



**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

**PROPOSED MAJUBA
PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR
ENERGY FACILITY, NEAR
AMERSFOORT**

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

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**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT PHASE**

**DR PIXELY KA ISAKA SEME LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY**

**HELD ON
7 APRIL 2016**

**VENUE
DR PIXELY KA ISAKA SEME LOCAL MUNICIPALITY,
VOLKSRUST**

Notes for the Record prepared by:

Savannah Environmental

Please address any comments to Gabriele Wood at the above address.

PROPOSED MAJUBA PV SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY NEAR AMERSFOORT, FREE STATE PROVINCE

Venue: Dr Pixely Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality, Voksrust
Date: 7 April 2016
Time: 12:30

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Gabriele Wood of Savannah Environmental welcomed all in attendance and introduced herself as the public participation and social consultant for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process being undertaken for the proposed Majuba PV Solar Energy Facility near Amersfoort in the Mpumalanga Province.

She noted that the project is being proposed by Eskom Holdings SOC Limited and that Savannah Environmental has been appointed as the independent environmental consultancy to undertake the EIA for the project.

Ms Wood thanked the members of the meeting for the opportunity to brief them about the proposed project. She noted that the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project and obtain comments on the draft EIA Report and project in general.

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Organisation & Position
Mandla Shabangu (MS)	Dr Pixely Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality – Office of the Speaker
Sandhisha Jay Narain (SJN)	Savannah Environmental – Environmental Consultant
Gabriele Wood (GW)	Savannah Environmental – Public Participation and Social Consultant

APOLOGIES

None

BACKGROUND & TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Sandhisha Jay Narain of Savannah Environmental presented the background and introduction to the project and provided an overview of the potential environmental impacts of the project identified in the draft EIA Report. (Please refer to the attached presentation).

DISCUSSION SESSION

Question / Comment	Response
MS: Eskom is requested to present the proposed project to the Municipality's Council once the project receives environmental authorisation.	GW: Comment noted, Eskom will be informed of this request.
MS: Please can you send a CD copy of the draft EIA Report to the Municipal Manager, Mr Malebye.	GW: A CD copy of the draft EIA Report has been sent to Mr Sam Ngwenya on 24 March 2016. A copy of the report will also be sent to the new Municipal Manager and his details will be included on the project's database.
MS: Will there be employment opportunities for people from the local communities?	SJN: The project will create employment opportunities for people from the local communities. Approximately 250 - 300 employment opportunities will be created for the project in total during the construction phase of the project. 45% of the opportunities will be available for low-skilled workers, 22% will be available to semi-skilled workers and 33% will be available to skilled personnel. The project will also provide skills development opportunities and benefits for local businesses. It should be noted, however, that these figures are likely to vary depending on the final design on the project.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Gabriele Wood stated that Interested and Affected Parties could submit their written comments on the EIA process and proposed project to Savannah Environmental before 26 April 2016. She noted that the comments received would be included in the Final EIA Report that would be submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs. She thanked the meeting attendees for availing themselves for the meeting. The meeting was closed at 18:00.



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**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT PHASE**

PUBLIC MEETING

**HELD ON
7 APRIL 2016**

**VENUE
EZAMOKUHLE COMMUNITY HALL, EZAMOKUHLE**

Notes for the Record prepared by:

Savannah Environmental

Please address any comments to Gabriele Wood at the above address.

PROPOSED MAJUBA PV SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY NEAR AMERSFOORT, FREE STATE PROVINCE

Venue: Ezamokuhle Community Hall, Ezamokuhle
Date: 7 April 2016
Time: 17:00

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Gabriele Wood of Savannah Environmental welcomed all in attendance and introduced herself as the public participation and social consultant for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process being undertaken for the proposed Majuba PV Solar Energy Facility near Amersfoort in the Mpumalanga Province.

She noted that the project is being proposed by Eskom Holdings SOC Limited and that Savannah Environmental has been appointed as the independent environmental consultancy to undertake the EIA for the project.

Ms Wood thanked the members of the meeting for the opportunity to brief them about the proposed project. She noted that the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the project and obtain comments on the draft EIA Report and project in general.

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Organisation & Position
Maria Phungwayo	Community Member
Hambaphi Mkoksi	Community Member
KM Masuku	Communtiy Member
S Msibi	Community Member
Douglas Nkui	Community Member
Bonyani Makhubu	Community Member
Mpho Muswubi (MM)	Eskom – Project Manager
Nonhlanhla Mnisi (NM)	Eskom Majuba Power Station – SHE Officer
Miranda Skaka (MS)	Eskom GTE – Engineer
Takalani Tjia (TT)	Eskom Majuba Power Station – SHE Officer
Sandhisha Jay Narain (SJN)	Savannah Environmental – Environmental Consultant
Gabriele Wood (GW)	Savannah Environmental – Public Participation and Social Consultant

APOLOGIES

None

BACKGROUND & TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT

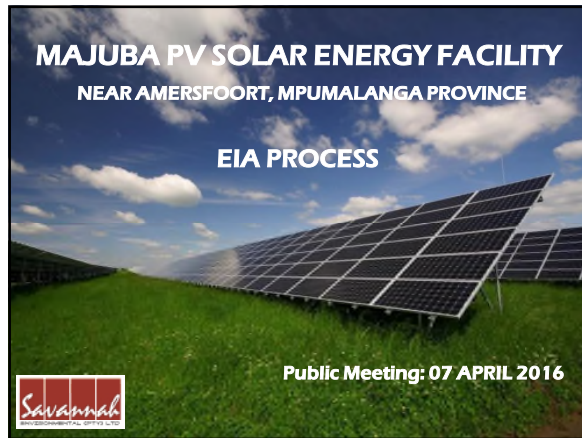
Sandhisha Jay Narain of Savannah Environmental presented the background and introduction to the project and provided an overview of the potential environmental impacts of the project identified in the draft EIA Report. (Please refer to the attached presentation).

DISCUSSION SESSION

Question / Comment	Response
Our main interest is the creation of employment opportunities through this project. How many jobs will there be during the construction phase of the project? Will the contractor employ people from the local community? How many jobs will there be during the operation of the facility.	<p>SJN: Approximately 250 – 300 employment opportunities will be created for the project in total during the construction phase of the project. 45% of the opportunities will be available for low-skilled workers, 22% will be available to semi-skilled workers and 33% will be available to skilled personnel. The contractor will be required to employ people from the local communities, this has been stipulated in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr). It should be noted, however, that these figures are likely to vary depending on the final design on the project.</p> <p>There will be few jobs available during the operation phase as highly skilled people are required to oversee the operation of the solar facility. However, occasionally general workers will be required for cleaning and maintenance purposes.</p>
The skills required to work on projects of this nature are lacking within the local communities. Will Eskom implement skills development programmes?	SJN: Opportunities for skills development do exist, Eskom and the appointed contractors will confirm the nature of the programmes to be implemented in due course.
Will this project reduce the electricity price?	MM: The price of electricity will not be impacted by this project. The purpose of the project is to reduce Eskom's self-consumption at the Majuba Power Station.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Gabriele Wood stated that Interested and Affected Parties could submit their written comments on the EIA process and proposed project to Savannah Environmental before 26 April 2016. She noted that the comments received would be included in the Final EIA Report that would be submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs. She thanked the meeting attendees for availing themselves for the meeting. The meeting was closed at 18:30.



MEETING AGENDA

- Welcome and introduction
- Purpose of the meeting
- Project information
- EIA Phase
- EIA process & feedback of the findings of environmental studies
- Questions and Answers session
- Way forward & closure

CONDUCT OF THE MEETING

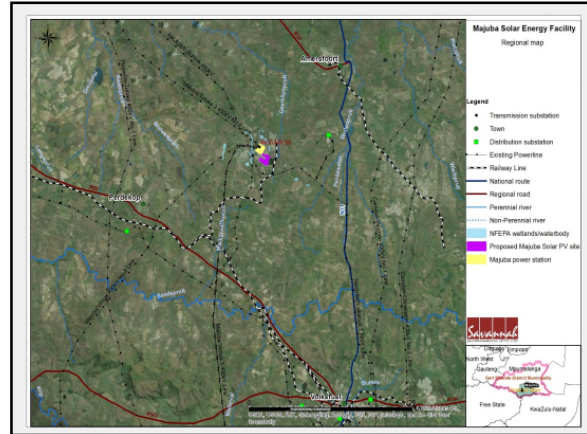
- Work through the facilitator
- Language of choice
- Questions to be taken during the discussion session
- Identify yourself
- Equal participation
- Cell phone etiquette

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

- Introduction to the proposed project
- Provide a summary of findings: EIA for PV facility
- Identify issues/risks to the proposed project in consultation with stakeholders and interested and affected parties
- To record comments

BACKGROUND

- **Applicant** – Eskom Holding SOC Ltd
- **Project Proposal** – Construction of the 65 MW Majuba PV Solar Energy Facility and associated infrastructure,
- **Location for the PV Facility** – The project is located on Portions 1, 2 and 6 of the farm Witkoppies 81 HS within the boundaries of the Majuba Coal Fired Power Station. approximately 15 km south-west of Amersfoort and 40 km northwest of Volkskrust in the Mpumalanga Province.



NEED AND DESIRABILITY

- Eskom is investigating the reduction of their self-consumption at various power stations
- 5 Solar PV projects being investigated
- These solar PV facilities will promote the reduction of Eskom's carbon footprint and support the demand side management energy efficiency programme.
- Creation of local employment, business opportunities & skills development for the area
- "Clean" power generation in Mpumalanga Province and South Africa


PROJECT COMPONENTS:

- Photovoltaic (PV) panels (Fixed Mounted PV or Tracking PV systems)
- On-site substation
- power line
- access roads
- workshop
- office buildings




PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) TECHNOLOGY

Fixed



- Predetermined angle
- Less space required
- Low maintenance & installation costs
- Robust structures

Tracking



- Panels move with the sun
- Qualified technician required for regular servicing
- More energy generated through tracking

LEGAL BACKGROUND

- National Environmental Management Act (No 107 of 1998)
 - Overarching environmental legislation in South Africa
 - Specifies the requirements for the EIA process
- Majuba PV Solar Energy Facility requires authorisation from DEA through this EIA process
- Independent environmental studies must be undertaken in accordance with the EIA Regulations

EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

PHASE 1
Notification of EIA Process

1. Application form - DEA
2. Advertise - local papers
3. Site notices
4. Written notification - ISAPs

PHASE 2
Scoping Phase

1. Consultation - Stakeholders & ISAPs
2. Distributed BID
3. Focus Group Meetings
4. Public meeting
5. Public Review - Draft Scoping Report
6. Final Scoping

PHASE 3
Environmental Impact Assessment Phase

1. On-going consultation
2. Public feedback meetings
3. Public Review - draft EIA Report & EMPr

PHASE 4
Decision Making

1. Authority Review - Final EIA Report
2. Take decision - approve/reject
3. Inform ISAPs of decision
4. Appeals Process

← We are here

THE EIA PROCESSES

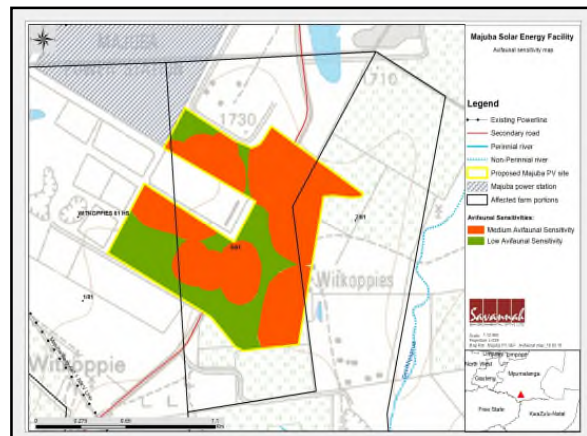
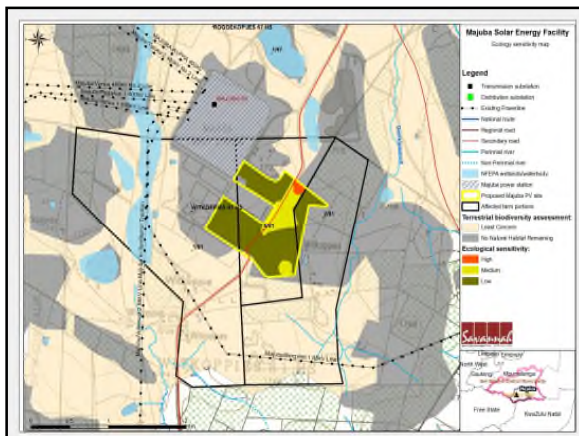
- Assessment of issues:
 - Impacts on biodiversity, avifauna and wetlands
 - Impacts on visual aesthetics
 - Impacts on heritage & paleontology resources
 - Impacts on soils & agricultural potential
 - Impacts on the social environment
- Impact assessments studies were undertaken to inform the EIA process
- Sensitive areas/ features identified through specialist studies & consultation were used to inform the final design

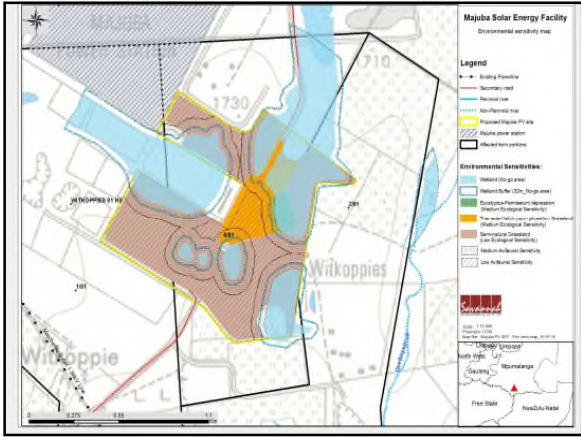
IDENTIFIED IMPACTS

- Positive impacts - economic benefits at the local & regional scale
 - Approximately 250-300 employment opportunities
 - 45% of the opportunities will be available to low-skilled workers
 - 22% will be available to semi-skilled workers
 - 33% will be available to skilled personnel
 - Skills Development
 - Economic benefits for local businesses
- Numbers are likely to vary depending on the final design of the proposed project

IDENTIFIED IMPACTS (Cont.)

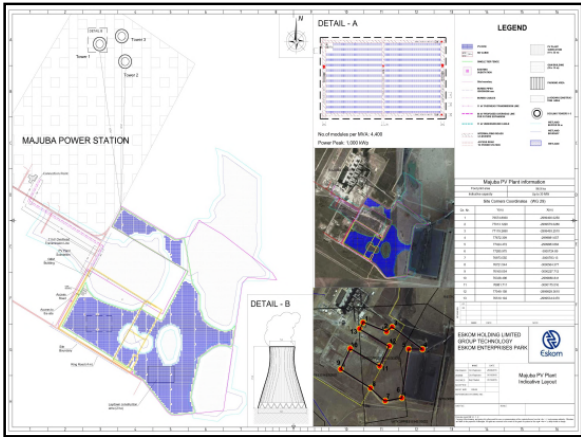
- High-Medium Impacts on Wetlands
- Medium impacts on birds
- Medium impact on Ecology (Fauna and Flora)
- Low visual impacts
- Low impacts on agricultural potential
- Low impacts on heritage resources
- Cumulative impacts: The are no other renewable energy projects in area) – can be managed to acceptable level





**EIA PHASE:
Mitigation Strategy**

- The PV facility layout has been refined to avoid encroachment into the wetlands
- Maintain optimal wetland functionality
- 65 MW → 30 MW
- This refined layout will still be able to meet the main objective of supplementing Eskom's self consumption at the Majuba Power station



CONCLUSION

- No environmental fatal flaws identified in the EIA phase
- Revised Layout avoids identified sensitive area within the site
- Impacts can be mitigated or enhanced through implementation of EMPr
- The majority of impacts expected to be limited to the site itself
- Benefits of the project expected to outweigh negative impacts
- Project can be authorised with recommended conditions

WAY FORWARD

- EIA report available for public review: 24 March 2016 – 26 April 2016
- Final EIA to be submitted to DEA- May 2016
- I&APs invited to submit comments or questions
- Minute any issues / concerns from stakeholder / public meetings
- Registered parties to be notified of the DEA decision
- Appeals process

DISCUSSION / QUESTIONS

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WHO TO CONTACT

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