1. Background

In order to improve its overall performance, effectiveness and service provision, the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) has developed a Strategic Plan (2007/08-2011/12) which describes the Ministry’s strategic objectives and how it is going to translate its strategy into actions.

The situation analysis performed during the participatory planning process gave rise to nine Strategic Themes defining the Ministry’s priority areas. “Policy, Planning, Knowledge Management and Communication” (Theme 6) was identified as an important foundation for the institution and as an area where a great deal of improvement needs to be made.

An efficient and effective exchange of data, information and knowledge will improve the Ministry's efficiency and service provision, and should facilitate organisational innovation and learning. Time and money can be saved if staff have quick access to information, communicate and report efficiently, can quickly familiarize themselves with work routines and learn from good and bad experience. Improved knowledge management within the Ministry is also an important measure for safeguarding capacity that may be undermined through the impacts of the HIV/Aids pandemic (due increased rates of death, compassionate or sick leave etc.).

The following knowledge management objectives are outlined in the Strategic Plan:

*Internal knowledge management*
- Provide integrated specialist planning support to park managers, conservancies and client-stakeholders as required (e.g. management plans, monitoring, quota setting and decision-making tools for parks and conservancies)
- Collect, manage, share and add value to information through strategic analysis and “packaging” and a centralized knowledge management system (e.g. GIS centre, economic research and analysis, optimal use of research centres EERI and GTRC)
- Use data and information for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and reporting (regularly collect, analyse and report on the achievement of Ministry targets and impacts)
- Communicate data and information to MET management (e.g. periodic reporting to senior management, use of ICT for internal communication, publications on relevant activities)

*External communication*
- Promote MET and the sector through a co-coordinated publicity programme (e.g. update and improvement of website, publications, establishment of a media desk)
- Conduct and promote environmental education, extension, and awareness programs in partnership with other Ministries and organizations (e.g. disseminate public awareness materials; upgrade of environmental education centres and MET resource centre).
The fact that MET has 72 regional offices based in the 13 MET geographical regions, and is entrusted to manage 14 percent of the land surface and takes the lead for the CBNRM programme which covers 50 registered conservancies, poses a particular challenge to knowledge management. A system for improved knowledge management in the area of Parks and Wildlife Management should consider, for instance, the establishment of a national database on Protected Areas (PAs), improved use of the ConInfo system, or other existing databases. It should foster active networking between protected areas (e.g. starting with the SPAN Project’s four field demonstration sites), regional offices and head quarters, in order to exchange personal experiences and best practices in the area of PA management and Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM).

Additionally, the Country Pilot Partnership (CPP) programme in collaboration with MET has been deliberating on various strategies to revitalize and strengthen Environmental Monitoring and Indicators Network (EMIN). At the March 2010 EMIN consultative meeting, a resolution was taken for a thorough scoping of the work, content and information products of existing environmental and related initiatives which have either been sustained or developed in the meantime. The ultimate product was a situational analysis and a comprehensive strategy for an integrated environmental management system for environmental monitoring and reporting process. This report highlighted the uncoordinated spatial data collection and production; and scattered responsibilities for environmental information across various organizations making the process of environmental assessment, monitoring and reporting difficult.

However, there are a number of initiatives around components of environmental and broader developmental information systems. Some are in existence, some under development and some in the idea stage. One such partnership exists between the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) and NamPower, which is developing a national web-based Environmental Information System (EIS). This system is now well advanced and came online recently. This initiative is collaborating closely with a number of organizations with biological databases, and aims to place as much readily accessible environmental information as possible in the public domain. The initiative also plans to liaise with potential users and provide orientation and training to maximize the use and value of the information.

The MET is seeking the services of a consultant to support the development of a comprehensive Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan; and cost effective mechanism to operationalize, integrate and improve dissemination, accessibility and use of existing relevant biodiversity information to local, regional and central policy decision makers.. It should build on the past experiences of the MET (incl. the IT networking project) and the work of the EMIN within the Directorate of Environmental Affairs. This consultancy should also link to the independent and concurrent consultancy aimed revising the national set ecosystem status and socio-economic indicators as guided by NCEI developed through EMIN in 2003 to inform landscape and site level indicators for PAN and an ISoER for the coastal and marine ecosystem.

2. Objectives

The objective of the consultancy is to develop a comprehensive Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan and a pilot web-based information sharing and dissemination system which enables the MET to operationalize the knowledge management objectives set in its 5-years Strategic Plan (2007/08-2011/12).

By improving its knowledge management the MET wants to achieve the following objectives:
- Improved reporting on the achievement of Ministry targets and impacts (NDP3 / Strategic Plan / other relevant plans and targets)
- Provision of readily accessible information, including biodiversity information developed under EMIN to support planning, decision-making and management
- Capturing of lessons learned, experiences and best practices for an improved institutional memory and organisational learning
- Increased efficiency and individual learning through improved internal communication and access to information.
- Stronger publicity and visibility of MET’s achievements and services for external stakeholders.
- Create stronger links with development and conservation partners to capture and enhance synergies to strengthen knowledge management within the sector.

3. Specific Tasks

For completion of this assignment, the following steps are envisaged:

1. Inception meeting with the MET’s Knowledge Management Committee to agree on the scope, approach and timeframe for the consultancy as well as present the contents page (1).
2. Review of MET’s past experiences and current approaches to knowledge and information management (data collection and information management; data analysis and research; databases / registers; libraries; communication and reporting; forms and policies; website and IT network; opportunities and instruments for exchange of information and experiences / skills) (2)
3. Conduct a participative institutional audit and needs assessment, including overview of overlapping ongoing activities. Identify responsible MET staff involved in various aspects of knowledge management (data collection and analysis, information management, M&E, different types of reporting, organisation of knowledge exchange, PR and media work, etc.) (5)
4. Conduct a needs analysis with MET staff of all Directorates and projects (headquarter and selected regional offices, including EERI and GTRC) and identify priorities for an improved knowledge management framework (10):
   - What type of information is needed for progress and impact monitoring as well as planning, decision-making and management?
   - Should some of the knowledge content to be centralised in one database (e.g. ConInfo, incident books, aerial surveys, translocation surveys, Image library, forms, policies, procedures, contact lists and staff profiles)?
   - How can reporting on the achievement of Ministry targets and impacts be improved (M&E of Strategic Plan / NDP3 targets)?
   - How can lessons learnt, experiences and best practices be captured for an improved institutional memory and organisational learning?
   - How can internal communication and individual learning be improved (e.g. IT-based discussion to support park management, ParkNet)?
   - How to improve PR, publicity and external communication?
5. Develop a comprehensive, feasible and cost-effective knowledge management strategy for MET, taking into consideration (3):
   - compatibility with MET IT network and user-friendly IT platform for stakeholders
   - accessibility for staff in regional offices
use of the latest technologies such as e-mail, blogs and intranet while also taking note of traditional and paper-based systems, social networking sites and regulatory measures thereof.

- access of information and knowledge for external stakeholders
- training requirements for MET “knowledge managers”
- web-based and physical exchanges of experiences and lessons learned
- strategies for pilot areas
- Synergies with development partners (e.g. Country Pilot Partnership for Sustainable Land Management, CBNRM programme etc.)

6. Following on from the coastal and marine NCEIs, PAN indicators network and ISoER and State of Parks Report developed in a concurrent consultancy: Identify the best and most practical web-based Information Tool or Output Mechanism/Facility that will assimilate, integrate, improve accessibility and use of this information, including biodiversity themes to local, regional and central policy decision makers. This information tool should be cost-effective, efficient, user-friendly, easily maintained & updated. Concomitantly, this information tool should serve as a meta-database facility for archiving and curation and data-collection sharing: This tool should therefore consider: (30)

- Hosting and dissemination of the NCEI's and ISoER;
- Assess the possibility of augmenting the existing NNF/NAMPOWER initiative and the Atlas web server or the online accessible meta-database;
- Confirm the possible comparative advantages provided by MET (DEA and DASS) for being the host institution and coordinating agency for integrated environment monitoring and reporting through EMIN and its subsidiary thematic working groups

7. Develop an implementation plan, proposed budget for phase 2 for establishing the improved knowledge management framework (1).

8. Present the draft knowledge management strategy and pilot web-based information sharing and dissemination tool to the Steering Committee (0.5)

9. Present the draft knowledge management strategy and pilot web-based information sharing and dissemination tool to MET management (0.5)

10. Integrate comments from SC and management (1)

11. Present Final Draft to the Committee (0.5)

55 days are envisaged for this consultancy

- Possibility of consultant using a CPP vehicle for the field trip and travelling with CPP staff member

4. Deliverables

- Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan with prioritized actions and milestones;
- Pilot web-based information sharing and dissemination tool or output mechanism/facility with different interfaces;
- Power Point presentation on the findings and knowledge management approach; and demonstration of the pilot web-based information sharing/dissemination or knowledge management system
5. **Skills needed**

A range of skills will be needed from the people working on this project including:

- At least five years of relevant professional experience
- Proven experience in production of viable knowledge management strategies
- Demonstrable experiences in developing electronic database and extensive knowledge and experiences with web-based database applications are also essential for this assignment. Familiarity with natural resource management in Namibia and park management issues is required.
- Excellent interview and research skills
- Preferably some knowledge/work experience in the field of parks and wildlife management, conservation and other MET fields
- Project management experience

6. **Supervision, Time Frame, Reporting**

The consultant will work under the supervision of MET’s Knowledge Management Committee. Final approval of the Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan will rest with the MET Management. The strategy should be produced before or on Friday, 7th October, 2011.