

*The KALAHARI DESERT in Botswana, 1000 km of deep sand and tall grass.*

ACTION MOBIL on tour in the south of Africa

On the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our company, we take the liberty to publish a somewhat more personal journal. Actually, in this year Otti Reitz, the founder of the company, is celebrating his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Every year Steffi and Otti Reitz spend a couple of months in the south of Africa where they tour the marvellous landscapes with the ACTION MOBIL stationed in Namibia.

This report is about a trip through the Kalahari Desert in Botswana in the year 2010. It will also be about how the ACTION MOBIL owners are used to travelling in southern Africa. New knowledge is gained on every trip and will be evaluated at home, which means that clever ideas will be included in the construction of new ACTION MOBIL cabins.



# ACTION MOBIL

EXPEDITIONSMOBILE / ALL WHEEL MOTORHOMES / VÉHICULES D'EXPEDITION /

PDF JOURNAL

www.actionmobil.com

2/2010



Steffi und Otti Reitz,  
Founders of ACTION MOBIL  
Model year 1943 and 1940 (pretty old)

## ACTION MOBIL

Cabin with lifting roof on a Pinzgauer chassis  
Construction year 1983 (not really young either,  
in permanent use for 28 years)

... after all,  
oldies can be achievers, too!

This journal informs about important topics, innovations and events about:

ACTION MOBIL  
BUILT IN AUSTRIA  
DRIVEN IN THE WORLD!

GLOBAL CRUISER  
OF THE TOP CATEGORY!



# The types of landscape in southern Africa

## The KALAHARI Desert in Botswana...

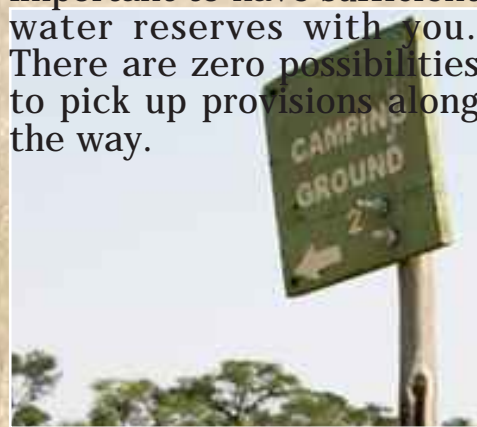
All-over sand deserts are to be found only in the west and northwest of Namibia - the Namib Desert. The rest of the country and the neighbouring countries are dominated by thorn bush savannah, swampy areas and mountainous regions. The road- and track network is well developed in South Africa and Namibia. However, the situation is quite different in the neighbouring countries. There you will often need all-wheel drive on minor roads. On top of that, the countryside is covered by thick bush along many tracks. The ruts, which are usually quite deep, correspond to the track width of vehicles like Land Rovers and Toyotas. Driving along such tracks with vehicles of other track widths or a cabin width above 2 m can be rather enervating and is even forbidden in some national parks. Trips into countries of southern Africa are definitely worthwhile, no matter what size your vehicle is, and are sure to become an unforgettable experience. Nevertheless it is imperative to plan your route conscientiously and after all it is not necessary to conquer every single bush land track with your own vehicle. One solution to the problem could be to leave the ACTION MOBIL in a secure place, rent an off-road vehicle for a couple of days and experience adventure off the beaten track on insider paths.

... a vast desert area, quite different from any other sand desert. Seen from the plane, the countryside appears overgrown with grass and bushes, interspersed by strikingly large or small pans. Some pans are covered with an almost white salt or chalk crust, some of them have loamy subsoil and are covered by thin, short grass. As soon as you are on the ground and driving along you will not fail to realize that this is a vast sand desert after all. Vegetation only covers the surface, but as soon as the tyres have ground through the turf, the subsoil becomes soft, at times even bottomless. After a period of abundant rain, the grass along the narrow tracks may reach a height of as much as 1 m. Radiators of water-cooled engines have to be protected with nets against the fine grass seeds, otherwise there is a risk of overheating and many a vehicle has burnt down on such tracks. Driving on the "trials" in Botswana's national parks is only allowed if you have a permit. Camps need to be pre-booked via the national park authorities and paid in advance. Booking upon arrival at the gate is no longer possible. This is how Botswana limits tourism and at the same time protects its untouched nature.



ACTION MOBIL

Camp means you are allowed to station your car under a marked tree, but no other tourist can park there at the same time. Camping in the wild is prohibited. On some off-road tracks, keeping to the indicated direction is mandatory. This regulation is to prevent manoeuvres for making way. Moreover, for safety reasons, a lot of tracks must only be covered in a convoy and no more than 5 vehicles per day are allowed on a trial. Infrastructure in Botswana's national parks is minimal. A plate carrying a number or a sign post "Camp Ground" will tell you that you have reached the pre-booked place for your overnight stay. In some places there will be a privy and the installation for a shower, however, you have to bring your own water. Nature throughout! On the other hand, however, there may be a lion, a cheetah or a leopard lurking behind every bush and the roar of lions in the night adds to the spirit of adventure. It has proved to be a good idea to carry fuel on board for at least 1000 km. At the same time one must not forget that when driving in deep sand, fuel consumption may rise by as much as 50%. It is equally important to have sufficient water reserves with you. There are zero possibilities to pick up provisions along the way.





Parks and Reserves Reservation Office:  
P.O.Box 131, GABARONE, Botswana.  
E-Mail: [dwnp@gov.bw](mailto:dwnp@gov.bw)

Travel Guide: Christoph Lübbert:  
BOTSWANA  
REISE KNOW HOW



Navigation preparations on the computer. The program "Tracks 4 Africa" serves as a basis.

 All-wheel tracks with deep sand  
 Paved roads



Overall distance Windhoek-Namibia and back: approx. 2500 km.



Safety measures:

Fire extinguisher ready to hand, protection against seeds in front of the radiator, SAT telephone, GPS, sufficient fuel and water.



# For safety reasons drive in convoy only! ... *but find the right partner in the first place!*

Finding the right partner for an off-road trip may turn out more difficult than you think. It is only in stress situations that you will find out how much of a burden your partner is able to take on. Many a good friendship has broken up on such occasions.

It was fortunate that in our case a good travel partnership has developed. Stefan and Anke, 2 very young and enterprising persons, bought a used ACTION MOBIL in Namibia a couple of years ago.

This is how we met, and we exchanged our travel experiences. Apparently we share a lot of interests. Today Steffi and I can look back on 40 years of travelling. However, at our age you go about everything more cautiously. It takes a bit longer before you are in control of modern navigation. When checking the chassis, lying under the vehicle, there are times when you do feel those old bones.

Nevertheless Steffi and I feel still fit enough to keep up with the young ones. Therefore, it is all the more pleasant to know that also young people appreciate our travel partnership. We benefit from it and keep learning as we go along. We hope to be making a lot more interesting trips together.



In the meantime it has turned out our team is working perfectly!



Steffi und Anke.



Stefan und Otti.



ANKE: She is a flight attendant and has a wide knowledge of biology. Her specialities are plants and animals of the KALAHARI Desert. On top of that she is making the effort to learn the language of the country.

STEFAN: He is a pilot and naturally an expert in navigation. He knows the KALAHARI like hardly any other person. Two of his special fields are route planning and the logistics of the trip.

ACTION MOBIL





*Untouched nature as far as the horizon and only one narrow track!*

Driving 100 km along a narrow sand track, across soft sand dunes, winding your way through thorn bushes and tall grass. No other human beings around you. Instead all the more encounters with wildlife. Adventures that can be lived nowhere else but in the vast landscapes of Africa.



ACTION MOBIL







*Encounters in the wild! Impressive experiences in the “Kalahari”*

It is only at sunrise and shortly before sundown that you will be able to shoot such photos. It means you have to get up early. During the rest of the day the animals enjoy lying in the shade of trees. You have to look closely to see them.



ACTION MOBIL 



You have to be fortunate to observe the animals at close quarters in the bush; you need to have the necessary experience and a well trained eye. Such encounters may happen anywhere quite unexpectedly. It is risky to move around the bush freely. Therefore, at the park gate you have to sign a statement that you will be moving around the park at your own risk. Of course such encounters with animals can also take place under the tree where you are camping.



ACTION MOBIL 







Also in the south of Africa the quality of ACTION MOBIL cabins is appreciated. One problem for importing the vehicles is the high customs duties in the South African Customs Union. In spite of this, a small family of aficionados has formed in Namibia. The heat of the African sun can do but little damage to the cabins. The cabin with lifting roof on the Pinzgauer is good proof of that. Even 20 years of blazing sunshine in Namibia could not harm the sandwich plate cabin of fibre glass composite. The ACTION MOBIL cabins are shipped without the chassis to Namibia, where they are then assembled. Most of the cabins shown here have already been mounted on their second chassis. As mentioned before, smaller cabins are preferred. Most chasses are Toyota, but also bigger types can be seen. Our customers in Namibia know very well which construction is best suited for the country.



This is why cabins are tailored to the clients' wishes in Europe. Modifications to the chasses, extensions of the wheelbase, wider tracks, additional loads, etc. are registered more readily by the Namibian authorities than by the European ones. Moreover, there are first-class companies in Namibia that will carry out the respective jobs.



Five more ACTION MOBIL vehicles are stationed in Namibia; three of them are mounted on a VW-MAN chassis. Unfortunately we do not have any photos of them. The ACTION MOBIL team is always grateful for any photo our customers send us from far away.



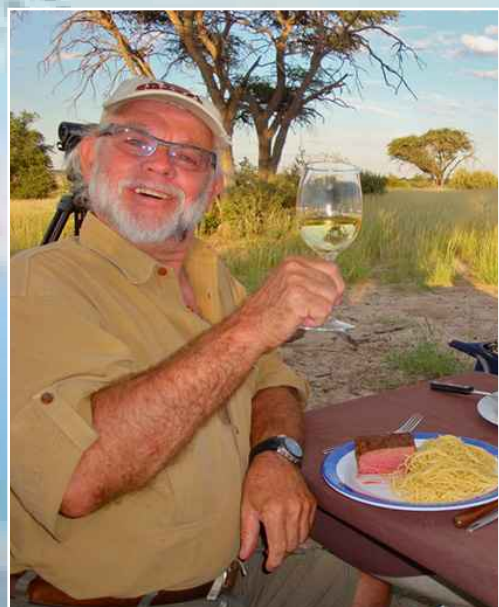
**ACTION MOBIL** ... stationed and registered in Namibia!



# ADVENTURE AND THE PLEASURES OF LIFE!

These two concepts go together when travelling in southern Africa. The vehicles are well equipped for the purpose. The minimum of convenience is a fridge and a freezer. On top of that, an additional outdoor kitchen is available.

From Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, you only have to cover a few hundred kilometres to come across most of the wildlife. So the trip to adventure is short. Compared with long trips it is easier to bring enough provisions with you. In our case the trip took little less than 2 weeks. Anyway, you never want to do without good food and drink, do you?



... well then CHEERS to many more trips with the ACTION MOBIL; this is what we wish all our customers wherever they may be in the whole wide world!!

Otti und Steffi Reitz  
March 2010



# ACTION MOBIL

