

**From:** andrew [mailto:andrew@enviroplan.co.za]

**Sent:** 18 December 2012 03:59 PM

**To:** Roxanne Oelofse

**Subject:** Re: Proposed Establishment of a New Dairy, 650 000m<sup>3</sup> Dam and the Cultivation of an additional 15 ha of Virgin Veld, on The Farm Clovelly No. 16370, Underberg, KwaZulu-Natal

Dear Roxanne, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the application to plough 15 hectares of veld and establish a new dam on Mr Phillip Turner's property.

Please register the KZN Crane Foundation as an Interested and Affected Party.

The area of veld to be transformed is fairly small, although this will be happening on a farm which is already fairly extensively cultivated.

The KZN Crane Foundation is aware that at times fairly large numbers of Crowned Cranes can at times be found on neighbouring properties (not sure of this farm).

Perhaps wrongly I believe that the development proposal is likely to alter this situation.

We are however, concerned about the loss of possible nesting sites for Cranes since dams are almost always located in wetlands - which are prime habitat for Cranes.

We are further concerned that the loss of wetland habitat in particular will accelerate climate change. Wetlands are regarded as being amongst the most important natural carbon sinks known. According to an economic evaluation of the ecosystem services of the World's major natural biomes undertaken by the economist Costanza (and others) some wetland types even outperform forests in terms of the value of the ecosystems goods and services they provide free to society.

It is within this context that we recommend to the applicant and his professional team that they provide a thorough evaluation what can be done to mitigate the dams potential environmental impacts, particularly on the natural environment.

We can make any number of suggestions:

- Islands for bird roosting,
- Earthworks to create shallows where water loving vegetation can thrive,
- Not planting so many trees next to the dams edge,
- Retaining some natural veld near the dams for wildlife (especially birds) to forage in.

No doubt you will be able to do a more professional job than I of identifying practical mitigatory measures and we look forward to reviewing the Basic Assessment Report in this regard.

As a matter of interest it would be appreciated if you could advise as to Mr Turner's involvement in conservation matters, is he a member of a local conservancy ?

Does he take any steps to protect the natural areas on his farm, etc ?

It may seem nosy but it helps an environmental organisation like our own to determine if it is likely the applicant will implement any measures contained in an Environmental Management Programme.

Kind Regards  
Andrew Ferendinos