

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN
IN TERMS OF THE DIRECTIONS REGARDING MEASURES TO ADDRESS, PREVENT AND
COMBAT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 RELATING TO NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT PERMITS AND LICENCES DURING COVID-19 ALERT LEVEL 2**

AGGENEYS 1 AND AGGENEYS 2 PART 2 AMENDMENT, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

OCTOBER 2020

The restrictions enforced in terms of Government Gazette 43096, dated 15 March 2020 which placed the country in a national state of disaster limiting the movement of people to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus has placed some limitations on the commencement and continuation of the public consultation as part of an amendment process. Considering these limitations, the following consultation process has been designed and will be implemented, on approval by the DEFF, to cater for the conducting of the public participation process which includes I&APs, the competent authority, directly impacted landowners/occupiers, adjacent landowners/occupiers, relevant Organs of State departments, Municipalities, ward councillors and other key stakeholders.

Projects Details:

Proposed Activity: ABO Wind Aggeneys 1 PV (Pty) Ltd and ABO Wind Aggeneys 2 PV (Pty) Ltd are undertaking a Part 2 amendment process to include the construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) for the authorised Aggeneys 1¹ and Aggeneys 2² solar energy facilities with a contracted capacity of up to 500MW/500MWh, as part of the project descriptions included in the Environmental Authorisation (EA). Each BESS will be developed within the authorised development footprint of the facilities, within the authorised laydown areas, and with an extent of no more than 5ha. Each BESS will connect to the authorised on-site facility substations of the Aggeneys 1 and 2 solar energy facilities respectively via underground cables.

Location: ~11km south-east of Aggeneys, within ward 4 of the Khai-Ma Local Municipality and within the greater Namakwa District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province on the Remaining Extent of Bloemhoek 61. The projects fall within the Springbok Renewable Energy Development Zone (or REDZ 8).

The following infrastructure will be developed for the BESS:

- Electrochemical battery storage systems with a maximum height of 3.5m; and
- Multi-core 22kV or 33kV underground cables, to follow internal access roads of the PV facility, to connect the battery storage area to the respective on-site facility substation.

The BESS do not in themselves trigger a listed activity. Therefore, a Part 2 Amendment process as detailed in Regulation 31 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended), will be followed.

¹ DEA Reference Number: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2019

² DEA Reference Number: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2020

Public Participation Plan:

The public participation (PP) process will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Regulations 39 to 44 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended, (GNR 326). The aim of the public participation process is primarily to ensure that:

- » information containing all relevant facts in respect of the proposed amendments 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 amendments; and
- » comments received from potential stakeholders and I&APs are recorded and incorporated into the amendment process.

The traditional means and opportunities available for the undertaking of public participation is still covered and implemented as part of this plan considering the current limitations. Alternative means of undertaking consultation has been designed and will be implemented by Savannah Environmental to ensure that I&APs are afforded sufficient opportunity to raise comments on the projects through an interactive web-based platform readily available and accessible to any person illustrating interest in the projects and enables 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, which can be accessed via desktop and mobile with internet access, allows the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to visually present details regarding the projects and our consultation documentation, including project maps and plans regarding the projects, and 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 allow them to participate in a meaningful way in the consultation process. The online platform allows for feedback and comments to be submitted by I&APs, in so doing saving time for the stakeholder and also giving the assurance that their comments have been submitted for inclusion in the project's reporting. The online stakeholder engagement platform considers the limitations applied by the Disaster Management Act Regulations prohibiting the gathering of people, as well as limitations which certain I&APs may have in terms of access to computers and internet as well as access to public spaces not open for operation or which have restricted access.

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 projects database), and automatically gaining access to comprehensive projects documentation.

- Enabling the PP team 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 i.e. access to internet, mobile phones, or computers, provision has been made to include these I&APs in the consultation process by consulting with the Ward Councillor, the ward committee members, community representatives and local community forum members.

The schematic illustration below provides an overview of the tools that are available to I&APs and stakeholders to access project information and interact with the public participation team to obtain project information and resolve any queries that may arise, and to meet the requirements for public participation.

i. Stakeholder identification and register of I&APs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Register as an I&AP on the online platform, via completion of a form and provision of contact information, by responding to an advert, or sending a 'please call me' which will be responded to• State interest in the project• Receive all project related information
ii. Advertisements and notifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertisements, site notices and notifications provide information and details on where to access project information• Notifications regarding the amendment process and availability of motivation reports for public review to be sent via email, post or SMS notifications
iii. Public Involvement and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission of comments or queries via email, post or the online platform to the PP team• Virtual presentations available via the online platform• Availability of project information via email, post and/or the online platform
iv. Comment on the Motivation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability of the project report via the online platform or other appropriate means for 30-day period• Submission of comments via the online platform, email or post to the PP team• Comments recorded and responded to as part of the process
v. Identification and recording of comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comments and Responses Report, including all comments received, and included within the final Report for decision-making

The PP plan, as set out in the table below, has been drafted for the above-mentioned projects to ensure that reasonable opportunity is provided to I&APs and that all administrative actions are reasonable. Proof of all notifications will be included in the public participation appendix included in the Motivation Report.

The PP plan is submitted to the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), for discussion and agreement before the PP process is undertaken for the proposed amendments.

Public Participation Plan: Discussion of approach and methodology to meet the requirements of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended)

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
<p>Regulation 40(1), Regulation 40(3) & Regulation 43 – provide all potential or registered interested and affected parties, including the competent authority, access to projects related information, access to the Motivation Report which will be made available for a period of at least 30 days to submit comments on draft reports prior to submission of the final report for decision-making.</p>	<p><u>Notification of the Part 2 Amendment process to be undertaken for the application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) to be distributed using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail • Dedicated project page on the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform • Post • Process notices placed on site and at locations that are accessible to I&APs • Advertisement in the printed media. <p><u>Notification of availability of report and period for review using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advert, including details of where the report can be accessed and details of the Savannah Environmental website. • Notification letter (to be sent via email, fax or post) to registered I&APs. • Notifications to communities via Ward Councillor, ward committee members, identified and confirmed community representatives, and local community forum members. • SMS and/ or WhatsApp notifications where no other means are available. <p><u>Availability of the report for review and comment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report available on the Savannah Environmental website for download. • Electronic copies can be made available to parties via a secure Dropbox link (or other means) that will be emailed upon request for the documentation. • CDs to be posted, if requested. • Hard copy report to be available only where appropriate sanitary conditions can be maintained. • Report will be submitted to the DEFF using the DEA online portal.

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report will be submitted to Organs of State and commenting authorities via an agreed electronic platform (such as on CD, or via a secure Dropbox link or WeTransfer, etc). <p><u>Submission of comments to PP team:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments can be submitted directly to the PP team using the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform. A customised reply form is available on this webpage. • The online platform allows for feedback and comments to be submitted by I&APs, in so doing saving time for the stakeholder and also giving the assurance that comments have been submitted for inclusion in the project's reporting. • Written comments can also be submitted via email, post or fax. • Any comments provided telephonically or via instant message will be transcribed and recorded as formal comments. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post. • Placement of site Notices on all affected properties. • Advertisement in printed media (local newspaper). • Consultation and communication through the ward councillor, ward committee members and confirmed community representatives and local community forum members. • SMS or WhatsApp notification. • CDs to be posted, if requested (and where a computer is available). • Hard copy report where sanitary conditions can be maintained.
Regulation 40(2) - Provide access to all projects information that has the potential to influence any decision regarding the application, unless protected by	Provision of project information and consultation via various means including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephonic consultation. • Email correspondence.

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
<p>law, and must include consultation with Competent Authority, Organs of State & registered I&APs.</p> <p>Regulation 41(6) – Relevant information available and accessible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence sent via post. • SMS and/or WhatsApp. • The Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform will ensure that I&APs are afforded sufficient opportunity to participate in the projects and raise comments on the projects to any person with interest in the Part 2 Amendment process for these two projects. This online stakeholder engagement platform which will include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A means to register on the project database and provide details of their interest in the projects ○ Background information on the projects ○ Project maps (including locality map, layout map, sensitivity map, etc) ○ Presentation providing a summary of the details and the findings of the Part 2 Amendment Processes ○ A means of submitting written comment or queries. • Communities will be consulted via the relevant Ward Councillor, ward committee members, community representative or local community forum members, as determined and confirmed during the consultation process. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephonic consultation • Post • SMS and/or WhatsApp • Consultation and communication through the ward councillor, ward committee members and confirmed community representatives and local community forum members.
<p>Regulation 41(2)(a) – Site notice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site notices will be placed at the affected property by the EAP (both projects are located on the same affected property, which is the Remaining Extent of Bloemhoek 61).

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
Regulation 41 (2)(b) – Written notification to affected and neighbouring landowners and occupiers; municipality; ward councillors; Organs of State & other parties required by the CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size and content will be in accordance with Regulation 41 (3) & 41 (4). • Notification letter to be sent via email, fax or post. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post. • SMS or WhatsApp notification.
Regulation 41 (2)(c) – (e) – Advertisements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advert to be placed in a local newspaper.
Regulation 42 – Project database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project database from the Basic Assessment process for the Aggeneys 1 and Aggeneys 2 solar energy facilities will be used for the amendments processes. I&APs details will be verified and updated where necessary. Other stakeholders will be required to formally register their interest in the projects through either directly contacting the Savannah Environmental Public Participation team via email, fax, telephone or use of the Savannah Environmental website. • Additional I&APs who register through the amendment process will be included on the database. • In order to access the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform for a specific project, I&APs will be required to provide their details such that they are automatically registered on the project's database. • The register of I&APs will contain the names of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ all persons who requested to be registered on the database through the use of the Savannah Environmental website, or in writing and disclosed their interest in the project; ○ all Organs of State which hold jurisdiction in respect of the activity to which the application relates; and ○ all persons who submitted written comments and viewed virtual presentations on the Savannah Environmental website during the public participation process.

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information captured on the project's database will contain the names, organisation and contact details, as required. In accordance with POPI, contact details will not be made available to the public. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process of networking and referral • Telephonic registration • SMS and/or WhatsApp • Fax or post
Regulation 44 – Comments to be recorded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments can be submitted directly to the PP team using the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform. A customised reply form is available on this webpage. • The Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A means to register on the project's database and provide details of the interest in the project ○ A means of submitting written comment or queries. • The online platform allows for feedback and comments to be submitted by I&APs, in so doing saving time for the stakeholder and also giving the assurance that their comments have been submitted for inclusion in the project's reporting. • Written comments can also be submitted via email, post or fax. • Any comments provided telephonically or via instant message will be transcribed and recorded as formal comments. • I&APs without the applicable electronic facilities to access the Savannah Environmental website will be provided with the opportunity to submit their comments and communicate with the public participation team via SMS, WhatsApp or by sending a Please-call-me notification. These comments will be transcribed and recorded as formal comments.

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All comments received throughout the amendment process will be acknowledged and captured in the comments and responses report (C&RR) with a relevant response. • The C&RR and all comments received will be included in the final report submitted to the competent authority. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written comments via post or fax • Comment submission telephonically and instant messaging (SMS and/or WhatsApp) • Sending a Please-call-me notification to the Public Participation team so that contact can be made.
Regulation 4(2) – Notification of decision on application	<p><u>Notification of Environmental Authorisation (EA) using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification letter with details as outlined in the EA amendment issued will be sent via email, fax or post. • Notifications that the EA amendment has been issued and where to download and/or obtain a copy to communities via Ward Councillor and his/her ward committee members and identified and confirmed community representatives. • SMS or WhatsApp notification. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post • Communication through the ward councillor, ward committee members and confirmed community representatives and local community forum members. • SMS and/or WhatsApp