



Dynamic Integrated Geohydro
Environmental Services cc

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 100MW SOLAR POWER PLANT ON PORTION 6 OF FARM BEZUIDENHOUTSKRAAL 96 JR WITHIN MORETELE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

DEA REF: 14/12/16/3/3/2/423

NEAS REF: DEA/EIA/0001499/2012

BACKGROUND

Moretele Local Municipality is a rural municipality with insufficient electrical infrastructure resulting in the larger percentage of the population utilising fossil fuels for heating. The Municipality's LED has identified electricity as a priority and intends to utilise renewable energy generation such as waste and solar. This is intended to move towards sustainable living trends by reducing the amount of green house gases produced. Solar energy has mostly been used in smaller projects or for domestic and individual requirements but recently the trend has shifted with solar energy also contributing to ESKOM's regional or local grid.

Department of Energy has launched a pilot programme to establish a limited number of public-private sector institutions in conjunction with relevant municipalities to provide electricity services on an integrated basis. Moretele Local Municipality in conjunction with Korean Power Consortium intends to construct 100 MW Solar Power Plant on Portion 6 and 7 Bezuidenhoutskraal 96 JR to feed into ESKOM grid. The project will be carried out in two phases: construction of the solar plant, and construction of the 132kV power line from the Solar Power Plant to a Babelegi substation. This document summarises the process carried out for the environmental impact assessment of the 100 MW Solar Power Plant.

AIM OF THIS DOCUMENT

The aim of this document is to inform the relevant stakeholders about the proposed project. It also includes:

- Geohydrological Services
- Geological Services
- Geo - Environmental Investigation
- Geophysical Survey
- Drilling & Testing Supervision
- Geo Technical Investigational

- i. A summary of the Impact Assessment process being undertaken;
- ii. Potential ecological and social impacts and benefits associated with the project; and
- iii. The Public Participation Process being initiated.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project entails the construction and maintenance of the following:

- 100MW solar Power plant;
- Guard house;
- Internal streets;
- Storm water structures;
- Access road;
- Lighting masts;and
- Water supply infrastructure

Location: The solar power plant will be located on Portion 6 and 7 of Bezuidenhoutskraal 96 JR within Moretele Local Municipality, Bojanala Platinum District. Reference is made to the attached Locality Map.

THE PROCESS

Before the project can commence, an authorization is needed from the Department of Environment Affairs, in compliance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2010. The development is listed in terms of Government Notice R545 and R546 under Chapter 5 of the National Environment Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998, and therefore requires an Environmental Impact Assessment to be undertaken.

. The project falls under the following listed activities:

- 1 *Of R545: The construction of facilities /infrastructure for the generation of electricity where the electricity output is 20MW or more; and*

15 of R545: Physical alteration of undeveloped, vacant or derelict land for residential, retail, commercial, recreational, industrial or institutional use where the total area to be transformed is 20 hectares or more:

4 (c)(i) cc of R546: The construction of a road wider than 4m with a reserve less than 13.5m in a critical biodiversity area, terrestrial type 2 as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in the bioregional plans.

The Environmental Impact Assessment process is currently being undertaken by DIGES on behalf of Moretele Local Municipality. An important aspect of the impact assessment process is the Public Participation Process whereby DIGES will engage all the interested and affected parties and these will include the local community, those with interests in the farms where the solar power plant will be located, and the relevant Government Departments.

LEGISLATION

The following legislation guided this assessment process:

LEGISLATION	IMPLEMENTING ORG	YEAR
The South African Constitution	The Government of South Africa	1996
National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998)	Department of Environmental Affairs	1998
The Principles of Integrated Environmental Management	Department of Environmental Affairs	1992
National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act No. 10 of 2004	Department of Environmental Affairs	2004
National Water Act 1998 (Act 36 of 1998)	Department of Water Affairs	1998
Water Services Act 1997 (Act 108 of 1997)	Department of Water Affairs	1998
The National Heritage Resources Act No. 25 of 1999	AMAFA	1999
Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act No. 43 of 1983	DoA	1983
National Road Traffic Act No. 83 of 1996	SANRAL	1996
National Environmental Management: Waste Act No. 59 of 2008	Department of Environmental Affairs	2008
Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 85 of 1993	Department of Labour	1993
Electricity Regulation Act	NERSA	2006
White Paper on Renewable Energy	DME	2003
IRP for Electricity 2010-2030	DoE	2011

MoreteleMunicipality, Bojanala Platinum District Municipality By-Laws		
National Forest Act 84 of 1998	DWA	1998
SANS 10103: Noise	Local Authorities	2004
Integrated Environmental Management Series Guidelines	DEA	2004

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Potential negative impacts and positive benefits associated with the project may include:

Negative Impacts

1. *Soil Erosion:*
2. *Loss of Flora*
3. *Loss of Agricultural Land*
4. *Visual Impact*
5. *Cultural and Heritage;*
6. *Increased Noise Levels*
7. *Water Pollution;*
8. *Air pollution: odor and dust*
9. *Increased health and safety risks;*
10. *Traffic Congestion;*
11. *Influx of workers;*
12. *Increased risk of flooding; and*
13. *Impact on surrounding land uses.*

Positive Benefits

14. *Cleaner energy production;*
15. *Improved efficiency in electricity production*
16. *A decrease in the quantity in greenhouse operations;*
17. *Additional Employment Opportunities.*
18. *Save water consumption in electricity generation.*

SPECIALISTS' STUDIES

The proposed project will require a variety of specialists to assist with the environmental context of the area. Specialized studies which may be required include but are not limited to:

- Heritage Impact Assessment;

- Ecological Assessment;
- Visual Assessment;
- Land-use capability;
- Wetland Delineation; and
- Engineering Services.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The general public has the right to voice their concerns about the project and highlight important issues that needs to be considered. In this regard, a Public Participation Process will be initiated by DIGES.

The Process will include:

- Written Notification:** Written notification will be posted to key stakeholders including affected landowners and local authorities.
- Adverts and Site Notices:** To be released in the Sowetan and notices will be placed at various public spots within the municipality.
- Meetings:** stakeholder meetings will be held, dates and venues will be publicized in the media.
- Commenting Period:** The registered Interested and Affected Parties will be given an opportunity to comment on the draft Scoping, Final Scoping, draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Final EIR.

We kindly request that you complete the attached registration form and return it to DIGES at the contact details below. Regular updates on all meetings and report releases will be communicated to registered Interested and Affected Parties throughout the entire EIA process. Should you have any comments or questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

