on wildlife), as Game Warden.[107] In 1952, Schoeman employed the painter and artist Dieter Aschenborn as an assistant game warden, stationed in Okaukuejo.[108] In 1953 he also appointed Bernabé de la Bat from the Cape, as a biologist to be stationed in Okaukuejo.[109] One can regard this moment as the start of a "scientification" of conservation efforts in Namibia. Amy Schoeman writes about de la Bat:

> [t]he history of formal conservation in Namibia revolves largely around one man, Bernabe de la Bat, who was appointed biologist and then chief game warden in Etosha in the early fifties. De la Bat orchestrated the birth of the country's first official conservation body and served as its director until the 1980s. With remarkable vision, courage and foresights, he created a rich legacy of game parks, reserves

101 NAN SWAA A267/11/1 1956: Report of the Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen in South West Africa: 6.
102 Botha (2013: 237–38)
103 Joubert (1974), Botha (2005)
104 Bridgeford (2018: 16)
105 Botha (2005: 180)
106 *Ibid.*, p. 185
107 Berry (1997: 7)
108 Dieckmann (2001: 138–39)
109 de la Bat (1982: 15)

> and resorts on which conservationists could build in the years to come. He also laid the cornerstone for tourism in Namibia.[110]

Also in 1953, however, P.J. Schoeman reported that tourists expressed more and more concern that the game in Etosha had decreased and become wilder, partly due to adjacent farmers' hunting activities, partly due to the increase in tourists, and partly due to dogs owned by Bushmen who were still allowed to live in the game reserve at this time.[111]

In 1954, Game Warden Schoeman provided the first *Annual Report of the Division Game Preservation of S.W.A.*, covering the period between April 1953 and March 1954.[112] Schoeman starts his paragraph on Game Reserve No. 2 with the introductory sentence 'this area is also known as Etosha Pan Game Reserve',[113] apparently ignoring the fact that Kaokoveld was also officially part of the Game Reserve (see Figure 2.1), but illustrating the focus of the administration in the 1950s. The report provides further insights into developments during this time, including the diverging interests of the different branches of the administration, and its author's opinion about lions (*Panthera leo*) and Hai‖om as well as game numbers in the reserve. Schoeman mentions in this report that one of the first challenges he had to address was the intended northwards shift of the Red Line to 'deep in the Etosha pan'. He expressed the opinion that if the Red Line was moved according to plan,[114] the actual bush area, which the wildlife needed for sheltered breeding time, as well as some of the best permanent waters between Okaukuejo and Namutoni, would be cut out from the game reserve. Schoeman noted that:

> [i]t came down to the fact that a choice would have to be made between the interests of a number of farmers who would be able to get nice farms, and the preservation of the Etoshapan game reserve as something really worthwhile, because without such an ideal breeding place and good waters, the pan lost its "heart and womb".[115]

Reportedly, the Administration decided in favour of the game's future. After this decision, Schoeman started with development of the game reserve, establishing a rest camp at Okaukuejo (as decided in 1952), fire breaks, more boreholes, and so on.

In his report, Schoeman estimated that around 100 lions were living permanently in the Etosha Pan Game Reserve and noted with concern that lions were being poisoned on farms around Etosha. He hoped that with research and management the number of lions in Etosha might increase up to 1,000 in the next five years. He reckoned there was space for at least 3,000 lions in Etosha and stressed that they were essential for controlling the numbers of zebra (*Equus quagga burchellii*) (see Chapter 10) and wildebeest (*Connochaetes taurinus*). Schoeman emphasised in the report that management (i.e. shooting/culling) was necessary to keep a balance between the different species; otherwise zebra and wildebeest would dominate. In fact, Schoeman was 'responsible for the controversial culling of large numbers of Burchell's zebra and wildebeest in the Etosha area' on the grounds that they were destroying vegetation.[116] Remarkably, while not permitting Hai‖om to hunt, his recommendations included the suggestion to shoot zebra and wildebeest to feed the

110 Schoeman (2007: 50)
111 NAN SWAA A 511/1, Game reserves general Game Reserve No. 2, 1953–54, Schoeman to the Secretary of SWA, 4.9.1953. See, for example, the chapter on 'Namutoni, the Etosha Pan and Okaukuejo' written by a visitor in these years by Newton (n.d.: 138–39).
112 NAN SWAA A 511/1 Game Reserves General, 18.5.1954 to 5.1956. Jaarsverslag van die Avdeling Wildbewaring van S.W.A. (April 1953 to March 1954), henceforth NAN SWAA 511/1 Annual Report (1953–54).
113 NAN SWAA 511/1 Annual Report (1953–54: 2)
114 Reading Miescher's analysis of the Lardner-Burke Commission at the end of the 1940s, the Red Line was supposed to be kept along the southern border of Etosha Pan, but the area south of it was suggested to be de-proclaimed as a game reserve and opened as farmland (Miescher 2009: 276). Presumably Schoeman referred to these recommendations in favour of the settlers' land demands.
115 NAN SWAA 511/1 Annual Report 1953–54, translation from Afrikaans by Ute Dieckmann.
116 Bridgeford (2018: 16), de la Bat (1982: 15)

employed Bushmen and if necessary the lions too,[117] a recommendation followed until at least the early 1960s. Read in the context of nature conservation developments at the time, his ideas suggest that the Etosha ecology increasingly had to be managed and "tamed".

Under the subheading 'Bushmen in the game reserve', Schoeman considered that around 500 Hai‖om were living in the game reserve in 1953, a fact that was about to change. He further reported that:

> they all have dogs, and continue hunting with poisoned arrows. Their favourite settlements are in the bush areas between Okaukuejo and Namutoni, around the game's drinking places. [...] at one time or another in the past they were granted permission to hunt zebras and blue wildebeest, but after an investigation by the Police and Game Conservation it was found that their favourite game were eland, hartebeest [*Alcelaphus buselaphus caama*] and gemsbok [*Oryx gazella*]. And these species are far too rare in the game reserve to be exterminated by Bushmen.[118]

There seems a certain irony in Schoeman's attitude towards lions on the one hand and Bushmen on the other. Lions were welcomed, due in part to their ability to control the number of game in the reserve, while Hai‖om were to be removed as 'game exterminators'. Schoeman's statement above can be certainly read as a justification for later decisions to evict Hai‖om from Etosha.

In 1953—the same year the Commission for the Preservation of Bushmen presented their recommendations with regard to the fate of Hai‖om residing in Etosha—the administration took the decision to expand and develop the game reserve as a sanctuary for game and for tourists.[119] Shortly after, in 1954 the Hai‖om were evicted from the game reserve and had to choose to either move to Ovamboland or seek employment on the farms in the vicinity.[120] A few were allowed to stay and found employment at the police stations and, later, the rest camps in the park, but they were no longer allowed to stay in their old settlements close to the waterholes (also see Chapters 4, 15 and 16). Schoeman's 1953–54 annual report reads that,

> [i]n 1953, Sergeant le Roux of Namutoni and Dr. Schoeman asked the administration to remove these idlers and game exterminators [the Hai‖om living in the reserve], from the game park—with the exception of the few who are employed by game conservation and the police [...] It was immediately heard by the Administration, and in 1954, there were only a few groups left in the less accessible parts of the game reserve. However, there is a danger that some of the Bushmen who work on adjoining farms will from time to time run away to their hunting paradise, to hunt free again and cause wildfires. Wildlife conservation would greatly appreciate it if the necessary arrangements could be made by the Administration, in collaboration with the Police, to have such Bushmen arrested.[121]

A similar development took place regarding |Khomanin Damara/ǂNūkhoen in the Khomas Hochland west of Windhoek. They had been removed in various steps from the de-proclaimed native reserve Aukeigas (!Ao‖aexas) since the 1930s to create space for Daan Viljoen Game Reserve as a weekend resort for white citizens of Windhoek.[122] Indicating a growing use of ideas about conservation and recreation to justify evictions, in the 1950s more |Khomanin were evicted from Aukeigas and relocated several hundred kilometres away to the farm Sorris-Sorris in today's Kunene Region on the Ugab (!Uǂgab) River; purchased by the administration to enlarge the Okombahe Reserve.[123]

117 NAN SWAA 511/1 Annual Report 1953–54.
118 *Ibid.*
119 NAN SWAA A 511/1, Game reserves general Game Reserve No. 2, 1953–54, 9.11.1953.
120 Dieckmann (2007a: 186–204). See Dieckmann (2003) for a detailed description of the eviction process. The factors leading to the eviction were not only related to concerns about game populations and the tourist economy. Evidently, people who have been deprived of their former livelihoods and land are more likely to become willing workers than those who can continue to pursue a variety of livelihood strategies. White farmers in the vicinity were in urgent need of cheap farm labourers. Furthermore, the Etosha Game Reserve functioned as a buffer zone separating the Police Zone in the south from the "native areas" in the north (Miescher 2009).
121 NAN SWAA 511/1 Annual Report 1953–54, translation from Afrikaans by Ute Dieckmann.
122 Sullivan & Ganuses (2020: 307–8)
123 Köhler (1959), First (1968: 35–6, 146)

This was a significantly more marginal area in terms of rainfall and productivity, and many of the promises for state assistance remained unmet.[124]

The image of an "untamed wilderness", highly appealing for tourists, henceforth excluded people, and the area around Etosha Pan was chosen to represent this image. Paradoxically, however, when employed for Kaokoveld this same idea seemed to include local inhabitants, namely ovaHimba.[125] In Etosha as well as other areas, people and game apparently had to be separated for the sake of game preservation.

For Kaokoveld, the situation was more complicated, being at the same time part of Game Reserve No. 2 and a Native Reserve administered by the Department of Native Affairs.[126] The problem caused by this ambiguous status became evident in a discussion that took place during the 1950s. A 1956 article published in the *Sunday Times*, Johannesburg, entitled 'Slaughter of game in Africa's Largest Reserve Alleged', followed a museum expedition to game reserves in South Africa, in which Dennis Woods, member of the Western Province branch of the Wildlife Protection Society of South Africa, took part. In the article his concerns were quoted, firstly about miners and prospectors causing 'indiscriminate killing of wild animals' in Kaokoveld, and secondly, about the '6000 Natives with herds of cattle' that were living in the northern part of Kaokoveld where most of the game could be found, 'more than they could ever need or use'.[127] Woods also wrote a letter to the Administrator of SWA with a copy of their report to the Chief Native Commissioner (Mr. Allen), saying that:

> [i]t would seem to us that if South-West Africa is ever to have a National Park, Game Reserve No.2 in its entirety would be the ideal area, and it would be the one way of really safeguarding Kaokoveld for all time[128] […] [t]he Kaokoveld Reserve is the best part of the only worth-while Game Reserve left in South-West Africa.[129]

The Chief Native Commissioner, in his reply, responded politely to the various concerns, stating:

> I would ask you to remember that the Kaokoveld is in the first place a Native Reserve and it is the duty of our officials to protect the Native inhabitants against the depredations of lions and other carnivora. I can, however, assure you that these officials limit themselves to such protective measures and have no intention of undertaking any wholesale destruction of these animals.[130]

It becomes evident from this correspondence that: 1) the Kaokoveld was highly valued in terms of wildlife by some people; 2) the nature conservation lobby was becoming stronger; and 3) the status of Kaokoveld as both game reserve and native reserve became increasingly problematic for the administration—a situation to be solved during the 1960s (see Section 2.4 and Chapter 13).

In 1955, the Game Preservation Section was established, and biologist de la Bat became the Chief Game Warden equipped with a clerk and 28 workers. According to Amy Schoeman, this signified the end of the game protection era, and the beginning of 'the holistic approach of conservation of Namibia's natural assets':[131] although the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance of 1937 mentioned above suggests some prior moves towards a more holistic approach. Additionally, the SWA Publicity and Tourist Association was established in order to promote SWA as a tourist destination, resulting in an increasing number of tourists. Development in the fields of both conservation and tourism thus gained momentum.

124 Oral history interview by S. Sullivan and W.S. Ganuses with Meda Xamses, ǁGaisoas, 19.4.1999.
125 For example, Hall-Martin *et al.* (1988)
126 NAN SWAA 511/1, 1956-58, de la Bat.
127 NAN SWAA A 511/1, correspondence and copies, 1956. This expedition forms a key focus of South African author Lawrence Green's 1953 book *Lords of the Last Frontier* which popularised the Kaokoveld.
128 NAN SWAA A 511/1, D.H. Woods, Rondebosch, C.P. to the Administrator, S.W.A. Windhoek, 22.11.1956.
129 NAN SWAA A 511/1, D.H. Woods, Southern Life Association, Rondebosch, C.P. to R.J. Allen, Chief Native Commissioner, Department of Native Affairs, Windhoek, 18.10.1956.
130 NAN SWAA A511/1, Chief Native Commissioner, Windhoek to D.H: Woods, 6.11.1956.
131 Schoeman (2007: 51)

Writing in this vein of an amplified conservation "movement", in 1957, F. Gaerdes—a member of the Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments established in 1948—wrote an article for the SWA Annual entitled 'Nature Preservation and the works of the Monuments Commission in SWA'. This article is revealing regarding the concept of nature conservation and its leadership by the "white man" in these years:

> [t]he present is shaped by the past. Therefore we cherish the historical tradition embodied in the monuments which bear witness to our past. Primitive nature with her riches of plant and animal life forms part of this heritage. In many parts of the world it has of necessity had to yield to the demands of an expanding and increasing population. This process of cultivation, and the necessary impoverishment of wild life which it entails, cannot be halted, however much we may regret the loss of the irreplaceable. Not only scientists and naturalists [...] have felt concern. The longing to experience nature where she still bears her original face, is alive in many people. Out of their need was born the concept of nature preservation which has gained increasing acceptance over the last 50 years. [...] The nature preservation movement originated in Europe and North America, from there it spread to other continents. *Primitive people are not concerned about nature preservation, and it was left to the white nations to spread the idea all over the globe*. The initiative of European settlers created exemplary parks in many parts of Africa which are gaining a growing international reputation among scientists and nature lovers. [...] In South West Africa too, the idea is gaining ground that the preservation of nature is not merely a hobby-horse of utopian eccentrics, but a duty which the community owes to posterity.[132]

It seems a reversal of facts runs through this statement: "white nations", i.e. mostly European traders, settlers and colonists, had been responsible for the large-scale decrease or extermination of game all over the world, including in SWA (see Chapter 1), but were now rhetorically enthroned as the champions of nature preservation.

While Gaerdes still talked about "preservation", however, in this same year Chief Game Warden de la Bat recommended the change of name from game preservation or protection to game *conservation*. Following growing international usage, he considered the term conservation to be more comprehensive than preservation or protection, which only referred to the safeguarding of so-called "game" from human destruction. He suggested the Section of Game Preservation be renamed Section of Game Conservation, and that the change of name should also be applied in any new legislation.[133] This suggestion was implemented shortly after. Already in 1954, the Parks Board had started operating although 'without any proper legal status',[134] confining itself mainly to the recommendation on the game reserves, while the Game Preservation and Hunting Board attended to matters concerning game outside the reserve.[135] Thus, the Game Preservation and Hunting Board and the Parks Board were operating alongside each other for four years before the merging of both institutions was formalised with Ordinance 18 of 1958 (Game Park and Private Game Reserves Ordinance), the first Annual Report of the Parks Board stating:

> [p]rovision is also made for the fusion of the Game Preservation and Hunting Board with the Parks Board so that all matters concerning game may be dealt with by one board.[136]

The Parks Board included at least five members: 'civil servants from agriculture, police, native affairs, the chief game warden and members of the farmers' and hunting associations'.[137] Its aims and functions were:

> a) To advise the Administrator on the control, management and maintenance of game parks and private game reserves in South West Africa;

132 Gaerdes (1957: 41, emphasis added)
133 NAN SWAA A511/1 Game Reserves General 1956-58, 7.3.1957, Hoofwildbewaarder, Okaukuejo to Hoof Algemene Afdeling, Windhoek.
134 NAN NTB 1/8 N13/2: Jaarverslae van Afdeling, Parks Board of South West Africa Annual Report 1.4.1957 to 31.3.1958 (First Report).
135 *Ibid.*
136 *Ibid.*
137 Bridgeford (2018: 16), Joubert (1974: 36)

> b) To investigate and report on all such matters concerning the preservation of game as the Administrator may refer to it;
>
> c) To make such recommendations to the Administrator as it may deem fit regarding the preservation of game and any amendment to the game preservation laws of the Territory;
>
> d) To meet in Windhoek at least once every year;
>
> e) To perform and exercise such further functions, powers and duties as the Administrator may by regulation prescribe to the Board.[138]

Ordinance 18 of 1958 defined 'Game Parks' including 'Etosha Game Park'; allowed for establishing Private Game Reserves; and provided for the official appointment of the Parks Board, defining its duties and members. The regulations for Game Parks (Section 5) were much more comprehensive than for Private Game Reserves. For example: entry and residence, the possession of firearms, and killing, injuring or disturbing animals in Game Parks, were not allowed without written permission; the introduction of animals and the chopping, cutting or damaging of trees were also prohibited. In Private Game Reserves, according to section 16(1), 'no person, except the owner, may hunt any game or other wild animal or bird in any area which has been declared a private game reserve [...] except under and in accordance with the written permission of the Administrator and on such conditions as he may impose in each case'.[139] A major part of the ordinance focused on establishing the boundaries of Etosha Game Park around Etosha Pan, as a specific designation of Game Reserve No. 2 (see Figure 2.2 below, and discussion in Section 2.3.2). De la Bat reported that shortly after,

> [w]e came to an agreement with the late Chief Kambonde to proclaim that part of the Andoni Plains which fell into his area, as his private game reserve. He saw to it that the wildebeest were undisturbed as long as he lived. Today [1982] there was none left and a border fence divides this vast plain which once teemed with game.[140]

In 1963, the Game Preservation Section was upgraded to the fully-fledged branch Nature Conservation and Tourism under the directorship of de la Bat[141] who moved from Okaukuejo to Windhoek as the first director of the branch. The purpose of the branch was:

> to extend activities in the field of nature conservation and to include, in addition to game parks, also fresh water fishing, public resorts, the protection of plants and trees, the development of nature reserves and regional services in connection with nature conservation.[142]

In this year, the staff of Etosha Game Park consisted of a Chief Game Ranger, '16 Europeans, two Coloureds, 9 Bantu and 31 Bushmen',[143] the classification and sequence of these categories reflecting the apartheid-era thinking of the time.

In 1965, a permanent research section under the Director of Nature Conservation and Tourism was established and Hym Ebedes became the first wildlife veterinarian (also due to the discovery of anthrax in Etosha in 1964), with Ken Tinley and Eugene Joubert appointed as ecologists.[144] For the first time, the SWAA White Paper on the activities of the different branches of the Administration of South West Africa included a subsection on research, reporting *inter alia* about experiments with immobilisation drugs, the transfer of specific animals to or in-between game parks and studies in diseases and parasites.[145] A direct census to determine the distribution of the black rhinoceros

138 NAN Ordinance 18 of 1958; NTB 1/8 N13/2: Jaarverslae van Afdeling, Parks Board of South West Africa Annual Report 1.4.1957 to 31.3.1958 (First Report).
139 *Ibid.*
140 de la Bat (1982: 18). If true, this fact of there being no wildebeest remaining in the area would no doubt have been due to a variety of reasons.
141 Bridgeford (2018: 17), Schoeman (2007: 52)
142 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1963–64: 57)
143 *Ibid.*, p. 58
144 Berry (2007a: 84)
145 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1965–66: 63)

(*Diceros bicornis bicornis*) was carried out by Joubert in the western part of the game reserve. Joubert writes that,

> [t]he study makes public disturbing information. The situation with regard to rhino is much more critical than was generally expected. The distribution of the black rhino, which used to occur throughout most of Suidwes, was now limited to the northwest corner. The total population of black rhino in 1966 were ninety animals. What was also disturbing, however, was the spread of these animals. Only 17 percent were within the amended limits of the Etosha National Park as suggested by the Odendaal Commission [see Section 2.4]. The other 83 percent were on private land or in communal or intended communal territories. It was clear that drastic steps were needed to ensure its survival.[146]

In 1967, the Nature Conservation Ordinance (31 of 1967) was proclaimed, providing a long-term policy consolidating former legislation and amended many times since its proclamation. It defined the powers and duties of the Nature Conservation and Tourism Branch and contained chapters on wild animals, game parks, indigenous plants, inland fisheries, protected and specially protected game, game birds and several other important subjects such as the issuing of licences, the establishment of a Nature Conservation Board (replacing the former Parks Board) and the repeal of laws.[147] With the exception of protected species, the ordinance provided ownership of game to 'owners or occupiers of a farm' if the game was 'lawfully upon such farm and while such farm is enclosed with a sufficient fence'.[148] It thus permitted farmers to hunt on their farm throughout the year without a licence, except for protected game.[149] It also allowed these farmers 'with the written permission of the Administrator to lease his hunting rights to any competent person'.[150] As Botha notes,

> [this] rapidly led to the commercialisation of game hunting and farming in SWA and served as a spur to the embryonic tourist industry in the country. Trophy hunting became an increasingly lucrative enterprise and the number of game farms featuring game animals and the spectacular landscapes of the country multiplied. Many farmers, even those that did not contemplate converting their farms into private game reserves, bought game animals made available by the Department of Nature Conservation from stocks considered superfluous to the reserves.[151]

The exploitation of game as an economic resource became increasingly important for settlers, since cattle farming had turned out to be more challenging during the 1960s due to drought and the termination of the heavily state-supported settlement programme.[152]

By now, the concept of nature conservation had formally replaced the concept of game conservation,[153] and the strong link with tourism was set in the formalisation of the Nature Conservation and Tourism Branch, still visible in Namibia's current Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT).

2.3.2 Shifting borders, confusing spatial organisation and naming

The professionalisation of nature conservation, the growing significance of tourism, and the ideal of the people-and-parks divide were accompanied by shifting borders and an often-confusing spatial reorganisation during the 1950s and the 1960s. The Police Zone border was shifted 10 times between 1947 and the early sixties, mainly to provide further farmland for white settlers, but also due to interests of the mining industry, tourism and veterinary concerns.[154] Game Reserve No. 2 was

146 Joubert (1984: 12) (translation from Afrikaans by Sian Sullivan, with the help of Deepl Translate). For more details on the circumstances and management of black rhino in Kaokoveld during these years see Sullivan *et al.* (2021: 12–14).
147 NAN, Nature Conservation Ordinance 31 of 1967, Chapter 1.
148 *Ibid.*, section 7
149 *Ibid.*, section 9
150 *Ibid.*, section 12
151 Botha (2013: 246)
152 *Ibid.*, p. 244
153 See also Schoeman (2007: 52)
154 See Miescher (2009: 286ff.) for a detailed description of these shifts. Previously Etosha Pan itself served as a border restricting animals from moving further south, as Dieter Aschenborn explained to Ute Dieckmann in an interview

changed significantly in size and shape and in 1958 a new legal entity, the Etosha Game Park, was created and extended (as noted in Section 2.3.1).

Ideas concerning a south-western extension of Game Reserve No. 2 emerged in the mid-1950s. The Chief Game Warden, de la Bat, reported in around 1957 that,

> during 1956 the Parks Board of South West recommended that an additional nature reserve between the Hoab [‖Huab] and the Hoanib rivers south of the Kaokoveld be created as a refuge for rhinos [...], mountain zebras [*Equus zebra hartmannae*] [...] and elephants [*Loxodonta africana*] and that it should be considered as an extension of the Etosha game park and that the Executive Committee has accepted these proposals and practical implications are currently being further investigated. The animals that are abundant in this area are relatively rare or absent in the Etosha Game Reserve.[155]

On 18 July 1956, the Executive Committee approved the following recommendations from a commission that had previously been asked to investigate damages caused by elephants, rhinos and giraffes on farms in the northern areas of SWA:

> [t]he Commission feels satisfied that the natural shelter and protection offered to the elephants and the rhinos by the nature of the area between the present red line and the Native Area in the North and the Sea to the West is sufficient insurance for the survival of these giant animals of the jungle, provided the following steps are taken:-
>
> i) this area must be declared a nature reserve and no one may be allowed to shoot anything there.[156]
>
> ii) this area must be declared as an extension of the Etosha game park but especially with a view to the protection of elephants, rhinos and mountain zebra.[157]

The Surveyor General was shortly after supplied with the report of the commission and requested to furnish a point-to-point description of 'the proposed new Nature Reserve':[158] in fact an extension of Game Reserve No. 2. He pointed out that there was a gap between the suggested new south-western portion and the old game reserve in the recommendation of the commission. He suggested:

> [u]nless there are reasons which have not been disclosed I would like to suggest that the northern boundary of the new reserve be made to coincide with the southern boundary of Game Reserve No. 2. There will then be no big gap between the two.[159]

In doing so he was recommending that the Sesfontein Native Reserve should be included in Game Reserve No. 2. However, the Chief Native Commissioner and his department were not in favour of 'any further portions of the Kaokoveld Native Reserve or the Sesfontein Native Reserve being included in the Game Reserve'.[160]

In 1958, the respective legislation was enacted. With Ordinance 18 of 1958, issued on 18 July, the south-eastern part of Game Reserve No. 2 was designated as Etosha Game Park with Kaokoveld remaining as both part of Game Reserve No. 2 and the Kaokoland Native Reserve—as established in 1947. Ordinance 18 reads:

> 2. The area defined in the first schedule to this Ordinance and known as game reserve No. 2, but excluding that portion which falls within a Native Reserve [i.e. the Kaokoland Reserve of 1947], is hereby declared a game park, to be known as the Etosha Game Park, for the propagation, protection and preservation therein of wild animal life, wild vegetation and objects of geological, ethnological, historical or other scientific interest for the benefit, advantage and enjoyment of the Inhabitants of the Territory.[161]

(10.4.2001). Namutoni and Okaukeujo were control posts during that time. Apparently, in the late 1940s and 1950s, diverse plans were discussed, and decisions were taken but the formalisation of these decisions in the form of ordinances took place sometime later (Miescher 2009: 382).

155 NAN SWAA A 511/1, 1956–1958. de la Bat.

156 A somewhat ironic statement given that soon afterwards a much larger landscape around this specific area became a trophy hunting concession (see Chapter 13).

157 NAN SWAA A511/6, vol. 4 Game Reserves: Boundaries and Fencing 1958-1959. Secretary to Administrator, 26.8.1958.

158 *Ibid.*

159 *Ibid.*

160 *Ibid.*

161 NAN, Ordinance 18 of 1958.

The boundaries of Etosha Game Park as defined in this 'first schedule' are marked in purple in Figure 2.2.

Soon afterwards (3 September 1958) in Government Notice 247 of 1958,[162] the Administrator redefined the boundaries of Game Reserve No. 2, which thereby became extended for 250 km south of the Hoanib River to the Ugab (!Uǂgāb) River along the Red Line. It is important to note that this area had been iteratively emptied of former inhabitants—for example, through a north-west expansion of the commercial farming area in the 1950s (see Chapters 12 and 13). At least until the 1990s, however, people concentrated in the Hoanib valley villages would return to areas south of the Hoanib to collect foods such as *sâun* and *bosûi* (*Stipagrostis* spp. grass seeds and *Monsonia umbellata* seeds gathered from harvester ant nests) and honey. Elderly inhabitants of Hoanib valley settlements have detailed memories of dwelling places, springs and graves throughout this area.[163] In this game reserve expansion, the Kaokoland and Sesfontein Native Reserves were retained where thousands of people were living (see Figure 2.2). During this time, there was neither infrastructure nor nature conservation personnel in the south-western portion of Game Reserve No. 2 to implement this redefinition: it is likely that local people had no idea about these boundaries and designations, a situation that echoes today in new boundary-making activities for conservation (see Chapter 3). In retrospect, de la Bat commented on the south-western extension of the reserve:

> [i]n the course of time it became clear that Etosha [Game Park] was not big enough to accommodate rare and threatened species such as black rhino, mountain zebra and black-faced impala, migratory big game like eland and elephant and the influx of wildlife from adjacent areas where it was being harassed. In 1958, the Parks Board under the chairmanship of Simmie Frank made a calculated move. We agreed to the deproclamation of Game Reserve No. 1, north-east of Grootfontein, provided that the unoccupied state land between the Hoanib and Uchab Rivers to be added to Etosha. In doing so, we exchanged valuable farming land for a mountainous and desert area but we practically doubled the size of Etosha, safeguarded game migration routes and obtained a corridor to the sea. The new park extended from the Skeleton Coast to the Etosha Pan, nearly 500 kilometres inland.[164]

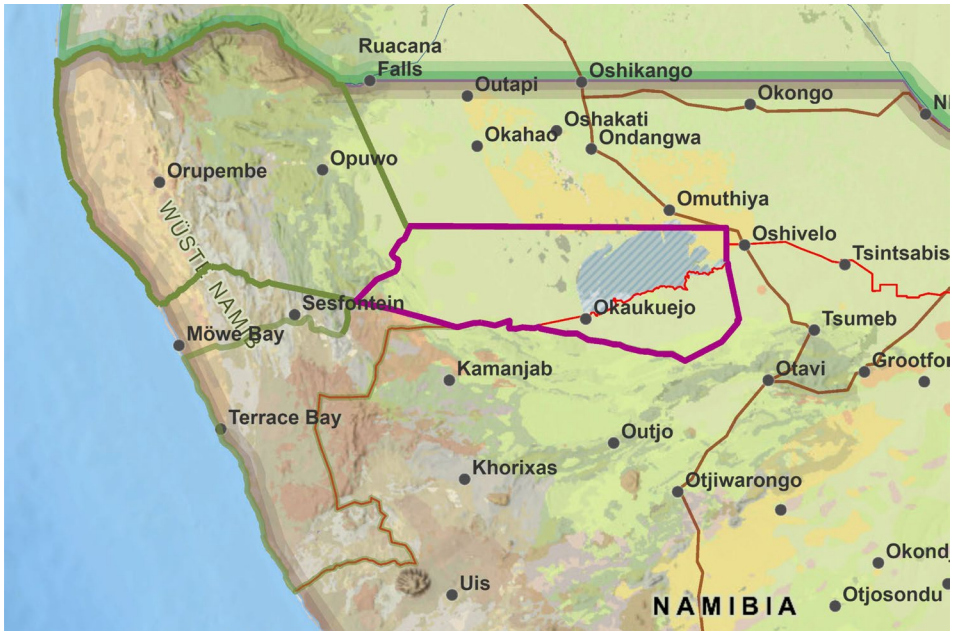

Fig. 2.2 Map of Etosha Game Park (purple contour) and Game Reserve No. 2 (green contour) in 1958, with the 'red line' of 1955 (red) and main roads (brown lines). Note that the southern boundary of Game Reserve No. 2 (in green) overlaps with the veterinary control boundary in red. © Ute Dieckmann; data: Ordinance 18 of 1958; Government Notice 247 of 1958; Atlas of Namibia Team 2022, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

162 NAN SWAA A511/6, vol. 4 Game Reserves: Boundaries and Fencing 1958–1959.
163 Sullivan (1998, 1999); Sullivan & Ganuses (2020, 2021, 2022)
164 de la Bat (1982: 19)

In 1962, with Government Notice 177, Etosha Game Park was itself extended across part of the 1958 south-west extension of Game Reserve No. 2 (Figure 2.3):

> to a point where the western boundary line of the last mentioned farm [Werêldsend] intersects the southern side of the road from Welwitschia [Khorixas] to Torrabaai; thence westwards along the southern side of the road to Torrabaai [close to the Koigab river] to the low-water mark of the Atlantic Ocean.[165]

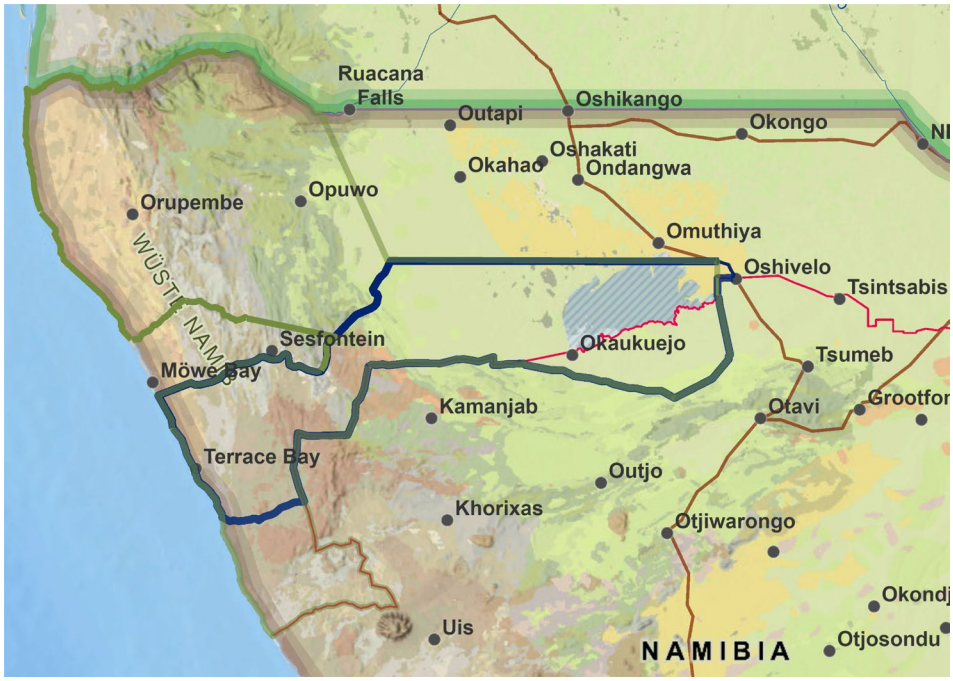

Fig. 2.3 Map of Etosha Game Park in 1962 (blue contour) and Game Reserve No. 2 in 1958 (green contour) (for which Government Notice 20 of 1966 retains the 1958 boundary); with the 'red line' in 1955 (red) and main roads (brown lines). Again, the southern boundary of Game Reserve No. 2 (in green) overlaps with the veterinary control boundary (in red). © Ute Dieckmann; data: Ordinance 18 of 1958; Government Notice 177 of 1962; Atlas of Namibia Team 2022, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

With this change, tourist spots along the coast were included in Etosha Game Park. The SWAA White Paper on the Activities of the Different Branches of the Administration of South West Africa for the Financial Year 1962–1963 notes:

> [t]he Etosha Game Park's boundaries were extended during the year up to the sea coast by the proclamation of part of the Game Reserve 2 as a game park. The popular fishing and holiday resort at Unjab [!Uniab] mouth [presumably Torra Bay] now falls within the game park.[166]

Torra Bay (south of !Uniab mouth) came under the direct supervision of the newly established branch of Nature Conservation and Tourism, yet changes to come impeded the development of the resort:

> it was now decided first to determine the resort's future popularity, as all the farms in that vicinity (from which most of the visitors always come) are now being bought up as a result of the implementation of the recommendations of the Odendaal Commission, and Torra Bay will eventually be cut off from the rest of the game reserve by a Bantu area.[167]

As alluded to in this quote, the extension of Etosha Game Park up to the coast was very short-lived as new plans entered the stage during this same year (as clarified in Section 2.4).

Further east, the Red Line south of Etosha Pan was shifted through Government Notice 222 of 1961, moving it southwards from along Etosha Pan to the border of Etosha Game Park and the

165 Government Notice 177, 15.9.1962.
166 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1962–63: 15)
167 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1964–65: 49–50)

settler farms.[168] Here, the reality of the Red Line on maps gradually became reality on the ground in the form of fences which impeded the mobility of both animals and people in and out of Etosha Game Park.[169] The game-proof fence along the southern boundary of Etosha Game Park had been gradually erected during the 1950s reached up to Otjovasandu in the west in 1963,[170] although it needed continual repairs due to damage by wildlife, mainly elephants.[171]

Government Notice 20 of 1966 entitled 'Prohibited Areas Proclamation 1928: Redefinition of the Boundaries of Game Reserve No. 2'[172] delineated a coastal strip of around 20 miles to the west of the Sesfontein and Kaokoveld Native Reserve areas (Figure 2.4). Although the stated boundaries do not in fact include this coastal strip within Game Reserve No. 2 it appears that this was the intention, as indicated in a map published by Giorgio Miescher's for 1966.[173] The stretch of land around Sesfontein, which had been excluded from the Game Reserve in the 1958 definitions, thereby became an island surrounded by the Game Reserve, followed soon after by proclamation of the Skeleton Coast National Park (SCNP) in 1971. This new boundary further consolidated the already restricted local access to the Northern Namib, where diamond prospecting and mining had been taking place since at least the 1950s[174] (see Chapter 12).

Fig. 2.4 Map of Game Reserve No. 2 in 1966 (green contour) showing the excluded 'native reserve' area around Sesfontein (brown contour), the 'red line' of 1955 (red) and main roads (brown lines). © Ute Dieckmann; data: Ordinance 18 of 1958, Government Notice 20 of 1966; Atlas of Namibia Team 2022, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

With Nature Conservation Ordinance 31 of 1967, Etosha Game Park became Etosha National Park,[175] initially retaining the 1962 boundaries of Etosha Game Park (see Figure 2.3) and adding a small corner of land in the north-east (see Figure 2.6 in Section 2.4.1). Chapter 3 of Ordinance 31 of 1967 iterates Ordinance 18 of 1958, with some adjustments:

> [t]he area defined in schedule 7 to this ordinance and known as the Etosha Game Park is hereby declared to be a game park to be known as the Etosha National Park for the propagation, protection

168 Miescher (2009: 382)
169 *Ibid.*, p. 322
170 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1963–64: 58)
171 *Ibid.*
172 NAN Government Notice 20 of 1966.
173 Also Miescher (2009: 284b)
174 Mansfield (2006), Schneider (2008: 225), Sullivan & Ganuses (2022: 128)
175 According to Berry (1997: 4), the Etosha Game Park officially received the status of a National Park in 1967 by an Act of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa.

> and preservation therein of wild animal life, wild vegetation and objects of geological, ethnological, historical or other scientific interest and for the benefit and enjoyment of the inhabitants of the Territory: Provided that it shall be in the Administrator's sole and final discretion to determine whether and when prospecting or mining activities are in the national interest.[176]

Evidently, the socio-ecological organisation of space was in constant flux during these years. The established entity of Game Reserve No. 2 was retained but transformed in size and shape, and new entities were created—Etosha Pan Game Reserve becoming Etosha Game Park, then extended to the south-west, then becoming Etosha National Park. There was little time, however, to implement these new legal entities with infrastructure, personnel and boundaries. They remained ideas in the minds of responsible administrative representatives, written down in Government Notices, and at times put on maps. This also explains why several published maps diverge from one another in the delineation of these entities.[177] In any case, the 1967 boundaries of Etosha National Park were also short-lived, as explained in Section 2.4.

2.4 The 1960s until 1989: Odendaal and the alleged "optimisation" of spatial separation

Starting in the early 1960s, another initiative began which was to "perfect" the spatial-functional organisation of the colony. Beinart notes that:

> [b]oth colonial and African practices saw land as to some extent divisible by its function. But colonial ideas, drawn from an industrialised and capitalist Europe, laid far more stress on rigid spatial division between lands set aside for different purposes.[178]

The Odendaal Plan epitomised this rigid spatial division between lands assigned to different purposes. As South African anthropologist Lesley Green writes,

> Apartheid South Africa, which took modernist divisions to the extreme, relied on the twin project of creating the nature reserve and the native reserve, with the former justified as the protection of nature, and the latter as the protection of culture [...][179]

In this section we document the new recommendations for expanded "homelands" in Etosha-Kunene and their perceived implications for conservation.

2.4.1 The Odendaal Plan and uncertainty in the 1960s

In 1962, a Commission of Enquiry into South-West Africa Affairs was appointed and Frans Hendrik "Fox" Odendaal, Administrator of Transvaal, became its chairman, leading to its colloquial name, the Odendaal Commission. The official purpose was:

> [t]o enquire thoroughly into further promoting the material and moral welfare and the social progress of the inhabitants of South West Africa, and more particularly its non-White inhabitants, [...] the attention of the Commission is particularly directed to the task of ascertaining—while fully taking into consideration the background, traditions and habits of the Native inhabitants—how further provision should be made for their social and economic advancement, effective health services, suitable education and training, sufficient opportunities for employment, proper agricultural, industrial and mining development in respect of their territories, and for the best form of participation by the Natives in the administration and management of their own interests.[180]

176 NAN Nature Conservation Ordinance 31 of 1967, section 37(1).
177 For example, compare the maps in Miescher (2009, 2012), Berry (1997, 2007b), Dieckmann (2007a) and Heydinger (2021)
178 Beinart (1989: 158)
179 Green (2020: 162)
180 Odendaal Report (1964: para. 1(i, ii))

The commission sought to implement apartheid in Namibia based on justifiable "scientific" grounds using *Volkekunde,* understood as the Afrikaner version of cultural anthropology. As Gordon points out, 'Afrikaner anthropology has played a significant role in the legitimation and reproduction of the apartheid social order on two levels: as an instrument of control and as a means of rationalizing it'.[181] The appointment of this commission was also due to increasing international criticism of South Africa's politics and its mandate to rule SWA. In 1960, Ethiopia and Liberia had instituted proceedings against South Africa at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in a case regarding the continued existence of the League of Nations Mandate and its duties and performance as mandatory power,[182] charges that were dismissed in 1966 on technical grounds.[183] As Heydinger notes, 'South Africa sought to invoke its right to rule South West Africa while showcasing the benefits of separate development and state planning'.[184]

The Odendaal Commission handed in their report at the end of 1963 to the Prime Minister of South Africa, Hendrik Verwoerd, commonly regarded as the architect of apartheid.[185] The report claimed:

> [t]he population of South West Africa is characterized by its ethnic diversity. In the course of many decades of the country's history, various ethnic groups have settled as separate peoples in certain areas of the present Territory. In spite of internal strife and wars, which were particularly fierce in the southern part of the country during the previous century, the respective groups all retained their individual identity and are still distinguishable as such in the present population. The distinct population groups are the Bushmen, Damara, Nama, Whites, Basters and Coloureds, as well as the various Bantu people which can be divided into five different groups, namely the Herero, Kaokovelders, Ovambo, Okavango and the East Caprivians. There is also a smaller group (consisting mainly of Bantu) which amongst others includes the Tswana. These separate population groups are distinguished from one another by their different languages, cultures and physical appearance, and to a large extent also according to the areas in which they have settled and now live.[186]

The Odendaal Commission helped to constitute social categories.[187] Evidently, these categories were somewhat arbitrary, lumping together language, culture, physical appearance, and area, at times quite selectively using one or another criterion, according to convenience in each case. English, Afrikaans and German groups were lumped together as Whites; Nama were transferred from the Department of Bantu Affairs to the Department of Coloured Affairs; 'the Bushmen' remained within the ambit of Bantu Affairs, although it was mentioned that they belonged to "Khoisan" peoples.[188] It was admitted that 'the Bushmen' consisted primarily of three groups—the '!Khung', 'Heikum' and 'Barakwengo'—and that their languages differed from one another.[189] The awkward category 'Kaokovelders' clearly makes reference to the cultural diversity of a geographic area, the inhabitants of which were described as 'closely related to the Herero as far as origin, language and culture are concerned'.[190]

One justification for "separate development" referred to alleged hostilities between these "groups" and their own alleged ideas about "development":

> [t]he Commission gained the impression, supported by evidence, that various population groups harbour strong feelings against other groups and would prefer to have their own homelands and communities in which they will have and retain residential rights, political say and their own language, to the exclusion

181 Gordon (1988: 536)
182 See https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/47
183 Heydinger (2021: 20)
184 *Ibid.*, p. 8
185 Kenney (2016)
186 Odendaal Report (1964: para. 104)
187 Gordon (2018: 105)
188 *Ibid.*, p. 106, Odendaal Report (1984: para. 106)
189 *Ibid.*, para. 106
190 *Ibid.*, paras. 128–129

> of all other groups.[191] […] The Commission is therefore of the opinion that one central authority, with all groups represented therein, must be ruled out and that as far as practicable a homeland must be created for each population group, in which it alone would have residential, political and language rights to the exclusion of other population groups, so that each group would be able to develop towards self-determination without any group dominating or being dominated by another.[192]

Accordingly, the recommendations in the report centred around the recommendation to divide and organise the country in eleven separate homelands with the white homeland having a special status (see Figure 2.5 for north-west Namibia):

> [f]or all the foregoing reasons the Commission's conclusion is that the upliftment and development of the non-White groups and their contemplated homelands is a task of direct handling in all its facets by the Central Government of the Republic of South Africa, and that, largely in view of the implications involved, only the proposed White area in South West Africa should be administered by an Administrator, Executive Committee and Legislative Assembly.[193]

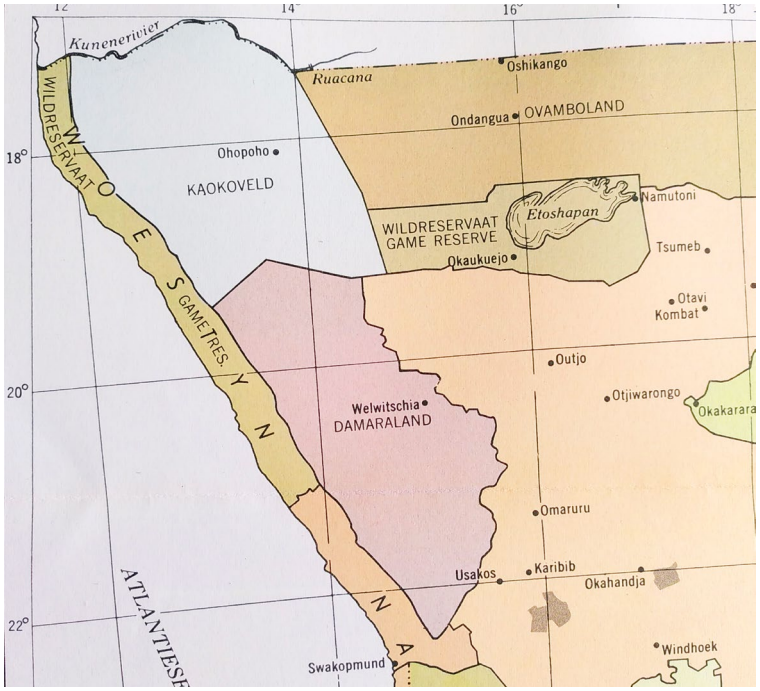

Fig. 2.5 'Proposed Homelands' for north-west Namibia. Source: Odendaal Report (1964: Figure 27, out of copyright), CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

These suggestions entailed a substantial transformation of the administration of SWA. It also entailed massive changes to the organisation of socio-ecological space and a reshuffling and uprooting of local communities. With regard to Etosha, it foresaw a reduction in size of over 70% from its predecessor, Game Reserve No. 2.[194] It should be noted here, however, that Kaokoveld and the land that became part of the south-west extension of Game Reserve No. 2 in 1958 (later included as the western Torra Bay extension of Etosha Game Park in 1962), was mainly a 'game reserve on paper',[195] inhabited at the time and historically by a diversity of people (as documented in Chapters 6, 7, 12, 13 and 14). The envisaged separation of people from people on the basis of actual and constructed ethnicity was reportedly grounded in the need for improved population control in light of increasing local resistance towards South African rule.[196] It also perpetuated and "perfected"

191 *Ibid.*, para. 187
192 *Ibid.*, para. 190
193 *Ibid.*, para. 214
194 Schoeman (2007: 52)
195 Joubert (1974: 41)
196 See also Gordon (2018: 100–3)

the functional division of space in the territory, mostly focusing on human inhabitants, although including paragraphs on 'natural resources', Game Reserves and Nature Reserves, 'Etosha Game Reserve', 'wildlife conservation', and several pages on 'veld foods' comprising plants, insects and 'game'.[197]

The ambiguous status of Kaokoveld, being simultaneously part of Game Reserve No. 2 and the Kaokoland Native Reserve, was to be solved once and for all:

> [a]s practically the whole of the Kaokoveld is at present a proclaimed game reserve, and since the Commission has in its recommendations in regard to Homelands recommended that the Kaokoveld, as expanded, should become the permanent Homeland of the Kaokovelders, and since the Commission is of the opinion that a Homeland as a whole should not be a proclaimed game reserve but that only a small part of it should continue to exist as such, it recommends:
>
> (i) That the existing Kaokoveld Reserve be deproclaimed, except for an uninhabitable desert strip, 20 miles wide, known as the Skeleton Coast, and running parallel to the west coast boundary line from the Kunene River in the north to the southern boundary of the Kaokoveld to be contiguous to the Game Reserve further south; and further
>
> (ii) That those parts of Game Reserve No. 2 which it is proposed to add to the Kaokoveld, Ovamboland and Damaraland, be deproclaimed as a game reserve.[198]

With the new Homeland of Damaraland to the south of Kaokoveld, the Odendaal Commission proposed to connect the fragmented Native Reserves of Sesfontein, Fransfontein, Okombahe and Otjohorongo:[199] see Figure 13.12 in Chapter 13. In doing so, the Commission reflected prior mobilities, habitation and uses of land between these areas (see Chapters 1, 12 and 13).

These recommendations were not fully implemented in the 1960s, as the South African government waited for the judgement of the ICJ, which dismissed the charges against South Africa only in 1966.[200] This was certainly one reason why the 1960s were characterised by uncertainty, confusion and conflict which partly hampered straightforward "development" in any direction, as illustrated by the following points:

- Kaokoveld remained a "native reserve" and part of Game Reserve No. 2 in the 1960s. For the sake of "development", however, hundreds of boreholes were drilled to support the pastoralist practices of the inhabitants, transforming the ecology of the area significantly (see Chapter 7);[201]
- uncertainty existed about the coastal resort of Torra Bay as freehold farms inland, where users of the resort for fishing were located, were bought up in order to create 'the proposed Bantu homeland' of Damaraland, making Torra's status as a nature resort questionable;[202]
- the exact boundary between Etosha Game Park/Etosha National Park and the Kaokoveld homeland was fiercely debated during the 1960s as a reaction to the Odendaal's recommendations (see Chapters 13 and 14);[203]
- and the Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1967, which re-confirmed the 1962 south-western borders of Etosha National Park up to the west coast,[204] was eventually overturned by the Odendaal recommendations.

Figure 2.6 aims to illustrate these conflicts and diverging ideas prevalent in the 1960s. The blue contour shows Etosha National Park as of 1967, legalised as a National Park three years after the Odendaal Commission's recommendations were published, mapped against the then envisaged,

197 Odendaal Report (1964: paras. 70–92, 100–101, 1208–1210, 1339, 1516)
198 *Ibid.* para. 1516
199 *Ibid.*, paras. 337–351
200 NAN, LUKS, 2.6, Vorderingsverslag oor Skakelkomitee-Aangeleenthede tot 12.2.1965: 12, in Heydinger (2021: 20)
201 For a detailed analysis of this development, see Bollig (2020: chapter 7)
202 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1965-66: 61)
203 Heydinger (2021: 17ff)
204 NAN Nature Conservation Ordinance 1967, Schedule 7.

but only later implemented homelands of Kaokoland[205] and Damaraland. It becomes clear that these different development and conservation plans precluded straightforward "progress" in any direction during the 1960s.

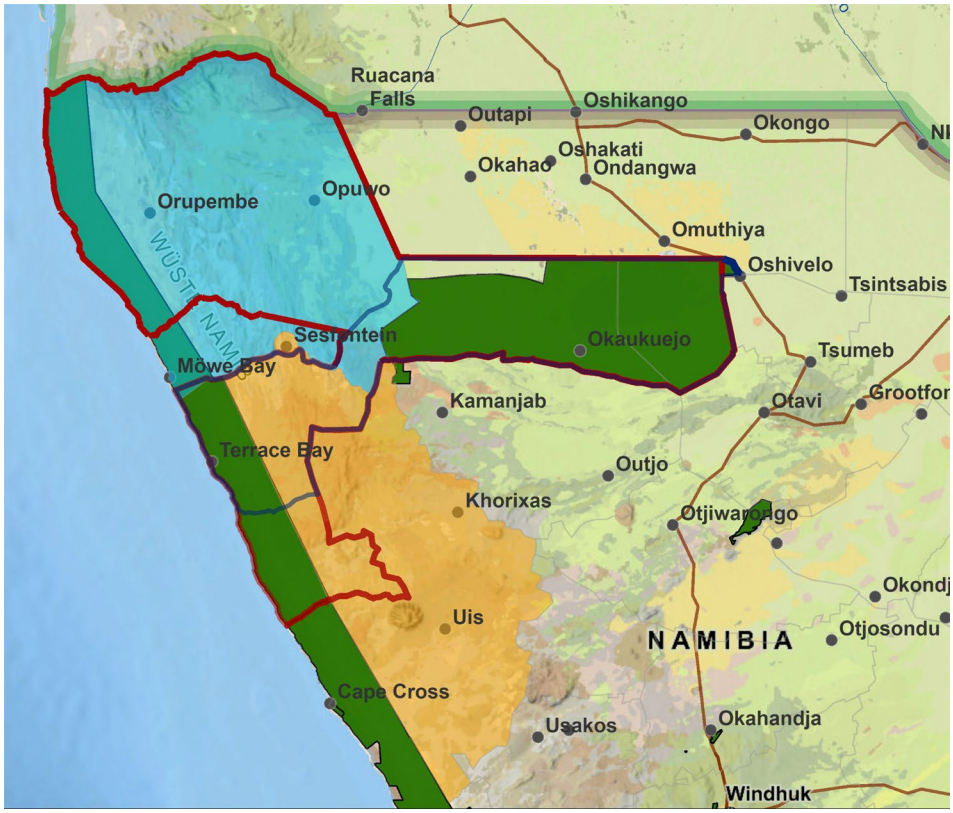

Fig. 2.6 Map of the borders of Etosha National Park in 1967 (blue), the borders of Game Reserve No. 2 in 1958 (red), the Kaokoland and Damaraland 'homelands' as implemented in the early 1970s (light blue and light orange respectively), and currently protected areas (green). © Ute Dieckmann; data: NAN; Atlas of Namibia Team 2022, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

2.4.2 The implementation of apartheid and spatial-ecological development in the 1970s and 1980s

In 1968, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution formally terminating the mandate of South Africa to administer SWA, which was instead to come under the direct responsibility of the United Nations.[206] South Africa, however, continued to implement its apartheid politics in the country, enacting the Odendaal Plan and the creation of homelands with the Development of Self-Government for Native Nations in the South West Africa Act 54 of 1968.[207]

According to the recommendations, Damaraland (4,799,021 hectares) included 223 government-bought white-owned farms (1,872,794 hectares) (see Chapter 13); 1,290,000 hectares of the short-lived 1958 south-west extension of Game Reserve No. 2—part of which was included in Etosha Game Park in 1962 and Etosha National Park in 1967; and 94,876 hectares of the south-eastern corner of Kaokoveld (outside the formerly designated Kaokoveld Native Reserve), initially included in Damaraland but later added to Kaokoland.[208] As noted, Damaraland thus reconnected several native reserves inhabited by mixed populations of Damara/ǂNūkhoen, ovaHerero, ovaHimba,

205 Although named 'Kaokoveld' in the Odendaal Plan's map of proposed homelands, subsequently the Kaokoveld homeland became named 'Kaokoland', bringing this name into alignment with the names of the other homelands such as Damaraland. See, for example, the listings here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bantustan and text here https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaokoland

206 See www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f1da18.html

207 See https://www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/sites/www.un.org.dppa.decolonization/files/decon_num_9-1.pdf

208 Odendaal Report (1964: paras. 338–40)

Nama and ǁUbun (namely Okombahe, Otjohorongo, Fransfontein and Sesfontein).[209] It also became the homeland for Damara/ǂNūkhoen living in other parts of the country (e.g. |Khomanin from Khomas Hochland).[210] Displacements within the area also took place. The reallocation of the south-east corner of Kaokoveld from Damaraland to Kaokoland resulted in the settlement of Warmquelle/|Aexa|aus east of Sesfontein becoming part of Kaokoland: Damara/ǂNūkhoen living there had to move southwards to Kowareb, located in Damaraland.[211] In the early 1970s a population of 'Riemvasmakers' living in the Upington area of South Africa were also relocated to Ward 11 around Bersig in Damaraland—on the grounds that they were linguistically connected with Damara/ǂNūkhoen—this area later becoming Torra Conservancy (see Chapter 3).[212] Major parts of the redistributed western extension of Game Reserve No. 2 (Etosha Game/National Park 1962/67) were subsequently established as a trophy hunting concession and later as the tourism concessions of Palmwag, Etendeka and Hobatere (see Chapter 13).

The Kaokoveld, already a "native reserve", was re-organised: a strip at the coast considered uninhabitable was cut off for the 'Skeleton Coast Game Reserve' (804,000 ha); the Kaokoveld area of Game Reserve No. 2 (256,435 ha), as well as the European-owned Farm Kowares (15,531 ha), were added to Kaokoland (also comprising almost 5 million ha).[213] The Odendaal Report recommended boreholes as key to economic development in the Kaokoveld,[214] contributing to the 'hydrological revolution'[215] documented in detail in Chapter 7. The consequent change in pastoralist mobility patterns is asserted to have caused a shift in vegetation structure through increasing dry season grazing near boreholes, promoting annual grasses over perennials.[216] Declining numbers of predators through strychnine and rifles issued to headmen in the 1960s and 1970s,[217] reportedly contributed further to the degradation of rangelands as stock owners could now leave their cattle to roam freely.

Unsurprisingly, the Odendaal Plan created a furore among conservationists—nationally and internationally—for disregarding ecological systems.[218] As Heydinger points out,

> [i]n transforming Etosha's boundaries and de-proclaiming Kaokoveld's game reserve status, Odendaal was also set to alter the region's ecology, with negative outcomes feared, particularly for rare species such as black rhino (*Diceros bicornis*) and mountain zebra (*Equus zebra*).[219]

In the years to come, ecologists and conservationists, both from within and outside of government, suggested alternative plans for dividing or re-arranging "Etosha-Kaokoveld". In the late 1960s, a Committee for the Enquiry into Nature Conservation and Tourism-problems in Bantu (*sic*) areas in Southwest-Africa (*Komitee van Ondersoek na Naturbewaring en Tourisme-probleme in Bantoegebiede van Suidwes Afrika*) was mandated to conduct research into the potential for nature conservation in Kaokoveld and Ovamboland, and to explore the tourism potential of those areas.[220] De la Bat was part of this commission, which argued for the integration of the northern homelands into a wider tourism and conservation strategy for the territory, highlighting the immense potential of these areas on the grounds that they 'still had abundant wildlife and comparatively low human population numbers'.[221] Recommendations included the development of nature conservation legislation for

209 Sullivan (1996, 1998)
210 Odendaal Report (1964: paras. 344–45); Sullivan (1996) documents experiences of qualifying Damara/ǂNūkhoen moving to the 'homeland' from elsewhere in Namibia.
211 Sullivan (2003: 81)
212 Sullivan & Ganuses (2020: 316–17)
213 Odendaal Report (1964: para. 326)
214 *Ibid.* para. 1228, ii
215 Bollig (2020: 153ff)
216 *Ibid.*, p. 188
217 Owen-Smith (2010: 464) in Bollig (2020: 188)
218 de la Bat (1982: 20)
219 Heydinger (2021: 12)
220 Bollig (2020: 204)
221 *Ibid.*

these homelands which should serve the conservation of wildlife and flora and at the same time 'preserve local traditions […] for the benefit of local inhabitants',[222] as well as establishing game parks within these homelands. This idea was not completely new. As mentioned in Section 2.3.1, Chief Kambonde in Ovamboland had already proclaimed part of the Andoni Plains as his private game reserve at the end of the 1950s.[223] The commission regarded especially the Kaokoveld as of particular touristic potential and highlighted prospects for trophy hunting in the area.[224] The report was not followed by any action in line with the recommendations, however, leading to growing concern and a series of conservation recommendations for the area that had briefly comprised the Etosha Game Park extensions, as reviewed in detail in Chapter 13.

Not only were people moved around in this period, but animals were subjected to increasingly intense conservation management practices, a key technique being translocation. A game capture unit was established in 1966 and the translocation of rare or endangered (as well as other) species began,[225] with game capture and sale also becoming an economic enterprise, as can be read in the SWAA White Papers in the section on Nature Conservation. In 1971, for instance, the game capture team in Namibia caught and translocated in total 364 animals, 145 black-faced impala and 'the last remaining black rhinos in the farming areas were taken to safety in the Etosha National Park'.[226] In 1972, 85 elands and some giraffes were transferred from the Mangetti area to the Waterberg Plateau Park, two rhinos to Etosha and seven mountain zebras to the game park area of the Hardap Recreation Resort, while 250 animals (springbok (*Antidorcas marsupialis*), gemsbok and plains zebras) were captured and sold to farmers. In 1975, 34 roan antelope (*Hippotragus equinus*) were translocated from Etosha National Park to Waterberg Plateau Park, 58 black-faced impala were captured at Otjovasandu (in the west of Etosha National Park) and released either at Ombika or Namutoni (in the east of the park). In 1976, the game capture unit concentrated on operations on freehold farmland in order to supply game to settler farmers: 862 animals were caught and sold for a total value of R24,750,00.[227] In 1977, sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*), tsessebe (*Damaliscus lunatus lunatus*) and reedbuck (*Redunca arundinum arundinum*) not present in other SWA game reserves or parks were caught, enduring a three-month quarantine period in Caprivi (now Zambezi Region) before being transferred to Etosha where they were subjected to another three-month quarantine.[228] In 1978, a total of 1,326 animals were captured, less than half of them sold or 'given by the Administration to other bodies as a gift', while the remaining animals were transferred to other localities.[229] In 1979, it was reported that,

> [t]here are now approximately 150 black rhinoceros and 100 black-faced impalas in Etosha. The future of these two rare game species is now assured in Southwest Africa.[230]

These displacements were not always completely successful. In the translocation of 55 rhino to Etosha National Park from the western areas sleighted to become "homelands", five animals were lost overall between 1967 and the early 1970s; perhaps connected with difficulties in estimating

222 *Ibid.*, and references therein
223 de la Bat (1982: 18)
224 As discussed in Bollig (2020: 206)
225 Schoeman (2007: 52)
226 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971 Section on Nature Conservation). These translocations were enacted on the assumption that the redistribution of commercial farms in the west to Damara farmers following Odendaal would lead to increased poaching. Somewhat ironically, since Independence black rhino have in fact been translocated back onto communal land in the west, with more poaching incidents seemingly now taking place on protected areas and freehold rhino custodian farms than on communal land. See discussion in Sullivan *et al.* (2021).
227 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971, 1972, 1975, 1976, Section on Nature Conservation). South African rand (ZAR) was the national currency at this time, until Namibian dollars (NAD) were brought in after Independence, although pegged to the rand.
228 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1977, Section on Nature Conservation)
229 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1978, Section on Nature Conservation)
230 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1979, Section on Nature Conservation)

accurate doses of anaesthetic and antidote.[231] The translocation process must have been arduous for the animals. In 1971, for example, it was reported that:

> [t]he use of helicopter proved imperative because of the rough terrain and sparse scattering of the rhino and black-faced impala. Drop-nets were used for the first time in catching the impala and springbok and injuries were reduced substantially. For the transportation of the black-faced impala over very bad roads and in hot weather, fans were installed in large crates with power units on top. This method contributed considerably to the successful translocation from Enyandi in Kaokoland to Otjovasandu.[232]

Although the mortality rate decreased considerably over the years due to improved capture techniques and drugs, in 1978, it was still reported that the 'average mortality for the year's capture operations was 5,3%'.[233]

Fences around ENP disrupted large-scale migration routes, especially of plains zebras and wildebeest (see Chapter 10), leading to an unforeseen collapse of the ungulate populations in the park.[234] Berry reports that successive aerial censuses of Etosha, together with water-hole and ground counts:

> showed conclusively that by 1987 some large herbivore species had declined drastically in numbers: Burchell's zebra from 22000 (1969) to 5000; wildebeest from 25000 (1954) to 2600; gemsbok from 5000 (1982) to 2200; and eland from 3000 (pre-1960) to 250.[235]

The mechanisms causing these changes in numbers were manifold and the dynamics only partly understood, a major factor being the restrictive fencing completed around ENP in 1973. This enclosure made human management more necessary than ever before. More artificial water places and roads were constructed;[236] these were important factors for increasing levels of anthrax,[237] which again was followed by a growing number of predators taking advantage of the vulnerable game. Heydinger sees the ultimate cause of the large-scale decimation of ungulate populations in the Odendaal recommendations,[238] although the exact relationship between the fencing of the park and the Odendaal Plan is unclear.

The "game-proof" fences prevented the migration of ungulates, but they were not such an insurmountable obstacle for elephants who regularly visited neighbouring commercial farms or "homelands". This caused considerable trouble and laid another time-consuming task on the shoulders of nature conservation officials; fence breaks 'occurred faster than they could be repaired',[239] and elephants were 'driven back to the game reserve time and time again but had returned to the farms just as regularly'.[240] In 1971, for example, officials had to drive back 111 elephants and shot three 'obdurate troublemakers'; in 1977, 1,841 breaks caused by elephants on the park's northern boundary were repaired; nine elephants were shot on farms while 102 were driven back to Etosha.[241] The broken fences also offered an opportunity for lions to exit the National Park, 'causing havoc among the farmers' stock'.[242] Farmers on freehold land often put an end to these incursions by shooting the lions: in 1970, for instance, 87 lions were shot by farmers; in 1974, 44 lions were shot; and in 1977, 56 lions were shot and 25 were driven back to Etosha.[243] This was

231 Joubert (1984: 13–14), Ebedes (2007: 57–58), Sullivan *et al.* (2021: 12–14)
232 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971, Section on Nature Conservation)
233 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1978, Section on Nature Conservation). This percentage refers to all game capturing operations, not only those which were translocated to the Etosha National Park; in total 1,326 animals.
234 Heydinger (2021: 25)
235 Berry (1997: 9)
236 *Ibid.*, p. 8
237 Heydinger (2021: 26)
238 *Ibid.*
239 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1977, Section on Nature Conservation)
240 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1978, Section on Nature Conservation)
241 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971; 1977, Section on Nature Conservation)
242 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1977, Section on Nature Conservation)
243 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971; 1974; 1977, Section on Nature Conservation)

a considerable loss of animals, bearing in mind that there were around 400–500 lions in Etosha over the years. Although Hu Berry, the biologist in Okaukuejo during those years, considered the number too high,[244] killing by farmers might not have been the best solution for population control.

The fencing also raised concerns with regard to available grazing in the park. In 1971, research was begun to study the vegetation in the park in order to determine the carrying capacity for grazing management, deemed as important 'especially once the Park has been full [*sic*] fenced in'.[245] Reportedly, animals were sometimes also captured in one area and moved to zones with better grazing.[246] In 1977,

> grazing was reasonable in the sandy veld but poor in the lime areas. According to grazing capacity stipulations it has been established that the winter grazing areas are generally overgrazed. The grazing capacity of the system is + 4000 large stock units, which is much lower than the present burden.[247]

The SWAA White Papers for the 1970s also provide an idea of the importance of game to the economy, as direct revenues to the Administration, as income for game dealers and as income to farmers. In the section on the annual developments of nature conservation, a paragraph on 'Game Farming' is included with income estimates provided for levies, hunting licences, game sale, sale of carcasses, sale of hides, income from trophy hunting, income from skins and huntable game shot for own use. Reading these reports, it becomes evident how important game farming was for settler farmers on freehold land, following the 1967 Nature Conservation Ordinance which established the legal framework for farmers to capitalise on game. The 1971 SWAA White Paper notes that:

> [m]ore and more profits are being derived from the administration's policy that game should have a direct monetary value for the farm owners. Farmers thus netted an estimated income of R 186 600,00 throughout the year from the sale of live game, game carcases [*sic*], hunting licence fees and trophy hunters. The value of hides or venison used by the farmers themselves is not included in this figure.[248]

In 1977, it was reported that the national income of commercial farmers from their game had exceeded 5 million rand for the first time.[249] It is worth noting that farmers on freehold land could also apply for permits to shoot 'protected or specifically protected' game in order 'to conserve grazing, to maintain the correct sex ratio or to protect live-stock and property'.[250] In 1971 and 1972, for instance, permits for shooting 4,449 and 3,091 head of game were issued to protect grazing.[251] As mentioned above, a major area of communal land to the west of ENP, including land that had been part of the short-lived western extension of Etosha game reserve from 1962, was also designated for trophy hunting (Chapter 13).

To the north-west of Etosha National Park, the newly created Kaokoland homeland was characterised by a decline of wildlife in the 1970s to the early 1980s,[252] linked with a major drought from 1979–1982.[253] Authority over nature conservation in the homelands remained with the Department of Bantu Administration and Development (BAD) in Pretoria.[254] Bollig claims that:

> [t]he revocation of game park status [game reserve?] and the endorsement of homeland status resulted in a situation in which the emergent homeland Kaokoland, had no applicable legislation on conservation whatsoever. Formally, homeland authorities would have to establish a new legislation for

244 de la Bat (1982: 16)
245 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971, Section on Nature Conservation)
246 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1974, Section on Nature Conservation)
247 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1977, Section on Nature Conservation)
248 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971, Section on Nature Conservation)
249 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1977, Section on Nature Conservation). This tremendous increase was not only due to an increase in numbers and prices but also due to the inclusion of estimations about income from game skins and the estimated value of the game shot for personal use.
250 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1979, Section on Nature Conservation)
251 NAN AP 5/6 E. SWAA White Paper (1971; 1972, Section on Nature Conservation)
252 Bollig (2020: 203, 221)
253 *Ibid.*, p. 203
254 Owen-Smith (2002: 2)

> the Kaokoland in the long run, but for the time being conservation was transferred to the Department of Bantu Administration and Development. In the early 1970s a number of South African homelands did indeed establish legislation on conservation but in northern Namibia [i.e. Kaokoveld] this did not happen.[255]

Poaching and legal hunting became serious problems there.[256] SWAPO had also opened a western front in Kaokoveld and the administration handed out thousands of rifles to local residents.[257] Yet, not only local residents equipped with rifles by the administration contributed to the decline of wildlife, but also top-level politicians and local white administrative and military staff were engaged in poaching.[258]

With Odendaal, spatial functional separation was completed in Namibia as a whole and in Etosha-Kunene in particular, at least on paper and maps: neatly defined "homelands" ("Damaraland" and "Kaokoland") for diverse population groups of African background and their livestock; settlers of European background and their livestock in the respective freehold farming area south-east of the homelands; and game kept within ENP and eventually through tourism concessions established in the 1980s by the Damaraland Regional Authority (see Chapter 13). Certainly, the reality on the ground differed from the ideas in the minds of the architects of this spatial functional separation and from the boundaries on maps. Human mobility between these areas continued to take place, game continued to exist in areas designated as homelands, and tourism concession areas were established in homelands.

What is important, however, is that land, flora and fauna, and humans of various backgrounds, were treated as separable categories to be sorted and arranged according to colonial needs. The intra-dependence within socio-ecological systems was largely disregarded by the South African government. The new arrangement imagined ENP as a fenced island within the wider colonial system. As described, this "dismembering" had unforeseen effects. Yet, the 1980s also saw the first ideas of Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) being experimented with in north-west Namibia, to later become the dominant paradigm for communal areas in independent Namibia, as considered briefly below and in more detail in Chapter 3.

2.5 The 1980s: First steps towards community-based nature conservation in Etosha-Kunene

The history of CBNRM in Namibia owes much to the initiative of a number of individuals concerned about the decline of wildlife in Namibia's north-west. In 1981, control over nature conservation in the homelands was transferred from BAD in Pretoria to the Directorate of Nature Conservation (DNC) in Windhoek, with the late Chris Eyre appointed Senior Nature Conservation Officer in Khorixas.[259] In 1982, the NGO Namibia Wildlife Trust (NWT) was formed by the late Blythe Loutit, the late Ina Britz, and other concerned conservationists (including botanist Dr Pat Craven), 'to help the nature conservation authorities bring poaching in the country's north-west under control'.[260] They had the support of the Damara Regional Authority (DRA), the Peoples' Trust for Endangered Species, and the Wildlife Society of South West Africa, with financial resources committed by the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT, South Africa) under the leadership of Clive Walker. The late Garth Owen-Smith, who became one of Namibia's most famous conservationists, was employed by the Trust to direct the field operations from NWT's field base at the farm Werêldsend,[261] south of the

255 Bollig (2020: 202–3) referring to Lenggenhager (2018)
256 Bollig (2020: 222–27)
257 Owen-Smith (2010: 377) in Bollig (2020: 223)
258 Ellis (1994), Sullivan (2002), Owen-Smith (2010: 367–406) in Bollig (2020: 224)
259 Jacobsohn (1998[1990]: 45), Hearn (2003: 13)
260 Owen-Smith (2010: 3, 6)
261 Jacobsohn (2019: 6)

vet fence on the Torra Bay road, working between 1982–1984 with, most notably, Peter Erb, Elias Hambo, Bennie Roman, Johan le Roux and Sakeus Kasaona.[262]

This Trust, which later formed the basis for Namibia's well-known and successful Save the Rhino Trust (SRT),[263] was thus formed 'by a group of conservationists alarmed by the wilful slaughter of game species in Namibia' who, 'as a first step'[264]

> had worked out a programme of protection for the large mammals of the desert regions, in particular the elephants, rhinos, giraffe and mountain zebra occurring outside proclaimed game reserves in the Kaokoland and Damaraland tribal areas. As Senior Field Officer, Garth was responsible for determining the status and distribution of the endangered species and for spearheading an anti-poaching campaign.[265]

The Trust worked on the basis of four principles that have formed a basis for subsequent 'community-based conservation' activities in the region (see Chapter 3):

> 1. To create an awareness of the need for good conservation among all residents of Kaokoland and Damaraland.
>
> 2. To train suitable inhabitants of Kaokoland and Damaraland in conservation so that in the future they might play an active professional role in the conservation of the region.
>
> 3. To assist the local government conservation officers in controlling illegal hunting in the region.
>
> 4. To promote a better understanding of the ecology of this unique region.[266]

A foundation of the Trust's work was cooperation with local headmen *vis-à-vis* poaching, leading to the establishment of an Auxiliary Game Guard (AGG) system, which later became known as Community Game Guards (CGG), and formed the basis of a network of Rhino Rangers[267] and Lion Rangers established in post-Independence conservancies (see Chapters 17, 18 and 19).[268] Margaret Jacobsohn, who later co-founded Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) with Owen-Smith, articulates their approach as follows:

> [c]onservation could be and should be relevant to Africans. If wildlife was valuable to people they would look after it. Instead, they were alienated from it by colonial conservation laws which gave ownership of wildlife to the state. […] Conservation (back in the 1980s) was a white man's game, and wildlife, even though it was one of Africa's most valuable resources, was less important than people's domestic stock and crops.[269]

Jacobsohn considers the auxiliary game guard network to have played 'a pivotal role in ending the poaching crisis in both Kaokoland and adjoining Damaraland'.[270] In 1985, however, Owen-Smith lost his funding and thus his job with the NWT, reportedly 'because the colonial authorities claimed he was "a dangerous Swapo supporter who was confusing the communities"'.[271] Evidently, the new ideas about conservation were not in line with the government of the time; crossing "ethnic" boundaries, these ideas also crossed political lines. Still, with funding from the EWT, the Department of Nature Conservation took over the auxiliary game guard network, although reportedly with limited enthusiasm.[272]

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262 Owen-Smith (2002: 3)
263 https://www.savetherhinotrust.org/
264 Owen-Smith (2010: 411 ff.)
265 Reardon (1986: 17). Mitch Reardon was a South African journalist and friend of Owen-Smith, who travelled with Owen-Smith in Kaokoveld.
266 Owen-Smith (2010: 343–44)
267 See, for example, Sullivan *et al.* (2021) and references therein.
268 Owen-Smith (2010: 415–20)
269 Jacobsohn (2019: 7–8)
270 Jacobsohn (1998[1990]: 44)
271 Jacobsohn (2019: xiv–xv)
272 Jacobsohn (1998[1990]: 44, 2019: 22)

In 1987, following an approach by Jacobsohn who was conducting archaeological research in Puros, the then Director of EWT (Dr John Ledger) visited the north-west to evaluate circumstances there, after which he secured further small funding for Owen Smith's work in the north-west. Owen-Smith and Jacobsohn started a small pilot eco-tourism project at Puros, the 'Purros Pilot Project', with three components:

- a tourist levy paid to the Purros community by tour operators, charged on a per head basis and paid directly to the community for their role as caretakers of wildlife;
- a craft market drawing for example on local materials such as palm fronds used in basketry, with the impacts of harvesting monitored by local women;
- a 'Conservation Committee' established to represent the interests of the community, distribute the tourist levy and as a forum for discussion of any problems related to tourists and tour operators.[273]

An underlying principle here was to create 'an incentive for the local community to become involved in the CGG Program' by channelling benefits from wildlife conservation and increased tourism 'back into the hands of the Purros community', so as 'to broaden the Purros community's economic base and thereby change their attitudes towards wildlife'.[274] This "sustainable use" principle has remained foundational to Namibia's post-Independence consolidation of CBNRM programme, although with disparate outcomes as elaborated in Chapters 3 and 5. As can be seen, CBNRM, now so prominent throughout Namibia's communal areas, has its origins in pre-Independent Etosha-Kunene.

2.6 Conclusion

The South African period was characterised by the classification and hierarchisation of human inhabitants according to so-called ethnic groups, the separation of human inhabitants from wildlife, and the reorganisation of space in Etosha-Kunene. Local inhabitants had become and were treated as resources for the colonial system, as was nature: both to be treated and exploited differently. The attempts at neat spatial-functional severance clearly reflected colonial thinking, being rooted in the ideas and categorisations documented in Chapter 1. Local human inhabitants were displaced and removed from lands they had previously lived in, and wildlife separated from its broader ecological context. The importance of "nature" for the colonial project increased considerably during the years covered in this chapter, which were also dominated by settlers' interests at the start of this period and the implementation of apartheid towards the end. Especially from the 1950s until the 1970s, nature conservation gained more prominence and was professionalised and "scientised".[275] This was due to various factors, among them the spatial limitations for further white settlement based mainly on livestock husbandry and the increasing interest in tourism. Nature conservation became driven by the aim of nature commercialisation, an emphasis amplified since Independence.

The high economic value of game was the reason for the establishment of Game Reserve No. 2 in German colonial times, as outlined in Chapter 1. During these early times, game was important as an economic resource for settlers and traders and as a social resource for white sportsmen.[276] Its value increased tremendously during South African times, both for settlers, thanks to the legislation enacted by the SWAA in 1967, and for the administration itself, due to the significance that tourism gained in economic terms for the territory. Wildlife became a product to be sold, not only as meat

273 Powell (1998: 27)
274 *Ibid.*
275 As can be seen by the proliferation of research publications concerning the 'Greater Etosha Landscape' (GEL) comprising Etosha National Park and a 40km surrounding 'buffer zone', from the 1960s onwards (Turner *et al.* 2022).
276 Miescher (2009: 99–101)

or hides to be eaten and used, but also an image of African wilderness for foreign visitors and as trophies for hunters from overseas.

The spatial reorganisations documented in this chapter had a tremendous impact on Etosha-Kunene ecology: in simplifying terms, ENP became overpopulated in wildlife and underpopulated in terms of human inhabitants, whilst from a conservation perspective the homelands of Kaokoland and Damaraland became underpopulated by wildlife and overpopulated with people and livestock. Game and local people with their livestock were perceived by the authorities as enemies to each other. During the 1980s, initial attempts to reconcile the interests of game protection on the one hand and of local populations on the other were observable but also limited in face of the liberation war and the political turmoil during those years. When Namibia became independent in 1990, it had to address this colonial legacy and the spatial division of Etosha-Kunene. In Chapter 3 we outline the efforts the new nation undertook to reshape Etosha-Kunene.

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