



A COLLECTIVE APPROACH TO MAXIMIZING IMPACT

NAMIBIAN CHAMBER OF ENVIRONMENT

The Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE) was created as a result of B2Gold rallying the environmental organizations active in Namibia to join forces and establish an effective collective to increase their impact. The NCE's objectives are to conserve the natural environment, protect indigenous biodiversity and endangered species, promote best environmental practices (including habitat rehabilitation), and to support efforts to prevent and reduce environmental degradation and pollution.

Since its establishment in April 2016, the NCE has secured the membership of almost all (currently 62) Namibian-based environmental and conservation NGOs – who now regard the Chamber as a vital part of the environmental and conservation network in Namibia. It is a source of project funding, advice and guidance to both government, NGOs and the private sectors, and it holds an extensive repository of Namibian environmental knowledge through its national database.

SOME OF THE NCE PROGRAM AREAS INCLUDE:

- » **Environmental policy research** – coordination of a policy research forum to identify and prioritize research;
- » **Training and mentorship** – establishment of an internship and bursary program;
- » **National facilitation** – organization of conferences, symposia and workshops on topical environmental issues and research themes;
- » **Awareness** – engaging regularly with government on development priorities;
- » **Fund raising** – to support research and field work; and
- » **Environmental information** – building and managing Namibia's Environmental Information Service (www.the-eis.com).

B2Gold Namibia's CSR department has been operating since 2012 with environmental conservation as one of its focal areas. Other companies operating in Namibia were also investing in environmental conservation programs – in addition to the various NGO and government agencies. It became evident that a greater impact could be realized if these companies and organizations could collaborate and align their CSR programs for greater impact. The NCE was identified as the body to achieve this collaboration.

B2Gold encouraged other private sector entities – including the Namibian mining sector – to join the coalition of companies which now form part of the NCE membership. Together, they have devised a mechanism for jointly funding environment, conservation and community support initiatives.

Projects not only address biodiversity, but also consider sustainable development for people and their livelihoods – in particular when interacting with land, air, water, or wildlife.

B2Gold in Namibia has used its leverage to rally environmental organizations and industry to collaborate on environmental and social initiatives. Together their impact is having a multiplier effect.

SOME EXAMPLE PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH THIS COLLABORATIVE APPROACH INCLUDE:

LOW-INCOME HOUSING IN URBAN AREAS:

In collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Mines and Energy, the mining industry members of NCE are investing in two social development projects in non-mining areas: the provision of semi-serviced plots for the urban poor, and the electrification of a village in a remote conservancy.

WILDLIFE AND ANTI-POACHING:

The NCE has three ongoing projects for the protection of lion, leopard and cheetah, and has coordinated several anti-poaching initiatives ranging from rhino and pangolin protection to creating awareness of illegal logging.

PLASTICS CAMPAIGN:

The NCE is working with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for better management of plastic use and waste.

PROTECTION OF PILCHARD FISH STOCKS:

Pilchards, like sardines, are a keystone species and provide a foundation for much of the marine species pyramid. For many years they have been overfished which, in turn, has threatened other marine species. The NCE is working with the government to implement a three-year ban on pilchard fishing, initiated in 2018.

AIR SUPPORT:

A local aviation company (WestAir) has donated an aircraft, with maintenance support, to the NCE. It enables environmental organizations to carry out initiatives in remote regions of Namibia, such as coastal surveys, anti-poaching work, wetlands surveys, and carnivore tracking.