

Oliver C. Ruppel | Katharina Ruppel-Schlichting (Eds.)

# Environmental Law and Policy in Namibia

Towards Making Africa the Tree of Life

4th Edition



**Nomos**



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Foundation**



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## Foreword

It is a great pleasure to see that what has become a standard work in the field of environmental law and policy in Namibia is going into the next round with the fourth fully revised and expanded edition of *Environmental Law and Policy in Namibia – Towards Making Africa the Tree of Life*. The first, second and third editions of this publication attracted much attention among both lawyers and non-lawyers in Namibia, Africa and beyond, and with good reason. This is a sustainable effort indeed and I continue to commend the depth of the work and its positive impact.

A sustainable environment is essential to protect people from the short, medium and long term ravages of nature; man-made threats in nature; and the deterioration of the natural environment. Namibia faces a range of difficult environmental challenges including among others land degradation; water scarcity and pollution; deforestation; biodiversity loss; and climate change. Addressing these challenges requires, above all, unequivocal determination on the part of policy-makers. The law, as a subsequent step to policy and decision-making processes on the one hand and as a basis for enforcement and implementation on the other, is an important discipline in terms of environmental protection and is an essential tool to address environmental problems threatening our country, region and planet. Given the multi-disciplinary nature of environmental issues and the involvement of different Government institutions, policy makers and stakeholders, the afore-mentioned environmental challenges are covered by a variety of statutes and policies.

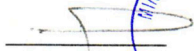
This book offers a multi-faceted insight into environmental law and policy in Namibia. It does this most successfully by taking stock of the existing legal framework and Namibia's commitment to environment-related issues at the local, national, regional, continental and international level. The mother of Namibian laws, our Constitution, is one of the few constitutions in the world to explicitly incorporate the protection of the environment. It is well reflected in this publication that we have achieved significant milestones in terms of environmental law and policy such as the ratification and implementation of several multilateral environmental agreements; the enactment of landmark pieces of national legislation such as the Environmental Management Act; as well as a broad environmental policy framework. Of course, the process is on-going and we must not rest on our laurels.

It is highly commendable that the editors and authors of this book have again eloquently managed to give an in-depth updated overview of sectoral and cross-sectoral legislation and policies relating to environmental concerns. The publication puts environmental law issues into the broader context of current and future societal needs and economic developments. The focus of the publication is on Namibia. It is, however,

notable that the book also puts a strong emphasis on the multi-faceted African legal structure and its particularities, including the environmental legal frameworks of the African Union and the Southern African Development Community.

This publication will be a valuable source of information and guidance for lawyers, judges, students, policymakers and all those members of the public interested in environmental law and policy.

I wish to cordially thank Prof. Dr. Oliver C. Ruppel and Dr. Katharina Ruppel-Schlichting, the Hanns Seidel Foundation, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit and all who have contributed to the fourth edition of the book and assisted in making it a reality. It has grown to be a landmark and an important work for Namibia, which will inevitably contribute to further green growth, sustainable development and environmentally sound management in the interest of our people. Let all of us make environmental protection our responsibility!



Pohamba Shifeta  
Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, MP  
*Windhoek, January 2022*

## Preface

This fourth edition of the publication *Environmental Law and Policy in Namibia – Towards Making Africa the Tree of Life* comes at a timely moment both nationally and internationally as the country is tackling diverse and numerous environmental and developmental challenges while the world has come together at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 31 October – 13 November 2021 to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The previous three editions of this book were published in 2011, 2013 and 2016, respectively, and all three were a great success. We therefore have sustained our commitment to this work and funded this fourth revised and expanded edition.

The Namibian Government has taken the lead to recognise the impact of the population with its economic activities on the country's natural environment and has also taken the initiative to adopt and domesticate ethical and humane legislation and policies to inclusively undertake, manage and monitor environmental management.

Namibia has made progress in fostering cross-sectoral and dynamic solutions to address the far-reaching effects of climate change, desertification and the depletion of biological resources. As such, this book stands as a comprehensive and telling compilation of the Namibian Government's commitment to tackle environmental challenges as not only users but also stewards of its endowments of natural resources.

Having supported the protection of the natural environment as a part of its worldwide activities for some decades now, the Hanns Seidel Foundation is committed to continuing its efforts for sustainable development and conservation of the natural resources. This book further intersects with many aspects of our Foundation's mandate to support political, economic and social development, especially in the Global South where economic development and environmental sustainability are often competing objectives.

Against this backdrop, the work of the editors and contributors is highly commended for demonstrating the interlinkages of the different sectors engaged in environmental management as well as the dynamic sphere of policy development and implementation guiding such efforts.



Dr. Susanne Luther  
Director of the Institute for International Cooperation (IIZ)  
Hanns Seidel Foundation  
*Munich, January 2022*





## Acknowledgements

Over the course of writing a book, one accumulates more debts than can be acknowledged in a few lines. A multi-authored publication such as this is an enormous team effort. Therefore, our special thanks go to all the distinguished contributors – both in Namibia and beyond. Upon conducted stakeholder consultations and while considering recent developments and thematic priorities in the field of law and policy, this fourth edition of *Environmental Law and Policy in Namibia* includes – besides substantial updates and revisions – some new Chapters and Sections. In order not to go beyond the constraints with regard to the length of this publication, some reductions of text were again necessary, and we are satisfied to know that these remain preserved and available to the interested reader in previous editions.

We are very grateful to those who contributed financially to this publication, that is the Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSS). “In the service of democracy, peace and development” – this is the motto of the Germany-based Hanns Seidel Foundation; this publication reflects this maxim and the aims of the foundation and its noble mission. Our particular gratitude goes to Dr. Clemens von Doderer, Head of Country Office of the HSS in Namibia, for his active involvement in making the fourth edition of this book a reality and for his valuable contribution as co-author.

This publication is also a tribute to German-Namibian development cooperation which acknowledges Germany’s special historical responsibility and to further strengthen the partnership between the two countries. Most relevant for this book, the focus of German-Namibian development cooperation is on sustainable economic development, natural resource management, climate, energy, and transport. Germany has supported Namibia in many fields, including environmental matters through bilateral cooperation. As early as 1991, Germany and Namibia concluded a cultural agreement, which *inter alia* incorporated cooperation in the areas of research and higher education. Environmental law and policy have also been on this agenda.

We cordially thank the Minister for Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Hon. Pohamba Shifeta, for his continued support! Last but not least, we would like to thank the numerous readers who provided us with valuable feedback on the first three editions of this book – for their positive response, but also for constructive suggestions for improvements.

*Environmental Law and Policy in Namibia – Towards Making Africa the Tree of Life* is always work in progress. This means that the various chapters in this book are regularly updated, reflecting the latest state of affairs at the time of writing the chapter – not necessarily at the time of publication. While legislation and its implementation is progressive in nature, the individual contributors have attempted to capture the latest

developments and case law in their respective chapters. In case that such developments have been overtaken by time during the editorial process in the finalisation of the publication before its publication, the reader can expect the next comprehensive update in the fifth edition of this book, which is envisaged for 2024/25.

The Editors, Prof. Dr. Oliver C. Ruppel and Dr. Katharina Ruppel-Schlichting  
*Stellenbosch, January 2022*

## The Editors

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He is a Member of the Academy of Sciences, Cameroon; Member of the Sahel Consortium (USA); Member of the Advisory Committee, Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD), Geneva, Switzerland; Member of the International Conservation Union (IUCN) World Commission for Environmental Law (WCEL); Member of the Wildlife Justice Commission, The Hague, Netherlands; AR5 coordinating lead-author of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); and Founding Director, Climate Policy and Energy Security Programme for sub-Saharan Africa of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation. He graduated in law after studies at the Universities of Lausanne, Switzerland and Munich, Germany and holds a Master of Laws degree (LLM) from Stellenbosch University, a Doctor of Laws degree (LLD) from Comenius University, Slovakia, a Master of Mediation degree (MM) from the University of Hagen, Germany and a postgraduate Diploma in International Human Rights Law from Åbo Akademi University, Finland.

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**Pieter Heyns** Pr Eng studied at Stellenbosch University in South Africa and graduated with degrees in science and water engineering. He is a registered professional engineer in Namibia and a Fellow of the South African Institution of Civil Engineers. In 1973 he started his career as a civil servant in the construction division of Department of Water Affairs (DWA) in South Africa and was transferred to Namibia 1976 where he progressed through the ranks until he retired in 2007 as the Head of the DWA in the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry. In 1987 he became the Director Resource Management and was accountable for 6 Divisions, of which one was the Division Water Law Administration. After the Independence of Namibia, he was the main driving force behind the establishment of water commissions between Namibia and the other riparian States on the internationally shared, perennial border rivers of Namibia. The main purpose was to enable Namibia to obtain an agreed, sustainable, equitable and reasonable share in the waters of those rivers. He prepared the first drafts of most of the water treaties that led to the agreements to establish water commissions on all the boundary rivers of Namibia, except the Kunene River, which had agreements in place since 1886. In the process he obtained sound knowledge of national and international water law in practice. He was a commissioner in five water commissions and obtained comprehensive experience in the management of transboundary water resources. He became a member of various national and international water management bodies and is a well-known professional in the water sector in Namibia, the SADC Region and elsewhere in the world. He was the chairperson of the Water Resources Technical Committee of the SADC Water Division, as well as a member of the founding steering committee of the Global Water Partnership and member of the African Advisory

Group of the World Bank on Water Management in Africa. He made many contributions to water publications (books and magazines) and published more than 20 papers. Since retirement he remained in practice as an international water management consultant.

**Clinton Hay** is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Environmental Science, School of Science at the University of Namibia. He holds a PhD (Zoology) from the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. He previously worked as a Chief Fisheries Biologist based at the Hardap Inland Fisheries Institute for the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources and was responsible for inland fisheries in the country. He has 33 years of extensive experience in freshwater fish and fish ecology with some socio-economic background. He assisted with the development of the Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Policies and legalisation in Namibia. Dr. Hay was engaged in numerous donor-funded projects through the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) focused on the co-management of shared fisheries resources between neighbouring countries as well as the devolution of power to community level and in the process assisting communities to have more control over their resources, mainly focussing on the Zambezi, Chobe, Kwando and Kavango Rivers. He is also part of the KAZA Fisheries sub working group. Dr. Hay is the main author of the NNF “Guidelines for setting up fisheries reserves” that were endorsed by SADC.

**Manfred O. Hinz** studied law and philosophy at the University of Mainz, Germany, where he graduated in law. He took his legal practitioner examination in 1964, the year in which he also obtained his PhD from the University of Mainz. After studying anthropology, sociology and African and Oriental languages at the same University, he became assistant lecturer, teaching anthropology and public law. In 1971, he was appointed full professor at the University of Bremen. In 1989, he went to Namibia where, after its Independence, he assisted the Ministry of Justice in its projects to restructure the traditional administration of justice and to make an inventory of customary law. He was later seconded to the office of the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Namibia (UNAM) to help build the first institution for legal education on Namibian soil: UNAM’S Faculty of Law. He joined the Faculty upon its inception. He has served as Deputy Dean and Dean of the Faculty. Prof. Hinz held the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Chair: Human Rights and Democracy in the Law Faculty’s Human Rights and Documentation Centre from 2000 to 2009. In 2009, Prof. Hinz retired from his full-time position at the University of Namibia. In 2010 he returned to Germany. Apart from holding the position of Professor at the University of Bremen, he is Adjunct Professor of Law and African Studies at the Jacobs University in Bremen since 2014. He has published widely in his areas of specialisation, particularly in the fields of legal and political anthropology, constitutional and international law.

**Jonathan M. Kamwi** is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources Sciences at the Namibia University of Science and Technology. He obtained his PhD in Forest Science from University of Pretoria, MSc in Forest Science from Stellenbosch University, BSc in Tropical Forestry from Larenstein University in the Netherlands and a Diploma in Forestry from the University of Namibia. He is a forest scientist and specialises in socio-ecological systems in forests; Geographical Information Systems, Remote Sensing, Plant Studies and Forest Inventory. His main focus is to carry out forestry related research in the remote regions of Southern Africa and other forest ecosystems in Namibia and beyond to understand the link between people and natural resource governance, the use of resources, and interventions that will successfully promote sustainable forest management. This includes a focus on the drivers of change in land cover and the modelling of carbon dynamics, plant distribution, among others. As a senior civil servant, he led policy and legislative reviews, which set keystone governance frameworks for forestry and the environmental sector in Namibia. He supported both formal protected area management and more importantly, the Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) in Namibia. He was directly involved with international organisations on forestry issues over short or long-term development projects and is very familiar with forest assessments, project management and the required leadership. He successfully facilitated numerous international meetings both in relatively informal and highly structured formats. Most of his work has focused on forestry research, forest management, remote sensing, forest inventory, climate change vulnerability assessment, governance and institutional issues on the African continent and he is familiar with the relevant forestry and climate change development partners and institutions (such as the GIZ, GEF, COMESA, FAO and UNEP). He was the head of the Forestry Inventory Section, Climate Change Unit and has been involved in the development of Namibia's first Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA), Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation plus (REDD+) activities, the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) and was responsible for the full review and elaboration of the proposals to the Climate Technology Centre Network (CTCN) of the UNFCCC which were approved as a model for developing countries.

**Peter Frank Koep** holds a BA and a LLB from the University of Cape Town. He was admitted as an attorney in 1980 and established Koep & Partners in 1982. After his retirement as Senior Partner, he has been active as mediator and independent legal advisor with extensive knowledge of mining and energy law. He is a long-standing member of the Law Society of Namibia and previously was a Councillor of the Law Society of Namibia, convenor of the Committee on Human Rights, a member of the Board for Legal Education and a member of the International Bar Association. He was the founding member and subsequently President of Namibia Peace Plan 435, working

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**Eliamani Laltaika** is a Judge of the High Court of the United Republic of Tanzania and former lecturer in Intellectual Property (IP) and Environmental Law at Tumaini University-Iringa, Tanzania. He was a WIPO Indigenous IP Law Fellow (2009) and the coordinator of the Tanzania Intellectual Property Rights Network (TIP-Net) a non-governmental organisation dedicated to sensitising Tanzanians on issues related to IP and technology transfer. He is a holder of degrees in law from Tumaini University-Iringa University College, Tanzania (LLB-Hons) University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa (LLM-Environmental Law) and the Munich Intellectual Property Law Centre, MIPLC, Munich-Germany (LLM-IP). He completed a PhD in IP at the Max Planck Institute for Intellectual Property and Competition Law in Munich, Germany. Judge Laltaika also was an advocate of the High Court of Tanzania and legal researcher-cum-consultant for UNESCO's Global Database Ethics Observatory System (GEObs), a project to develop a system of databases with worldwide coverage in bioethics and other areas of applied ethics in science and technology such as environmental ethics, science ethics, and technology ethics. Since August 2012 he has been attached to the IP Law Unit of the Faculty of Law, University of Cape Town as an Open Africa Innovation Research and Training (open A.I.R.) Fellow.

**Isaac Mapaire** is a full Professor of Ecology & Conservation Biology in the Department of Environmental Science at the University of Namibia (UNAM). He holds a PhD in Science specialising in Ecology & Conservation Biology, which he obtained from the University of Zimbabwe (in conjunction with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway). He previously worked as a Senior Ecologist for a number of years in the Ministry of Agriculture in Zimbabwe before moving to the University of Zimbabwe's Tropical Resource Ecology Programme (TREP) as a Lecturer and later became the Academic Coordinator of TREP. Prof. Mapaire joined UNAM in 2003 where he has also served as Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Science, Director of Research and Deputy Director of Centre for Grants Management and Resource Mobilisation at UNAM. Isaac received the Southern African Research and Innovation Management Association (SARIMA) Award for Distinguished Contribution to the Research Management Profession in southern Africa in 2015. Prof. Mapaire has more than thirty years of experience in research, consultancy and student supervision. He also had short visiting lectureships at Edinburgh University (UK) and Macquarie University (Australia). He teaches a number of Environmental Biology Courses for undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Faculty of Agriculture, Engineering & Natural Science. Prof. Mapaire has supervised more than eighty-five BSc students and more than forty-five Postgraduate students. His areas of research interest include natural resources management, rangeland dynamics, disturbance and restoration ecology,



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**Felicity F. Owoses** is a Deputy Chief at the Directorate Legislative Drafting, Ministry of Justice, Namibia. She has more than 15 years of experience in drafting of legislation in areas of town planning and environmental law and land reform, amongst others. She has recently been appointed as a Commissioner of the Law Reform and Development Commission of Namibia. She is also a Part Time Lecturer at Faculty of Law, University of Namibia (UNAM), lecturing Legal Research, Writing and Interpretation. Ms. /Goagoses holds B. Juris and Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degrees from UNAM. She is currently an LLM candidate in Constitutional Law at the University of South Africa (UNISA). She is a member of the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel. In 2013, she published a book titled *Planning Law in Namibia* which focuses on town planning and township establishment in Namibia. She also published a number of academic articles on children's rights, family law and constitutional law.

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**Elize Shakalela** is an environmental law activist, who serves a Law Lecturer at the University of Namibia and part time environmental law consultant. She holds a Master's degree (LLM) in rule of law for development from Loyola University Chicago and an LLB degree from the University of Namibia (UNAM). She serves as a board member to the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN), a trustee at the Rooikat Trust and is an honorary member of the Namibia Chamber of Environment. Elize was also appointed by the Congress of Nations and States Preparatory Body to serve as a member of the Environmental Commission. In 2016, Elize founded the plastic free campaign for Namibia which persuaded Namibia's government to place a ban on all single use plastic bags in National Parks and the introduction of a general levy on all plastic bags in the country.

**Hugo Meyer van den Berg** holds an LLB and a BA Hons (Latin) from Stellenbosch University. He also holds a LLM in South African and Namibian mineral law and a

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**Anielle von Finckenstein** is Head of FNB Fiduciary. She obtained her Bachelor of Laws degree (LLB) from Stellenbosch University and completed her articles of clerkship at Koep & Partners in Namibia in 2016. During her time at Stellenbosch University she developed a keen interest in socio-economic rights and academic writing. After having served on the 2014 editorial committee of *Responsa Meridiana*, a law journal exclusively publishing undergraduate students, she became the editor of the 2015 edition.

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