GOAL

To conserve seabirds on the Namibian coast and in its marine exclusive economic zone, with emphasis on the most threatened species

OBJECTIVES

- Deploy qualified Seabird Rangers to the main breeding islands for the successful management of Namibian Islands Marine Protected Area (NIMPA)
- Promote responsible governance of coastal and marine eco-systems, the conservation of marine life and promote harmonious coexistence between people, economy and the environment.
- Respond to seabird-related emergencies, such as oil spills.
- Set up the NAMCOB seabird rehabilitation center
- Provide training for the handling, care, rehabilitation and monitoring of seabirds, and for emergency response preparedness.
- Support the management of Namibia's marine conservation areas, particularly the NIMPA.
- Educate and raise public awareness for seabirds and coastal and marine biodiversity.
- Conduct monitoring, research and data management in support of seabird conservation with the objective to release a high percentage of seabirds back into the wild.

NAMCOB'S VALUES

- Uphold the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Namibian Constitution and the laws of Namibia.
- Support the conservation and sustainable development missions, goals and objectives of relevant government agencies responsible for coastal, marine and biodiversity management, protection and conservation.
- Apply best practice in all aspects of NAMCOB's work, including scientific evidence-based decision-making.
- Help develop the skills and expertise of Namibians in the conservation of seabirds and other coastal and marine wildlife and their habitats.

CONTACT US

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Namibia's most threatened breeding seabirds:

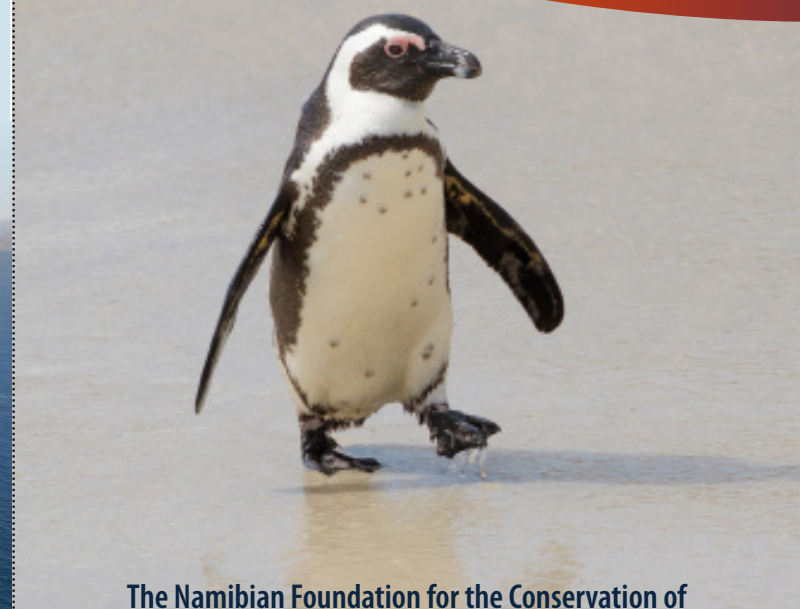
Cape Gannet
Critically Endangered

Bank Cormorant
Endangered

African Penguin
Endangered

Cape Cormorant
Endangered

The 9,500 km^2 Namibian Islands' Marine Protected Area (NIMPA) is an iconic area of outstanding marine biodiversity, supporting globally significant populations of seabirds and marine mammals, and important marine industries. It is Africa's second largest marine protected area.



The Namibian Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB) is a non-governmental, not-for-profit membership-based organisation, established as a Voluntary Association and body corporate separate from its members under Namibian Common Law.

KEY THREATS TO SEABIRDS

DECLINE IN THE FOOD BASE:

The overfishing of small pelagic fish in Namibia severely impacted the Northern Benguela Current ecosystem, particularly affecting top predators like seabirds. Effective management of NIMPA could reverse this degradation.

MORTALITIES THROUGH BY-CATCH IN FISHERIES:

Namibia's fisheries contribute to 10% of global seabird bycatch, killing about 30,000 birds annually (Rocha et al., 2021). Research demonstrates that implementing the 2018 Regulations for seabird bycatch mitigation measures such as Tori-lines for trawl and demersal longline operations have rapidly reduce the scale of mortality and NAMCOB will support the implementation of these regulations.

DISEASE OUTBREAK:

Since 2018, seabirds globally have faced high mortality due to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreaks. Support by conservation agencies will improve disease monitoring and response for current and future outbreaks. NAMCOB actively responds to disease outbreaks.

CLIMATE CHANGE:

Climate change may harm endangered seabird populations by causing nest site abandonment or reproductive failure through severe storms extreme heat events and rising sea levels in marine ecosystems.

CAPACITY LIMITATIONS:

Poor knowledge base, inadequate research and limited resources all contribute to increase the threat to seabirds and the marine ecosystem.

POLLUTION FROM OIL:

The country is on an important maritime trade route and has recently found significant offshore oil deposits.

BREEDING HABITAT DEGRADATION:

The African Penguins historically bred in burrows dug into a thick layer of guano (essentially a mix of bird excrement, feathers and sand). Large-scale guano havesting from the islands for the fertiliser industry resulted in the penguins being forced to breed on the surface, where they are vulnerable to predation and overheating.

PREDATION AND DISTURBANCE:

Predation by seals and gulls, both on the nest and at sea, can have significant impacts on seabird populations. Seals as well as people may cause disturbance in breeding colonies which impacts breeding success. Proper management is needed to address these issues.

EMERGENCY DISASTER RESPONSE

NAMCOB is developing and carrying out a disaster emergency response programme for incidents affecting seabirds, such as oil spills:

- Support the implementation of Namibia's National Oiled Wildlife Contingency Plan
- Set up oil containers with specialised equipment in Lüderitz, Oranjemund and by each main breeding colony

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

NAMCOB is a membership-based organisation established as a voluntary association. The members constitute the "Council", the highest decision-making organ of NAMCOB.

The Council elects members to serve on an Executive Committee at its AGM. The Executive Committee has all the necessary power to oversee and give strategic direction to NAMCOB.

The founder members of NAMCOB comprise the following:

- Debmarine – Namdeb Foundation (DNF)
- Maryland Zoo in Baltimore, USA
- Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)
- Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE)
- African Penguin Conservation Project
- Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB)

The current Executive Committee comprises a representative from each of the founding members. The Executive Committee can co-opt up to three additional members.

THREATS TO NIMPA: Overfishing, mining, pollution and large scale aquaculture. Insufficient government resourcing and management framework.

HOW CAN NIMPA BECOME SUCCESSFUL? Strengthen the formal management system of NIMPA and the capacities needed to implement it in order to secure important populations of biodiversity and marine ecosystem services. Engender broad support for NIMPA from civil society and engage coastal communities and strengthen and diversify coastal livelihoods

MONITORING, RESEARCH AND ACTION

Develop and implement NAMCOB's ecological monitoring plan in support of NIMPAs management plan, including:

- operationalization of standardized data collection and monitoring systems for seabird populations
- identification and authorized conservation interventions
- set up of tech-based monitoring tools
- support MFMR in monitoring potential fishery-seabird interactions
- identifying potential key areas of fisheries-seabird foraging overlap and advising management authorities on appropriate mitigation interventions
- developing an advocacy function to identify, prioritize, and mitigate emerging threats to seabirds and ecosystem health

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

a) **Institutional Members**, applicable to constituted organizations whose work, or active participation comprises an interest to promote, assist or support the conservation of seabirds and their habitat in Namibia

b) **Ordinary Members**, applicable to individuals, whose work or active participation includes interest to promote, assist, support the conservation of seabirds and their habitats in Namibia

c) **Junior and Student Members**, applicable to persons under the age of 21 years or who are *bona fide* students at any duly constituted educational facility, whether state or private, and who have an interest in seabirds, coastal and marine conservation and research, and who wish to become actively involved in the work of NAMCOB

d) **Corporate and Donor Members**, being businesses, bilateral and multilateral development partners, foundations, trusts and other institutions that channel corporate social investment (CSI) and donor funding to conservation initiatives.

Only Institutional and Ordinary Members have voting rights on the NAMCOB Council. Other membership categories may participate in all NAMCOB events. Application for membership is done online via the NAMCOB website OR email at **info@namcob.org.na**