



Map 70: CDP, Section 4 (Oranjevalle Wilderness Camp Sites)



Map 71: CDP, Section 4 (Coboop Training Centre)

4.3.5 River Section 5 (Pella)

4.3.5.1 *Integrated Concept Proposal*

The Bondelswarts Community, a clan within the broader Nama Community, within southern Namibia and South Africa in the vicinity of Pella, proposed tourism products based on the cultural heritage of the Region, a heritage intimately intertwined with human settlement of the Region. This includes aspects such as cultural use of the landscape; the conflict associated with the colonial settlement and domination; the various uprisings and rebellions which characterised the Region; as well as unique architecture, dress, language, stories, myths and legends associated with the Region.

This includes the value of the Orange River, locally known as the Gariep or Great River, as lifeline for this community, currently divided by the colonial border along the river. This link, both physically and culturally, is still intact, albeit divided by the border, making this an ideal transboundary conservation area, for both natural and cultural resources. Locally the links follow the traditional connectivity associated with settlements such as Warmbad, Pella, and Goodhouse, closely associated with the historic crossings at Pella, Ramaansdrift, and Goodhouse.

The Namibian product would constitute an adventure hub at Warmbad, consisting of a lodge utilising one of the old German colonial buildings serving as a base for ecotourists participating in the experience, an open game vehicle drive to Pella drift, followed by a multi-day canoe trip culminating in a historical route following the Houms River, a river that featured prominently in the uprisings and rebellions in 1905 and 1922. As a heritage route, this combination adventure will enable interpretation of the various cultural heritage aspects in an interesting manner compliant with the needs and expectations of the modern ecotourism market.

Infrastructure requirements for this product would entail the establishment of a lodge at Warmbad utilising one of the old buildings, two river based safari camps and one desert safari camp along the Houms River. This would enable the establishment of a five day cultural heritage product starting and ending in Warmbad, re-establishing this settlement as a gateway to the Region, and specifically the TFCA. In this way, the development of the Nama Sandloper Tourism route can be supported, rather than relying on the tourism route placing prominence on the town without a reason for visiting, besides visiting the hot springs facility.

Support for this product should lead to broader support for conservation initiatives in the Region, specifically for the Gamaseb and Warmbad Conservancy, as well as for the proposed Sandfontein Game Reserve. As a CPPP this product could show support for tourism and conservation initiatives aimed at providing equitable access to resources both natural and cultural, in an equitable and sustainable manner. Besides creating numerous opportunities for investment – facilities, operation, vehicles, and vessels – opportunities will also be created for training and employment.

This approach to unlocking the ecotourism potential of the Warmbad Region through the establishment of a heritage safari, also provides significant opportunity for a financial model which the Bondelswarts Community can be the holder of the development and operational rights, as well as the financier, while the private sector operator ensures efficient and effective operation, marketing and guest experience management, with the affected landowners receiving a percentage of the turnover for the contribution that they make.

From Pella, on the South African side, it is proposed that two river trips be planned and developed, based on the current utilisation patterns of commercial operators. The first river trip (3 day) is from Pella Drift to Houmsrivier, while the second river trip (2 day) is from Houmsrivier to Goodhouse. Both river trips have a strong cultural storyline, set within the natural beauty of the area. Interpretation of the cultural use of natural resources is important such as the drifts, alluvial deposits, grazing, river beds, ephemeral streams, springs etc., as well as the role of the Catholic Church, missionaries, settlers, prospectors and traders, as well as colonial forces, and the impact of Apartheid policies on communities.

It is recommended that Pella Mission serve as the adventure hub due to its accessibility and cultural importance, while trailheads be established at Houmsrivier (Witbank) and Goodhouse. The trailhead at Houmsrivier will serve as end to the Pella-Houmsrivier river trip, and as the start for the Houmsrivier-

Goodhouse river trip, as well as a resupply point for combination trips along this river section enabling 5 day river trips from Pella to Goodhouse.

Overnight stops are proposed for Kambreek, Kum-Kum Falls, Houmsrivier, and Groot Melkboom.

A concession agreement needs to be finalised between the operator and the Pella, Witbank, and Goodhouse communities, and should be linked wherever possible with the ecotourism and cultural conservation initiatives of the Bondelswarts Community in Namibia. (Refer Figure 22.)

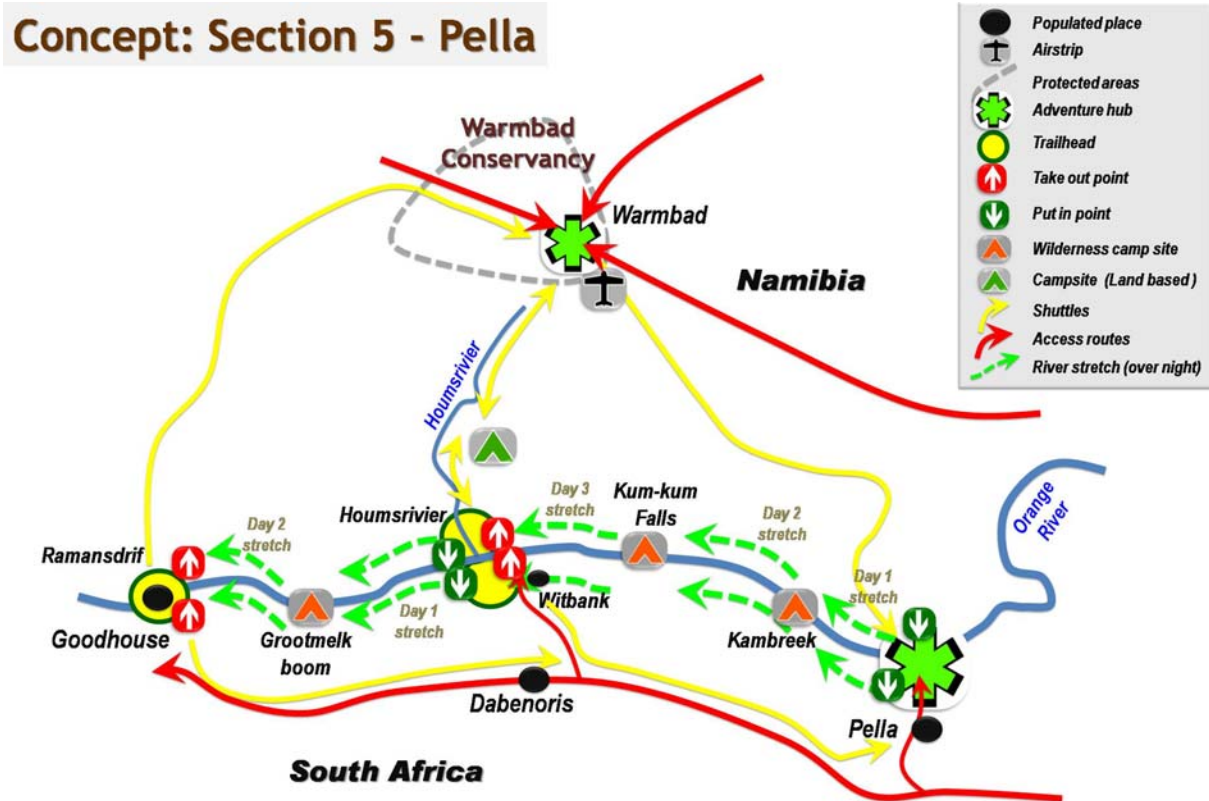


Figure 22: Integrated Concept Proposal, Section 5 (Pella)

4.3.5.2 Sensitivities

Besides the high and moderate impacts at Pella Drift, Witbank, and Goodhouse, the largest portion of this river section is characterised by low impacts on the riparian habitat, mainly as a result of livestock farming and the presence of alien plants.

Due to the different tenure systems between South Africa and Namibia, one of the main sensitivities will be to find a mechanism for a conducive arrangement between the communal structures in South Africa and the private ownership in Namibia. If based on a business model, utilising concessionaires, and a percentage split system based on relative contribution, the potential conflict that could arise may be negated.

Beside the ripple and pools close to Pella Drift, this river section is characterised by a braided river landscape with dense vegetation, creating a complex, difficult and dangerous experience for inexperienced paddlers. In this light, it is suggested that the commercial river trips be guided.

To provide the affected communities with maximum benefit, it is important that opportunity is created for equity involvement by these communities. To achieve this it is recommended that a partnership between the communal structures and the private sector operators or concessionaires be formed regarding not only

the concession opportunity but also the financing of the operation. Broader benefit will be shared between the respective landowners based on their respective contribution of shoreline and overnight campsites.

This portion of the river has vast amounts of cultural resources linked to the Bondelswarts Community, as well as settler and colonial history. These should be incorporated into the river experience, and provide a broadening of the experience offered to guests by guides, yet this would require incorporation into the training programme discussed in the previous section. (Refer Map 72.)



Map 72: Habitat Integrity, Section 5 (Pella)

4.3.5.3 CDP

Two distinct products are offered within this section of the river, the first being Namibian products, and the second South African products (refer Map 73).

The Namibian products' viability depends on an agreement being attained between the landowners and the Bondelswarts Community for access to, and use of, land with strong cultural ties to this community. Access will be for the development and operation of a cultural product that will link Warmbad to the Orange River, in an equitable and sustainable manner, and development will be directly linked to this product in the form of four wilderness style river campsites, and one desert campsite for interpretation of the role that the Houmsrivier played during the uprisings and rebellions. The product will, by design, be guided, utilising open game drive vehicles to shuttle guests from Warmbad to the river at Pelladrift or at Houmsrivier, and back from the river via Houmsrivier or Goodhouse depending on the specific product and take-out point.

The first river experience will entail guests overnighting at a lodge in Warmbad, preferably in one of the old German buildings, which will serve as the Adventure Hub for this section of the river, after which they will be shuttled by game drive vehicle to Pelladrift, to embark on the three paddling sections within this cultural experience, the first from Pelladrift to Kambreek, a distance of 18km, the second from Kambreek (refer Map 75) to the Kum-Kum Falls (refer Map 76), a distance of 21km, and the third from the falls to the Houmsrivier, a distance of 19km, a total distance on the river of 58km, over three days. After exiting the river at the

Houmsrivier, guests will be shuttled to the Desert Camp (refer Map 78), for the third night of the experience. This night will sharply contrast with the nights spent on the river and highlight the importance that these tributaries played during the uprisings. From here guests will be shuttled by game drive vehicle to Warmbad, from where they can continue with their journey, filled with insight into the cultural use of the landscape, and the region's history.

A second three day cultural experience consists of the utilisation of the Desert Camp as overnight stop en route to the river from Warmbad on Day 1. The second day entails a short drive to the Houmsrivier Trailhead (refer Map 77) on the river and paddling to the Grootmelkboom area to a wilderness style river camp (refer Map 79), a distance of 25km. The third day would entail guests paddling to the take-out point at Goodhouse (refer Map 80), a distance of 17km, before returning, via the historically important route, from Goodhouse to Warmbad, to either enjoy the hot springs, or to continue with their journey.

These two Namibian products could be combined to make a five day river experience, starting at Warmbad, shuttling to Pelladrift, and paddling along the river, with four overnight stops, exiting at Goodhouse, and returning to Warmbad.

The South African products follow a similar design, except that the Pella Mission serves as the Adventure Hub (refer Map 74), similar to Warmbad on the Namibian side. From here guests will be shuttled to the river at Pelladrift, sufficiently downstream to avoid the visual intrusion of the pumpstation, for the three day experience, or to the Houmsrivier Trailhead to embark on the two day experience. From the respective take-out points, either at Houmsrivier or at Goodhouse, guests will be shuttled back to the hub at Pella Mission. These two sections can be linked to enable a five day experience. The total distance would be 100km.

Despite the individual products using the same stretch of the river and having similar designs, the focus of the products can differ quite dramatically. From Warmbad the focus should be on the various rebellions and uprisings in the region, the role that colonialism played in these, the outcomes thereof, while from Pella the focus can be on the role of Catholicism, the role of Apartheid on community development, and on the rich biodiversity of the area.

Four distinct groupings within the historically disadvantaged communities are affected by, and have a direct role to play in these products, the Bondelswarts at Warmbad in Namibia, and the Pella, Witbank, and Goodhouse communities in South Africa. It is recommended that, despite the cultural linkages that exist between these four communities, that the products be developed and operated as country specific products. This will enable maximum support to be given by each country's Government to the development of equitable participation by these communities without raising issues of transboundary collaboration. It is just easier.

Additionally, it is recommended that the products be packaged as concession opportunities based in either Warmbad, Namibia, or at the Pella Mission, South Africa. Due to the strong communal involvement and contribution it is further recommended that the financing options seriously consider direct equity by the affected communities, either through donor funding, grants and soft loans, or a combination of these. This should include the Adventure Hubs in the respective countries – these can be in the form of lodges with sufficient parking, storage, and equipment maintenance facilities – vehicles, vessels, and camping equipment. This would reduce the risk of the private sector operator, and significantly increase the benefits to the respective communities.

Once the proposed TFCA is fully operational the possibility exists to combine these products into full scale cross border products where the guests would be able to transfer from one country to the next without necessarily passing through a border post and immigration control measures. This would enable guests from Warmbad to visit the Pella Mission, use the river to transfer to either the Houmsrivier or the Goodhouse take-out before returning to Warmbad, as vice versa, effectively figure of eight journeys on land and river. This is currently not possible and will await further clarification in terms of the transfrontier conservation plans being drafted and discussed within each country and collectively between the countries. This would however truly re-establish the severed cultural ties that currently exist in this area as a result of colonial border demarcation.

Below Table 5 summarises the distances of the various trail components, both the three day river safari, on either side of the river, and the additional two day river safari, which can be combined with the three day experience to make a five day experience.

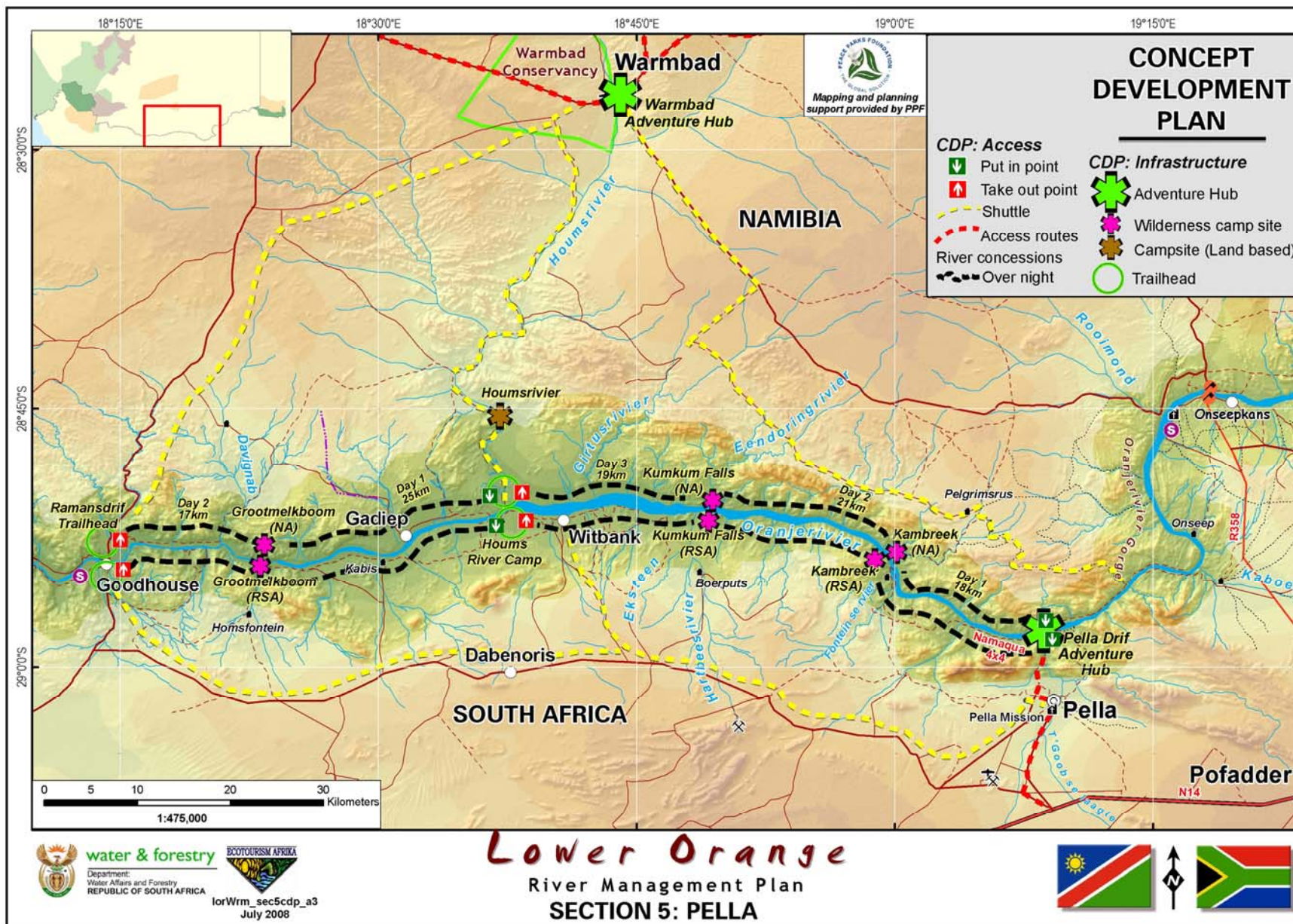
Table 5: River Distances, Section 5 (Pella)

Section	Product	Activity	From	To	Km	Total distance
5	a. Three day river safari	Rafting	Pella Drift	Kambreek	18.00	58.00
			Kambreek	Kum-kum Falls	21.00	
			Kum-kum Falls	Houmsrivier	19.00	
	b. Two day river safari		Houmsrivier	Grootmelkboom	25.00	42.00
			Grootmelkboom	Goodhouse	17.00	

4.3.5.4 Requisite Actions

The following actions are required to ensure that the CDP for this river section can be achieved:

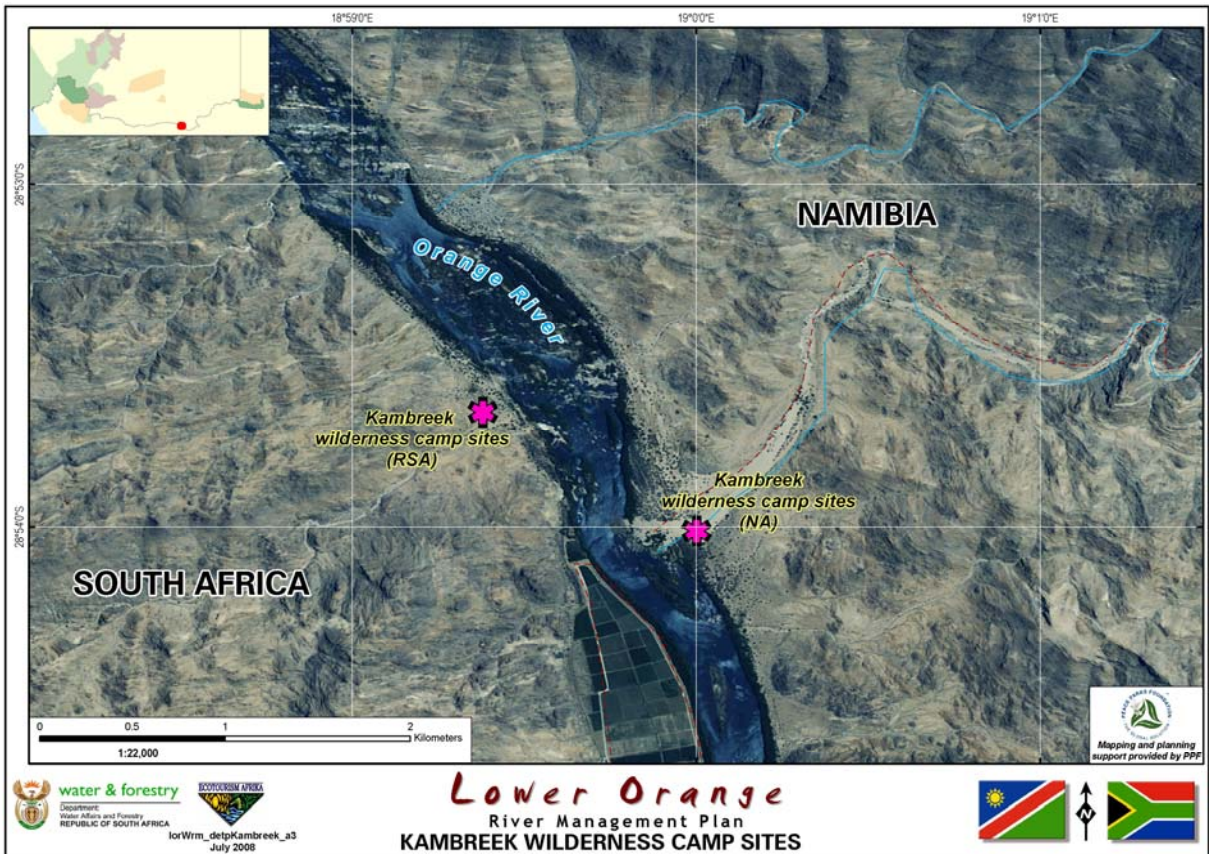
- Discuss with, and compile agreement for the various landowners on the Namibian side for access, use and development to enable the development of the Bondelswarts cultural experiences;
- Discuss with the Pella, Witbank, and Goodhouse communities for the development of a joint concession on the South African side;
- Packaging of these river sections as individual concessions; and,
- Conclude a revenue sharing agreement with the relevant property owners.



Map 73: CDP, Section 5 (Pella)



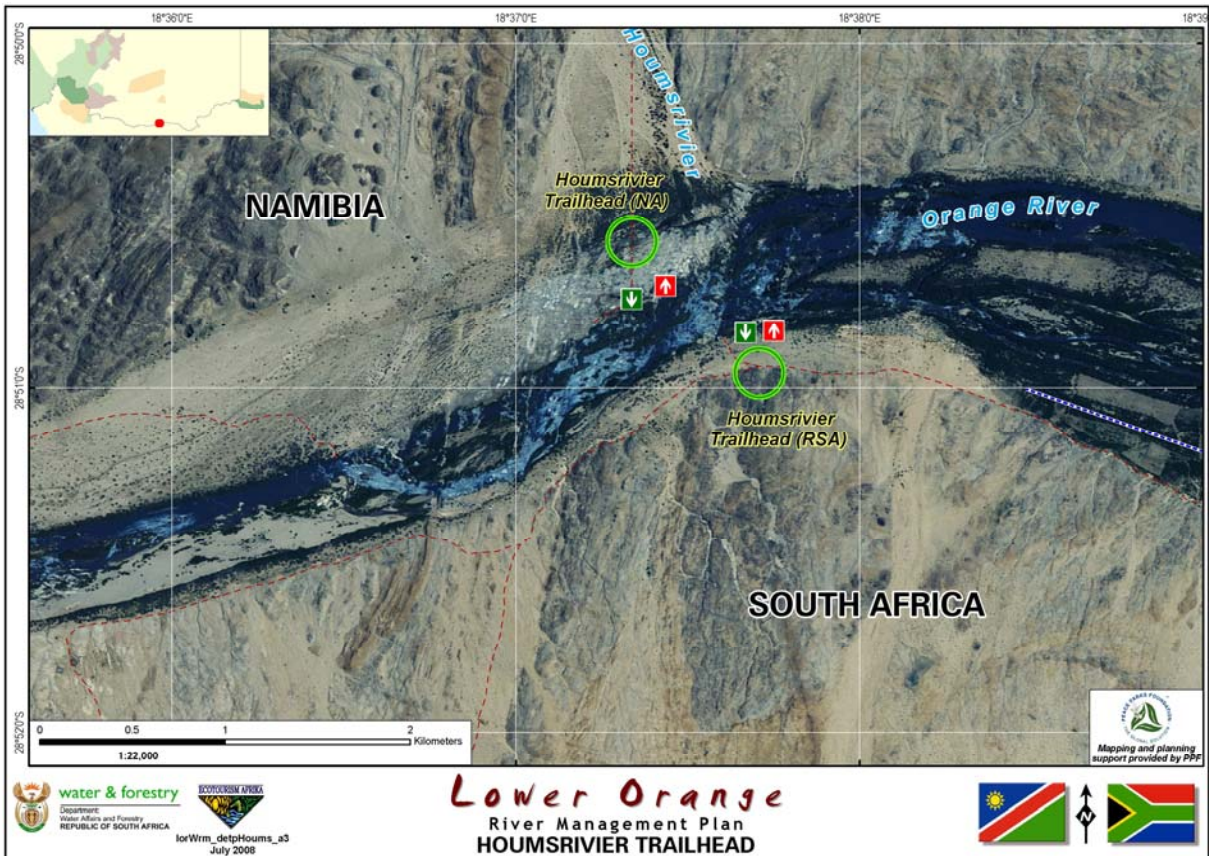
Map 74: CDP, Section 5 (Pella Adventure Hub)



Map 75: CDP, Section 5 (Kambreek Wilderness Camp Sites)



Map 76: CDP, Section 5 (Kum Kum Falls Wilderness Camp Sites)



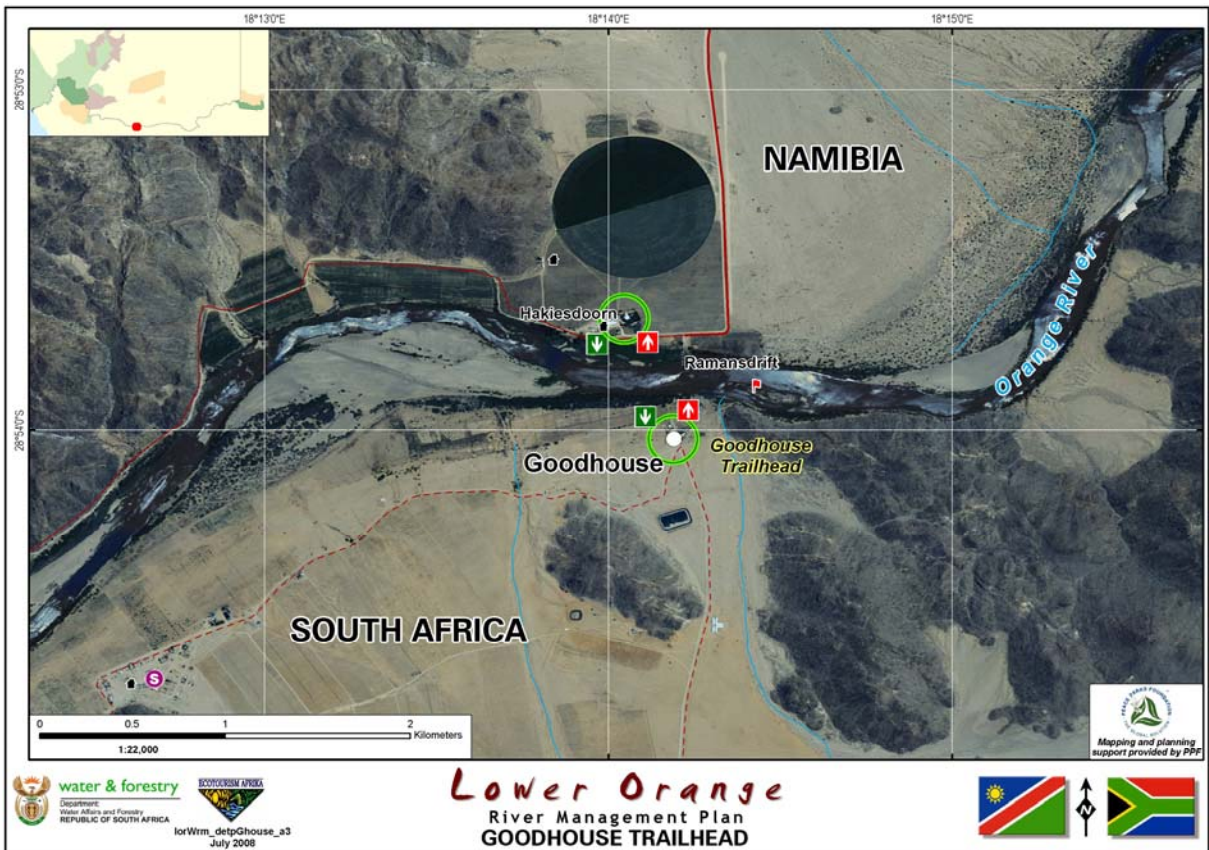
Map 77: CDP, Section 5 (Houmsrivier Trailhead)



Map 78: CDP, Section 5 (Houmsrivier Desert Camp)



Map 79: CDP, Section 5 (Grootmelkhoutboom Wilderness Camp Site)



Map 80: CDP, Section 5 (Goodhouse Trailhead)

4.3.6 River Section 6 (Goodhouse)

4.3.6.1 Integrated Concept Proposal

Due to the remoteness of this river section, few commercial companies offer this as a regular river trip. The wilderness character, as well as the date plantations along this river section, however, make it ideal for 4 day river trips focusing initially on the production and history of dates in southern Africa, and then on wilderness and man’s attempts to tame this.

It is recommended that the trailhead be established at Goodhouse, linked to the previous river section, and that stopover sites be arranged at Henkries, allowing for visits to the date farms; Kromrivier; and Matjiesrivier, with the take-out at the second siphon approximately 3km upstream from Violsdrift. This take-out should serve as the put-in point for the Violsdrift river section, and should thus be developed as a trailhead.

To enhance the debriefing of guests, and manage the conclusion to this river trip it is essential that the trip ends well before the Violsdrift/Noordoewer Bridge, thus avoiding the negative impact of development, agriculture and traffic, and preserving privacy, exclusivity and the sense of isolation normally associated with wilderness areas and experiences. By concluding the river trip in this way it is possible to psychologically end the experience prior to entering “civilisation”, and when entering, to do this as part of the shuttle service provided.

Most of this river trip is within Plot 226, proposed as an extension to NNR, a proposal that will significantly contribute to attaining national conservation targets pertaining to the vegetation of the region. (Refer Figure 23.)

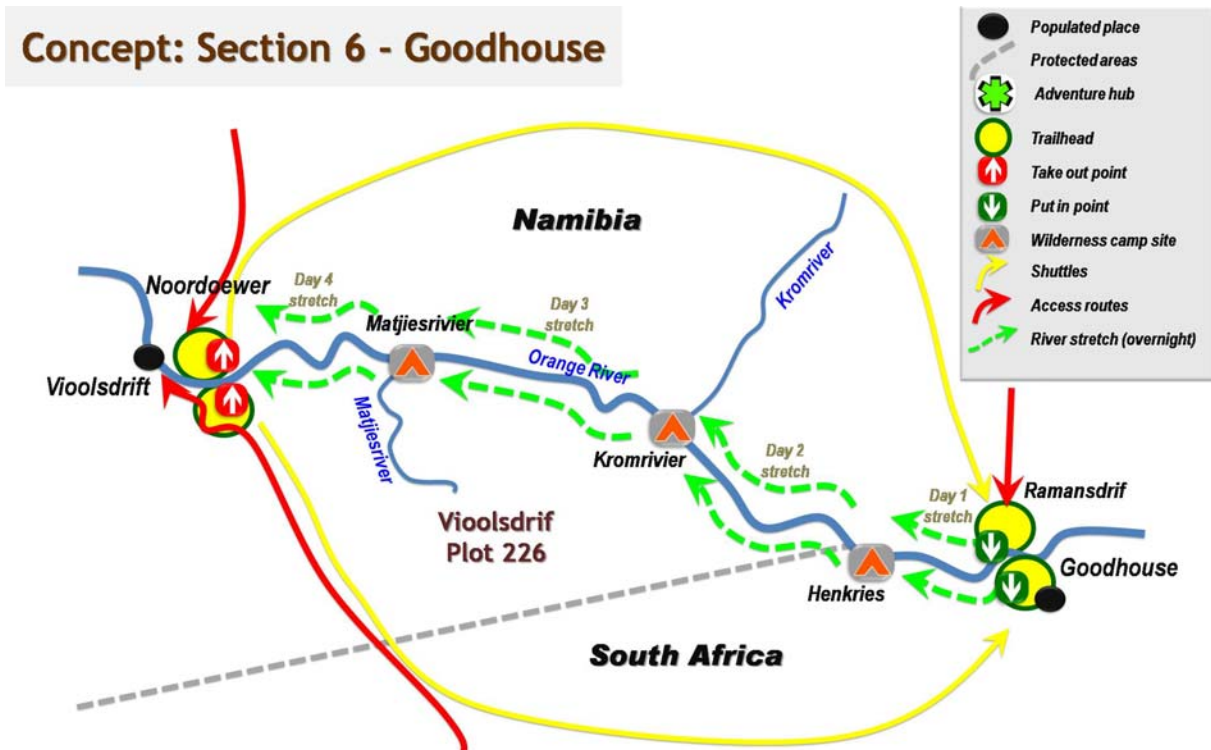


Figure 23: Integrated Concept Proposal, Section 6 (Goodhouse)

4.3.6.2 *Sensitivities*

The totally transformed riparian landscapes that characterise the Goodhouse and Vioolsdrift sections of this river, sharply contrast with the pristine river section close to the Kromrivier, which is fringed by sections with low impacts, mainly from livestock farming, farm settlements and irrigation farming.

Despite the complex mountainous landscape the gradient of this river section is low, resulting in this river section being characterised by pools, and pools separated by ripples. A few bits have sandy pools or show braided characteristics, yet this is not dominant.

Beside the overnight campsite proposed for Henkries, the other overnight camps should be based of wilderness principles aimed at enhancing the character of these sections. The unprotected status of these high value habitats should be addressed by seeking formal protection status both in South Africa and Namibia.

Due to the remoteness of this river section, and difficulty associated with rescue in the event of accident or injury, it is essential that good records are kept of all visitors on the river, whether guided or self-guided. Ideally this should be a four day guided trip within a protected area, jointly managed between the two countries, with controlled access, interpretation and operation.

Undertaken in this way tourism development can significantly contribute to ecological objectives in an environment that would be difficult to use sustainably in any other way, while also providing opportunity to interpret agriculture use of the landscape at Henkries, one of the region's leading date producing areas.

Once again this river section should be planned as a concession, with direct benefit to the contributing landowners, yet providing clear guidelines regarding overnight stops and interpretation points, and by providing a trailhead at Goodhouse, provide opportunity for community benefits in the region.

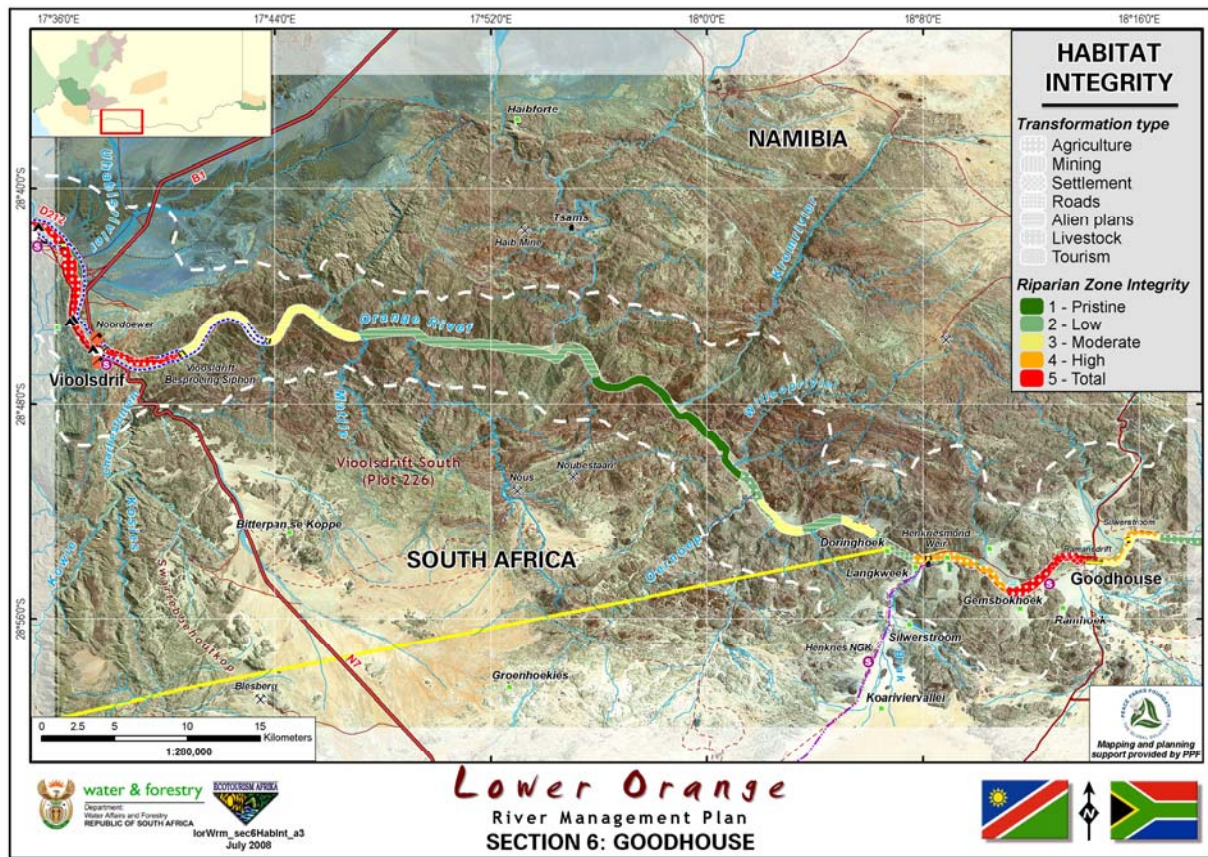
By 2015 it is envisaged that the dam proposed as a critical intervention required to effectively manage the Ramsar site at the Orange River Mouth will be completed, changing the character of this river section substantially. As part of the mitigation it is proposed that infrastructure planned as part of this river section should be aligned with the plans for the construction of the dam and the implications concomitant with the impoundment. Permanent infrastructure should not be placed in areas that will be inundated or required for the effective management of the dam.

Additionally, the state land on either side of the river could be jointly planned, possibly as a transfrontier conservation area similar to the area around the Pongolapoort Dam that now forms the centre of a TFCA between South Africa and Swaziland, and has been identified of an international growth node.

Even though the proposed dam will have implications on the character of the area, it is possible that the dam will create opportunities for the diversification of tourism products, incorporating motorised boating activities to explore the area inundated by water. These activities would be compatible with the activities proposed for the ARTP, Sperrgebiet and Oranjemund River Sections, where the gradient of the river is low, and paddling difficult.

Training in this regard could be offered for skippers, gillies, birding guides and related camp staff, yet should only start once construction of the dam has commenced.

Until the details pertaining to the construction of the dam become clarified, this river section should be planned within its current environmental character. Any concession agreements finalised for this section, both within Namibia and South Africa should take cognisance of the possible impact that the construction of the dam will have on the sustainability, viability and feasibility of this river operation. (Refer Map 81.)



Map 81: Habitat Integrity, Section 6 (Goodhouse)

4.3.6.3 CDP

Being a rather remote relatively flat river section, it is recommended that this river section be developed and utilised as a four day river trip, spending three nights on the river, starting at Goodhouse from either the Namibian or South African side, yet the operational hubs for this river section should be at either Vioolsdrif or Noordoewer, closet to the main route and existing infrastructure, and should target the existing market that utilises either of these settlements as a base from which to start.

The product should firstly entail a briefing regarding the area, its history and development, with specific focus on the role of roads in regional growth and development, highlighting the current role of the road and its role on the settlements of Vioolsdrif and Noordoewer, and then the history of Goodhouse and its role as main route prior to the bridge between Nooroewer and Vioolsdrif being constructed. The historical places along the old route and the pont at Goodhouse should be discussed prior to embarking on the river trip. (Refer Map 82.)

Once on the river the interpretation should focus on man’s attempts at farming this wild, inhospitable area, and the history of date farming should be emphasised. At Henkries a visit should be done to the date plantations, production and packing plants. The camp at Henkries (refer Map 83) could be developed close to this plantation, along the river creating the feeling of an oasis in the desert, and can include permanent infrastructure since there is a level of transformation.

The other two overnight stops should be utilised as wilderness style camps – Kromrivier and Matjiesrivier – with permanent infrastructure allowed. This will protect and enhance the environmental character even though the area is not formally proclaimed, nor protected. Similar to the proposed inclusion of most of the area on the South African side into a provincial protected area (Plot 226), the possibility of formally protecting the Namibian side should be investigated. Due to the rugged terrain, few other viable land use options exist, yet as a protected area, additional aspects, besides the ecotourism potential of the river can be investigated.

The distances on the river are 13.5km for the first day, allowing time for shuttling, orientation, safety briefings, and a visit to the date plantation; while the second day entails a 20km paddle from Henkries to the Kromrivier wilderness camp site (refer Map 84). The third day covers a distance of 22km, ending at Matjiesrivier, also a wilderness style overnight camp site (refer Map 85). The fourth day entails a moderate paddle of 15km ending at the trailhead at Vioolsdrift Syphon 2 (refer Map 86). These trailheads will enable sufficient debriefing of guests before shuttling them back to their respective starting points.

Below Table 6 summarises the distances of the four day river safari, on either side of the river.

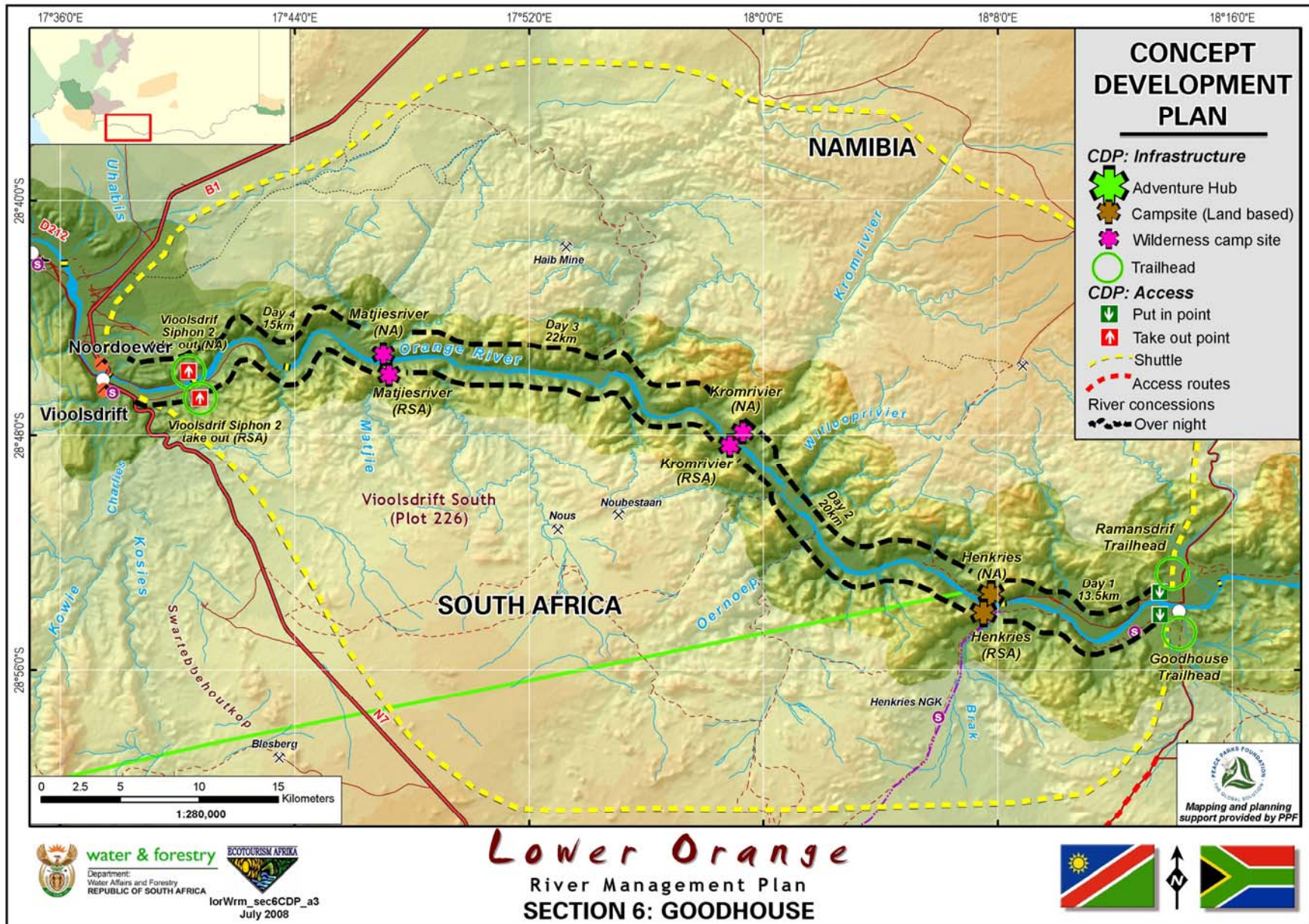
Table 6: River Distances, Section 6 (Goodhouse)

Section	Product	Activity	From	To	Km	Total distance
6	a. Four day river safari	Rafting	Goodhouse	Henkries	13.50	70.50
			Henkries	Kromrivier	20.00	
			Kromrivier	Matjiesrivier	22.00	
			Matjiesrivier	Vioolsdrift siphon 2	15.00	

4.3.6.4 Requisite Actions

The following actions are required to ensure that the CDP for this river section can be achieved:

- Discussions with the PWC regarding clarity pertaining to the proposed Vioolsdrift dam
- Discussions with the PWC and relevant conservation authorities regarding the potential establishment of a transfrontier conservation area associated with the proposed Vioolsdrift Dam, based on the state land either side of the river;
- Discussions with the respective landowners regarding access to and use of land for the requisite developments e.g. River camp at Henkries, guided tour of date plantation, trailheads etc.;
- Packaging of these river sections as individual concessions; and,
- Conclude a revenue sharing agreement with the relevant property owners.



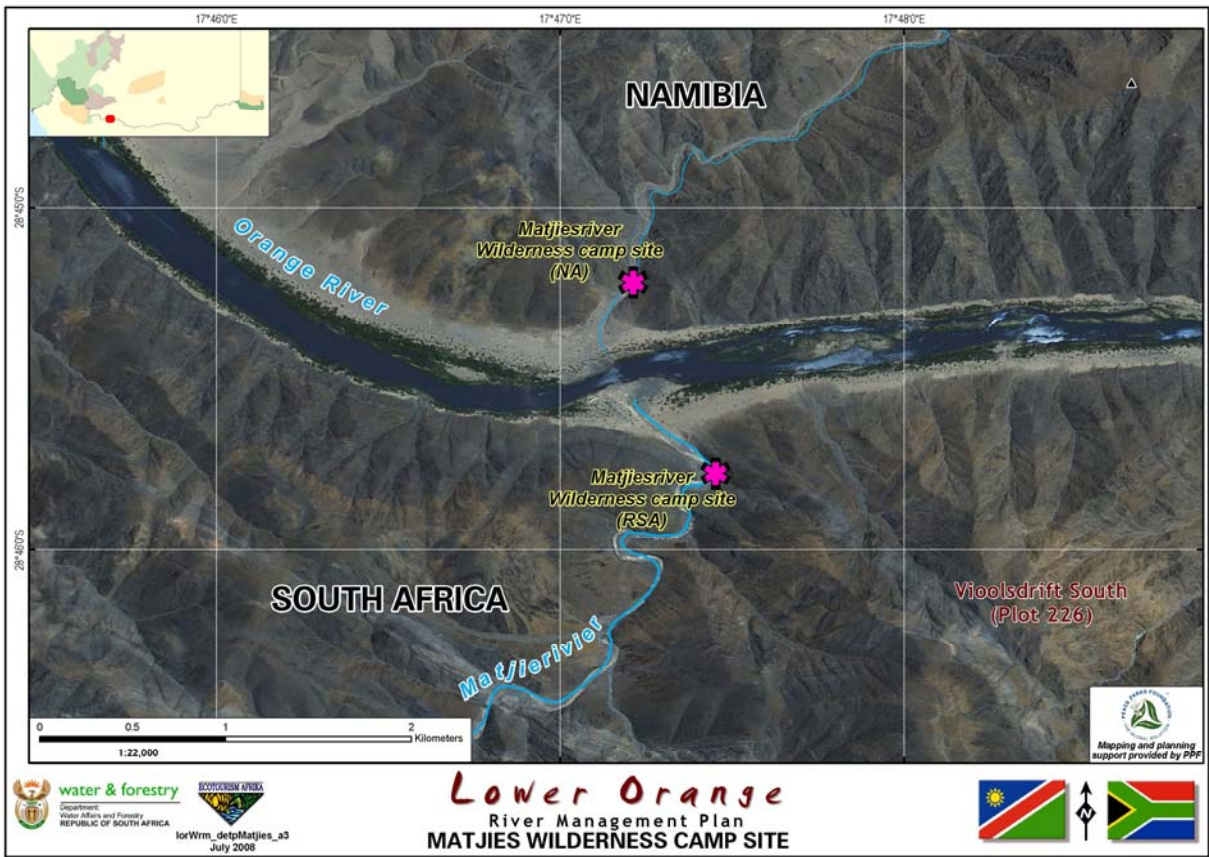
Map 82: CDP, Section 6 (Goodhouse)



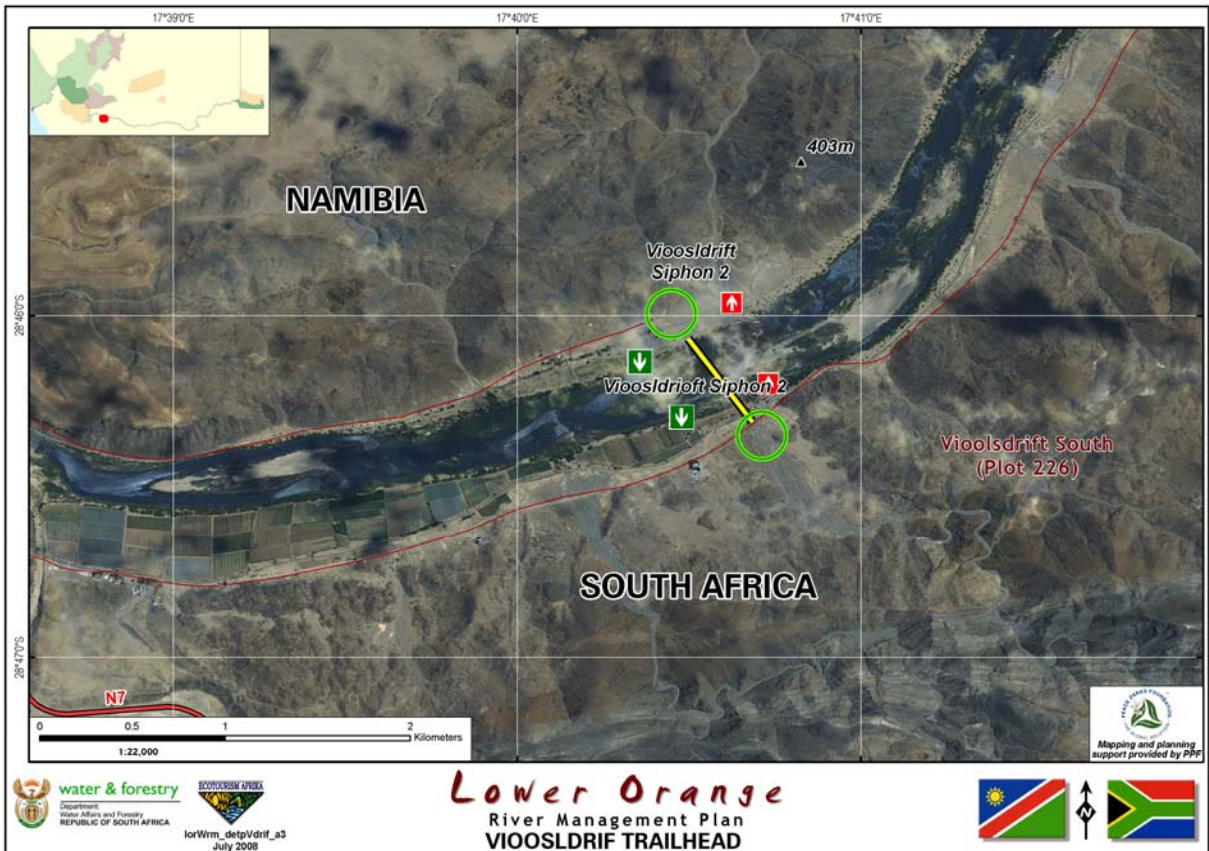
Map 83: CDP, Section 6 (Henkries River Camps)



Map 84: CDP, Section 6 (Kromrivier Wilderness Camp Site)



Map 85: CDP, Section 6 (Matjies Wilderness Camp Site)



Map 86: CDP, Section 6 (Violsdrif Trailhead)