



WSP ref.: 41102282

08 September 2021

PUBLIC

Dear Stakeholder:

Subject: NOTICE OF THE PROPOSED RE-INSTATEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF VBC08 WETLAND PROJECT IN SECUNDA, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Notice is given in terms of Regulation 41(2) of GNR 326 (2014, as amended) published under section 24 and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) for submission of an application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) in respect of activities identified in terms of GNR 327 and GNR 324 (2014, as amended) and in terms of Section 41(4) of the National Water Act (36 of 1998) (NWA), for the submission of a Water Use Licence (WUL) Application.

BACKGROUND AND LOCATION

Secunda Operations, a division of Sasol South Africa Limited (Sasol) are proposing the reinstatement of a Channelled Valley Bottom Wetland (VBC08) located below the Nitro Fertiliser plant. The reinstatement project entails the installation of up to eighteen wetland restoration structures (weirs) at various points of the VBC08 wetland system. The installation of the weirs will help improve the wetland health by reducing nutrient and salt load into the Bossiespruit. The Secunda Industrial Complex (SIC) is located in Secunda, which is approximately 50 km north of Standerton and 28 km west of Bethal in the Mpumalanga Province. The site is east of the R546 Regional Road and Embalenhle Township and falls within Govan Mbeki Local Municipality of the Gert Sibande District Municipality.

ENVIRONMENTAL APPLICATION

The following listed activities are triggered:

- NEMA EIA Regulations: GNR 327 Activity 12 and 19;
- NEMA EIA Regulations: GNR 324 Activities 3; and
- NWA: Section 21 (c) & (i) water uses.

REGISTRATION

WSP Group Africa (Pty) Ltd (WSP) was appointed as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) by Sasol to manage Basic Assessment (BA) and WUL processes. Parties wishing to formally register as interested and affected parties in order to receive more information and/ or raise their comment(s) on the proposed project, are requested to forward their full contact details to the EAP and disclose their direct and/or indirect business, financial, personal or other interest in the project. Any comments on the proposed project should be submitted to the EAP via the details provided below. Registered interested

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and affected parties will be forwarded all future project related correspondence and notified individually of additional opportunities to participate in the process.

DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REVIEW PERIOD

The Draft BA Report will be made available at the venues below for review and comment for 30 days from **8 September to 11 October 2021**.

- Secunda Public Library (Address: 1 Louwrens Muller St, Tel: 017 620 6000);
- Sasol Charlie 1 Security Entrance; and
- WSP website (<https://www.wsp.com/en-ZA/services/public-documents>)

Kindly ensure that all comments on the proposed project or requests to be registered as an Interested and Affected Party are submitted to the contact details provided herewith, by **11 October 2021**.

Should you have any queries/comments, please do not hesitate to contact the EAP.

Lukanyo Kewana

(T) 011 3611400

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(A) PO Box 98867, Sloane Park, 2152

Yours sincerely,



Ashlea Strong
Principal Consultant



PROPOSED RE-INSTATEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF VBC08 WETLAND SYSTEM PROJECT: Secunda Operations –Mpumalanga Province

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Secunda Operations, a division of Sasol South Africa Limited (Sasol) are proposing the reinstatement of a Channelled Valley Bottom Wetland (VBC08) located below the Nitro Fertiliser plant. The wetland falls within the C12D catchment and flows into the Groot Bossiespruit, which leads into the Waterval River and eventually into the Vaal River. The reinstatement project entails the installation of up to eighteen wetland restoration structures (weirs) at various points along the VBC08 wetland system. The installation of the weirs will help improve the wetland health by reducing nutrient and salt load into the Bossiespruit.

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This background information document (BID) introduces all stakeholders to the proposed project. This document forms part of the environmental authorisation process undertaken as a component of the stakeholder consultation process and is intended to provide stakeholders with adequate information to comment on the project.

The BID details the project, the environmental authorisation process, the role of stakeholders in the process as well as to encourage stakeholders to comment on the project, ask questions and raise issues that should be included in the project documents. Aside from this document, at various stages of the environmental authorisation process, information and reports will be made available for stakeholders to comment on.

WSP Group Africa (WSP) has been appointed by Sasol as the independent environmental assessment practitioner (EAP) to undertake the environmental authorisation process for the project and to facilitate stakeholder engagement.

To become a registered stakeholder and ensure all comments and queries regarding this project are accurately documented and addressed, please forward your contact details and comments on the attached response sheet to:

Consultant: Lukanyo Kewana
Address: P.O. Box 98867, Sloane Park, 2152
Tel: +27 11 3611400
Email: Lukanyo.Kewana@wsp.com

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The development entails installation of eighteen wetland restoration structures throughout the VBC08 wetland system. In terms of the Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998, as amended) (NEMA) and the amended Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (GNR 326 of 2014, as amended), an Environmental Authorisation (EA) is required for the proposed development as it includes activities that are listed in the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. The project triggers Listing Notice 1 (GNR 327)

and Listing Notice 3 (GNR 324) (**Table 1**) and a Basic Assessment (BA) and associated public participation process will be undertaken.

Table 1: Applicable Listed Activities in terms of Listing Notice GNR327 and GNR 324

LISTING NOTICE (LN) AND ACTIVITY NUMBER	ACTIVITY AND DESCRIPTION
GNR. 327 LN 1: Activity 12	The development of:– (i) dams or weirs, where the dam or weir, including infrastructure and water surface area exceeds 100 square metres; or (ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square meters or more where such development occurs - a) within a watercourse;
GNR. 327 LN 1: Activity 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.
GNR 324 LN 3: Activity 3	The development of – (i) dams or weirs, where the dam or weir, including infrastructure and water surface area exceeds 10 square metres; or (ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more; where such development occurs- a) within a watercourse; i. <u>Outside urban areas:</u> (ff) Critical biodiversity areas or ecosystem service areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;

The National Water Act (Act No.36, 1998) (NWA) aims to control the use of water, which may affect water resources through the licencing of specific water uses in terms of Section 21 of the act. The Section 21 water uses (as outlined in Chapter 4 of the NWA) associated with the re-instatement and development of the VBC08 wetland system are outlined in **Table 2**:. The proposed facility falls within a regulated area requiring an authorisation (a Water Use Licence (WUL)) from the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS). The WUL application will be undertaken concurrently with the BA process as far as possible.

Table 2: Section 21 Water Uses

Section 21 of NWA	Water Use Description
Section 21 (c) - Impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse; and	The establishment of weirs will impede and divert the VBC08 wetland system.
Section 21 (i) - Altering the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse.	The establishment of weirs will alter the characteristic of the VBC08 wetland system.

What does the Environmental Authorisation Process consist of?

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The purpose of stakeholder engagement is to consult with interested and affected parties in the public and private sectors as part of the decision-making process on projects which may affect them. The process aims to develop and maintain open channels of communication between the project team and stakeholders. This process provides stakeholders with the opportunity to express their views and concerns regarding the proposed project through project correspondence. The environmental assessment practitioner documents the views and concerns of stakeholders, and makes the project team and relevant authorities aware of issues that need to be considered during the compilation and evaluation of the potential risks and impacts associated with the project.

Who is a Stakeholder?

Any person, group of persons or organisation interested and/or affected by the proposed development.

Register your interest by completing and returning the Registration and Comments Form attached herewith.

The first steps are to notify the public and previously identified stakeholders of the proposed project. Notification is accomplished by various means to ensure a transparent process and will include details of the project as well as instructions on how to register as a stakeholder. An advertisement including these details has been placed in The Ridge Times on **8 September 2021**. Site notices have also been placed in and around the project area in clearly visible locations. Additionally, notification emails and this BID have been distributed to surrounding landowners and previously identified stakeholders.

BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

The proposed project may not commence without prior Environmental Authorisation (EA), as defined in the NEMA and the amended EIA Regulations (GNR 326 2014, as amended). A BA Report (including specialist studies) and Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) will be compiled for the proposed project in line with the requirements of NEMA.

The BA report will contain the anticipated/ potential biophysical and socio-economic impacts that may occur because of the proposed project. Furthermore, the report will rate these anticipated impacts against a ratings table in order to assess the significance (based on consequence and likelihood) of the impact, and include the cumulative impact on the receiving environment (biophysical and socio-economic). Mitigation measures will be developed in order to minimise the potential negative impacts associated with the proposed project. The purpose of the EMPr is to facilitate the mitigation and management of the identified potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project.

The Draft Basic Assessment Report has been made available at the venues below for review and comment for 30 days from **8 September to 11 October 2021**.

- Secunda Public Library (Address: 1 Louwrens Muller St, Tel: 017 620 6000);
- Govan Mbeki Local Municipal Offices (Address: Horwood Street, Tel: 017 620 6000); and
- WSP website (<https://www.wsp.com/en-ZA/services/public-documents>)

Kindly ensure that all comments on the proposed project or requests to be registered as an Interested and Affected Party are submitted to the contact details provided herewith, by **11 October 2021**. Should you have any queries/comments, please do not hesitate to contact the EAP. Once all comments and issues are received a Comment and Response Report will be compiled and included in the Final BA report and submitted to the relevant authorities for review and approval.

LOCALITY MAP

The Secunda Industrial Complex (SIC) is located in Secunda, which is approximately 50 km north of Standerton and 28 km west of Bethal in the Mpumalanga Province. The site is east of the R546 Regional Road and Embalenhle Township and falls within Govan Mbeki Local Municipality of the Gert Sibande District Municipality. The conceptualised placement of the 18 weirs can be seen in **Figure 1**.

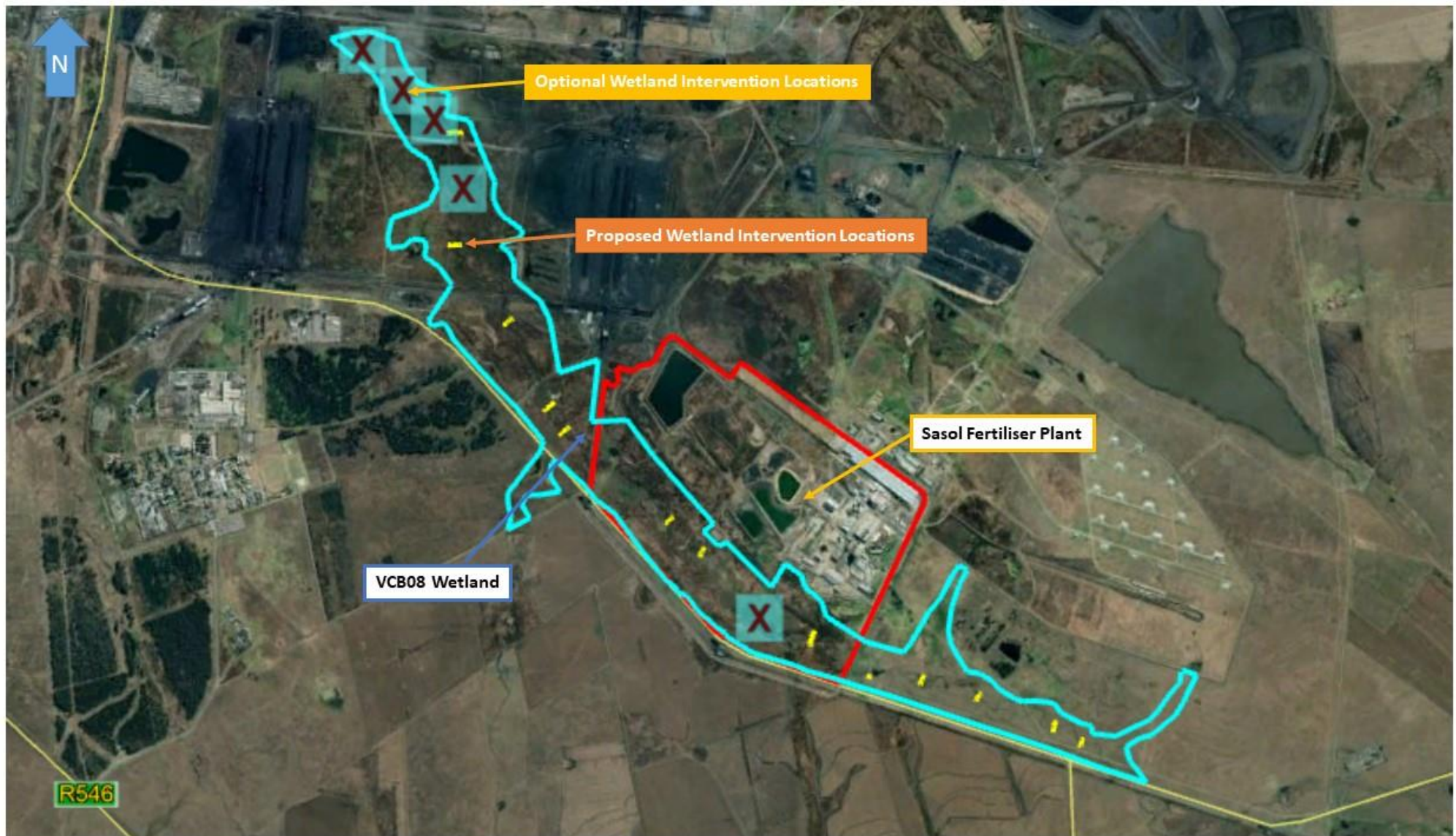


Figure 1: Site Locality Map

