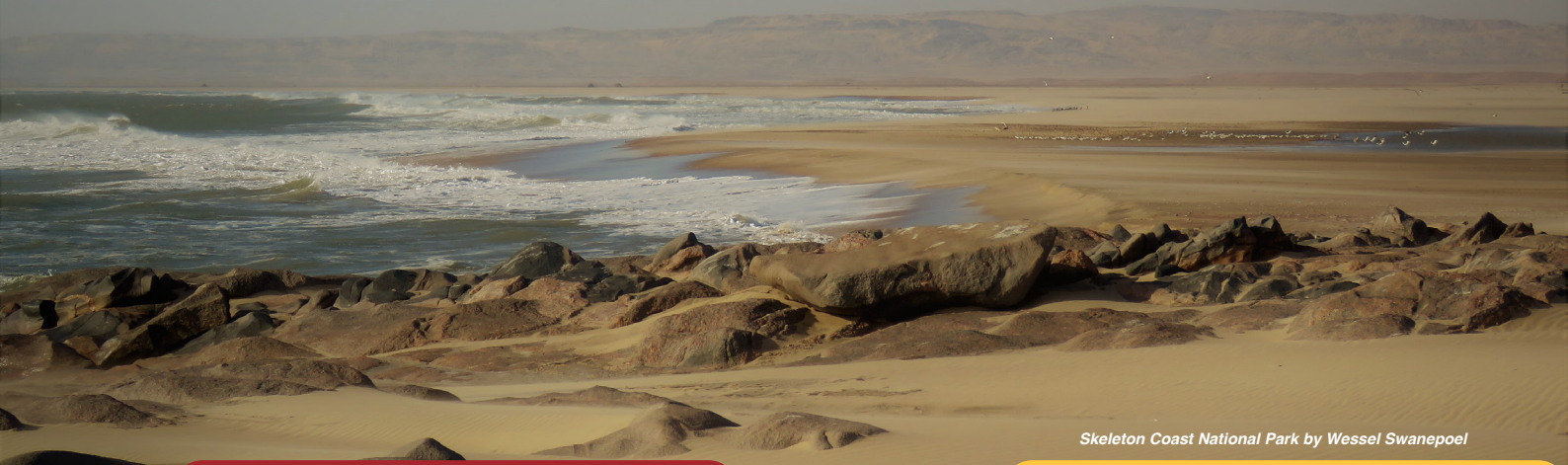


Skeleton Coast National Park by Wessel Swanepoel

SCIONA

BRIDGING THE KUNENE

Co-designing conservation technologies for the Iona-Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Conservation Area of Angola and Namibia

A project funded by the European Union (EuropeAid/156423/DD/ACT/Multi).

Lead Applicant: Namibia University of Science and Technology

Main Partner: ISCED - Instituto Superior de Ciências de Educação da Huíla, Angola; the Higher Institute of Education Sciences of Huíla, Angola

Period: 1 February 2018 – 31 January 2021

Funding: N$16 Million (€ 1,095,570)

Overall Objective

To strengthen cross-border management and wildlife law enforcement by co-designing and implementing conservation monitoring technologies with park authorities and communities within the Iona-Skeleton Coast transfronteir area

The SCIONA project builds on the Namibian experiences with community involvement in ecotourism and conservation. Namibia has been at the forefront of devolving natural resource management authority to the local communities through the legally mandated Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programme.

PROJECT CONTENTS

PHASE 1

The first phase of the project is an assessment of the status quo leading to an integrated ecosystem management plan. Local communities on both sides of the border will be co-opted to the project and engaged in a dialogue establishing current challenges, best practices, attained skills, aspirations, and needs with regard to livelihood development and the management of a sustainable ecosystem within the TFCA. Ecological and other data relevant to the decisions of a sustainable ecosystem management plan will be collected. An Iona-Skeleton Geographical Information System (GIS) will allow to centralise all baseline data, including data derived from high-resolution aerial surveys. Stakeholder workshops will be conducted to exchange information and knowledge on best practices, to explore available technologies, and to jointly develop an integrative ecosystem management plan.

PHASE 2

The second phase consists of strengthening the community-driven natural resources governance structure. It will explore natural resources monitoring by the community in cooperation with park officials and Namibian and Angolan students, as well as encourage various resource management related livelihood activities, amongst others through the training of para-ecologists. Exchange visits between Angolan and Namibian community conservation members are facilitated. The natural resource monitoring activities will support wildlife and ecological research activities in the region. Wildlife monitoring technology such as telemetry, camera traps and animal identification on aerial photographs will be demonstrated to the local communities. Required training and technology infrastructures will be identified and provided. A co-design approach ensures the assimilation of different knowledge systems and indigenous practices, as well as the usability of the tools and meaningfulness of the activities for the community members.

PHASE 3

The third phase of the project ensures the implementation of a sustainable cross-border management information platform. Conservation monitoring technologies will be deployed and integrated, including an online portal, and a community monitoring hub will be set up. The management of the TFCA will be demonstrated and validated through a well-established collaboration between communities across the borders, government, and academia. The on-going monitoring activities will also bring para-ecologists and students from the different countries together for co-management of the TFCA, which will ensure life-long learning for all parties involved.

This project is funded by the European Union

NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

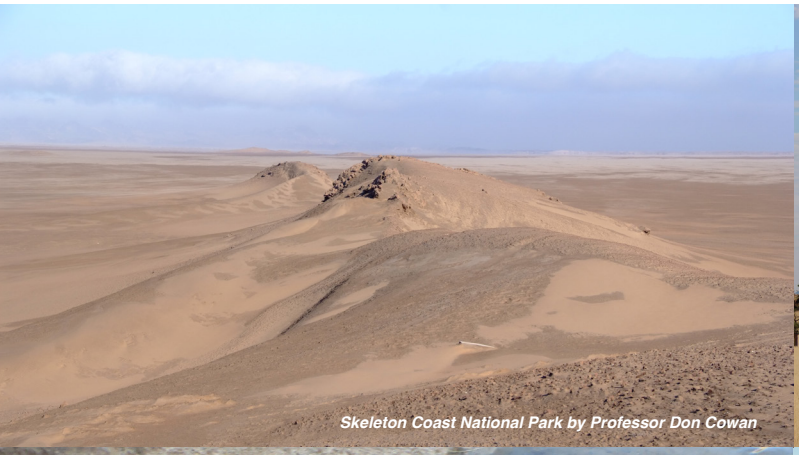
INSTITUTO SUPERIOR DE CIÊNCIAS DE EDUCAÇÃO HUÍLA ISCED

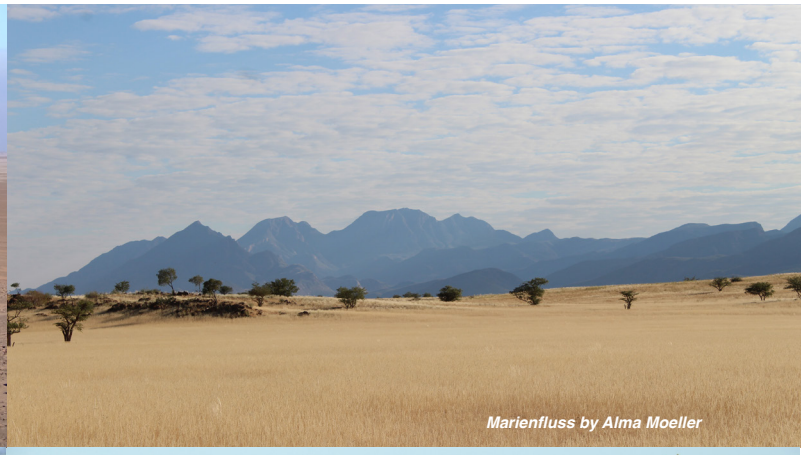
BACKGROUND

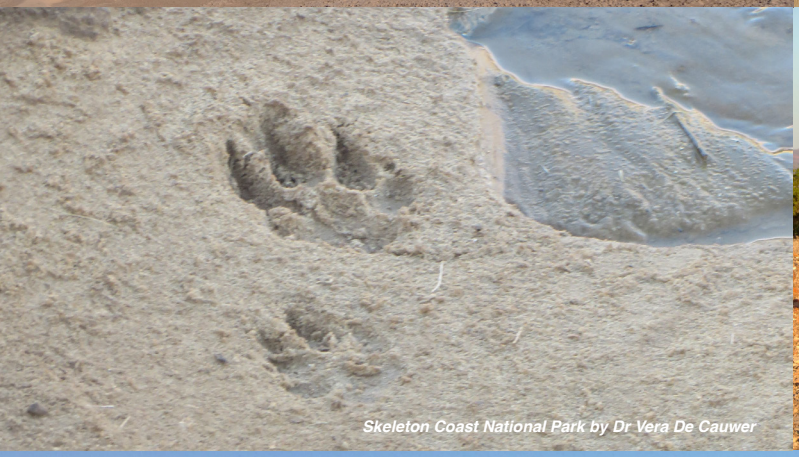
The SCIONA project aims to strengthen cross-border ecosystem management and wildlife protection in the Iona – Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) through co-designing and implementing conservation monitoring technology with the park authorities and surrounding communities. The TFCA is one of the larger transboundary conservation areas in southern Africa. It connects the Namib Desert ecosystem's northern extent in Namibia and southern Angola and provides unique eco-tourism opportunities with its marine and terrestrial wildlife, impressive mountains, sand dunes, and surrounding indigenous Himba communities. The Namibian Skeleton Coast National Park and Angolan Iona National Park share several unique species, some found nowhere else on earth, including black-faced impala, desert dwelling elephants, the desert lion, black rhinos and the remarkable *Welwitschia mirabilis* plant. The two countries and parks are separated by the Kunene River, which provides an oasis in this arid ecosystem. The Kunene River mouth which flows into the Atlantic Ocean is the second most species-rich coastal wetland of Namibia (Simmons et al., 1993).

SCIONA
BRIDGING THE KUNENE

For more information, please contact the Project Coordinator: Mrs. Amber Nott at anott@nust.na or view our website at http://www.sciona.nust.na/.


Skeleton Coast National Park by Professor Don Cowan


Marienfluss by Alma Moeller


Skeleton Coast National Park by Dr Vera De Cauwer


Orupembe by Professor Don Cowan


Orupembe by Marina Coetzee

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