

NYAE NYAE FARMERS' ORGANISATION

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NEWS RELEASE

NYAE NYAE CONSERVANCY SIGNS N\$170 000 DEAL

BARAKA: MEMBERS OF the newly established Nyae Nyae Conservancy today (Wednesday, March 18, 1998) became the first Namibians to benefit from the Communal Area Conservancy Programme.

An agreement totalling N\$170 000 was signed at Baraka, eastern Otjozondjupa Region between the newly-formed conservancy and the la Rochelle Hunting and Guest Farm. This amount will be paid in two instalments of US\$17850 over two years. A range of additional benefits have also been agreed upon between the two groups. This means that the total package could be valued at N\$340 000.

Negotiations started at the end of last year and were concluded last month. The contract was drawn up in conjunction with Windhoek's Legal Assistance Centre.

The Nyae Nyae Conservancy was formally declared in the Government Gazette of February 16, 1998. The conservancy immediately applied for a quota of animals to be allocated for trophy hunting use.

The quota was originally destined to be auctioned by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) last year. However, at the request of the Conservancy Committee the MET agreed not to auction the quota. Conservancy members and the committee instead decided to attract a suitable business partner with whom long-term options and a range of other benefits would be possible.

Under the agreement, La Rochelle have been allocated a quota of 10 animals, being two elephants, two leopards, two kudu, two oryx and two spotted hyaena. The agreement also allows la Rochelle to occupy a former hunting camp at Klein Dobe about 20 km north of Tsumkwe.

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In return, la Rochelle will restock the area with oryx and red hartebeest valued at N\$160 000. Other benefits include training and employment opportunities for Ju/'hoansi people, while meat from animal carcasses will be distributed among conservancy members. The camp will be used for general (non-hunting) tourism.

The people of Nyae Nyae, through a series of meetings, have decided to share most of the money between the 30 villages within the conservancy. Each village will decide how to spend their share of the revenue.

A portion of the funds will be allocated to the Conservancy Committee for borehole maintenance, payment of community rangers and other staff and for daily running costs.

The Nyae Nyae Conservancy measures about 9 000 km² and consists of about 2000 Ju/'hoansi people. Community rangers were first employed in 1994. The cornerstone for the conservancy was laid in 1994 with the launch of a Natural Resource Management Project with the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative.

In 1996, legislation was passed allowing for the formation of communal area conservancies within Namibia. Under this plan, communal area residents can come together to form a land unit called a conservancy. Members practice normal farming activities, in conjunction with conservation activities.

Legislation states that conservancies must have a democratically elected conservancy committee, a constitution, boundaries which have been agreed upon with neighbouring communities and clearly defined membership. Members must agree on an equitable way in which funds are to be distributed.

Conservancies aim at conserving local environments and encouraging sustainable rural development. Funds generated by natural resources and spin-off activities such as tourism can be used for community programmes and development by the conservancy members.

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