

## 25.9.2019 Windhoek, Namibia

After some excitement if our flight with Condor Airlines would be cancelled or not due to the Thomas Cook bankruptcy, we arrived well but a bit tired in Windhoek. Pick up by Manfred with whom we store our Unimog works smoothly.

It is instantly visible how dry the landscape is. Since almost two years it did not rain here, last year only 100 ml in total and the last raining season came without any rain.

Of course, we are eager to see how our Unimog is doing. The engine starts with the first turn of the key. Unfortunately, the back-right tire is flat and came off the rim. Right after the long flight, Werner has to crawl under the truck to fix it. With a generous dose of dish washing liquid the tire slips back on the rim and we are able to pressurize it. Now we can drive to the Urban Camp in Windhoek.



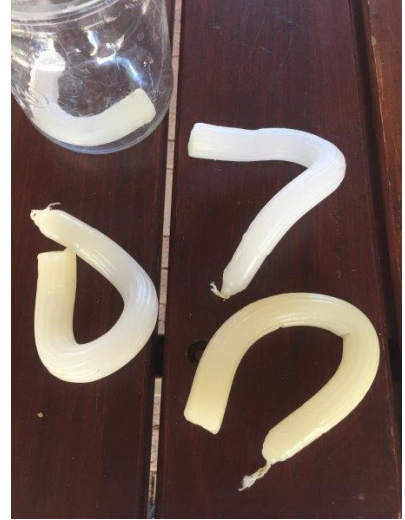
## 27.9.2018 Windhoek

A few busy days are behind us as we had to get ready to be able to start our journey. We had to unpack all our gear we brought with us and stow it away, change engine oil and filters, reinstall the tire pressure control system, check oil in our wheel gears, install the new water flow-through counter, fill up our water tank (not leaking!), reconnect gas, clean solar panels, change money and buy beer...and much more...





Art in all variations and shapes...



After all the work we treat ourselves to a sundowner. Ready-made shanty from the Tafel brewery is now available in Namibia.



## **28.9.2018 Gross Barmen**

Our preferred first stop on the way North is in Gross Barmen near Okahandja. The fantastic huge outdoor pool and the hot spring are a last treat before it will get very hot and very dry.



The water supply situation is very critical at the moment. 2019 is so far the driest year since more than 100 years they say. The last raining season was extremely poor, five out of 17 dams are completely dried out, most others are at 20% of their water capacity. The rivers which carry water all year around – the Okavango, Zambezi, Kwando, Chobe, Kunene and Oranje – all have historic low water levels. A lot of water is also lost due to holes and leaks in the piping and canal systems. In May this year, the government declared this drought a national emergency and approved more than 440Mio N\$ for drought easement measures. However, there is no big change in the water spending behavior. Everyone just hopes that this year's raining season will bring the long awaited rain.

## **29.9.2018 Otjiwarongo**

The morning we still spent at the pool before we start our drive to Otjiwarongo. During this rather boring drive we see many more warthogs along the road than usual and we wonder how warthog would taste, as it is never offered on any menu or in a shop.

In the afternoon temperatures in our Unimog cabin are soaring. Not only due to the strong sun, but also because of the heat of the engine. Our learning: We decide from now on to start early so we can cover some ground before it gets too hot in the afternoons.



In Otjiwarongo, the manager of the local riding club Manfred lets us stay on the car park, even being a bit concerned, that there is no security personnel in place. Manfred tells us that the riding club has to import all of the hay they need from South Africa. The cattle herd in Namibia was already reduced by 50% because of the lack of water and feed.



### **30.9.2019 Otavi, Grootfontein, Roy's Camp**

As planned, we hit the road at 7:00 a.m. and it is an incredible 10C only. The temperature difference between day and night is enormous. Daytime temperatures reach easily 35C and more, while at night time it still drops to below 10C. The reason for this huge difference is the also the current elevation of around 1500 m above sea level. The further we travel north the warmer it will get as we descend.

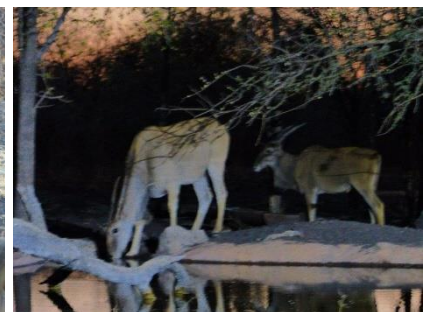
Last year we only had a brief stop in Grootfontein at the mall on the outskirts of the city. This time we drive into town for a coffee break at the Purple Fig Bistro. The staff is very friendly and attentive, but the coffee does not taste particularly good.



Same like last year we stay at Roy's Camp, ~50km behind Grootfontein. The camp is decorated creatively with old metal junk, there is always something new to discover.



At sunset we are at the camp's own water hole and are not disappointed with our first wildlife encounters during this trip. Duiker and impala antelopes, guinea fowls, warthogs and a few eland antelopes come for a drink.



## 1.10.2019 Rundu, Mobola Camp

We hit the road early again and soon we pass the Kavangoland veterinary control station. Travelling north bound we are safe as our food supplies are not checked, but travelling southbound, we would not be allowed to carry any meat or dairy based products. This is because in the north communal grazing in the villages is common and therefore it is very difficult to control Foot and Mouth disease as well as tuberculosis.

Behind the veterinary fence the scenery is changing to a typical African one: Literally no more grass is growing, many small villages with round African huts line the road and one always has to slow down for donkeys, goats or cattle crossing the street. There are quite sizeable dust devils, it is clearly much drier this year compared to last.



We only have a brief stop in Rundu at the local supermarket, somehow Rundu is still a bit chaotic. We remember Katima Mulilo to be much more relaxed and prefer to do our shopping there.



We drive to the Mobola Lodge campsite, located directly at the Okavango river, where we stayed last time as well. They have a nice island-bar which is accessible only via a suspension bridge. Unfortunately, we only later realize that they added a “lorry” fee on our bill. We never had such an experience at any other campsite during our travels. One pays per campsite and per person and it should not matter what kind of car is parked on site. It smells like rip off... and it leaves a bad after taste.



## 2.10.2019 Divundu, Kongola, Mudumu National Park

Just behind Divundu the long and narrow Caprivi Strip begins, about 400 km long and only 50 km wide. To the north it is bordered by Angola and to the south by Botswana. This strip is a special political arrangement signed between Germany and England in 1890 as the „Helgoland-Zanzibar-Agreement“. After the Angolan civil war from 1975 until 2002 came to an end the Caprivi Strip was declared the Bwabwata Nationalpark.



The road is heading East in a very straight line all the way to Kongola. The only distraction are police checks, construction sites and crossing animals. In Kongola we turn south towards the tip of the Caprivi. Our destination is the Mudumu National Park.



Last year we saw so many elephants in this park that we really wanted to come back here again. This time we also know better where the park headquarter is and will not miss it again. It is located to the right of the big new gate, there is a small gravel road which is not sign posted at all. We are checked in professionally by 'Beauty' and are allowed to drive directly from the headquarter into the park, without having to go back to the main road.

We pass the huts of the anti-poaching unit and settle again on site No.1 of the Nakatwa Campsite, directly located beside the Kwando river. From the camp we can already watch a lot of wildlife passing by, actually there is no need to go for a game drive. But of course we will set off for a little game drive in the evening.





From our game drive we return a bit late and darkness sets in quickly at 18.30pm. We have to switch on the headlights and realize that only the parking light is working. Something is wrong, either the light bulbs or the electric is faulty. Well, another To-Do on our never-ending To-Do-list.

