



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SELF DRIVERS TRAVELING IN REMOTE WILDERNESS AREAS OF NAMIBIA

If you are planning on traveling in the remote wilderness areas of Namibia (Damaraland, Kaokoveld, Caprivi...), please be aware that it is a privilege to still be able to travel in such unspoilt areas, and with that privilege comes great responsibility. There are essential rules to follow which will help conserve these sensitive areas for years to come and which will at the same time respect the local communities living in them.

- **Do not sleep in river beds** - this may disturb the wildlife as well be hazardous for your own safety (dangerous animals and flash floods).
- **Only camp in designated areas/campsites and use the community campsites wherever possible** - the local people have accepted that they live in close proximity to potentially dangerous animals. Help support these communities benefit from tourism by paying the requested campsite fees, so that the impact of conflicts with wildlife can be minimized - it is a win-win situation. By using the designated campsites you also minimize pollution and additional ecological damages.
- **Do not camp within 2km of any spring/waterhole** - this may prevent wildlife travelling vast distances from drinking at these sources, or alternatively it could put you in an unnecessary dangerous situation if the wildlife gets too close.
- **Get to your campsite before dark and do not walk about at night** – this is for your own safety.
- **Always cover the ashes from your fire with a shovel** - this will reduce the chances of a bush-fire.
- **Only use well-marked tracks and NEVER create a new one** – this prevents visual pollution and ecological damages, as the area does not receive enough rain for tracks to get recovered.
- **Do not take a road if you do not know where it leads** - even if you have a GPS along, make sure you find out before traveling how long it usually takes to drive a stretch of road in your planned route. In this wild terrain, a distance of a mere 30-40km can take 7-8 hours!
- **Do not make the wildlife run** – apart from making them thirsty (and a lack of water is a problem!), it also increases the chances in the long run that they will become aggressive towards you or future selfdrivers and even the local community.



TOSCO Trust – Reg. No. T86/12

Tel: +264 (0)61 401510 - Cell: +264 (0)81 4535 855

Email: info@tosco.org - Website: tosco.org - PO Box 35025, Pioneers Park, Windhoek, Namibia

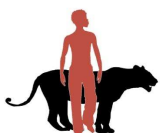
- **Take all rubbish with you** - there are no rubbish treatment facilities in the north.
- **Take along your own firewood** – you are not permitted to chop down any trees for firewood.
- **Leave your camp cleaner than you found it.** Burn or take out your used toilet paper.
- **Ask permission before photographing the locals.** Gifts such as sugar, maize meal, and tobacco are commonly accepted as payment. However, it is better to visit the demonstration village in Puros or Opuwo, as these are real Himbas showing their culture with limited negative influence from tourism. This is simply a matter of respect for their privacy.
- **A 4x4 vehicle is necessary** – again, this is for your own safety and it minimizes erosion. Also know your vehicle's fuel range as fueling options in these areas are very limited. A vehicle outfitted with a watertank is also a big bonus as you will need to bring your own water along.
- **Always use a recommended local guide to discover an area** - never underestimate local knowledge & support the ones who welcome you into their area.
- **DO NOT ENTER restricted conservation areas like the Skeleton Coast Park** – entry into these areas is illegal and it causes damage to sensitive conservation areas.

PLEASE REMEMBER: If you bring it in, take it out! Take only photographs and leave only footprints!

If you are lucky enough to see Elephants:

- **Stay in your vehicle at all times and be quiet.**
- **Stay downwind and at least 100m away** to leave both yourself and the elephants ample space to prevent confrontation.
- If they start to turn or move away, **do not follow or chase them.**
- **It is dangerous to drive or walk around**, especially at night and in dense vegetation.
- **Elephants may charge if agitated.** Often they warn you by shaking their head at you. Breeding bulls in “musth” are especially unpredictable and aggressive.
- Activated car alarms and horns have been known to aggravate elephant's attitude.

Be safe, not sorry!



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