

Press Release

Opening of the Bush-to-Value (ButoVal) Biomass Industrial Park in Namibia *A Milestone for Sustainable Biomass Utilisation and the Circular Economy*

Witvlei, Namibia – 11 March 2025

On 11 March 2025, the Bush-to-Value (ButoVal) Biomass Industrial Park (BIP) was officially inaugurated in Witvlei, Omaheke Region, Namibia. This pioneering project presents an innovative solution for the sustainable use of bush biomass. The goal is not only to reduce the spread of invasive bush encroachment but also to harness it as a valuable resource for renewable energy, economic growth, and social development.

The project is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and supported by the German Aerospace Center (DLR) as the project sponsor. It also enjoys strong political support at the highest levels in Namibia.

High-Level Political Support

The opening ceremony was attended by around 100 guests, including senior political representatives, industry experts, and researchers. Notable participants included:

- Hon. Pijoo Nganate, Governor of the Omaheke Region
- Ms. Lucia lipumbu, Honourable Minister of Industrialisation and Trade (MIT), represented by Ms. Diina V. Nashidengo, Director of Trade at MIT
- Mr. Johnson Ndokosho, Director of Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism
- Representatives from the Witvlei community, local council, and Omaheke Regional leadership
- Ms. Lucia Radovanovic, Representative of the Namibian Embassy in Berlin (Commercial Counsellor)
- Ms. Ulrike Metzger, German Embassy in Windhoek (Counsellor for Economic Cooperation)
- Leading representatives from biomass associations and the private sector

A Model for Sustainable Biomass Utilisation

The ButoVal Biomass Industrial Park in Witvlei is a modern facility demonstrating innovative harvesting, processing, and utilisation technologies for bush biomass. The facility is at the centre of a comprehensive programme aimed at economic, ecological, and social development in Namibia.

After two years of intensive planning and preparation, the facility is now operational. Over the next 13 months, it will be tested to gather critical techno-economic data needed to develop the pilot into a full-scale industrial operation.

A key innovation of the ButoVal project is the development of a unique compactor, enabling all bush material to be compressed into transportable “bush cigars.” Already, 1,000 tonnes of compressed biomass are stored on site for further processing.

The production process includes: cutting, rotary debarking, screening, milling, and de-sanding to produce wood and feed pellets, as well as high-quality raw materials for charcoal and fuel production.

Initial tests show that the project successfully addresses key challenges in bush processing, including transportability, removal of contaminants, and compliance with industrial quality standards.

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony and Partner Contributions

The official opening was led by Hon. Pijoo Nganate (Governor of Omaheke) and Ms. Diina Nashidengo (MIT). Mr. Michale Degé (General Manager of the Charcoal Association of Namibia – CAoN) moderated the event.

Following this, national and international partners presented their contributions to biomass utilisation:

- Prof. Dr. Peter Heck, Managing Director of IfaS (Institute for Applied Material Flow Management)
- DHG Vertriebs- & Consultinggesellschaft mbH – introduced the Biomass Industrial Park model
- HAAS Recycling-Systems – showcased bush biomass shredding and processing technologies
- AMANDUS KAHL GmbH & Co. KG – presented pelletising technologies
- CLAAS Group – demonstrated harvesting technologies
- Students from the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) – presented research
- Namibia Biomass Industry Group (N-BIG) – presented sustainable biomass innovations
- Mr. Michale Degé (CAoN) – addressed the charcoal industry’s role in Namibia’s bush utilisation strategy

Funding and Future Outlook

An essential aspect of the project is its long-term financing and scalability. Roland Keil, Head of the Environment and Sustainability Division at DLR, presented the German funding structures supporting the project’s expansion. The financial resources are aimed at further research, infrastructure development, and the expansion of the pilot into a full-scale industrial facility.

An International Example of Sustainable Development

The ButoVal project clearly demonstrates that economic progress and environmental protection can go hand in hand. The strong collaboration between Namibia and Germany, along with the involvement of industry, academia, and government, makes this project an international model for sustainable biomass utilisation.

This milestone positions Namibia as a leader in green, resource-efficient economic development and shows how innovative technologies can address bush encroachment while creating economic, environmental, and social value.

The event concluded with a guided on-site technology demonstration, where guests could experience the innovative solutions firsthand.
