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Appendix C5:

Background Information Document



Agtergrondinligtingsdokument
Voorgestelde Botterblom Wind Energie Fasiliteit
Noord-Kaap Provinsie, Suid Afrika

Mei 2021

Applikant:

FE Botterblom (Pty) Ltd

Omgewingsevalueringpraktisyn:

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1 INLEIDING

FE Botterblom (Pty) Ltd (hierna die Applikant) beoog die ontwikkeling van 'n kommersiële wind energie fasiliteit (WEF) en geassosieerde infrastruktuur voor op 'n projekterrein wat ongeveer 53 kilometer (km) noord van Loeriesfontein in the Noord-Kaap geleë is. Die voorgestelde ontwikkeling wat as Botterblom WEF sal bekend staan, gaan elektrisiteit opwek wat in die Nasionale kragnet sal invoer. Enviro-Insight CC (hierna Enviro-Insight) is aangestel as die onafhanklike omgewingsevalueringspraktisyn (OEP) om die Omgewingsimpakevaluering (OIE) te onderneem vir die WEF volgens die Nasionale Wet op Omgewingsbestuur (NEMA, Wet 107 van 1998), namens die Applikant.

Die Agtergrondinligtingsdokument beoog om u, as 'n belangstellende en/of geaffekteerde party (B&GP), te voorsien van:

- 'n oorsig van die Botterblom WEF;
- 'n oorsig van die OIE en studies wat onderneem word om die projek te evalueer; en
- besonderhede van hoe u by die OIE-proses betrokke kan raak, inligting kan ontvang en deel te neem aan die publieke deelname proses.

2 OORSIG VAN DIE PROJEK

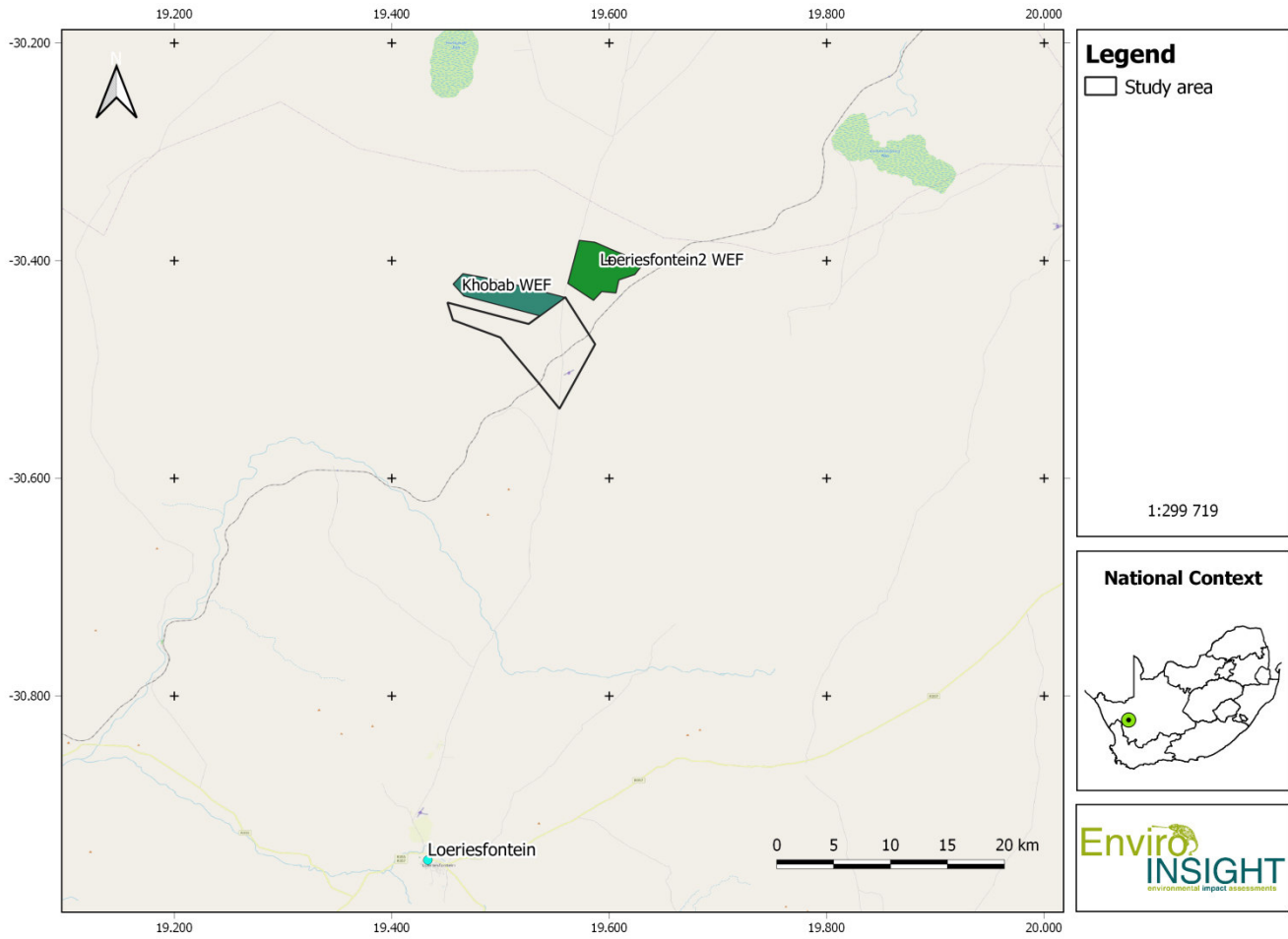
Die voorgestelde Botterblom WEF projekterrein is ongeveer 5 745 hektaar geleë op 'n porsie van die restant van die plaas Sous 226 in die Hantam Plaaslike Munisipaliteit. Die projekterrein is ongeveer 53 km noord van Loeriesfontein, 87 km wes van Brandvlei and 146 km suid van Pofadder in die Noord-Kaap. Die projekterrein kan met die Gnaatboskolk / Zout Dwaggas Grondpad bereik word wat uit die R357 tak (Figuur 1; Figuur 2). Die bestaande Khobab WEF is noord geleë terwyl die Loeriesfontein2 WEF noord-oos van die projekterrein geleë is.

Die voorgestelde Windplaas gaan bestaan uit 54 wind laaiers met 'n opwekkingsvermoë van omtrent 6.5 MW per laaier. Die naafhoogte kan tot en met 150m hoog wees en die rotor diameter tot en met 175m. Die finale wind laaier model en dus spesifikasies kan eers nader aan die tyd van oprigting bepaal word weens die nuutste tegnologie op daardie stadium.

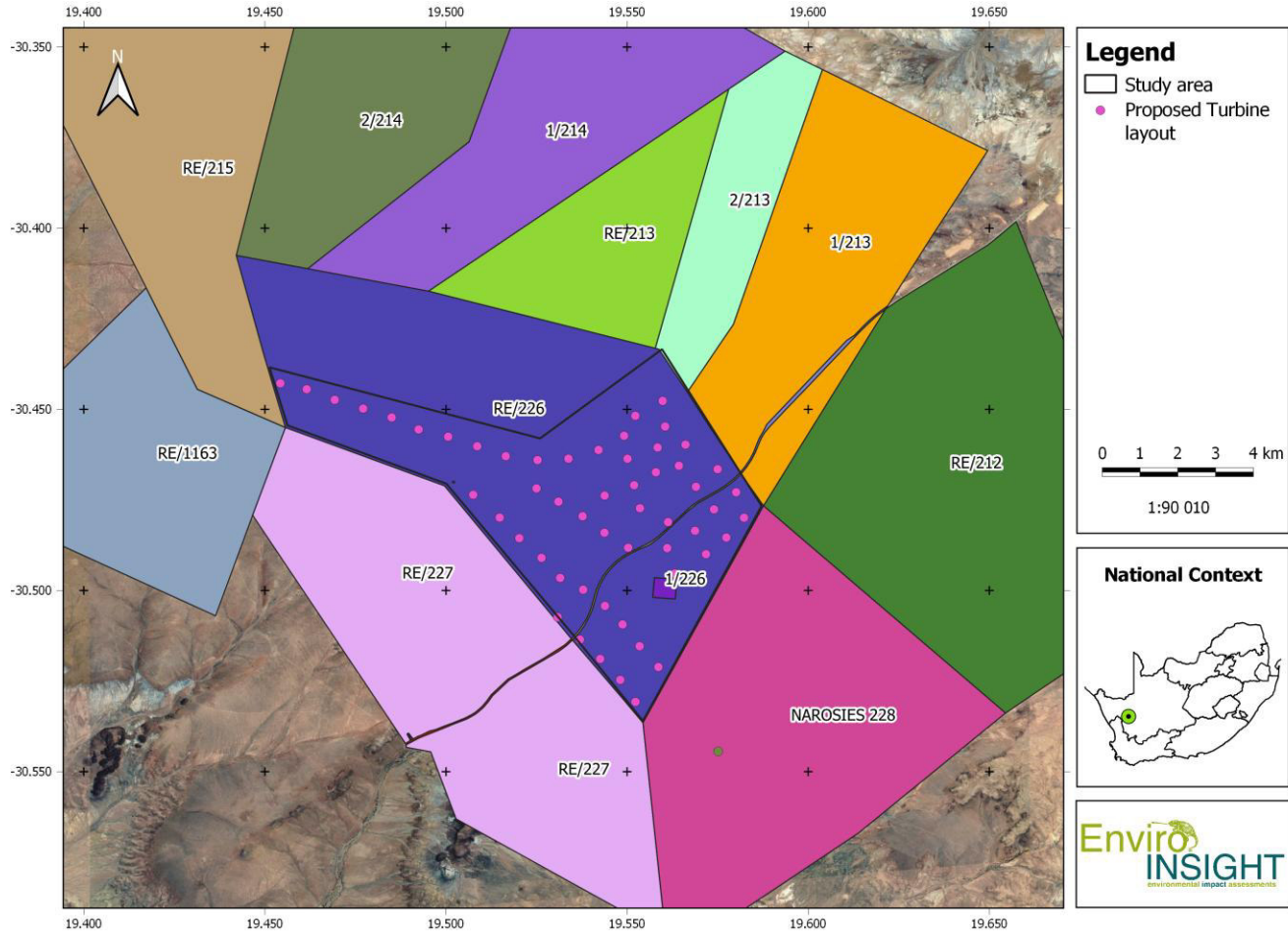
Die ontwikkelingsvoetspoor maak voorsiening vir die gepaardgaande infrastruktuur wat die interne paaie (omtrent 10 m wyd), werkwinkel, stoorkamer, kantore en afleggingsgebied vir die konstruksie fase insluit. So ver as moontlik sal die bestaande plaaspaai van gebruik maak en opgradeer waar nodig. Verder kan die projekterrein omhein word. As deel van die konstruksie fase gaan die afleggingsgebied tydelike geboue insluit vir die stoor van toerusting asook vir die oprig van die wind laaiers. 'n Terreinkantoor asook 'n sekuriteitsgebied sal ook opgerig word.

Verder word 'n interne substasie van omtrent 200 m x 200 m in omvang op te rig om die konneksie tussen die windplaas en die kragnet moontlik te maak. 'n Oorhoofse kraglyn van 132 kV om die aanleg met die kragnet by Helios Substasie te verbind gaan in 'n aparte aansoek aan die Departement gestuur word.

Die ontwikkelaar is van voorneme om die Botterblom WEF aan te bied ingevolge die Departement van Energie (DE) se Program vir Onafhanklike Hernubare Kragprodusente (REIPPP). Die krag wat deur die projek opgewek sal word, sal aan Eskom verkoop word en by die Nasionale kragnet ingevoer word.



Figuur 1: Die ligging van die Botterblom WEF projekterrein.



Figuur 2: Ligging van die plaas asook die omliggende plase.

3 WETGEWING

Artikel 24C(2)(a)(i) van NEMA stipuleer dat die Minister van die Omgewing as die bevoegde owerheid aangewys moet word wanneer die aktiwiteite van 'n voorgestelde projek implikasies het aanrakende internasionale omgewingsooreenkomste soos geïdentifiseer deur die Minister by wyse van kennisgewing in die staatskoerant. Vir hierdie rede word die Nasionale Departement van Bosbou, Visserye en die Omgewing (DFFE) aangewys as die bevoegde owerheid aangedui vir hierdie aansoek.

3.1 SIFTINGSPROSES

Die Minister van Omgewing, Bosbou en Visserye, het kennisgewing gegee dat die indien van 'n verslag wat gegenereer word deur die nasionale aanlyn omgewingsonderzoek instrument¹, soos deur gegee in Regulasie 16(1)(b)(v) van die OIE-regulasie (2014, soos gewysig) gepubliseer in Staatskennisgewing No. R982 van Staatskoerant No. 38282 op 4 Desember 2014, soos

¹ <https://screening.environment.gov.za/screeningtool/#/pages/welcome>

gewysig, sal verpligtend wees van 4 Oktober 2019 met die indien van 'n aansoek vir omgewingsmagtiging in terme van regulasie 19 en 21 van die OIE-regulasie (2014, soos gewysig).

Daarbenewens het die Minister 'n stel protokolle gepubliseer op 20 Maart en 30 Oktober 2020 wat 'n aansoeker moet aan voldoen tydens die OIE proses. Die gepubliseerde 'Procedures to be followed for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting of Identified Environmental Themes in terms of Section 24(5)(a) and (h) of the National Environmental Management Act (1998) when Applying for Environmental Authorisation', sluit protokolle in vir die volgende omgewings temas: landbou, voëls, biodiversiteit (beide landelik asook akwaties), landelik diere en plante, klank, verdediging en burgerlike lugvaart.

Elke protokol stel vereistes vir die assessering en verslaggewing van omgewingsimpakte van aktiwiteite wat goedkeuring benodig. Hoe hoër die sensitiwiteit van die spesifieke tema van die voorgestelde projekterrein soos aangedui op die omgewingsondersoek verslag, hoe strenger en meer gedetailieerd gaan die vereistes vir assessering en verslaggewing wees.

In Tabel 3-1 word elke omgewings tema aangedui volgens die omgewingsondersoek verslag vir die voorgestelde projekterrein.

Tabel 3-1: Omgewings temas soos aangedui in die omgewingsondersoek verslag.

Tema	Baie Hoë sensitiwiteit*	Hoë sensitiwiteit *	Medium sensitiwiteit	Lae sensitiwiteit
Landbou				
Diere Spesies				
Akwatiese Biodiversiteit				
Argeologiese en Kultuuruele Erfenis				
Voëls (Wind)				
Vlermuise (Wind)				
Burgerlike Lugvaart (Wind)				
Verdediging (Wind)				
Flikker				
Landskap (Wind)				
Klank				
Palaeontologies				
Plant Spesies				
RFI (Wind)				
Landelike Biodiversiteit				

* Benodig volle assessering.

Die volgende het betrekking tot die bogenoemde Tabel 3-1 :

- die Voël (Wind) Tema moet eintlik Hoog or Baie Hoog wees weens sensitiewe spesies wat in die area voorkom

asook vir die rede dat die voorgestelde projek 'n windplaas is. Gevolglik moet die voorgeskryfde 12 maande voorkonstruksie monitering plaasvind;

- die Burgerlike Lugvaart (Wind) Tema moet Medium of Laag wees aangesien daar geen aanloopbane in die area is wat operasioneel is nie. Daar is wel 'n ongebruikte, ou aanloopbaan langs die Helios substasie. Kommentaar sal verkry word van die *South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA)* met betrekking tot hierdie;
- die Flicker Tema word aangedui as Baie Hoog weens die teenwoordigheid van 'n ou verlate huis en die Helios substasie wat op die projekterrein voorkom. Hierdie sal geassesseer word, maar dit is moontlik dat die impak eintlik Laag gaan wees.
- die Klank Tema word aangedui as Baie Hoog weens die teenwoordigheid van 'n ou verlate huis en die Helios substasie wat op die projekterrein voorkom. Volgens die klank spesialis word slegs 'n nakomingsverklaring benodig.
- die Palaeontologies Tema word aangedui as Baie Hoog. Die SAHRIS *PalaeoSensitivity Map* dui aan dat die projekterrein geleë is in 'n Hoë sensitiviteitsgebied, en dat 'n literatuur studie nodig is en gebaseer op die uitkoms van die studie kan 'n veldassessering moontlik wees.

Meer inligting hieroor sal in die Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie beskikbaar wees.

3.2 HERNUBARE ENERGIE ONTWIKKELINGS GEBIED

Kabinet het op 17 Februarie 2016, die Hernubare Energie Ontwikkelings Gebiede (REDZs) vir grootskaal wind en sonkrag ontwikkelings en strategiese transmissiegange wat areas ondersteun waar langtermyn elektrisiteitsnetwerke ontwikkel gaan word.

Die proses wat gevolg moet word wanner aansoek gedoen word vir grootskaal projekte in 'n REDZ of in 'n strategiese transmissiegang was op 16 Februarie 2018 in GN113 and GN114 gepubliseer. Op 17 Julie 2020, het Minister Barbara Dallas Creecy in die Staatskoerant 43528, Kennisgewing 786 aangedui dat afgesien van die betsaande agt REDZs daar drie addisionele REDZs voorgetel word soos gepubliseer onder Staatskennisgewing No. 114 in Staatskoerant No. 41445 op 16 Februarie 2018. Enige nuwe elektrisiteitsnetwerk uitbreidings wat binne in een van die vyf strategiese transmissiegange plaasvind benodig slegs 'n Basiese Ewalueringsproses (BE) en nie 'n volle OIE nie, asook 'n verkorte periode van 147 dae (90 dae vir BE proses en 57 dae vir nasien en uitkoms).

Die voorgestelde Botterblom WEF is nie in 'n REDZ geleë nie, maar is wel in die Westelike strategiese transmissiegange. Dus word 'n Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie en OIE proses vir die WEF gevolg en 'n BE proses vir die transmissielyn.

3.3 NEMA OIE REGULASIES (2014, SOOS GEWYSIG)

Ingevolge die Staatskennisgewing No 324, 325 and 327 (soos gewysig op 7 April 2017) is die voorgestelde Botterblom WEF onderhewig aan gelyste aktiwiteite wat 'n volledige Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie en OIE proses moet volg wat die nodige aansoek en verslae by die DFFE moet indien.

Die doel van 'n Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie en OIE proses is om te verseker dat die moontlike omgewingsimpakte wat

met die voorgestelde wind plaas gepaard gaan te identifiseer, evalueer en te verseker dat die nodige maatreëls gehandhaaf word. Daar is twee fases, naamlik die Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie en die Omgewingsimpakevaluering fase.

Hierdie twee fases word vervolgens bespreek hieronder:

Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie

Die Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie word gedoen voor die impakte verder ondersoek word gedurende die OIE fase. Die volgende vorm deel van hierdie fase:

- Die projek en basislynassessering word bepaal deur die nodige inligting van bestaande bronne en voorlopige terreinbesoek af te lê vir die projekterrein. Hierdie sluit gewoonlik Geografiese inligtingstelsel data en kaarte in, asook navorsing van bestaande bronne met betrekking tot die omliggende omgewing.
- Identifiseer B&GPe en sleutel-rolspelers wat betrek gaan word gedurende die proses.
- Konsultasie met en deurgee van inligting aan B&GPe.
- Die Departement word genader met betrekking tot wetgewing en die proses wat gevolg moet word (hierdie word gedoen voor die aansoek ingedien word).
- Aanstel van spesialiste volgens die omgewingsonderzoekverslag.
- Identifiseer potensiële impakte vir verdere oorweging.
- Bepaal en evalueer alternatiewe.
- Identifiseer studieplan vir die OIE.
- Stel die Bestekopnameverslag saam en maak dit beskikbaar vir openbare nasien vir 'n tydperk van 30 dae.
- Handel Bestekopnameverslag af na al die kommentaar ontvang aangespreek is en dien in by DFFE vir nasien.

Omgewingsimpakevaluering fase

Indien die Bestekopnameverslag en studieplan goed gekeer word deur die DFFE, volg die OIE fase. Dit sluit in:

- Die spesialisstudies word afgehandel volgens die studieplan.
- Evalueer van alternatiewe.
- Evalueer impakte en stel versagtingsmaatreëls voor waar moontlik.
- Stel Omgewingsbestuursplan (OBP) saam wat gevolg moet word gedurende die konstruksie, operasionele en ontmantelings proses.
- Stel die OIE verslag saam en maak dit asook die OBP beskikbaar vir openbare nasien vir 'n tydperk van 30 dae.
- Handel OIE af na al die kommentaar ontvang is aangespreek word en dien die finale OIE en OBP verslae in by DFFE vir nasien.

Die vereistes van die Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie & OIE proses word voorsien in Hoofstuk 4 Deel 3 van die OIE Regulasies No 326 (soos gewysig op 7 April 2017). Die proses kan tot en met 300 dae neem om af te handel. Dit sluit 87 dae in vir die Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie, 106 dae vir die OIE proses, en 107 dae vir DFFE om na te sien.

4 SPESIALIS STUDIES

Spesialis studies wat deur die aanlyn omgewingsondersoek verslag bekend is maak is sluit in:

- Akwatiese Biodiversiteit Assessering;
- Landelike Biodiversiteit Assessering;
- Sensitiewe Plant Spesies Assessering;
- Voël Voorkonstruksie monitering en Impak Assessering;
- Vlermuis Voorkonstruksie monitering en Impak Assessering;
- Klank Nakomingsverklaring;
- Landbou Nakomingsverklaring;
- Visuele en Flikker Impak Assessering;
- Verkeer en Vervoer Impak Assessering;
- Sosio-ekonomiese Assessering;
- Erfenis Impak Assessering; en
- Paleontologiese Assessering.

5 PUBLIEKE DEELNAME PROSES

5.1 DOEL VAN PUBLIEKE DEELNAME

- voorsien B&GP 'n geleentheid om betrokke te raak by die projek deur hulle kommer en insette te kan lewer gedurende die proses;
- voorsien B&GP 'n geleentheid om inligting te voorsien en te ontvang van die biofisiese en/of sosio-ekonomiese impakte van die voorgestelde ontwikkeling;
- voorsien B&GP 'n geleentheid om maatreëls voor te stel om die verwagte biofisiese en sosio-ekonomiese impakte van die voorgestelde aktiwiteit te versag, bestuur, verhoed of op te los;
- voorsien die Aansoeker die geleentheid om die inligting soos verkry van die B&GP aan te spreek en waar moontlik te inkopereer in die aansoek;

5.2 WETGEWING

Die publieke deelname proses moet voldoen aan sekere wetgewing wat betrekking het tot publieke deelname, insluitend:

- Nasionale Wet op Omgewingsbestuur (NEMA, Wet 107 van 1998);
- OIE-regulasie (2014, soos gewysig);
- Wet op Rampbestuur, 2002 (57/2002): *Directions Regarding Measures to Address, Prevent and Combat the Spread of COVID-19 Relating to National Environmental Management Permits and Licences.*

Dus om te verseker dat publieke deelname doelgerig en regverdig is moet die bogenoemde aan voldoen word.

Die Aanwysing soos gepubliseer deur die Minister op 5 Junie 2020 voorsien riglyne wat aan voldoen moet word gedurende publieke deelname tydens die COVID-19 pandemie. Alle gesondheid en veiligheids maatreëls en ander beperkings wat van toepassing is in terme van Artikel 27(2) van die Wet op Rampbestuur moet gehandhaaf word. Ten alle tye sal die publieke deelname proses voorsiening maak vir doelgerigte deelname en verseker dat die nodige stappe geneem word om te verseker dat dit voldoen aan al die wetgewing. Volgens die Aanwysing moet 'n Publieke Deelname Plan (soos vereis in Aanhangsel 3 van die Aanwysing) ingedien word by die relevante aangewysde saakbeampte vir goedkeuring voor die publieke deelname proses kan begin (verwys na afdeling 5.2.1 vir meer inligting).

Soos pre die Aanwysing:

- *"In ensuring the above, applicants and EAPs, in addition to the methods contained in Chapter 6 of the EIA Regulations, or as part of reasonable alternative methods proposed in terms of regulation 41(2)(e) of the EIA Regulations, may make use of the following non-exhaustive list of methods: emails, websites, Zero Data Portals, Cloud Based Services, or similar platforms, direct telephone calls, virtual meetings, newspaper notices, radio advertisements, community representatives, distribution of notices at places that are accessible to potential I&APs."*
- *"Reports **may not** be made available at any public places or premises closed to the public, as contemplated in the Regulations. Hard copies or electronic versions of reports may be made accessible through any of the following non-exhaustive list of methods: websites, Zero Data Portals, community or traditional authorities, Cloud Based Services, provided that all registered I&APs have access to the reports." Dus geen verslae mag in publieke areas gelos word vir nasien nie.*
- *"Unless part of a site visit, virtual or telephonic meetings to be arranged." Geen persoonlike/ publieke vergaderings mag gehou word in die openbaar nie. Slegs virtuele of telefoniese vergaderings mag plaasvind.*

Meer inligting oor hierdie word hieronder bespreek.

5.2.1 Publieke Deelname Plan soos aanvaar deur DFFE

Die Publieke Deelname Plan was aan die DFFE saakbeampte ingedien op 6 April 2021 en dit was goedgekeur op 7 April 2021.

Hiermee volg 'n opsomming van die goedgekeurde Publieke Deelname Plan:

Kommunikasie met grondeienaars:

- Geen openbare vergaderings sal plaasvind nie.
- Alle kommunikasie sal met epos, telefonies, of met WhatsApp boodskappe plaasvind.
- Veggaderings sal met virtuele platforms soos Microsoft Teams of Zoom plaasvind.
- Waar nodig sal briewe gestuur word met pos of afgelewer word.

Kommunikasie met belangstellende en/of geaffekteerde party (B&GP):

- 'n Advertensie in 'n plaaslike koerant sal gepubliseer word.
- Site notices will be placed at prominent areas on the boundary fence of the properties.
- I&APs will be notified and will receive updates throughout the process via email or telephonic calls. Where necessary, registered post will be sent.
- All reports / documents will be made available electronically via the EAPs website. No hard copies will be made available at public locations, unless indicated otherwise by DEFF based on the published protocols. At this stage, no communities within the study area or the immediate surrounding area have been identified, with the exception of landowners and individuals utilising the properties (such as farm workers or family members residing on the properties). It must however be indicated that internet connection in this area is generally slow and at times unreliable. In these cases, an electronic CD copy can be provided to affected people. Should other challenges arise during the dissemination of information during the process; this will be discussed with DEFF and alternative measures will be proposed in order to address these limitations.
- Public meetings or open days will not be held. Should the need arise (depending on a number of factors), a virtual meeting can be arranged. Depending on the requirements for such a meeting, the specifics will be captured and discussed with DEFF. As mentioned, internet connection may be problematic for this area, and where necessary alternative arrangements will be made to ensure that all registered I&APs are given adequate opportunity to take part during the public participation process. Minutes of meetings will be captured and made available to all registered I&APs and the final minutes will be included in the scoping and EIA reports submitted to DEFF for decision making.
- All written comments received from registered I&APs will be captured in a Comments and Response Report.

Huidiglik is geen ander kommunikasie metodes geïdentifiseer nie. Ten alle tye sal die protokols soos deur die Minister uiteengesit is gevolg word.

5.2.2 Identifikasie en registrasie van belangstellende en/of geaffekteerde party (B&GP)

'n B&GP data basis word opgestel van staats en ander belanghebbendes asook geregistreerde B&GP gedurende die OIE proses. Die data basis sluit onder andere gondeienaars, geaffekteerde gemeenskaplede, plaaslike en nasionale owerhede en ander belangstellendes in.

5.2.3 Kennisgewing aan B&GP

Die Publieke Deelname proses het op 30 April 2021 begin met die plaasing van 'n kennisgewing in die Noordwester koerant. Verder is daar kennisgewings op die projekterrein opgesit op 8 Mei 2021 en kennisgewing is gestuur aan geïdentifiseerde B&GP party via epos.

Neem kennis dat die aansoek nog nie aan die DFFE gerig is nie en dus het die 300 dae periode nog nie begin nie. Alle geregistreerde B&GP partye sal in kennisgestel word sodra die aansoek ingedien is.

5.3 KENNISGEWING VAN OMGEWING BESTEKOPNAMESTUDIE BESKIKBAARHEID

Alle geregistreerde B&GP partye sal kennisgewing ontvang sodra die Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie beskikbaar is vir nasien vir 'n 30 dae periode. Die verslag sal op Enviro-Insight se webwerf beskikbaar wees: <http://www.enviro-insight.co.za/download-it/project-downloads/>.

Kommentaar ontvang van B&GP partye sal in berekening gebring word en sal aan die Departement voorgelê word. Die inligting sal ook met die spesialiste gedeel word, veral wwar dit relevant op 'n spesifieke gebied is.

REGISTRASIE EN KOMMENTAAR VORM

MEI 2021

Geregistreeerde belangstellende en/of geaffekteerde partye (B&GP) sal inligting ontvang soos die projek voortgaan. Alle geregistreeerde B&GP sal ingelig word sodra die Omgewing Bestekopnamestudie beskikbaar is vir nasien wa op Enviro-Insight se webwerf beskikbaar sal wees by: <http://www.enviro-insight.co.za/download-it/project-downloads/>.

Deur die aangehegte kommentaarvorm te voltooi en terug te stuur aan die aangeduide inligting hieronder, word u outomaties as 'n B&GP vir die projek geregistreer. U word sodoende ook daarvan verseker dat u bekommernisse en vrae oor die projek genoteer word. Alle kommentaar en navrae wat tydens die verloop van die projek ontvang word, sal beantwoord word.

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Wapadrand Security Village

Pretoria 0081

Voltooi asseblief die volgende vir die projek data basis.

Titel en Vollenaam						
Selfoon		Tel (H /W)		Faks		
Epos						
Pos Adres					Kode	

Dui asseblief die instansie en naam van instansie aan indien van toepassing:

Grondeienaar		
Staatsowerheid		
Munisipaliteit		
Gemeenskap / Organisasie		
Nie-regerings Organisasie		
Besigheid		

As u die plaaseienaar of verbruiker van die land is, of op die perseel bly (huurder), dui asseblief die die plaas en porsie aan asook die hoeveelheid mense wat wonend is op die grond:

	Plaas naam en porsie nommer	Aantal mense
Grondeienaar		
Huurder / land verbruiker		

Voltooi asseblief die onderstaande gedeeltes:

Hoe kan die projek u moontlik beïnvloed? Verskaf redes hiervoor.
As u 'n grondeienaar is, waarvoor word die grond huidiglik gebruik?
Gee asb. die besonderhede van enige biofisiese en/of sosioekonomiese impak wat u voorstel wat in aanmerking geneem moet word tydens die projek.
Stel voor hoe die biofisiese en/of sosioekonomiese impakte moontlik versag kan word deur moontlike maatreëls in te stel.

Verskaf asb. inligting oor die omgewing (die tipe plantegroei, topografiese eienskappe, infrastruktuur, sensitiewe plante en diere, kultuur- of erfenisvoorkomste in die gebied ens.). Indien moontlik, stuur asb fotos en dui die ligging aan op 'n kaart of stuur GPS koördinate wat deur die spesialisiste geassesseer moet word.

Algemene opmerkings:

Hiermee word u opreg versoek deur Enviro-Insight om hierdie skrywe te onderteken en terug stuur na Enviro-Insight, volgens die kontakbesonderhede wat verskaf is. Hierdie is om te bevestig dat u die kennisgewing ontvang het betreffende die bogenoemde, maar ook om te verseker dat u kommentaar, kommer en u insette genoteer kan word. Neem asseblief kennis dat slegs geregistreerde B&GPs ingesluit sal word in enige toekomstige korrespondensie betreffende hierdie Aansoek.

Geteken:..... **Naam:**..... **Datum:**.....

Indien u bewus is van enige ander B&GPs wat ook in kennis gestel moet word, verskaf asb. die nodige inligting en kontakbesonderhede hieronder.

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Titel en Vollenaam				
Selfoon		Tel (H /W)		Faks
Epos				

Background Information Document (BID)
Proposed Botterblom Wind Energy Facility
Northern Cape Province, South Africa

May 2021

Applicant:

FE Botterblom (Pty) Ltd

Environmental Assessment Practitioner:

Enviro-Insight CC

Tel: 012 807 0637

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1 INTRODUCTION

FE Botterblom (Pty) Ltd (hereafter the Applicant) is proposing the development of a wind energy facility (WEF) and associated infrastructure on a site located approximately 53 kilometers (km) north of Loeriesfontein in the Northern Cape province of South Africa. The proposed development, to be known as Botterblom WEF, will generate electricity which will feed into the National Grid. Enviro-Insight CC (hereafter Enviro-Insight) has been appointed as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake the requisite environmental impact assessment (EIA) process for the WEF as required in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998)(NEMA), as amended, on behalf of the Applicant.

This Background Information Document (BID) has been developed to:

- Provide a description of the proposed Project;
- Provide an overview of the environmental regulatory processes which will be undertaken in accordance with the South African legislation; and
- Provide details of the Public Participation Process (PPP) and how Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) can become involved.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed study area for the WEF development is located approximately 53km north of Loeriesfontein, 87 km west of Brandvlei and 146 km south of Pofadder in the Northern Cape. The site can be reached via a gravel Granaatboskolk / Zout Dwaggas Road, which branches off the R357 (Figure 1). The Botterblom WEF footprint is approximately 5 736 hectares (ha) and will be located on a Portion of the Remainder of the Farm Sous 226 (Figure 2). The existing Khobab WEF is located directly north while Loeriesfontein2 WEF is located north-east of the study area.

The Botterblom WEF will consist of up to 54 wind turbines, with a generation capacity of up to 6.5 MW per turbine. Each turbine will have a hub height of up to 150m and a rotor diameter of up to 175m. The final turbine model to be utilised will only be determined closer to the time of construction, depending on the technology available at the time. Additional ancillary infrastructure to the WEF would include underground and above-ground cabling between project components, onsite substation/s, foundations to support turbine towers, internal/ access roads (up to 10 m in width) linking the wind turbines and other infrastructure on the site, and permanent workshop area and office for control, maintenance and storage. As far as possible, existing roads will be utilised and upgraded (where needed) with the relevant stormwater infrastructure and gates constructed as required. The perimeter of the proposed WEF may be enclosed with suitable fencing. A formal laydown area for the construction period, containing a temporary maintenance and storage building along with a guard cabin will also be established.

Additionally, the Applicant is proposing to construct the associated on-site substation and power line, both with a capacity of up to 132kV. This would feed into the existing national electricity grid at the Helios Main Transmission Substation (MTS) located within the property itself. This associated electrical infrastructure will require a separate Environmental Authorisation and is being conducted as a part of a separate Basic Assessment (BA) process.

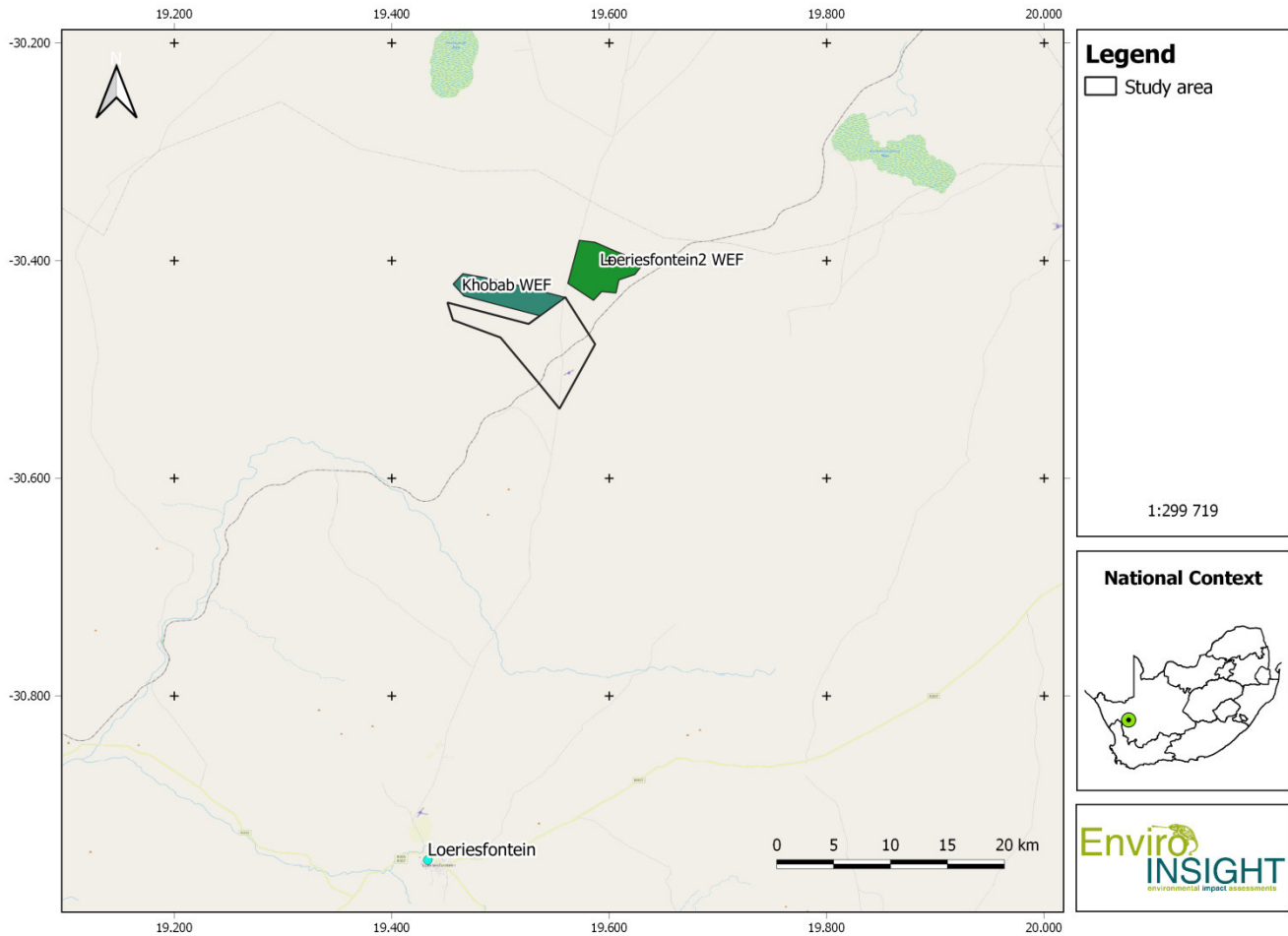


Figure 1: Locality map of the study area for the proposed Botterblom WEF.

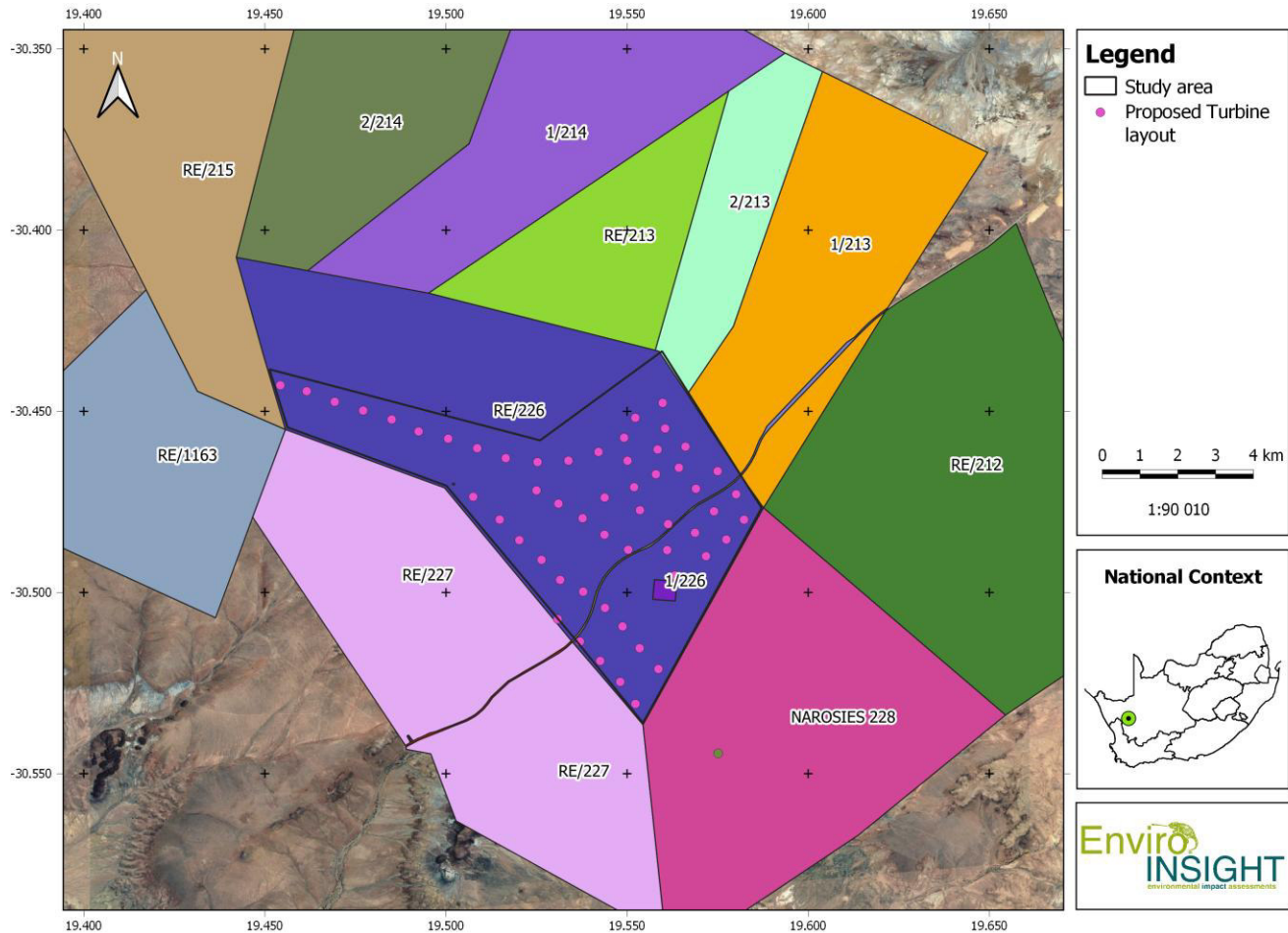


Figure 2: Locality map showing the affected farm portion and surrounding farms.

3 LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Section 24C(2)(a)(i) of the NEMA stipulates that the Minister of Environment must be identified as the competent authority if the activity has implications for international environmental commitments or relations and where it is identified by the Minister by notice in the Gazette. Accordingly, the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment is the competent authority for this environmental authorisation application.

3.1 SCREENING REPORT

The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, gave notice that the submission of a report generated from the national web-based environmental screening tool¹, as contemplated in Regulation 16(1)(b)(v) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, published under Government Notice No. R982 in Government Gazette No. 38282 of 4 December 2014, as

¹ <https://screening.environment.gov.za/screeningtool/#/pages/welcome>

amended, will be compulsory from 4 October 2019 when submitting an application for environmental authorisation in terms of regulation 19 and regulation 21 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014.

In addition, a set of protocols that an applicant needs to adhere to in the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process were developed and on 20 March 2020 the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment gazetted the Protocols for national implementation purposes. The gazette 'Procedures to be followed for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting of Identified Environmental Themes in terms of Section 24(5)(a) and (h) of the National Environmental Management Act (1998) when Applying for Environmental Authorisation', has protocols that have been developed for environmental themes which include agriculture, avifauna, biodiversity (Terrestrial and Aquatic Biodiversity), noise, defence and civil aviation. On 30 October 2020, the Minister published the protocol for the Terrestrial animal and plant species themes which was accompanied by the Species Environmental Assessment Guideline (SANBI, 2020)².

The protocols set requirements for the assessment and reporting of environmental impacts of activities requiring EA. The higher the sensitivity rating of the features on the proposed site as identified by the screening tool report, the more rigorous the assessment and reporting requirements.

Based on the generated screening report, all environmental theme sensitivities are indicated in Table 3-1 below.

Table 3-1: Environmental themes from Screening Tool which needs to adhere to in the Environmental Authorisation process.

Theme	Very High sensitivity*	High sensitivity*	Medium sensitivity	Low sensitivity
Agriculture Theme				
Animal Species Theme				
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme				
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme				
Avian (Wind) Theme				
Bats (Wind) Theme				
Civil Aviation (Wind) Theme				
Defence (Wind) Theme				
Flicker Theme				
Landscape (Wind) Theme				
Noise Theme				
Palaeontology Theme				
Plant Species Theme				
RFI (Wind) Theme				
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme				

* Require full assessments.

² Guidelines for the implementation of the Terrestrial Fauna and Terrestrial Flora Species Protocols for environmental impact assessments in South Africa.

The EAP, however, does not agree with the findings of the screening report due to the following:

- the Avian (Wind) Theme should be indicated as High or Very High owing to the presence of species of conservation concern and as this application is for a wind energy facility. Accordingly, the prescribed 12 month preconstruction monitoring is required for this project;
- the Civil Aviation (Wind) Theme should be medium or low, as there is not operational runway on or close to the study area. An unutilised runway is adjacent to the Helios substation. Comments will be sourced from the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) about this;
- the Flicker Theme is indicated as Very High due to the presence of an abandoned house and the Helios substation. This will be assessed, but is likely to be of lower significance.
- the Noise Theme is indicated as Very High due to the presence of an abandoned house and the Helios substation. According to the noise specialist only a compliance statement is required.
- the Palaeontology Theme is indicated as Very High. The SAHRIS PalaeoSensitivity Map indicates that the sites is located in High sensitivity, and that a desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study, a field assessment is likely.

More information on this will be available in the scoping report.

3.2 RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ZONE

On 17 February 2016, Cabinet approved the Renewable Energy Development Zones (REDZs) for large scale wind and solar photovoltaic development and associated Strategic Transmission Corridors (STC) which support areas where long term electricity grid will be developed.

The procedure to be followed in applying for EA for a large-scale project in a REDZ or in a Power Corridor was formally gazetted on 16 February 2018 in GN113 and GN114. On 17 July 2020, Minister Barbara Dallas Creecy, published Government Gazette 43528, Notice 786 for consultation with the intention to identify three additional Renewable Energy Development Zones to the eight Renewable Energy Development Zones published under Government Notice No. 114 in Government Gazette No. 41445 of 16 February 2018. REDZs are also aligned with the powerline corridors that were identified in the Electricity Grid Infrastructure SEA completed in 2016 and gazetted as powerline corridors in February 2018. In this way, the combination of the REDZs and power corridors provides strategic guidance to Eskom on where to prioritise investment in grid infrastructure. Any new electricity grid expansion within the five Strategic Transmission Corridors are subject to a Basic Assessment and not a full EIA process, as well as a shortened timeframe of 147 days (90 day BA process and 57 decision-making process).

The proposed Botterblom WEF is not located in a REDZ, but is located in the Western Strategic Transmission Corridor. Accordingly, a S&EIR is required for the WEF and a BA process is required for the grid connection.

3.3 NEMA EIA REGULATIONS (2014, AS AMENDED)

The proposed Botterblom WEF constitutes various listed activities which have been listed within the scheduled activities in Government Notice EIA Regulation No 324, 325 and 327 (as amended on 7 April 2017) and therefore require a full Scoping and EIA process to be followed. Prior to any listed activity being approved by the DFFE, it is required that an environmental process is undertaken and a report is submitted to the relevant environmental authority for consideration.

The purpose of the S&EIA process is to ensure that potential environmental, economic and social impacts associated with operation and closure/ rehabilitation of a project are identified, assessed and appropriately managed. There are two primary phases, namely the scoping phase and the impact assessment phase.

These two phases are discussed in more detail below:

Scoping Phase

The scoping phase is conducted as the precursor to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process during which:

- Project and baseline environmental information is collated. Baseline information for the scoping report is gathered through visual inspections during field visits of the proposed project area and surroundings, desktop studies which include GIS mapping, and review of existing reports, guidelines and legislation.
- Landowners, adjacent landowners, local authorities, environmental authorities, as well as other stakeholders which may be affected by the project, or that may have an interest in the environmental impacts of the project are identified.
- Interested and affected parties (I&APs) are informed about the proposed project.
- Environmental authorities are consulted to confirm legal and administrative requirements.
- Environmental issues and impacts are identified and described.
- Development alternatives are identified and evaluated, and non-feasible development alternatives are eliminated.
- The nature and extent for further investigations and specialist input required in the EIA phase is identified.
- The draft and final scoping reports are submitted for review by authorities, relevant organs of state and I&APs.
- Key I&AP issues and concerns are collated into an issues and response report for consideration in the EIA phase.

EIA Phase Process

After the initial scoping phase, the EIA phase of the application includes:

- Specialist investigations are undertaken in accordance with the terms of reference established in the scoping assessment (plan of study for EIA appended to the scoping report). The scope for specialist work is determined accordingly to the nature and scale of the project impacts.
- An evaluation of development alternatives and identification of a proposed option.
- An assessment of existing impacts (no-go development option), environmental impacts that may be associated with the proposed project option, and cumulative impacts using the impact assessment methodology.
- Identification of mitigation measures to address the environmental impacts and development of actions required to achieve the mitigation required.

- Consultation with I&APs.
- Incorporation of public comment received during scoping and the draft EIA into the final EIA report.
- Issuing of the final EIA report for review.
- After the draft EIA report was reviewed, comments received are incorporated in the final EIA report and final Environmental Management Program (EMPr).

The requirements for the S&EIA process are specifically contained in Chapter 4 Part 3 of the NEMA Reg No 326 (amended on 7 April 2017). The EIA process can take up to 300 days to complete (87 days for scoping phase, 106 days for EIA phase, and 107 days for competent authority to review).

4 SPECIALIST STUDIES

Specialist studies as per the screening report and national protocols to assess the environmental impacts:

- Aquatic Biodiversity Assessment;
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment;
- Sensitive Plant Species Assessment;
- Avifauna pre-construction monitoring and impact Assessment;
- Bat pre-construction monitoring and impact Assessment;
- Noise Compliance Statement;
- Agricultural Compliance Statement;
- Visual and Flicker Impact Assessment;
- Traffic and Transportation Impact Assessment;
- Socio-economic Assessment;
- Heritage Impact Assessment; and
- Paleontological Desktop Assessment.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

5.1 OBJECTIVES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (PP)

- Provides Interested and Affected parties (I&APs) with an opportunity to voice their support, concerns and questions regarding the project, application or decision;
- Provides an opportunity for I&APs, EAP and the Competent Authority (CA) to obtain clear, accurate and understandable information about the environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed activity or implications of a decision;
- Provides I&APs with the opportunity of suggesting ways of reducing or mitigating negative impacts of an activity and for enhancing positive impacts
- Enables the applicant to incorporate the needs, preferences and values of affected parties into the application;

5.2 LEGISLATION

The PP Process must comply with the several important sets of legislation that require public participation as part of an application for authorisation or approval; namely:

- The National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998 - NEMA);
- The EIA Regulations (2014, as amended);
- Disaster Management Act (57/2002): Directions Regarding Measures to Address, Prevent and Combat the Spread of COVID-19 Relating to National Environmental Management Permits and Licences.

Adherence to the requirements of the above-mentioned Acts and Regulations will allow for effective PPP to be conducted, and in so doing, satisfy the requirement for public participation referenced in the Acts.

The Directions as published by the Minister of DFFE on 5 June 2020 provides guidance when conducting public participation during the COVID-19 pandemic. All applicable health and safety and other restrictions, directions and requirements determined in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act are relevant. At all times it must be ensured that reasonable opportunity is provided for public participation and that all administrative actions are reasonable. A compulsory Public Participation Plan (PP Plan) (as required in Annexure 3 of the Directions) for pending applications must be submitted to the relevant assigned case officer for approval prior to commencement of PP Process (see section 5.2.1 below).

As per the Directions:

- “In ensuring the above, applicants and EAPs, in addition to the methods contained in Chapter 6 of the EIA Regulations, or as part of reasonable alternative methods proposed in terms of regulation 41(2)(e) of the EIA Regulations, may make use of the following non-exhaustive list of methods:
emails, websites, Zero Data Portals, Cloud Based Services, or similar platforms, direct telephone calls, virtual meetings, newspaper notices, radio advertisements, community representatives, distribution of notices at places that are accessible to potential I&APs.”
- “Reports **may not** be made available at any public places or premises closed to the public, as contemplated in the Regulations. Hard copies or electronic versions of reports may be made accessible through any of the following non-exhaustive list of methods: websites, Zero Data Portals, community or traditional authorities, Cloud Based Services, provided that all registered I&APs have access to the reports.”
- “Unless part of a site visit, virtual or telephonic meetings to be arranged.”

The details of the PP Process are provided below.

5.2.1 Public Participation Plan as submitted and approved by DFFE

The Public Participation Plan was submitted to the DFFE case officer on 6 April 2021 and was approved on the 7th of April 2021.

A summary of the Public Participation Plan, with regards to communication with the landowners and Interested and Affected

Parties (I&APs) are as follows:

Communication with landowners:

- Face-to-face meetings will be avoided as far as possible.
- Communication will be via email, telephonic calls, and WhatsApp messages.
- Meetings will take place via virtual platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom.
- Letters will be sent via post or hand delivered if necessary.

Communication with Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs):

- An advertisement in a local newspaper will be published.
- Site notices will be placed at prominent areas on the boundary fence of the properties.
- I&APs will be notified and will receive updates throughout the process via email or telephonic calls. Where necessary, registered post will be sent.
- All reports / documents will be made available electronically via the EAPs website. No hard copies will be made available at public locations, unless indicated otherwise by DEFF based on the published protocols. At this stage, no communities within the study area or the immediate surrounding area have been identified, with the exception of landowners and individuals utilising the properties (such as farm workers or family members residing on the properties). It must however be indicated that internet connection in this area is generally slow and at times unreliable. In these cases, an electronic CD copy can be provided to affected people. Should other challenges arise during the dissemination of information during the process; this will be discussed with DEFF and alternative measures will be proposed in order to address these limitations.
- Public meetings or open days will not be held. Should the need arise (depending on a number of factors), a virtual meeting can be arranged. Depending on the requirements for such a meeting, the specifics will be captured and discussed with DEFF. As mentioned, internet connection may be problematic for this area, and where necessary alternative arrangements will be made to ensure that all registered I&APs are given adequate opportunity to take part during the public participation process. Minutes of meetings will be captured and made available to all registered I&APs and the final minutes will be included in the scoping and EIA reports submitted to DEFF for decision making.
- All written comments received from registered I&APs will be captured in a Comments and Response Report.

At this stage, no other means of communication or alternatives have been identified. At all times, independent of the proposed methodology identified to conduct effective public participation, will the relevant protocols asset out by the Minister be adhered to.

5.2.2 Identification of I&APs

An I&AP database will be compiled of key stakeholders and I&AP's identified for notification of the Environmental Authorisation Application. The I&AP database includes, amongst others; landowners, affected communities, regulatory

authorities and other specialist interest groups.

5.2.3 Notification and Register of I&APs

The PP Process and a call to register as I&APs commenced on 30 April 2021 with the newspaper advertisement. All individuals who register for this project will be added to the I&AP list, provided that they have given the correct and complete contact details in order to receive communications for this project. The notification procedure also included:

- Newspaper advertisement: published in the Noordwester on 30 April 2021;
- Site Notices: erected at prominent points along the property boundaries and noticeable places on 8 May 2021; and
- Public Notices: distributed to identified stakeholders, landowners and residents (where possible) via email.

The application to the DFFE has not been submitted yet, and all registered I&APs will be notified of this. The formal 300 day EIA process will be initiated once the application has been submitted.

5.3 NOTIFICATION OF AVAILABILITY OF SCOPING REPORT

The Draft Scoping Report (DSR) will be available to stakeholders and I&APs for a period of 30 days to review and provide comments. All registered I&APs will be notified via email of the availability of the DSR. Electronic copies can be obtained from the Enviro-Insight website: <http://www.enviro-insight.co.za/download-it/project-downloads/>.

Comments raised by stakeholders will assist in informed decision-making for authorities, and provides information to be considered by the project team and specialists conducting studies.

REGISTRATION AND COMMENT FORM

May 2021

Registered Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) will be informed of ongoing developments. The draft Scoping Report for comment will be available on <http://www.enviro-insight.co.za/download-it/project-downloads/> and all registered I&APs will be notified of its availability in an announcement letter.

Comments raised by stakeholders will assist in informed decision-making for authorities and provides information to be considered by the project team and specialists conducting the Environmental Impact Assessment process. Please register as an I&AP and provide comments by sending this form, or other written correspondence, to the contact details provided below:

Enviro-Insight CC

Reference: Botterblom WEF

Attention: Mr Corné Niemandt

Tel: 012 807 0637

Email: corne@enviro-insight.co.za

www.enviro-insight.co.za

Postal address:

Unit 8, Oppidraai Office Park

862 Wapadrand Rd

Wapadrand Security Village

Pretoria 0081

Please fill in your contact details below for the project database

Title, Full Name				
Designation				
Cellphone		Tel		Fax
Email				
Postal Address				Code

Please indicate which sector you represent and also provide a name (if applicable)

Landowner	
Government Department	
Municipality	
Community	
Non-Government Organisation	
Business	

If you are a landowner or land occupier, please indicate which farm(s) and portion(s) you reside on, as well as the number of people living on the property.

	Farm portion and name	Number of people
Landowner		
Land occupier		

Please complete the questions below to assist with the stakeholder engagement process:

How do you think the project might impact (affect) you?
If you are a landowner or occupier, what is your land currently being used for?
How do you think the project might impact (affect) the socio-economic or biophysical conditions of the area?
Suggest ways that these impacts can be managed or mitigated, or avoided?

Are there any environmental, social or heritage features on the proposed project area we need to be aware of? If possible, please indicate these locations on a map or by providing GPS coordinates.

General Comments

Please sign this document to confirm receipt of this document as well as to verify that the information you provided herein are correct. The information will be captured in the Project database, and will ensure that your comments and concerns are captured. No personal information will be made publically available, but the information will be shared with the competent authority.

Signature: **Name:** **Date:**

If there are any other stakeholders we should include onto the stakeholder database for the proposed project, please forward this BID to them or please provide their contact details (with their permission).

Title, Full Name			
Cellphone	Tel	Fax	
Email			

Title, Full Name			
Cellphone	Tel	Fax	
Email			

Title, Full Name			
Cellphone	Tel	Fax	
Email			

Title, Full Name			
Cellphone	Tel	Fax	
Email			