

**PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE TUTUKA PV SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY NEAR STANDERTON, MPUMALANGA
COMMENTS & RESPONSES REPORT**

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COMMENTS RECEIVED: EIA PHASE

No.	Issue	Issue Raised By	Response
ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS			
1.	Has the EIA Report taken the Mpumalanga Biodiversity and Conservation Plan into account?	Itumeleng Mashishi Town Planner Lekwa Local Municipality Focus Group Meeting: 7-04-2016	The EIA Report makes reference to the Mpumalanga Biodiversity and Conservation Plan although the Tutuka Power Station does not fall within a Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA) identified within this plan.
EMPLOYMENT AND PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES			
2.	What employment opportunities will be provided by this project?	Issues raised at Public Meeting held on 07-04-2017	Approximately 250 – 300 employment opportunities will be created if the 65.9 MW solar facility is constructed. 100 – 150 employment opportunities will be created if the 24 MW solar energy facility is constructed. These figures are for the construction period of 12 – 24 months. 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. It must be noted that these figures are likely to vary depending on the final design of the proposed project.
3.	We want Eskom and the appointed EPC contractor to consult with the leadership structures of the community when employing people from the local community so that we can verify that people employed on the project reside in the community.		All projects will follow normal Eskom procurement policies including supplier development and localisation (SD&L) policies.
4.	It seems as though only Eskom will benefit from this project while the local people are struggling to find work.		The development of this project will result in economic benefits for the local community and local businesses.

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HERITAGE IMPACTS			
5.	<p>Eskom Holdings (SOC) Limited is proposing to establish a 65MW photovoltaic solar energy facility named the Tutuka PV Solar Energy Facility. The project involves the construction of PV solar panels mounted on rammed steel with pre-manufactured concrete footings, an internal transformer, switching station and power line from the substation to Tutuka Coal-Fired Power Station, internal access roads and workshop admin area. The total project area is 98.8 ha and lies adjacent to the existing Tutuka coal fired power station. The proposed Solar Energy Facility will be located on Portions 4, 10, 11 and 12 on the farm Pretorius Vley 374 IS, Lekwa Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province.</p> <p>Thank you for submitting the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to SAHRA as requested in the Interim Comment published to the case on 19/05/2015.</p> <p><i>Van der Walt, J. September 2015. Archaeological Impact Assessment for the Proposed Establishment of the Tutuka Solar PV Facility, Mpumalanga Province.</i></p> <p>Mr Van der Walt undertook a field assessment of site alternatives 1 and 2 for the proposed solar energy facility as part of the recommendations made in the heritage scoping report by the same author (November 2014).</p>	<p>Nokukhanya Khumalo Case Officer</p> <p>South African Heritage Resources Agency</p>	<p>It is noted that SAHRA has no objection to this proposed development on the condition that the chance finds procedures described in the EMPr are adhered to.</p>

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	<p>The assessment did not uncover any surface archaeological material, graves or historical structures older than 60 years of age because the study area has been modified by previous agricultural activities and road construction. However, a chance finds procedure has been included in the report in the event any cultural material is uncovered during construction of the facility. SAHRA notes that the chance finds procedure provided in the HIA were incorporated into the EMPr.</p> <p>Final Comment</p> <p>SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit agree with the recommendations made in HIA and the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment reports. As such SAHRA has no objections to the proposed construction of the Tutuka PV Solar Energy Facility on condition that the Chance Finds Procedure in the EMPr is adhered to.</p> <p>If any newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance a Phase 2 rescue operation might be necessary, and a permit will be needed before mitigation is carried out. You may contact SAHRA APM Unit for further details: (Nokukhanya Khumalo/Phillip Hine 021 202 8652). If any unmarked human burials are uncovered then please contact the SAHRA BGG Unit (Itumeleng Masiteng/Mimi Seetelo 012 320 8490).</p>		

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GENERAL			
6.	What is the property earmarked for the development currently zoned as?	Itumeleng Mashishi Town Planner Lekwa Local Municipality Focus Group Meeting: 7-04-2016	The site for the proposed Tutuka Solar Energy Facility falls within the Tutuka Power Station boundary. It is likely to be zoned as industrial property.
7.	Will this project improve the electricity supply to the community?	Issue Raised at Public Meeting held on 06-04-2016	The purpose of the project is to reduce Eskom's self-consumption at the Tutuka Power Station. This project will promote the reduction of Eskom's carbon footprint and support the demand side management energy efficiency programme.

COMMENTS RECEIVED: SCOPING PHASE

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT LETTERS FROM ORGANS OF STATE			
8.	<p>The Department of Energy hereby acknowledges receipt of the Environmental Impact Assessment Process for the proposed Tutuka Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Energy Facility, Mpumalanga Province.</p> <p>We would like to confirm that the Department is still inviting Independent Power Producers to submit proposals for the generation of electricity from renewable energy sources under the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP).</p> <p>We have gone through the report and wish to inform Savannah Environmental that we are satisfied with the report. We further wish you all the best in securing a positive Environmental Authorisation from the Department of Environmental Affairs. The Department would appreciate being kept informed of progress with this project.</p>	<p>Pheladi Masipa Project Coordinator: Renewable Energy Initiatives</p> <p>Department of Energy</p> <p>Letter: 17-02-2015</p> <p>and</p> <p>Letter: 27-03-2015</p>	<p>Acknowledgment noted, no response required.</p>
9.	<p>1. The Department has no objection to the proposed Tutuka PV Solar Energy Facility. However, any activity that is listed in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998), may not take place without an Environmental Authorisation.</p> <p>2. Please note that this letter does not exempt the applicant from complying with any other</p>	<p>Dr A. De Lange Acting Chief Director: Environmental Services</p> <p>Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land</p>	<p>Acknowledgment noted, no response required.</p>

No.	Issue	Issue Raised By	Response
	<p>statutory requirements that may be applicable to the undertaking of the proposed activity.</p> <p>3. This Department reserves the right to revise its initial comments and request further information from you based on any new or revised information received.</p>	<p>and Environmental Affairs</p> <p>Letter: 30-04-2015</p>	
EMPLOYMENT AND PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES			
3.	I'm Simphiwe Sibeko director of JB Sibeko General Construction cc. I have interest in the project. I'm in Standerton and I would like to register on the database.	<p>Simphiwe Sibeko</p> <p>JB Sibeko General Construction</p> <p>Email: 22-01-2015</p>	Savannah Environmental has been appointed to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed Tutuka Solar Energy Facility being proposed by Eskom. Eskom are not yet in a position to put the construction of the solar energy facility out on tender as feasibility studies are still being undertaken. Business owners and job seekers who contacted Savannah Environmental during the EIA process have been registered as Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) on the project's database.
4.	Themba Joseph Mazibuko request to register for work for this project.	<p>Themba Joseph Mazibuko</p> <p>Job Seeker</p> <p>Fax: 15-01-2015</p>	
5.	I'm Amanda. We met at the library in Standerton. Please don't forget me in any opportunities or trainings concerning the project.	<p>Andile Mbatha</p> <p>Job Seeker</p> <p>Email: 13-04-2015</p>	
6.	Is this project going to create job opportunities for local community members if it is approved?	Issue raised at Public Meeting held on 8-04-2015.	An EPC contractor will be appointed by Eskom to manage the construction of the project. The EPC contractor will determine the type of skills and number of people required to work on the project. Generally, the contractor would employ engineers and

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			technicians. The EPC contractor will determine whether there are sufficient skills available in the contract team and whether support from the local community will be required. However, the EPC contractor will be required by Eskom to employ low-level and semi-skilled workers from communities surrounding the proposed site.
IMPACTS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ITC)			
7.	There are no links passing through the proposed farm area.	Coert Loubser Telkom Email: 17-12-2014	Comment noted. No response required.
ISSUES RAISED BY NEIGHBOURING / SURROUNDING LANDOWNERS			
8.	I do not have concerns regarding the project as my farm is located far away from the proposed site.	Jan Schoonraad Adjacent Landowner	Comment noted, no response required.
9.	When do they intend starting the development?	Farm Racebult 3/352 Meeting: 19-02-2015	Eskom are in the concept phase of this project and are in the process of obtaining the necessary approvals to develop the project. Eskom will announce the construction timeframes at a later stage.
10.	I have no concerns regarding the noise, dust, safety, security and visual impacts of this project.	Mr Johannes van Rensburg Adjacent Landowner	Comment noted, no response required.
11.	When will Eskom construct the project?	Farm Pretorius Vley 3/374 & 18/374	Eskom are in the concept phase of this project and are in the process of obtaining the necessary approvals to develop the project. Eskom will announce the construction timeframes at a later stage.
12.	Are there any possibilities Eskom will subcontract from the local businesses?	Meeting: 19-02-2015	Yes, contracting work will be available for local people and businesses through a tender process. The extent of opportunities will be determined at a later stage.

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13.	The ash from the power station might have a negative impact on the solar energy facility. We get a lot of hail in the area that might damage the solar panels.		Comments noted. Eskom will take this into consideration in their designs.
14.	When do they intend starting the development?	Mr Van Zyl Farmer near Tutuka Power Station	Eskom are in the concept phase of this project and are in the process of obtaining the necessary approvals to develop the project. Eskom will announce the construction timeframes at a later stage.
15.	Are there any possibilities Eskom will subcontract from the local businesses?	Meeting: 19-02-2015	Yes, contracting work will be available for local people and businesses through a tender process. The extent of opportunities will be determined at a later stage.
16.	I don't have any concerns with the project. I support the development as renewable energy sources are needed in South Africa. I would like to be added onto your database to be notified of the project progress.		Comment noted. Mr Van Zyl's details were added to the project's I&AP database.
17.	Will local SMMEs and subcontractors be provided with subcontracting opportunities on this project?	Issue raised at Public Meeting held on 8-04-2015.	Subcontracting opportunities for local businesses will be provided. However, local subcontractors will have to comply with a certain level of expertise required to meet the safety and environmental, construction requirements of the project.
ISSUES RAISED BY THE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY			
18.	Unemployment is a major problem in the Lekwa Local Municipality. There is a basic service delivery backlog. There is insufficient electricity available in this area. Will the electricity generated by the proposed project, supply the local municipality with electricity directly?	Itumeleng Mashishi Town Planner Lekwa Local Municipality	No. The proposed solar energy facility forms part of Eskom's Ilanga PV Project Portfolio which aims to reduce their electricity consumption by installing 150 MW of renewable energy at their various owned or utilised sites. The solar PV facilities will promote the reduction of Eskom's carbon footprint and support the demand side management energy efficiency programme.
19.	When does Eskom intend starting the development?	Meeting: 19-02-2015	Eskom are in the concept phase of this project and are in the process of obtaining the necessary approvals to develop the project. Eskom will announce the construction timeframes at a later stage.

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20.	How many employment opportunities will be created?		The preferred site will have a generating capacity of 65.9MW and could potentially create approximately 250-300 employment opportunities during construction phase (18-24 months). The alternative site will have a generating capacity of 24MW and will create approximately 100-150 employment opportunities during construction phase which will be between 8 and 12 months.
21.	How many employment opportunities will be created with this development?	Sechaba Stephen Mosia Ward Councillor – Ward 12 Lekwa Local Municipality	The preferred site will have a generating capacity of 65.9MW and could create approximately 250-300 employment opportunities during construction phase which will be between 18 and 24 months. The alternative site will have a generating capacity of 24MW and could create approximately 100-150 employment opportunities during construction phase which will be between 8 and 12 months.
22.	When do they intend starting the development?	Meeting: 19-08-2015	Eskom are in the concept phase of this project and are in the process of obtaining the necessary approvals to develop the project. Eskom will announce the construction timeframes at a later stage.
23.	In terms of small business development, are there any possibilities of subcontracting from the local area?		Yes, contracting work will be available for local people and businesses through a tender process. The extent of opportunities will be determined at a later stage.
24.	Will the proposed project provide skills transfer initiatives for local community members? What programmes will be put in place to ensure that the skills acquired through this project can be used in the local community going forward?	Issue raised at Public Meeting held on 8-04-2015	One of the objectives of the project is to develop local skills to help during construction and during maintenance. The exact numbers will be determined as project progresses.
GENERAL			
25.	What are the construction time frames for this project?	Issue raised at public meeting held on 8-04-2015	The construction time frames are between 12 – 18 months. However, the project will only be constructed once the required permits are received from the organs of state departments and once project financing has been secured. The project also needs

No.	Issue	Issue Raised By	Response
			to undergo a detailed design phase and tendering process. The construction date can therefore not be provided at this time.
26.	Has the project been registered with the Lekwa Local Municipality and does it align with the municipality's Local Economic Development Strategy (LED) and district's Spatial Development Framework (SDF)?	Robert Mkhabela LED Manager Lekwa Local Municipality Public Meeting: 8-04-2015	<p>Savannah Environmental presented the Environmental Impact Assessment process for the proposed project to Ms Matladi Thabitha (HoD: Development and Planning) and Itumeleng Mashishi (Town Planner) on 19 February 2015. Further consultation with the Lekwa Local Municipality will take place as the project progresses.</p> <p>The district SDF indicates certain issues and trends affecting the district that includes the occurrence of environmental degradation, a great deal of conflict also exists between mining, agricultural and tourism activities, over the use of land. More often than not the conflict results in the loss of valuable agricultural land, and land featuring high biodiversity and/or eco-tourism / conservation potential. The proposed development is located in an industrial zoned area within the boundary of the Tutuka Power Station. The proposed development falls in line with the SDF as it will not compromise agricultural land or tourism potential within this area.</p> <p>As indicated in the Lekwa IDP 2013-2013, the local municipality has a number of challenges. Some of the main challenges include low economic growth, high unemployment rate and poverty. The municipality has developed a number of long-term and short-term goals to address these challenges. In terms of the municipality's long-term objectives, the proposed development will contribute to LLM 1 through building the local economy by introducing a relatively new industry that will create employment opportunities, decent work and sustainable livelihoods. In terms of the short term objectives the project will</p>

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			<p>be in line with the ninth strategic focal area through employment opportunities and contributing towards improving skills development.</p> <p>Eskom representatives from the Tutuka Power Station attend several forum meetings which sit at the Gert Sibande District Municipality. The proposed solar energy facility project has been discussed at this level.</p>
27.	I request that a follow-up public meeting be convened to provide an update on the project's progress?	Sechaba Mosia Ward Councillor	A second public meeting will be convened during the EIA phase of this process. The findings of the EIA studies will be presented in September or October 2015.
28.	Eskom and the principal contractor would need to identify social corporate investment projects that would benefit the community.	Lekwa Local Municipality Public Meeting: 8-04-2015	This project does not consider any such social investment projects at this phase. However, Stakeholders will be engaged as the project progresses and as the scope of the project is progressively defined to determine if such initiatives can be accommodated.