



NUST BRIEF

SCIONA project to enhance conservation efforts

The launch of the SCIONA Project, a initiative on “Co-designing of Conservation Technologies for the Iona-Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Conservation Area of Angola and Namibia,” was held last week. The project is funded by the European Union to the tune of N\$16 million.

NUST is the lead applicant and coordinator of SCIONA, in partnership with the Angolan Instituto Superior de Ciências de Educação da Huíla (ISCED). A multi-disciplinary team from the two institutions will research and develop technological tools to support government and community conservation in managing and monitoring the Northern-Namib Desert ecosystem.

Her Excellency Jana Hybášková, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Namibia, encouraged the researchers working on the project to engage with the local communities in the Kunene Region, saying that these are the key stakeholders in ensuring the success of the initiative.

The Iona – Skeleton Coast area is one of several recently established transboundary areas in southern Africa. It is situated in the northern Namib with its endemic fauna and flora and contains the Kunene River Delta, which is the second most species-rich coastal wetland in Namibia.

Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, the Minister of Environment and Tourism, applauded the project saying that the Namibian Constitution obliges government to actively promote and maintain the welfare of people by adopting policies aimed at the maintenance of ecosystems to the benefit of all Namibians.

Conservation continues to face many challenges and threats, including anthropogenic disturbances like illegal mining, overfishing and poaching of our iconic endangered desert Black Rhino. This is especially due to the remoteness, inaccessibility and vastness of the area, covering approximately 44 000 km².

“We are confident that through this project, Namibia’s community-led conservation model can be replicated in neighbouring Angolan communities to benefit from the improved biodiversity, which transboundary conservation will bring,” remarked Dr Tjama Tjivikua, the NUST Vice-Chancellor.



FROM LEFT: H.E Jana Hybášková, European Union Ambassador to Namibia; Dr Fernanda Lages, Associate Professor: Angolan Instituto Superior de Ciências de Educação da Huíla (ISCED); Dr Tjama Tjivikua, NUST Vice-Chancellor and Hon Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism.



Bernice Karuhumba, Manager: Entrepreneurship and Incubation: NBII (second from left); Hilaria Graig, Marketing and Communications Manager: Sanlam Namibia (second from right); Tertius Stears, CEO: Sanlam Namibia (far right), pictured with entrepreneurs.

Top 5 innovation finalists revealed

The top five finalists of the 4th Sanlam Innovation Works Competition for this year were announced recently. They are Lahja Ndeshipanda Amakali, Iriya Jona, Mareka Masule, Jesaya Muandingi and Petrus Nghipandulwa.

The Sanlam Innovation Works Competition, is a public platform that offers start-up funding for entrepreneurial projects that address key issues in innovation. The top five viable business proposals were selected from over 60 entries received.

“The emphasis is on finding ways to grow the economy by collectively providing a support structure to these entrepreneurs in order for them to become real businesses,” said Tertius Stears, CEO of Sanlam Namibia.

The candidates will receive mentorship and training, as well as advisory services from the Namibia Business Innovation Institute (NBII) and Sanlam Namibia. In addition, they will each receive N\$ 50 000, as seed capital and the final winner will be awarded an additional N\$25 000 at a ceremony that will take place in November 2018.

“This smart partnership was initiated to specifically curb the high unemployment rate

among the youth,” said Bernice Karuhumba, Manager: Entrepreneurship and Incubation at NBII. She further encouraged the finalists to be committed and to make necessary sacrifices during the eight-month period of the competition and beyond.

The business ideas include producing breakfast cereals; instant soups and sorghum coffee substitutes; harvesting Kelp seaweed, a marine resource of higher nutritional and medicinal value that is composed of rare vitamins and minerals; producing organic, essential oil based, nutrient filled body health products; development of mobile applications that commuters taxi can use to identify whether a particular taxi is registered or not, and designing a computer based SMS platform application that specifically encourages the improved involvement of parents/guardians in the educational affairs of their children.

CED makes skills accessible to persons with disabilities

The Centre for Enterprise Development (CED) in partnership with the National Disability Council of Namibia (NDCN), is currently conducting entrepreneurship training for persons with disabilities. The sessions are focused on business idea generation and operating successful and profitable businesses.

Tjiveza Tjombumbi, the Head of Research at NDCN said: “Persons with disabilities in the rural areas find it difficult to find opportunities that help in sharpening their skills. This is why a decision was taken to conduct this particular training in towns such as Gobabis. Our plan is to roll-out these opportunities to all corners of the country.”

Twenty participants took part in the six-month training, with an additional period for mentoring and coaching offered to the successful participants. The initiative was made possible through the financial support of the NamPower Development Fund and the Development Bank of Namibia.

In 2012 the NDCN and NUST signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which provides capacity-building initiatives to people with disabilities to equip them with the necessary skills to run successful businesses and make meaningful contributions to the local economy.



Participants in the entrepreneurship training for persons with disabilities.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

Theme: **Human Resource Management (HRM): Mitigating the Nations’ Turbulence Amidst Global Economic Challenges.** The forum will bring together academics in the field of human resource management, as well as practitioners, managers and leaders from industry to participate in sessions that will emphasise the integrating role of HRM in alleviating organisations’ challenges during global economic turbulence.

DATE: 22 - 23 May 2018

VENUE: Health Sciences Auditorium (NUST)

International / Local presentations:

-Prof René Schalk from Tilburg University, the Netherlands.

-Prof Bennie Linde from North-West University, South Africa, and others.

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<http://hrm-symposium.nust.na>