

Purpose of this document

The main purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to summarise the activities that will be associated with the proposed Grootspruit Solar Farm Project. This BID also provides stakeholders and / or identified Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with the opportunity to comment on the proposed development and to indicate their interest.

Project Description

H2ON Environmental Specialists is currently conducting a Basic Assessment, Scoping and Impact Assessment processes in terms of the EIA regulations of 2010 under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act 107 of 1998) on behalf of the applicant, i.e. SolaireDirect Southern Africa (Pty) Ltd, to obtain environmental authorisation (or not) for the proposed commencement of these developments. The project entails the proposed establishment of **two solar farm facilities** on the farm Grootspruit 252/0, Odendaalsrus RD. The process will involve a **Basic Assessment** process for the establishment of a **10 MW Solar Farm** and a **Scoping and Impact Assessment** process for the establishment of a **75 MW Solar Farm**. The proposed activities will entail the construction of two photo-voltaic solar panel facilities and their related infrastructure including the following:

	10 MW Solar Farm	75 MW Solar Farm
Affected farm portion:	The farm Grootspruit 252/0, Odendaalsrus RD, Free State	The farm Grootspruit 252/0, Odendaalsrus RD, Free State
Structure height:	3.3m	3.3m
Type of technology:	SD1-0612-M modules	SD1-0612-M modules
Generation capacity:	10 MW	75 MW
Structure orientation:	North	North
Surface area to be covered:	19.9 ha	150 ha
	Internal roads and cable network	Internal roads and cable network
	Construction of a sub station for connection to the Eskom grid.	Construction of a sub station for connection to the Eskom grid.
	Connection to Eskom power grid via on-site power line.	Connection to Eskom power grid via on-site power line.

Locality

The proposed Solar farm facilities will be established on the farm Grootspuit 252, Odendaalsrus RD. The property is currently zoned "farm land". Please refer to the attached locality map for an indication of the locality of the 10 MW and 75 MW Solar facilities.

Property description

The development will occur on the farm Grootspuit 252/0, Odendaalsrus RD.

Surveyor General code: F0240000000025200000

Title deed: T22485/1879

Distance from Allanridge: 15 km

Distance from Odendaalsrus: 20 km

Current land use: 530 ha grazing, 160 ha cultivated land

Proposed land use: 360 ha grazing, 160 ha cultivated land, 170 ha photo-voltaic solar panels

General services

- Electricity generated will be supplied to Eskom via the on-site power lines and the proposed construction of an on-site substation.
- Water to be used for cleaning of the panels will be obtained from the local water users association. The amount used by the 10 MW plant will amount to 100 000 litres per year and the amount used by the 75 MW plant will amount to 750 000 litres per year.
- Access to the site will be gained through the existing access road to the site which may be upgraded to secure easy and safe access.
- Run-off from panels during cleaning will be allowed to percolate into the soil.
- Storm water run-off from panels will be managed by means of contours and storm water canals.

Water Use

The estimate water use required for the washing of the panels will amount to 100 000 litres per year for the 10 MW plant and 750 000 litres per year for the 90 MW plant. The water will be obtained from the local water users association. For this reason a general authorisation of water use is not required.

Effluent Management

No effluent will be generated by the facility.

General waste management

General waste (i.e. paper, plastic, glass bottles, etc.) will be disposed of at an authorized landfill site in Allanridge/Odendaalsrus on a regular basis.

Hazardous waste management and rehabilitation

Any panels that need replacing will be collected in appropriate receptacles on-site and will be removed to the nearest registered landfill site (Allanridge/Odendaalsrus).

In the unlikely event that the facility is decommissioned, a full rehabilitation plan will be implemented. This rehabilitation plan will be financed by a fund set aside for this purpose.

Clearing of vegetation

Vegetation on the proposed site will not be cleared by construction or operation. Construction vehicles and internal roads are anticipated to have a moderate impact on the vegetation. Owing to the height of the solar panels it is not anticipated that the shadow effect will prevent vegetation from establishing. This vegetation will however consist of a pioneer community adapted to partial shade.

Public involvement

A Basic Assessment process and Scoping and Impact Assessment process by H2ON Environmental Specialists is currently underway. You are requested to send any issues and/or concerns regarding the proposed project to Darius van Rensburg. Your comment and concerns received will be recorded and addressed accordingly where possible.

Invitation to participate

Should you wish to participate in the Public Participation Process you are requested to indicate whether you wish to register for the Basic Assessment process (10 MW plant) or the Scoping and Impact Assessment (75 MW plant). You are requested to send any issues and/or concerns regarding the proposed project to Darius van Rensburg at H2ON Environmental Specialists: Suite 158, Private Bag X01, Brandhof, Bloemfontein, 9324; or 051 444 4700 (Tel), 086 697 6132 (Fax) or darius@h2on.co.za before 22 August 2012. The issues received will be recorded and addressed accordingly, where possible. A draft Basic Assessment Report and Scoping Report will be available from 31 July 2012 to 3 September 2012 for review.