

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

ENVIRONMENTAL BASIC ASSESSMENT (BA) FOR THE PROPOSED SIGIDI LODGE, MBIZANA  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE

## 1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The **Amadiba Coastal Community Trust** (ACCODA) have proposed a tourism-based development in the form of **Sigidi Lodge**, within the **Mbizana Local Municipality**. An Environmental Basic Assessment Process in terms of Regulation 21 to 25 of the Regulations is being conducted and compiles with Chapter 3 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998, as amended), for this project which will be registered with the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT).

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to inform interested and / or affected parties (I&AP) of the Environmental Basic Assessment Process (BA) that will be conducted for the Proposed Sigidi Lodge Development.

In addition to supplying information about the proposed Project, this BID will also provide I&AP's with the opportunity to:

- \* Register as stakeholders in the public participation process; and
- \* Provide initial comments on the proposed project.

## 2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Sigidi is a picturesque coastal village bordered by the *Mphahlane* River in the south and the *Mzamba* River in the north. The Sigidi residents are passionate farmers, whom participated in the Amadiba Adventures Tourism Project in the 1990's, which enabled the community to experience the benefits of community owned tourism. During this period the community received training and provided guiding services and homestay accommodation to tourists.

The community of Sigidi wishes to rekindle the tourism within the area through eco-tourism. The community has proposed the establishment of a lodge with a maximum capacity of sixty (60) persons, which will consist of:

- \* Twelve (12) Sleeping Huts;
- \* Two (2) Dormitory Huts;
- \* Camping Grounds;
- \* Two (2) Service Huts (Kitchen and Hall);
- \* Two (2) Ablutions Units;
- \* One (1) Managers Hut; and
- \* One (1) Storage Hut.

The area is not serviced by the Municipality with no electricity nor water provided, nor to be provided in the near future. The community have opted for power inputs for the Lodge via solar electric power. Water will be sourced from a tributary of the *Mphahlana* River in the south, with no fixed infrastructure to be installed and a small electric water pump to be used. A HDPE pipe of no greater diameter than fifty (50) millimeters will be dug roughly 300mm below ground level via hand excavation from the development storage tanks to the edge of the development footprint, with the remainder of the pipeline to be moveable above-ground pipeline / hose which will be attached during the pumping periods and extent to the water source. No permanent infrastructure is to be developed at the watercourse.

The facility will operate via waste minimisation and reuse philosophy, with composting toilets to be used and grey water to be utilised on the community gardens and discharged via soak away units. All landfill waste will be recycled, with food waste composted and all other waste material generated to be separately stored and removed to the local registered recyclers or landfill, in alignment with the Municipal Requirements.

There will be no bulk earthworks required, with only localised levelling to occur for each hut, with the use of small plant / construction equipment or by hand. An existing access road leading to the proposed development area is in place and will require no further upgrade.

The proposed buildings / huts will be made from adobe concrete strip foundations, adobe walls and floors, gum pole with thatch roofs. Adobe refers to building material made from earth and other organic materials. This process will utilise all excavated soil from the proposed hut foundation and significantly minimise material being brought in from off-site. The lodge will blend into the local environment through the use of local architecture and natural materials. Pathways and parking areas will be cleared and demarcated with no fixed structures.

The area proposed for development is on cultivated land and as such indigenous plants will be planted for screening and aesthetic purposes. Light weight timber screens will be placed between buildings for additional screening options.

The proposed development area is on cultivated traditional lands, with the total designated area being 1,5 hectares in extent. However, due to the building construction technique being proposed and the localised disturbance only for the huts and connecting walk ways the actual area of disturbance is significantly less (20% of the proposed development area).

The Sigidi Community wishes to continue to focus on agriculture, while promoting tourism. The communities' appreciation of the land and its beauty is an aspect they wish to share with visitors through opportunities like hiking and beach activities. Additionally, hikers will be able to stay here on their way travelling further south.

The community are AmaMpondo, with the residents wishing to promote cultural learning experiences to ensure the Mpondo cultures and way of life is available for the visitors to learn and to ensure the history of the AmaMpondo is retained.

The villagers of Sigidi are aware that the young residents in the community need jobs and they see tourism as one way of helping to create such jobs. The building and maintaining of a lodge will provide construction work, with long term permanent and temporary opportunities, as guides, educators, cooks, cleaners, and managers, becoming available for the community members once the Lodge is opened.

The lodge will be close enough to Port Edward for day visitors to walk to it, and it will be possible to provide meals. The lodge will need food supplies, and this will be provided by the agricultural means of the community. The community envisions a number of new ideas and supporting small scale businesses that can begin once this tourism venture succeeds. From Sigidi, tourists can also visit other areas close by such as Mdatya and Mtolane. In this way the lodge can help to boost tourism with the neighbouring villages further south. The Sigidi Community would like to promote the area as a beautiful hiking and outdoor destination.

The Sigidi Community have committed to the development of this lodge, as it will assist in developing and protecting the communities Mpondo way of life and the land that they depend on for survival. It will be the kind of enterprise that is comfortable for the community to develop, that they can own, manage, enjoy and share. It will enable the community to proudly share Pondoland with visitors, both local and foreign. This proposed development will improve the sustainability and daily lives of the community.

It is envisaged that the nature of the development will entail low-impact activities, with sensitive aesthetics provided by a low visual impact-built environment and landscaping with indigenous flora. Appropriate management of the facility and planned conservation practices will mitigate any negative impacts on the environment. There will be limited access by vehicle and pedestrians will follow existing well-established footpaths.

### **3 PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE**

Depending on the issue date of the approval of the Environmental Authorisation (EA), and should an EA be granted by DEDEAT, it is proposed that the Sigidi Lodge will be constructed within ten (10) to twelve (12) months of approval being received.

### **4 SITE LAYOUT**

The proposed development location and coordinates are indicated in the map below, with the centre point of 31°06'43.3"S 30°09'20.0"E. Should additional coordinates be required they can be requested from the Environmental Assessment Practitioner.

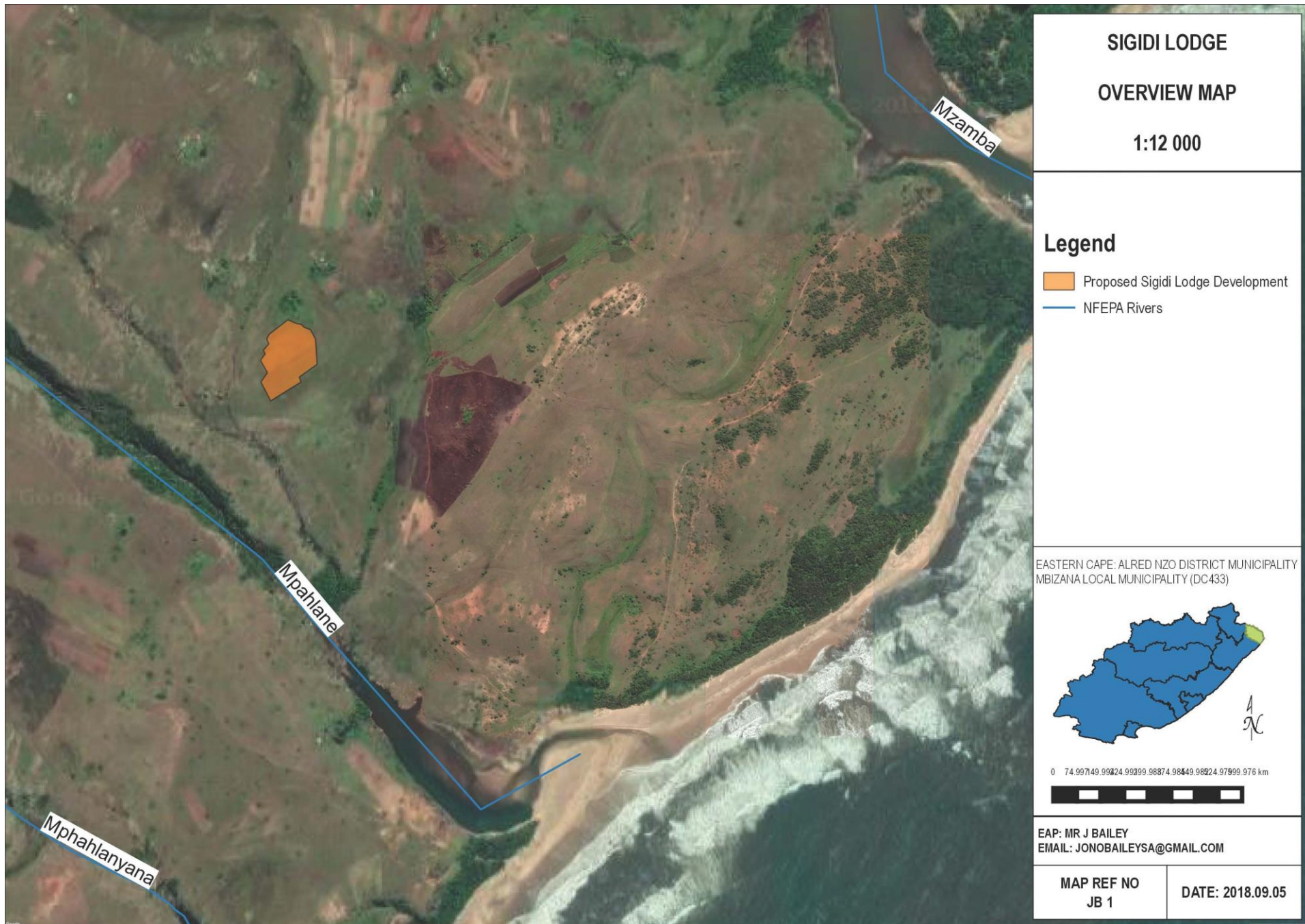


Figure 1: Sigidi Lodge development overview map.

## 5 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The listed activities for the above-mentioned project are captured in the EIA regulations promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) under Listing Notice 1 & 3 (GNR 327 & 324, 2017).

Table 1: NEMA Government Notices.

ACTIVITY No:	Legislation Extract
<b>Listing Notice 1 (GNR 327, 2017)</b>	
27	<p><i>The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for—</i></p> <p><i>(i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or</i>  <i>(ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.</i></p> <p>The development is 1,5 hectares in extent; however, located within disturbed agricultural lands with only the building / hut footprints to result in direct transformation. This activity has been included to accommodate the full extent of the proposed development footprint and allow for layout changes within the footprint should the onsite conditions require.</p>
<b>Listing Notice 3 (GNR 324, 2017)</b>	
6 (a) (i):	<p><i>The development of resorts, lodges, hotels, tourism or hospitality facilities that sleeps 15 people or more, outside of urban areas:</i></p> <p><i>(ee) Critical Biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</i>  <i>(gg) Areas within 10 kilometres from national parks or world heritage sites or 5 kilometres from any other protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA or from the core area of a biosphere reserve;</i>  <i>(hh) Areas seawards of the development setback line or within 1 kilometre from the high-water mark of the sea if no such development setback line is determined;</i>  <i>(ii) Areas on the watercourse side of the development setback line or within 100 metres from the edge of a watercourse where no such setback line has been determined.</i></p> <p>The development is associated with a lodge for the tourism industry (60 people capacity). The uMtamvuna Nature Reserve and Pondoland Marine Protected Area are within 10 km of the development.</p> <p>The development is located outside of 1 km from the high-water mark of the sea; however, is within 100 metres from a watercourse (although on a raised escarpment area). The development is located within an identified Critical Biodiversity Area.</p> <p>This activity will be triggered, and an Environmental Basic Assessment Process will be required.</p>
12 (a) (ii):	<p><i>The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation, within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans.</i></p> <p>The development exceeds 300 square metres and will need to be assessed, as this area is recognised as a Critical Biodiversity Area. This activity will be triggered, and an Environmental Basic Assessment Process will be required.</p>

## 6 INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

You have been identified as potential **Interested and Affected Parties (I&AP)** in this process and are invited to participate in the above process by registering yourself.

### **Your responsibility as an I&AP:**

In terms of the EIA Regulations, your attention is drawn to your responsibilities as an I&AP:

- \* In order to participate in the EIA process, register yourself on the project database;
- \* Inform any other parties (neighbours, friends, colleagues, etc.) who may be interested and / or affected by the proposed project and encourage them to become involved;
- \* Ensure that any comments regarding the proposed projects are submitted within the timeframes legislated;
- \* Disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which you may have in the approval or refusal of the application for the proposed project.

### **The responsibility of the Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP):**

In terms of the EIA Regulations, the responsibility of the EAP in the public consultation process include:

- \* Ensure that sufficient information is available regarding the project;
- \* Ensure that you have an understanding of the proposed project to enable you to submit any concern in an informed manner;
- \* Ensure that the following actions are taken upon receiving any comments / queries / issues:
  - o The contact details provided by you are entered into the project database and that you are sent all further information releases;
  - o If you send us queries or comments, we respond in writing;
  - o If you call us, your details and queries / comments are recorded.

How to become involved:

1. Respond (by phone or e-mail) to our invitation for your participation;
2. E-mail the attached Registration and Comment Form to the EAP;
3. Attend the Public Participation Meeting;
4. Contact the EAP should you have a query, comment or require further information;
5. Review the consultation Basic Assessment Report within the 30-day review period.

If you consider yourself an I&AP for this proposed project, we urge you to make use of the opportunities created by the Public Participation Process and be involved in the process. Your input into the process forms a key part of the Environmental Assessment and we would like to hear from you.

By completing and submitting the accompanying Registration and Comment Form, you automatically register yourself as an I&AP for this proposed project and are assured that your comments and / or concerns raised are noted. All relevant public documents can be requested from the EAP.

We look forward to your contributions. Please feel free to suggest other stakeholders to be consulted.



**ENVIRONMENTAL BASIC ASSESSMENT (BA) FOR THE PROPOSED SIGIDI LODGE: MBIZANA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE**

**REGISTRATION AND COMMENT FORM**

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Please complete this form and return it to the Environmental Assessment Practitioner below:

Jonathan Bailey (*Pri.Sci.Nat*) (IAIAsa)

Phone: (084) 422 3147

E-mail: [jonobaileysa@gmail.com](mailto:jonobaileysa@gmail.com)

TITLE (Prof/Mr/Mrs)		FIRST NAME	
SURNAME			
CAPACITY			
ORGANISATION			
POSTAL ADDRESS		POSTAL CODE	
TEL. NO.: (     )     )		CELL NO.:	
FAX NO.: (     )     )		E-MAIL ADDRESS	

**COMMENTS** (You are welcome to use a separate sheet if required)

The following environmental, social and economic impacts must be addressed during the EIA / BA:

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Please add the following of my colleagues / friends / neighbours onto your mailing list:

Name:	Organisation:		
Contact details:			
Address:			
Tel.:	Fax:	Cell:	
E-mail:			

IF YOU WISH NOT TO RECEIVE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THIS PROPOSED PROJECT, AND PREFER TO BE REMOVED FROM THE PROJECT'S DATABASE, PLEASE SIGN BELOW AND RETURN THE FORM TO THE EAP WHOSE CONTACT DETAILS ARE PROVIDED ABOVE.

Yes, please delete my contact details from the project's database	<b>SIGNATURE:</b> .....
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**UMCWANINGO LWEZEMVELO BASIC ASSESSMENT (BA) OLUHLELIWE KU-SIGIDI LODGE: E-MBIZANA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE**

**INCWADI YOKUBALISA NEMIBONO**

SIYAYEWAMUKELA IMIBONO NEMIBUZO YENU

Sicela nicwalise lencwadi niyibuyisele kwihhovisi le-Environmental Assessment Practitioner engezansi:

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Ucingo: (084) 422 3147

E-mail: [jonobaileysa@gmail.com](mailto:jonobaileysa@gmail.com)

<b>IBIZO</b> (MNU/NKK)		<b>IGAMA</b>	
ISIBONGO			
UMTHAMO			
INHLANGANO			
IKHELI LEPOSI		UMBHALO WEPOSI	
UCINGO LASENDLINI.: ( )		UCINGO.:	
FAX NO.: ( )		E-MAIL ADDRESS	

**IMIBONO** (Namukelekile ukusebenzisa elinye iphepha)

Kumele nichaze ngezinkinga zemvelo, ezokuphilisana kanye nomnotho kucwaningo:

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Siela nifake abasebenzi / abangani / nomakhelwane kwincwadi yakho yeposi:

IGAMA:	INHLANGANO:	
LAPHO ENGATHOLAKALA KHONA:		
IPOS:		
TEL.:	FAX:	UCINGO:
E-MAIL:		

UMA UFISA UKUNGATHINTWA NOMA UKUTHINTWA MEYELANA NALOMSEBENZI. SIELA USAYINE NGENZANSI MESE UPHINDISELA LENCWADI KUBAPHATHI BALOLUCWANINGO

<b>Yebo</b> , ngicela ningisuse kulomusebenzi neminingwane yami.	Sayina: .....
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