

# **The Carnivore Environmental Education Teacher Workshop**

***“The challenges in utilizing predator education to support environmental education in schools to increase pride in Namibian biological heritage”***

A Facilitated Workshop Conducted in Partnership Between

Cheetah Conservation Fund, Namibia,

Cincinnati Zoological and Botanical Gardens  
Angel Fund, Ohio, U.S.A.

Cheetah Outreach, Western Cape, South Africa

The Smithsonian Institution National Zoological Park’s  
Conservation and Research Centre, U.S.A.

29 June – 1 July 2002

## ***PROCEEDINGS REPORT***

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**Report Reviewed by Working Group Representatives**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education and Communication was identified as a priority for the conservation of the cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) during a Global Master Planning workshop in August 2001. Environmental education (EE) was deliberated as a key point of divergence for the promotion of environmental stewardship across the board. As a result, the Education Working Group of the Cheetah Interest Group was formed and the 2001 Cheetah Outreach/Smithsonian/Western Cape Education Department workshop was endorsed as a model to increase resources in Africa in order to enhance the development and implementation of multi-level education.

The Cheetah Conservation Fund has been working in Namibia for the past eleven (11) years, in close association with local communities and school environments. Through intensive investigation and survey of the human population at the forefront of the human-cheetah conflict, social and economic aspects of predator conservation in Namibia were identified as underpinning obstacles to efficient predator management. At the core of this issue was a fundamental deficiency in ecological knowledge and understanding of the role of predators in the ecosystem. Hence, CCF has developed an Environmental Education protocol, whereby resources have been developed and distributed amongst Namibian teachers with personal contact time for teachers and students forming an integral part of their efforts to prevent the extinction of the cheetah. After discussions with environmental educators and scientists at the Global Master Planning Workshop, the Cheetah Conservation Fund and its international partners took the initiative to expedite a workshop for Namibian teachers, as an expansion to their long-term education programme.

After further evaluation of community and teacher needs within Namibia, CCF and its' partners formulated a focusing question which would aid in directing discussions pertaining to the development and amplification of environmental education and carnivore awareness in Namibian schools and communities.

***“ What are the challenges in utilizing predator education to support environmental education in schools to increase pride in Namibian biological heritage?”***

This set the foundation for the 2002 Carnivore Environmental Education Teacher Workshop, held between 29 June and 1 July, at the Cheetah Conservation Fund's Research and Education Centre, near Otjiwarongo in Namibia. A total of 30 participants attended the workshop, of which 13 were Namibian educators that were subsequently empowered as stakeholders. The workshop was professionally facilitated by Jennifer Buff of the Smithsonian Institution's Conservation and Research Centre and formally documented by Katherine Tolmay of Massey University, New Zealand. Presenters represented a variety of environmental education stakeholders such as multi-national environmental educators, multi-national non-government conservation organisations and Namibian ministerial and education associations. The Cincinnati Zoological and Botanical Gardens Angel Fund generously sponsored the workshop and will provide funding for the printing and distribution of resulting resource material to the stakeholders and teacher participants.

The specific objective of the workshop was to provide educators in Namibia with a platform upon which to clarify and report the current issues precluding effective environmental education in Namibian classrooms. In symbiosis with this theme was the need for the evolution of infrastructure enabling the exchange of information, resources and experience amongst teachers and conservation or education organisations.

Preliminary workshop discussions resulted in the classification of three (3) priority issues to the impedance of environmental education in Namibia. Participants articulated these as follows:

- ❑ **Resources and Teacher Training:** Inadequate accessibility or irrelevant environmental education resources inhibit teachers from incorporating environmental education into their lessons. Teachers are not skilled in the underlying knowledge necessary for proficient dissemination of environmental education themes and information.
- ❑ **Motivation and Attitudes:** Negative attitudes and poor motivation arise from a lack of knowledge and misinformation
- ❑ **Curriculum:** The current curriculum is inflexible and environmental education cannot be easily incorporated into the required learning objectives.

The three (3) working groups reported a variety of promising solutions with which to address the issues and subsequently action steps were distinguished, providing detail as to how to implement remedial measures.

The primary outcomes of these discussion groups were the need for teachers and conservation organisations to liaise more efficiently and regularly in order to distribute and review existing EE resources, as well as develop new and more relevant teaching materials. In service training was identified as requiring EE skills training and EE centres must become more accessible to the end-users. Pro-active marketing and advertising of available resources will enhance awareness amongst educators as to their role in EE for future generations, as well as providing motivational support to already highly-committed teachers.

International partnerships are included as a critical step in the process of building resources and changing attitudes to wildlife conservation. Opportunities for advanced teacher training as well as reward for efforts within EE must be promoted within Namibia.

Communication and networking amongst educators and environmental organisations will be developed and maintained in a progressive manner so as to identify key personnel and resources. Alignment with the curriculum was discussed in detail by many of the participants and stakeholders and much effort is underway to ensure the relevance and correlation of future environmental resources.

Transportation, financial and time constraints are to be addressed with conservation organizations and education ministries in order increase accessibility to EE for both learners and teachers. A strong theme that emerged during this workshop was the acknowledgement of the underlying social and economic issues affecting EE in Namibia. These issues are often central to conservation issues and must be addressed in order to increase ecological and cultural knowledge in a manner that is relevant and practical for teachers and learners.

**Carnivore Environmental Education Workshop  
Namibia 2002**

## ***PARTICIPANT EVALUATION SUMMARY***

### Workshop Goals

What were your goals in attending this workshop?

- Learn about predators, their role in the ecosystem and how can we [ ? ] by teaching the young generation with knowledge about predators
- Looking at how to integrate predator education into Namibian education
- I wasn't sure what to expect—I was coming to help pull it off and hope that I'll be able to provide a helpful resource for predator education in Namibia and in the U.S.
- Identify ways and means of improving the standard of EE in Namibia. Enhance my knowledge of EE [ ? ] in the country.
- To know more about predators and their behaviour and how to incorporate predators in my EE activities with youth.
- Empower and equip myself to more effectively present EE
- Identify problems with using EE as a tool in the classroom; learning more re EE in Namibia
- To offer assistance to Namibian teachers from an educator's point of view from the U.S.A. To also establish connections with fellow teachers around the world.
- To learn more about the predators and EE
- To learn more and share ideas on how land resources can be protected and utilized sustainably
- Learn, get an awareness and appreciation for the environment and environmental education
- Learn some ideas on how to help teachers with their lesson plans with outreach programmes
- Presenter and EE/predator interest
- Understand the usefulness of a cheetah as an animal; gain information that I can practically use in my class
- To become more aware of the problems and solutions facing the carnivores of Namibia

Did the workshop fulfil your goals? If not, why not.

Yes 111111

- Yes. I learned a lot and feel that awareness is what makes a person react positively
- Very much so. I was amazed and felt very bonded with all participants

- I was hoping there would be a greater contingent of primary teachers and could've gotten more feedback on the resource I'm expecting to produce.
- Not really, I have picked up a few tips, but the workshop concentrated more on teachers in the classroom.
- Mostly, helped ID and found out more re problems in Namibia; more information re EE in Namibia would be interesting
- The workshop revealed substantial angles of environmental and possible solutions and demonstrated fantastic approaches
- Yes it did. I plan to be involved in EE on several levels—school, friends, church, etc.
- It did to a certain extent, we still need more practical activities that can be carried out in class. But overall it made me aware of nature than before.

## Workshop Resource Material

Was the resource material provided relevant and of use to you? In what way?

- Very good. We kept progressing very fast and easily follow the discussions because it was on paper
- Yes, good overview, good activities
- I learned a great deal about EE, cheetahs, Namibian perspectives, beliefs, education systems, and teaching styles
- Interesting, may be helpful in designing curriculum—haven't evaluated yet.
- All resource material is useful
- Yes, although I might not have reviewed all, the paper and computer work was handy.
- Yes, the resource provided has helped me to understand predator education
- Yes, it has given me potential ideas to use in my class
- How to intertwine ecological messages in normal classroom lesson by Mr. Blake
- Yes, will be able to use it to build lesson plans for classrooms, etc.
- Yes, simple to understand
- Yes, the resources about the cheetah are important and interesting and serves as a model for other animals. Other resources will help in presentation skills planning and goal setting skills.
- Yes, help me to get predator conservation more effectively across
- They were more helpful in dealing with predator as animals, how to care, why should we conserve, etc.
- I am trying to start a facility, and the material provided gives good info and ideas to use for U.S. education

Will you be able to utilise the resources provided in your classroom? If not, why not?

Yes 111

- Yes by adding and improving to be relevant to my classroom situation

- Did not obtain portable materials, probably because I was a late-comer
- I would be able to use some resources, but more need to be developed
- Yes, develop predator education activities with out-of-school youth.
- It will be a challenge to incorporate EE into chemistry and physics lessons. However, there is a section on environmental chemistry and another section about earth and space in the physics section.
- Yes definitely
- Some—too specific in some areas
- Most of them created a challenge, the cheetah book is a promising resource in EE, it will be one of the major resources. It also pose a challenge for me as a teacher to make my own and use environmental, local available material.
- No because the problems in Namibia are not the same as the U.S., but the problems can be introduced to the U.S.

## Workshop Presentations

How do you rate the presentations overall?

Poor

Reasonable

Good 111111111

Excellent 11111

- Provided great background info

Which presentation did you find the most useful? Please say why.

- Tough to answer. All were wonderful
- Animal phobias
- Animal phobias and animal critter lab gave me practical tools to overcome problems in my class
- Blake Wills on termites to include a cross curricular teaching by including different skills to be observed in the learner
- Blake's
- I feel the lion would have been the most interesting for me if the presenter could have made it.
- Animal phobias—love psychology
- Integration of mini-animal in mathematic and other classwork in the normal school schedules by Mr. Sills and how entire education could be approached by cheetah outreach team. These presentations [ ? ]
- Identification of predators and their critical role in the ecosystem; relevant to my work; Birds of prey; simplify learner understanding—relevant
- Graem Wilson—NEEN—broadened my understanding on the concept of the environment and Sandy Ball—Animal Phobia—learn how to desensitise my fears and other people's fears of animals and other fears

- Phobias, solution and actions, education, etc.
- Cheetah Outreach and Laurie's CCF history, because it helps with starting a U.S. education facility

Which presentation did you find the least useful? Please say why.

- None really
- Hard to say
- Current status of EE in Namibia—need more in depth explanation
- All useful
- None
- Vulture/poison—It was more of problems experience between partners which will not help us to resolve the problem

## Workshop Outcomes

Were you able to express your concerns adequately? If not, why not?

Yes 1111111111

- My concerns were not relevant to Namibia, but I felt I had a few good suggestions to aid the group
- There was plenty of time for me to say all my ideas
- Yes, there was adequate opportunities for each participant to express his/her views
- Yes, we did
- Although I am not familiar with Namibia, people were willing to listen to me and the ideas I had, whether they were relevant or not.

Was this workshop a valuable use of your time? Please explain.

Yes 11

- Very much, I learned a lot, gave me an opportunity to discuss issues with people who are dealing with current problems and trying to bring a change without payment or blaming others
- Yes, very interesting to meet Namibian teachers and learn about their education system
- Yes, especially if even one of our ideas came through and are successful
- Yes, although the workshop was over the weekend, it was very useful, but very compact and concise
- Yes, it has stimulated my thinking, developed relationships and given me practical tools
- We need more workshop
- Yes—if I was of use to the educators present, then my time was well spent.
- Yes, good atmosphere



- This workshop was worthwhile to spend time at rather than doing with norms of the weekend
- Yes, up to now I have had very little awareness and little sense of responsibility towards the environment
- Yes, made valuable contacts; learned more effective teaching skills
- Yes: need to think through positive predator advertising within EE and various target groups for our own program

## Obstacles to Attendance

What obstacles did you have to overcome in order to attend this workshop?

Lack of time 11

Lack of transportation 11

Lack of interest

Lack of awareness about the workshop 11

Other

- I had field tasks up to Saturday to accomplish
- I am from CCF
- Poor pre-organization on themes, audience, etc.
- Getting information earlier
- None
- Expense travels due to the travelling from the U.S.A.

## Environmental Education Challenges

What issues regarding environmental education in Namibia do you see as priorities?

- Water, wild animal—especially endangered animals, pasture management
- Resources and training for teachers
- Need to align the current syllabi to EE expectations or predator education
- Basic EE—understanding basic ecological principals
- Knowledge of predators and why they are misunderstood and important to our livelihood
- Supply relevant, appropriate environmental resources to all schools. EE must be pointed out as a crucial component in pupils' lives and should be taught seriously.
- Predator education, awareness, funding for EE
- Letting people see EE pay and help them physically in some way
- Awareness, attitude, resources
- Training and awareness
- Lack of access and capacity of the teachers to preach environmental issues in the school schedules
- Poaching and killing of predators by farmers; littering in the cities
- Teacher willingness to incorporate EE into lesson plans; transport lacking

- Placing it in formal education; placing it in informal and non-formal education
- Saving of tropical forestry, animal husbandry, management system

How important do you think international partnerships are in implementing more effective EE in Namibia?

- Help with strategy to implement the programs; work on elements necessary for approval of project proposals
- Very—I think the experience and support of other countries will be essential.
- International partnerships are essential for us to better understand each others similarities and differences. Without helping each other, obstacles are more difficult to overcome
- Provide technical support to Namibian EE institutions. Help encourage and motivate teachers and learners (guest speakers would do).
- When it comes to funding, they are the only ones reliable and they get things done.
- Very important
- They are important as an aid, but Namibia should own the process
- 100%--have the interest and the expertise
- They facilitate EE by guiding Namibians to follow the steps taken in other parts of the world
- It is important to share ideas and to increase each other's passion and responsibility for the environment
- Crucial. Can provide expertise and much needed finance
- Very: knowledge, sharing, financing, philosophy, etc.
- We can't do without their expertise; donations, etc.
- The partnerships going on now are proof of the importance
- Important

How can Cheetah Conservation Fund and international partners assist in resolving these issues?

- Conduct workshop with all relevant parties; bring awareness through media, newspaper, booklets
- Producing materials and training collaboratively with teachers
- Ensure a voice for as many stakeholders as possible by including these individuals as participants
- By working together
- Work together to get things organized and get good ideas to resolve the issues
- Through networking with organisations that have been involved in similar projects for some time now. Their experience-based assistance will be of substantial value.
- They provide platform to raise these issues and provide necessary financial support in resolving these issues.
- Adapt existing program to help teachers etc. be motivated to make EE doable
- Resources, workshops, awareness campaigns
- Close cooperation and networking; training; awareness

- Going around the country informing people about EE
- CCF plays a vital role as a channel through which information and other physical materials from international partner come in.
- CCF is already doing a great job. Regular courses and workshop will widen the network of interested teachers and educators throughout the country
- By initiating process and using cat as ambassador by contacting schools and communities organisation, e.g., churches, bars, etc.

Do you feel better able to face your challenges towards environmental education?

Yes 11111111

Why or why not?

- Yes, knowledge is the key to life
- I need to get background knowledge on Namibian education in order to produce resources
- Yes, because awareness has been created and now determination will carry over
- Liked all the input
- I feel empowered to approach various EE institutions and media on environmental issues without fear. After all, it is our challenging responsibilities and we owe it to the nation.
- I had acquired tools to provide promising solutions and am able to come up with realistic action steps that are cheap to carry out.
- Equipped
- I'm committed
- I can share much of the info that I received here to individuals and groups—I can now help others also become more aware of conserving the environment
- No and Yes—Few participants, not such clear workshop subjects—what participants developed
- Because of good content on predator education, learn how to appreciate, care
- Yes, because I have more information on the problems facing the environment in Africa

## Future Needs

What changes would you like to see made to future workshops?

- More community members and elders be invited to share what they did in the past so that we can see how to improve in our own situation at present
- Better organization, stick to agenda, too long of days—suggest 9 to 5—maybe less presentations, better equipped to meet basic needs (e.g., refreshments in a.m.)
- Participants gather the existing work and publications in the field from which we can depart.

- There needs to be a workshop where teachers have time to highlight standards from other subject areas to then align EE integrating these subjects
- We should be sent more information in advance; time and proper planning
- More practical activities, e.g., interactive lessons given practically, allow participant to work out sample lesson plans in groups and give them
- More teachers involved, agenda to be issued before the time, should concentrate workshop in one direction, i.e., either working groups or presentations—not enough time for both
- Whole Namibia (all regions) should be represented
- See more teacher, more local, communities leaders, farmers, etc.

What additional materials/resources/information would be helpful in facilitating your efforts in environmental education?

Curriculum 11111

Teacher education 1111111

Student materials 1111111111

Guest speakers 111111

- International or locals who have accomplished something in EE
- Farmers who are making environment work for the community
- All topics
- Guest speaker help a lot to motivate, see the seriousness of the campaign

Films/Videos 11111111

Other

- School dramas and community dramas
- Funds
- Magazines
- Any media vehicle
- Many schools have video facilities, they might be helpful

What prerequisite knowledge do your learners need before effective environmental education can take place?

- Importance of EE; love towards their environment
- Literacy, understanding of basic ecological principals to be taught from 1<sup>st</sup> grade
- Local environment, animals, basic analytic skills
- I would like to teach more about the countries where predator animals came from to bridge connections
- Background information
- A solid ecological base, terminology, animals, etc.
- Interest and commitment
- Knowledge of what environment is and what their role in it is
- ?? maybe what environment is—i.e., everything in time and space
- Basic ecological principle; changing attitudes and how to care; how to overcome animal phobia

How much parental support or resistance exists in your school for environmental education?

- Some parents do not participate by helping their learners with what is requested by the school
- Little to moderate support exists. Parents do not necessarily value some of its benefits yet, at least not at this stage.
- 70% parental support
- No resistance exists at all. My parents would gladly help, but I am from a high socio-economic level from the U.S.A.
- Prior to today, I had no awareness of EE. My assessment of parental support as resistance to EE is very bad
- No resistance—children and private schools
- Very less, no awareness
- Parents need education throughout the country—most parents in the country have no education

Do you have other comments you would like to make?

- Environmental education is a community and national issue—not just schools or [ ? ]. \*Quality vs quantity—good teachers who worked in small groups taking the workshop personally
- Thanks for inviting me
- Keep thinking together, we can make a difference. Impressed with the way it was set up
- I think all participants were wonderful!
- I feel more workshop should be done regionally
- Thank you for everything
- Workshop was good organized with perfect time keeping
- I want to thank the sponsors, the facilitator, Laurie and the CCF staff and everyone who contributed in any way to this enlightening and powerful workshop.
- Thank you
- I think that a smaller group is more personalized and you connect on a more personal level, which means people trust you more and want to work with you more