the BIODIVERSITY company

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17 May 2023

Attention:
SAVANNAH ENVIRONMENTAL (Pty) Ltd
Candy Mahlangu: candy@savannahsa.com

To whom it may concern:

SPECIALIST INPUT FOR THE PART 1 AMENDMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION (EA) FOR THE PROPOSED BOESMANLAND SOLAR FARM, PORTION 6 (A PORTION OF PORTION 2) FARM 62 ZUURWATER, AGGENEYS, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE.

1. Boesmanland Solar Farm (Pty) Ltd is proposing to amend the Environmental Authorisation (EA) for the Boesmanland Solar Farm, by extending the EA validity by an additional ten (10) years. Extension of the validity of the EA will ensure that the EA remains valid for the undertaking of the authorised activities.

2. Savannah Environmental have been appointed as the Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to prepare the Application. The EA Amendment will be completed in terms of Regulation 30(1)(a) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended, including additional specialist studies and public participation required by the DFFE. Condition 7 of the First Issue Environmental Authorisation, Issued on the 16th of July 2013, DEA Reference 14/12/16/3/3/2/222 states that:

"This activity must commence within a period of three (3) years from the date of issue of this authorisation. If commencement of the activity does not occur within that period, the authorisation lapses and a new application for environmental authorisation must be made in order for the activity to be undertaken."

Consequent amendments to extend the validity of the authorisation have been made as follows:

- 14/12/16/3/3/2/222/AM1 – authorised on the 22 February 2016 extending the validity to commence within two (2) years from the date of expiry of the EA issued on 16 July 2013.
- 14/12/16/3/3/2/222/AM2 – authorised on the 30 July 2018 extending the validity to the 16 July 2020.
- 14/12/16/3/3/2/222/AM3 – authorised on the 12 August 2020 extending the validity to the 16 July 2023 which states the following:

"*This activity must commence within a period of ten (10) years from the date of issue of this authorisation (i.e. the EA lapses on 16 July 2023). If commencement of the activity does not occur within that period, the authorisation lapses and a new application for environmental authorisation must be made in order for the activity to be undertaken."*

The applicant, Boesmanland Solar Farm (Pty) Ltd thus requests that the Competent Authority amends Condition 7 of the original EA (Page 9) as amended (DFFE Reference: 14/12/16/3/3/2/222/AM3; dated 12 August 2020).

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3. The 2012 soil and agricultural assessment compiled by Hendri Beukes (Solek Renewable Energy Engineers) (Pty) Ltd): Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Environmental Impact Assessment Report: Proposed Boesmanland Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Farm (up to 75MW) on portion 6 (a portion of portion 2) of the farm 62 Zuurwater near Aggeneys town, in the Northern Cape Province.

4. The 2012 study as part of the Environmental Authorisation Amendment process (DEA Ref. No: 12/12/20/2602) has been reviewed by The Biodiversity Company who conducted a site assessment on portion 6 (a portion of portion 2) of the farm 62 Zuurwater, in Khai-Ma local Municipality, Northern Cape Province, during May 2023.

5. The construction date for the Boesmanland Solar Farm is still awaiting finalization. Furthermore, following the 2012 agricultural potential report, DEA Screening tool (see Figure 1) and the recent 2023 site verification, no further amendments will be required in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2012.

6. According to the DEA Screening tool (2023), the proposed project area mainly falls within the "Very Low to Low" land capability sensitivity. However, there is a small portion of the area that has a very high land capability sensitivity with crop fields (see Figure 1). It is specialist advice to avoid such high land capability areas. However, in case relocation is not feasible, stakeholders should negotiate with landowners in terms of compensation.

7. The soil forms identified within the proposed project area include Mispah, Glenrosa and Ermelo soil forms (see Figure 2). Mispah soil form consists of an orthic topsoil on top of a hard rock. Glenrosa soil form consists of a lithic horizon on top of a hard rock. Lastly, Ermelo soil form consists of an orthic topsoil on top of a deep yellow-brown apedal soil. The dominant soil forms including Mispah and Glenrosa are characterized with low land capability and low land potential, resulting in a non-arable land. Furthermore, the available climate conditions of the proposed project area are not favorable for intensive agricultural production.

8. The current (2023) soil and agricultural survey reports that the EIA (2012) soil and agricultural baseline findings for the Boesmanland Solar Farm are applicable and invariable, therefore the predicted impacts and provided mitigation measures still applies to the proposed land capability of the assessment site. It should be noted that the current soil and agricultural potential were classified using the updated soil taxonomic "Soil Classification Working Group, 2018".

9. We hereby confirm that the proposed project activities will not result in any additional impacts and will not increase the level or nature of the impact on the available land resources, which was initially assessed and considered when application was made for an EA and subsequent amendments. The significance ratings will remain unchanged, and the proposed mitigation and management measures proposed as part of the EIA process will still suffice.

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10. We trust you find the above in order. If there are any uncertainties or additional information required, please feel free to contact the undersigned.

Kind regards,

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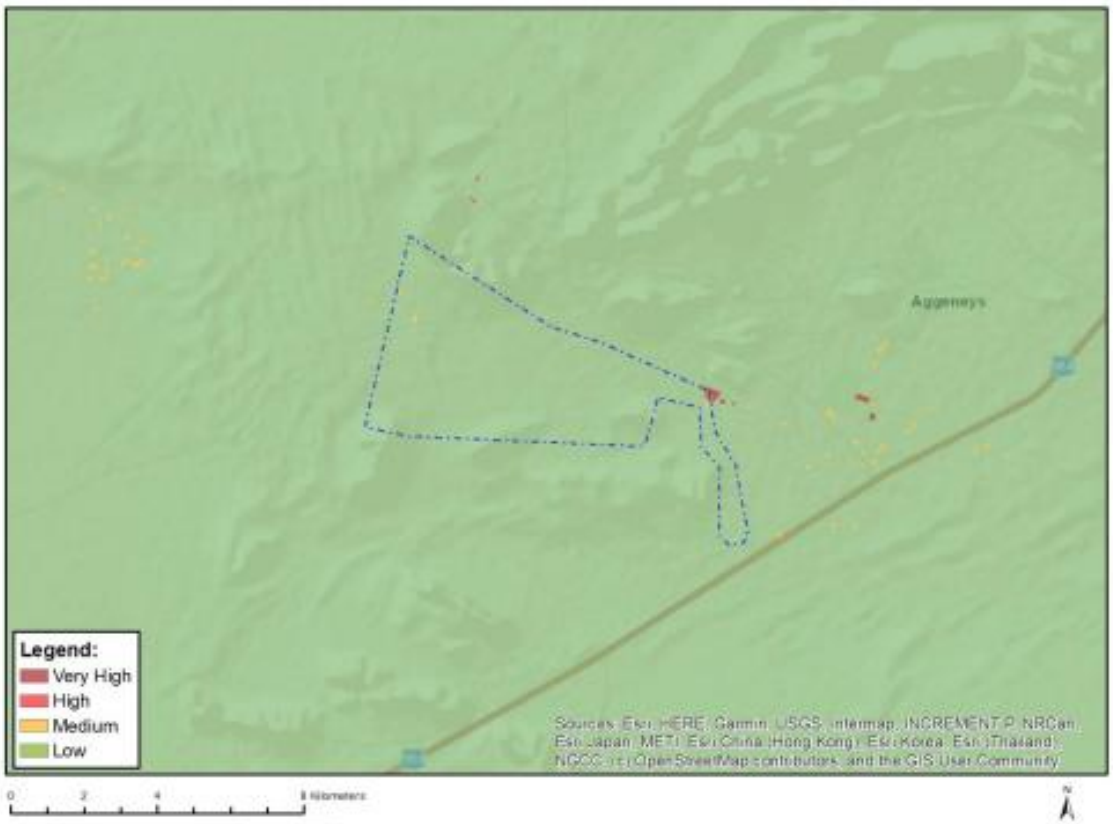
MAP OF RELATIVE AGRICULTURE THEME SENSITIVITY



Very High sensitivity	High sensitivity	Medium sensitivity	Low sensitivity
X			

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Low	Land capability;01. Very low/02. Very low/03. Low-Very low/04. Low-Very low/05. Low
Medium	Land capability;06. Low-Moderate/07. Low-Moderate/08. Moderate
Very High	Horticulture / Viticulture;Land capability;01. Very low/02. Very low/03. Low-Very low/04. Low-Very low/05. Low

Figure 1: DEA Screening tool (2023)

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Figure 2: Soils identified within the proposed project area: A&B) A shallow lithic subsoil; and C) Sandy red orthic topsoil; D) Deep Yellow-brown apedal subsoil