

PRESS RELEASE

Four research partners from Finland: Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK), Finnish Environmental Institute (SYKE), Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd. (VTT) and the University of Oulu, are pleased to launch a new project in Namibia on 16th of February 2016. The project is called NAMHUB – Green, Safe and Smart Transport and Logistics Hub to Namibia. NAMHUB is financed by Tekes – the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland together with the partners.

Co-operation between Finland and Namibia on transport and logistics was taken to a whole new level in 2012 when the marine research vessel R/V Mirabilis was launched from the Rauma shipyard in Finland. The Finnish Environmental Institute (SYKE) and Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK) trained the marine researchers and seafarers of R/V Mirabilis during the years 2012-2015. MARIBIA project (2013-2015) was a partnership between Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, the Polytechnic of Namibia and Namibia Maritime and Fisheries Institute (NAMFI) with a focus on improving maritime education in Namibia. This co-operation was taken to the next level in May 2015 in Rauma, when SAMK and Polytechnic of Namibia (now Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST)) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU). An ongoing research project NAMURBAN of SAMK and NUST heading for urban resource efficient development in Namibia was launch on 1st of October at the Residence of the Ambassador of Finland in Windhoek. The Technical Research Center (VTT) of Finland is studying fish-based biodiesel for Namibia in so-called FIBINA-project.

The NAMHUB project is based on the fast expansion of the mega hub in Namibia for transport and logistics activities in ports, roads and railway. Namibia as a key player of the mega hub is supporting import and export to neighboring countries and other SADC countries. There will be demand for products (transport infrastructure such as roads, rail road, bridges, ship building, cargo handling and lifting equipment) and services (crewing, logistics, safety, environmental training) by local stakeholders. The aim of the NAMHUB is to form an ecosystem for providing products, services, and capacity building in Namibia. The NAMHUB project partners are experts on green, safe and smart transport. Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK) is an expert on maritime and logistics activities (products, services, safety, security and surveillance), the University of Oulu on infrastructure project design and implementation of the technology for construction periods, the Finnish Environmental Institute on environmental risks prevention and surveillance and the Technical Research Centre of Finland on low carbon solutions for transport and logistics.

The specific solutions for products and services of NAMHUB are based on the analysis of the current situation and needs for transport and logistics in Namibia. Namibia's vision 2030 states that by the year 2030, Namibia will be a prosperous and industrialized country, developed by its human resources, enjoying peace, harmony and political stability. Namibia's National Development plan (NDP4) focuses on increased income equality, employment creation, and high and sustained economic growth. The economic priority areas are logistics, tourism, manufacturing and agriculture. NAMHUB widens the co-operation between Finland and Namibia from education to research, development work and business. By the year 2030 Namibia is envisaged to be the logistics and distribution hub of the Southern Africa with green, sustainable and safe infrastructure and actions.

The NAMHUB project is part of Tekes and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' BEAM - Business with Impact – programme for innovations, meeting the needs of developing countries and providing Finnish companies with new business opportunities in the growing markets of such countries. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland supports cooperation between Finnish higher education institutions and their partners in developing countries, with the aim of strengthening research and development work as well as business between the countries.

The NAMHUB project will be officially launched in a ceremony at the Residence of H.E. Ambassador of Finland, Ms. Anne Saloranta. The ceremony followed by a buffet reception will take place on Tuesday 16th of February at 10:00 hrs. at 3 Bruce Street in Klein Windhoek. Representatives of the media are warmly welcome to attend the event.

Statements will be made by Ambassador Anne Saloranta, Embassy of Finland, Prof. Tjama Tjivikua, Vice Chancellor of Namibia University of Science and Technology and the NAMHUB Project Manager, Dr. Minna Keinänen-Toivola, SAMK as well as the Finnish partners from VTT, SYKE and the University of Oulu. A buffet lunch is served after the official part of the program.