

**CASH FROM CONSERVATION  
TORRA COMMUNITY TASTES THE BENEFITS:  
A SHORT SURVEY AND REVIEW OF THE TORRA  
CONSERVANCY CASH PAYOUT TO  
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

**October 2003**

Wildlife Integration for Livelihood Diversification (WILD) Project  
Working Paper 15

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The WILD Project team would firstly like to thank the Torra Conservancy Committee members for their cooperation and willingness to talk to us. Our sincere thanks to all the community respondents who gave up their valuable time to participate in the questionnaire survey; the staff of IRDNC at Wereldsend, in particular Anton Esterhuizen, Garth Owen Smith and Margie Jacobsohn, for the hospitality during our three-week stay there; Gerhardus Jansen, Petrus Meituere, and Albert Goases, who carried out the questionnaire survey; and Vincent Mwilima, a student from the Polytechnic of Namibia, who assisted in the data analysis.

*Research for this working paper was conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism's WILD Project and funded by the UK Government's Department of International Development (DFID).*

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**Acronyms**

CBNRM	Community-based Natural Resource Management
WSN	Wilderness Safaris Namibia
IRDNC	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation
WILD	Wildlife Integration for Livelihood Diversification Project
TCC	Torra Conservancy Committee
BDP	Benefit Distribution plan
CP	cash payout

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Between January and October 2003, Torra Conservancy implemented the ongoing process of distributing N\$ 630 to each of its registered members. Torra Conservancy Committee (TCC) allocated N\$ 200,000 in total for the cash payout to individual registered members. The WILD Project in conjunction with the TCC and community members conducted a short questionnaire survey (67 respondents) and held a number of interviews with TCC, NGOs, MET and community members to review the payout. The research documents the experiences from the payout and provides options to support future payouts.*

*Torra is a premier conservancy that is financially self-sustaining. It has generated considerable income (approximately N\$ 1.2-1.5 million) from its joint venture with Wilderness Safaris at Damaraland Camp, trophy hunting and live game sales. The payout to individual registered members is a clear demonstration of the potential of the conservancy and CBNRM programme to make tangible livelihood benefits available to communal-area residents and stands as an example for other conservancies to follow.*

*The majority of respondents were pleased with the payout and receipt of cash income. However, 97% of respondents were unaware of how the conservancy generated its income and 85% were unaware of how the money was spent, which indicates a shortfall in terms of disseminating information, especially financial, to conservancy members. This limits the ability of members to make the link between income generated and wildlife conservation and tourism, and their awareness of alternative (i.e. financial) values for wildlife. The conservancy should disseminate more information, especially financial information, to its members to increase transparency, instil ownership, pride and awareness of income-generating activities and alternative wildlife values. Monitoring needs to be conducted into how receiving distributed cash acts as an incentive for living with wildlife.*

*The community was not consulted in the decision-making process for the payout, not involved in setting the total amount for distribution, nor the amount allocated for individual members. The primary rationale for the payout was a response to community pressure to 'taste' the cash. The community was not consulted as to who (e.g. members versus non-members, or individuals versus households) should receive the payout or on the criteria used to confirm eligibility for receipt of the payout. There was minimal community involvement in setting the criteria and 'rules' for the process of the payment. In future, full community involvement should be incorporated to ensure transparency and accountability for decision-making over payouts. This could be achieved through publications, the radio, holding meetings on specific issues, and by conducting farm visits and action-orientated research.*

*The payout was a positive step in Torra's development and demonstrates the potential for conservancies to generate and distribute tangible and meaningful livelihood benefits to its members. However, key challenges remain for supporting inclusive decision-making, developing simple processes for monitoring and evaluating payouts, and promoting good governance. Most important is to understand and document the extent to which the payout was not a 'quick fix' to resolve community tensions, but the development of a foundation for supporting the long-term livelihood and conservation needs of Torra Conservancy residents.*

**Summary of key issues and options**

1. *Payout and timing of payout was positive for supporting livelihoods. Most money was spent on school fees and household needs. Support future payouts at critical times of household need.*
2. *There was minimal community participation in decision-making for setting the total cash amount to be used, amount to individuals, eligibility and criteria for individuals to receive payouts. Develop and support processes for involving community in participatory decision-making for payouts.*
3. *No clear community-decided criteria for eligibility of receipt of payouts. Undertake community consultation to develop and set community criteria for payment to individuals versus households, registered versus non-registered members, and residents versus non-residents (even if members).*
4. *Lack of information flow to community members, especially around income generation and expenditure. Increase flow of financial information to community.*
5. *Unclear to what extent cash payouts act as an incentive for improved wildlife and conservation management. Develop processes to support conservancies to monitor attitudinal change towards the conservancy programme and conservation initiatives.*
6. *Lack of clarity regarding the long-term trade-offs of the payout versus other investments. Document the extent to which cash payments to individual members are the best long-term use of conservancy money. Support conservancies in scenario financial planning to review multiple options for utilisation of conservancy revenue in order to generate long-term positive livelihood impacts and support for the conservancy initiative.*
7. *Unclear how frequently (yearly or five-yearly?) the conservancy can support payouts. Unclear how processes for developing benefit cash payouts are incorporated into conservancy activities. Support conservancies in process of financial forecasting to review sustainability and frequency of cash payouts and for targeting at other peak times of community need, e.g. drought and outbreaks of livestock disease. Support process for incorporating payouts into planned conservancy activities.*
8. *Current lack of systematic processes for conducting payouts. Support processes for future payouts with development of simple guidelines on processes for achieving payouts and record keeping.*
9. *Lack of community involvement and decision-making caused conflicts and lack of transparency and accountability by conservancy. Promotion of good governance approach to include transparency, accountability and participation in decision-making.*
10. *Process of cash payouts proves positive livelihoods impacts and is a step towards increasing community engagement with CBNRM programme. Continued CBNRM programme support to document and implement cash payouts to communities based on community criteria and priorities.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report reviews issues arising from the cash payout made by Torra Conservancy committee to its individual registered members between January 2003 and 14<sup>th</sup> October 2003 (Torra Conservancy staff, *pers. comm.*). The research is part of an iterative and ongoing research process conducted by the WILD Project Kunene team to document the livelihood impacts and options of the CBNRM programme, in particular with reference to the impacts of the cash payout.

The Wildlife in Livelihoods Diversification (WILD) Project is a Department for International Development (DFID) funded applied livelihoods research project for Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). Its purpose is to "*provide research findings, based on good data, in order to strengthen decision-making about Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) at all levels*". This report explores and documents the key CBNRM and community/conservancy-related issues surrounding Torra's cash payout, in order to assist improved decision-making for Torra Conservancy and all other organisations and individuals in the Namibian CBNRM programme.

Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in Namibia has a strong economic rationale. Like most other community-oriented approaches to resource management it is based on a number of premises. The primary belief is that if local people participate in resource management and benefit economically from this participation then a win-win situation will arise, whereby wildlife is conserved while at the same time community welfare improves (Jones, B. 2003; Hulme and Murphree 2001). Thus providing communities with returns from cash incomes earned directly or indirectly from natural resources (NRs) in their area is an integral part of CBNRM. In addition, it can provide cash income directly to the households and more importantly at the individual level, that then allows people the freedom to choose how they utilise their benefits.

Four Namibian conservancies have implemented cash payouts as part of a process of benefit distribution to local communities. These are Nyae Nyae, Marienflüss, Salambala, and more recently Torra Conservancy. Torra paid out N\$ 630 cash directly to individual registered conservancy members, and not to households, Village Development Committees or other community organisations. Apart from the cash payout Torra Conservancy has also given gifts to pensioners, e.g. blankets and shoes; donated N\$ 20,000 to the Bergsig Primary school; and donated N\$ 10 000 towards the building of a community kindergarten (TCC, *pers. comm.*). This report, however, focuses exclusively on the cash payout and not on previous benefit distribution activities.

## 2. BACKGROUND TO TORRA CONSERVANCY

Torra was one of the first four communal-area conservancies to be registered in Namibia in 1998. It is situated in the Khorixas Constituency Ward 12 of Kunene Region in north-west Namibia. Bergsig Village is regarded as the main centre in Torra. The conservancy has an estimated 450 members (TCC, *pers. comm.* March 2003). Ethnic groups in the conservancy include Damaras and Riemvasmakers relocated to the area in the early 1970s after they were forcibly removed from their original area by the South African apartheid government. There

are also several Herero and Wambo families in the area. Most people derive their livelihoods from small stock (goats and sheep), cattle, and small-scale vegetable gardens.

Torra Conservancy is heralded as one of the top communal-area conservancies in Namibia, in terms of income generation and sustainability, and conservancy development. It was the first conservancy to gain autonomy over its running costs covering salaries, fuel for the vehicles and other daily expenses. The conservancy is well supported by the Integrated Rural Development for Nature Conservation (IRDNC) NGO. The conservancy derives most of its income from a lucrative joint venture (JV) with the Damaraland Camp run by Wilderness Safaris Namibia (WSN). Trophy hunting sales to professional hunters is the second income earner for the conservancy and live game sales third. Bank interests are also considered a valuable cash income for the conservancy. Prior to the cash payout Torra's revenue stood at just over N\$ 1.2 million (TCC, *pers. com.*) In 1997, there was a mobile registration process during which the majority of members joined Torra Conservancy, and after that registration was conducted by people coming to visit the office. Current membership stands at 450 and increased rapidly during the period after the cash payout (TCC, *pers. comm.*).

### 3. BACKGROUND TO TORRA CONSERVANCY CASH PAYOUT

Early January 2003, Torra Conservancy started paying out cash of N\$ 630 to individual registered members. The payout continued until October 2003 with eligible members able to request their cash payment up until that date (*The Namibian* newspaper and TCC, *pers. comm.*).

In discussion with the TCC, it was stated that the primary rationale for the payout had been in response to the community demanding to “*taste the benefits of the money before they pass away*” and “*people wanted to feel the money*” (TCC members, *pers. comm.*). A WILD review of previous conservancy planning activities and processes specific to the cash payout – including Quarterly Work Plan Oct-Jan 03, Visioning Document and the Benefit Distribution Plan (BDP) and discussions with the TCC, did not indicate any planned cash payout activities. From discussion with service providers and the TCC it appears that the payout was primarily in response to fierce community pressure to receive cash benefits, especially when some community individuals became aware that Torra had N\$ 1.2-1.5 million in its bank account. Community pressure was causing rifts within the conservancy community and was said to be threatening the stability of the conservancy's foundation (TCC member, *pers. comm.*). A cash payout was seen by the TCC as a good way of meeting members' demands and reducing conflict, whilst also securing the stability of the current committee members' term in office and providing direct benefits to its members. In addition, Linda Baker and other IRDNC staff supported the TCC in the process of decision-making. MET was not consulted in the process of decision-making about the payout or the payment process.

The TCC decided that January was the best time for a cash payout since that is when people need to pay school fees and there is general shortage of household funds after Christmas expenditure. The committee decided that anyone registered before the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2002 was eligible for the cash payout and it would be paid out to individual registered members. Upon receiving the payout members also received an informative news brief highlighting key achievements and issues concerning the conservancy. The payout sum of N\$ 630 was decided

upon by dividing the amount N\$ 200,000 by the total number of existing registered members (TCC, *pers. comm.*).

N\$ 630 to an individual member is a substantial amount of money in relation to other income sources. It represents more than the average cumulative individual income per annum in Kunene – N\$ 4500, which translates to N\$ 375 per month (WILD/EEU livelihoods survey<sup>1</sup>). Thus the payout represents almost twice the monthly income of the average individual in Kunene. In Torra, the average annual income (for income-earning individuals over 16 years: in Torra N 151 persons) for 70% of the WILD/EEU total sample (of those earning income) was less than N\$ 5000 per annum – N\$ 416 per month. In addition, 38% (WILD/EEU) of individual household members over 16 stated they earned no income. 99% of households had at least one member contributing cash income, but only 5% of households received cash from three or members. Therefore, in local livelihood-financial terms, the payment of cash direct to individual members represents a significant contribution to the short-term support of local household livelihoods. The significance of this contribution to livelihood security and welfare is also determined by the expenditure of the income, e.g. on school fees versus alcohol (see Section 6.3 below on uses of cash payout).

#### **4. WILD PROJECT PROCESS FOR REVIEW OF BENEFIT CASH PAYOUT**

A total of 67 structured questionnaires (see Appendix 1) were implemented over the whole of the Torra Conservancy, covering 12 main areas detailed in Table 1 below. This represents 15% of the 450 individual registered members. Of the respondents, 26 were male and 41 female. This gender bias in the sample size reflects the difficulty in finding males to question, since they were out in the veld or were away from home seeking work. Only one of the survey respondents was a non-member with all the others claiming to be members, although eight had been refused the cash payout, as they were deemed ineligible by TCC. The sample was not fully randomised, but relied on the availability of respondents at various places. However, interviews were conducted at different posts and homesteads all over the conservancy to gain a good geographic spread. The survey tried to interview household heads where available. Of the sample size, four were conservancy staff or committee members. Permission was sought from the TCC, the Traditional Authority and discussed with staff of IRDNC. The survey aimed to cover the majority of Torra's geographic area and to include the diversity of different community individuals, including people from all socio-economic and ethnic groups with different livelihood strategies, e.g those on remote farms and those in urban areas such as Bergsig.

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<sup>1</sup> See the WILD/EEU survey for more comprehensive data on the different income groups and income sources and amounts for individual and households.

**Table 1: Number of respondents at each location where interviews were conducted**

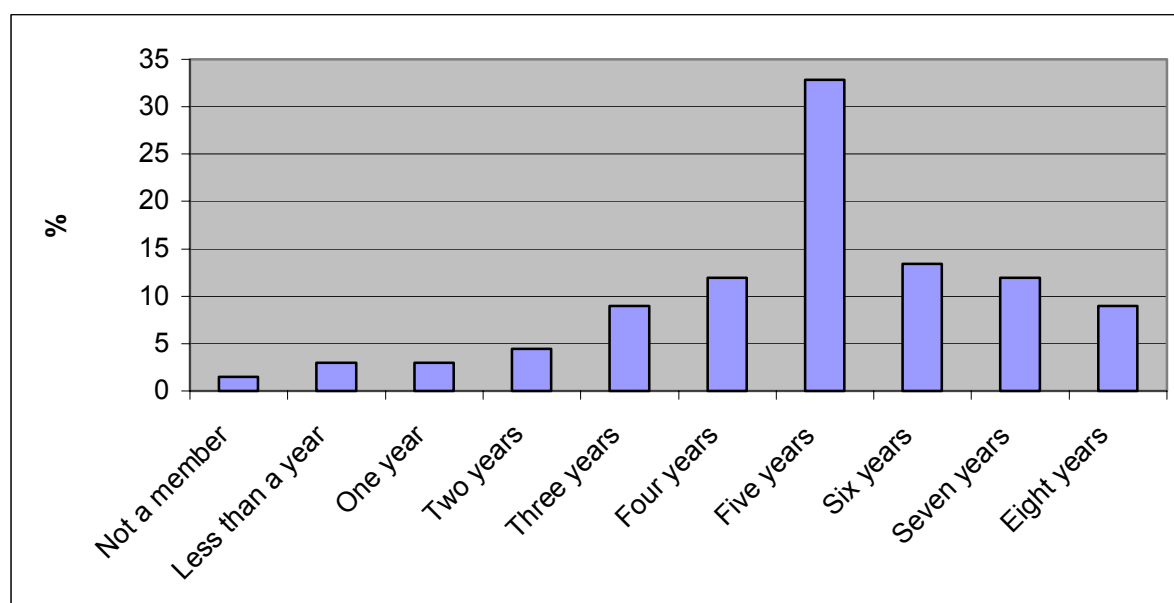
Name of post	Number of people interviewed
Bergsig	23
Damaraland Camp	5
Fonteine pos	5
Middle Post	3
Omusema	2
Otjihavara	3
Palm	5
Palm Cross	1
Palm Post	4
Spaarwater	3
Vrede	12
Witvlei	1
<b>Total no. of interviewees</b>	<b>67</b>

A number of additional follow-up interviews were held with the TCC, regional MET, NGO staff and community members. Secondary data was reviewed, including TCC work and visioning plans and a newspaper article on the payout (see References below).

## 5. BACKGROUND TO SURVEY RESPONDENTS

The following bar graph illustrates the length of the conservancy membership of respondents in years.

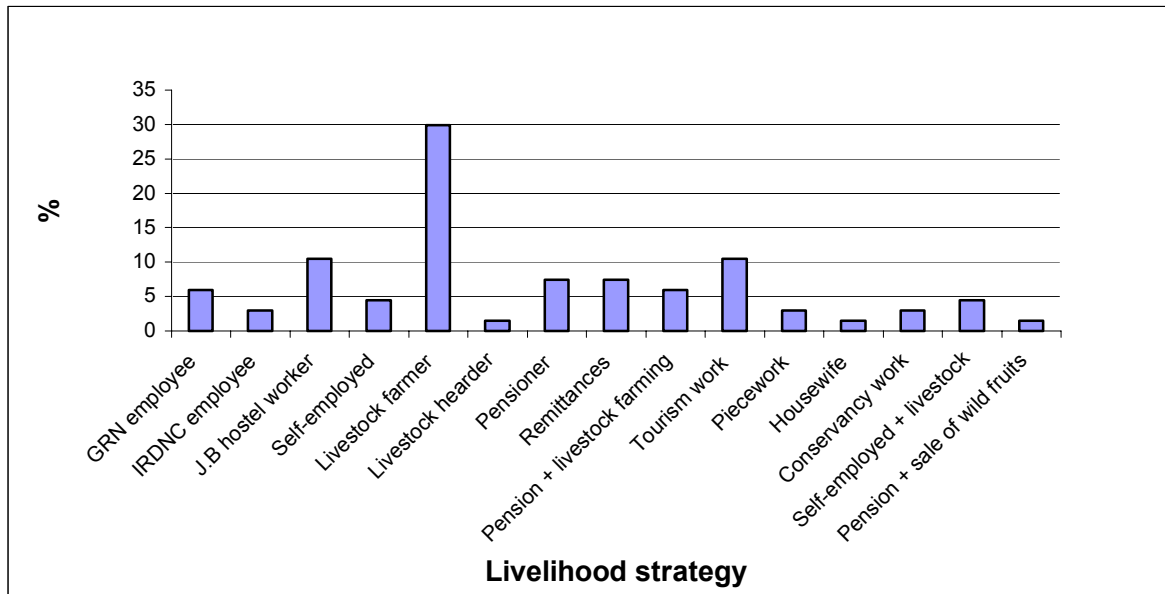
**Figure 1: Length of respondents' conservancy membership in years**



The majority of respondents have been members for 5 years or more, which coincides to the big membership push during Torra’s period of inception and registration. Reportedly since the payout there have been 120 new members registered with many others wanting to be registered but being refused as they were not eligible (TCC, *pers. comm.*). The payout has dramatically increased the demand to become registered members and the pressure on the conservancy concerning its criteria for including or refusing people.

The following bar graph identifies the main livelihood strategies of respondents.

**Figure 2: Livelihood strategies of respondents**



As can be seen from the graph above the majority of respondents’ primary livelihood strategy is livestock farming. There is a diversity of other activities supporting people’s livelihoods, which shows people employ a dynamic mix of strategies to achieve livelihood outcomes.

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS AND KEY THEMES ARISING

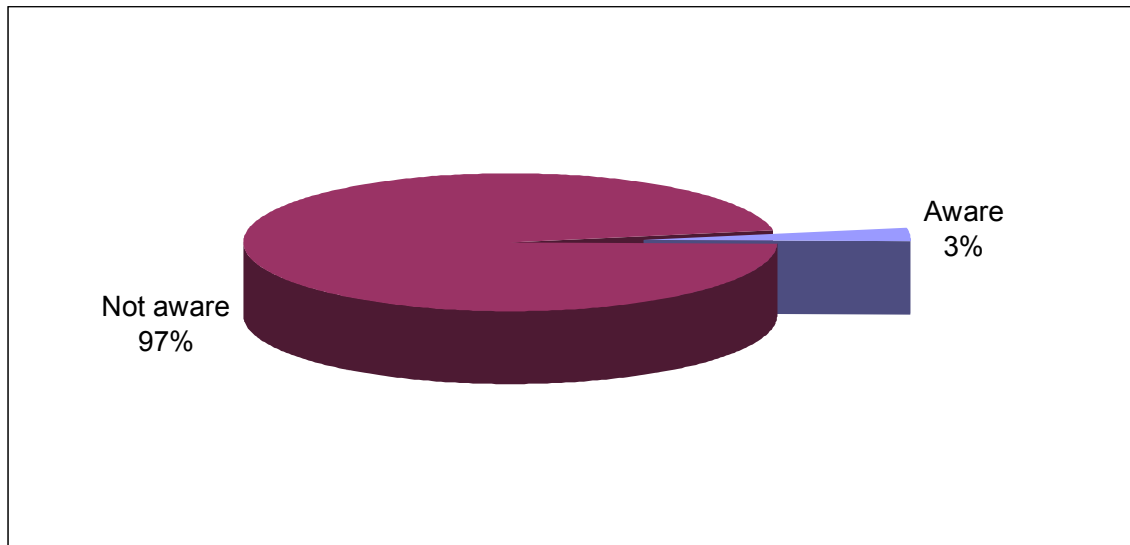
The following section summarises the key information arising from the analysis of the survey data and is clustered around several core themes that arose from the fieldwork. Information is presented and an initial discussion highlights key issues arising. The issues arising are then discussed again with some qualitative information in further detail together with options, in Section 7 at the end of the report.

### 6.1 Awareness of the conservancy revenue generation

97% of respondents did not know how Torra Conservancy made revenues over the last year. Only 3% of respondents indicated that they knew. Whilst Torra is a relatively small community these figures, and discussion with community and TCC members, highlight that information provision on Torra activities to the general community is low. This is a crucial part of the chain in raising community members’ awareness about the value of alternative wildlife uses, especially from income derived from tourism. If people are unaware of the

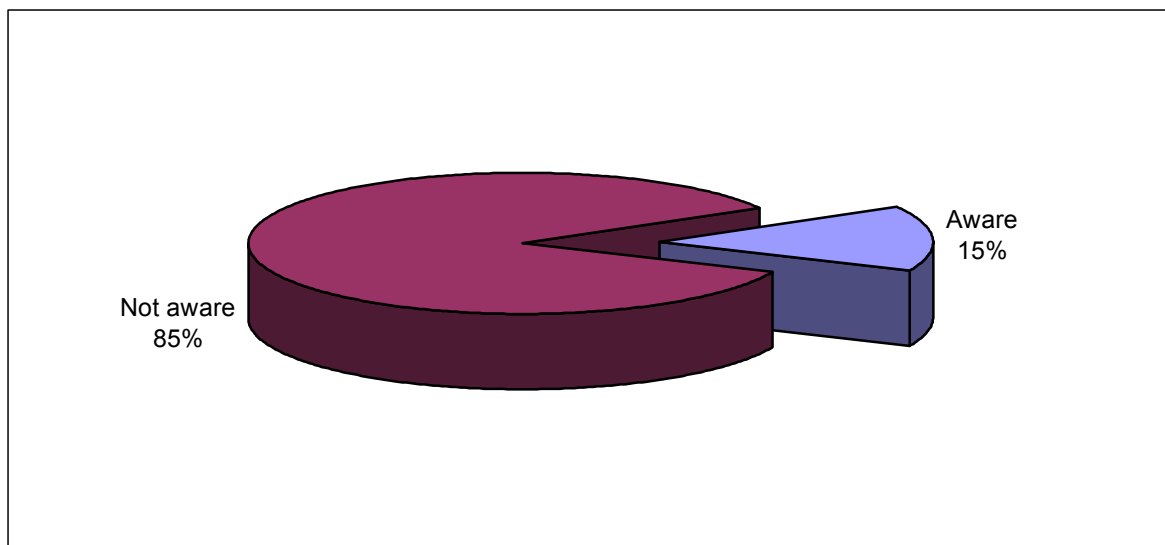
importance of income derived from tourism and live sales of springbok, they will be less likely to invest in conservation and await returns from conservancy benefit distribution.

**Figure 3: Respondents' awareness of how Torra Conservancy generated its income last year**



Of the sample, 85% of respondents did not know how Torra Conservancy spent the revenue generated last year. 15% of the respondents indicated that they knew how the conservancy spent the money (this reflects the inclusion of four TCC members and staff in the sample). According to 15% of respondents, the conservancy gave N\$ 20,000 to the school, N\$ 10,000 for the building of a kindergarten, bought gifts for pensioners, gave cash payouts to members, bought a computer for the conservancy and covered conservancy the running costs. Again the low awareness among community members about conservancy financial matters reflects a shortage of information provision to the conservancy membership. It remains critical for conservancies to publicise this information to increase transparency, reduce community conflict and misunderstandings over expenditure decision-making, and to instil a sense of pride and ownership over conservancy-generated income among community members.

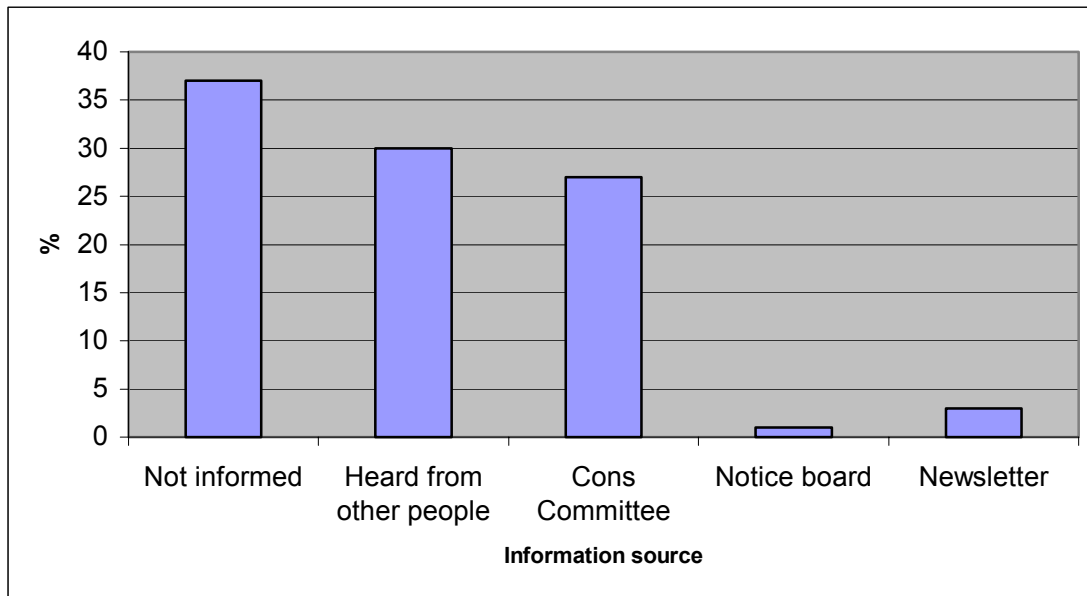
**Figure 4: Respondents' awareness of Torra Conservancy expenditure last year**



### 6.2 Understanding information and decision-making

The majority of the respondents (37%) were not informed about the cash payout, while 30% heard from other people and 27% were informed by Conservancy Committee members. 3% of the respondents read about the payout in the newsletter and 1% of respondents read about it on the notice board.

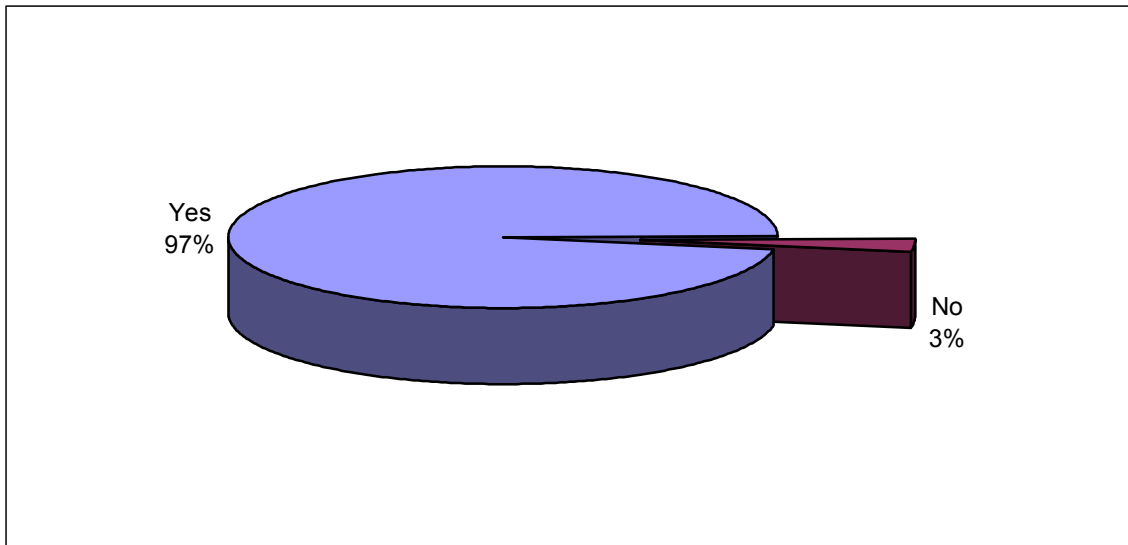
Figure 5: How respondents were informed about the cash payout



This illustrates that no prior announcement was made about the cash payout to the community. In part this was due to security concerns. However, since the majority of people were not informed and it came as a surprise to them, they were unable to plan ahead for the money that was coming. In addition, community members were not consulted either at an AGM or during farm visits, or previously, on the decision about the amount and timing of the payout. Again, awareness of such decisions was said to be important for enabling people to plan financially and to be supportive of the payout process.

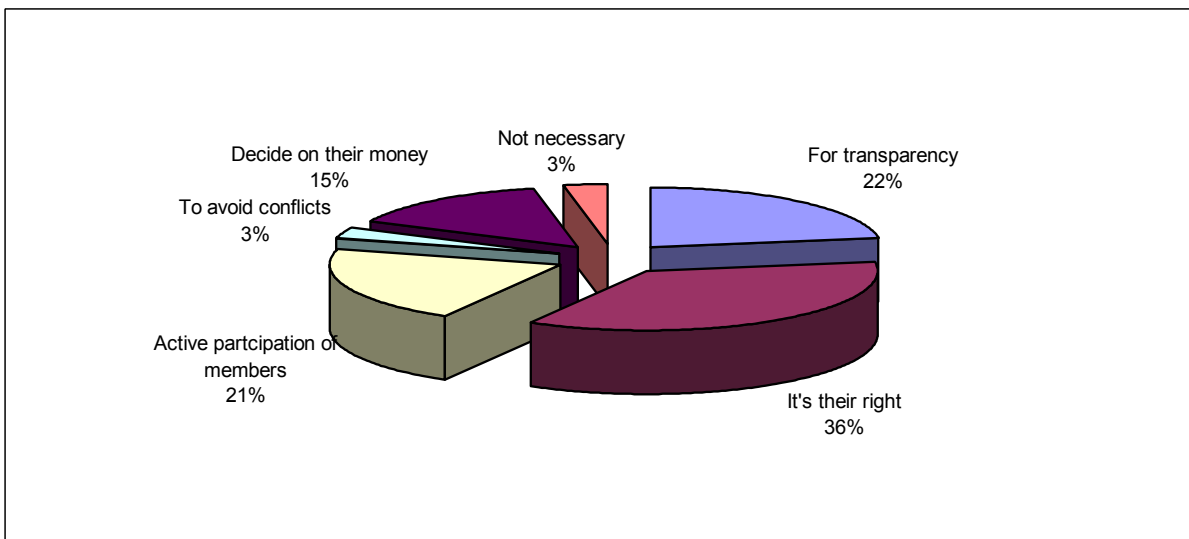
97% of respondents said conservancy members should be part of the decision-making.

Figure 6: Respondents indicating if conservancy members should be part of the decision-making



When asked to provide reasons why conservancy members should be part of the decision-making, 36% of respondents said it was the right of the members; 22% said members should take part for transparency; 21% said it was necessary for active participation of members; 15% said because it was their money; and 3% said to avoid conflicts. 3% said it was not necessary for members to be part of the decision-making process. Clearly members wish to exercise their constitutional rights for decision-making and be involved in deciding how Torra should use its income.

Figure 7: Respondents reasons for why members of Torra Conservancy should be part of the decision-making

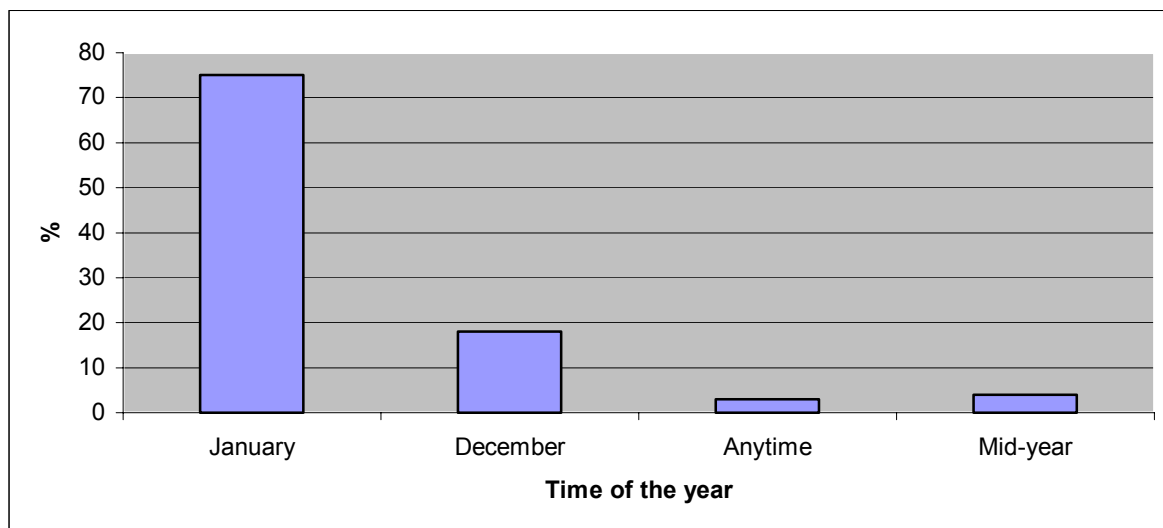


### 6.3 Uses of cash payout by respondents

Respondents were asked what was the best time for the conservancy to make payments to members. 75% of respondents said January was the best time; 18% said December; 3% said anytime of the year; and 4% said mid-year. Most of the respondents who said January mentioned school fees and difficulties of starting a new year as the reasons for their timing preference, while Christmas was the main reason for those who said December. It is clear that

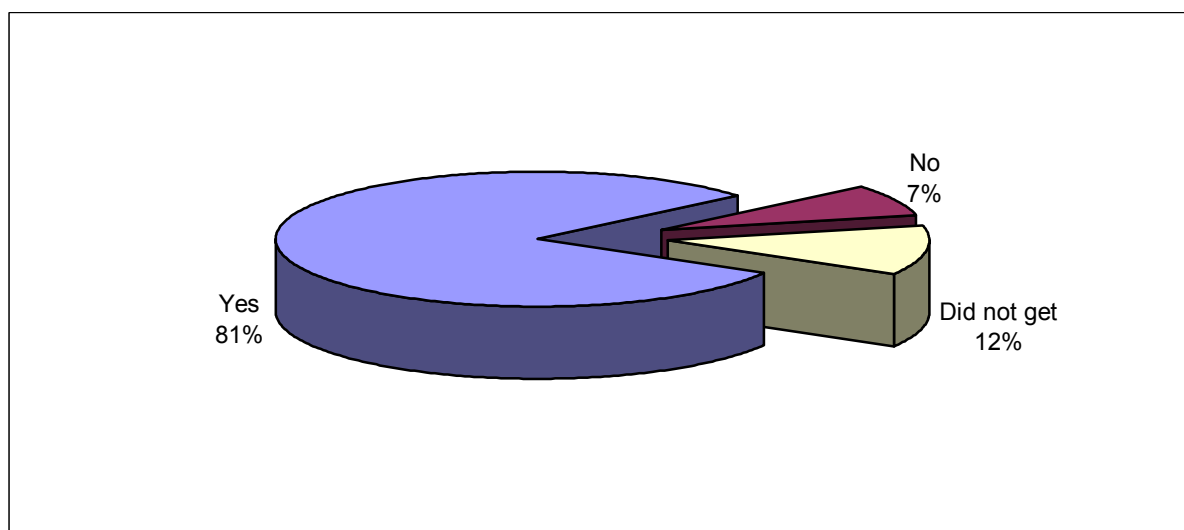
TCC targeted the payout at a critical time to support livelihoods. People were happy with the timing and this reflects in part the conservancy’s ability to guess the needs of its members, although the decision did not involve the community.

**Figure 8: Respondents indicating what time of the year is best for the cash payout**



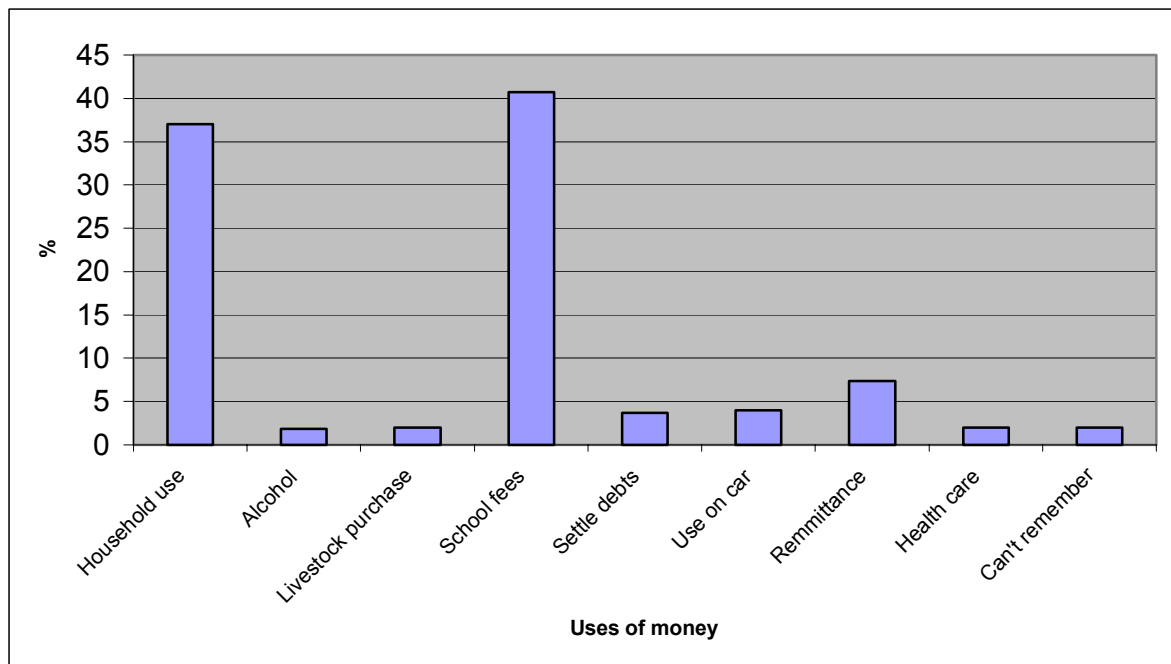
At the time of the survey – three weeks after the majority of payouts - some 81% of respondents had spent the cash.

**Figure 9: Respondents indicating if they have spent the cash payout by the time of the survey**



The majority of people spent the money on school fees (41%) or household use (37%). This is partly a reflection of the bias in the gender sample size towards women, but also clearly demonstrates that small amounts of money at the right time can have significant positive livelihood benefits, e.g. support for education and household needs.

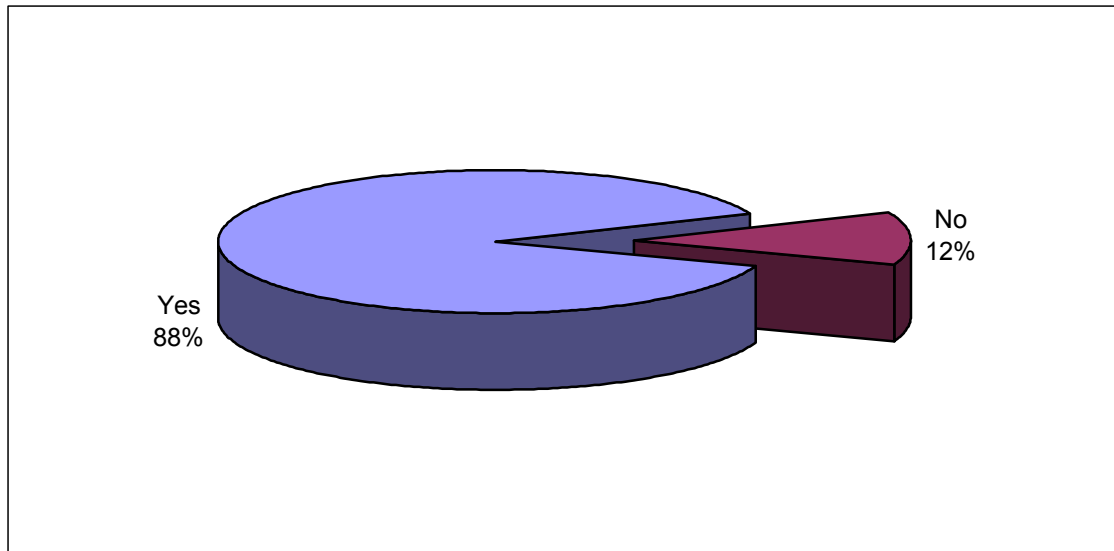
Figure 10: Respondents use of the cash payout



#### 6.4 Who should benefit from benefit distribution?

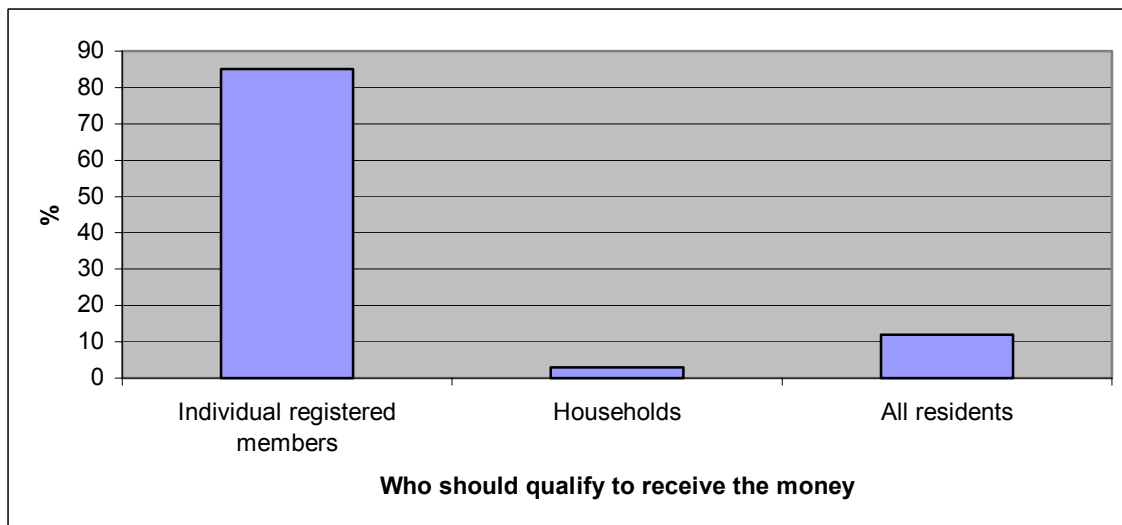
Eight respondents (12%) did not receive the cash payout. Five were registered members, but their names did not appear on the register. Two registered late and one respondent was not a member. The issue of who was eligible to receive the cash payouts was a very contentious one. A number of people cited that they were members but were refused payouts. In addition, some respondents said that people “*had even hired cars to come from Khorixas and Henties Bay to get their money, yet they don’t stay here but got money*” (Torra registered member, *pers. comm.*). In some instances the use of the registered membership list was not clear and even those people who were not registered or living in Torra were able to get benefits, while others who had been there for some years were discriminated against (Torra registered member, *pers. comm.*). This caused conflicts in some cases. It is recommended that had an independent person (e.g. MET official etc.) be present to ensure improved transparency. If the decision had been announced previously and the membership list been regularly updated, and the decision about payout eligibility, e.g. member/non-member versus resident/non-resident, been made in conjunction with the community, then these conflicts would have been reduced and transparency and accountability for TCC actions and decision-making increased.

Figure 11: Respondents who received the cash payout



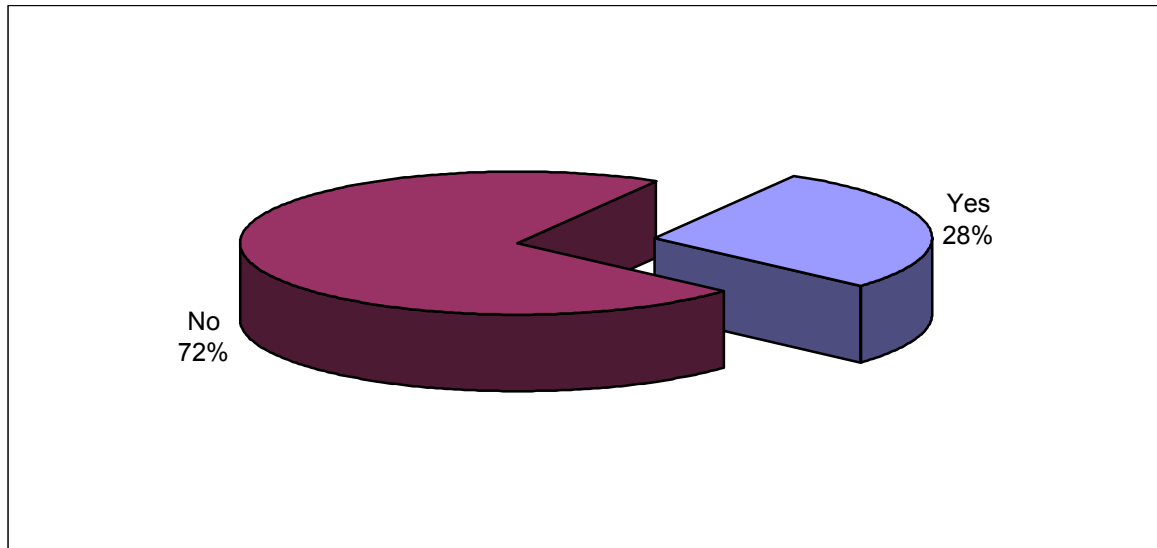
Respondents were asked if the cash payout (CP) should go to individual registered members or to households, or to anybody even not registered members but resident of Torra. 85% of respondents said the CP should be given to individual registered members. Respondents said this is due to the fact that each member is registered on their own and should be able to make their own decisions on how to use the money. The other reason given why cash payout should be given to individual members was to avoid conflicts in the households. 3% said that CP must be given per household (especially to adults) because youngsters tend to waste money on unnecessary things. The remaining 12% indicated that the money should be given to all residents of Torra irrespective of whether they were members or not. The reason given was that the human wildlife conflict (HWC) affects all residents, whether they are members or not. While this data seems clear, in the interviews it was difficult to explain to respondents the differences between members and non-members, and individuals versus households. Thus in a quick survey it was difficult to capture the full breadth of related issues. Further work could be conducted on this issue with community consultation, exploring the different decision-making factors and rationale for payment to different groups.

Figure 12: Respondents' indication of who should receive cash payouts



Most of the respondents (72%) said that the CP must be given to all members and not just to the vulnerable groups. Respondents said this was necessary to avoid conflicts within the conservancy, because if the CP is given to a specific group conflicts will arise. 28% indicated that the money should be targeted at the vulnerable groups because they really need the money. There was little discussion of other options, e.g. targeting with a select amount as already happens for pensioners. This discussion would be useful to have at AGMs and other specific topic-focused community meetings.

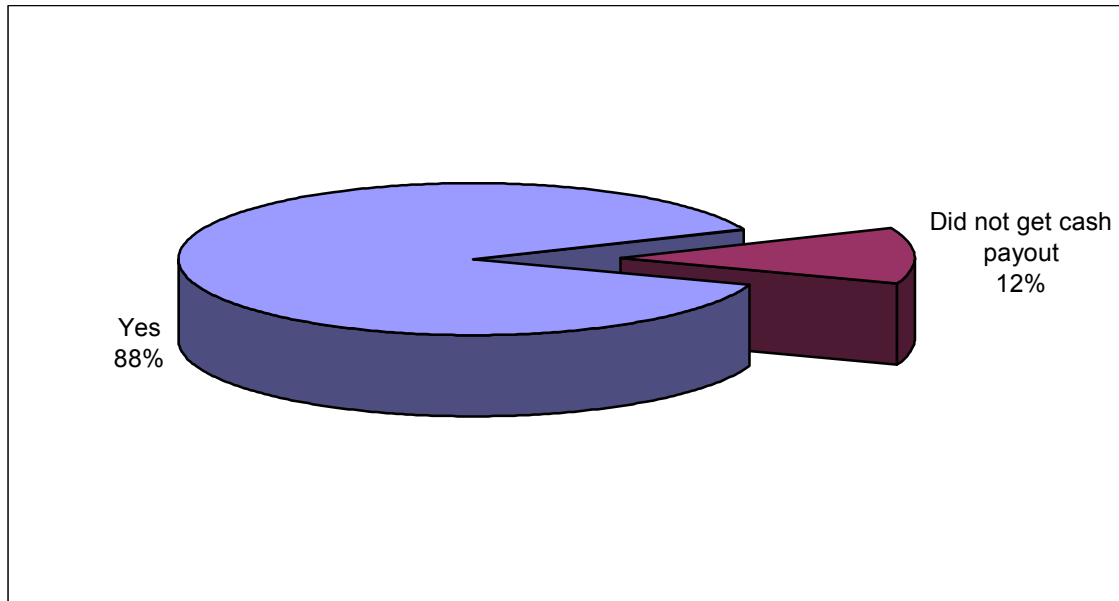
Figure 13: Respondents indicating if vulnerable groups should be targeted with cash payouts



### 6.5 Impact of the cash payout

All the respondents who received the CP (88%) said that it made them more positive towards wildlife and tourism. Of the 12% of respondents who did not get the CP, 9% said that they could not answer this question, since they did not get the CP. 3% said they were already positive towards wildlife even though they did not get any money. However, this question needs further research, as if the majority of people (97%) were unaware of how Torra generates income (i.e. from wildlife and tourism), it remains unclear how they see the link between income generation arising from conservation and tourism and the payout they received. In addition, it is difficult to explore fully this topic of incentives for attitude/behaviour change towards NRM in a snapshot survey, asking a ‘leading’ question. This could best be explored through an ongoing action-orientated research process conducted by the conservancy, which would aim to understand incentives for behaviour change and how much attitudes have changed within the conservancy.

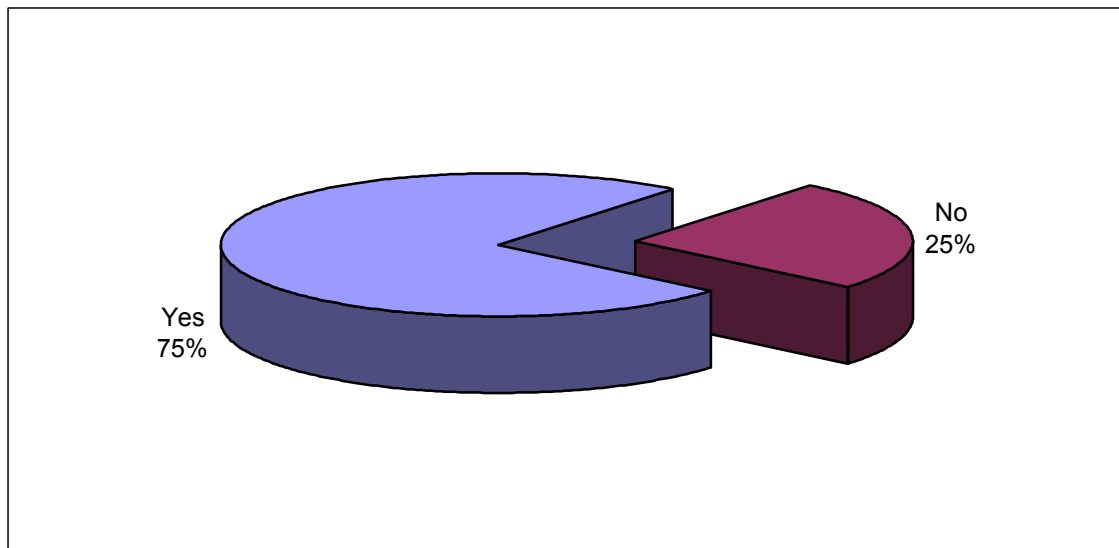
**Figure 14: Respondents indicating if receiving the cash payout made them feel more positive towards wildlife and tourism**



*6.6 Other key issues arising*

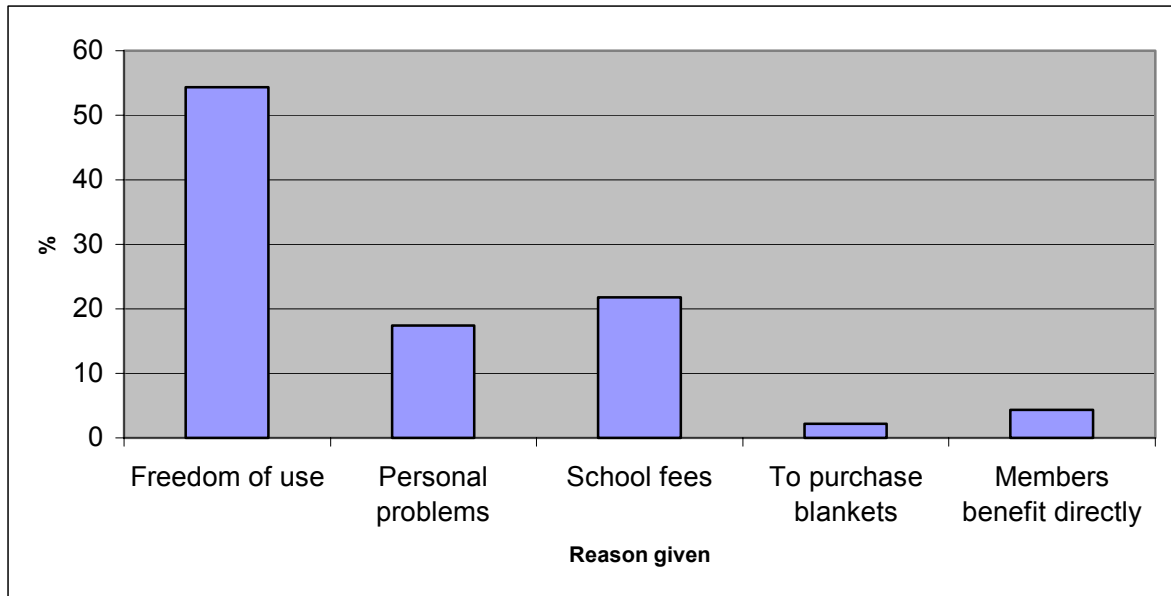
75% of respondents felt that the cash payout was the best way to use the conservancy funds, while 25% disagreed.

**Figure 15: Respondents indicating if the cash payout was the best use of conservancy funds**



Out of the 46 respondents who believed the cash payout was the best use of conservancy funds, the majority (54%) said this was because with a cash payout members have the freedom to use the money in any way they wanted. 22% were in favour of CP because of school fees, while 17% cited personal problems as the reason why CP was the best. The other reasons given were: CP allows members to benefit directly (4%) and purchasing of blankets (2%). During discussions, some longer-term members at Damaraland Camp and in the TCC stated that they had wanted to see the money used for the development of income-generating projects for the long-term benefit of the Torra community.

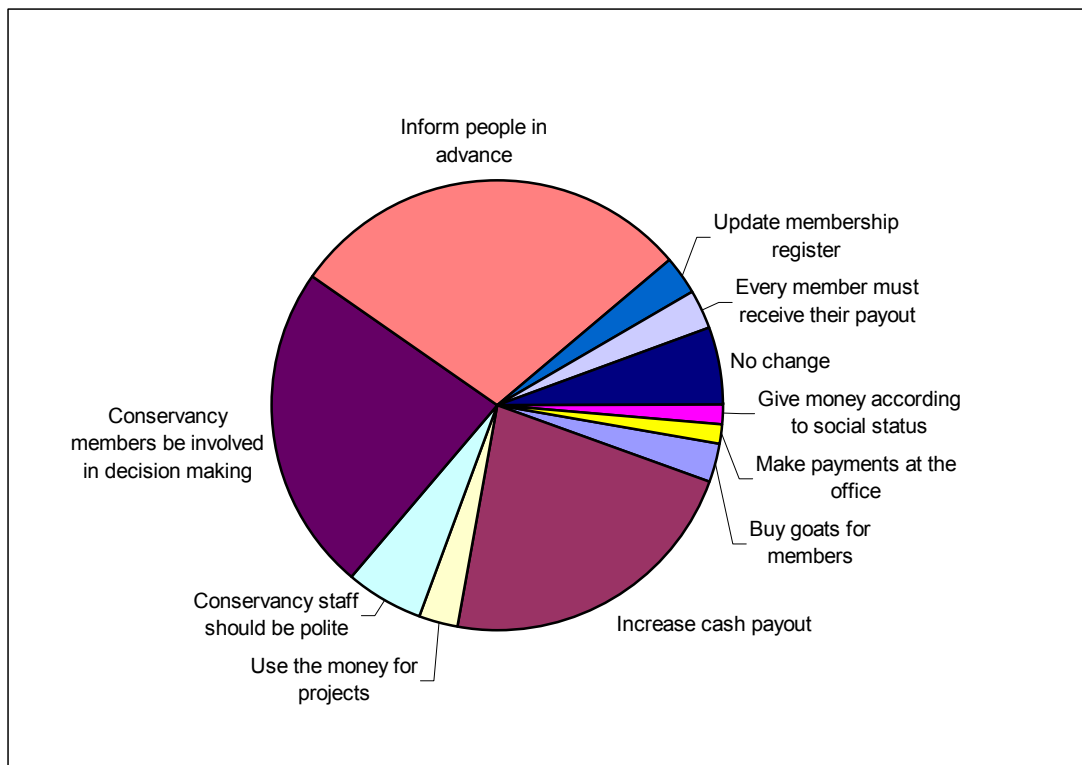
Figure 16: Respondents indicating why the cash payout was the best use of funds



Of those respondents (21) who said that CP was not the best use of TCC funds, 57% said this was because money is used up quickly. 43% said it was because the money has short-term effects and people don't benefit over the long term. This group of respondents said community projects were better because they have long-term effects.

Respondents were asked what the way forward was for the cash payout – what they felt should be done differently in future. Most of the respondents (28%) indicated that in future the conservancy must inform members in advance about the CP. 24% of respondents said that in future members must be part of the decision-making process, while 22% indicated that in future if there is a cash payout the amount of money be increased. Nine other responses were given to this question (see Figure 16 below), including 6% of respondents who said that the money should be used for community projects in future rather than cash payouts. Further work could be conducted with the community to review the extent and feasibility of different options for the use of the money and process for future payouts.

Figure 17: Respondents’ suggestions on what should be done differently in future if there is a cash payout



## 7. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES AND OPTIONS & CONCLUSION

Clearly Torra’s cash payout was a positive step for the Torra community and the Namibian CBNRM programme in disseminating a substantial amount of cash revenue to its individual registered members. Torra’s achievement in achieving its potential to deliver tangible cash benefits to its registered members, at a pertinent time in terms of household and individual need, serves as an inspiration for other conservancies. It demonstrates the potential of the CBNRM programme to deliver direct timely benefits to its members, which support sustainable livelihoods and may act as incentives for improved NRM and support for tourism activities.

The N\$ 630 payouts were considerably more than the average individual monthly income of N\$ 416 per month. Cash payments gave members the freedom to choose how they would best spend their money. The money was spent primarily on school fees and household needs at a critical time of cash shortage in the majority of households. This may also reflect the gender bias in the sample (N: women = 41, men = 26). Further analysis showed that the majority of school fees paid from the CP were paid by women respondents. This raises interesting questions for the potential to target money to gender-focused activities that may demonstrate the biggest livelihood impact, e.g. support for women’s sewing or school groups. If reviewed by the costs of purchasing local groceries and the school fees the cash payout becomes more meaningful. As a basic monthly shop for an average household of 4-5 people, the total basket of groceries at the main Bergsig store came to N\$ 220 for one month’s worth of supplies. This figure was derived from the total costs of the following groceries: maize meal, flour, sugar, coffee/tea, cooking oil, matches, salt, soup/spices, onions, soap (fuel costs were not included – data provided from wilderness shop in Bersig).

The N\$ 630 can also cover the basic annual school costs of two local secondary school students who are boarding, i.e. N\$ 120 each for school uniforms, N\$ 83 for school fees and N\$ 102 for other contributions, which comes to N\$ 610 (school-related expenditure data provided by the secretary of Jacob Basson School in Bergsig, in August 2003). This use of the money for school fees is particularly important when you note that 36% of household residents in Torra are of school-going age and some 7% of households had children not attending school because of an inability to afford school fees (WILD/EEU survey, Torra results). Thus it can be seen that, when used wisely, the payout represents a substantial mechanism for conservancy support to local livelihood priorities.

Respondents said that the payout made them feel more positive towards wildlife and tourism. Yet the provision of information regarding Torra's income generation and expenditure was very low and community involvement in decision-making and TCC transparency around decision-making (updating of register, presenting financial statements to the community) was limited. Involvement in decision-making is vital to give the community a sense of pride and ownership towards the conservancy, and to increase transparency and accountability. In discussion, TCC stated that they were strongly considering community consultations for future cash payouts and recognised the importance of inclusive community decision-making. The process of community inclusion in decision-making must be given more emphasis in future payouts or other kinds of benefit distribution. Special meetings could be conducted to discuss key issues, or household visits or short surveys. Topics might include how to involve the community in decision-making; how much money to use, for what and how; (in relation to Torra's income and expenditure) timing of payouts, membership and eligibility criteria for receipt of the payout, plus processes for monitoring and evaluation.

The criteria for eligibility to receive a payout was unclear to the community and in some cases this caused community conflict. There was reportedly no clear processes for recording receipts for the payments and this also added to confusion and in some cases conflict (IRDNC staff and community members, *pers. comm.*). In addition, community members said they wanted prior notification of the timing and amount to be paid out so they could budget for this in their activities. If a payout process had been developed and agreed with the community, and adhered to, this would have reduced conflict and allowed for transparency. In addition, a neutral third party could have played a support role in maintaining the neutrality of the cash payout and acted in an advisory role to ensure that misinformation and conflicts did not arise from a lack of transparency or adherence to process. It is suggested that MET take on this role of supporting conservancies in making payouts; documenting the process and lessons learned; and ensuring that adequate community consultation occurs, procedures are followed, and the payouts reflect what is outlined in the benefit distribution plans. These activities could support the development of simple guidelines and procedures for implementing future cash payouts. There should be an increased focus on supporting good local governance for the development of participatory decision-making processes, which foster accountability and transparency, and strengthen the role and ownership of the community in conservancy activities.

Due to confusion over membership registration, with people declaring they had registered but their names had not appeared on the list, TCC is considering issuing membership cards. This is particularly important given that membership numbers have increased since the payout. From the start of the payout until October 14<sup>th</sup>, a total of 325 people were paid (TCC staff, *pers. comm.*) The payment of some registered individuals and not others, and non-members or by household, raises serious questions for Torra Conservancy and the national CBNRM programme as a whole. The WILD/EEU survey states that of the Torra households surveyed

there were some 15% who were resident but not members. This could be because they are new residents and not eligible, they don't want to join, they were not informed, or are discriminated against, or for other reasons. It is recommended that Torra Conservancy explore the reasons why some residents are not members and address this in their activities. If the conservancy continues to pay only registered individual members it is in danger of disenfranchising this core group of people who are not currently members and are not eligible to receive benefits. In addition, some members may be in the more remote wildlife frontline areas. Some people received payments who were members but not resident in the area, and so not using or protecting the natural resources, while others who are full-time residents and using the resources, or temporary residents, but are not eligible for payment.<sup>2</sup>

There is a need to review how far the payout acts as an incentive for the CBNRM programme and Torra Conservancy objectives. The constitution acts as a guideline for this but doesn't adequately reflect the local rules and norms expected by the community. Some members expressed resentment at individual payouts, but the majority supported them. The individual payouts should, however, be reviewed in terms of equity. The WILD/EEU survey revealed that one household (a Conservancy Committee member) had 13 registered members, and so that household received N\$ 8,190, while others with only one member received just N\$ 630. In comparison, if the N\$ 200,000 had been divided evenly by 123 households<sup>3</sup>, then each household would have received N\$ 1,626. Some members also complained that payments to individuals was an individualistic approach and didn't promote collective action. Normally, they were used to sharing household resources, but now everybody was operating on their own, which also went against the conservancy approach of working together. It is suggested that TCC discuss with its members the best process for clearly defining who should and shouldn't receive benefits, in accordance with locally agreed rules and the constitution. These could then be discussed, developed and agreed by the community, and incorporated as conservancy policy and used to support future payouts. This should include a review of benefits to households or individual members, registered versus non-registered, residents and non-residents, and the extent to which these decisions and actions achieve Torra's CBNRM objectives.

In discussion with the TCC, it was unclear how often the conservancy would conduct a cash payout. Some said every five years, others didn't know. Clearly there is a need to support conservancies in long-term financial planning and trade-off scenarios for alternative uses of income, e.g. spending the money on cash payouts versus development of income-generating projects (such as community campsites). This information should be shared with the community and payment schedules and conservancy expenditure agreed with members, so that expectations are not unduly raised and conservancy-community agreements are developed jointly and adhered to. There is a need to explore the alternative options for spending conservancy money on behalf of the community. Suggestions could be solicited from the community and voted on at AGMs or special meetings, including options for exploring micro-credit facilities, small entrepreneurs and businesses, and other income and

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<sup>2</sup> In discussion with the TCC, the question was raised of whether temporary/migratory grazing herders, who come for six months at a time and use the wildlife, grazing water etc., should be eligible for money? The response was no, they are not eligible. However, those who were born in Torra but not resident are eligible for receipt of payment, even though they are not fully resident anymore or using and protecting NR.

<sup>3</sup> The concept of households and exact numbers is hard to define, since households are dynamic and always changing. Humphrey *et al.* 2003 states that Torra has 123 households. In a participatory exercise with TCC staff, there was difficulty in agreeing the number of households and figures ranged between 126 and 143 (Vaughan *et al.* 2003).

employment-generating opportunities. Torra must also carefully consider the financial sustainability of the amount and frequency of the cash payout and include issues of financial security during hard times, or payments during drought or livestock diseases periods, in its planning, and share this with its membership.

The payout was not a clear part of TCC planned activities and was a dynamic reaction to community pressure. This shows that the TCC is in touch with its community and has a good understanding of changes in community support for the conservancy initiative. In discussion with a number of TCC staff and NGO and MET staff, it was stated that the conservancy had also been pressured by IRDNC to make the payout in response to its community demands and to maintain the political stability of a premier NGO-supported conservancy. Broader community consultation would have clarified any tensions over this issue and had it been voted on at an AGM the decision could have been recorded as reflecting the demands and desires of the community. While TCC were responsive to community pressure, they also need to take on a broader role of consultation with their community about the community's money, especially when dealing with substantial amounts such as N\$ 200,000. These TCC decisions should also reflect their current benefit distribution plan and planned conservancy activities and be shared with the broader community for consultation. This would reflect the desire of members to be involved and support increased transparency and accountability for decision-making, as well as reducing possible community conflicts arising from a lack of consultation and information provision.

Weak participation in decision-making (e.g. about payouts) by community members can undermine the conservancy's legitimacy and respect for it among community members. The TCC needs to take a proactive role in seeking full participation of members in reaching decisions on critical issues, including the distribution of benefits to registered members only, households or individuals, marginal or poor groups, groups facing the highest wildlife conflict, pensioners, HIV/AIDS sufferers, or female-headed households etc. Attention should be given to alternative uses of funds other than cash payouts, e.g. micro credit or income-generating projects. External support from service providers should assist conservancies in developing proactive, participatory decision-making processes, which meet the needs of the majority of the membership. In addition, simple guidelines could be developed for supporting the process of decision-making and implementation and regulation of the cash payout. The link between the conservancy concept and its generation of revenue and distribution of benefits from wildlife and tourism management needs to be made more explicit to members. This will facilitate a greater level of community support and investment in the conservancy and CBNRM concept and practice by the broader community.

Long-term monitoring of the individual and household financial and livelihood implications of conservancy activities, especially cash payout, needs to be considered. This could review the impacts of receiving and spending N\$ 630 in one go to individual members, or N\$ 1,626 to households in one go, or other small amounts of cash distributed at critical times throughout the year. In addition, the review could consider the alternative uses for the N\$ 200,000, such as long-term investment in community income and employment-generating activities.

Careful monitoring by the conservancy and service provider of the impact of benefit distribution and other conservancy activities (e.g. meat distribution, employment at lodges etc.) should be undertaken to record the change in community attitude towards new forms of wildlife management and CBNRM programme objectives. This should review who are the

critical groups using wildlife and what are the ways to reduce their dependency, and options for targeting benefits to those most vulnerable groups and those facing high HWC. This would help Torra and other stakeholders to review how much N\$ 630 and other activities support livelihood and conservation priorities and act as an incentive for improved NRM.

Overall Torra's cash payout was a positive step in the development and distribution of conservancy benefits to members. However, a number of critical challenges remain. It is recommended that TCC and service providers, with community consultation, conduct further research. This could explore and document the extent to which the payout acted as an incentive for community conservation and if the payout was not just a 'quick fix' to resolve community tensions, but the development of a foundation for supporting the long-term livelihood and conservation needs of Torra Conservancy residents.

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### Other resources

- Minutes from verbal feedback and semi-structured interview with Torra Conservancy regarding summary findings from cash payout questionnaire
- Interviews with MET Kunene South regional field staff, Outjo and Khorixas offices
- Minutes from Torra Conservancy post-payout community meeting, held at Bergsig
- Interviews of discussions with IRDNC staff and community individuals

**APPENDIX 1: TORRA BENEFIT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Questionnaire survey**

**TORRA BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION**

**Enumerator** \_\_\_\_\_ **Questionnaire Number** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Post name: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Urban /semi rural/ rural/*-Circle which is appropriate*
5. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Main Livelihood activity/income generation: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Number of adults and children in household: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are you a member of Torra Conservancy member? Yes/No
10. If you are a member for how long have you been a member (years or months)? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Is anybody in your household a member? Yes/No Number \_\_\_\_\_
12. Do you know how much money Torra Conservancy made last year? Yes/No
  
13. If yes, how much was it? \_\_\_\_\_
  
14. Do you know how the money was made? Yes/No
  
15. Do you know the details of what the money was spent on? Yes/No
  
16. Examples: \_\_\_\_\_
  
17. Do you know how much money the Conservancy Committee gave to each member? Yes/No  
State amount \_\_\_\_\_
  
18. How were you informed of the payout? \_\_\_\_\_
  
19. What is the best time of year to make payments? \_\_\_\_\_  
Give reasons e.g. \_\_\_\_\_
  
20. How much notice should be given to people before the payout? Weeks \_\_\_\_\_  
Give reasons e.g. \_\_\_\_\_
  
21. Is the paying out of cash to members the best way to use Torra Conservancy fund or are there other alternatives? Yes/No  
Give reasons and examples  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
22. Should the money go to individual registered members or to households or to anybody even non-registered members but residents of Torra?  
Individual members / Household/non members but resident - circle *which is appropriate*  
Give reasons for your answer above (in 18)  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
23. Should cash payouts be targeted at poor, pensioners or those with high wildlife problems or the same for everybody? Yes /No  
Reasons \_\_\_\_\_

24. What criteria should be used to decide who gets a payment?  
Give examples \_\_\_\_\_
25. Do you know how the decision to give this money out was made? Yes/No
26. Do you know who made the decisions to allocate the money? Yes/No
27. If yes, who made the decision? \_\_\_\_\_
28. Did you take part in the decision-making? Yes/No
29. If no, what would have been your suggestions on the payout?  
\_\_\_\_\_
30. Should members take part in the decision-making? Yes/No  
Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_
31. If you are a member did you receive any money? Yes/No  
If yes, how much? \_\_\_\_\_  
If no why not? \_\_\_\_\_
32. (Ask question if respondent is a member) Have you spent the money given to you by the Conservancy Committee in January this year? Yes/No
33. If yes, what did you spend it on? \_\_\_\_\_
34. If the money was not spent, where is it now? (In bank or elsewhere) \_\_\_\_\_
35. What will it be spent on? \_\_\_\_\_
36. Has there been any community-committee discussion about how future benefit distribution money will be spent? Yes/No
37. If yes, what are some of the possibilities/options for future payouts ? \_\_\_\_\_
38. Does receiving this money make you more positive towards wildlife and tourism? Yes/No  
Give reasons \_\_\_\_\_
39. If there is another cash payout in the future is there anything that should be done differently with the process and the money?  
Examples: \_\_\_\_\_
40. Any other information you would like to tell us?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME

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