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Etosha-Kunene Histories: a weave of prior work

entangled and contested pasts, lands and 'natures' in post-colonial Namibia

by Elsemi Olwage, with Sian Sullivan, Ute Dieckmann and Selma Lendelvo

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Abstract

This report presents a weave of prior work produced by the principal investigators of the *Etosha-Kunene Histories* project, funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council and the German Research Foundation. It brings together key points of convergence and thematic overlaps between their work and creates a generative and interdisciplinary dialogue on Etosha-Kunene's complex and entangled pasts, lands and 'natures'. Broadly speaking, this report explores the contributions of the three authors to understanding Etosha-Kunene's overlapping colonial and social histories of settlement, land, conservation and indigeneity. In doing so it considers changing livelihoods and land-relations, and the diversity of resource use, management and knowledge practices which co-constitute the past and present of Etosha-Kunene's 'cultures' and 'natures'. The report thus reads across their work to provide insight into the historical processes, changing policy and legal mechanisms, and colonial and global discourses which have shaped Etosha-Kunene's emerging socio-materialities, and contributed to hegemonic ways of imagining, valuing, and knowing 'nature'. A focus here is on 'African landscapes' and dryland ecologies, and the ongoing and dialectical construction of cultural identities, ethnicity, and indigeneity. Their work argues for learning from locally-rooted and culturally-inflected land-relations, diverse tenure institutions, and Indigenous and gendered knowledge systems and values: both for conservation praxis and for informing environmental and land management debates. Lastly, the report explores their contribution to decolonising environmental knowledge and heritage management practices through an ongoing engagement with, and mapping of, 'relational ontologies', and of occluded social and cultural landscape histories.

[1] Elsemi Olwage is a Namibian post-doctoral researcher commissioned to contribute this review for the *Etosha-Kunene Histories* project. The remaining three contributors are the project's UK, Germany and Namibia Principal Investigators respectively.

1. Introducing 'Etosha-Kunene Histories'

Introduction

This report was commissioned in year one of the *Etosha-Kunene Histories* (www.etosha-kunene-histories.net) research project, to assist the lead investigators with generating a fresh overview and synthesis of their prior work underscoring the project: its connections, overlaps and gaps. *Etosha-Kunene Histories* is a collaboration between academics at Bath Spa University (UK), the University of Cologne (Germany) and the University of Namibia, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) and the German Research Foundation under a bilateral funding programme for Humanities research.

Etosha-Kunene Histories 'proposes a multivocal and historical analysis that contributes new thinking on colonialism, indigeneity and "natural history" in Namibia' (https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/about). The overall aim 'is to support laws and practice in biodiversity conservation to more fully recognise the diversity of pasts, cultures and natures constituting this internationally-valued region' (*ibid.*). With *Etosha-Kunene Histories* the three principal investigators seek to bring their combined research experience and prior work together into a regional social history of conservation for an area of national and international conservation importance. Their aim is to contribute a cross-disciplinary analysis that is simultaneously ethnographic, historical, and spatial in understanding the making of 'Etosha-Kunene' as a combined geographical and organisational unit with significant biodiversity conservation and cultural heritage value. Since the early 1990s 'Etosha-Kunene' has constituted the setting for ethnographic, oral history, archival, livelihoods and ecology research by the three researchers comprising the academic team leading this application. In chronological order the emphases of their research is as follows:

- Sian Sullivan (UK Principal Investigator, Bath Spa University) has carried out on-site oral history, cultural landscapes mapping and 'ethnoecological' research since 1992 in the Damaraland Communal Land Area (as delineated in the Communal Land Reform Act 2002), including the Palmwag Tourism Concession, neighbouring conservancies, Skeleton Coast National Park and settlements south of the 'Red Line', mainly with Khoekhoegowab-speaking Damara / ǂNūkhoen, ǁUbun and Nama, and most recently through the project *Future Pasts* (www.futurepasts.net);

- Ute Dieckmann (German Principal Investigator, University of Cologne) has carried out on-site oral history and cultural landscapes mapping with Khoekhoegowab-speaking Haiǁom in the Etosha National Park (ENP) since the late 1990s. She has also worked in the neighbouring Outjo district and contributed detailed historical and anthropological analyses of the perspectives and experiences of Haiǁom, as well as previously advantaged and disadvantaged farmers, government and NGOs;

- Selma Lendelvo (Namibian Principal Investigator, University of Namibia) has analysed indigenous knowledge in managing Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) bordering ENP, tourism experiences in ENP, and livelihood concerns of Himba-Herero pastoralists in Ehirovipuka Conservancy west of ENP.

Publications by these initiators of *Etosha-Kunene Histories* connected with their prior work in Namibian contexts are listed at https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/prior-work. Much of this work is also available through Namibia's Environment Information Service at http://www.the-eis.com/. The *Etosha-Kunene Histories* project proposes to combine, build on and extend this prior and preliminary work through a new programme of research (for more information, follow the links at https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/workpackages).

In embarking on this new collaborative project we realised it would be helpful to us for a fresh eye to read through our prior work and help us to articulate the 'weave' more clearly between it, so as to more fully integrate our research backgrounds in the different areas across our 'Etosha-Kunene' research area. Commissioning the present report was also partly a response to COVID-19 travel restrictions which meant that the field research components of the project had to be delayed, freeing up time for more review work. This is how the present report, led by Elsemi Olwage, came about: as a commission to read the prior work of the three lead investigators with an eye to two things simultaneously:

> 1) documenting patterns regarding content (as in discourse analysis), drawing out key areas of focus (and gaps), key findings, points of comparison and difference, and changes in our perspectives through time;
>
> and 2) connecting with themes identified as priorities in our original project funding application submitted in February 2019 (see Sullivan, Dieckmann and Lendelvo 2020).

The methodology involved reading across and reviewing around 95 publications shared between the three authors over a period of six months and in chronological order, starting with Sullivan's list of publications. A reference management programme (Citavi) was used to organise the publications thematically and to identify those publications where their work strongly overlaps and/or creates generative and transdisciplinary dialogues. Subsequently these publications were read more closely, summarised and coded, to further aid with refining the thematic categories and identifying interconnections and comparison points.

'Etosha-Kunene': setting and context

The *Etosha-Kunene Histories* project is located in an analysis of colonialism and coloniality. Specifically, it is concerned with how intersecting layers of formal colonial governance and desire interacted with local cultural and ecological complexity and generated shifts in land and socio-spatial organisation, and relations of power. Histories of colonial governance stretch back to the British annexation of the harbour town of Walvis Bay and the coastal islands in 1878, and the later formalised colonial 'protection' of present-day Namibia – first through German colonial rule (1884-1915) and subsequently that of South African colonial and later apartheid rule (1920-1990); with the territory of 'South West Africa' (SWA) becoming a British Protectorate in the wake of World War 1 and initially governed as mandated territory (1915-1920). The colonial encounter and the mapping of colonial and state policies, discourses and practices generated lasting impacts and historical entanglements within and across Etosha-Kunene's diverse social and cultural ecologies. As Sullivan, Dieckmann and Lendelvo (2020) summarise:

Etosha-Kunene is shaped historically by both Anglo and German colonial interests stretching back to the mid-1800s, and subsequently by apartheid policies that partitioned land and populations during South Africa's administration of former 'South West Africa' in the 20th century. The geographical constellation of ecologies and cultures constituting Etosha-Kunene… stretches westwards from the celebrated Etosha National Park centred on the massive Etosha saltpan in north-central Namibia, to the Skeleton Coast National Park encompassing the interface between the northern Namib Desert and the Atlantic Ocean. Etosha National Park (ENP) itself is the current incarnation of a 'game conservation' area established in 1907 as Game Reserve No. 2 by the former German colonial state of Deutsch-Südwestafrika (1884-1915). As observed for major conservation areas elsewhere in Africa (see Adams & McShane 1996 on the Serengeti), the establishment of Game Reserve No. 2 was related to declines of human and livestock populations caused by a series of factors: the rinderpest epidemic of 1897 (Miescher 2012; Rizzo 2012: 25); drought from 1900-1903 (Wadley 1979); and [ultimately] a genocidal colonial war of especially 1904-1907 (Bley 1998; Olusoga and Erichsen 2010; Hartmann 2019).

Control of this new conservation area [Game Reserve No. 2] deepened as the state territory became a UN Mandated Territory (the British Protectorate of South West Africa) in the post WW1 period. Initially, indigenous Hai‖om inhabitants were able to live in the Game Reserve but were later evicted as ENP was increasingly enacted as an "African wilderness" from which people were absent(ed) (Dieckmann 2007[a]). The area west of present ENP boundaries was also shaped historically by layers of land clearances, connected with the post-1958 westward extension of the Etosha protected area (Sullivan 2017[a]) [and the expansion of surveyed freehold farms for white settler farmers]. Various boundary changes again took place in connection with the creation of new 'homeland' areas following government recommendations in the 1960s. At this time, much of the western portion of Etosha was reallocated as part of the 'homeland' of 'Damaraland' and the western park boundary was moved eastwards to its 1970 position [reducing its size from 93,240km^2 to 22,270km^2], allowing the Skeleton Coast National Park to be gazetted (in 1971) (Tinley 1971). Later, the Damara Regional Authority committed a large area of land in between these two Parks as the … tourism concession of Palmwag. Today this area is a popular high-end 'wilderness' tourism destination, and home to the largest population of endangered black rhino (*Diceros bicornis bicornis*) outside of a National Park (Muntifering *et al*. 2017).

After independence in 1990, the government addressed the land dispossession of the Hai‖om through a resettlement programme, but sustainable livelihood options remain a challenge on these farms (Dieckmann 2011). Areas west of ENP became more deeply woven into Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) approaches through establishment of communal area conservancies (Sullivan 2002[a]; Kimaro *et al*. 2015) …

Etosha-Kunene conservation territories are populated and shaped by an array of individuals and groups who embody and enact diverse histories, experiences, and perceptions. They include livestock herders, small-scale farmers, state and NGO conservation and development professionals, miners, tourists, tourism lodge managers and varied entrepreneurs, who are also groups and individuals with a clear sense of ethnic identity: European settlers; Khoe-speaking Hai‖om, Dama[ra] / ǂNūkhoen and ‖Ubun of various *!haoti* (land and lineage based groups); and Nama, Herero and Himba pastoralists. These overlapping and intersecting ethnic categories are themselves caught within and made through formations of power and associated discursive regimes (Butler 2006[1990]; Sullivan 2001a-b; Dieckmann 2007[b]) …

> [In particular] conceptions and constructions of indigenous natures and cultures as somehow ahistorical – as external to and background for historical change and development – can … arise (Adams and McShane 1996). The Etosha-Kunene conservation contexts have certainly been caught within this frame: spectacularised as 'last wildernesses' (Hall-Martin *et al*. 1988) yet nonetheless inhabited in some corners by exotic(ised) indigenous pastoralists (Jacobsohn 1998[1990]) and primitive 'Bushmen' (as critiqued for Etosha in Gordon 1997; also Hitchcock 2015) for whom the permissibility of presence becomes entangled with projections of acceptably 'pure' traditional practices. All these ideas of natures and peoples have been dramatically shaped by historical factors that can be documented.

Through weaving together of the work of the three principal investigators the *Etosha-Kunene Histories* project articulates its approach to the historical, socio-ecological, and material-discursive entanglements which shaped and continue to shape the mutual constitution of Etosha-Kunene's 'natures' and 'cultures'. This weaving is ongoing, with Sullivan and Dieckmann documenting the Etosha-Kunene historical trajectories in detail through a series of chronologies online at https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/wp1-historicising-etosha-kunene, as well as spatialised historical journeys by varied colonial actors at https://www.etosha-kunene-histories.net/wp4spatialising-colonialities. This report aims to further support and deepen this process. The next section briefly provides a broad overview of reviewed prior work and the structure of the report.

Report structure and overview of prior work: executive summary

Following this opening chapter, this report is structured into four subsequent chapters, each organised thematically. The different themes in each chapter overlap and inform each other, with key threads weaving through all of the chapters.

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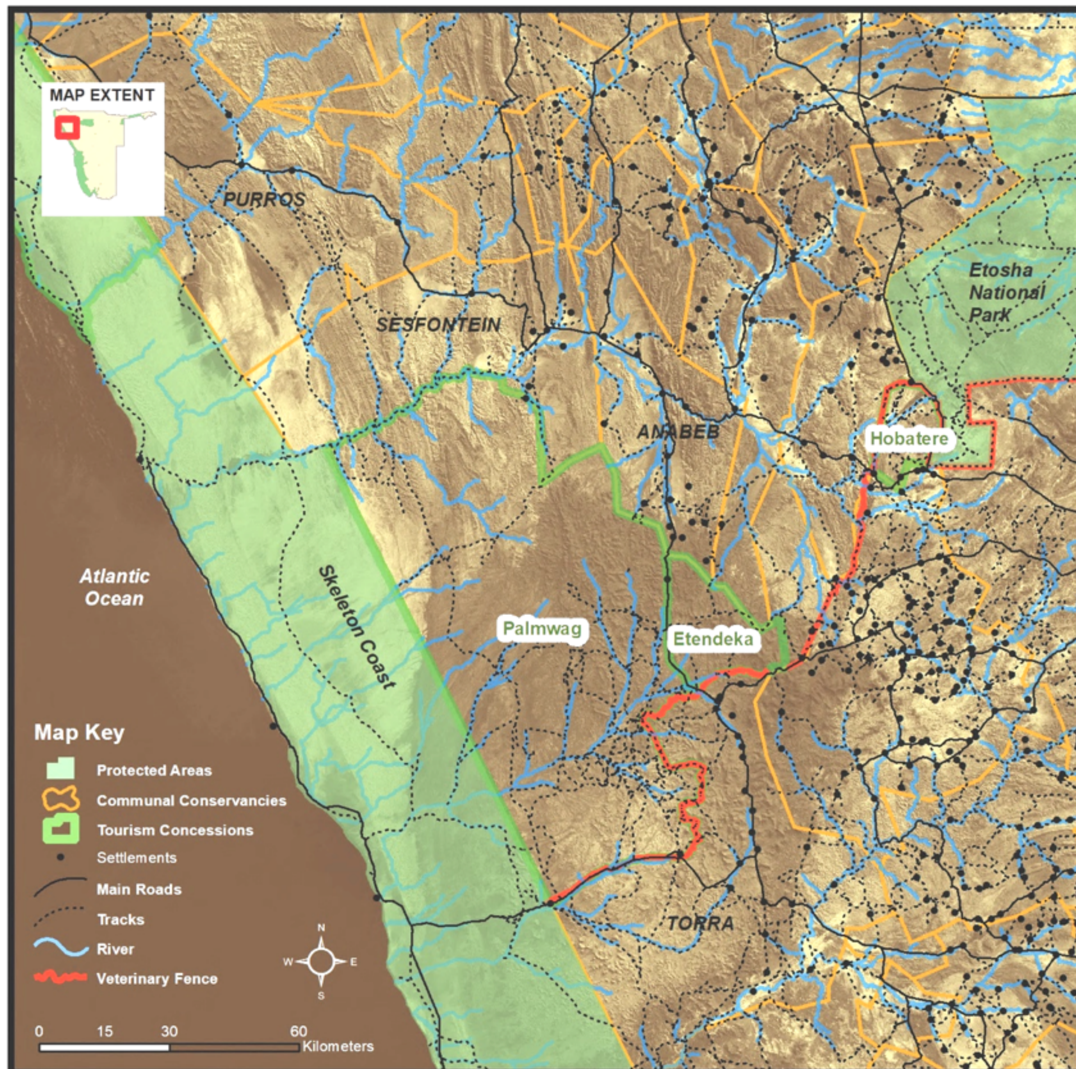
Chapter 2 opens with a focus on the roles of ***Colonialism, science, and the state in the historical making of Etosha-Kunene.*** This chapter examines more closely how the work of Dieckmann and Sullivan, over the years, is complementary in detailing parallel and overlapping processes of colonial socio-spatial reorganisation co-constituting the historically entangled Etosha-Kunene territories. Their research thus details processes of dispossession and layers of displacement, the negotiation of settler agriculture and private property, the cordoning off of landscapes for formal conservation areas, and the expansion of colonial industry and mining (see, for instance, Sullivan 1996a, 1998, 2017a, 2019a, 2022; Dieckmann 2001, 2003, 2007a, 2007c-e, 2013, 2020, 2021a; Sullivan *et al.* 2016, 2019a; Hannis and Sullivan 2018a-b; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a).

Chapter 2 traces meeting points between Dieckmann's and Sullivan's work in addressing the historical discourses and underlying ideologies which shaped these processes of re-territorialisation and colonial dispossession and which, over time, came to constitute dominant ways of knowing, governing, imagining, and valuing Etosha-Kunene's 'natures' and 'cultures'. Their work in

combination, and to differing degrees, explores how the ordering of knowledge, including through colonial scientific practice and governance regimes, was crucial in the entrenchment of colonial power relations and coloniality (see references above). Although this theme is introduced in Chapter 2, it weaves through subsequent chapters. Both Dieckmann and Sullivan draw throughout their work on critical discourse, revisionist historical and anthropological analyses to deconstruct taken for granted 'truths' and their contingencies in contemporary conservation and resource management praxis, and in post-colonial identity and heritage politics within Etosha-Kunene. This past and present work of these two authors intersects in trying to understand impacts on Etosha-Kunene's different indigenous Khoekhoegowab-speaking groups, and on their changing access to land, resources, livelihoods, representation, and cultural and historical recognition.

Much of Sullivan's research, which began in the early to mid-1990s, is situated within southern and central Kunene region and west Namibia more broadly where she has engaged primarily with Khoekhoegowab-speaking groups and persons residing in the apartheid-era 'Damaraland' and 'Kaokoland' homelands, reframed as Communal Land Areas as per Namibia's Communal Land Reform Act 5 of 2002 (see Sullivan 1996a, 1998). Her research has crossed north and south of the veterinary fence that crosses the Damaraland Communal Land Area, with a recent focus on the connected landscapes of the Palmwag Tourism Concession, Sesfontein, Anabeb and Purros communal area conservancies established from the late 1990s onwards, and the Skeleton Coast National Park (Sullivan 2017a-b, 2021; Sullivan and Ganuses 2021a) – see Map 1. Based on field research starting in 1992, 1994-1996, 1999 and the 2000s, Sullivan's early work, including her PhD (1998), interrogates the ethnographic archives and dominant environmental and historical narratives for the Damaraland Communal Land Area, specifically in relation to histories and practices of resource and land use and management. In doing so, and from the start, Sullivan examined and traced how these narratives and practices were shaped by and embedded within colonial histories of dispossession and displacement, including those driven by the ongoing parcelling up of land for 'nature' conservation purposes and for settler agriculture and mining. In particular, her early work examined how and why deep cultural histories of association with places and land and experiences and knowledges of the west Namibian landscape were excluded and occluded from then emerging land and wildlife governance institutions, official cartographies and archives, and hegemonic environmental discourses (see for instance, Sullivan 1998, 1999a, 2000a, 2005a, 2019a, 2022, and review in subsequent chapters). Sullivan's later work in the context of the cross-disciplinary and multimedia *Future Pasts* project (2016-2019) deepens this early engagement with recovering cultural histories associated with places and landscapes therein, and on mapping the overlapping layers of colonial and post-colonial displacement and erasure (see https://www.futurepasts.net/, and Chapters 3 and 4).



Map 1. Boundaries of current tourism concessions, surrounding communal area conservancies and state protected areas in southern Kunene Region, west Namibia. Source: Jeff Muntifering, 2 October 2019.

In her early work, Sullivan worked across disciplinary boundaries, including ecology and anthropology, in an effort to democratise environmental and historical knowledges of dryland west Namibia. Thus, during the 1990s and early 2000s Sullivan's work built on ecological, ethnographic, and historical research, including ecological surveys and multivariate analyses of woody and herbaceous vegetation datasets and was indicative of her interdisciplinary background and approach to understanding socio-ecological dynamics (see Sullivan 1998, 1999b, 2000b). In doing so, she unearthed conceptual values, coloniality and political interests implicit in dominant ecological thinking, illustrating, for example, how these came to inform a hegemonic desertification discourse within environmental and conservation management praxis in Namibia (Sullivan 1996b, p. 5). Moreover, she interrogated this discourse on empirical grounds, showing how this gave rise to both specific (and colonial) imaginaries of drylands and negative and essentialist conceptions of African land-use practices and knowledges, including those in the Damaraland Communal Land Area (see for instance, Sullivan 1996b, 1998, 1999b, 2000b, 2002b, 2003, 2005a; Sullivan and Rohde 2002).

Sullivan's early work was thus explicitly concerned with how particular historical and environmental (scientific) discourses become reified as 'truth', drawing on a Foucauldian analysis to understand this power/knowledge nexus, and making explicit contested approaches to knowledge building in natural and social science fields of research and their political implications (Sullivan 2000b, 2005a; Sullivan and Homewood 2017[2003]). Her work during this time pursued a theme that was set to characterise her research in subsequent years, i.e., examining how extreme climatic contexts, such as drylands, become prone to ideas of crisis (such as with the desertification discourse) and hence to overlapping international conventions, policies, designations and state interventions (for example, Sullivan *et al*. 2016; Sullivan and Homewood 2017[2003]).

Drawing on field research starting from 1999 onwards, Dieckmann's scholarship (Dieckmann 2001, 2003, 2007a-c, 2009, 2011, 2020, 2021a), and especially her book (Dieckmann 2007a), focuses on the history of colonial land dispossession of Khoekhoegowab-speaking Hai‖om linked to both the history of nature conservation, i.e., the creation and establishment of the Etosha National Park (formerly Game Reserve No. 2), and that of settler agriculture within southern Kunene region (especially the Outjo District). In a combined historical analysis of colonial archival material, oral history, and personal memory accounts, and through multiple fieldtrips to Etosha between 2000 and 2006, much of Dieckmann's early work thus examines the various and interconnected factors which combined to lead to the eventual forced removal of Hai‖om from the Etosha National Park (ENP) during the 1950s and to them being left without any legal claim to land. This work eventually also saw Dieckmann become involved from 2001 onwards in a cultural landscape mapping project – the *Xoms |Omis* Project (Etosha Heritage Project) – which aimed at recovering Hai‖om cultural heritage and settlement histories embedded within the Etosha landscapes (see, Dieckmann 2007f, 2012, Dieckmann 2021a, p. 97). Dieckmann's later work, including her 2007 book (Dieckmann 2007a), looks more closely at some of the consequences and the aftermath of these histories of colonial dispossession, especially in terms of livelihoods, land-claims, identity politics and marginalisation (see for example, Dieckmann 2007b-d, 2011, 2020, and Chapter 3 below). Hence, research for her PhD and book and for subsequent publications also took place in the urban centre of Outjo and on commercial and resettlement farms surrounding Etosha.

In analysing the factors which eventually led to Hai‖om becoming a "landless underclass", Dieckmann (2007a-b) critically examines how the colonial state and science (specifically the field of ethnology) conceptualised and constructed ethnic categories and difference within a racial, essentialist and civilising ideology. In particular, she shows how intersecting ethnic and racial classifications were politically mobilised by the state and other powerful actors to systematically justify the dispossession of Hai‖om and how these regimes of signification and their dynamics changed between German and South African colonial rule. In addition, Dieckmann's early work closely examines the role of 'nature' conservation in the (colonial) history of land and settlement in Etosha-Kunene, including how the mapping of changing ideas and paradigms of 'nature' conservation shaped histories of dispossession and the re-imagining and refiguring of African landscapes (see for instance, Dieckmann 2001, 2003, 2007a, 2009).

Informed by and parallel to this research, Dieckmann's later work details the history of settler and commercial agriculture in the Outjo District south of the Etosha Pan, from the onset of colonialism until Namibia's independence in 1990 (see, Dieckmann 2007a, d-e; Bolten and Dieckmann 2011;

Dieckmann 2013). Dieckmann critically explores the settlement histories, historical land-uses and significantly changing agricultural strategies of these settler farmers during the 20th century, showing how they shifted between diversification and specialisation strategies, depending on interconnected and changing political, environmental and economic factors (Dieckmann 2007d, 2013). Moreover, in this work, Dieckmann illustrates the key role that the colonial and later apartheid state played in the establishment of commercial and settler agriculture and private property regimes, together with the configuration of colonial labour conditions and relations (see Dieckmann 2007a, 2013, p. 273).

Sullivan's and Dieckmann's work speaks to each other in showing how Etosha-Kunene's colonial history, including that of 'nature' conservation, is not only one of dispossession and displacement, but also of a progressive inscription of hegemonic and 'Western' ways of imagining, seeing, valuing, and knowing 'nature', specifically African landscapes and dryland ecologies (see, for example, Sullivan 1996b, 2005a; Dieckmann 2001, 2007a, 2009; Martin *et al.* 2013; Sullivan *et al.* 2016). Reading across their work, the authors foreground the still close and largely unquestioned interrelationships between formal science, race, colonialism, and 'nature' conservation. In combination these dimensions have promoted an authoritative role for scientific and colonial discourses in justifying largely centralised state interventions regarding how land and ecology should be known, conserved, valued, and used.

In detailing histories of settler colonialism and 'nature' conservation, Dieckmann's and Sullivan's work is complementary in providing insight into the processes whereby Khoekhoegowab-speaking groups, over the decades, lost claims and access to their ancestral land-areas and were forced in many instances into farm labour or less fertile land-areas, or, like the Hai‖om, to become a landless underclass (see for instance Sullivan 2019a, p. 24, 2022). Histories of dispossession are echoed further west and across central Namibia, and especially (but not only) in the landscapes that for a short period were incorporated into Game Reserve No. 2 (from 1958-1970) but where multiple families retain collective memories of living sites, grave sites, and valued resources (Sullivan 1996a, 1998, 2017a-b, 2019a; Sullivan *et al.* 2019; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a).

Building on this analysis, Sullivan's and Dieckmann's work closely interlinks in revising hegemonic and colonial discourses of historical land-relations in Etosha-Kunene's drylands. In particular, their work deconstructs essentialist discourses tying together ethnicity, race, and modes of production, to challenge static and culturally-deterministic divisions between 'pastoral' and 'hunter-gatherer' societies in understanding histories of land-use and land-relations and cultural difference (Sullivan 1998, 2001a, 2019a; Dieckmann 2007a). Both authors also examine how the negotiation and establishment of settler colonialism and rule was underpinned by changing conceptions of land and land-relations. Hence, their work shows how colonial rule was accompanied by processes of boundary-making, discourses, codifications, and cartographic practices which led to historical erasure and 'othering' of indigenous land-relations and institutions, and the mapping of new regimes of ownership and exclusion (for instance, Sullivan 1998, 1999a, 2000a, 2001a, 2005a, 2019a; Dieckmann 2003, 2007a and e, 2013, 2021a; Sullivan *et al.* 2019b; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a).

As noted, much of Sullivan's early work challenged a set of interconnected biases and (colonial) environmental discourses. In doing so her work resonates directly with Dieckmann's in exploring

how Etosha-Kunene's Khoekhoegowab-speaking groups were situated at the lowest rung of a colonially imposed evolutionary and racial hierarchies, and how this shaped and continues to shape their shifting position within colonial and post-colonial political and cultural economies and access to official discourses, land and resources (Sullivan 1998, 2001a, 2019a, 2022; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020). Read in conjunction, Sullivan's and Dieckmann's work powerfully complements each other in illustrating how Etosha-Kunene's different Khoekhoegowab-speaking groups, overlapping in historical, socio-economic, cultural, and geographical entanglements, were eventually enfolded in divergent regimes of colonial signification and classification, and how this differentially impacted their access to land and resources and marginality. In addition, both Dieckmann's and Sullivan's work speaks to each other in tracing the contingencies of colonial ethnic ascriptions in contemporary Namibia, in the ongoing structural marginalisation and exclusion of particular groups and their histories, perspectives, and knowledges, and in post-colonial identity politics in struggles over land and resources (see, for instance, Sullivan 1998, 1999a, 2005a; Dieckmann 2007a-b; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a; also see Chapter 3 and 4 for more on this).

In disentangling the complex ways in which colonialism institutionalised a direct relationship between ethnic and racial ascriptions and access to land and resources that entrenched relations of structural marginalisation, the work of Dieckmann and Sullivan emphasises how local actors exerted agency and ingenuity, despite highly unequal power relations. In other words, local actors tactically navigated, resisted, refashioned, and co-shaped these historical developments; and hence these colonial histories need to be read as dialectical and relational processes rather than uni-directional changes (see, for instance, Sullivan 2001a; Dieckmann 2007a, p. 6, 2007b). This focus on local agency and on a more nuanced and dialectical reading of the colonial encounter and of coloniality in Etosha-Kunene is a theme which weaves through most of their publications.

Looking at the histories of conservation and environmental management within Etosha-Kunene, Sullivan's and Dieckmann's work meets with the work of Lendelvo (see, for instance, Lendelvo and Nakanyala 2013; Mfune *et al.* 2013). For example, both Sullivan and Lendelvo examine the history and evolution of natural resource management paradigms in the context of Namibia, including Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). In particular, both of them note that ideas of participation and devolved ownership were initially formulated within specific colonial and apartheid state and tenure regimes, with all three authors interrogating the contingencies of such colonial era legislative frameworks in contemporary conservation and land policies (as elaborated in see Chapter 4).

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Chapter 3 builds on the connections established in Chapter 2 to examine a theme encountered across the work of all three researchers, that of ***Changing and contested land-relations and tenure in Etosha-Kunene.*** Specifically, the work of all three authors examines how people and groups in Etosha-Kunene are re-negotiating access to land and tenure relations in the face of intersecting post-independence reforms and changes in land administration over the course of the last 25 years. Given Namibia's colonial histories, post-independence land reform remains a controversial, complex, emotional and urgent topic, and is an ongoing process (Sullivan 1996a; Dieckmann 2011). In working with this topic, the work of all three authors is situated at the interface of policy and science,

engaging both with national policy and public debate. Read in conjunction, their work challenges centralised and standardised policy thinking, arguing for the need to pay attention to, and create opportunities for learning from, locally-rooted and existing cultural land-relations, diverse tenure institutions, and occluded and layered social histories. Additionally, and as explored throughout this report, their work argues for recognising land not only as an economic good but as also imbued with "deep cultural and social meaning" (Lendelvo *et al.* 2020a, p. 37). Hence, they argue for a more nuanced, integrated, culturally-informed and historically-contingent perspective in debating land.

In addition, with their research situated in different geographic locations across Etosha-Kunene, and also elsewhere in Namibia, their work in combination weaves a larger overview of the multiple, shifting and overlapping systems of tenure and ownership shaping access and competing claims to land and resources, and the different strategies deployed to do so, especially by marginalised and indigenous groups. This mutually shared research interest led to all three authors recently publishing chapters in a locally edited volume *'Neither Here Nor There': Indigeneity, Marginalisation and Land Rights in Post-Independence Namibia* (Odendaal and Werner 2020): see Dieckmann (2020), Lendelvo *et al.* (2020a), Nghitevelekwa *et al.* (2020) and Sullivan and Ganuses (2020).

As mentioned above, both Sullivan's and Dieckmann's research is characterised by an engagement with more occluded histories and practices of settlement and land, including of land-use and relations. In doing so, both authors draw on on-site oral history and cultural landscape mapping methodologies in their earlier and later work (Sullivan 1996a, 1998, 1999a, 2000a, 2002a, 2017a-b, 2019a, 2022; Dieckmann 2007a and f, 2009, 2012, 2021a-b; Peter *et al.* 2009; Sullivan *et al.* 2019b; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a). This work has been, and continues to be, key in shaping their understandings of how formally conserved lands across Etosha-Kunene are contested and are interwoven with multiple and overlapping claims and pasts, as well as in their conceptions and understandings of culturally-inflected land-relations. Such positioning underpins their historical revisionist work (as detailed in Chapter 2 and discussed throughout this report), as well as their wider engagements with changing legal and policy landscapes in post-independent Namibia.

Through these research methodologies, social and cultural histories, memories, perspectives and indigenous forms of knowing are accessed and mapped through "collaborative journeying", or what anthropologist Anna Tsing refers to as "historical retracing" (as reviewed in Sullivan 2017a, 2019a; Sullivan and Ganuses 2021). This methodology understands that memories, relations, and the past are embedded in landscapes and places. Returning to these places through collaborative journeying stimulates acts of remembering, performance and retelling and has the potential to disrupt official archives of place-names, cartographies and landscape histories (see, for instance, Sullivan *et al.* 2016, and Dieckmann 2021b) – see Image 1.

Image 1. 'Historical retracing' methodologies.

The late Nathan ǂÛina Taurob (R), Christophine Daumû Tauros (centre) and the late Michael |Amigu Ganaseb (L) enact the practice of *tsē-khom* to greet and gift their ancestors and anonymous spirits of the dead, looking across the |Giribes plains towards their home area of Purros in north-west Namibia. Photo: Sian Sullivan 1995.

'Historical retracing' in Etosha: Tsinab, close to Halali in Etosha National Park. Photo: Harald Sterly 2002.

Dieckmann has drawn on this methodological approach throughout her research on the social and political history of Etosha (for instance, Dieckmann 2001, 2007a and f, 2012) and more explicitly in her work with the cultural landscape mapping *Xoms |Omis Project* (see https://www.xoms-omis.org/). This project saw the digital archiving and organisation of material relating to categories of places, bushfood documentation, social organisation, and ways of life in former times, historical and kinship data (family trees), and life lines (Dieckmann 2021a, p. 100). The researchers and cartographers involved in the project also produced various maps and posters and Dieckmann wrote a tour guide book and a children's book (see Dieckmann 2007f, 2012, 2021, p. 101) – see Image 2. These maps and outputs were not developed for the purpose of claiming land, but to "document the inhabitancy and way of life of Hai‖om in the Etosha area" (Dieckmann 2021a, p. 101) and to sketch the culturally deep connection of Hai‖om to the land which is now included in the ENP. Although this project was not driven by land claims, it did take place in parallel with, and as a precursor to, the ongoing struggles by some Hai‖om groups to gain state recognition for long-term access-rights to and custodianship over some places within ENP, and to benefit from the ENP's success (for more on this see Dieckmann 2020).

Image 2. Poster produced within the Xoms |Omis Project. Design: Strata 360 © Xoms |Omis Project.

Although informing Sullivan's earlier work (1999a, 2003, 2019a, 2022), on-site oral history and cultural landscape mapping was again taken-up by her in earnest in the recent *Futures Pasts* project (see, https://www.futurepasts.net/). This project foregrounded a transdisciplinary, collaborative and

multimedia approach including various online and co-publications, multiple films (see https://vimeo.com/futurepasts), digital mapping exercises and an exhibition with people from the research area in west Namibia (Sullivan *et al.* 2016, 2019a-b; Sullivan 2017a-b; https://www.futurepasts.net/exhibition). Through this “collaborative journeying” methodology, Sullivan shared journeys with especially Damara / ǂNūkhoe and ǁUbu elders during 2014, 2015 and 2019 in which the trajectories and former dwelling places were digitally mapped using GPS coordinates, including for areas now part of tourism concessions and the Skeleton Coast National Park – see Image 3. Stories, songs, music and genealogies connected to these places were performed, shared, recorded and mapped (Sullivan *et al.* 2016, 2019a-b; Sullivan 2017a, 2019b; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a-b). Sullivan’s recent co-publications (Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a-b) builds on this work to explore how histories and narratives of dispossession and marginalisation in west Namibia can be reclaimed and voiced through other modalities (see Chapter 5 for more on this).

Image 3. Cousins Noag Mûgagara Ganaseb (L) and Franz |Haen ǁHoëb (R) revisit places in the westward reaches of the Hoanib River where they used to live.

Here, Noag and Franz are close to the former dwelling place of ǀOeb, now the site of an eco-tourism lodge called Hoanib Camp, located on the south side of the bend in the Hoanib River just to the right of centre in this image. Photo: Sian Sullivan, November 2015, composite made by Mike Hannis using aerial images from Directorate of Survey and Mapping, Windhoek.

As noted, as well as her engagement with occluded histories of dispossession, Dieckmann's later work follows the struggles of Hai‖om (and the San in general) to access land and livelihoods in post-independent Namibia (see Dieckmann 2001, 2003, 2007a-c, 2011, 2018, 2020; Dieckmann *et al.* 2014). Post-independence, the Hai‖om, together with many other San groups, were left without any legal title to land, with many finding themselves living in peri-urban and urban areas, on commercial farms as generational farm labourers or in communal areas under the land administration of other groups (Dieckmann 2009, p. 357, 2018). In the last thirty years, several attempts have been made to address the marginalisation of the San in general, including Hai‖om, which many see as crucially linked to the question of land. Dieckmann's prior work thus looks both at the question of contested land in formally constituted conservation landscapes, including analysing legal and symbolic land-claims in ENP, and the process whereby several resettlement farms were established in the last decade and in the Etosha surrounds specifically to resettle Hai‖om (see, Dieckmann 2001, 2003, 2007a-b, 2020).

Although Sullivan's earlier work primarily focuses on local resource access and use and environmental management in west and north-western parts of the Etosha-Kunene research area, much of this work also implicitly and explicitly deals with changing and contested land-relations, tenure and rural development (see for instance, Sullivan 1996a, 2000c). In one of her first pieces of work in 1996 Sullivan was commissioned by the Multi-Disciplinary Research Centre of the University of Namibia to research how former surveyed farms in the north-west that were leased and/or settled by settler farmers in the 1950s had been 'communalised' in practice through their allocation in the 1970s for settlement by qualifying Damara / ǂNūkhoen (Sullivan 1996a). This resettlement process was part of establishing the Damaraland 'homeland' (following recommendations of the 1964 Odendaal Report) – now the Damaraland Communal Land Area. This report specifically aimed to inform processes around land redistribution associated with post-independence land reform, especially the then still nascent state resettlement programme, as well as debates on agricultural and tenure reform in Namibia's 'communal lands' (*ibid*.). Importantly, it showed how people and families exercised agency in negotiating the resettlement process, co-produced tenure institutions and drew on cultural resources to foster sustainable livelihoods in less productive semi-arid land areas, and from a position of structural marginalisation.

As noted above, two of Dieckmann's (2011, 2020) publications also focus on the establishment of group-resettlement farms close to Etosha, for the purpose of resettling landless Hai‖om from the late 2000s onwards. This work not only analyses the history and dynamics of the resettlement process, but also the evolution of the relevant and intersecting land reform legislative and policy frameworks governing resettlement in Namibia, and specifically the resettlement of structurally marginalised groups. In addition, Dieckmann maps out the complex stakeholder interests and power imbalances which shaped and continue to shape the process (*ibid*.). Dieckmann's work can thus be read in relation to Sullivan's earlier work on how a significant and historical resettlement process played out in practice (Sullivan 1996a). Moreover, it speaks directly to Lendelvo's later research on the economic viability of emerging commercial farmers and current subsistence realities under the resettlement programme, and especially in relation to the codification of land-rights and ownership (Lendelvo *et al.* 2020a). Read together their work provides valuable insight into the challenges, shortcomings, and potential of state resettlement to redress the inequalities of the past and address present social and economic developmental needs. Moreover, their work shows how access to land

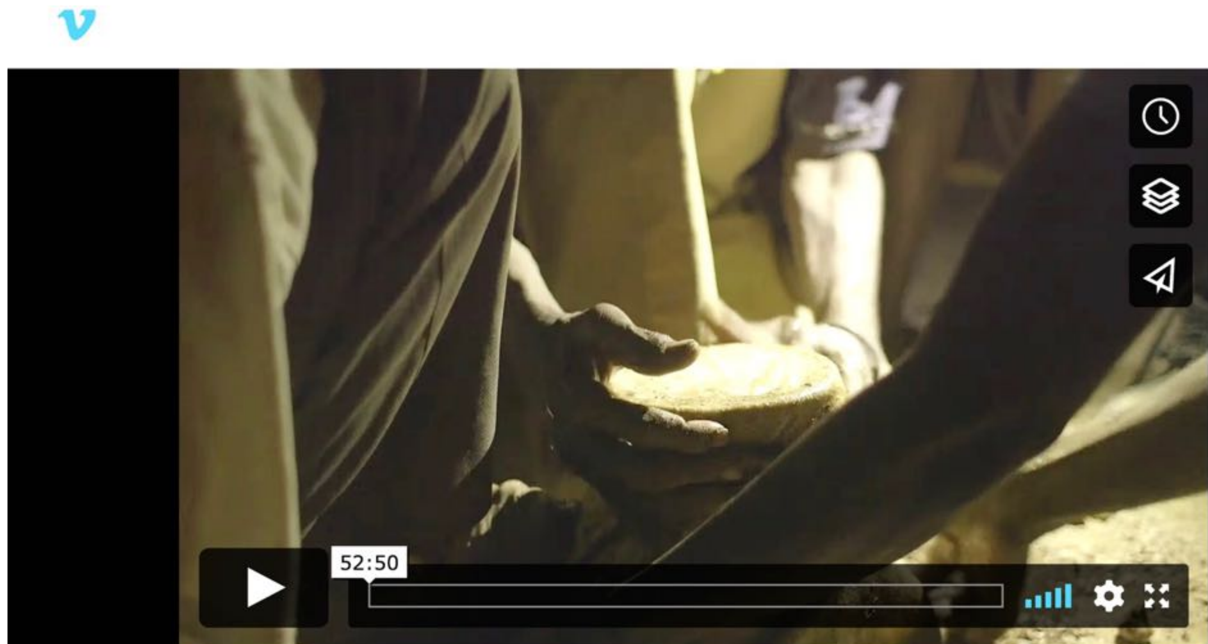
alone is not enough to ensure sustainable livelihoods in Etosha-Kunene's drylands. Rather, this access needs to be accompanied with the necessary state-support, infrastructure, institutional development, lease agreements and access to markets, knowledge, and resources.

In addressing struggles to access land and livelihoods, including land claims in formal conservation lands, Dieckmann's work (see 2007a-b) also explores the politics of ethnicity and indigeneity within such contestations and the extent to which representations, identity and access to resources are interrelated within post-colonial Namibia. Her work details how these struggles were, and continue to be, informed by the global movement of Indigenous land rights and recognition, and how this in turn, has driven local processes of ethnicisation and group identity-formation among Hai‖om (Dieckmann 2007a-b, 2020). At the same time, she shows how these processes of ethnicisation have to be situated historically in relation their marginality and relation to struggles for political recognition and representation within a post-colonial state. In this regard, Dieckmann's book (2007a, pp. 4-8) provides a useful and thorough theoretical discussion and overview of the concept of ethnicity and specifically in relation to Namibia's post-colonial historicity. Taking a constructivist point of view, her book looks at the various historical processes, imaginations, appropriations, contestations, and ongoing fashioning which has characterised the relational negotiation and enactment of Hai‖om ethnicity, identity and belonging (*ibid*., p. 21).

This analysis connects with Sullivan's (2001a-b, 2002a, 2003) earlier work which likewise explores the political mobilisation of ethnicity and indigeneity in contesting both global and local inequalities, and as a means to access resources and recognition. Sullivan's early and later work (see Sullivan 2001a, 2019a; Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a) directly engages with Dieckmann in generating a fresh perspective on the cultural politics and historical factors at play in why some groups, such as the San and the Hai‖om, have managed to gain international and national recognition as being Indigenous or as 'first peoples', while others such as Damara ǂNūkhoen and ‖Ubun have not, considering the impact this has had and continues to have in contributing to marginality.

As noted earlier, Sullivan's research also details competing and overlapping claims to land within the western part of the Etosha-Kunene research area, not only between different groups (Sullivan 2001a, 2002a, 2003), but also the between state's formally constituted conservation and tourism concession areas and those whose ancestral settlement and social histories are entangled with these areas (see Sullivan 2019a, 2022, and as explored in her later work and co-publications, for instance, Sullivan *et al.* 2019a, and Sullivan and Ganuses 2020, 2021a). For example, Sullivan's work documents how during the first decades after independence communal area conservancies were used and mobilised as a tool to claim land (Sullivan 2002a, 2003, 2019a, 2022). In addition, the *Future Pasts* project, as noted above, aimed to reinsert multivocality within understandings of west Namibia's conservation landscapes, including through a number of co-publications, maps, films and performances with Damara / ǂNūkhoen persons and elders, and through music and story-telling (see for instance, Sullivan 2017a, 2019a-c, Sullivan and Ganuses 2020; also the film *The Music Returns to Kai-as* online at https://vimeo.com/486865709 – see Image 4).

Image 4. Screenshot for the 2019 film The Music Returns to Kai-as: see https://vimeo.com/486865709.



The Music Returns to Kai-as

Much of Dieckmann's work also traces the relationship between changing land tenure systems, economic trends, and livelihoods in Etosha-Kunene, specifically the impact of post-independent land and political reforms on the commercial and still predominantly settler owned farming sector, including in terms of ownership and the diversification of economic practices, and on the capacity of Hai‖om to foster sustainable livelihoods (more on this in Chapter 4) (Dieckmann 2007a and d, 2013). Her work thus reflects on the perspectives of 'white' commercial farmers within the changing socio-political context of independent Namibia and on land reform as a major political and economic issue (Dieckmann 2013, p.256). Dieckmann's combined work on Hai‖om land claims and resettlement process, and the history of commercial and settler agriculture in Etosha-Kunene thus also inserts much needed multivocality into the debate on land and from different positions of power, while providing historical insight into the role of the state and the challenges of establishing commercial farming enterprises in dryland Etosha-Kunene. This theme of tracing the relationship between changing tenure systems, access to land and livelihoods, resonates with the work of Sullivan and Lendelvo (as further explored in Chapter 4).

Moreover, the work of all three authors connects in debating the ongoing making and negotiation of Namibia's communal lands and tenure and the role of 'customary' authorities in the administration of land. As noted earlier, much of Sullivan's early work during the late 1990s and early 2000s examines the 1970s making of the 'Damaraland Homeland', and also deconstructs some of the hegemonic development discourses informing the state development trajectories of 'communal' lands in Namibia. In particular, her work deconstructs the coloniality still prevalent in top-down views of 'communal' farmers and farming as inherently environmentally destructive, unproductive, and unsustainable, as well as the implications of this perception for debates on land and agricultural

reform (Sullivan 1996b, 1998, 1999b). In addition, her work throughout the late 1990s and 2000s, questions the ongoing lack of formal policy recognition of culturally-informed institutions and mobile land-relations – especially within the ongoing push to formalise and codify communal land-rights and to decentralise environmental management according to bounded and static socio-spatial units and blueprint institutional set-ups (for instance, Sullivan 1996b, 1998, 1999a, Sullivan 2002a, 2005a, 2019a, 2022: as further discussed in Chapter 4).

In a later and recent joint publication, Lendelvo (see Nghitevelekwa *et al.* 2020) joins Sullivan in debating the incorporation of mobile land-relations and land-use practices in communal land reform and management policy, and specifically in relation to securing tenure and land rights for San people and groups living within communal lands. This also builds on Dieckmann's body of work, including a number of research reports, which addresses the socio-economic, marginalised and landless status of the San in Namibia (for instance, Dieckmann *et al.* 2014; Dieckmann 2018). It also connects with both Dieckmann's and Sullivan's work in examining the allocation of land access and rights within communal areas and group resettlement farms under the current post-independent structures of Traditional Authorities, and in relation to politically marginalised groups.

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Chapter 4 moves into mapping the contributions by the authors to the theme of ***Innovation in conservation and environmental management: between global discourses, policy, and practice***. Broadly speaking this chapter discusses contributions from all three authors to understanding the rise of the biodiversity conservation discourse (as opposed to 'nature conservation'). It also discusses the rise of a Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) paradigm in Namibia from the early 1990s onwards in contexts characterised by overlapping and diverse knowledge and resource-use practices enacted across complex biocultural landscapes. In particular, Chapter 4 details the close links between Sullivan's and Lendelvo's work on resource use and management, and on the evolution and implementation of the CBNRM programme and paradigm. It explores how Lendelvo's publications on ENP complement the work of Dieckmann in sketching a larger regional and economic overview of Etosha-Kunene's changing conservation and tourism landscapes. Additionally, this chapter examines how the work of all three authors converges in weaving together perspectives and analytical frameworks for engaging with Etosha-Kunene's Indigenous, marginalised, and diverse knowledge practices and for sustainable environmental and resource management (see Sullivan 1998, 1999a, 2000a-b, 2002a, 2005a; Dieckmann 2007a and f, 2012; Peter *et al.* 2009; Embashu *et al.* 2015; Lendelvo *et al.* 2015, 2018).

In focusing on the mapping of environmental discourses, Chapter 4 also details Sullivan's later work on, and critique of, the rise of 'neoliberal conservation' and the 'green economy', analysing the ongoing enfolding of Etosha-Kunene's 'natures' within a globalising modernity (see Sullivan 2005b, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011a, 2013a, 2017a, 2019a; Igoe *et al.* 2010). This work, including Sullivan's later work on understandings of sustainability in west Namibia (Sullivan *et al.* 2016; Sullivan 2018), speaks to the other two authors' engagement with larger debates on conservation, climate change and environmental sustainability, including the complex interdependencies between sustainable livelihoods and local cultural and social values (for instance Dieckmann 2007a, 2018; Dieckmann *et al.* 2013; Lendelvo and Nakanyala 2013; Lendelvo *et al*. 2018). To conclude, this chapter weaves

together the work of all three authors as they explore the interrelations between local, national and international interests, knowledges, and institutions in shaping conservation and environmental management within Etosha-Kunene (Sullivan 2003, p. 71).

Parallel to her work on deconstructing the equilibrium model of ecology, Sullivan's early work focuses on practices of collective resource-use and management within the Damaraland Communal Land Area, southern Kunene Region (Sullivan 1996a, 1998), and how people here manage, know and value drylands (Sullivan 1999a, 2000a, 2002b, 2005a; Sullivan and Homewood 2004). Sullivan's (1998) doctoral dissertation, as well as later work, specifically explores the importance of gathered resources in Damara / ǂNūkhoen and ǁUbun environmental, economic, and cultural relations – incorporating collection of over 400 herbarium voucher specimens housed in the National Herbarium of Namibia to support ethnobotanical research (Sullivan 1998, 1999a, 2000a, 2005a; Craven and Sullivan 2002). In doing so, her work challenges a set of biases and assumptions, including those reified in prior colonial ethnographies. For one, she challenges the then negative assumption that Damara herders in north-western Namibia no longer practice gathering and if they did, it was purely utilitarian and to offset experiences of poverty (Sullivan 1998, 1999a, 2005a). Moreover, and linked to this, she addresses the widely held assumption that culturally informed resource management institutions and Indigenous forms of knowing and land-relations have completely broken down "due to the exigencies of colonial rule and apartheid administration during the twentieth century" (Sullivan 2000a, p. 145, also see Sullivan 1998, 1999a, 2000a, 2005a). Lastly, her work revised ethnographic assumptions regarding the "patriarchal pastoralist", recovering feminised and women-dominated resource domains (see for instance, Sullivan 2000a).

Supporting Sullivan's work on gathering, Dieckmann's publications, including the publications produced through the *Xoms /Omis* project, also recover local resource use histories and practices within Etosha-Kunene, including that of gathering and hunting. Her work, similar to Sullivan's, illustrated how gathering is still taking place among many San groups, including the Haiǁom, and how this practice is not purely utilitarian, but embedded within cultural values, memory, social relations, and emotional registers (see Dieckmann 2007a-b, 2012, 2018, 2021a; Peter *et al*. 2009; Dieckmann *et al.* 2013, 2014). In addition, her publications, including one which deals specifically with the histories of hunting within the ENP (Peter *et al.* 2009 – see Image 2 and Map 2), illustrates the complex cultural and people-environment relations within which such land-use and livelihood practices were and continue to be embedded (also see Dieckmann 2009). This theme is strongly echoed throughout Sullivan's work, and in both Dieckmann's and Sullivan's ongoing efforts to deepen recognition of such cultural landscapes in places which carry high international conservation value. In taking a critical look at 'wild' or 'natural' landscapes, their work aims to make visible alternative and culturally-informed conservation values (more on this below and in Chapter 5).

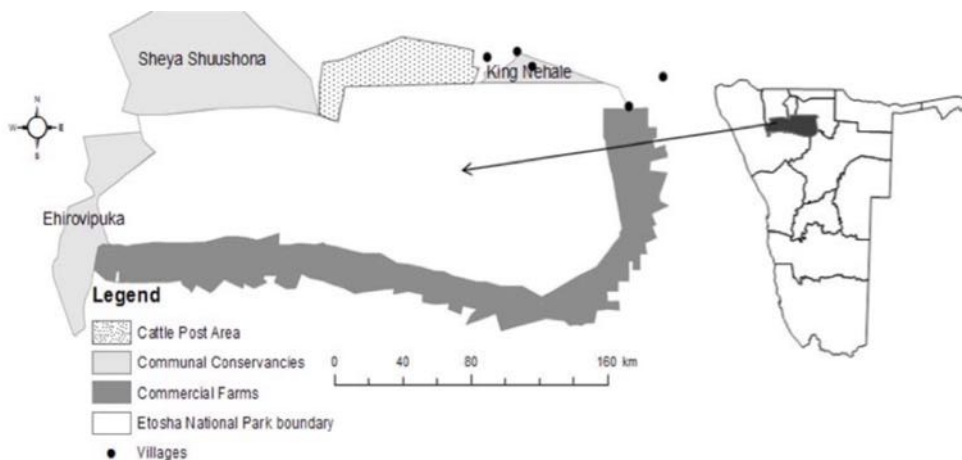
Map 2: Extract of a map on Hai||om mobility and prey animals, © Xoms |Omis.

Likewise, and although not exclusively focusing on Etosha-Kunene, Lendelvo's publications recover the diversity and importance of local resource use and management practices, especially in relation to Indigenous ecological knowledge and understandings of biodiversity (see Embashu *et al.* 2015; Lendelvo *et al.* 2015). Moreover, her work closely intersects with and speaks directly to Sullivan's and Dieckmann's publications in critically assessing the role of Indigenous knowledges and institutions in conservation praxis and environmental and resource management within Etosha-Kunene and from a gendered analytical framework (as elaborated on below).

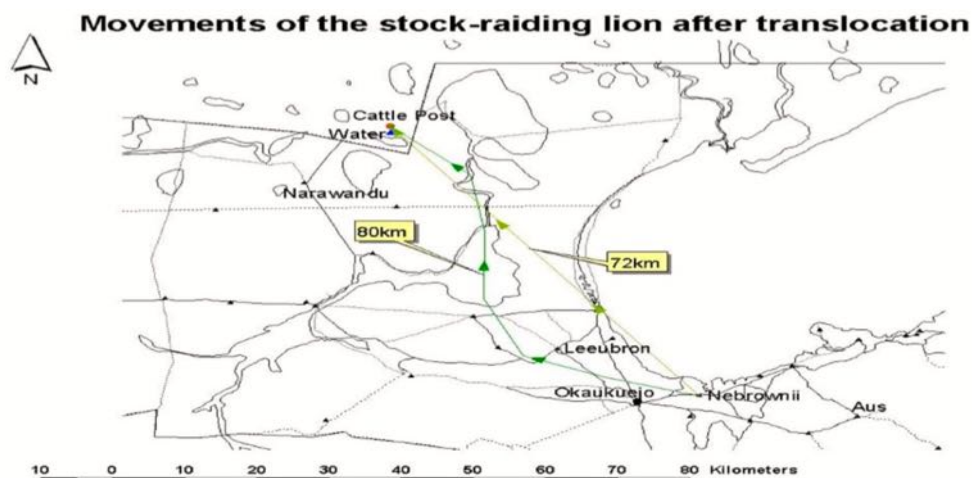
In exploring the themes outlined above, Sullivan's early work critically unpacks changing paradigms of 'nature' conservation in west Namibia, specifically the rise of the CBNRM paradigm and community conservation (Sullivan 1999a, 2000a, 2002a, 2003, 2005a-b, 2006, 2019a; Sullivan and Homewood 2004; Igoe *et al.* 2010). Theoretically, Sullivan draws on a feminist political ecology, historical revisionist, and critical realist approach to engage with and critique new conservation paradigms in relation to their embeddedness within resilient colonial and modernist knowledge constructs and neoliberal ideologies (for instance Sullivan 2005a-b, 2006, 2018). She argues both for strengthening ethnographic detail and scientific data in deconstructing dogma and hegemony regarding people-environment relationships and trajectories (Sullivan 2005a). For example, Sullivan analyses the CBNRM discourse and practice in west Namibia on the grounds of its spatialising praxis and the codification of lands (see Sullivan 2019a, 2022), its "communalising rhetoric" and "economising framework", as well as its ideological underpinnings (Sullivan 2000a, 2002a, pp. 160–162, 2003, 2005a-b, 2006, 2019a and b). In so doing, Sullivan notes a damaging lack of engagement with Indigenous knowledge or "folk ecology", cultural values and practices, gendered resource

domains, and historical and cultural land-relations (see references above, especially, Sullivan 1999a, 2000a, 2019a, 2022). Here Sullivan and Lendelvo's work builds strongly on each other and in taking a critical but also generative look at Namibia's CBNRM programme.

As noted in Chapter 3, Lendelvo's later work (Lendelvo *et al.* 2020a; Nghitevelekwa *et al.* 2020) engages with questions of tenure and land-reform. This research builds on almost a decade of prior interdisciplinary work on resource use and management in Namibia, including through the lens of ecological, socio-economic, sociological and gender analysis research. In particular, Lendelvo's research has addressed and analysed the implementation of the CBNRM programme and in relation to changing and sustainable livelihoods (Lendelvo and Nakanyala 2013), wildlife and ecological dynamics and diversity (Rispel and Lendelvo 2016; Lendelvo *et al.* 2019), local gender and power relations and the politics of participation (Mogotsi *et al.* 2016), human wildlife conflict (HWC) and Indigenous knowledge (Mfune *et al.* 2013; Lendelvo *et al.* 2015), and climate change vulnerability and impacts (Lendelvo *et al.* 2018). Moreover, her work has more broadly looked at recovering Indigenous knowledge in fostering sustainable rural livelihoods (Embashu *et al.* 2015), as well as studying tourist satisfaction in the ENP (Kimaro *et al.* 2015) and HWC along the borders of the ENP (Mfune *et al.* 2013) – see Maps 3 and 4.



Map 3. Etosha National Park and surrounding land use designations. Source: Mfune *et al*. 2013, p. 6.



Map 4. Movements of a stock-raiding lion (*Leo panthera*) after translocation, central Etosha National Park. Source: Mfune *et al*. 2013, p. 17.

Reading across Sullivan's and Lendelvo's work on CBNRM there are clear parallels and connections in their analysis of the programme's communalising rhetoric, and in unpacking the roles of gender, cultural heterogeneity, marginality, and power. Moreover, their work similarly makes visible feminised and woman-dominated resource use and management domains and their incorporation (or lack thereof) into the CBNRM programme and policy (see for instance, Sullivan 2000a; Embashu *et al.* 2015; Mogotsi *et al.* 2016). Reading their work in conjunction offers insight into the long-term economic, ecological, and social benefits and costs of the CBNRM programme, including gaps between the official narrative of success which surrounds CBNRM, and realities on the ground (Sullivan 2002a; Koot *et al*. 2020). This close intersection between their research led them to co-author a recent publication on the impacts of COVID-19 and state-enforced lockdowns and regulations on the CBNRM programme (Lendelvo *et al.* 2020a). In addition, Lendelvo's engagement with the question of marginality and minority groups in resource and land management in two of her publications (see Mogotso *et al.* 2016; Nghitevelekwa *et al.* 2020) resonates deeply with much of the work of both Sullivan and Dieckmann in interrogating the power relations structuring the practices and politics of access under different tenure and resource-management regimes.

In Sullivan's later work she begins to analyse the 'green economy' and neoliberal strategies more explicitly for 'green' and global environmental governance, through a cross-cultural engagement that leans into her Namibia research and draws on the fields of environmental anthropology, philosophy, and political ecology. In doing so, Sullivan's work during the mid-2000s began to shift more explicitly into trying to understand and theorise people-environment relations beyond the confines of the modernist 'Western' ideas of "nature" and globalising neoliberal epistemes (see for instance, Sullivan 2006, 2010, 2011a). This theme is explored in detail in Chapter 5 and relation to Dieckmann's work.

In addition, Lendelvo's and Dieckmann's work connects in their analyses of sustainable livelihoods and climate vulnerability. For instance, Dieckmann, in conjunction with others, has published two seminal research reports on the San in Namibia and especially in relation to their livelihoods and food security (Dieckmann *et al.* 2014; Dieckmann 2018), and her book (Dieckmann 2007a) also provides a critical analyses of Hai‖om's shifting vulnerability and resilience in the face of larger political, environmental and economic transformations and historical marginalisation. Both Dieckmann and Lendelvo address climate change vulnerability and adaptation within Etosha-Kunene (see Dieckmann *et al.* 2013; Lendelvo *et al.* 2018).

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Chapter 5 on ***Knowing Etosha-Kunene's post-colonial "natures": relationality, ontology, and biocultural ethics*** primarily addresses connections between the work of Sullivan and Dieckmann in exploring and theorising Indigenous and post-colonial people-environment relations. In doing so it considers their engagements with relationality, animist ontologies/ecologies, and alternative research methodologies, including the intersections between cultural landscape mapping and digital humanities. As alluded to above, much of Sullivan's body of work examines how global environmental discourses reify colonial patterns of power due to their rootedness in modernist and patriarchal ideologies and knowledge practices. At the same time, her work looks at how these knowledge practices have and continue to play a key part in rationalising global capitalist and

imperial expansion and exploitation, pointing to past and current trends to re-constitute biodiverse 'natures' as marketable and speculative financial(ised) products (Sullivan 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011b, 2013a-c; Igoe *et al.* 2010). At the heart of her engagement with these processes and knowledge/power structures has been, and continues to be, the question of what alternative 'truths', knowledge practices and ways of being are occluded, devalued, and silenced by these conventionally modern and strongly capitalist approaches to people-environment relations (for instance, Sullivan 2005a-a, 2006, 2010, 2011a, 2016a, 2017a, 2019a, 2022; Sullivan and Low 2014). In trying to answer this question, Sullivan draws on her situated research experience in west Namibia to reinsert and reactivate "different and resistant realities and practices" (Sullivan 2010, p. 128) and to decolonise the orders of knowledge which sustain modernity and its systemic violences (Sullivan 2013b, p. 61). Moreover, her work engages with different philosophical currents, such as that of phenomenology and embodiment, and with new thinking on animism, relationality, ontology, and ecology (see for instance, Sullivan 2016a-b). Sullivan thus aims to generate multiplicity through making visible other forms of knowing and being which might exist at modernity's "ontological edges" (Sullivan 2016a), yet which continues to haunt the modernising and globalising moment (also see Sullivan *et al.* 2016).

Although explored in her prior work, the *Future Pasts* project (2016-2019), allowed for a deeper engagement with these divergent strands shaping people-environment relations in west Namibia, and specifically in relation to understandings and practices of sustainability (Sullivan *et al.* 2016). This project thus aimed to critically and collaboratively map the diversity of pasts, knowledges and practices which animate ideas and trajectories of the environment and of the future, including the futures embodied by discourses on global sustainability. As a cross- and trans-disciplinary humanities project, it drew on oral histories, participant observation, discourse analysis, archival research, biophysical data, recordings and filmed material and a range of other engagements to access such diversity. In particular, this project worked theoretically at the nexus between "market-based green performativities", cultural and landscapes histories, discourses, values and practices, and ecocultural ethics (Sullivan *et al.* 2016, p. 1). It was especially interested in "enactments and embodied knowledges" which "'haunt' the present, even as they are masked by currently hegemonic trajectories of economic development amidst contexts of environmental crisis", and in acknowledging the range of cultural, performative and aesthetic registers through which socio-environmental knowledge may be transferred and mediated, including through songs, dances, poetic stories, and memories (for more on this project see Sullivan *et al.* 2016, and https://www.futurepasts.net/).

As explored in Chapter 3, this project engaged extensively with cultural landscape mapping and on-site oral history methodological techniques, producing several maps, including mapping remembered and significant places, historical references, and the embeddedness of music in the landscapes (available online at https://www.futurepasts.net/maps-1). In addition to the various maps, this *Future Pasts* project organised an exhibition and various blogs, working papers and publications which excavated divergent and multiple perspectives on the interrelations between place, landscape, music, memory, healing, change and mining within west Namibia's topographies (see for instance, https://www.futurepasts.net/exhibition) – see Image 5. These conversations were and are meant to flesh out the "culturally-inflected understandings of human/nature relations and entanglements" which animate west Namibia and bring into dialogue alternative visions, versions,

and understandings of 'environmental change' and 'sustainability' (Sullivan *et al.* 2016, pp. 3-4). It thus aimed to both generate and engage with the multiplicity of knowledge claims and values regarding land, places, and natures (*ibid*., p. 19).

Image 5. Banner for the exhibition Future Pasts: Landscape, Memory and Music in West Namibia, curated online, in Gallery 44AD, Bath, UK (2017) and at COSDEF Community Arts Venue, Swakopmund, Namibia (2019).
See https://www.futurepasts.net/exhibition.

It is here that Sullivan's work flows into and connects deeply with Dieckmann's work, with both authors contributing to a recent edited volume on cultural landscapes and cartographic explorations with Indigenous people, including on how to map affective geographies and relational ontologies (Dieckmann 2021c). Although grappling with alternative people-environment relationships throughout her research with Hai‖om and especially through her long-term engagements with the *Xoms /Omis* project (see Dieckmann 2009; Peter *et al.* 2009), recent theoretical engagements with new thinking on ontology, animism and relationality has led Dieckmann to revise her prior work and her own conceptual bias and 'Western' epistemic positioning (see Dieckmann 2021a-b). Moreover, her recent publications reflect on, and analyse, cultural landscape mapping as a cartographic and counter-mapping tool for engaging with Indigenous forms of knowing and being (*ibid*.). Here there are also close intersections with Sullivan work, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, with both authors grappling with how relational and animist ontologies can be accessed, translated, embodied, and known.

Read in conjunction, their work offers novel insights and new perspectives into the multivocality of Etosha-Kunene's 'natures' and 'cultures', while exploring the deeply intertwined and co-constitutive domains of ecology and culture and the cross-cultural knowledge politics of defining, naming, and relating between these domains. Lastly, this chapter concludes with some reflections primarily from Sullivan's work on the implications of engaging with relational and animist ontologies for questions of environmental ethics and justice in the context of Etosha-Kunene, but also globally (Sullivan 2006, 2010, 2016a, 2017a, 2019a; Martin *et al.* 2013; Sullivan and Low 2014; Hannis and Sullivan 2018c).

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This report closes with a brief conclusion, affirming the need for future research agendas to be firmly rooted in local needs, voices, and diversity.