

National Agricultural  
Marketing Council



# Seasons HARVEST

Issue No. 06



NAMIBIAN  
AGRONOMIC BOARD



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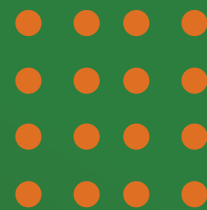
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# Editor's Note



**Auguste Fabian**  
Public Relations Officer

**D**ear reader, welcome to the 6th edition of our quarterly newsletter, the Season's Harvest.

As we strive to deliver on the KPIs set out in our 2019/20 – 2023/24 Strategic Plan, we focus more efforts on maintaining and strengthening stakeholder relations by ensuring that all industry stakeholders are abreast with relevant industry information.

In this edition, we shed light on developments within the agronomic and horticultural value chain spearheaded by the NAB to further cement cooperation with key industry players. These developments include the Memorandum of Agreement signed between the NAB and NSI, which is aimed at transforming the industry and promoting food and nutrition security in Namibia through the implementation of regulated standards.

We also highlight the NAB's participation in the 59th annual Agricultural Economics Association of Southern Africa (AEASA) conference. The conference provided a platform to forge mutually beneficial connections within the value chain from both academic and business spheres.



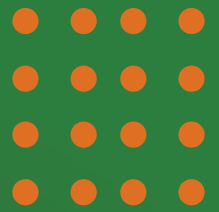
This was also meant to create long-lasting and sustainable synergies in the agricultural industry, especially where research is concerned.

In addition, we share more industry news on various stakeholder engagement activities such as the NAB Board members' familiarisation trip that took place in the Kavango-East region, the sesame information day and border control matters. Aspiring vegetable producers are also in for a treat as we share tips to consider when embarking on a vegetable production enterprise.

With all that said, let's keep in mind that each and every one of us has a role to play in the development and growth of our agronomy and horticulture industry. Therefore, let us support our local producers by buying local and consuming local fruits and vegetables. To borrow from the words of Sam Farr, *"remember that, to make agriculture sustainable, the grower has got to be able to make a profit"*.

*Until the next edition. happy reading!*

# CEO'S CORNER



**Dr. Fidelis N. Mwazi (PhD)**  
Chief Executive Officer

**D**uring the second quarter of the current financial year, the Namibian crop industry experienced various changes that have had a direct impact on the production volumes of some special controlled crops such as potatoes, onions, etc. Owing to this, the NAB Board as the governing body, passed resolutions to mitigate the factors accordingly.

During its board meeting held in August 2022, the board resolved to maintain the MSP scheme threshold at 47%. The decision was informed by the production forecast reports indicating a lower estimate of primary MSP in comparison to previous marketing seasons. By keeping the MSP at its current threshold, local traders will be able to maintain their market share.

To further enhance the implementation of the Agronomic Industry Act, the board also approved four technical administrative requirements relating to the exportation, importation, local production and transit of controlled products. These requirements will provide a regulatory framework aimed at strengthening the control of market quality assurance, food safety and the traceability



of controlled products within various segments of the agronomy and horticulture sectors in Namibia to enhance the Namibian food control system.

Furthermore, the NAB developed and published the marketing and commercial quality control for lettuce, berry fruits, watermelons and citrus fruits. The standards were developed in collaboration with the Namibian Standards Institution (NSI) and published on the 15th of August 2022 in the Government Gazette (GG 7878) as Government Notice No: 393.

Standards and quality are essential tools in the development of our crop industry. Therefore, the aforementioned regulatory standards' developments come at a crucial time as the NAB has finalised the preparedness for the implementation of the Quality Management System based on the ISO 9001:15 standard. After the internal audit stages were concluded earlier this year, we proceeded to the next step which entails launching an application for an independent audit through the NSI. This is an indication that the NAB is moving in the right direction in terms of implementing its strategic plan and in affirming our vision to become a world-class regulator of the vibrant, diversified and sustainable crop industry.

*I thank you*



# NSI AND NAB SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)



NSI CEO, Ms Chie Wasserfall and NAB CEO, Dr Fidelis Mwazi centre pictured with executives from their respective organizations pictured during the MoA signing ceremony.

Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) and Namibian Standards Institution (NSI) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) at a ceremony held on Tuesday 30 August 2022 in Windhoek.

The two institutions signed the MoA to transform the agricultural sector and to promote food and nutrition security in Namibia through the implementation of regulated standards aimed at governing the production and distribution of selected food items to the nation.

The NAB is a statutory body governed by the Agronomic Industry Act (Act No. 20 of 1992), and it is mandated to promote the agronomic and horticulture industry and to facilitate the production, processing, storage, and marketing of controlled products in Namibia through market regulation.

The NSI was established through the Standards Act (Act No. 18 of 2005) with the primary aim of developing and publishing national standards. The NSI's vision is to be a reliable service provider of standards-based solutions that can create confidence and improve the quality of life with the mission to provide standardisation and conformity assessment services to ensure the health and safety of consumers, protection of the environment and promotion of trade.

The main objective of the MoA is to enable the two organisations to collaborate in areas of standardisation, conformity assessments and testing and metrology. This will ensure that a formalised systematic approach to the development of Namibian standards is established

in the agronomy and horticulture industry sector. Thus, ensuring that Namibia produces good quality products that are able to access both local and international markets and enable fair competition with products from elsewhere.

Furthermore, the collaboration will benefit producers and traders in the form of access to a discounted rate for published crop-specific marketing standards, and access to public dialogues on matters about standardisation, conformity assessment, testing and metrology.

The MoA is expected to deliver a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of Namibia, undertake conformity assessments and standards development in the promotion of trade through the systematic reduction and elimination of trade barriers and the enhancement of the standard of living of their respective stakeholders through their cooperation.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the fragility of global supply chains and local food systems; therefore, rebuilding efforts must be focused on countries becoming more self-sufficient, resilient and productive.

The NSI CEO, Ms Chie Wasserfall, listed the key areas of the agreement that the NSI promises to deliver in fulfilment of this partnership which include but are not limited to the provision of technical advice to the NAB and its stakeholders on specific sector standards that are available at the national, regional and/or international level for adoption as National Standards; facilitate the adoption or

development of specific sector standards relevant to the mandate of the NAB as identified; and share information with the NAB and its stakeholders on their participation in the standards development process, as well as in the certification process.



NAB CEO, Dr Fidelis Mwazi and NSI CEO, Ms Chie Wasserfall signed on behalf of their respective organizations.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the NAB CEO, Dr Fidelis Mwazi, said, "In a quest to establish ourselves as a world-class regulator of a vibrant, diversified and sustainable crop industry, we commit ourselves to contribute to the implementation of the National Quality Policy by actively participating in activities of national quality, whilst engaging in robust stakeholder consultations to ensure that our local producers and traders are well informed and have access to the published crop-specific marketing standards as a way to inculcate a culture of quality within the industry".

This collaboration between the NSI and the NAB aims to strengthen local farm systems and also raise awareness of the importance of food security and food safety by implementing and adhering to standards related to crop production. The institutions have already begun discussions on activities that support the developmental initiatives towards a sustainable agricultural sector.

## NAB EMBARKS ON THE 2022 BOARD FAMILIARISATION EXCURSION

As a tradition, the NAB embarked on an annual familiarisation trip for its Board members and advisors to one of the seven production zones in the country. For the 2022/23 financial year, the Board familiarisation trip took place in the Kavango-East from the 1st to the 5th of August 2022.

Board familiarisation trips are aimed at creating a platform for the Board members as industry leaders to network with agronomy and horticulture producers, traders and processors, and this is a way to share success stories as well as challenges faced

by the farmers on the ground. This ensures that Board members effectively deliberate on regulatory matters that can enhance the development of the crop industry and thereby make informed decisions. Furthermore, familiarisation trips are also used as a tool for recognising the industry milestones and opportunities achieved within the value chain through the implementation of various policies and mechanisms facilitated by the NAB.

During the visit, the NAB CEO, Dr Fidelis Mwazi, highlighted the importance of having staff members that are capable of providing specialised inspection services for controlled crops such as blueberries, citrus, etc., especially now that the NAB has signed a service level agreement with the GLOBALG.A.P., that is centred around capacity development and facilitating the adoption of the local g.a.p. The Primary Farm Assurance (PFA) standard for implementation at the farm level and integration within the regulatory system is administered by the NAB.

"This is to ensure that products that are exported from Namibia meet international standards and that they compete fairly with other certified products in the market," Dr Mwazi said.

During the familiarisation trip, board members visited the K.E.M.E. project, Salem Community Project and Mashare Irrigation, all in the Kavango production zone respectively.



## K.E.M.E. PROJECT



Board members and advisors pictured during the visit to the K.E.M.E. project

Board members and advisors pictured inspecting grain storage facilities at the K.E.M.E. project



The K.E.M.E Project is a GlZ-funded project in the Ncamangoro constituency, in the Kavango-East region. The project produces various horticultural products and it has a well-established market with local traders. The project currently employs 23 full-time workers and seven temporary workers.

## SALEM COMMUNITY PROJECT

Board members and advisors pictured during information sharing sessions at the Salem Community Project that is 10 km to the east of Rundu Town along the Okavango River



Salem is a community-run project with 43 active members that all make a monthly contribution of N\$300 per hectare for its upkeep and successful operations thereof. Members consist mostly of women from the surrounding villages.

## MASHARE IRRIGATION



NAB board members and advisors accompanied by Mashare Irrigation and NAB secretariat management during the familiarisation visit



Mashare Irrigation is a large-scale project that produces various horticultural and agronomic crops. In 2019, Mashare Irrigation started to produce blueberries on a large scale, the first of its kind in Namibia. The project currently employs 140 permanent employees and 150 temporary or seasonal employees.



# NAB'S PARTICIPATION AT THE 59TH AEASA CONFERENCE

The Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) is a proud sponsor towards the 59th annual Agricultural Economics Association of Southern Africa (AEASA) conference. The NAB sponsored an amount of N\$50 000 towards the conference held from 02 to 05 October 2022, in Swakopmund, Namibia, under the theme, “How recent value chain disruptions shaped agri-food systems in sub-Saharan Africa”.

The conference was hosted by the Agricultural Trade Policy Institute (ATPI) of the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and it offers participants the opportunity to forge stronger connections within the value chain from both academic and business spheres to create long-lasting and sustainable synergies in the agricultural industry.

As part of the conference, the NAB collaborated with the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) of South Africa to co-host a workshop titled, “A Changing Southern African Agricultural Landscape - Statutory Measures, A Tool Driving Transformation and Inclusive Value Chains”. The workshop took place on the 3rd of October 2022.



NAB CEO, Dr Fidelis Mwazi, presented on the green economy concept from a crop perspective

The workshop aimed at driving panel discussions that showcase the transformation models used by different industries utilising levies and/or using the trust funds/income. Furthermore, the workshop focused on sharing practical experiences from the private sector partners on how they have introduced innovations towards the achievement of inclusive growth and transformation.

Various stakeholders from South Africa and Namibia within the agricultural industry presented their industry models and transformational interventions. The NAB CEO, Dr Fidelis Mwazi, delivered a presentation on the state of Namibia's Agronomy and Horticulture industry development as well as the quest for a green economy from a crop perspective.

Speaking at the conference, Dr Mwazi, said, “A green economy from a crop perspective in the face of economic crisis and climate variability is a must for Namibia to ensure economic development”.

*“Furthermore, it will allow us to define the current prevailing conditions which are not meeting the environmental, economic and social goals of sustainable development”, he concluded.*

The NAB remains committed to the development of the Namibian crop industry through the facilitation of production, processing, storage and marketing of controlled products in Namibia.



Delegates pictured during the workshop co-hosted by the NAB and the NAMC



# TIPS TO CONSIDER FOR A VEGETABLE PRODUCTION ENTERPRISE



**PAULINA MUBIANA**

Horticulture Market Development Officer  
at the NAB

Crop production is a vital tool for economic transformation and food self-sufficiency in Namibia. Vegetable production, in particular, offers opportunities for sustainable income generation and job creation. As such, many producers in Namibia have begun to diversify their farming production by venturing into vegetable enterprises.

Unfortunately, some start-up vegetable producers fail to remain in business due to factors that include insufficient skills, limited resources (water, land and capital) and a poor understanding of the vegetable market and trends. This article seeks to provide basic guidelines on critical factors for consideration in determining the viability of a vegetable production enterprise.

## CONDUCT A MARKET RESEARCH

It is crucial for producers to establish that there is a demand and a market for the type of vegetables that one chooses to produce before planting. Thus, it is recommended to conduct thorough market research to ensure that one only produces vegetables that are in demand and are most likely to bring higher returns. As part of the market research, producers must consider the following;

- Which type of vegetables and cultivars to grow and why?
- How much to produce (quantity)?
- When to produce that vegetable?
- Who are the targeted customers (formal or informal markets)?
- Establish market trends in terms of supply and demand

It is crucial for producers to address these questions before starting a vegetable enterprise so that they can understand the market and not after they have already planted. This is done to avoid challenges in terms of market access.

## IDENTIFY A RELIABLE WATER SOURCE

Water is a crucial resource for sustainable vegetable production. Before deciding on what and how much to produce, producers must identify the water source (e.g. borehole, river, canal, etc.), and analyse its capacity and reliability thereof. This will assist the producer in determining if the water source is sufficient enough to supply the required amount of water per specific vegetable type as per the targeted area size.

## ASSESS LAND VIABILITY

Land is another primary factor in sustainable vegetable production. The size of the land and the type of soil determine the type of crops that are suitable for growing in that particular area and the quantity that can be produced on that particular size of land. Producers are, therefore, encouraged to conduct a soil analysis to verify the vegetable growth suitability and ascertain the required soil nutrients for vegetable enterprises identified during the market research stage.



## ANALYSE PRODUCTION INPUTS

The producers need to have access to necessary and sufficient inputs for vegetable production. Therefore, the following shall be considered:

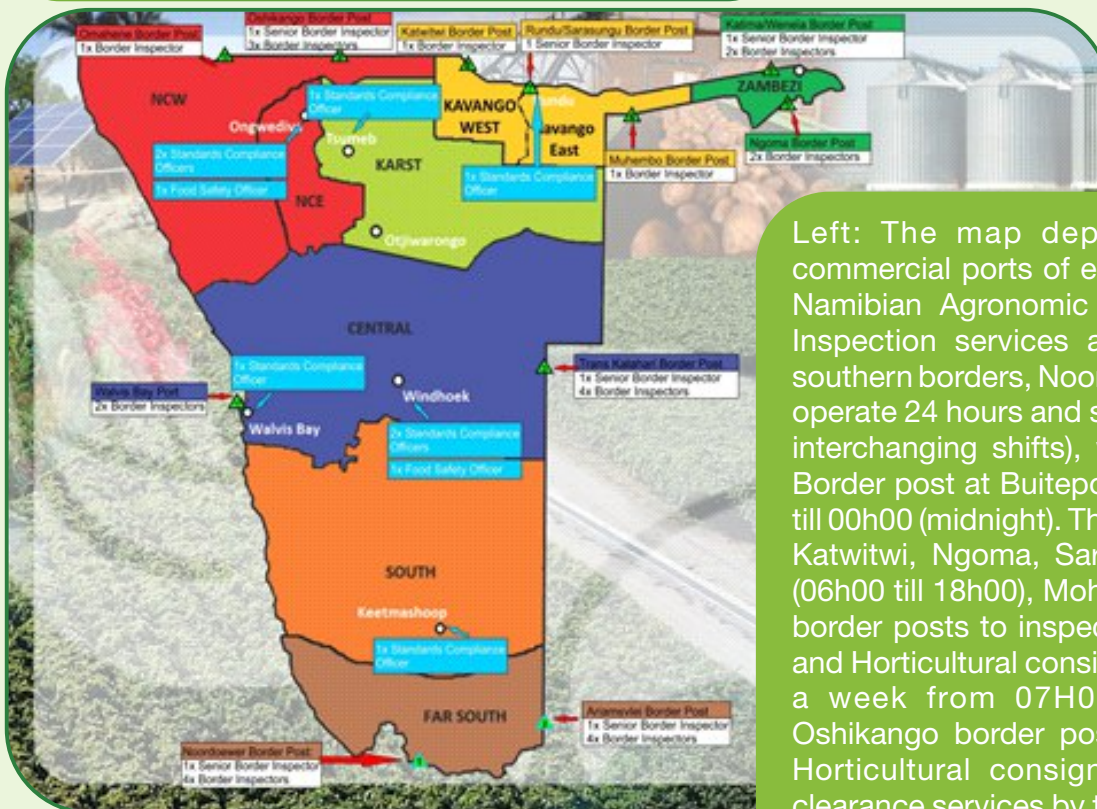
- Establish the cost of producing the needed crop (that is, the cost of seeds, land preparation, fertilizer, pesticides, packaging material, transport of produce to the market, labour costs, etc.);
- Only apply the right quantity of the lacking nutrients needed by the crop to ensure quality (as per the recommendations from the soil test/assessment);
- Use quality seeds that are resistant to diseases as opposed to low-quality seeds to gain a better yield; and
- Implement Good Agricultural Practices to be able to grow high-quality products, e.g. by adopting correct crop rotation schedules and effective pest and disease management practices.

## KEEP OPERATIONAL RECORDS

Vegetable producers need to maintain proper record-keeping of all operational activities of the enterprise. Remember, a producer can only manage well what he/she can measure. Farm records assist a producer in effectively planning for future production and ascertaining future contingencies. In addition, the maintenance of updated records enables producers to identify which crops generate more income than others.

To align production with the latest market trends, producers are advised to consult the NAB to establish the national vegetable demand and supply for products of their interest to make informed decisions. Producers can also secure a market through offtake agreements and maintain such commitment through consistent production and supply as per the agreed quality and quantity.

## FROM THE BORDERS



Left: The map depicts the eleven (11) commercial ports of entry and exit where the Namibian Agronomic Board Border Control Inspection services are provided. The two southern borders, Noordoewer and Ariamsvlei, operate 24 hours and seven days a week (with interchanging shifts), while the Transkalahari Border post at Buitepos operates from 07h00 till 00h00 (midnight). The NAB is also present at Katwitwi, Ngoma, Sarasungu, Katima Mulilo (06h00 till 18h00), Mohembo and Omahenene border posts to inspect and clear Agronomic and Horticultural consignments seven (7) days a week from 07H00 till 18H00. At the Oshikango border post, the Agronomic and Horticultural consignment inspection and clearance services by the NAB are from 08h00 till 19h00, seven (7) days a week.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



**Q: Are all agronomic and horticultural consignments sealed at the point of entry?**

**A:** No. Not all import consignments are sealed but only special controlled and controlled horticultural product consignments are sealed at the point of entry. All transit consignments are sealed for the purpose of implementing and ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework. NAB inspectors may from time to time implement the sealing of consignments as per the NAB Board Resolutions and/or for the purpose of compliance assessment.

**Q: When in possession of a valid NAB permit, is the importer restricted to use the entry port as indicated on the permit?**

**A:** Not necessarily. An importer with a valid NAB permit may use another port of entry into Namibia. It is advisable that if the importer is not sure of the port of entry to be used, they can indicate “various ports of entry” when applying for a permit.

**Q: Will your agronomic or horticultural consignment be allowed entry with an expired permit in order to apply for a new permit at the first point of offloading?**

**A:** No agronomic and horticultural consignments will be allowed entry into Namibia if the permit is expired or if the validity period is not yet in effect. The consignment will be detained and the owner of the consignment will be allowed to apply for another permit at their own cost; the consignment will only be cleared upon presentation of a valid permit and supporting documents.

**Q: Are the NAB Border Control Inspectors allowed to detain consignments at the border post?**

**A:** Yes, the NAB Border Control Inspectors are appointed as per Section 13 of the Agronomic Industry Act 20 of 1992, and they may therefore detain consignments that are non-compliant with the permit conditions, MSP Rules and Procedures, and the export, import and transit rules and procedures pertaining to border control. The NAB Border Control Inspectors may also detain consignments that are not compliant with Board resolutions pertaining to border control.

**Q: Are there special conditions for the transit consignment trucks?**

**A:** Yes, all trucks transiting through Namibia with agronomic and horticultural consignments shall be sealed. Hence, the design and make of the trucks must be sealable (e.g. flat-bed trucks should have hooks onto which the seals should be placed). Flat-bed truck consignments should be covered with a tent and a net, and all transit consignments should exit the Namibian territory within 48 hours from the time the consignment was cleared at the port of entry (permit conditions apply).

## HOW TO IDENTIFY NAB BORDER CONTROL INSPECTORS





# NAB AND UNAM HOST MIND-OPENING FARMERS' INFORMATION DAYS

*Farmers conducting visual varietal screening evaluation at Rema farm during the information day.*



During the second quarter of the financial year, the Namibian Agronomic Board (NAB) together with the University of Namibia (UNAM) successfully hosted thought-provoking and informative sesame research information days. The information days were held at Hochfeld (Rema farm) and Grootfontein (Hoba farm) respectively.

Farmers' Information Days are aimed at providing a platform for farmers and other stakeholders to observe the performance of the different sesame varieties planted in the trials while conducting visual varietal screening evaluations on agronomic scores of each variety.

Sesame (*Sesamum indicum*) is an oilseed crop with a high value for use in refined edible oil products with a global market value of over N\$97.5 billion (FAO, 2019; Bedigian, 2015). The global demand for high-quality seed oils continues to grow and this has led to escalated prices on cooking oil and related products in Namibia and globally.

Currently, there are no sesame production activities in Namibia, thus, the local market depends on sesame imports from neighbouring countries.

It is against this background that the NAB in collaboration with UNAM embarked on the first-ever sesame research trial cultivation in Namibia to identify well-adapted and high-yielding varieties for commercial production purposes, as well as to determine the exact production cost in the Namibian context. As part of the collaboration, the two institutions (NAB and UNAM) procured four sesame varieties from the National Cereals Research Institute (NCRI) international seed supplier in Nigeria and planted them at four Farmer-Managed research sites in the Central and Karst production zones for trial purposes.

The research trials aim to identify the best-performing varieties to be recommended to Namibian farmers for commercial production after the 2nd or 3rd trials through the relevant authorities regulating the seed industry. Sesame, a high-value export crop, once commercialised, will significantly contribute to socio-economic development.

# TOP TRADED AGRONOMIC CROPS IN NAMIBIA

## LOCAL PRODUCTION

Total tons produced during the 2021/22 Financial year.



**White Maize**  
90,895 Tons



**Pearl millet (Mahangu)**  
1,985 Tons



**Wheat**  
18 498 Tons

## LOCAL VALUE

Total local value during the 2021/22 Financial year.



**White Maize**  
N\$422,807,271



**Pearl millet (Mahangu)**  
N\$10,562,859



**Wheat**  
N\$125,231,256

## IMPORTS

Total tons imported during the 2021/22 Financial year.



**White Maize**  
112,985 Tons



**Pearl millet (Mahangu)**  
25 Tons



**Wheat**  
126,441 Tons

## IMPORTS VALUE

Total Import value during the 2021/22 Financial year.



**White Maize**  
N\$405 Million



**Pearl millet (Mahangu)**  
N\$104 Thousand



**Wheat**  
N\$665 Million

## EXPORTS

For the year under review, no grains were exported.

# REPORTING SMUGGLING VIA SMS

This platform should only be used to report incidents of suspected cross-border smuggling of agronomic and horticulture products.

## HOW TO REPORT AN INCIDENT

### Message Format

Report **SPACE** type the incident you would like to report.

**NB:** The message should include the exact location and the type of product suspected to be imported. - **Send to 79500.**

### Ts & Cs Apply

- A fee of N\$0.40 for each
- SMS160 characters per SMS







NAMIBIAN  
AGRONOMIC BOARD

## CONTACT US

### Windhoek Head Office



+264 (61) 379 500



PRO@nab.com.na

## BORDER OFFICES



Ariamsvlei Border Office



+264 63 280031



Ariamsvlei.Border@nab.com.na



Noordoewer Border Office



+264 (63) 297815



Noordoewer.Border@nab.com.na



Katima Mulilo Border Office



+264 (66) 254903



Katima.border@nab.com.na



Walvis Bay Port Office



+264 (64) 204221



Walvisbay.Border@na.com.na



Ngoma Border Post



+264 (66) 250621



Ngoma.border@nab.com.na



Oshikango Border Office



+264 (65) 265524



Oshikango.Border@nab.com.na



Transkalahari Border Office



+264 (62) 560474



Transkalahari.Border@nab.com.na



Muhembo Border Office



+264 (66) 265805



muhembo.border@nab.com.na



Omahanene Border Office



+264 (65) 259670



mahenene.border@nab.com.na

## INLAND OFFICES



Ongwediva Office



+264 (65) 238619



Tsumeb Office



+264 (67) 222571



Katima Office



+264 (66) 253524



Rundu Office



+264 (66) 256718



Keetmanshoop Office



+264 (63) 221013