



# GLOBAL GREEN

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**DRAFT SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT:  
PROPOSED 150 MW METSIMATALA CONCENTRATED SOLAR POWER (CSP) FACILITY  
AND 132KV POWERLINE, POSTMASBURG, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

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## SOCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Global Green Environmental Consultants was appointed by Enviroworks to conduct a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the proposed 150MW Metsimatala Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) facility and related 132KV powerline, Postmasburg, Northern Cape Province. This was done by building on SIA work already conducted by the North West University (Potchefstroom campus) Environmental Assessment Research Group (EARG) for the Metsimatala alternative energy project. Although the scale of the project has increased since the NWU SIA study, our findings on the social impacts are very similar. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to provide the environmental authority with sufficient information on the key social issues to make an informed decision. The overall conclusion is that the proposed development has the potential to provide a **highly significant social benefit** regionally as well as to the local Metsimatala community. This conclusion is based on the following key aspects:

- *Strong local community support:* Strong buy-in and support from the local Metsimatala community. This has continually been confirmed through for example resolutions at community meetings as far back as 2012, as well as during the EIA public participation process.
- *Employment potential:* The proposed development will create as a minimum approximately 1 200 temporary construction workers and up to 120 permanent employment opportunities for the local community. The unemployment rate of the larger municipality is around 64% and it can reasonably be expected that the unemployment rate within the Metsimatala community is much higher. This suggests that the employment contribution is significant within the regional and local contexts.
- *Income generation potential:* The proposed development will provide income to the local community through a lease agreement as well as through shares in the development company. Moreover the municipality will benefit through increased rates and taxes. This additional income could make a significant contribution towards implementation of the various IDP projects related to services and infrastructure provision.
- These significant positive social impacts far outweigh the modest adverse impacts that may be caused by the development.

We thank Enviroworks for the opportunity to contribute to the SIA and trust that the outcome will add value to decision making.



Dr Francois Retief  
Social Specialist

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## **1. INTRODUCTION AND BRIEF**

Global Green Environmental Consultants, was appointed to Enviroworks with a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the Metsimatala alternative energy project. Social Impact Assessment (SIA) has been a particular research focus of author in recent years, together with colleagues from the North West University (NWU) with various publications and studies exploring the quality and effectiveness of SIA (see for example Du Pisani and Sandham, 2006; Kidd and Retief, 2009). Therefore as part of the SIA an external review was conducted of previous SIA work for the Metsimatala project.

The previous SIA studies comprised of a main report and a supplemented external review document with a SIA statement. These documents has since been approved by the environmental authority and formed part of a previous EIA authorization. The aim of this report is therefore to build on previous SIA work and highlight key social impacts to be considered in decision making. Finally we confirm that Global Green acts independently and has no vested interest in the development project under question.

### **1.1 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

As already mentioned the purpose of this report is not to replace the SIA already conducted but to supplement, complement and strengthen the SIA towards better decision making. For brevity, the development project itself as well as the affected communities are not discussed in detail here. For this reason we suggest that this report be read with the following documentation relevant to this application:

- Scoping Report
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report

### **1.2 AUTHORS**

The following author drafted the social impact statement for the Metsimatala alternative energy project:

- Dr Francois Retief

See Annexure A for CV summary of the author.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The social impact assessment (SIA) is based on the approach and methodology for SIA described in the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning Guidelines for Social Impact Assessment (2007) as well as the minimum requirements for specialist studies described in the EIA Regulations. The methodology aims to pull together the work that has been done thus far on social impacts related to the proposed development. The scope of the study was therefore to gather all the relevant information and distil the key aspects to be considered by the environmental authority when making a decision.

The following steps were followed:

- Review of all EIA related reports and documentation with special attention to social aspects.
- Consideration of the outcomes of the NWU external review of the SIA Report (2012).
- Review of relevant planning and policy frameworks.
- Review of data gathered from direct interaction with the affected communities and IAPs as part of the EIA public participation process.
- Review of information from similar projects in the Northern and Western Cape Provinces.

### 2.1. DATA SOURCES

The social impact statement relied on the following data sources. We are confident that the level of engagement and consultation underpinning the data has been sufficient to identify key impacts, reach meaningful conclusions and make appropriate and relevant recommendations. The main data sources are:

- *Literature:*
  - EIA documentation such as the Scoping Report, Plan of Study for EIA and draft EIA Report.
  - Previous SIA Specialist study reports for the Metsimatala alternative energy project.
  - Other Specialist study reports related to the Metsimatala alternative energy project.
  - NWU EARG SIA Review Report.
  - Relevant legislation providing minimum standards required of a specialist report.
  - Relevant Guidelines for Social Impact Assessment.
  - SIA Specialist reports for similar projects. A total of six other similar developments in the Northern and Western Cape were considered in terms of social impacts.

- Outcomes of the *EIA public participation and consultation processes*:
  - Legal minimum requirements such as site notices, advertisements, etc.
  - Minutes of meetings with affected communities and interested and affected parties.
  - Minutes of meetings with the Metsimatala communities.
- Outcomes of *development planning processes*:
  - Relevant IDPs and SDFs. Although it seems that the development of the Metsimatala community is not explicitly dealt with these documents do provide the development context for the broader community.

## 2.2 IMPACT IDENTIFICATION METHODOLOGY

The following criteria were used to assess impacts:

- The *extent*, where it is indicated if the impact is local (limited to the immediate area or site development), regional, national or international. A score between 1 and 5 is assigned as appropriate (with a score of 1 being low and a score of 5 being high).
- The *duration*, where it will be indicated whether:
  - the lifetime of the impact will be of a very short duration (0-1 years) – assigned a score of 1;
  - the lifetime of the impact will be of a short duration (2-5 years) – assigned a score of 2;
  - medium-term (5-15 years) – assigned a score of 3;
  - long term (> 15 years) – assigned a score of 4; or
  - permanent – assigned a score of 5.
- The *magnitude*, quantified on a scale from 0-10, where a score is assigned as follows:
  - 0 is small and will have no effect on the environment;
  - 2 is minor and will not result in an impact on processes;
  - 4 is low and will cause a slight impact on processes;
  - 6 is moderate and will result in processes continuing but in a modified way;
  - 8 is high (processes are altered to the extent that they temporarily cease); and
  - 10 is very high and results in complete destruction of patterns and permanent cessation of processes.
- The *probability of occurrence*, which describes the likelihood of the impact actually occurring. Probability will be estimated on a scale, and a score of 1-5 assigned as follows
  - 1 is very improbable (probably will not happen);
  - 2 is improbable (some possibility, but low likelihood);
  - 3 is probable (distinct possibility);
  - 4 is highly probable (most likely); and
  - 5 is definite (impact will occur regardless of any prevention measures).

- The *significance*, which shall be determined through a synthesis of the characteristics described above (refer formula below) and can be assessed as low, medium or high.
- The *status*, which will be described as either: positive, negative or neutral.
- The *degree* to which the impact can be reversed.
- The *degree* to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources.
- The *degree* to which the impact can be mitigated.

The *significance* is determined by combining the criteria in the following formula:

$$S = (E+D+M)*P; \text{ where}$$

S = Significance

E = Extent

D = Duration

M = Magnitude

P = Probability

The *significance weightings* for each potential impact are as follows:

- < 30 points: Low (i.e. where this impact would not have a direct influence on the decision to develop in the area),
- 30-60 points: Medium (i.e. where the impact could influence the decision to develop in the area unless it is effectively mitigated),
- > 60 points: High (i.e. where the impact must have an influence on the decision process to develop in the area).

## 2.3 UNCERTAINTIES AND GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

The documented interaction between the developer and the communities as well as the EIA public participation process to date provides the best available information. However, very little statistical socio-economic information for the Metsimatala community exists. Therefore due to the rather limited context specific data and information there are uncertainties and gaps in knowledge, namely:

- *Socio-economic status*: Very limited information on the exact socio-economic status of the affected Metsimatala community is available. The only information is contained in the ZF Mgcawu District and Tsantsabane (Postmasburg) Local Municipality IDPs. However, our interpretation of the local context (based on the little data available, experience and



anecdotal evidence) is one of extreme poverty and very poor socio-economic conditions. The lack of basic services and housing infrastructure combined with high levels of unemployment strongly supports this view.

- *Complexity of relations:* The nature of the relationship between the 'Old Groenwater' and 'New Groenwater' communities is not that clear. These two communities make up the overall Metsimatala community most affected by the development. However, structures such as the Groenwater Communal Property Association (CPA) do seem to provide a unified representative structure which has successfully engaged with the project.
- *Local Employment:* The successful participation of the communities as unskilled and semi-skilled workers during construction and operation is uncertain. However, despite this uncertainty, the clear support for the development expressed by the community (contained for example in a resolution adopted at a community meeting held as early as 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012), suggests a high degree of commitment from the community towards the development.

### **3. ALIGNMENT WITH POLICY AND PLANNING**

The socio-economic development context for the development is reflected in the following key policy documents:

- Northern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Strategy.
- ZF Mgcawu District Municipality IDP.
- Tsantsabane Local Municipality IDP.

#### **3.1 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT**

In terms of national policy when considering the National Development Plan (NDP), National Climate Change and Energy Policies as well as the National Energy Act of 2008, it is evident that there is a concerted effort to support transition to a low carbon economy. Renewable energy projects, which include solar options, are therefore in line with and fundamentally in support of national policy and development planning.

From a provincial perspective the Northern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Strategy is the main policy document to consider. The strategy shows a particularly low Human Development Index for the Potsmasburg and Danielskuil region. It also highlights the overdependence of the province on mining and agriculture and that diversification of the economy is urgently required. Although the strategy makes specific mention of the role of renewable energy it can be concluded that given the strategic advantage of the Northern Cape in terms of climate and land availability, renewable energy could make a significant contribution to economic growth and job creation.

The district and local planning contexts are described in the ZF Mgcawu District IDP and Tsantsabane Local Municipality IDP. Neither the District nor Local IDP makes explicit mention of the role of renewable energy development. However, with specific reference to the Metsimatala (Groenwater) community, the issue of a lack of energy supply is of concern to both the district and the local municipalities. For example, the Local Municipality even states as an IDP project the need to provide 100 indigent Metsimatala households with free electricity. The lack of general services related to water, sewerage, roads, etc. is also explicitly highlighted in the IDP.

It is therefore concluded from the above that in terms of national, provincial, district and local government – renewable energy projects are supported in principle, especially their potential contribution to energy supply, job creation and income generation.

## 4. SUMMARY OF SOCIAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH DIFFERENT PHASES

The impacts described in this section were assessed according to the methodology described in section 2 and are described in relation to the following phases of the development:

- Design and Feasibility Phase (section 4.1).
- Construction Phase (section 4.2).
- Operational Phase (section 4.3).
- Decommissioning Phase (section 4.4).

### 4.1 DESIGN AND FEASIBILITY PHASE

The design and feasibility phase is the period before construction during which the initial consultation and participation with affected communities take place. The following are the main potential social impacts to consider during this period:

- *Effect of unrealised expectations:* The Metsimatala community is extremely marginalised with high levels of poverty and unemployment. Understandably such communities are usually particularly prone to raised expectations. Although the risks to the development such as the EIA authorisation process and more importantly the preferred bidder tender process have been explained, rising expectations are unavoidable at this stage in the process. However, a raised level of expectation is not an impact by itself. The impact only occurs once the expectations are either met or remain unfulfilled. It is recommended that continual communication between the local community leadership and the developer be sustained throughout the EIA and tendering processes to ensure that the risks are fully explained and the affected communities are kept up to date with progress. In this regard we note that the developer has been engaging with the Metsimatala local community in a seemingly responsible manner since 2011, specifically to manage expectations.
- *Capacity building, awareness and information sharing:* The EIA process has to some extent already provided an opportunity for capacity building, awareness and information sharing around the project and renewable energy in general. The minutes of meetings and the content of the presentation sessions with the community suggest an honest and clear channel of communication between the developer and the CPA.

**Table 1:** Summary of impacts during design and feasibility phase

Impact	Significance Rating (No Mitigation)	Significance rating (with Mitigation)
Unrealised expectations	Low (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Capacity building and awareness	Low (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Opportunity for consultation and information sharing	Low (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)

## 4.2 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

The construction phase will last approximately 3 months for the CSP facility. The following key social impacts are identified:

- *Job creation, empowerment and skills development:* A total of approximately 1 200 construction related employment opportunities are envisaged for the construction phase. A local employment policy will be applied as far as possible in the appointment of low-skilled and semi-skilled construction workers. Preference will be given to skilled workers within the Northern Cape. In view of the very high unemployment rates in the local municipality area (64%) these employment figures are significant.
- *Influx of job seekers and presence of construction workers:* It is expected that the influx of construction workers will have a relatively minor impact on the Metsimatala community. This is because most of the low-skilled and semi-skilled workers will be employed from the existing community. Moreover, the lack of basic services and relative distances to local towns will also to some extent deter the influx of outsiders. However, this aspect should be monitored throughout the construction phase.
- *Risk of theft and damage to infrastructure.* Because of the location of the development near a low income community, theft and damage to infrastructure is a concern. In this regard the developer indicated that a designated security company will be appointed to ensure the safety of the facilities.
- *Nuisance related to construction activities:* It is evident that the construction phase will last many months and therefore a sound construction management plan will be required to mitigate the nuisance as well as health and safety related impacts. The construction management plan is attached as an annexure to the EIA Report. In considering the content of the construction management plan it seems that most construction related impacts could be mitigated to a reasonable level.

**Table 2:** Summary of impacts during construction phase

Impact	Significance Rating (No Mitigation)	Significance rating (with Mitigation)
Job creation	High (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Empowerment and skills development	High (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Presence of construction workers and potential impacts on family structures and social networks	Low (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Influx of job seekers	Low (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Risk of theft and damage to infrastructure	Low (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Nuisance related to construction activities	Low (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)

### 4.3 OPERATIONAL PHASE

The operational phase of the project will last approximately 20-25 years - with the option to extend the lifetime as will be discussed under the decommissioning phase. The positive impacts during the operational phase have been identified as highly significant while the potential negative impacts were assessed to be medium to low significance. The key impacts to consider are the following:

- *Job creation:* The unemployment rate for the municipal area in general stands at 64%, which is probably much lower than for the Metsimatala community specifically. It is estimated that the proposed development will provide a total of 120 permanent jobs. Taking an average of five dependents per employed individual the potential total effect is estimated at 500 individuals to benefit indirectly from employment generated by the development which is significant within the local context.
- *Income generation from the development:* The development will provide two income streams. The first is a monthly lease amount for the land portions utilised for the solar energy facilities and the second will be from dividends declared by the project company. The Metsimatala community will obtain a share in the development company.

- *Conflict over income:* These types of developments, which include a strong community development focus, pose a particular challenge in terms of the management and application of the income generated by the development. To address this challenge the developer envisages setting up the Groenwater CPA Trust to administer the income in a responsible manner.
- *Influx of job seekers:* The extent of influx of job seekers to the area is very difficult to predict and / or quantify. However, since the development will be located on CPA property and limited housing and related services exist in close proximity, the influx of outsiders could potentially be strictly managed. Experience with other similar projects internationally suggests that due to the isolation of these facilities the influx of outsiders will not be significant.

**Table 3:** Summary of impacts during operational phase

Impact	Significance Rating (No Mitigation)	Significance rating (with Mitigation)
Job creation	High (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Income generation from the development	High (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Conflict over income and leadership	Medium (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Influx of job seekers	Low (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)

#### 4.4 DECOMMISSIONING PHASE

Although the developer indicated that the ideal would be for the facility to be retrofitted and re-assembled for another 20-25 years, the possibility of decommissioning needs to be considered.

There are two main social impacts related to this phase:

- *Loss of income and employment:* The closure of the facility could present a major social impact to the workers employed at the facilities, and to the community at large. To mitigate the potential impact the provision of a viable pension and savings plan over a period of 20-25 years is recommended. The fact that most of the labourers will be local workers with limited employment mobility suggests a high retention rate – which would support long term savings initiatives. Moreover, during the lifespan of the project the employers should be able to provide for the education of their children leading to increased employment mobility – mitigating the severity of the decommissioning impacts.

- *Nuisance related to construction activities*: The decommissioning phase poses very similar impacts to the construction phase. However the timeframe for the decommissioning is much shorter (less than a year).

**Table 4:** Summary of impacts during decommissioning phase

Impact	Significance Rating (No Mitigation)	Significance rating (with Mitigation)
Loss of income and employment	High (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Nuisance related to construction activities	Low (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)

## **5. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Table 5 provides a summary of the social impact associated with the proposed alternative energy project across the different phases. It shows that after mitigation 10 (of the 16) impacts received a low negative impact rating and six a high positive significance impact rating. The main positive impacts are:

- Job creation during construction and operational phases.
- Income generation during the operational phase.
- Empowerment and skills development during the construction phase.

Two potentially medium to high negative impacts are the possible conflict over income and leadership within the local communities as well as the loss of income and employment after decommissioning. Mitigation options are available for both impacts in the form of a third party to advise and administer income and a retirement fund option during operations to buffer the social impacts after decommissioning.

Overall the proposed project does not hold any overriding negative social impacts to suggest a no development option. The investment, employment and income generation potential linked to the project could significantly contribute to the socio-economic development objectives described in the local IDPs.



**Table 5:** Summary matrix of social impacts (for the Metsimatala alternative energy development project)

IMPACTS	Significance Variables				Significance Rating	
	Extent	Duration	Probability	Magnitude	No Mitigation	With Mitigation
<b>Planning and Feasibility Phase</b>						
Unrealised expectations	Local (1)	Very short (1)	Improbable (2)	High (8)	Low (20) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Capacity building and awareness	Local (1)	Very short (1)	Improbable (2)	Moderate (6)	Low (16) (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Opportunity for consultation and information sharing	Local (1)	Very short (1)	Improbable (2)	Moderate (6)	Low (16) (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
<b>Construction Phase</b>						
Job creation	Local and Regional (3)	Short to Medium (2)	Definite (5)	Very High (10)	High (75) (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Empowerment and skills development	Local and Regional (3)	Short to Medium (2)	Definite (5)	High (8)	High (65) (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Presence of construction workers and potential impacts on family structures and social networks	Local (1)	Short to Medium (2)	Improbable (2)	Moderate (6)	Low (18) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Influx of job seekers	Local and Regional (3)	Short to Medium (2)	Improbable (2)	Low (4)	Low (18) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Risk of theft and damage to infrastructure	Local (1)	Short to Medium (2)	Probable (3)	Low (4)	Low (21) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)

Nuisance related to construction activities	Local (1)	Short to Medium (2)	Probable (3)	Moderate (6)	Low (27) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
<b>Operational Phase</b>						
Job creation	Local and Regional (3)	Medium to Long (4)	Definite (5)	Very High (10)	High (85) (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Income generation from the development	Local and Regional (3)	Medium to Long (4)	Definite (5)	Very High (10)	High (85) (Positive Impact)	High (Positive Impact)
Conflict over income and leadership	Local (1)	Medium to Long (4)	Highly Probable (4)	Very High (8)	Medium (52) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Influx of job seekers	Local and Regional (3)	Short (1)	Improbable (2)	Low (4)	Low (16) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
<b>Decommissioning Phase</b>						
Loss of income and employment	Local and Regional (3)	Long (5)	Highly Probable (4)	High (8)	High (64) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)
Nuisance related to construction activities	Local (1)	Short (1)	Probable (3)	Moderate (6)	Low (24) (Negative Impact)	Low (Negative Impact)

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# Annexure A: CV Summary

## CURRICULUM VITAE



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS



### PROF FRANCOIS RETIEF *Environmental Specialist*

#### KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D), School of Environment and Development, University of Manchester, United Kingdom  
Masters in Environmental Management (M.EM), University of the Free State (UV), SA  
Masters in Town and Regional Planning (M.TRP), University of the Free State (UV), SA

Registered at:

International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA)  
Environmental Law Association (ELA)  
South African Planning Institute (SAPI)  
South African Council for Town and Regional Planners (SACTRP)

#### PERSONAL DETAILS:

**Name:** Francois Retief  
**Date of Birth:** 8 Nov 1974  
**Nationality:** South African  
**Profession:** Environmental  
Assessment  
Practitioner (EAP)

#### POSITION WITH NWU:

Associate Professor

#### ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS:

Ph.D (University of Manchester)

#### REGISTRATIONS:

IAIA, ELA, SACTRP, SAPI

#### EXPERIENCE:

Prof Retief provides national and international specialist expertise in the field of environmental assessment at project as well as strategic level.

His experience with EIA processes and the intricacies around process management stems from his involvement in practice, design of EIA training courses as well as research activities. In this regard he has successfully completed various EIA applications for a range of different activities in respective provinces. This ensures valuable insight in terms of 'doing' EIA and extensive exposure to the 'real life' complexities of EIA. In terms of training and capacity building Prof Retief is the programme manager for the Masters Programme in Environmental Management at the North West University (Potchefstroom campus). Finally he co-founded the Environmental Assessment Research Group at the NWU which specializes in research on the following four assessment themes: quality, efficiency, effectiveness and cost of EIA. Various peer reviewed papers and national and international conference contributions have emanated from the research.

Based on his competence in environmental assessment Prof Retief was nominated to serve on the national task team mandated to develop unit standards for the registration of environmental assessment practitioners (EAPs) in South Africa. He therefore has intimate knowledge of the competencies required from EAPs.

Internationally Prof Retief has built extensive networks. He completed his PhD studies in environmental assessment at the EIA Centre, University of Manchester where he is currently an Honorary Research Fellow. He is also the co-editor of the international journal Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal (IAPA). His international involvement ensures that he is kept up to date with best practice and trends in the international impact assessment profession. He is also a guest lecturer at Murdoch University, Western Australia.