



EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd
Reg No 2018/462716 /07

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17 February 2021

To whom it may concern

AQUATIC ASSESSMENT OPINION ON THE PROPOSED PAULPUTS SOUTH WIND ENERGY FACILITY GRID CONNECTION AND SUBSTATION YARD BASIC ASSESMENT

The Applicant, Paulputs Wind Energy Facility South (RE) (Pty) Ltd ('Paulputs South'), intends to apply for Environmental Authorisation for the construction and operation of the Paulputs South WEF Grid Connection and associated infrastructure - which includes a substation yard and BESS (hereon referred to as the 'proposed development'). The preferred site layout and technical specifications of this proposed development was assessed by EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd in the approved 300MW Paulputs Wind Energy Facility (WEF) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), undertaken by Arcus Consulting Services South Africa ('Arcus') in 2019. EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd was appointed to confirm that the findings of the 2019 report are current and valid for the bA application.

As part of the original Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), three alternative Grid Connection options (A, B and C) and three alternative on-site substation options (A, B and C) were assessed during the site visits and reporting period. It is understood from Arcus that the Competent Authority (CA), DEFF, chose to only issue a favourable authorisation for the preferred Grid Connection option 'C' and on-site substation option 'A'. As such, Paulputs South would like to apply for authorization for remaining Options to facilitate the evacuation of electricity from the Paulputs South WEF, located on the east of the N14 highway.

The aforementioned application has little bearing on the aquatic environment as the footprint would not result in any changes to the impacts previously assessed. The addition of BESS has little to no bearing on the impacts previously assessed. The area earmarked for the BESS development was assessed as part of the laydown facilities for the authorised Paulputs WEF and therefore the assessment footprint remains valid.

Therefore the significance of the impact would remain low after mitigation during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the project as the with the exception of road crossings. All the delineated systems with a High Sensitivity, as is required by the Biodiversity Assessment Protocols – Aquatic Theme, will be avoided. A Water Use Licence will be applied for should any Section 21 water uses be triggered in terms of the National Water Act (NWA).

In conclusion, the final impact of the proposed development on the aquatic ecological environment with mitigation will remain unchanged from the original impact assessment, i.e. it will remain of low significance. Thus, based on the findings of this study, the specialist has no objection to the approval of the proposed development. Similarly, in the assessment of potential cumulative impacts, no additional impacts or changes to the previously assessed impacts would be required due to the proposed development. Further, no changes to the original mitigations or EMPr considerations are required.



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environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DETAILS OF THE SPECIALIST, DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND UNDERTAKING UNDER OATH

	(For official use only)
File Reference Number:	
NEAS Reference Number:	DEA/EIA/
Date Received:	

Application for authorisation in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended (the Regulations)

PROJECT TITLE

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF THE AUTHORISED PAULPUTS WIND ENERGY FACILITY, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

Kindly note the following:

1. This form must always be used for applications that must be subjected to Basic Assessment or Scoping & Environmental Impact Reporting where this Department is the Competent Authority.
2. This form is current as of 01 September 2018. It is the responsibility of the Applicant / Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to ascertain whether subsequent versions of the form have been published or produced by the Competent Authority. The latest available Departmental templates are available at <https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms>.
3. A copy of this form containing original signatures must be appended to all Draft and Final Reports submitted to the department for consideration.
4. All documentation delivered to the physical address contained in this form must be delivered during the official Departmental Officer Hours which is visible on the Departmental gate.
5. All EIA related documents (includes application forms, reports or any EIA related submissions) that are faxed; emailed; delivered to Security or placed in the Departmental Tender Box will not be accepted, only hardcopy submissions are accepted.

Departmental Details

Postal address:

Department of Environmental Affairs
Attention: Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Private Bag X447
Pretoria
0001

Physical address:

Department of Environmental Affairs
Attention: Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Environment House
473 Steve Biko Road
Arcadia

Queries must be directed to the Directorate: Coordination, Strategic Planning and Support at:
Email: EIAAdmin@environment.gov.za

1. SPECIALIST INFORMATION

Specialist Company Name:	EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd		
B-BBEE	Contribution level (indicate 1 to 8 or non-compliant)	4	Percentage Procurement recognition
			100
Specialist name:	Dr Brian Colloty		
Specialist Qualifications:	Ph.D Botany / aquatic sciences		
Professional affiliation/registration:	SACNASP Pr Sci Nat Ecology 400268/07		
Physical address:	1 Rossini Rd Pari Park PE		
Postal address:	As Above		
Postal code:	6070	Cell:	0834983299
Telephone:	0413662077	Fax:	-
E-mail:	b.colloty@gmail.com		

2. DECLARATION BY THE SPECIALIST

I, Brian Colloty, declare that –

- I act as the independent specialist in this application;
- I will perform the work relating to the application in an objective manner, even if this results in views and findings that are not favourable to the applicant;
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work;
- I have expertise in conducting the specialist report relevant to this application, including knowledge of the Act, Regulations and any guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity;
- I will comply with the Act, Regulations and all other applicable legislation;
- I have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity;
- I undertake to disclose to the applicant and the competent authority all material information in my possession that reasonably has or may have the potential of influencing - any decision to be taken with respect to the application by the competent authority; and - the objectivity of any report, plan or document to be prepared by myself for submission to the competent authority;
- all the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct; and
- I realise that a false declaration is an offence in terms of regulation 48 and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the Act.

Signature of the Specialist



EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd

Name of Company:

Date

21/7/2021

21-07-21 om 11:10

W. van der Merwe
 (HARDEKENING) KOMMISSARIS VAN EDE
 (SIGNATURE) COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

W. van der Merwe
 VOLLE VOORNAAM EN VAN IN DRUKSKRIEF
 FULL FIRST NAMES AND SURNAME IN BLOCK LETTERS

PO W. van der Merwe
 BESIGHEIDSADRES (STRAATADRES)
 BUSINESS ADDRESS (STREET ADDRESS)

PO
 RANG/RANK



3. UNDERTAKING UNDER OATH/ AFFIRMATION

I, Brian Colloty, swear under oath / affirm that all the information submitted or to be submitted for the purposes of this application is true and correct.



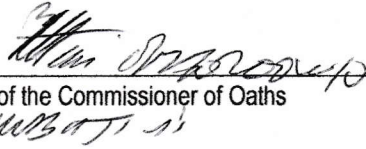
Signature of the Specialist

EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd

Name of Company

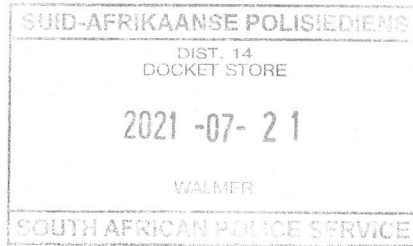
21/7/2021

Date


WUBATI SI

Signature of the Commissioner of Oaths

Date 2021-07-21



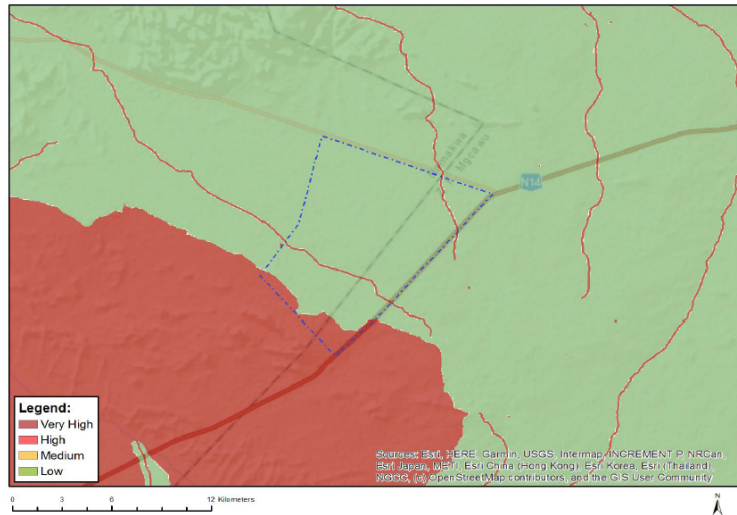


Figure 1. DEFF Screening Tool outcome for the aquatic biodiversity theme for Paulputs North WEF

The specialist confirms that site is drained by several non-perennial watercourses, hence would be considered to be within FEPA quaternary catchments. Wetland and River features are confirmed to be present. In general aquatic features are avoided as far as possible and are limited to road crossings where necessary.



Plate 1: A view of the typical small water course within the study area



Plate 2: The Kaboep River near the Orange River confluence

The Present Ecological State (PES) of the Rivers

The Present Ecological State of a river represents the extent to which it has changed from the reference or near pristine condition (Category A) towards a highly impacted system where there has been an extensive loss of natural habit and biota, as well as ecosystem functioning (Category E).

The national Present Ecological Score or PES scores have been revised for the country and based on the new models, aspects of functional importance, as well as direct and indirect impacts - have been included (DWS, 2014). The new PES system also incorporates EI (Ecological Importance) and ES (Ecological Sensitivity) separately as opposed to EIS (Ecological Importance and Sensitivity) in the old model. Although the new model is still heavily centered on rating rivers using broad fish, invertebrate, riparian vegetation and water quality indicators.

The Present Ecological State scores (PES) for the drainage lines and the rivers in the study area was rated as follows (DWS, 2014 – where D = Largely Modified and E= Critically modified):

Subquaternary Catchment Number	Present Ecological State	Ecological Importance	Ecological Sensitivity
3445	B	High	High
3449	C	High	High

In general aquatic features are avoided as far as possible and are limited to road crossings where necessary. The significance of the impact would remain low after mitigation during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Paulputs South WEF project, as the with the exception of road crossings all the delineated systems with a High Sensitivity as is required by the Biodiversity Assessment Protocols – Aquatic Theme will be avoided.

Motivation of the outcomes of the sensitivity map and key conclusions.

In conclusion, the finding of the DEFF Screening Tool can be upheld. With regard the wind farm (North and South) components, these will all be located within LOW aquatic sensitive areas and all High Sensitive Areas have been avoided.