

(Newsletter of the project The Future Okavango, covering the period August and September 2014)

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

- The 7th Biennial Conference of the International Biogeography Society (ibs) will be held in Bayreuth, Germany, from January 8th to 12th, 2015.

Eleven plenary symposia covering a variety of topics related to biogeography, paleoecology and climate change will feature three or four invited speakers each and one to three speakers selected from the regular contributed papers. There will also be poster sessions and sessions with contributed talks focused on the same themes, as well as on a wide range of other subjects in biogeography.

The final abstract submission deadline will be October 10th, 2014. For further details please visit the conference website (<http://www.bayceer.uni-bayreuth.de/ibs2015/>).

- From January 27th to 29th, 2015 a GLUES workshop will be held in Leipzig, Germany. Key focus is on WOCAT methods and tools, an internationally recognized knowledge management system that facilitates standardized documentation and sharing of praxis-oriented results in the field of sustainable land management. Final aim will be to develop a joint WOCAT book or video with contributions from all projects funded within the BMBF program “Sustainable Land Management – Module A”. Invited are 2 to 3 representatives from each regional project who can make concrete contributions and have praxis-oriented results for the implementation of sustainable land management. During the workshop the WOCAT methods and tools will be introduced and possible applications in the projects will be elaborated in group work. TFO members working on Conservation Agriculture and related topics who are interested in participation please contact Alexander Gröngröft.
- The presentation of TFO’s final findings and products is envisaged for July 2015. During this “road show” within the three countries policy makers as well as local stakeholders will be addressed. Further information will follow.

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

Inside TFO: What has been done recently?

- The German project manager (PT-DLR) together with the funding agency, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), invited all twelve projects funded within Module A of the ‘Sustainable Land Management’ funding measure (“Interactions between Land

Management, Climate Change and Ecosystem Services”) to a “Mid-Term Seminar and 3rd Advisory Board Meeting” on October 6-8, 2014 in Bonn, Germany. To prepare our project’s presentation, representatives of the TFO-subprojects met in Hamburg on September 2, 2014. In addition, the project manager asked all projects to give an outlook on the project’s implementation phase and the final products envisaged, scientific reports/publications as well as stakeholder products. The final presentation will be sent to the TFO community in October.

- The 8th scenario workshop took place from September 2-3, 2014 in Hamburg. Members of the scenario task force met to revisit the four preliminary storylines developed for the Okavango basin. Comments received concerning the description of different states of the variables, the assignment of the respective state descriptions to the different storylines as well as the relevance of the storylines for policy makers and other stakeholders were discussed in the plenum. In subsequent work groups we started to “translate” the preliminary storylines from the Okavango basin- to the core site-level. A report on the results of the scenario development process will be sent to the members of the scenario task force.



Impression from the Scenario Workshop in Hamburg, September 2-3, 2014 (© TFO / S. Stirn)

Inside TFO: News, communication & other information

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

- Starting with this issue of the TFO newsletter, we will additionally send a Portuguese version.
- All prior **TFO newsletters** as well as the updated **TFO Flyers** "Scientific Support for Sustainable Land and Resource Management in the Okavango Basin" are now available in the download section of the TFO website. There, you will also find the flyer on "The Okavango Basin Information System (OBIS) Information and Knowledge Management for the Okavango Basin"

which was distributed during the TFO workshop in Rundu in February this year (http://www.future-okavango.org/downloads_tfo.php).

- 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
- 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

Outside TFO: Reports from stakeholders' activities

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

- The third training workshop for para-ecologists of the Future Okavango project took place in Mashare, Rundu / Namibia from July 28th to August 8th 2014. The main topic of this training was how to share scientific results of the Future Okavango Project with local stakeholders.



Vilho Snake Mtuleni (Namibia), Bettina Koelle (South Africa), Meshack Kwamovo (Botswana), Ute Schmiedel (Germany), Miguel Hilario (Angola), Robert Mukuya (Namibia).

New Publications by us and/or others

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

- Murray-Hudson, M., Wolski, P., Cassidy, L., Brown, M. T., Thito, K., Kashe, K., & Mosimanyana, E (2014). Remote Sensing-derived hydroperiod as a predictor of floodplain vegetation composition. *Wetland Ecology and Management*, 1-14. DOI: 10.1007/s11273-014-9340-z
- Dr. rer. nat. Ben Strohbach defended his PhD-thesis **“Vegetation Survey of Namibia: Conceptualisation and implementation of a nation-wide vegetation survey serving practical land management needs”** on September 1st, 2014 in the Biocentre Klein-Flottbek in Hamburg. Congratulations to Ben!
- Keoikantse Sianga finalized his Master thesis on **“Habitat use by buffalo and zebra in relation to spatial and temporal variability of resources in the Savuti-Mababe-Linyanti ecosystem of northern Botswana”**.

Herbivores across the globe exhibit seasonal movement patterns and habitat use in response to changing water availability forage dynamics and predation risk. Herbivores demand for energy, proteins and minerals increase during the wet season due to the development of fetuses in pregnant females, for lactation and development of body stores before the arrival of the dry season. Large herbivores are adapted to move to their functional wet season habitats as a strategy to maximize the intake of energy, protein and minerals in forage, and where water is available and risk of predation is low. However, when forage quality and quantity and water availability declines in their wet season habitats during the dry season, herbivores are forced to move to their functional dry season habitats where green forage and permanent water is available. The Savuti-Mababe-Linyanti ecosystem (SML) in northern Botswana remains one of the few unfragmented ecosystems in Africa and it supports a variety of wildlife populations such as elephants, buffalo, zebra and others. Plains zebra *Equus burchelli* and African buffalo *Syncerus caffer* in the SML ecosystem favour distinctive habitats seasonally. Detailed movement patterns of zebra and buffalo, their migratory corridors and drivers for the migration will identify habitats within the SML ecosystem which need to be conserved for wildlife and not be allocated to human settlements or agriculture. A two-year study was carried out in the SML ecosystem northern Botswana to investigate movement patterns of zebra and buffalo.

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

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

Anything else...

(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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