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2015/364493/07

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Part 1 Environmental Authorisation (EA) Amendment Application for the 132kV Grid Alignment (i.e., Overhead Power Line) and 132kV Eskom Portion of the Shared On-site Substation to service the 100 MW Loeriesfontein 3 Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Energy Facility (SEF) (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/2) – Extension of EA validity period: Impact on bats

Animalia Consultants (Pty) Ltd undertook the bat impact assessment as part of the original Environmental impact Assessment (EIA) process in 2012 (SiVEST, 2012), and the 12-month pre-construction monitoring for the 132kV Grid Alignment (i.e., Overhead Power Line) and 132kV Eskom Portion of the Shared On-site Substation to service the 100 MW Loeriesfontein 3 Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Energy Facility (SEF) near Loeriesfontein in the Hantam Local Municipality, Northern Cape Province (DFFE Reference Number: 12/12/20/2321/2/2), was subsequently completed in 2012.

South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Loeriesfontein 3 (Pty) Ltd received the original Environmental Authorisation (EA) for the 100MW SEF and Grid Connection infrastructure on 29 October 2012 (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2). Further to this, the original EA was amended on 10 July 2014 (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/A1), 27 October 2015 (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/AM2), 04 October 2017 (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/AM3) and 24 September 2019 (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/AM4). In addition, following the 2019 amendment, the EA was subsequently split into two separate EAs (1 for the 100MW PV SEF and 1 for the grid connection infrastructure), both dated 21 May 2021, as follows:

- 1) EA for the 100MW Loeriesfontein 3 PV SEF, 33/132kV Independent Power Producer (IPP) portion of the shared on-site substation (including Transformer) and associated infrastructure (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/1); and
- 2) EA for the 132kV Grid Alignment and 132kV Eskom Portion of the shared on-site substation to service the 100MW Loeriesfontein 3 PV SEF (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/2).

It should be noted that the split EAs for the Loeriesfontein 3 PV SEF (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/1) and Grid Connection infrastructure (DFFE Ref: 12/12/20/2321/2/2) dated 21 May 2021 respectively replaced the original EA dated 29 October 2012, as well as the subsequent amendments. **This letter however addresses the EA extension application for the Grid Connection infrastructure specifically, and the EA extension application for the Loeriesfontein 3 PV SEF has been assessed and reported on as part of a separate standalone letter.**

The validity period of the split EA for the 132kV Powerline and Eskom portion of the on-site substation to service the 100MW Loeriesfontein 3 PV SEF lapsed on 29 October 2022, however, a Part 1 EA Amendment Application to extend the validity of the EA by 5 years (i.e., EA lapses on 29 October 2027) was submitted to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) on 26 October 2022. It is important to note that according to Regulation 28(1B) of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) EIA Regulations of 2014 (as amended), *“an environmental authorisation which is the subject of an amendment application contemplated in this Chapter remains valid pending the finalisation of such amendment application.”* The Part 1 EA Amendment Application was acknowledged by the DFFE on 09 November 2022



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and additional information was requested to be submitted to the DFFE for consideration. Following this, a specialist opinion is to be provided on the proposed extension of the validity period of the EA for a further 5 years.

Due to the relatively low impacts of gridlines on bats (including cumulative impacts), and the low levels of change in the receiving PV environment, there are no issues related to bats as a result of the grid connection infrastructure to service the solar PV facility and Animalia has no objection to the proposed amendment of extending the EA validity for a further 5 years.

If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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