River which forms the border with Angola in the north to the Ugab River north of Brandenburg in the erine bush between 80-150 metres wide which slopes gently down the banks of the river. The camp at south. The western boundary is formed by the Skeleton Coast, while the eastern limit is defined by the Epupa Falls is a cool haven set under a variety of trees and palms. Outjo, Otjiwarango, Omaruru and Karibib magisterial districts. The Kaokoveld offers the visitor a magnificent diversity of terrain and ecosystems, all of which add to the fascination of the area. These various waterfalls which converge and plunge over the jumble of black, glistening rocks into the deep granite-

which seldom reaches further than 20 kilometres inland except in the far north, near the Hartmann view. This is a wonderful place to relax and to watch the bird-life. Mountains and the Angolan border, where it extends some 60 kilometres inland. It is at this point that the Kaokoland 4x4 trail meets the Namib dunes, although the trail itself does not actually enter the Skelisolated localities especially after the brief and infrequent showers.

in this area increases to approximately 30mm to 100mm per annum thus making it a semi-desert with a booisdrif where you turn left towards Okangwati, 109 kilometres north-west of Opuwa. greater diversity of plant life including the well-known prehistoric plant, the welwitschia.

that they are better described as plains.

To the east of the escarpment lies a large, central inland drainage basin which serves as a transition between the highlands which extend beyond Etosha Pan, eastward into Botswana and finally into the area RUACANA and are broken into a number of different regions by the tributaries of the Kunene River.

ROUTE IDEAS Option-1

Option-2

Epupa Falls, then south and south-west to Otjitanda from where it joins option-2.

DIFFICULTY AND EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

can expect to spend the entire day travelling a mere 60 kilometres or so.

Malaria is endemic to northern Namibia so it is recommended that you start a course of anti-malaria into a beautiful acacia-mopane woodland which serves as an ideal camping site. prophylactics before visiting the area. It is advisable to boil or sterilise all water intended for drinking that you draw from wells, dams or rivers along the trail. Hats and sunblock are essential and it is advisable to From this point, read option-2, from 0tjitanda. take along warm clothing even when visiting in summer, as cold, foggy days are not uncommon, especially as you near the coast. It is important to carry a well stocked first-aid kit, as medical help is far away in the event of an emergency. Many outback travellers consider the use of snake-bite kits in addition to Outjo, Omumbaikiha (Baaitjie), Khowarib Schlucht, Sesfontein, Opuwo, Otjitanda, three used as landmark beacons in a land devoid of landmarks of almost any kind. first-aid kits. Snakes and scorpions are common, so wear shoes at all times and take special care when Marienfluss, Otjinungwa, the Hartmann Mountains, Purros, Sesfontein. collecting firewood or moving rocks. The Kunene River is teeming with crocodiles, and many lives have been lost due to people swimming recklessly in the waters. Be especially careful when collecting water OUTJO - KHOWARIB SCHLUCHT from the river and if you do choose to swim, make it quick and have someone keep a sharp lookout.

days are still guaranteed, as daytime temperatures often reach 35°C, while during the hours of darkness Sesfontein is 83 km. vehicles to offer protection from the sun are recommended.

TIME REQUIRED

decide how long to spend at each one.

VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT AND SPECIAL CHALLENGES

over uneven rocky tracks where you will require hard tyres to protect the tread and sidewalls. campsite is shaded, it is only suitable for an overnight stay.

As this is desert country you must be prepared to carry sufficient water for your entire party.

My stay in Sesfontein was highlighted by the rescue of an adventurous English couple You can expect to find water at some of the Himba settlements but for your own peace of mind who had gone in search of elephant and got themselves well and truly bogged down in the do not rely on these. It is essential that you carry sufficient fuel in Jerry cans and long-range tanks river bed. Still, they saw the elephant and I didn't!

for your entire safari as at no place are fuel supplies guaranteed. The beauty of this trail is that you are able to camp where it suits you. The only restrictions are on land close to Himba settlements where you should first seek permission from the headman Depart Sesfontein by heading east along the same road used to enter the town. Travel before setting up camp. Flash floods after thunderstorms are not uncommon in this arid country for 11 km and take the left turn to Opuwo. The track is a good one for for the first thirty so be especially careful of camping in or next to river beds during the summer months. It is also kilometres or so, and then steepens and deteriorates into a rutted track, slow going but not imperative to the long-term success and survival of the trail that you choose campsites within overly tedious. easy access of the road so that you do not have to make new tracks over virgin bush to reach the Some maps indicate the road D3705 from Sesfontein to Otavi and Opuwo. I managed, 'ideal spot'.

TRAIL IDEAS

Outjo, Kamanjab, Opuwo, Epupa Falls, Otjitanda, Marienfluss, Otjinungwa, the Hartmann fontein, Otjive is reached, a non descript village, after which, at 65 km, Otjomatemba and Mountains, Purros, Sesfontein. Min 14 days.

OUTJO TO EPUPA FALLS

This is a two-day drive beginning with the last chance to stock with foodstuffs and supplies so have named the area Baobab Bend. It is 96 km from Sesfontein. before the trek north. An ideal overnight stop on route to Epupa is Okangwati. There is a camp

At 111 km the T-junction to Opuwo is reached. Turn right to Opuwo, which is 23 outside the village in the mopane woodland.

km from the junction. Closer to Outjo is Kamanjab, where 2 km north of the town is Mopane Lodge where there is a pleasant camping site at reasonable fees. There are also self-catering bungalows.

Opuwa, meaning 'the end' in Herero, has a service station where you should stock up with

If you have not yet seen the striking Himba women, Opuwo is where you will find fuel as this will be your last chance to do so. However, fuel supplies are unreliable, expensive many. It is true that many dress to impress the tourists, but nevertheless their appearance is and only cash is accepted. I recommend that you fill your water tanks here too. Once north of striking. Opuwo is a comparitively large town where reliable supplies of diesel and petrol Opuwa the flat landscape becomes more rugged as you head deeper into the Kaokoland and the is found as well as general goods, cooldrinks, liquor and food. Opuwo has three campsites, predominant features include a series of wide valleys and plains enclosed by mountain ranges all signposted and all with very basic facilities. and steep hills.

The road from Okangwati to Epupa Falls is rocky and hard but fairly easy going. As this part OPUWO - VAN ZYL'S PASS of the Kaokoland receives a higher rainfall than the areas to the west, the predominant vegetation

Head back out of town, returning to the intersection west of the town. Take the D3703 through which you drive is mopane scrub savannah and the landscape is dominated by granite road, which begins as quite a good road but after about 50 km deteriorates into a 4x4-only

tapering off as they reach the desert dunes on the coast. The Kunene is the only perennial river through a river bed and a good example of a Himba gravesite can be seen. It is forbiden to and the mouth at Foz do Cunene is always open. The only other river which reaches the sea is the enter the enclosure. At 99 km the village of Etanga is reached after which there is some flat Hoarusib, although in the summer of 1999/2000 many more were brought down in flood, includ-ground suitable for camping. AT 111 k the intersection to Otjihaa is reached. Keep right. ing the Hoanib. The northern-flowing rivers which drain into the Kunene, and the Kunene itself,

The junction between the D3703 and the Van Zyl's Pass road (also D3707) is reached support more tropical vegetation than the other rivers in the Kaokoland and you can expect to see at 134 km. This is Otjitanda. Turn left to Van Zyl's Pass. I suggest that you collect sufficient

The Kaokoland covers some 48 982 square kilometres of largely unspoilt mountain wilderness and is the your more typical bushveld riverine trees like camelthorns, leadwoods, and trees and tamarisk. Makalani firewood before you descend the pass, because there is none available until the Kunene is home of the Himba people – a proud, semi-nomadic tribe of pastoralists. It stretches from the Kunene Palms are also common. The area between Epupa Falls and Swartbooisdrif is blessed with luxuriant riv-

lined gorge of the Kunene River. It is well worth spending a couple of nights at Epupa as you need to is not forbidding nor dangerous. It is a dramatic descent of approximatly 572 metres over a The desert dunes along the desolate Skeleton Coast form a starkly beautiful but narrow sand sea walk downstream from the campsite for about two kilometres to really see and appreciate the magnificent distance of 10.4 km, an average drop of 1:18. The pass is not one continuous descent but a

Opuwo and the Route to Epupa Falls

eton Coast Park. The dunes are true desert where the rainfall rarely exceeds 15mm per annum and the From Outjo take the C38 north for 10kms and turn left onto the C40 to Kamanjab, (see GPS table). swings hard left but because of the long grass, few travellers see it before having to stop. vegetation is reduced to hardy lichens, scrub-like succulents and quick-growing grasses which flourish in This is a fair gravel road. At Kamanjab continue north on the C35, passing the Otjovasandu Etosha Gate However, the stop is worth is, for the views of the Marienfluss and valley below makes the on the right, 66km from Kamaniab.

To the east and adjoining the dune belt, is the area known as the inner Namib or Pro-Namib which

Opuwa is approximately 135 kilometres from Otjovasandu Gate intersection. Once through Opuwa

Travelling Van Zyl's Pass going west to east is only impossible with good off-road includes the Hartmann Valley and the spectacular Marienfluss through which the trail passes. The rainfall turn right at the first junction to Swart- vehicles with differential locks and experienced drivers. However, to those tempted by the

Epupa Falls is 74 kilometres from Okangwati. There are a number of roads leaving Okangwati, up Van Zyl's Pass. Nobody maintains Van Zyl's Pass and the damage to the track makes it The terrain in this Pro-Namib region consists essentially of flat, wide plains dotted with therefore take care with your directions to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors to ensure that you select the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors the correctors the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors the correct route to Epupa Falls. Directors the correctors the inselbergs or small round-topped koppies ringed by rugged and weathered chains of hills or high mountions start at Titus Muhenje's shop. From the shop head for the gate just past the unused military base on Trailers behind large or heavy vehicles can be safely taken down the pass. Drivers must the left-hand side of the road. Immediately through the gate turn right and follow the road in a northerly be experienced. Further inland a mountainous, broken escarpment which runs from Angola through the Kaokoveld direction for about one kilometre, past a group of shacks until you reach the Omuhonga River which is and down as far as South Africa, rises from the plains and separates the low-lying Pro-Namib from the usually dry. Cross the river bed and follow the road which swings west round the southern side of the highlands to the east. Much of the 4x4 trail traverses this broad chain of mountain ranges. The mountains of the western side of the mountain headthrough which you drive are constantly changing in aspect and one of the most difficult sections of the ing for Epupa Falls. Interesting landmarks for about 26 kilometres from Okangwati include two vehicle spectacular reservedly because this is the kind of desert landscape that makes me get into l is found in the north at Van Zyl's Pass where they, rising from the floor of the Marienfluss, appear wrecks, the victims of land-mine attacks during the war. These vehicles are a grim reminder of the destruction was vehicles. to be an unbroken line of solid rock reaching an altitude of some 1500 metres above sea level. In other tion which took place in this beautiful wilderness during the border war years. A further landmark, found big-sky country and I was in my element. places, especially at Khowarib Schlucht at the southern boundary of the trail, the landscape is carved about 33 kilometres from Okangwati, is a spring where the Himba water their cattle. Your next point of Your objective on this day is to reach Otjinungwa on the Kunene River. Once on the by rivers which form deep valleys and chasms. At Sesfontein and Warmquelle which lie on the border reference is the Omuramba huts, 44 kilometres from Okangwati. You must take the left turn to Epupa Kruger National Park and the Lowveld 1:250 000 between the Kaokoland and Damaraland, the mountains are set further apart and the valleys are so broad Falls when reaching the junction near the kraals. A final landmark to look out for is a mere 10 kilometres mannetjie along the tracks can become heavily overgrown. from the Falls, where you will see an airstrip.

that used to be known as the Transvaal Highveld. These highlands vary in altitude from 1300-1500 metres

Should you wish to visit Ruacana, Epupa Falls is 184 kilometres away along a tough, steep track, curious features is not known, although two theories have been proposed. Firstly, it was likely to take the entire day to negotiate. Almost all of the tracks that follow the Kunene are particular—suggested that they were caused by extinct termitaria from a formerly higher rainfall period ily rough, so much so that some have become graveyards of off-road trailers and caravans. Overloaded and secondly, by the death and decay of poisonous Euphorbia damarana plants which vehicles suffer broken axles so I only recommended these routes to well equipped convoys ready for a formerly grew on these sites. rough ride. Eighty kilometres before Ruacana is the town of Ombalantu. Fuel is sometimes available here Outjo, Kamanjab, Opuwo, Epupa Falls, Otjitanda, Marienfluss, Otjinungwa, the Hartmann Moun- and if it is, take advantage of it because fuel supplies are not reliable at Ruacana. The camping site at tains, Purros, Sesfontein. Min 14 days. This route begins at Outjo, heads directly to the Kunene River and Ruacana kas no ablutions but it is well shaded. From Ruacana continue west and follow the signs to the

It is important that you reach Otjinungwa before nightfall as the threat of fire in the Marienfluss is and continue for 40 km until you hit severe corrugations. Then get out, have a cooldrink and brace yourhippo pools. The river-fronted communal campsite is located one hundred metres after the tar ends.

very real and there are no suitable campsites where you can safely build a fire en route.

remote, and more beautiful Marienfluss and Hartman Valley. This trail ends in Sesfontein. hours driving the distance as the track is very slow going.

ing point for the route to Otjitanda. Head through the gate and turn left, or south-west, at the edge of the sleep in the open, staring into the night sky at an awsome display of stars. The Kaokoland trail is a four-star trail, implying that you need to be totally self-sufficient with village. The road travels down the western side of the military base, swinging left as you leave the base regards to food, water, petrol, vehicle spares and tyres before heading into this rugged mountainous wilder-behind. After four kilometres branch left to the hot springs at Otjiyandjasemo. The route takes you to the

erbed and follows a narrow gorge between two granite koppies. Once through the gorge the road opens the water's edge.

turnoff to the left immediately after crossing a white bridge. This lies 66kms after Kamanjab. This is the

The scenery is awesome and the remoteness a real pleasure. Camping sites are non-existent and the one

Treat river courses in these dry areas with respect. Flash floods in summer are also a real threat

temperatures can be expected to drop as low as 5°C. You can expect fog and mist when in the HartThe track passes through the Kamdescha Veterinary Control Point, where Paulos, the gate guard will in the Marienfluss. mann Mountains and near the Angolan border. The mist lowers the temperature dramatically and cold, sign your vehicle through. He hands out maps of the area if he has stock and will give you directions if foggy summer days are not uncommon. Shade cloth or awnings that can be attached to the side of the you wish. He told us how to avoid the dust holes by skirting a hill, but we must have missed the crucial intersection because, to our surprise, we found the holes. This stretch is short and, although extremely dusty, not nearly as severe as many found in Namibia's river beds.

the magnificent scenery. I therefore recommend that you spend at least two weeks on the trail. We have the steep rocky cliffs and green riverine vegetation, together with the thick sand, river mud and rocky a no-entry coast road which is fenced before reaching the Skeleton Coast Park. indicated a number of possible campsites along the route with descriptions of each, to allow you to climbs, made it a drive to remember. There are numerous places to camp, more so as the western end of a work of the route with descriptions of each, to allow you to climbs, made it a drive to remember. There are numerous places to camp, more so as the western end of a work of the route with descriptions of each, to allow you to climbs, made it a drive to remember. There are numerous places to camp, more so as the western end of a work of the route with descriptions of each, to allow you to climbs, made it a drive to remember. There are numerous places to camp, more so as the western end of a work of the route with descriptions of each, to allow you to climbs, made it a drive to remember. There are numerous places to camp, more so as the western end of a work of the route with descriptions of each, to allow you to climbs, made it a drive to remember. the Khowarib Schlucht is neared.

SESFONTEIN

It is important that your vehicles are equipped with recovery gear and each vehicle must carry a Talk about an anti-climax! After a wonderful day, Sesfontein is reached, whose only grace is that it The route now takes you through Orupembe where you will find a large windmill which serves and colddrink can tops constitute litter, so please be careful where you leave these. When going to the fire-extinguisher as sections of the trail traverse grasslands where the risk of fire caused by grass caught is near the Hoanib River valley, home of the desert elephant. Its only other recommendation is the Engen as the focal point of a number of Himba settlements in the area. Once past Orupembe the landscape to illet dig a deep enough hole to bury the evidence. Leave the campsite in the same way as you would under the vehicle is great and where you will frequently need to stop and check the underside of fuel station, with diesel and leaded petrol. Fort Sesfontein is the most convenient campsite, although it changes again and you travel along a badly corrugated road through broad, flat country where the your vehicle. It is absolutely essential that each vehicle carries two good-quality spare tyres. Include a seems obvious that the operators are not particularly interested in attracting campers - the shower out of the bush at breakneck of the bus complete tyre repair kit for emergencies. Tyre pressures are important on this trip as you will be travelling lets, positioned in the middle of the bathroom ceilings, do not even have a rose on them. Although the wildlife and birds that several trip as you will be travelling lets, positioned in the middle of the bathroom ceilings, do not even have a rose on them. Although the wildlife and birds that

SESFONTEIN - OPUWO

after being driven by a guide, to find the track. It was very rough and after twenty minutes I decided that this was not a viable alternative. The road is also difficult to find on the Otavi side, and so I can only conclude that this track either no longer exists as a thouroughfare or is rarely used.

The D3704 is a rough track suitable for high-clearance 4x2 vehicles. 44 km from Sesa windmill is passed. I have taken it upon myself to give a landmark found on this route a name. The feature is a right hand bend, and on the small hill around which the track curves is a community of baobab trees. These are the only baobob trees I saw in the Kaokoveld

koppies. As you approach Epupa Falls on the Kunene River, the hills of Angola become visible. track. At 33 km there is a water hole on the right and then a river crossing at 42 km. At 51, The major rivers in Kaokoland all flow from east to west from the areas of higher rainfall, 63 and 97 km respectively there are radio masts marking the way. At 52km the track moves

series of descents broken by sections of flat ground and even one or two mild climbs. It is one of the most dramatic passes I have ever travelled and I enjoyed it immensely. The best part is when the track suddenly rises and stops at the edge of a precipice. The track actually rough and tumble of this kind of motoring worth every minute of effort.

prize of a moment sponsored by a well-known liqueur maker' please don't try and drive

Another feature of the Marienfluss are the circular patches of bare, sterile ground in The Garden Route the grassland, sometimes called fairy circles The patches vary in size from two to five me-Visit our website at http://www.infomap.co.za tres in diameter and on sloping ground they are usually oval in shape. The origin of these

the plain. I needed to be at the right place in the late afternoon light. This meant that night fell and I was goes directly to the Purros campsite, set in trees on the bank of the Hoarusib River. The right fork heads Outjo, Omumbaikiha (Baaitjie), Khowarib Schlucht, Sesfontein, Opuwo, Otjitanda, Marienfluss, ut is approximately 137 kms from Epupa to Otjitanda but you can expect to take all day to travel this very far from Otjitungwa. Camping is not encouraged on the plains because too many people would not to the main river crossing and into Purros itself. Otjinungwa, the Hartmann Mountains, Purros, Sesfontein. Min 8 days. If time is limited, this is the sugsection. You begin by back-tracking from Epupa Falls to Okangwati along the same route you followed—think and drive through the grass to find a camping site. Tracks are not errased by weather and stay in gested route. Although Epupa falls is missed, I regard the highlights of the Kaokoveld to be the more to reach the Falls. Otjitanda is only 63 kilometres from Okangwati but you can expect to spend up to 5 the plains for fifty or more years. So, with low impact in mind I drove until I found a fairy circle crossing the track. It didn't take long to find one, as they are very numerous, especially in the southern section of

The only reason for this small village's existence appears to be the campsite. A well appointed heav-Once back at Okangwati head for the shop both to replenish your supplies of drinks and as a start—the Marienfluss. To further reduce impact, I did not light a fire, or pitch a tent. What a perfect place to—ily-wooded campsite with flush toilets and deep shade is a welcome stop-over after the day's teeth rattling.

ness. Reliable, mechanically sound vehicles are essential as you will be far from help in the event of a west of the springs after which it joins up with the main road to Otjitanda again. Keep a lookout for the 53 km from the bottom of Van Zyl's Pass Otjinungwa river bed is crossed and the final approach Otjitanda again. Keep a lookout for the problem. Variety is part of the attraction of this trail and you can expect to have your driving ability tested landmarks as you leave Okangwati. There is a concrete dam wall 18 kilometres from the village. At 27 to the Otjinungwa camp and the 'Camp Under the Ana Tree' on the banks of the Kunene River. The river by rocky tracks, steep slopes and inclines in the mountainous terrain, dune driving, long grass and fast kilometres you will come across the grave of a Himba headman. Etengwa kraal, which has a borehole of campsite is by far more pleasant and only marginally more expensive. There is a resident Himba family gravel roads and even mud in the riverbeds in late summer. In many places the going is slow and you sweet, pure drinking water, is situated 31 kilometres from the town. At 46 kilometres you will see a large who cares for the camp site, and a good job they do too. There is plenty of deep shade, reed flush toilets, and tree in a dried river bed, and you will come to Ovireva Dam, 57 kilometres from Okangwati. cold showers and plenty of space. The water supply comes directly from the river so is not drinkable across dozens of rivers. The route heads towards the eastern interior which, thanks to its higher rainfall, The trail really becomes difficult about 62 kilometres from Okangwati, as the road drops into a riv- untreated. A last word of caution: the Kunene River is teeming with crocodiles, so take special care at has a greater variety of vegetation. Sesfontein is 105 km from Purros. Along the way are numerous settle-

OTJINUNGWA TO HARTMANN'S VALLEY

From Otjinungwa the trail returns for 43 km and then splits at the 'Marienfluss intersection' (see GPS table). The right fork will take you to Rooi Drom. Many who visit the area are surprised at

Marienfluss, you are certain to enjoy the Hartmann's Valley.

The Route to Hartmann's Valley

beautiful, especially after a summer of good rains.

type of projection may seriously limit accuracy. In addition some minor tracks have been drawn by hand as no aeria photographs or satellite images exist for reference. 4. Strange, unexplained anomalies have been reported by pilots and explorers using GPS receivers in Kaokoland. These include inconsistencies from one day to another in certain areas. It is therefore essential that travellers should not be complacent that the GPS will take care of navigation. Permit required to use roads in Skeleton Coast National Park

12°00′

. GPS accuracy varies due to many factors, most within the control of the user.

Set up your GPS carefully and correctly before using the co-ordinates on this map. Set it on the WGS84 datum and

the measurements to display deg/min/seconds (hddd°mm'ss") Knowledge of traditional map reading is advised.

WARNING Using GPS co-ordinates in a vehicle within the confines of a road or track requires special precautions

2. Although great care is taken, should there be an error on this map, these errors need not cause navigational dif-

3. This map should NOT be used for lifting co-ordinates by measuring from the grid lines, as the large scale and

ficulties if users use common sense when plotting their route and pay attention to distance and direction.

Should co-ordinates be used blindly, without regard for distance and direction, serious navigational errors can result.

7 12°00 The InfoMap range of fine GPS road maps:

1:400 000 1.620 000

Rooidrom, because that is all it is - a red drum. There are two other drums in the immediate vicinity, all trails as all of these traverse fragile desert landscapes which are easily damaged by thoughtless or ignorant

This good gravel road takes you from Outjo, via Kamanjab onto the C35 towards Hobatere Lodge.

The Hartmann's Valley is a broad undulating plain edged by mountains. Unlike the Marienfluss, the leave the track to pass an obstacle such as a badly bogged stretch of road or to avoid a fallen tree then Some 15km before the lodge, and 13km before the Etosha Otjovasandu Gate intersection, take the P2232 closer it gets to the Kunene, the redder and thicker the sand becomes, making the driving more difficult. return to the main track as soon as possible.

The best time of the year to visit is in the cooler winter months from April to September. Sum- track, which begins as one suitable for high-clearance 4x2s but degenerates, as the Khowarib Schlucht is marked on many maps belongs to the same company that has a concession in the northern reaches of the with severe consequences if you are trapped in a river bed and faced with a raging torrent. Animals, mers can be unbearably hot with temperatures soaring into the mid and upper 40s. During winter, hot reached, into a challenging and enjoyable 4x4 drive. From the C35 turnoff to the main road (D3706) to Skeleton Coast Park. The campsite is therefore private and most visitors who drive through Hartmanns do especially elephant and rhino, frequent river beds in search of subterranean water. Many cases have been so as day visitors. Camping in the valley is not encouraged for the same reason as it is not encouraged reported where these animals have been injured when trying to escape from a vehicle in a river bed.

At Rooidrom turn right. Drive for 16 km and look out for a blue drum. This intersection also links to

• Do not contaminate the water at dams, springs or wells with detergents and soaps, as both

road to Orupembe. PURROS AND SOUTHERN-WESTERN KAOKOLAND

The Route to Purros

Head east from Orange Drum for one kilometer and turn right. Soon after leaving Orange Drum there is an ideal riverbed campsite. At 45 km there is another road to the right. Keep straight. 59km from Orange Drum is an intersection. A left turn will take you to Pupembe and the D3703 eastwards. Bear right selves for the next thirty or so kilometres, because the corrugations are so bad you will want to remove When I visited the area I was shooting photographs for a book and a 4x4 driving video, while on your teeth. 97 km from Orange Drum and the road descends into a broad valley and forks. The left fork

Permit required to use roads i Skeleton Coast National Park

19°00′ –

13°00′

Mozambique 1:1 800 000

Drakensberg and Eastern Freestate 1:250 000

The bed of the Hoarusib River makes as interesting drive but despite river bed driving being prohibited, the entire area is littered with vehicle tracks, as if it has been made into a giant 4x4 playground. Set in magnificent scenery, the tracks spoil an otherwise beautiful area. It is approximately 229 kilometres from

ments, many with communal campsites, most worthy of an overnight stay if you find people getting tired and the sun going down.

sickly animals.

Much the same guidelines apply to the Kaokoland trail as to the Central Namibia and Richtersveld off-roaders. These harsh, dry environments take many years to recover from abuse, so for your pleasure Rooidrom marks the intersection: left to Orupembe via the Outihaa intersection (47 km) and right and the enjoyment of those who come after you, you are requested to follow some simple rules: Orupembe via Blue drum, Orange Drum and the Hartmann Valley turnoff (87 km). If you enjoyed the

• Stay on the tracks. It not only visually scars the landscape, but also causes fundamental ecological damage and erosion when off-roaders leave the tracks and head off into the pristine veld. If you have to

> • Never monopolise the available water sources by camping right next to springs or rivers, as game and livestock rely on this water for survival. Your presence at a water source could mean that already thirsty animals have to trek for miles to find other water, often resulting in the death of young, old or

The Khowarib Schlucht (the front cover photograph was taken here) is one of the highlights of the a northerly road, but the drive is uninteresting and leads to a small mine, 29 kms away and stops. Instead, people and animals rely on this water. If you do intend to use detergents, then ensure that they are bio-The trail can be covered in as little as 10 days but this leaves little time to stop and rest or to enjoy — Richtersveld and I thoroughly enjoyed the drive. The sun was going down and the light, bursting between — continue straight for 9 km until you see an orange drum. This is the intersection of Hartmann's Valley and — degradable. Wet yourself and then move away from the water source to soap down and rinse off with a bucket. The sand on the bank will filter any harmful detergents.

tree or on its roots as the heat could kill the plant. Bury all traces of your fire before leaving a campsite so as not to mar the campsite for the next visitor.

• Take all your rubbish out with you when you leave. Never bury your refuse. Cigarette stompies

HAPPY AND SAFE TRAVELLING. LET'S PROTECT THE KAOKOLAND FROM CLOSURE!

13°00′

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27 11 215 8800, bruce@ccic.co.za

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