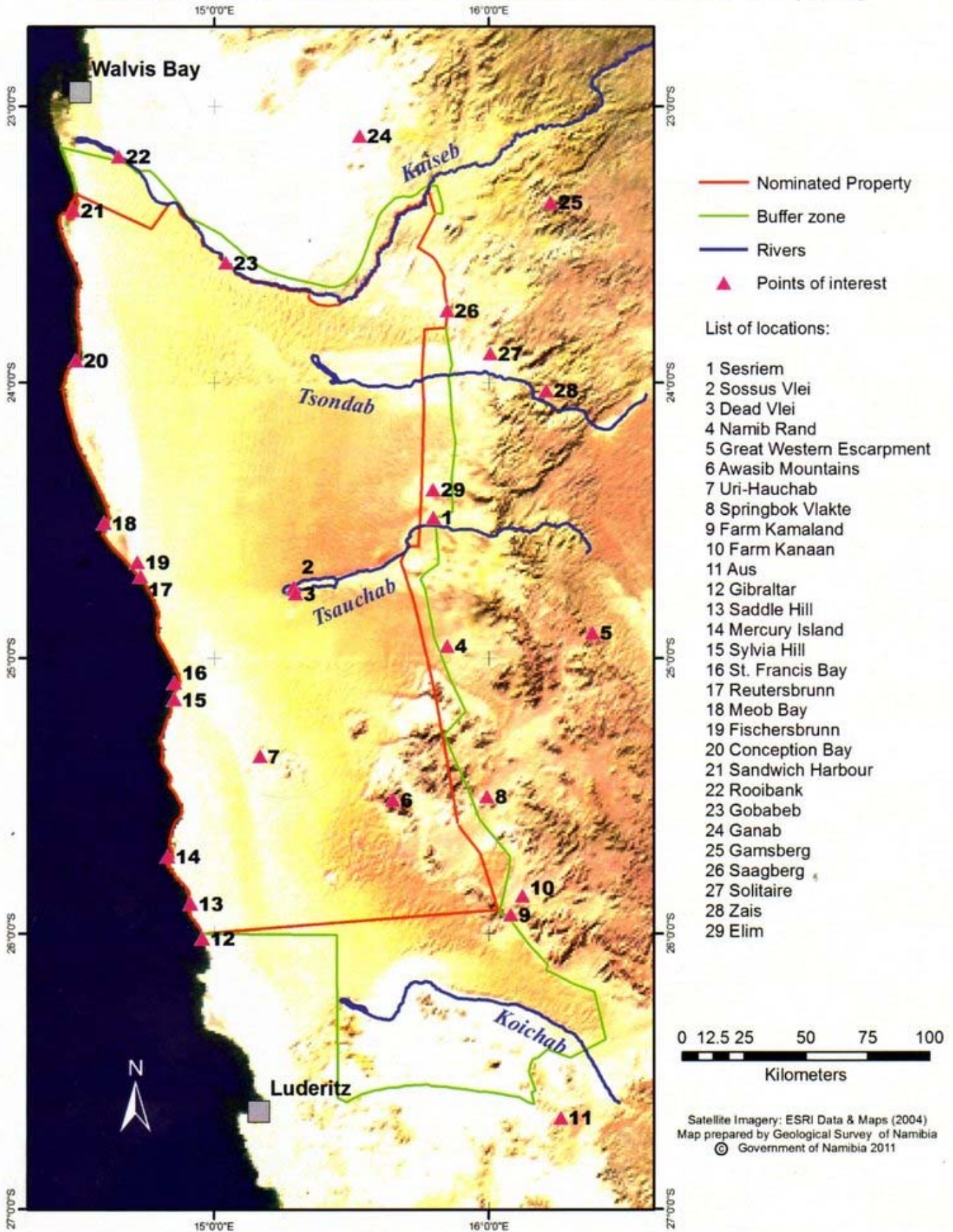


Places, rivers and areas within the Nominated Property



Map based on satellite imagery of the Namib Sand Sea, showing the world heritage site boundary and places of interest (from the Government of Namibia world heritage nomination file, 2011)



Road map of the central coastal part of Namibia, showing part of the Namib-Naukluft Desert Park, including the area listed as the Namib Sand Sea world heritage site (from the Map Studio Road Atlas of Southern and East Africa)



Map showing the location of the Namib Sand Sea world heritage site in the Namib Desert on Namibia's west coast (left, from www.AfricanNaturalHeritage.org), and Google Earth satellite image of the area showing the 'sand sea' as it lies across the desert landscape, brought ashore by ocean currents and blown inland by strong winds (right).



Google Earth satellite image of the northern part of the Namib Sand Sea (world heritage site), showing its abrupt northern boundary (marked by the Kuiseb River canyon), and the course of the two occasional rivers (the Tsondab and Tsauchab) which originate in the mountains to the east and have washed out channels into the core of the desert where their waters finally sink into the desert sands. The course of the Tsauchab River (the southernmost of the two channels shown above) ends at Sossusvlei, a spectacular desert landscape that is readily accessible to visitors and a popular tourism destination.



Satellite image (from Google Earth) showing the eastern fringe of the Namib Desert with Sossusvlei (top left) and the rocky outcrops that mark the eastern edge of the Sand Sea. The Namib Rand (private) Nature Reserve occupies the land in the foreground of this photo.



The spectacular dunes that flank the course of the Tsauchab River channel create an unmatched spectacle for visitors to the Namib Desert, serving as a gateway to the unrivalled scenery around Sossusvlei and Dead Vlei.



Satellite image of 'Dune 45' (left of photo), one of the tallest sand dunes in the world, which can easily be climbed by visitors to the Sossusvlei area (Namib Desert).



The course of the Tsauchab River (which flows only very occasionally into the heart of the Namib desert) comes to an abrupt end at Sossusvlei (shown above, Google Earth satellite image). This aerial view shows the course of the river (left side of photo), terminating in a small (occasional) lake (Sossusvlei, bottom left). Previously the river used to discharge into another 'sink' at Dead Vlei (centre right), until this was blocked by an accumulation of wind-blown sand (leading to the death of all the trees that lived there 900 years ago). Dead Vlei is an extraordinary (and much-photographed) place where the gaunt 'skeletons' of the ancient trees stand against a white salt-encrusted dry lake bed surrounded by high golden sand dunes).



Aerial view of Elim Dune, a popular climb for visitors to the Sossusvlei area of the Namib Desert (Google Earth satellite image)



Satellite image of part of the Awasib Mountains which are partially engulfed by the Namib desert sands near the southeast boundary of the world heritage site (image from Google Earth).



Aerial view of Sesriem canyon (bottom of photo) and the nearby hills (with roads and rows of hotel rooms (Sossus Dune Lodge) at the foot of the hills).



The course of the ancient Tsondab river ends in the heart of the Namib Sand Sea. Semi-consolidated sandstones of an ancient desert have been eroded by the waters of the present-day river into distinctive 'cliffs' at this point (right of photo) while wind-blown sands create an ever-changing landscape of modern dunes elsewhere (left of photo) (Google Earth satellite image).



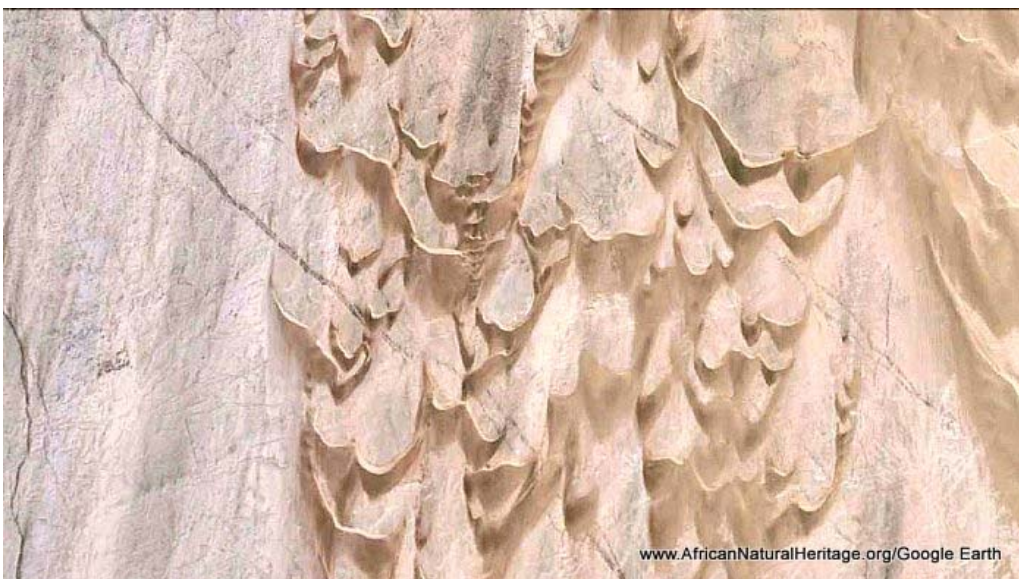
The rocky canyon of the Kuiseb River marks the 'end of the road' for the wind-blown sands of the Namib desert, a final barrier where sands accumulate as enormous golden dune fields to the south (bottom of photo), giving way to rocky desert to the north (top of photo). The sands of the Namib are carried thousands of kilometres from their point of origin in the interior of southern Africa, eroded from bedrock as far afield as Lesotho, carried by the Orange River and dumped into the South Atlantic Ocean. From here they are driven north and brought back onshore by strong ocean currents before being picked up for the final leg of their journey and carried inland by strong winds.



Gobabeb Research and Training Centre has served as a major international scientific centre for more than 50 years, revealing many of the 'secrets' of the life and ecology of the Namib desert. Research has revealed that the Namib is a uniquely dry desert and its animals and plants have evolved special mechanisms to collect water from atmospheric fog.



Patterns in the sand and sea: submerged channels and wind-blown dunes at Sandwich Harbour, (top); dune fields bordering the south-western shoreline (middle); and the bay and onshore dunes at Mercury Island (bottom)



Patterns in the sand: Dune formations are complex and vary across the desert (photos from Google Earth satellite data)