



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NEAS Reference: DEA/EIA/0000848/2011

DEA Reference: 12/12/20/2647

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Mr. Terence Govender
SolarReserve South Africa (Pty) Ltd
Office L6 B-1, 6th Floor, SinoSteel Plaza
159 Rivonia Rd
SANDTON
2191

Fax no: 011-784-7539

PER FACSIMILE / MAIL

Dear Mr Govender

APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT, 1998: GN R.543/544/545/546: CONSTRUCTION 75MW ARRIESFONTEIN PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR POWER PLANT: PHASE 1, ON THE FARM ARRIESFONTEIN 267, BARKLEY WES RD, KGATELOPELE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

With reference to the above application, please be advised that the Department has decided to grant authorisation. The environmental authorisation (EA) and reasons for the decision are attached herewith.

Activities applied for as listed in GN R. 544 10 is not authorised, since a separate study is being undertaken by SIVEST for all overhead power lines in the area associated with the proposed project.

Your attention is drawn to Chapter 7 of the Regulations, which prescribes the appeal procedure to be followed. This procedure is summarised in the attached document. Kindly include a copy of this document with the letter of notification to interested and affected parties.

Should the applicant or any other party wish to appeal any aspect of the decision a notice of intention to appeal must be lodged by all prospective appellants with the Minister, within 20 days of the date of the EA, by means of one of the following methods:

- By facsimile: 012 320 7561;
- By post: Private Bag X447,
Pretoria, 0001; or
- By hand: 2nd Floor, Fedsure Building, North Tower,
Cnr. Lilian Ngoyi (Van der Walt) and Pretorius Streets,
Pretoria.

If the applicant wishes to lodge an appeal, it must also serve a copy of the notice of intention to appeal on all registered interested and affected parties as well as a notice indicating where, and for what period, the appeal submission will be available for inspection, should you intend to submit an appeal.

Please include the Department (*Attention: Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations*) in the list of interested and affected parties, notified through your notification letter to interested and affected parties, for record purposes.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to:

Mr T Zwane, Senior Legal Administration Officer (Appeals), of this Department at the above mentioned addresses or fax number. Mr Zwane can also be contacted at:

Tel: 012-310-3929

Email: tzwane@environment.gov.za

The authorised activity/ies shall not commence within twenty (20) days of the date of signature of the authorisation. Further, please note that the Minister may, on receipt of appeals against the authorisation or conditions thereof suspend the authorisation pending the outcome of the appeals procedure.

Yours sincerely



Mr Mark Gordon
Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Department of Environmental Affairs

Date: 01/02/2013

CC	Mr. T Govender	SolarReserve South Africa (Pty) Ltd	Tel: 011-784-7539	Fax: 011-784-7549
	Mrs. N Ramuhulu	Northern Cape Province	Tel: 053-807-7430	Fax: qramuhulu@ncpg.gov.za
	Ms. G von Mollendorf	Kgatelopele Local Municipality	Tel: 053-384-8600	Fax: 053-384-0326
	Mr T Zwane	Appeals Authority (DEA)	Tel: 012-310-3929	Fax: 012-320-7561
	Mr S Malaza	Compliance Monitoring (DEA)	Tel: 012-310-3397	Fax: 012-320-5744

APPEALS PROCEDURE IN TERMS OF CHAPTER 7 OF THE NEMA EIA REGULATIONS, 2010 (THE REGULATIONS) AS PER GN R. 543 OF 2010 TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE APPLICANT AND INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES UPON RECEIPT OF NOTIFICATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION (EA)

APPLICANT	INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES (IAPs)
1. Receive EA from the relevant Competent Authority (the Department of Environmental Affairs [DEA]).	1. Receive EA from Applicant/Consultant.
2. Within 12 days of date of the EA notify all IAPs of the EA and draw their attention to their right to appeal against the EA in terms of Chapter 7 of the Regulations.	2. N/A.
3. If you want to appeal against the EA, submit a notice of intention to appeal within 20 days of the date of the EA with the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs (the Minister).	3. If you want to appeal against the EA, submit a notice of intention to appeal within 20 days of the date of the EA. with the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs (the Minister).
4. After having submitted your notice of intention to appeal to the Minister, provide each registered IAP with a copy of the notice of intention to appeal within 10 days of lodging the notice.	4. After having submitted your notice of intention to appeal to the Minister, provide the applicant with a copy of the notice of intention to appeal within 10 days of lodging the notice.
5. The Applicant must also serve on each IAP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a notice indicating where and for what period the appeal submission will be available for inspection. 	5. Appellant must also serve on the Applicant within 10 days of lodging the notice, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a notice indicating where and for what period the appeal submission will be available for inspection by the applicant.
6. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Minister within 30 days after the lapsing of the period of 20 days provided for the lodging of the notice of intention to appeal.	6. The appeal must be submitted to the Minister within 30 days after the lapsing of the period of 20 days provided for the lodging of the notice of intention to appeal.
7. Any IAP who received a notice of intention to appeal may submit a responding statement to that appeal to the Minister within 30 days from the date that the appeal submission was lodged with the Minister.	7. An Applicant who received notice of intention to may submit a responding statement to the appeal to the Minister within 30 days from the date that the appeal submission was lodged with the Minister.

NOTES:

1. An appeal against a decision must be lodged with:-

- a) the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs if the decision was issued by the Director- General of the Department of Environmental Affairs (or another official) acting in his/ her capacity as the delegated Competent Authority;
- b) the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development if the applicant is the Department of Water Affairs and the decision was issued by the Director- General of the Department of Environmental Affairs (or another official) acting in his/ her capacity as the delegated Competent Authority;

2. An appeal lodged with:-

- a) the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs must be submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs;
- b) the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development must be submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs;

3. An appeal must be:-

- a) submitted in writing;
- b) accompanied by:
 - a statement setting out the grounds of appeal;
 - supporting documentation which is referred to in the appeal; and
 - a statement that the appellant has complied with regulation 62 (2) or (3) together with copies of the notices referred to in regulation 62.



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Environmental Authorisation

In terms of regulation 36 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2010

Construction 75MW Arriesfontein Photovoltaic Solar Power Plant: Phase 1, on the Farm
Arriesfontein 267, Barkley WES RD, Kgatelopele Local Municipality

Siyanda District Municipality

Authorisation register number:	<i>14/12/16/3/3/2/251 (12/12/20/2647)</i>
NEAS reference number:	<i>DEA/EIA/0000848/2011</i>
Last amended:	<i>First issue</i>
Holder of authorisation:	<i>SolarReserve South Africa (Pty) Ltd</i>
Location of activity:	<i>NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE: Kgatelopele Local Municipality</i>

This authorisation does not negate the holder of the authorisation's responsibility to comply with any other statutory requirements that may be applicable to the undertaking of the activity.

Decision

The Department is satisfied, on the basis of information available to it and subject to compliance with the conditions of this environmental authorisation, that the applicant should be authorised to undertake the activities specified below.

Non-compliance with a condition of this authorisation may result in criminal prosecution or other actions provided for in the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and the EIA regulations.

Details regarding the basis on which the Department reached this decision are set out in Annexure 1.

Activities authorised

By virtue of the powers conferred on it by the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2010 the Department hereby authorises –

SOLARRESERVE SOUTH AFRICA (PTY) LTD

with the following contact details –

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159 Rivonia Rd

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to undertake the following activities (hereafter referred to as “the activity”) indicated in Listing Notices 1, 2 or 3 (GN R. 544, 545 & 546):

Listed activities

GN R. 544 Item 9:

The construction of facilities or infrastructure exceeding 1000 meters in length for the bulk transportation of water, sewage or storm water-

- (i) With an internal diameter of 0,36 meters or more; or
- (ii) With a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more.

GN R. 544 Item 10:

The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity –

- i. outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts; or
- ii. inside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of 275 kilovolts or more.

Page 75 of the final EIR states that a separate EIA is being undertaken by SIVEST for the proposed power lines for the proposed development, therefore this activity is not authorised as part of this project

GN R. 544 Item 12:

The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the off-stream storage of water, including dams and reservoirs, with a combined capacity of 50000 cubic metres or more, unless such storage falls within the ambit of activity 19 of Notice 545 of 2010;

GN R. 544 Item 13:

The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the storage, or for the storage and handling of dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 80 but not exceeding 500 cubic meters;

GN R. 544 Item 22:

Construction of a road, outside urban area;
where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 meters

GN R. 545 Item 1:

The construction of facilities for the generation of electricity where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more.

GN R. 545 Item 3:

The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the storage, or for the storage and handling of dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of more than 500 cubic meters;

GN R. 545 Item 15:

Listed activities
Physical alteration of undeveloped, vacant or derelict land for residential, commercial, recreational, industrial or institutional use where the total area to be transformed is 20 hectares or more.
<u>GN R. 544 Item 26:</u> Commencing of an activity, which requires an atmospheric emissions license in terms of Section 21 of the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, 2004 (Act No.39 of 2004), except where such commencement requires a basic assessment in terms of Notice No.544 of 2010.
<u>GN R. 544 Item 14:</u> The clearance of an area of 1 hectare (ha) or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetation cover constitutes indigenous vegetation, except where such removal of vegetation is required for: (1) the undertaking of process or activity included in the list of waste management activities published in terms of section 19 of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act no 59 of 2008) in which case the activity is regarded to be excluded from this list; (2) (a) in the Northern Cape a) All areas outside urban areas.

as described in the Final Environmental Impact Assessment Report (FEIAR) dated May 2012 at:

Site (Phase 1)	Latitude (S)	Longitude (E)
Phase 1 (Middle)	28° 16' 30.65"S	23° 46' 39.91"E
Phase 1A	28° 15' 59.25"S	23° 46' 31.30"E
Phase 1B	28° 16' 36.46"S	23° 46' 11.03"E
Phase 1C	28° 16' 48.60"S	23° 46' 25.64"E
Phase 1D	28° 16' 23.55"S	23° 47' 15.81"E

- for the construction 75MW Arriesfontein Photovoltaic Solar Power Plant: Phase 1, on the Farm Arriesfontein 267, Barkley WES RD, Kgatelopele Local Municipality in the Northern Cape Province, hereafter referred to as "the property".

The infrastructure associated with this facility includes:

- 75 MW PV block with a panel surface of approximately 150h that converts sunlight to electrical DC current.
- Water reticulation and purification works. This includes water reticulation from the Sedibeng Bulk Water Supply Pipeline for industrial water use, and a water treatment and purification system to provide water for both domestic and process use;
- Sewer reticulation and treatment works;

- Roads and storm water infrastructure;
- Substation of approximately 100 m x 100 m and overhead power lines (an EA for the distribution lines will be applied for separately from this EIA);
- Construction camp - accommodation and sanitation facilities for approximately 350 people ;
- Administrative and office buildings;
- Visitors centre;
- Equipment and materials lay down area;
- Assembly Plant;
- Concrete batching plant;
- Vehicle workshops and wash bays;
- Fuel storage area;
- Temporary general waste storage facility; and
- Hazardous material storage facility.
- Three 75 MW PV Developments of 150 ha each
- DC-AC current inverters and transformers.

Conditions of this Environmental Authorisation

Scope of authorisation

1. The proposed Arriesfontein Solar Plant: Photovoltaic phase 1 is approved on the Farm Arriesfontein 267 Barkley Wes RD, approximately 32km south east of the town Danielskuil, which falls under the Kgatelopele Local Municipality of the Siyanda District Municipality.
2. Authorisation of the activity is subject to the conditions contained in this authorisation, which form part of the environmental authorisation and are binding on the holder of the authorisation.
3. The holder of the authorisation is responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions contained in this environmental authorisation. This includes any person acting on the holder's behalf, including but not limited to, an agent, servant, contractor, sub-contractor, employee, consultant or person rendering a service to the holder of the authorisation.
4. The activities authorised may only be carried out at the property as described above.
5. Any changes to, or deviations from, the project description set out in this authorisation must be approved, in writing, by the Department before such changes or deviations may be effected. In assessing whether to grant such approval or not, the Department may request such information as

it deems necessary to evaluate the significance and impacts of such changes or deviations and it may be necessary for the holder of the authorisation to apply for further authorisation in terms of the regulations.

6. 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.
7. Commencement with one activity listed in terms of this authorisation constitutes commencement of all authorised activities.
8. The holder of an environmental authorisation must notify the competent authority of any alienation, transfer and change of ownership rights in the property on which the activity is to take place.

Notification of authorisation and right to appeal

9. The holder of the authorisation must notify every registered interested and affected party, in writing and within 12 (twelve) calendar days of the date of this environmental authorisation, of the decision to authorise the activity.
10. The notification referred to must –
 - 10.1. specify the date on which the authorisation was issued;
 - 10.2. inform the interested and affected party of the appeal procedure provided for in Chapter 7 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2010;
 - 10.3. advise the interested and affected party that a copy of the authorisation will be furnished on request; and
 - 10.4. give the reasons of the competent authority for the decision.
11. The holder of the authorisation must publish a notice –
 - 11.1. informing interested and affected parties of the decision;
 - 11.2. informing interested and affected parties where the decision can be accessed; and
 - 11.3. drawing the attention of interested and affected parties to the fact that an appeal may be lodged against this decision in the newspaper(s) contemplated and used in terms of regulation 54(2)(c) and (d) and which newspaper was used for the placing of advertisements as part of the public participation process.

Management of the activity

12. The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) submitted as part of Application for EA must be amended and submitted to the Department for written approval prior to commencement of the activity. The recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the EIAR dated May 2012 must be incorporated as part of the EMPr. Once approved, the EMPr must be implemented and adhered to.

12.1. A Detailed monitoring protocol (birds), for the operational phase of the project must be included into the final EMPr as per the recommendations made by EWT.

12.2. The final EMPr must also include a final layout of the PV facility, including the final routing of the power line and location of all associated infrastructure.

Monitoring

13. The applicant must appoint a suitably experienced independent Environmental Control Officer (ECO) for the construction phase of the development that will have the responsibility to ensure that the mitigation/rehabilitation measures and recommendations referred to in this authorisation are implemented and to ensure compliance with the provisions of the EMPr.

13.1. The ECO must be appointed before commencement of any authorised activities.

13.2. Once appointed, the name and contact details of the ECO must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.

13.3. The ECO must keep record of all activities on site, problems identified, transgressions noted and a task schedule of tasks undertaken by the ECO.

13.4. The ECO must remain employed until all rehabilitation measures, as required for implementation due to construction damage, are completed and the site is ready for operation.

13.5. Records relating to monitoring and auditing must be kept on site and made available for inspection to any relevant and competent authority in respect of this development.

Recording and reporting to the Department

14. All documentation e.g. audit/monitoring/compliance reports and notifications, required to be submitted to the Department in terms of this authorisation, must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* at the Department.

15. The holder of the authorisation must submit an environmental audit report to the Department within 30 days of completion of the construction phase (i.e. within 30 days of site handover) and within 30 days of completion of rehabilitation activities.
16. The environmental audit report must indicate the date of the audit, the name of the auditor and the outcome of the audit in terms of compliance with the environmental authorisation conditions as well as the requirements of the EMPr.
17. Records relating to monitoring and auditing must be kept on site and made available for inspection to any relevant and competent authority in respect of this development.

Commencement of the activity

18. The authorised activity must not commence within twenty (20) days of the date of signature of the authorisation.
19. An appeal under section 43 of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Act 107 of 1998 (as amended), does not suspend an environmental authorisation or exemption, or any provisions or conditions attached thereto, or any directive, unless the Minister, MEC or delegated organ of state directs otherwise.
20. Should you be notified by the Minister of a suspension of the authorisation pending appeal procedures, you may not commence with the activity until such time that the Minister allows you to commence with such an activity in writing.

Notification to authorities

21. Fourteen (14) days written notice must be given to the Department that the activity will commence. Commencement for the purposes of this condition includes site preparation. The notice must include a date on which it is anticipated that the activity will commence, as well as a reference number. This notification period may coincide with the notice of intent to appeal period.

Operation of the activity

22. Fourteen (14) days written notice must be given to the Department that the activity operational phase will commence.

Site closure and decommissioning

23. Should the activity ever cease or become redundant, the applicant must undertake the required actions as prescribed by legislation at the time and comply with all relevant legal requirements administered by any relevant and competent authority at that time.

Specific conditions

24. A storm water management plan must be submitted for subject to the EPC contractor site design and layout.
25. Waste must be sorted and stored in appropriate and separate containers to allow for the implementation of "reduce, reuse and recycle" strategy. The site design must allow for designated storage areas.
26. Liaison with land owners/farm managers must be done prior to construction in order to provide sufficient time for them to plan agricultural activities. If possible, construction should be scheduled to take place within the post-harvest and pre-planting season, when fields are lying fallow.
27. Areas around fuel tanks must be bunded or contained in an appropriate manner as per the requirements of SABS 089:1999 Part 1.
28. Dust abatement techniques must be used before and during surface clearing, excavation, or blasting activities.
29. Appropriate dust suppression techniques must be implemented on all exposed surfaces during periods of high wind. Such measures may include wet suppression, chemical stabilisation, the use of wind fences, covering surfaces with straw chippings and re-vegetation of open areas.
30. The ECO must monitor any excavations into fresh bedrock and any significant finds should be left in situ and reported to SAHRA.
31. There must be a 30m buffer zone between the edge of sensitive habitat and any type of development or surface disturbance.
32. Care must be taken to ensure that construction activities do not negatively impact on the perennial spring situated in a central-western part of the study area. Measures must be taken to prevent peripheral impacts affecting the status of the spring. The spring must be clearly demarcated as a no go zone for all construction personnel.
33. Mitigation measures recommended by the Bathusi Environmental Consulting (Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment) dated March 2012 must be included in the Final EMP.

34. All boreholes (used and unused) must be properly sealed at the surface to prevent surface pollution of the groundwater.
35. The power generation unit of the Solar Plant must be constructed at an offset of least 3000 metres from the nearest noise sensitive receptors, depending on the intended periods of operation.
36. Water quality and aquatic ecosystems must be monitored throughout the project life cycle in order to quantify impacts and manage any deterioration in the aquatic environment.
37. A 30 m buffer zone must be implemented around wetlands.
38. A road management plan must be compiled and must form part of the final EMP for the whole project (this includes the Phase 2, 3 and the CSP).
39. No roads must be constructed within ecologically sensitive areas.
40. The realignment of farm road must be negotiated and agreed with the affected farm owners.
41. No activities will be allowed to encroach into a water resource without a water use authorisation being in place from the Department of Water Affairs.
42. The applicant must obtain a wayleave from the Department of Public Transport Roads and Works prior construction should their services be affected.
43. The relocation of the existing 132kv distribution overhead lines that are currently crossing the site must be finalised with Eskom before the commencement of construction activities.
44. A permit must be obtained from the relevant nature conservation agency for the removal or destruction of indigenous protected and endangered plant and animal species. NCDENC and DAFF must be consulted before the removal of rare, endangered, protected and or any species of interest, in particular *Acacia erioloba* and *Olea europaea subsp.african*.
45. Copies of permits required for the proposed development must be obtained from the relevant authorities and submitted to this Department or record keeping. The said permits must also be available on site at all times, together with the copy of the signed EA and approved EMPr.
46. No exotic plants may be used for rehabilitation purposes. Only indigenous plants of the area may be utilised.
47. The applicant is required to inform the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and this Department should the removal of protected species, medicinal plants and "data deficient" plant species be required.
48. Vegetation clearing must be kept to an absolute minimum. Mitigation measures must be implemented to reduce the risk of erosion and the invasion of alien species.
49. Construction must include appropriate design measures that allow surface and subsurface movement of water along drainage lines so as not to impede natural surface and subsurface flows. Drainage measures must promote the dissipation of storm water run-off.

50. An integrated waste management approach must be implemented that is based on waste minimisation and must incorporate reduction, recycling, re-use and disposal where appropriate. Any solid waste must be disposed of at a landfill licensed in terms of section 20 (b) of the National Environment Management Waste Act, 2008 (Act 59 of 2008).

General

51. A copy of this authorisation and the approved EMPr must be kept at the property where the activity/ will be undertaken. The authorisation and approved EMPr must be produced to any authorised official of the Department who requests to see it and must be made available for inspection by any employee or agent of the holder of the authorisation who works or undertakes work at the property.

52. The holder of the authorisation must notify both the *Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations* and the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* at the Department, in writing and within 48 (forty eight) hours, if any condition of this authorisation cannot be or is not adhered to. Any notification in terms of this condition must be accompanied by reasons for the non-compliance.

53. National government, provincial government, local authorities or committees appointed in terms of the conditions of this authorisation or any other public authority must not be held responsible for any damages or losses suffered by the applicant or his successor in title in any instance where construction or operation subsequent to construction be temporarily or permanently stopped for reasons of non-compliance by the applicant with the conditions of authorisation as set out in this document or any other subsequent document emanating from these conditions of authorisation.

Date of environmental authorisation: 01/02/2013



Mr Mark Gordon

Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations

Department of Environmental Affairs

Annexure 1: Reasons for Decision

1. Information considered in making the decision

In reaching its decision, the Department took, *inter alia*, the following into consideration -

- a) The information contained in the EIAR dated May 2012;
- b) The comments received from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), SAHRA, EWT and WESSA and interested and affected parties as included in the EIAR dated May 2012;
- c) Mitigation measures as proposed in the EIAR dated May 2012 and the EMPr;
- d) The information contained in the specialist studies contained within Appendix D of the EIAR;
- e) Findings of the site visit conducted on 27 September 2012; and
- f) The objectives and requirements of relevant legislation, policies and guidelines, including section 2 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998).

2. Key factors considered in making the decision

All information presented to the Department was taken into account in the Department's consideration of the application. A summary of the issues which, in the Department's view, were of the most significance is set out below.

- a) The findings of all the specialist studies conducted and their recommended mitigation measures.
- b) In an effort to utilise renewable energy resources, SolarReserve SA (Pty) Ltd, is proposing to construct 325 MegaWatt (MW) Solar Power Park on the Farm Arriesfontein 267, Barkley Wes RD, Siyanda District Municipal Region, comprising both Photovoltaic (PV) and Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) Technology.
- c) The proposed development of Renewable Energy (RE) projects aims to introduce both PV and CSP technology to the area. The proposed PV Plant development will entail the installation and operation of three 75 MW (megawatts) photovoltaic (PV) power blocks with a combined projected output of approximately 225 MW, whereas, the proposed CSP plant, will entail the construction and operation of a central receiver tower plant with a projected output of up to 100 MW.

- d) A separate EIA is currently being undertaken by SIVEST for the overhead lines in the area. Collision of large terrestrial birds with any new overhead power line is likely to occur and is anticipated to be a significant threat posed by associated infrastructure.
- e) The EIAR dated May 2012 identified all legislation and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the EIAR dated May 2012.
- f) The analysis of available data from existing weather stations suggests that the site has sufficient solar resources to make a solar energy facility viable.
- g) Sufficient land has been secured under long term lease agreements with the relevant land owner to enable power supply and to allow for a number of PV modules to make the project feasible. Land owners in the area were supportive of the proposed development.
- h) The site consists of relatively flat land with a few rock outcrops or water bodies and these presented suitable construction conditions.
- i) The entire solar park will require approximately 380 000m³ per annum of raw water which will be divided between the 3 PVs and the auxiliary services.
- j) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the EIAR dated May 2012 and the specialist studies have been adequately indicated.
- k) A sufficient public participation process was undertaken and the applicant has satisfied the minimum requirements as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2010 for public involvement.

3. Findings

After consideration of the information and factors listed above, the Department made the following findings -

- a) The identification and assessment of impacts are detailed in the EIAR dated May 2012 and sufficient assessment of the key identified issues and impacts have been completed.
- b) The proposed project will make a contribution towards job creation, the reduction of greenhouse gases and give support to the grid system in areas that are in need of reliable supply of electricity.
- c) No large scale irrigation occurs in the area
- d) The procedure followed for impact assessment is adequate for the decision-making process.
- e) The proposed mitigation of impacts identified and assessed adequately curtails the identified impacts.
- f) The information contained in the EIAR dated May 2012 is accurate and credible.

- g) EMPr measures for the pre-construction, construction and rehabilitation phases of the development were proposed and included in the EIAR and will be implemented to manage the identified environmental impacts during the construction process.

In view of the above, the Department is satisfied that, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in the environmental authorisation, the proposed activity will not conflict with the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the proposed activity can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The application is accordingly granted.