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OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MUNICIPAL MANAGER

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Dear Sir/ Madam

DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED NGODWANA DAM REMEDIATION PROJECT

Kindly receive our comments regarding the proposed Ngodwana dam remediation project within the City of Mbombela, Mpumalanga province. The City of Mbombela (Environmental Management and Planning) supports the proposed project and has the following comments.

1. NEED AND DESIRABILITY OF THE PROJECT

SAPPI Ngodwana intends to upgrade an existing dam. The dam remediation is to ensure the continued safe operation of this Category III dam including the stability of the main and right flank embankments and its foundations. The construction of a pedestrian bridge and a low water vehicle crossing over the Ngodwana River, to allow access during construction and dam safety inspections during operation.

2. ECOLOGY AND SURFACE WATER

These activities will take place within 32m of a watercourse, outside an urban area, and within a critical biodiversity area (CBA) and within 5km of a protected area.

All the proposed activities should not alter with the Present Ecological Status (PES) of the receiving environment and downstream ecology in any way. Physical alterations of biodiversity should be minimal and be away from sensitive footprints. Prioritize the use of existing services (e.g. roads) and previously disturbed/degraded areas than opting to disturb new environments

An integrated water use licence must be obtained authorized by the Department of Water & Sanitation (DWS) because it involves activities that are regulated by Section 21(c) and (i) of the National Water Act (1998);

Section 21(c): impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse

Section 21(i): altering the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse.

3. STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Due to the nature of the project scope and associated works, there is high possibility of the occurrence of soil erosion as there will be vegetation clearance. Clearing of site establishment areas will create bare areas, channelling storm water and surface runoff, etc. This will cause erosion of sediments and result to the siltation of the river. A coherent storm water management plan should be in place,

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The developer has to appoint an Environmental Control Officer (ECO) during construction phase in order to ensure that the development adheres to the conditions prescribed in the authorizing document and also to ensure that all the mitigation strategies or measures stipulated in the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) are properly instituted. Mitigation measures have to be developed for all anticipated issues.

Hope you find this to be in order.

SR MHLONGO
DEPUTY MUNICIPAL MANAGER