



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

Specialists in Environmental Management
Integrating Industry and Infrastructure with the Environment

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PRE-APPLICATION MEETING MINUTES: PROPOSED 132 KV GRID CONNECTION TRANSMISSION LINE BETWEEN THE ORANGE RIVER SOLAR FACILITY 1 AND ESKOM'S HIGH VOLTAGE GROBLERSHOOP SUBSTATION

21/09/ 2022

Attendance

- Ms. Bathandwa Ncube (BN) (Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment - DFFE)
- Ms. Masina Litsoane (ML) (DFFE)
- Ms. Ricus Nel (RN) (Environmental Management Group - EMG)
- Mr. Sampie van Rooyen (SVR) (EMG)

EMG



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AGENDA

- **Welcome and Introduction**

SVR had given a welcome from EMG and thanked the DFFE for accommodating EMG for the meeting.

- **Background of the project and project proponent**

SVR provided a brief background of the proposed Groblershoop 132kV connection transmission line between the Orange River Solar Facility 1 and Groblershoop Substation, Northern Cape Province, stating the project location, coverage area, and simultaneously illustrating the subject site on a map to provide a clear understanding. SVR also provided maps indicating the REDZ and REEA, regional vegetation, and sensitivity areas occurring within the project area.

- **Reason for application for an Environmental Impact Assessment**

SVR went through each of the Listed Activities and had explained why EMG considers each activity as applicable. The subject site also traverses Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA1/CBA2).

SVR stated that specific specialist studies have been proposed in this regard such as Terrestrial Ecology and biodiversity, Avifaunal, Wetland/aquatic, Heritage phase 1 and Visual Impact Assessments.

SVR enquired if the above-mentioned studies are sufficient, and BN stated that a DFFE screening tool should be implemented to identify any additional specialist studies or the need for any compliance statements.

BN enquired about any road upgrades that may occur that could trigger listed activities and SVR confirmed that no such upgrades will occur therefore not triggering any activities.

BN suggested that LN 3 activity 14 be included as the site falls within a CBA, and SVR agreed to include this activity for the application.

SVR enquired about the need to include LN1 activity 12 section a) and c) stating that: the development of – (ii). Infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square meters or more; where such development occurs – (a) within a watercourse; and (c) If no development set back exists, within 32 meters of a watercourse, measured from the edge of the watercourse. BN confirmed that it should be included in case of future conflicts which may arise with regards to amendments.

BN enquired about the application of the powerline and associated infrastructure and suggested that these two components are submitted together. BN stated that the timeframes will be confirmed.

It was confirmed that no activities within LN2 will be triggered, thus a Basic Assessment Application (BAR) process will be followed to obtain Environmental Authorisation for the 132kV connection transmission line between Orange River Solar Facility 1 and Groblershoop Substation.

BN stated that the competent authority, whether National or Provincial, will be confirmed for this specific project.



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- **Comments**

The specific Listing Notice activities that we will be applying for are tabulated below as per Table 1:

Table 1: Listing Notices and Associated Activities

Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant Basic Assessment Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 1 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.	Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates.
LN1: 11	The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity— (i) outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts.	The proposed powerline will entail the construction of an Eskom 132kV connection transmission line connection the Orange Solar Facility 1 and Groblershoop Substation, Northern Cape.
LN1: 12 ii) a) & c)	The development of - dams or weirs, where the dam or weir, including infrastructure and water surface area, exceeds 100 square metres; or infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more; (a) within a watercourse; (c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse.	Proposed powerline infrastructure and supporting foundation mounting structures such as the power blocks and inverter stations and the new gravel roads that could occur within drainage lines/flow paths of a watercourse.
LN1: 19	The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse.	The construction of the powerline and associated infrastructure such as supporting foundation mounting structures such as the power blocks and inverter stations and the new gravel road may require possible depositing of or removal of material within the drainage lines/flow paths of a watercourse.
Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant Basic Assessment Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 3 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.	Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates.
LN 3: 12 (g)(ii)	The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation. (g) Northern Cape Province (ii) Within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans.	The construction of the powerline and its associated infrastructure will entail the clearance of more than 300 square metres of vegetation, within a Critical Biodiversity Area 1&2 (CBA1/2).
LN 3: 14 (ii)(a)(c)(g)(ii)(ff)	The development of— (ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more; (a) within a watercourse; (c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse; measured from the edge of a watercourse (g) Northern Cape Province	The construction of the powerline and its associated infrastructure will entail the clearance of more than 10 square metres of vegetation, within a Critical Biodiversity Area 1&2 (CBA1/2).



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(ii) Outside urban areas (ff) Critical biodiversity areas or ecosystem service areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;	
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- **Conclusion and way forward**

The minutes and PowerPoint presentation must be circulated to all attendees and the client.

Once the timeframes and competent authority is identified and the Department provides a way forward, then the application and Draft Basic Assessment Report, inclusive of all specialist studies for the 132KV powerline can be submitted to the allocated competent authority.

Yours faithfully

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Sampie van Rooyen
Environmental Management Group