

(Newsletter of the project The Future Okavango, covering the period February and March 2015)

## What is coming up? TFO activities and deadlines, events of interest

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- A final **dissemination tour** at the end of the TFO project is scheduled for mid-July. Under the lead of the African partners the results and recommendations will be passed both to the decision makers at the national level and to the local stakeholders. With the help of the par-ecologists suitable formats for the transfer of the recommendations to local farmers will be developed. It is envisaged to visit the national or regional centres as well as the TFO-core sites in Angola, Botswana and Namibia. The detailed time schedule will be made available to the TFO community as soon as it has been agreed upon.
- The 3rd Scientific Conference of the **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** "Combating drought, land degradation and desertification for poverty reduction and sustainable development: The contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices" was held in Cancún, Mexico, 9-12 March 2015. Several documents are available online: the conference impulse report, entitled "Climate change and desertification: Anticipating, assessing & adapting to future change in drylands", the book of abstracts and the conference programme booklet. For further information please refer to the website at <http://3sc.unccd.int/> and especially to the "documents & outputs" page.

For more upcoming events, please have a look at our TFO website under the category "Events".

## Inside TFO: What has been done recently?

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- On March 16<sup>th</sup> 2015, Achim Röder gave a talk at the Namibian Scientific Society, Windhoek, on **'The utilization of earth observation images to monitor our environment'**. Achim talked about satellite images offering a unique potential to contribute to a better management of terrestrial resources, by providing spatially explicit maps of the present state of the environment. During the talk he also introduced some of the fundamental concepts of satellite-based remote sensing and illustrated the potential of earth observation data to help addressing some of the most burning questions in environmental monitoring and assessment exemplified with case studies from Southern Africa.



**Impressions from the public talk at Namibian Scientific Society  
(Photos: Armin Jagdhuber, Namibian Scientific Society)**

- The **scenario development** process has nearly been completed by now. Here is a short summary of the scenario development: Through a matrix analysis the most active and uncertain variables with the strongest influence on land use in the Okavango basin until 2030 had been identified. The key variables *“Integrated transboundary management”* and *“Policies of natural resources management”* were chosen as main driving forces for the storylines. Another important decision was the assignment of the third highly active and uncertain variable *“Development policy paradigms”* to the four storylines. The Scenario Coordination Task Force decided on an uneven assignment (3:1) of this variable to the four storylines, as is shown in Fig. 1.:

*Fig.1: Assignment of the third variable “Development paradigms”*

<p><b>Scenario 1: “Race for Money”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National interest first</li> <li>● Exploitative management of natural resources</li> <li>● <b>Jump</b> to the future (unidimensional growth oriented policies with a focus on innovations mainly in the industrial and commercial agricultural sectors)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scenario 2: “Green Growth”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National interest first</li> <li>● Sustainable management of natural resources</li> <li>● <b>Jump</b> to the future</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 3: “Basin Quarry”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Integrated transboundary management</li> <li>● Exploitative management of natural resources</li> <li>● <b>Jump</b> to the future</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scenario 4: “Everyone is Basin”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Integrated transboundary management</li> <li>● Sustainable management of natural resources</li> <li>● <b>Stepwise</b> improvement of current situation (multidimensional poverty alleviation policies with a focus on people’s current activities and expertise)</li> </ul>

The main characteristics of the four scenarios are summarized in Tab 1.:

Tab. 1: Brief description of the Okavango Basin scenarios

Scenario	Essential Features
<b>“Race for Money”</b>	No collaboration between the three countries exists. Rather, there is a fierce competition within the region to become a player in the global economy. Natural resources are mainly seen as the economic basis for development. Agro-industrial agriculture is strongly supported; smallholders will be marginalised. This will lead to lower productivity of smallholders, an increase in poverty and urbanization, and a sellout of nature.
<b>“Green Growth”</b>	Each country follows its own national interests and relies on its share of the basin as a source of resources. In contrast to 1, there is an increasing awareness of the need to produce, trade and export national products in a sustainable manner. Since the focus is on strong economic growth options investments are primarily made in modern land use practises (e.g. large scale organic production schemes, certified commercial logging, hydropower stations). Smallholders persist in rural poverty and partially migrate towards urban centres.
<b>“Basin Quarry”</b>	The Okavango basin is perceived as an economic and ecological entity. In order to promote regional economic growth, the countries preferentially exchange and market products made from their resources. Jointly developed land use plans assign respective zones for agricultural, pastoral, tourism and forestry use. Since the focus is on industrialization and marketization, natural resources are more and more exploited. Smallholders, too, are encouraged to intensify, mechanise and commercialize agricultural production.
<b>“Everyone is basin”</b>	As in 3, there is a strong cooperation between the basin countries and the basin is managed as an economic and ecological entity. A coordinated land use plan has been developed based on comparative ecological advantages; trade between the countries is encouraged. But notions of sustainability have fundamentally changed the values and lifestyles of society. Although markets are the main economic mechanism, social, cultural and environmental values are equally important. The countries mainly promote innovations strongly linked to small scale agricultural production.

For the basin scale as well as for the core site Mashare the respective storylines corresponding to the four scenarios have been completed. The storylines for the core sites Cusseque and Seronga are well advanced but have not been completed yet. One important additional result of the scenario building exercise is the description of the current state of the Okavango basin and the three core sites. All results will be documented in a Scenario Report which will be made available to the TFO community and our stakeholders.

## Inside TFO: News, communication & other information

*(Topics: New TFO members, new uploads or features in MyTFO, OBIS or website, information by PT/BMBF/GLUES)*

- TFO **online calendar** available on OBIS: Please be so kind to take the time to **always add all events, deadlines, field-trips, conference dates** etc. that are of relevance for the TFO community and make use of the calendar as much as possible. You will need an OBIS account to get access to the calendar which is accessible for TFO members only. You can register on the OBIS website, in case you don't have an account yet. Link to the calendar (link can also be found at the upper right corner on the TFO website):

<http://leutra.geogr.uni-jena.de/obis/metadata/login.php?url=%2Fobis%2Fmetadata%2Fcalendar.php>

- Please make use of the TFO webpages internal area called **MyTFO** which allows you to update your participant details, generate mailing lists and download internal documents such as reports, minutes, presentations etc. You will find the MyTFO link in the upper right corner. You

can receive your personal MyTFO - login from the TFO - webmaster at [webmaster@future-okavango.org](mailto:webmaster@future-okavango.org)

- All SPs and Institutions please spend a minute to **update your participant details on the TFO Webpage in the MyTFO area** (see above) so that we get a clear picture who is participating at this stage. Please also provide information on your function and thematic and regional expertise within TFO. If you identify colleagues of your SP who have left the project please send an email to the TFO - webmaster at [webmaster@future-okavango.org](mailto:webmaster@future-okavango.org)

## Outside TFO: Reports from stakeholders' activities

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*(Topics: Feedback from stakeholder meetings TFO attended, TFO members on stakeholder contacts, stakeholder activities....)*

## New Publications by us and/or others

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*(Topics: new publications by TFO members or other publication be of interest; interesting websites, data etc.)*

- Falk, T., Vollan, B., & Kirk, M. (2014): Tragedy of the commons. In: Morin, J.-F. and Orsini, A. (eds.); Essential Concepts of Global Environmental Governance, Abingdon: Routledge, 2014.
- Fynn, R.W.S, Chase, M. & Röder, A. (2014): Functional habitat heterogeneity and large-herbivore seasonal habitat selection in northern Botswana. South African Journal of Wildlife Research 44(1): 1-15.
- Wehberg, J., Weinzierl, T. & Conrad, O. (2014): The Core-Site Approach of "The Future Okavango - TFO. Zentralblatt für Geologie und Paläontologie; Teil I, 2014, Heft 1: 339-349 doi: 10.1127/zgpl/2014/0339-0349
- Kaye-Zwiebel, E. & King, E. (2014): Kenyan pastoralist societies in transition: varying perceptions of the value of ecosystem services. Ecology and Society 19(3): 17. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-06753-190317>
- Pröpfer, M. (2015): Emerging markets for nature and the challenges for the ecosystem service approach. Development and Change 46 (2) 247-268. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dech.12153/pdf>
- Reed, M.S., Stringer, L.C., Dougill, A.J., Perkins, J.S., Athlapheng, J.R., Mulale, K., Favretto, N. (2015): Reorienting land degradation towards sustainable land management: Linking sustainable livelihoods with ecosystem services in rangeland systems. Journal of Environmental Management 151: 472–485.
- Osman Kontle from the Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS), Botswana, submitted his Master thesis "**Collaborative Management of an Ecosystem: A case study of elephant-human interaction in the eastern part of the Okavango Delta, Botswana**" which completed his Master

Study 'Culture and Environment in Africa' at the University of Cologne, Cologne African Studies Centre:

The Okavango Delta has continued to be popular across the global sphere due to its rich ecosystem wildlife resource base, among them being elephants, which need to be conserved collectively by all stakeholders. The ecosystem is an interaction of all living organism in conjunction with their instantaneous environment within which they live. As a result, therefore, collaborative management (co-management) of an ecosystem strives for the advancement of mutually shared accountability amongst stakeholders aimed at conserving a given ecosystem. The top-down approach has continued to undermine the true intentions of the co-management of an ecosystem in elephant-human interaction. In order to combat this phenomenon this study, specifically was set to explore the implementation of co-management of an ecosystem in elephant-human interaction in the eastern part of the Okavango Delta panhandle, Seronga, Botswana.

This research therefore, evolved around one main research question as supported by four specific questions that correspond to the objectives through which four thematic areas were achieved. In order to contribute to the body of organised knowledge in co-management of an ecosystem in elephant-human interaction, I employed a qualitative approach, an emergent research design aimed at adjusting the methods, as well as encompassing a combination of data sources such as interviews, observations and relevant documents. In addition, to the aforementioned, I also employed snowball technique as a variant of purposive sampling for the selection of respondents or participants for this research. This research concludes that co-management of an ecosystem in elephant-human interaction is vital and there is a need to embrace adaptive management in a continuum.

- Felix Haupts submitted his Master thesis "**The Nature of Values and the Valuation of Nature: Mapping Sociocultural Dimensions of Environmental Values in the Okavango Delta, Botswana**" in March 2014 at the University of Hamburg Germany. The thesis is supported by and contributes to the TFO subproject 06. Supervisor is Professor Michael Schnegg and co-supervisor Dr. Michael Pröpper:

The study investigates the question: What is the value of natural resources and nature as a whole for the habitants of a rural village in the Okavango delta? The work is based on empiric data that was raised during various field-studies (about five month) in the village of Seronga. While part of the work aims at presenting the results of the ethnographic study in a comprehensive form (maps, graphs, ethnographic description), part of the thesis was dedicated to a critical revision of the approach of ecosystem service assessment. The thesis points out that an approach that tries to translate values and value scales from the local context into a global scale can be contra-productive when it comes to sustainability. Interaction with and cultural adaptation to the local environment are often overlooked in the equation. In order to establish a framework for environmental valuation the thesis deploys David Graebers contribution to understanding values in their sociocultural context. The results of the fieldwork are presented as a description of different spheres of valuation that matter on the local level but are also linked to larger processes and values on a national and global scale.

*All TFO participants who have completed MA, BA, PhD theses or other publications, please contact us if you would like to use the opportunity to have your work advertised here and please use the opportunity to contribute your work to the TFO publication-database on our webpage.*

## News from the Okavango region

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*(Topics: new policies, happenings etc. relevant for resource management in the Okavango Basin)*

## Anything else...

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*(Here we offer space for all other information, which might be of interest for the TFO community)*

**\*\*\* Do you have any information for the TFO-community? \*\*\***

**Upcoming events, new SP-members, publications, research results, news from the basin or interesting events to share – please let us know:**

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