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NEAS REF: NCP/EIA/0000126/2012  
EAP REF: 22/2011

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

**FOR:** THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECO ESTATE NEAR UPINGTON, NORTHERN CAPE

**LOCATION:** REMAINING EXTENT OF THE FARM VAALKOPPIES NR 40

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 2012

**COMPILED BY:** VAN ZYL ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

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#### 1. Project Applicant

Deo Gloria Olive Estate (Pty) Ltd 1998/010126/07.

#### 2. Project Title

The Proposed Development of an Eco Estate near Upington, Northern Cape

#### 3. Purpose of this Document

This document aims to provide the reader with information regarding the proposed development, as well as the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and public participation processes that are being conducted. The document also aims to equip the reader to participate in the public participation process by requesting and receiving information and raising concerns and issues with regard to the proposed development.

#### 4. Brief Project Description

The development of approximately 137 houses, a lodge, a conference centre, and all associated infrastructure and services are proposed. The associated infrastructure would include the provision, management and maintenance of internal and bulk services such as potable water, roads, electricity, sewage, general waste, storm water drainage, a game fence and possibly telecommunication. The development will have a footprint of approximately 400 ha. (Figure 3)

#### 5. Project Location and Surrounding Land Use

The development is proposed on the Remaining Extent of the Farm Vaalkoppies Nr 40 situated approximately 30 km from Upington on the N10 towards Groblershoop. (Coordinates: 28°23'5.45" S 21°21'57.08" E) (Figure 1 and 2)

The surrounding area has a rural, agricultural character and land is mostly used for stock farming and where soil is suitable, agricultural cultivation.

#### 6. Need and Desirability of the Activity

The proposed development will provide socio-economic and agricultural benefits. The local economy will be stimulated and job opportunities will be created during the construction, operational and maintenance phases of the proposed development.

Local resources will be utilised from the planning to the construction and operational and maintenance phases. The proposed development would not affect the quality of life of local inhabitants negatively.

The game farming activities and the proposed development would complement each other.

#### 7. Alternative Sites

No alternative sites have been identified. An agricultural study has been conducted on the farm that indicates that the area selected has a low potential for grazing and agriculture. This site has been selected due to its beauty and natural environment, the low potential for grazing and agriculture, close proximity to Upington and easy access via the N10 route.

#### 8. Applicable Legislation & Applications to be Submitted

Government Notices R 543, R 544, R 545 and R 546, published in Government Gazette No 33306 (dated 18 June 2010) in terms of Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No 107 of 1998 (as amended) are applicable. The thresholds defined in Regulations 544, 545 and 546 will be crossed by the development and therefore an application for environmental authorisation has been submitted to the Northern Cape Department of Environment and Nature Conservation (DENC).

The listed activities that are most likely to be applicable to the proposed development include, but are not limited to:

- Regulation 544, Activities 10(i); 11 (vi) and (xi); and 22(ii)
- Regulation 545, Activity 15
- Regulation 546, Activities 5 (d) i (cc); 6 (a) (ii); and 14(a)(i)

Deo Gloria Olive Estate would also apply to the Department of Water Affairs for a Water Use Licence in terms of the National Water Act 1998 (Act No 36 of 1998).

#### 9. Specialist Studies

The following specialist studies have already been conducted on the study area and would possibly be informed further by the relative specialists:

- A heritage impact assessment (August 2010)
- A vegetation study including ecological aspects (August 2010)
- An agricultural impact assessment (commissioned by the Department of Agriculture)

The specialists who participated in the previous study will be consulted during the current EIA process with regard to possible additional environmental impacts of the proposed development.

## 10. The Environmental Impact Assessment Process

The environmental impact assessment (EIA) process is conducted by an independent environmental assessment practitioner (EAP) in order to identify and manage the possible environmental impacts of the proposed development. It ensures that environmental considerations form part of the planning of the development and aids the DENC in deciding whether a development should be authorised or not.

The public participation process (PPP) forms an important part of the EIA process, as it ensures that the concerns of all the Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) are taken into consideration.

After an application for environmental authorisation through scoping and impact assessment has been accepted by the DENC, potential I&APs are identified and notified of the proposed development and the EIA process. I&APs are requested to register, and to raise their issues and concerns about the proposed development. Public invitations for involvement in the EIA are also issued by means of media advertisements and public notices in order to ensure that all potential I&APs are notified. All I&APs who respond to the notices in writing are registered on a database and their comments and concerns recorded for inclusion in the relevant reports.

The scoping report, which is compiled shortly after the initial public notification, examines possible alternatives with regard to the proposed development and identifies environmental impacts that could possibly result from each alternative. These impacts are then assessed and mitigation measures proposed, and the most favourable option is recommended. An environmental management programme (EMP) is compiled with the EIA report and stipulates the measures that are to be taken during the planning, construction, operational and closure phases of the development to ensure that positive environmental impacts are enhanced and negative impacts mitigated.

When the relevant reports have been compiled, it will be made available in draft format for public perusal. Registered I&APs will be informed and invited to comment. Comments received during this phase will be included in the final reports, which will be made available for comment again. When the commenting periods on the final reports lapse, it will be submitted to the DENC, together with all comments received.

Each invitation to comment will be subject to a deadline, by which time the EAP will assume that all comments have been received. These deadlines must be adhered to in order for the process to flow smoothly.

All I&APs are hereby invited to get involved in the EIA process by responding to media advertisements or public notices, attending public meetings, if any are held, and reviewing and commenting on the draft and final reports within the commenting periods that will be provided. Any queries, comments or requests for further information can be directed telephonically or in writing to the EAP (contact information on p. 1).

# PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A ECO - ESTATE ON A PORTION OF THE FARM VAALKOPPIES NO.40

FIGURE 3

