

PROPOSED PV8 SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY FOR HOEKPLAAS PAN FARM NEAR COPPERTON

PLANTS	DEA REF NO	NEAS REF NO
PV8	14/12/16/3/3/2/499	DEA/EIA/0001760/2013

UPDATE OF FINAL TO REVISED FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

This Update Page describes the process followed since the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Reports were made available to Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) for comment during 2013. It also highlights the changes that have been made to the Final EIA Report in response to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) requests, as per the letter dated 21 February 2014.

PROCESS SINCE THE LODGING OF THE DRAFT AND FINAL EIA REPORTS

The process since the lodging of the Draft EIAR has been as follows:

- The Draft EIA Report was made available to the public in Prieska (Elizabeth Vermeulen) Public Library, letznietz Guest House in Copperton and on the Aurecon website (<http://aurecongroup.co.za/en/public-participation.aspx>) from 27 September 2013 until 5 November 2013.
- All registered I&APs were informed of the lodging of the Draft EIA Report for public comment by means of a letter in English and Afrikaans (see **Annexure B**).
- Authorities were also provided with copies of the report for review.
- Two comments were received on the Draft EIA Report during this period and have been responded to in a Comments and Response Report (see **Annexure B**).
- The Final EIA Report was made available at the same locations as the Draft EIA Report from 22 November 2013 until 12 December 2013 for a 21 day comment period
- All registered I&APs were informed of the lodging of the Final EIA Report for public comment by means of a letter in English and Afrikaans (see **Annexure B**).
- Authorities were also provided with copies of the report for review.
- Comments received on the Final EIA Report during this period were forwarded to DEA for consideration. These comments are included in **Annexure B** of the Revised Final EIA Report.
- On 21 February 2014 a letter was received from the DEA, rejecting the approach to assess all the proposed applications for Farm Hoekplaas Number 146, near Copperton in the Northern Cape.) in one EIA Report. Separate reports were requested for each application.
- Subsequent to DEA's decision, Mulilo identified three priority projects they wished to submit for the 18 August 2014 Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (IPPPP) bidding window, one which was Hoekplaas PV4. These projects were then separated into individual reports and submitted to the Department on 9 April 2014. An Environmental Authorisation (EA) was granted for Hoekplaas PV4 on 9 July 2014

UPDATING OF THE FINAL EIA REPORT TO THE REVISED FINAL EIA REPORT

A limited number of changes were made to the Draft EIAR. To assist readers, the most significant changes are outlined below.

A number of minor changes were made to the Report which includes:

- Grammatical and typographic changes.
- All maps have been updated to be project specific.

Other changes to the report are as follow:

Chapter 1:

- Provides information on the process to date since the Final EIA Report was made available for public comment.
- A list of activities from the 2014 EIA Regulations that are additional to the 2010 EIA activities for which environmental authorisation are applied for, has been included.

Chapter 2:

- The project approach has been updated to include the third public comment period.

Chapter 3:

- Descriptions of infrastructure components that could be shared among the different PVs were included.

Chapter 5:

- Sections 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7-5.9 and 5.11: The cumulative impact descriptions have been updated in terms of the proposed and approved applications for Farm Hoekplaas and other renewable energy applications within a 20km radius of the site.
- Section 5.3: The cumulative impact description has been updated and an additional mitigation measure that addresses potential future cumulative impacts was included.
- Sections 5.12 and 5.13: Construction phase impacts, decommissioning phase impacts and cumulative impacts have been updated.
- Sections 5.14 and 5.15: The No-go alternative and cumulative impact assessments have been updated.
- Section 5.16: Additional renewable energy projects that are proposed for the Copperton area has been included. The impact and mitigation sections were also updated with information on the electromagnetic characterisation of similar equipment used for projects near De Aar and the potential risks to the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project. The applicant also commits to work closely with the South African SKA Projects Office throughout the project lifecycle (see **Annexure K**).
- Section 5.17: Provides a collective overview of the cumulative assessments discussed under each of the impact sections.

Chapter 6

- A short summary of all potential impacts, proposed mitigation measures and a summary table of the significance ratings of the assessed impacts with and without mitigation have been included.
- A summary table have been included that describes the preferred alternatives and reasons for the preference.

Annexures have been updated as follow:

- Comments on the Final EIA Report and proof of the PPP have been included in **Annexure B**.
- **Annexure C** has been updated with information on the electromagnetic characterisation of the PV components.
- Correspondence with DEA regarding the split reports and PPP has been included in **Annexure J**.

- The Life-cycle Environmental Management Plan (LEMP) has been updated with additional mitigation measures included in the Revised Final EIAR.
- The sensitivity maps in the LEMP have been updated with the new layout for PV8.

WAY FORWARD

These Update Pages have been sent to all registered I&APs on the database. The Revised Final EIA Report has been made available to the public at the same venues as the Draft and Final EIA Reports, as well as on Aurecon's website (<http://aurecongroup.co.za/en/public-participation.aspx>) from **23 March 2015 to 16 April 2015**.

The Revised Final EIA Report will be submitted to the competent authority, namely the DEA for their consideration and review on 17 April 2015. DEA have 14 days to accept or reject the Revised Final EIA Report after which they will review the report (together with the CRR and all comments submitted on the final and revised reports) over a period of 60 days. The DEA will then either:

- Accept the Final EIAR;
- Notify the applicant that the report has been referred for specialist review;
- Request the EAP to make such amendments to the Report as the competent authority may require; or
- Reject the report if it does not materially comply with the EIA Regulations.

If the report is accepted, the DEA must within 45 days:

- Grant authorisation in respect of all or part of the activity applied for; or
- Refuse authorisation in respect of all or part of the activity.

Once DEA issue their decision on the proposed project, all registered I&APs on the project database will be notified of the outcome of the decision within 12 calendar days of the decision having been issued. Should anyone (a member of public, registered I&AP or the Applicant) wish to appeal DEA's decision, a Notice of Intention to Appeal in terms of Chapter 7 of the EIA Regulations (Government Notice No. 543) of NEMA must be lodged with the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs within 20 calendar days of the decision being issued. The substantive Appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the Notice.

Aurecon would like to thank all those who have participated in this EIA process thus far.