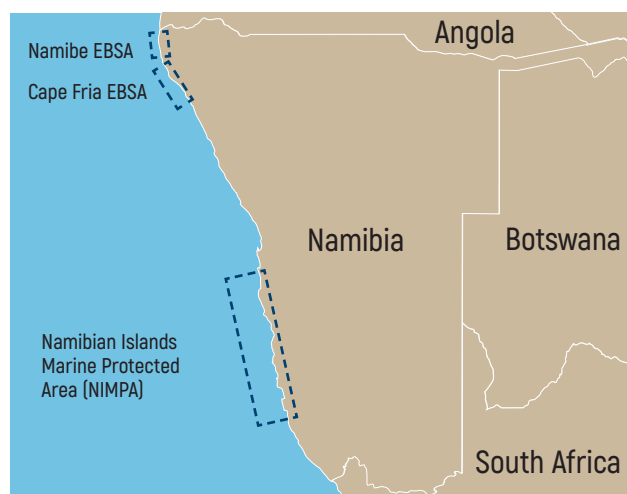


GRANT FACT SHEET



Strengthening and expanding Namibia's MPA network (NIMPA+)



Project duration	April 2023 – March 2028
Country/ies	Namibia
Lead organisation	Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)
Partners	Blue Marine Foundation (Blue Marine), GRID-Arendal (GRID), The Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB), South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI), Community Skills Development Centre (COSDEC) Benguela, Namibian Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB)
Total project costs	€ 7,051,734
Blue Action Fund grant	€ 3,647,748 (52%)
Match funding	€ 3,403,986 (48%)



Namibia's coast hosts one of the most productive marine regions in the world. Fed by cold, nutrient-rich water, the Benguela Current Marine Ecosystem along the coast of south-western Africa is renowned for its highly productive waters and is the lifeblood of the entire coastline. The Namibian Islands Marine Protected Area (NIMPA) is located within an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Area (EBSA) and covers the principal upwelling centre of the Benguela Current. It is home to globally significant populations of seabirds (such as African penguins and bank cormorants), marine mammals (such as Cape fur seals) and other marine species. Despite being Africa's second-largest marine protected area (MPA) with a surface area of around 9,500km², NIMPA only covers 1.7% of Namibia's waters and is under threat from overfishing, pollution, mining, climate change, ineffective management and a society disconnected from marine values.

To address these issues, a consortium comprising NNF, Blue Marine, GRID, SANCCOB, SAERI, COSDEC-Benguela and NAMCOB is working with the Namibian government to develop and implement a management framework for NIMPA. This new framework will draw on the latest scientific evidence and

provide a blueprint for effective decision-making, setting clear thresholds for key environmental indicators and prioritising sustainable resource use. To ensure the long-term sustainability of NIMPA and its surrounding communities, the newly established non-profit organisation NAMCOB works closely with the government and supports the management and monitoring of NIMPA. NAMCOB is focusing much of its conservation efforts on rehabilitating seabirds through the creation of a centre that will benefit seabirds such as the endangered African penguin, a keystone species whose population has declined by more than 50% over the last 30 years. It also plays a vital role in engaging the community in marine conservation and supporting coastal tourism.

By developing innovative strategies for sustainable resource use, the NIMPA+ project supports small-scale fisheries, gleaners and entrepreneurs, improving their economic benefits while protecting one of the world's most important marine ecosystems. The project will also inform the designation of two new MPAs (Namibe and Cape Fria EBSAs) located near the Angolan border in Namibia, setting the stage for a brighter future for the country's priceless marine biodiversity.

KEY TARGETS

Newly created MPAs:
6,275 km²

Effectively managed MPAs:
9,500 km²

Number of beneficiaries:
5,310

KEY ACTIVITIES AND AREAS OF WORK



MPA GOVERNANCE

- ▶ Support the government to develop and implement a management framework for NIMPA, including a new management plan and sustainable financing plan
- ▶ Implement NIMPA's long-term management and monitoring and engage the community in marine conservation
- ▶ Support Namibia's MPA expansion, using NIMPA as a model to designate two new MPAs in Namibe and Cape Fria
- ▶ Operationalise NAMCOB as an important awareness, education and research hub of marine conservation



SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

- ▶ Diversify and strengthen coastal livelihoods while promoting food security in ways that empower women and the most vulnerable, by e.g. introducing local markets and creating employment opportunities in the regional tourism industry
- ▶ Establish a fishers' association to support small-scale fisheries operating in NIMPA waters
- ▶ Provide business support and mentoring to new coastal micro, small and medium-sized enterprises



SPECIES CONSERVATION/SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES

- ▶ Monitor indicator species such as Cape fur seals and research elasmobranchs to generate novel datasets on species present in Namibian waters. This will inform conservation management strategies and their effectiveness for those species and around the NIMPA itself, as well as the designation and management of new MPAs
- ▶ Set up and implement an ecological monitoring plan for seabirds. Conservation measures include rescuing, rehabilitating, rearing and releasing of e.g. African penguins and monitoring their populations. Deploy seabird rangers to breeding sites



Photo: R. Braby



Photo: R. Braby