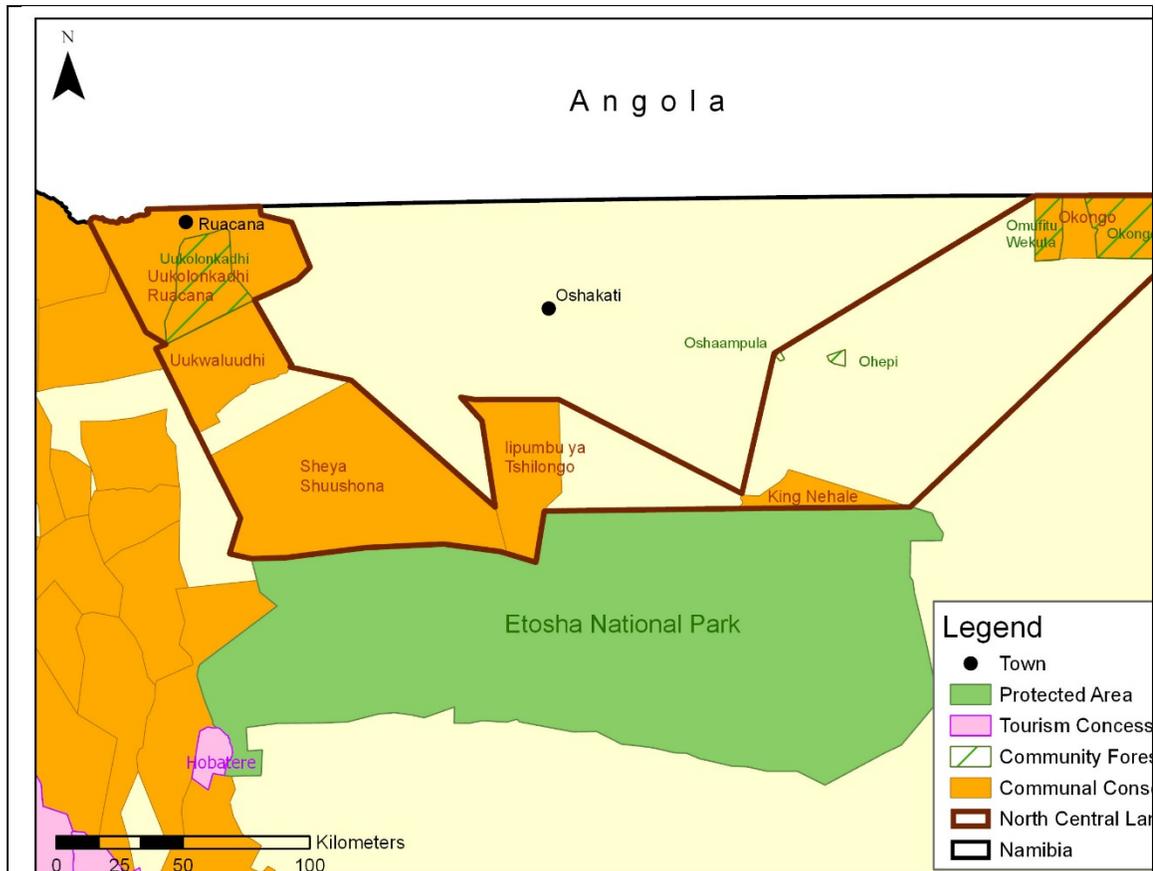


Landscape Name: North Central



Location & Size: The landscape size is 25,036km². It is located in sections of Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshikoto and Oshana regions and cuts across 9 political constituencies of Okaknkolo, Omuthiya, Okongo, Ruacana, Onesi, Tsandi, Okahao, Otamanzi and Uuvudhiya. It borders Angola to the north, Kavango West Region to the East, Kunene Region to the west and Etosha National Park to the south. It covers six conservancies, namely Okongo, King Nehale, Iipumbu ya Tshilongo, Sheya Shuushona, Uukwaluudhi and Uukolonkadhi, and 9 Community Forests (Uukolonkadhi, Uukwaluudhi, Ongandjera, Otshiku tshilithilonde, Ohepi, Oshaampula, Okongo, Ehangano, and Omufitu Wekuta).

Population: The total population of the area is 165,087 people (NSA, 2011). The dominant inhabitants of the area are Ovambo people while the other inhabitants include Dhemba, Himba and the San people. The latter 3 are classified as vulnerable indigenous minorities.

Landscape: Soils and topography: North-Central forms part of the extensive Kalahari Sand Basin and the central part is intersected by a network of shallow water courses locally known as *Oshanas* which comprise the Cuvelai Delta (Strohbach *et al*, 2002 and Hangula *et al*, 1998). The topography is flat typically of the Kalahari Sandveld regions. A large proportion of the soils in this area are broadly categorised as *Arenosols* or sandy soils (Mendelson, 2002). The Deep Kalahari Sands are found in the Eastern and Western parts while clayey sodic sands dominate in the Oshanas with sodic sands occurring on the surrounding higher grounds. Sands and Loams occur largely to the North, South, East and West of the Cuvelai Dealta (Mendelson, 2000). Soils in this area have fairly high

suitability for crop cultivation, relative to other soil types in other parts of the country (Mendelson, 2002).

Rainfall: The average annual rainfall varies from 550-600 mm in the wettest areas in north-east to 250-300 mm in the drier south-western parts around Etosha (Mendelson *et al*, 2000). Rainfall in this area is highly variable in amount and temporal distribution. It is estimated that 83% of all rainwater evaporates soon after it has fallen while percolation rate is also very high (Hangula *et al*, 1998).

Vegetation: *Combretum colinum*, *Terminalia Selicea*, *Colophospermum Mopane*, *Terminalia prunoids-Colophospermum Mopane*, *Acacia nilotica*, *Acacia hebeclada* shrubs, *Eragrostics Cilianensis*, *Oryzidium barnabadii*, *Aristida stipiodes*, *Harpagophytum Zeyberi* (Devil's claw), Palm trees etc.

Wildlife: The area is endowed with various bird species such as eagles, common grenadier, white Helmetshrike, Kalahari Scrub Robin, Owls, to mention but a few. The faunal species in the area occur in extremely low numbers, are concentrated towards the west and include ground squealers, jackals, and springboks, wilder bees, elephant, Oryx, Zebra, Kudu, and Eland.

Socio-Economics Profile: The majority of the population within the region live in rural areas with limited formal employment opportunities. The informal sector is the main employer, employing 78.1% in Ohangwena, 81.3% in Omusati, 67.7% in Oshana and 73% in Oshikoto (Namibia Labour Force Survey 2016 Report).

Land tenure: Entirely communal, under traditional leadership.

Sources of livelihoods: The main source of livelihood is rain-fed/reliant subsistence farming where farmers mostly grow pearl millet and sorghum for household consumption. Trade in basic daily needs and other essential commodities (informal sector) is also very strong and the largest source of cash income. Several farmers' associations affiliated to the national farmers' union and waterpoint committees work with government on issues of mutual concern.

Wildlife and tourism: Nature-based tourism is relatively under-developed in this landscape for various reasons mostly related to low wildlife (because of lack of water) and flat landscapes. The western parts, areas bordering Etosha NP and the vicinity of the Ruacana falls have seen some developments. There is potential for the landscape area to generate more income through concessions especially in Sheya Shuushona, King Nehale and Iipumbu ya Tshilongo conservancies.

Climate change vulnerabilities: The landscape lies in the region which is more vulnerable to effects of climate change and variability. It experiences floods during instances of excessive rainfall especially in southern Angola but experiences food shortages during protracted recurrent dry spell because many households depend on rain-fed agriculture for food production. Drier conditions, increased rainfall variability and more extreme events such as droughts and floods are being predicted (MET CCVAA report, 2010). Due to highest population the landscape also experience immense pressures of deforestation and land degradation.

Infrastructure: The landscape is a fairly young well-distributed network of roads linking it with all neighbouring regions and Angola. A railway line (also fairly young) links the landscape with the rest of the country. Telecommunication and rural electrification infrastructure are well developed and distributed. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF) through the Directorate of Rural Water Supply, is responsible for providing water to rural communities in the landscape area. One of Namibia's major airport is located in this landscape. The Hydro-electric Power Station in Ruacana provides electricity to the landscape.

