

06 August 2021

Dear Stakeholder and Interested & Affected Party,

**ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE (EGI) FOR THE 100MW_{ac} VREDE AND 100MW_{ac} RONDAVEL
PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES, LOCATED NEAR KROONSTAD, FREE STATE PROVINCE
(DFFE Ref. Nos.: To be Issued)**

NOTICE OF BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Developments (Pty) Ltd is proposing the development of Electrical Grid Infrastructure (EGI) required to enable the evacuation of generated electricity from the Vrede PV Solar Energy Facility and the Rondavel PV Solar Energy Facility, located ~11km and 6km, respectively, from Kroonstad in the Moqhaka Local Municipality (Fezile Dabi District Municipality), Free State Province.

The key infrastructure and components associated with each EGI include a 132kV double- or single-circuit overhead power line, a 33/132kV on-site Eskom substation, associated equipment, infrastructure, and buildings, and temporary and permanent laydown areas. The Vrede PV Solar Energy Facility will connect to the national grid via a loop-in loop-out connection into the existing Eskom 132kV Kroonstad Municipality - Theseus 1 132kV Switching Station power line. The Rondavel PV Solar Energy Facility will loop in and loop out into the Eskom 132kV Kroonstad Municipality – Kroonstad Switching Station power line or connect directly with the Kroonstad Municipality 132/66kV substation, depending on which alternative is constructed. Two (2) alternative corridors, each with a varying width of up to 400m are being considered for the Vrede grid connection, and three for the Rondavel grid connection. In addition, two alternative substation locations are being considered for the Rondavel EGI, and only one substation location is being considered for the Vrede EGI. Regardless of which grid corridor alternative is approved for each respective project, a 4 – 6m wide servitude service road under the power line is also required.

Due to the proximity of the EGI to each other, the Public Participation Process for both projects will be undertaken concurrently, providing the public with an opportunity to understand and comment on each project. The details for each project, including the alternatives and the respective farm portions affected by the proposed EGI are as follows:

Project name	Affected Properties	Grid Corridor Alternatives
Vrede EGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Remaining extent of the farm Vrede No. 1152 » Remaining Extent of the farm Gesukkel No. 1153 » Remaining Extent of the farm Geduld No. 1156 	1 and 2
Rondavel EGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Remaining extent of the farm Rondavel No. 627 » Portion 1 of the farm Rondavel No. 627 » Portion 0 of the farm Rondavel No. 627 » Remaining extent of the farm Boschplaat No. 330 » Remaining extent of the farm Salie No. 1837 	1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Remaining extent of the farm Rondavel-Noord No. 1475 » Portion 1 of the farm Naseby Thorns No. 288 » Portion 0 of the farm Leeuwkrantz No. 1384 » Remaining extent of the farm Dorp Gronden Van Kroonstadt No. 460 » Portion 225 of the farm Dorp Gronden Van Kroonstadt No. 460 » Portion 226 of the farm Dorp Gronden Van Kroonstadt No. 460 	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Remaining extent of the farm Rondavel-Noord No. 1475 » Remaining extent of the farm Waterloo No. 1383 	3

Site-specific studies and assessments will delineate areas of potential sensitivity within the identified development areas for both the Vrede and Rondavel EGI. Once constraining factors have been confirmed, the layout of the EGI can be planned to minimise social and environmental impacts.

It is the Developer's intention to bid the Vrede and Rondavel PV Solar Energy Facilities, including their associated EGI, under the Department of Energy's (DoE) Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement (REIPPP) Programme. The power generated from each PV Solar Energy Facility will be sold to Eskom and fed into the national electricity grid. The development of the facilities will also assist with achieving the energy mix as set out in the Integrated Resources Plan (IRP).

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

In accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 (as amended) published in terms of Section 24(5) of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA), the development and operation of the proposed EGI requires Environmental Authorisation (EA) from the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) in consultation with the Free State Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DEDTEA).

In terms of Section 24(5) of the NEMA, as read with the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended, (GN R 324 and 327)), a Basic Assessment Process is required to be undertaken in support of the application for EA for each project. Each application is required to be supported by comprehensive, independent environmental studies undertaken in accordance with the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

The proponent has appointed Savannah Environmental, as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), to undertake the Basic Assessments (BA) for the respective projects to identify and assess all potential environmental impacts associated with the projects and recommend appropriate mitigation measures in the Environmental Management Programmes (EMPrs). As part of

the environmental studies, Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) will be actively involved through the public involvement process being undertaken by Savannah Environmental.

You and/or the organization / company, which you represent, have been identified as a stakeholder for the proposed projects as described above. The nature and extent of the EGI for each PV Solar Energy Facility is explored in more detail in the Background Information Document (BID) which was distributed in November 2020 and is still available for download from the Savannah Environmental public participation platform on <https://savannahsa.com/public-documents/grid-infrastructure/vrede-and-rondavel-grid-sef-2>.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The public participation (PP) process will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Regulations 39 to 44 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, (GN R326). The aim of the PPP is primarily to ensure that:

- » information containing all relevant facts in respect of the proposed project is made available to potential stakeholders and I&APs;
- » participation by I&APs is facilitated in such a manner that all potential stakeholders and I&APs are provided with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed project; and
- » comments received from potential stakeholders and I&APs are recorded and incorporated into the BA process.

The restrictions enforced in terms of Government Gazette 43096 which placed the country in a national state of disaster limiting the movement and gathering of people to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus has placed some limitations on how public consultation can be conducted as part of an EIA processes. The consultation process for these projects has been designed considering these limitations, and the implementation is in line with our public participation plan (PP Plan), as approved by the DFFE. Savannah Environmental have established an online stakeholder engagement platform, where you are invited to register your interest in the project/s, and view project documentation.

Alternative means of undertaking consultation have been designed to ensure that I&APs are afforded sufficient opportunity to raise comments on the project, predominately through our interactive web-based platform readily available and accessible to any person with interest in the project, enabling the public participation process to be undertaken in line with Regulations 41 to 44 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. This online stakeholder engagement platform allows for the sharing of details regarding the project and consultation documentation, including project maps, presentations, and posters regarding the project, as well as all reports available for review. The use of online tools enables stakeholders and I&APs to explore the project-specific content in their own time and allows participation in the consultation process in a meaningful way.

The benefits of the online stakeholder engagement platform include:

- » Ability to create a dedicated project-specific online platform to enable easy access to project-related information.
- » Ability to reach a wider audience, allowing more widespread consultation for major infrastructure projects.
- » Allowing stakeholders and I&APs the opportunity to engage on a project without leaving their office or home.

- » Enabling stakeholders and I&APs to register their interest in a project (for inclusion on the project database), and automatically gaining access to comprehensive project documentation.
- » Enabling the EAP to maintain a complete database of I&APs through maintaining a record of persons accessing the online stakeholder consultation platform.
- » Enabling the EAP and stakeholders/I&APs to meet virtually.
- » Provides a resilient solution to a public consultation process.

Where I&APs do not have the applicable facilities or access to internet, provision has been made to facilitate the consultation process through limited one-on-one consultation where sanitary conditions can be maintained, as well as consulting with the Ward Councillor, the ward committee members, community representatives and local community forum members.

AVAILABILITY OF BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORTS FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT

As a registered I&AP, you are hereby notified that the Basic Assessment (BA) Reports and associated documentation for each respective project are available for your review and comment from **Friday, 06 August 2021** until **Monday, 06 September 2021**.

In complying with the terms of Government Gazette 43096, the BA Reports have been made available on the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform at <https://savannahsa.com/public-documents/grid-infrastructure/vrede-and-rondavel-grid-sef-2>. As per our approved public participation plan submitted to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), you can also request that an electronic copy of the BA Reports be sent to you via file transfer services such as WeTransfer or Dropbox.

Please submit your written comments on the BA Report by **Monday, 06 September 2021** via our online stakeholder engagement platform (link provided above) or:

- » Telephone: 011 656 3237
- » Mobile: 060 978 8396 (including please call me)
- » Fax: 086 684 0547
- » Post: PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157
- » E-mail: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

All comments can be addressed to Tumelo Mathulwe at Savannah Environmental.

All comments received during the 30-day review and comment period will be recorded and included in the Final BA Reports for submission to the DFFE in line with Regulation 44 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended (GN R326).

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require additional information and/or clarification regarding the projects. Our team welcomes your participation and looks forward to your involvement throughout this process.

Kind regards

Tumelo Mathulwe

Public Participation Consultant

Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

Nicolene Venter

From: Savannah Environmental <publicprocess@savannahsa.com>
Sent: Friday, August 6, 2021 5:09 PM
To: Nicolene Venter
Subject: SE2716: VREDE AND RONDAVEL ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE: Notification of Basic Assessment Reports available for review and comment
Attachments: SE2716-Vrede&Rondavel EGI BARs Notification Letter-FINAL.pdf

ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE (EGI) FOR THE 100MWac VREDE AND 100MWac RONDAVEL PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES, LOCATED NEAR KROONSTAD, FREE STATE PROVINCE (DFFE Ref. Nos.: To be Issued)

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Please find attached the notification letter in which you, as a registered Stakeholder and/or Interested and Affected Party (I&AP), are informed of the availability and review/comments to the Basic Assessment Reports.

The BARs are available for download from Savannah Environmental’s stakeholder engagement platform at [Click Here](#)

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any additional information and/or clarification regarding the projects.

Our team welcomes your participation and look forward to your comments on the BARs.

Kind regards,

[Unsubscribe this type of email](#)



t: 011 656 3237
f: 086 684 0547

Nicolene Venter
Public Process

e: publicprocess@savannahsa.com
c: +27 (0) 60 978 8396



Format: HTML

Normal Calibri Size (CTRL+S) **B** / *I* U A [color] [background color] [bulleted list] [numbered list] [indent] [outdent] [table]

ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE (EGI) FOR THE 100MWac VREDE AND 100MWac RONDAVEL PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES, LOCATED NEAR KROONSTAD, FREE STATE PROVINCE (DFFE Ref. Nos.: To be Issued)

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Design

HTML

Preview

HELP

SAVE

CLOSE

[Print](#)

SE2716: VREDE AND RONDAVEL ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE: Notification of Basic Assessment Reports available for review and comment

Date: 06
August 2021
Time: 05:12
PM

Company	Last Name	First Name	
	Algarra	Nahed	
	Arnott	Nicholas	
	Bahumi	Tshepo	
	Bekker	Petrus	
	Booi	Morena	
	Chambers	Joshua	
	George	Tebogo	
	Hleli	Luvuyo	
	Itumeleng	Khetsi	
	Kgotlagomang	Sello	
	Kokoropo	Matsiliso	
	Lephuthing	Seipati	
	Liphoko	Maki	
	Mamkulu	Dikeledi	
	Maruluba	Mzingisi	
	Mashimbye	Nkateko	
	Mazibuko	Duma	
	Menzi	Noluna	
	Moeketsi	Ramantso	
	Mokhemia	Thabang	
	Mokhemisa	Mpho	
	Monokoane	Nelson	
	Morabe	Khunong	
	Mosokotsoane	Johannes	
	Motingoe	Refiloe	
	Ndhlovu	John	
	Ndlovu	Sthembiso	
	Nketu	Natash	
	Nkomo	Linda	
	Nthako	Abbey	
	Ntloko	Reginald	
	Nunez	David	
	Rephithile	Rampopo	
	Semila	Semang	
	Tshabalala	Francina	
	Tshesane	Rebone	
	Tshotyana	Kenneth	
	Van Niekerk	Lukas	
	Venter	Nicolene	
Afriforum	Grobler	Gabrie	
Agri Free State	Van Niekerk	Waldo	
Agri Northern Cape	Jansen	Nicol	
Agri SA	Rabie	Janse	

Agri Western Cape	Van Eeden	Helena	
Agri Western Cape	Wessels	Louis	
Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS)	Masilela	Simphiwe	
BirdLife South Africa	Ralston-Paton	Samantha	
Black Farmers Association of South Africa	Mtshagi	Lennox	
Bolako Investments (Pty) Ltd	Du Plessis	Hennie	
Cell C	Everett	Roger	
Cell C	Joubert	Brian	
Cell C	Kasseepursad	Harish	
Cell C	Otto	Marius	
David Crous Trust	Crous	David	
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	M	Petunia	
Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	Buthelezi	Thoko	
Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	Marubini	Mashudu	
Department of Energy	Masipa	Pheladi	
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	Lekota	Seoka	
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	Mans	Jacoline	
Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	Mahlatji	Khomotso	
Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	Maphinda	Mthetheleli	
Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	Mutheiwana	Kevin	
Department of Rural Development and Land Reform	Makgalemele	Nozizwe	
Department of Water and Sanitation: Free State Province	Lenong	Pule	
Department of Water and Sanitation: Free State Province	Nel	George	
Dept of Environment, Small Business Dev, Tourism & Environmental Affairs	Koen	N	
Dept of Environment, Small Business Dev, Tourism & Environmental Affairs	Nokwequ	M	
Dept of Environment, Small Business Dev, Tourism & Environmental Affairs	Thabethe	Peter	
DESTEA	Thamela	Hendrik	
Endangered Wildlife Trust	Hoogstad	Constant	
EPK Projects Sol (Pty) Ltd	Kgabale	Paul	
Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd	Geeringh	John	
Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd	Grobbelaar	Nico	
Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd	Khanye	Nondwe	
Farmprops 19 (Pty) Ltd	Crous	Adriaan	
Farmprops 19 (Pty) Ltd	Crous	David	
Fezile Dabi District Municipality	Molibeli	Lindi	
Free State - DWS	Ntili	Tseliso	
Free State - DWS	Ratau	Sputnik	
Free State - Heritage Resources Authority (FSHRA)	Nel	Jeane	
Free State Department of Agriculture	Barnes	W	
Free State Department of Agriculture	Mokitlane	M.C	
Free State Department of Agriculture	Mokoena	Thato	
Free State Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	Mokone	Thabita	
Free State Department of Economic Small Business Development, Tourism and Envir	Mkhosana	Grace	
Free State Department of Economic Small Business Development, Tourism and Envir	Sello	M	
Free State Department of Police, Roads & Transportation	Maree	Hannes	
Free State Department of Police, Roads & Transportation	Naude	Willie	
Free State Department of Police, Roads & Transportation	Van Wyk	J.W	
Free State Provincial Heritage Resources Agency	Mbatha	Ntando	
Free State Provincial Heritage Resources Agency	Philip	L	
Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)	Modimoeng	Keabetswe	
JEM Van Niekerk Trust	Van Niekerk	Kassie	
Langkuil Trust	Van Niekerk	Manie	
Leads 2 Business	Miles	Melanie	
Lechwe Lodge	Wessels	Sarel	
Liquid Telecoms	Gengan	Seshni	
Mainstream Renewable South Africa (Pty) Ltd	Janse van	Liza	

	Vuuren		
Mainstream Renewable South Africa (Pty) Ltd	Kamish	Rafeeqah	
Mainstream Renewable South Africa (Pty) Ltd	Theron	Gesie	
Moleboheng Matli Foundation	Matli	Moleboheng	
Moqhaka Business Forum	Mosokotsoane	Mohlolo	
Moqhaka Community Forum	Thebe	Morena	
Moqhaka for the People	Khoury	Spiro	
Moqhaka for the People	Mafokosi	Leonard	
Moqhaka for the People	Meyer	Anton	
Moqhaka for the People	Mohande	MC	
Moqhaka for the People	Motlhudi	P	
Moqhaka for the People	Motsapele	Doctor	
Moqhaka for the People	Pie	Paul	
Moqhaka for the People	Ramantso	Keke	
Moqhaka for the People	Ramontso	M	
Moqhaka for the People	Visagie	Braam	
Moqhaka for the People	Visagie	Braam	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	.	Madelaine	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	B	Pieter	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Bolofo	Tshidiso	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Bredenkamp	Pieter	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Danster	Abram Moretele	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Geringer	M	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Greeff	Louis	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Kotze	Andre	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	L	Flory	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Labuschagne	A	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Leie	Thekisa	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Mahudi	Hilda	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Monyaki	S	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Morabe	Sibongile	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Motaung	Mahuhudi	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Mqwathi	Simon	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Mthimkhulu	NJ	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Ngobeni	Lerator	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Sefatsa	Ntinti	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Thompson	Rentina	
Moqhaka Local Municipality	Vosloo	Magdel	
MTN	Govender	Dennis	
MTN	Molebatsi	Justice	
Ngwao-Boswa Ya Kapa Bokone (NCPHRA)	Timothy	Andrew	
Northern Free State Caregivers	Combrink	Felicity	
Public Works and Rural Development: Free State	Mohlallo	ME	
Rietgat Trust	Wessels	Gert	
SANRAL	Abrahams	Nicole	
SANRAL	Mabaso	Nxobile	
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd	Bulunga	Nondumiso	
Sentech Ltd	Koegelenberg	Johan	
Sentech Ltd	Motlhake	Serame	
South African Civil Aviation Authority	Pretorius	Marie	
South African Civil Aviation Authority	Stroh	Lizell	
South African Civil Aviation Authority	Vilakazi	Zwelithini	
South African Heritage Resources Agency	Higgitt	Natasha	
South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO)	Matlhane	Selaelo	
South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO)	Sithole	Busang	
South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO)	Tiplady	Adrian	
South African Weather Services	Magogotya	Zamikhaya	
Telkom SA SOC Ltd	Shaw	Leonard	

Transnet SOC Ltd	Njonga	Andiswa	
Vuka Safe Haven	Thebe	Morena	

Totals:



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X 447 · PRETORIA · 0001 · Environment House · 473 Steve Biko Road, Arcadia, · PRETORIA

DFFE Reference: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2406

Enquiries: Ms Constance Musemburi

Telephone: (012) 399 9416, **E-mail:** cmusemburi@environment.gov.za

Jo-Anne Thomas
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd.
P. O. Box 148
SUNNINGHILL
2157

Tel: (011) 656 3237
E-Mail: joanne@savannahsa.com

PER MAIL / E-MAIL

Dear Ms Thomas

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE TO THE PROPOSED 100Mac VREDE SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY, BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED NEAR KROONSTAD IN THE MOQHAKA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, FEZILE DABI DISTRICT IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE.

The draft Basic Assessment Report (BAR) dated August 2021 and received by this Department on 06 August 2021, refers.

This letter serves to inform you that the following information must be included to the final BAR:

(a) Listed activities and required information

- Please clarify whether the proposed development also include BESS facility? The Department understands that this application is related to the Rondavel Photovoltaic Solar Energy Facility, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure (DFFE Ref: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2039) which also include a BESS facility. Please clarify this. If no BESS facility is being applied for the proposed development, please ensure that all reference to BESS facility must be removed in the FBAR.
- Please ensure that all relevant listed activities are applied for, are specific and can be linked to the development activity or infrastructure as described in the project description. Only activities applicable to the development must be applied for and assessed.
- If the activities applied for in the application form differ from those mentioned in the final BAR, an amended application form must be submitted. Please note that the Department's application form template has been amended and can be downloaded from the following link <https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms> .
- It is imperative that the relevant authorities are continuously involved throughout the basic assessment process as the development property possibly falls within geographically designated areas in terms of numerous GN R. 985 Activities. Written comments must be obtained from the relevant authorities and submitted to this Department. In addition, a graphical representation of the proposed development within the respective geographical areas must be provided.
- The Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) is required to provide the potential impacts and mitigation measures of the proposed infrastructure.

LJM

- The EMPr must include mitigation and monitoring measures to all the environmental impacts identified and assessed for the above-mentioned proposed activity. Furthermore, the EMPr must include all recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the final BAR.

(b) Layout & Sensitivity Maps

Please provide a layout map which indicates the following:

- All supporting onsite infrastructure that will support the proposed development, e.g. roads (existing and proposed), camp sites, and etc.
- The preferred route/layout alternative.
- The location of sensitive environmental features on site e.g. Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs), heritage sites, wetlands, drainage lines, anticipated erosion, farming activities, existing substation, etc, that will be affected.
- Buffer areas; and, all “no-go” areas.
- The above map must be overlain with a sensitivity map and a cumulative map which shows neighbouring developments and all existing infrastructure that will be affected by the proposed project.
- The total footprint and centre coordinates of the area and exact location of the proposed development and associated infrastructure must be mapped at an appropriate scale.

(c) Specialist Declaration of Interest

Specialist Declaration of Interest forms must be attached to the final BAR. You are therefore requested to submit original signed Specialist Declaration of Interest forms for each specialist study conducted. The forms are available on Department’s website (please use the Department’s template).

(d) Specialist Assessments

- i. Specialist studies to be conducted must provide a detailed description of their methodology, as well as all other associated infrastructure that they have assessed and are recommending for the authorisation.
- ii. The specialist studies must also provide a detailed description of all limitations to their studies. All specialist studies must be conducted in the right season and providing that as a limitation, will not be accepted.
- iii. Should the appointed specialists specify contradicting recommendations, the EAP must clearly indicate the most reasonable recommendation and substantiate this with defensible reasons; and were necessary, include further expertise advice.

(e) Alternatives

• Please note that you are required to provide a full description of the process followed to reach the proposed preferred alternative within the site, in terms of Appendix 1(3)(1)(h) of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended, including the following content:

- (a) details of all the alternatives considered;
- (b) details of the public participation process undertaken in terms of regulation 41 of the Regulations, including copies of the supporting documents and inputs;
- (c) a summary of the issues raised by interested and affected parties, and an indication of the manner in which the issues were incorporated, or the reasons for not including them;
- (d) the environmental attributes associated with the alternatives focusing on the geographical, physical, biological, social, economic, heritage and cultural aspects;
- (e) the impacts and risks identified for each alternative, including the nature, significance, consequence, extent, duration and probability of the impacts, including the degree to which these impacts—
- (f) (aa) can be reversed;
- (g) (bb) may cause irreplaceable loss of resources; and
- (h) (cc) can be avoided, managed or mitigated;

- (i) the methodology used in determining and ranking the nature, significance, consequences, extent, duration and probability of potential environmental impacts and risks associated with the alternatives;
 - (j) positive and negative impacts that the proposed activity and alternatives will have on the environment and on the community that may be affected focusing on the geographical, physical, biological, social, economic, heritage and cultural aspects;
 - (k) the possible mitigation measures that could be applied and level of residual risk;
 - (l) the outcome of the site selection matrix;
 - (m) if no alternatives, including alternative locations for the activity were investigated, the motivation for not considering such; and
 - (n) a concluding statement indicating the preferred alternatives, including preferred location of the activity.
- Written proof of an investigation and motivation if no reasonable or feasible alternatives exist in terms of Appendix 1.

(f) Undertaking of an Oath

- i. The Department has noted that the submitted application form has an undertaking under oath or affirmation by the EAP. However, the aforementioned oath was not included in the draft BAR, but rather an appendix of the application form attached to the BAR. Please note that the final BAR must also have an undertaking under oath/ affirmation by the EAP.
- ii. Based on the above, you are therefore required to include an undertaking under oath or affirmation by the EAP (administered by a Commissioner of Oaths) as per Appendix 1(3)(r) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, which states that the BAR must include:
“an undertaking under oath or affirmation by the EAP in relation to:
 - a) *the correctness of the information provided in the reports;*
 - b) *the inclusion of comments and inputs from stakeholders and I&APs;*
 - c) *the inclusion of inputs and recommendations from the specialist reports where relevant; and*
 - d) *any information provided by the EAP to interested and affected parties and any responses by the EAP to comments or inputs made by interested and affected parties”.*

(g) Details and Expertise of the EAP

You are required to include the details and expertise of the EAP in the BAR, including a curriculum vitae, in order to comply with the requirements of Appendix 1(3)(1)(a) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

(h) Public Participation Process

- i. The following information must be submitted with the final BAR:
 - a) A list of registered interested and affected parties as per Regulation 42 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended;
 - b) Copies of all comments received during the draft BAR comment period; and
 - c) A comment and response report which contains all comments received and responses provided to all comments and issues raised during the public participation process for the draft BAR. Please note that comments received from this Department must also form part of the comment and response report.
- ii. Please ensure that all issues raised and comments received during the circulation of the draft BAR from registered I&APs and organs of state which have jurisdiction (including this Department's Biodiversity Section) in respect of the proposed activity are adequately addressed in the final BAR.

iii. Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders must be included in the final BAR. Should you be unable to obtain comments, proof should be submitted to the Department of the attempts that were made to obtain comments. The Public Participation Process must be conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended.

(i) **Environmental Management Programme**

(a) You are required to comply with the content of the EMPr in terms of Appendix 4 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended.

(j) **Environmental Impact Statement**

It is noted that an environmental impact statement is not included in the draft BAR, therefore you are kindly requested to include an environmental impact statement which contains –

- a) a summary of the key findings of the environmental impact assessment;
- b) a map at an appropriate scale which superimposes the proposed activity and its associated structures and infrastructure on the environmental sensitivities of the site indicating any areas that should be avoided, including buffers; and
- c) a summary of the positive and negative impacts and risks of the proposed activity and identified alternatives.

Please also ensure that the final BAR includes the period for which the Environmental Authorisation is required and the date on which the activity will be concluded as per Appendix 1(3)(1)(q) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

You are further reminded to comply with Regulation 19(1)(a) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, which states that: *“Where basic assessment must be applied to an application, the applicant must, within 90 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, submit to the competent authority -*

(a) a basic assessment report, inclusive of specialist reports, an EMPr, and where applicable a closure plan, which have been subjected to a public participation process of at least 30 days and which reflects the incorporation of comments received, including any comments of the competent authority.”

Should there be significant changes or new information that has been added to the BAR or EMPr which changes or information was not contained in the reports or plans consulted on during the initial public participation process, you are required to comply with Regulation 19(b) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, which states: *“the applicant must, within 90 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, submit to the competent authority – (b) a notification in writing that the basic assessment report, inclusive of specialist reports an EMPr, and where applicable, a closure plan, will be submitted within 140 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, as significant changes have been made or significant new information has been added to the basic assessment report or EMPr or, where applicable, a closure plan, which changes or information was not contained in the reports or plans consulted on during the initial public participation process contemplated in subregulation (1)(a) and that the revised reports or, EMPr or, where applicable, a closure plan will be subjected to another public participation process of at least 30 days”.*

Should you fail to meet any of the timeframes stipulated in Regulation 19 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, your application will lapse.

You are hereby reminded of Section 24F of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, that no activity may commence prior to an Environmental Authorisation being granted by the Department.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Sabelo Malaza

Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

Signed by: Mr Lerato Mokoena

Designation: Assistant Director: Priority Infrastructure Projects

Date: 02 September 2021

cc:	Eugene Marais	South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Developments (Pty) Ltd	E-mail: Eugene.Marais@mainstreamrp.com
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forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X 447, Pretoria, 0001, Environment House, 473 Steve Biko Road, Pretoria, Tel: +27 12 399 9000, Fax: +27 86 625 1042

Reference: Vrede & Rondavel PV

Enquiries: Mrs Portia Makitla

Telephone: 012 399 9411 **E-mail:** pmakitla@environment.gov.za

Tumelo Mathulwe
Savannah Environmental
PO Box 148
SUNNINGHILL
2147

Telephone Number: (+27) 11 656 3237
Email Address: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

PER E-MAIL

Dear Sir/Madam

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT BASIC ASSESSEMENT REPORT (DBAR) PROPOSED ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE (EGI) FOR THE 100MWAC VREDE AND 100MWAC RONDAVEL PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES, LOCATED NEAR KROONSTAD, FREE STATE PROVINCE

The Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation has reviewed and evaluated the report and the following are recommendations that must be considered to minimize loss of biodiversity:

- Vegetation clearing must be limited to the approved areas.
- Highly sensitive areas near the development footprint must be demarcated as no-go area.
- Alien Invasive Plant (AIP) Management and Control Plan must be designed and implemented to prevent further loss of floral habitat and diversity as AIPs displace native species; and
- Erosion management plan, maintenance plan and rehabilitation plan of natural vegetation must be developed to mitigate on habitat degradation and consider all phases of the development.

Notwithstanding the above, kindly take note that any development within a high biodiversity sensitive area, where significant residual negative impacts cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level will not supported.

NB: The Public Participation Process documents related to Biodiversity EIA for review and queries should be submitted to the Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation at Email; BCAdmin@environment.gov.za for attention of Mr. Seoka Lekota.

Yours faithfully

Mr Seoka Lekota
Control Biodiversity Officer Grade B: Biodiversity Conservation
Department of Forestry Fisheries & the Environment
Date: 06/09/2021



Batho pele- putting people first