

Press Release

lipopo (Namibia) / Frankfurt/Main (Germany), 13 April 2015



Water for the dry season – Handing over the floodwater harvesting plant in lipopo, central-northern Namibia

During the rainy season normally there is abundant rain- and surface water sufficient for irrigation purposes available in northern Namibia. During average rainy seasons, the widely branched river arms in the Cuvelai-Etoshia Basin, the Oshanas, carry large quantities of water which evaporate during the dry season. With its floodwater harvesting pilot plant in lipopo the German-Namibian project team from CuveWaters together with the local community has developed a solution for agricultural irrigation during the dry season. Today, the floodwater harvesting plant in lipopo was officially handed over to the village community.

Under the lead of the ISOE – Institute for Social-Ecological Research the project team had been exploring the novel utilization concept of floodwater harvesting. The floodwater harvesting plant was developed by the Technische Universität Darmstadt. The plant collects floodwater from the local Oshana. During the rainy season it is pumped into underground reservoirs and can then be pumped into smaller raised tanks.

During the dry season ten families are using this water to cultivate vegetables. They use it to irrigate patches within the greenhouse and a vegetable garden by applying water saving drip irrigation. The families till a field each for self-supply. They also sell vegetables on the market. “In former times we just let the water flow along the Oshanas” as Rauna Nakahambo, farmer and manager of the greenhouse remembers. “But now we got to know this method how to harvest water.” All farmers were trained in agriculture and in efficient water use.

In order to be able to use the plants when – like presently – rain fails to appear, they connected themselves to the public water supply system. “But we know from our time series analyses, that usually there is enough rain to secure the harvests for the next dry season in lipopo”, said project leader Thomas Kluge from ISOE on Monday on the occasion of the inauguration.

Successful Example for German-Namibian Cooperation

“The fact that we succeeded in establishing this measure adapted to the local circumstances is an excellent result of the close cooperation with the local population”, said Kluge and pointed out that the success of this project exemplarily demonstrated how natural water resources could be sustainably tapped with the help of small-scale plants in other dry regions of this planet as well. The floodwater harvesting plant is part of the CuveWaters overall project in the course of which pilot plants were developed with the help of various technologies in order to utilize local water resources and relive the central water supply system.

The handing over of the floodwater harvesting plant was part of the German weeks which have been taking place since March and which are organized by the German Embassy on the occasion of 25 years of German-Namibian cooperation. The German Ambassador to Namibia, Onno Hückmann also participated in the ceremony. He described the German-Namibian cooperation within the research project as future-orientated. “CuveWaters is a successful example showing how a research project can be of specific use allowing a long-term perspective for the rural communities”, said Hückmann.

Links

[CuveWaters Website](#) | [Film on Floodwater Harvesting](#) | [Photos from lipopo](#)

CuveWaters is a joint project of the ISOE, Frankfurt on the Main and the Technische Universität Darmstadt. It is sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The Namibian cooperating partners are the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF), the Outapi Town Council and the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN). Besides lipopo there are project sites in Outapi, Epyeshona, Akutsima and Amarika.

CuveWaters – Integrated Water Resources Management in the Cuvelai-Etoshia Basin
www.cuvewaters.net

Project coordination:
ISOE – Institute for Social-Ecological Research, Frankfurt am Main
Dr. Thomas Kluge
Alexia Krug von Nidda (coordination)
Tel. +49 69 707 6919 20
Mobile +264 81 210 71 28
cuvewaters@isoe.de

Project partner:
Technische Universität Darmstadt
Institute IWAR
www.iwar.tu-darmstadt.de

Corporate partners:
projaqua, Mainz
Terrawater, Kiel
Ingenieurbüro für Energie- und Umwelttechnik IBEU, Jülich
Bilfinger Water Technologies, Hanau

Partners in Namibia:
Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF)
Outapi Town Council
University of Namibia
Polytechnic of Namibia
Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN)
German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources (BGR)
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Media contact:
Melanie Neugart (ISOE)
Tel. +49 69 707 6919 51
neugart@isoe.de

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