

Background Information Document (BID)

FOR COAL MINING RIGHT AND ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORIZATION APPLICATION ON PORTION OF PORTION 1 (EXCLUDING MINING PERMIT WITH REF: MP 30/5/1/3/2/ (12496) MP), PORTIONS 2, 3 AND REMAINING EXTENT OF THE FARM GROOTLAAGTE 70 HT IN THE WAKKERSTROOM MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE: DMRE REF NUMBER: MP 30/5/1/2/2/10358 MR.

MARCH 2022



Prepared by:



Office 870,

5 Balalaika Street Tasbet Park Ext 2, Witbank 1035.

Prepared on behalf of:



Bohmer Sentrum Building, 11 Corner Mark & De Wet Street, Piet Retief, 2380.

Tell: 072 9602 738

Email: foloyima@gmail.com

MINING RIGHT BACKGROUND
INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

FOLOYI CONSTRUCTION AND PROJECTS CC has applied for a mining right in terms of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Act (Act No.28 of 2002) (MPRDA) (as amended) portion of portion 1 (excluding mining permit with ref: MP 30/5/1/3/2/ (12496) MP), portions 2, 3 and remaining extent of the farm Grootlaagte 70 HT in the Wakkerstroom Magisterial District, Mpumalanga province: DMRE ref number: MP 30/5/1/2/2/10358 MR.

This application for a mining right is subject to an application for an Environmental Authorization in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Act 107 of 1998. In addition to this, the project will also require a waste management license in terms of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act (NEM: WA), Act 59 of 2008, (amended in 2017), a water use license in terms of the National Water Act, Act No. 36 of 1998 (NWA) and a waste management licence (WML) for waste management activities in terms of section 45 of the National Environmental Management Waste Act 2008 (Act,1998 (Act 107 of 1998)(NEMA).

FOLOYI CONSTRUCTION AND PROJECTS CC appointed Singo Consulting (Pty) Ltd as an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), to complete the necessary environmental applications and oversee the various specialist studies:

Various Specialist studies:	
Geohydrology study	Heritage study
Biodiversity study	Hydrological Study
Blasting and vibration Assessment	Integrated Water and Waste Management
Mining Right Layout	Wetland Delineation Study
PCD and General Engineering Design	Soil study
Rehabilitation Plan	Surface and Storm Water Management Report
Traffic Management Study	Water Balance Report

2. LOCATION

The mining right area falls in the Gert Sibande District Municipality and Mkhondo Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province. The mining right application will be on portion of Portion 1 (Excluding Mining Permit of Ref: MP 30/5/1/3/2/ (12496) MP), portions 2, 3 and Remaining Extent of the Farm Grootlaagte 70 HT. The site is 902.230 hectares in extent and is located Approximately 47km southwest of the town Piet Retief and about 117.40km East of Standerton. The mining right area cuts between the R543 road and is next to Dirkiesdrop settlement. Please refer to Figure 1 and Figure 2 on page 4.

3. PURPOSE OF THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

➤ ***The purpose of this document is to:***

- Provide background information to landowners and interested and affected parties (I&APs) on the proposed prospecting activities
- Consult stakeholders and provide them the opportunity to register as I&APs
- Announce the availability of a draft Scoping Report available for public review and comment
- Obtain I&AP comments and contributions to incorporate these into environmental reporting

Please complete the attached Comments and Registration Form if you wish to register as an I&AP or contribute comments. Register / comment and return the form to Singo Consulting (Pty) Ltd by Saturday the 9th April 2022.

➤ ***THE ROLE OF I&AP's***

Communities, neighbors, government representatives, stakeholders such as community leaders, Non-governmental organizations (NGO) are being invited to participate in the EIA process by means of published advertisements, site notices and written correspondence. I&APs are invited to assist in:

- Identifying issues of concern to be investigated, as well as possible impacts of the project on the natural & social environment;
- Suggesting alternative means in which to mitigate possible negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

You are hereby invited to participate freely and submit any questions or information you feel may contribute to the process. All comments received will be recorded and addressed as part of the environmental impact assessment process. Please complete the attached comment form (APPENDIX A).

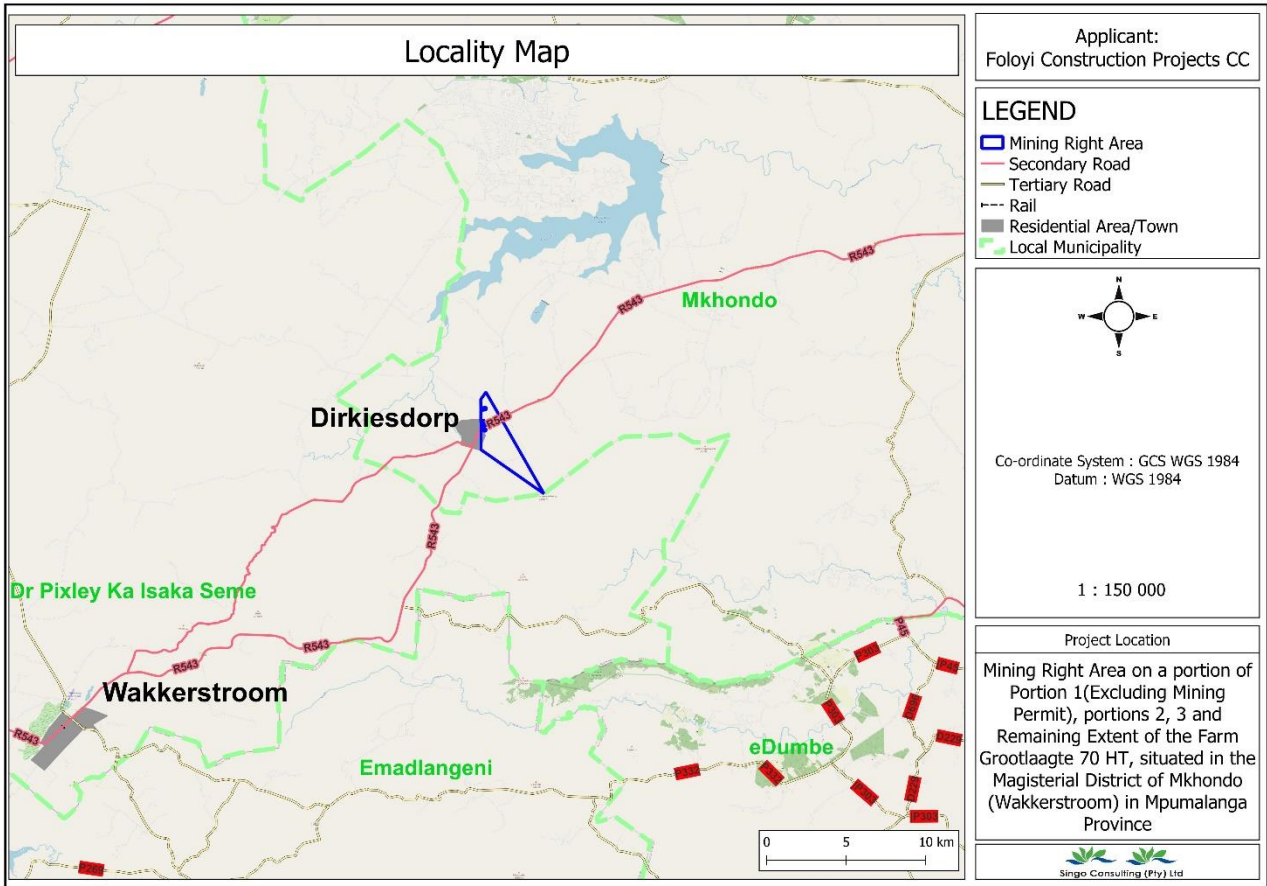


Figure 1: Locality Map of the project area.

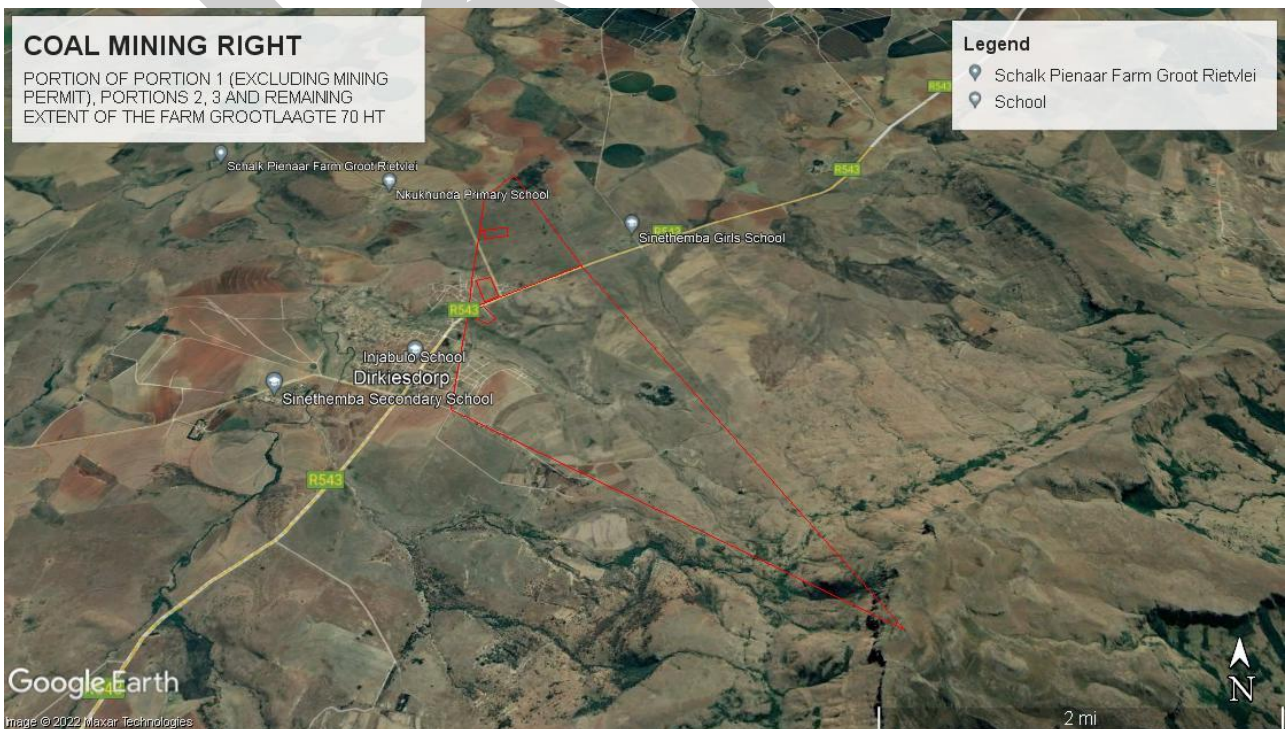


Figure 2: Google Earth View of the project area, showcasing the absence of housing nearby.

4. Project Overview

Mineral Applied For: Coal resources

Mining Methods: Open Cast Mining

Life of Mine: 20 years lifespan

Potential Market: International markets, Eskom, other domestic (i.e. coal stove & power generation) and (i.e. for steel production, liquid fuel and for cement manufacturing).

The main components of the database included spreadsheets describing each of the following data formats, collar, lithological, raw quality and the wash product quality database.

➤ Mineral and Land Tenure

The mining right is applicable for portion of Portion 1 (Excluding Mining Permit of Ref: MP 30/5/1/3/2/ (12496) MP), portions 2, 3 and Remaining Extent of the Farm Grootlaagte 70 HT. The Figure below shows identified landowners using Windeed Search. As observed on the Windeed results below, the proposed property belongs to National Government of The Republic of South Africa (portion 1, 2 and 3 of the farm Grootlaagte 70 HT) and remaining extent owned by Mshengu Ndabazewe Trust. There is a granted mining permit by Foloji Construction and Projects CC on portion of portion 01 with DMRE Ref: MP 30/5/1/3/2/ (12496) MP.

➤ **HISTORICAL INFORMATION;**

According to the geological map of the project area below, it can be observed that the area is underlain by Vryheid Formations which forms part of the Ecca Group within the Karoo Supergroup. The Vryheid Formation is composed of shales, sandstones, and coal seams. According to the studies that were conducted by XMP Consulting available online, Ermelo coal field stretches from Carolina in the north to Wakkerstroom in the south, a distance of 150 km and the east-west extent of the field is about 80km, about 25km east of Standerton, eastwards to Sheepmoor. It is bounded by the Witbank Coalfield in the north west, Highveld in the west and Utrecht Coalfield to the south.

Previous studies show that anthracite has been mined before in areas such as Piet Retief, Ermelo and Wakkerstroom. There are four coal seams that are most important namely, the A seam, B Seam, C Seam and Dundus. The surface geology over the project area is dominated by outcrops and sub-crops of sedimentary rocks of the Ecca Group (Vryheid Formation), with Transvaal Supergroup (Hekpoort Formation) outcrops also present at the surface in the far east of the project area.

From the data gathered from CGS the drilled boreholes confirmed that there are coal resources on the area of interest and the adjacent mines solidify the existence of coal commodity..

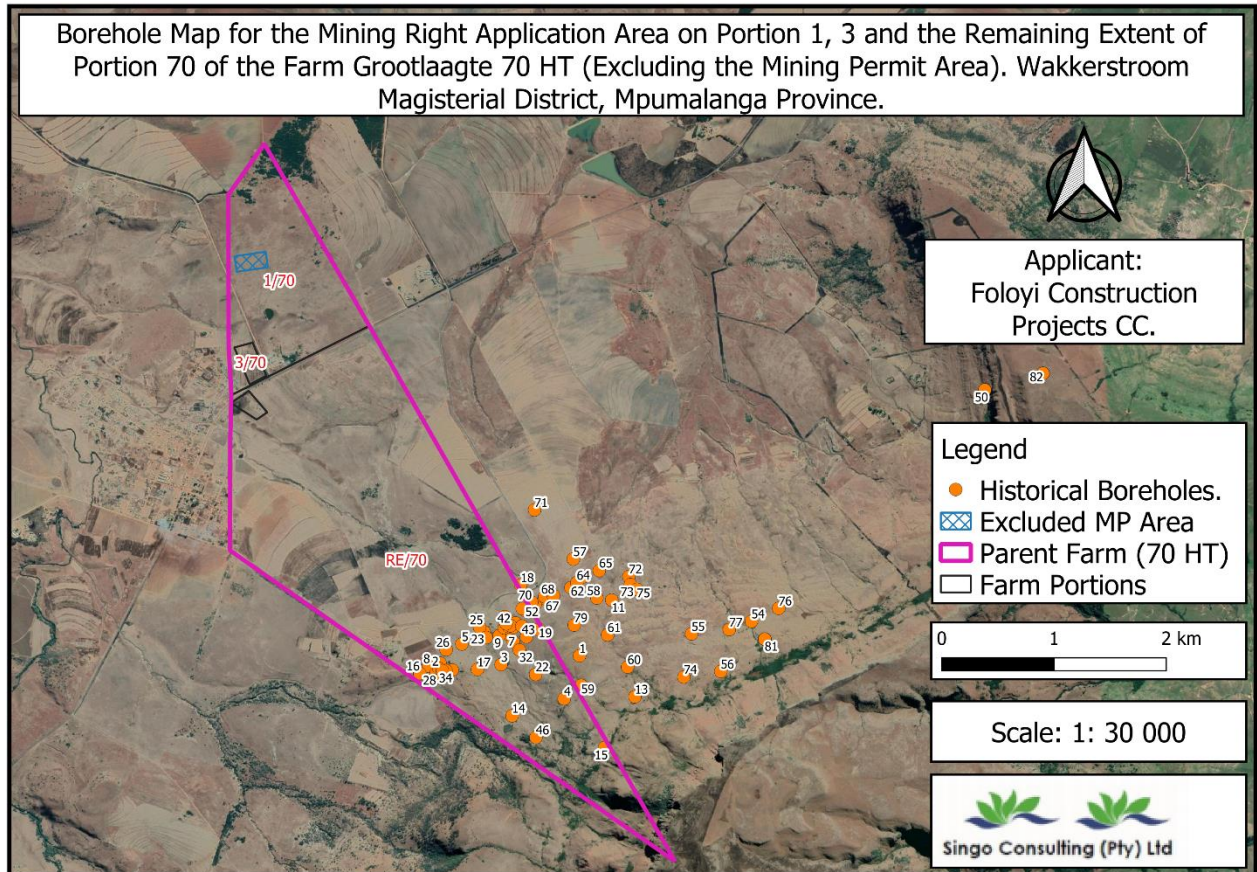


Figure 3: Historical Drilled boreholes.

➤ **Project Geology;**

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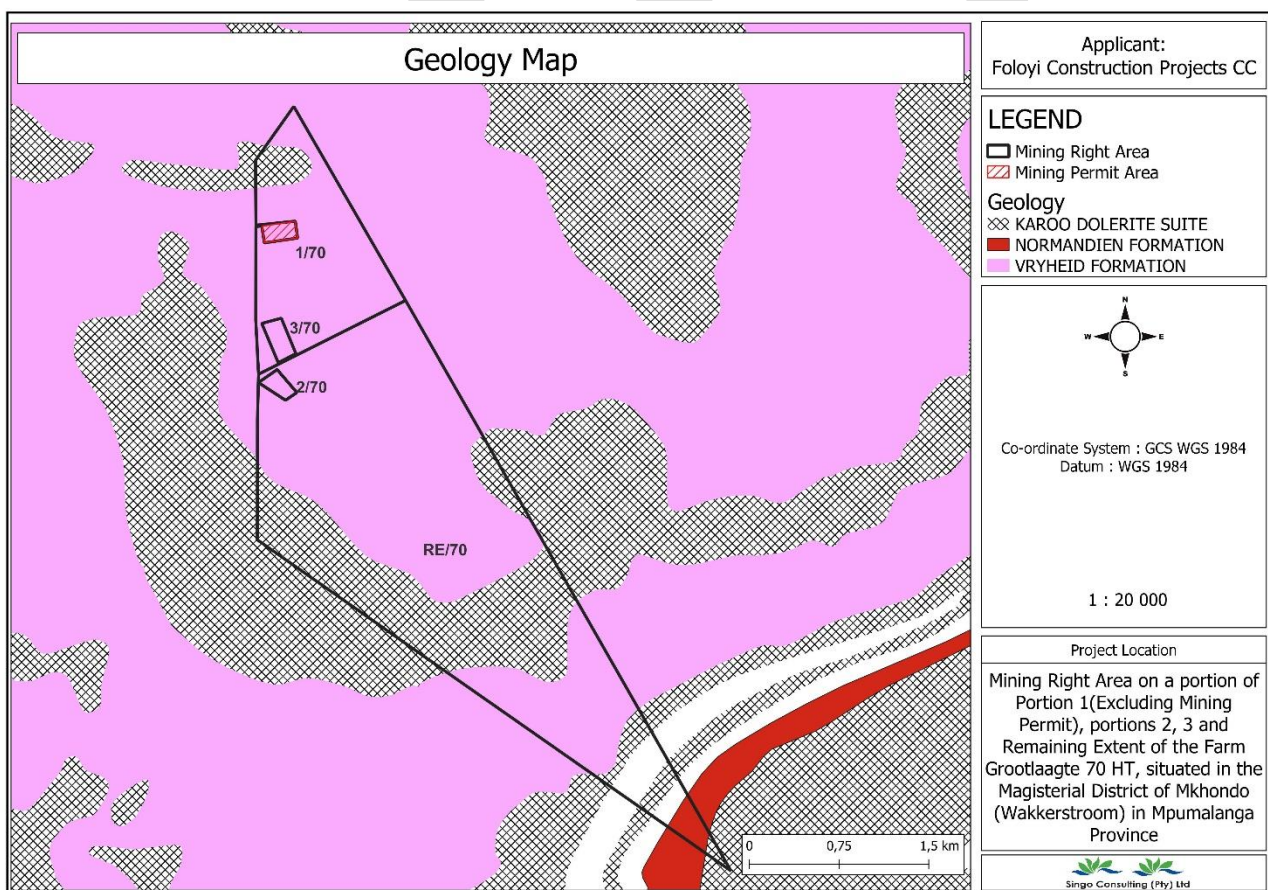


Figure 4: Geology Map.

Open cast coal mining recovers a greater proportion of the coal deposit than underground methods, as more of the coal seams in the strata may be exploited. The proposed infrastructure required on site includes the following:

Proposed Infrastructure:	
Access & Haul roads (with necessary security) including the upgrading of the access point to the gravel road.	Contractor's Yard with septic/chemical ablution facilities
Offices	Weighbridge
workshop and stores (with septic/chemical ablution facilities)	Rail Siding
Diesel facilities and a hardstand	Power and Water
Boxcut	Stockpiles (topsoil, overburden, subsoil/softs, ROM)
Surface water management measures (stormwater diversion berms and trenches, pollution control dams etc)	Full washing plant
Discard Facility	

The proposed mining method and sequence comprised of the following main mining activities for both waste and coal:

- Initial topsoil and soft overburden removal which will be stockpiled to ensure it can be replaced back in the initial box cut;
 - The physical mining of the coal seam which includes drilling of hard overburden material, charging and blasting;
 - The coal is loaded into trucks and hauled to the crushing and screening facility;
 - Discard coal will be extracted and replaced in the bottom of the opencast pit, while the product will be taken to the weighbridge via trucks and then removed off site;
 - The overburden is replaced back into the pit as mining progresses leaving a minimum area open at a single time;
 - The topsoil which was stripped and stockpiled separately before mining commenced is then replaced.
- The findings of the land capability study will determine the optimal composition to ensure pre-mining conditions for utilisation.

Service Requirements:

- ❖ Electricity for the operation will be sourced from Eskom (8MVA required).
- ❖ Process water will be sourced from the River and tributaries around through a WUL.
- ❖ It is envisaged that potable/ domestic water will be sourced from boreholes on site, other alternatives are also being considered.
- ❖ General waste will be collected for disposal at the Municipal dump.

Industrial waste will be collected for disposal at a suitably licensed facility.

- ❖ Sewage will be collected within conservancy tanks to be emptied by honey sucker for treatment at a suitably licensed facility. Alternatively, a small, package sewage plant will be installed on site.

Employment:

- ❖ The project will create employment for approximately 48 people.

5. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

In order for the proposed mine to operate, the applicant is required to submit an application for a mining right in terms of Section 22 of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 2002 (Act 28 of 2002) with the DMRE. In support of the application to obtain the mining right, the applicant is required to conduct a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (S&EIA) process that needs to be submitted to the DMR for adjudication, which includes activities triggered under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2014 (as amended) promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998) and activities triggered under the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (NEM:WA) (Act 59 of 2008).

The extent of the mining right entails a life of mine of 20 years and covers the above-mentioned farm portions. The proposed Grootlaagte opencast coal mining operations constitutes various listed activities which have been listed within the scheduled activities in Government Notice Regulation No 324, 325 and 327 (amended 7 April 2017) now amended GNR 517 as of 11 June 2021 and therefore require an integrated Scoping and EIA process to be followed. Prior to any listed activity being approved by the DMR, it is required that an environmental process is undertaken and a report is submitted to the relevant environmental authority for consideration. The purpose of the S&EIA process is to ensure that potential environmental, economic and social impacts associated with operation and closure/ rehabilitation of a project are identified, assessed and appropriately managed. There are two primary phases, namely the scoping phase and the impact assessment phase. These two phases are discussed in more detail below:

✓ Scoping Phase

The scoping phase is conducted as the precursor to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process during which:

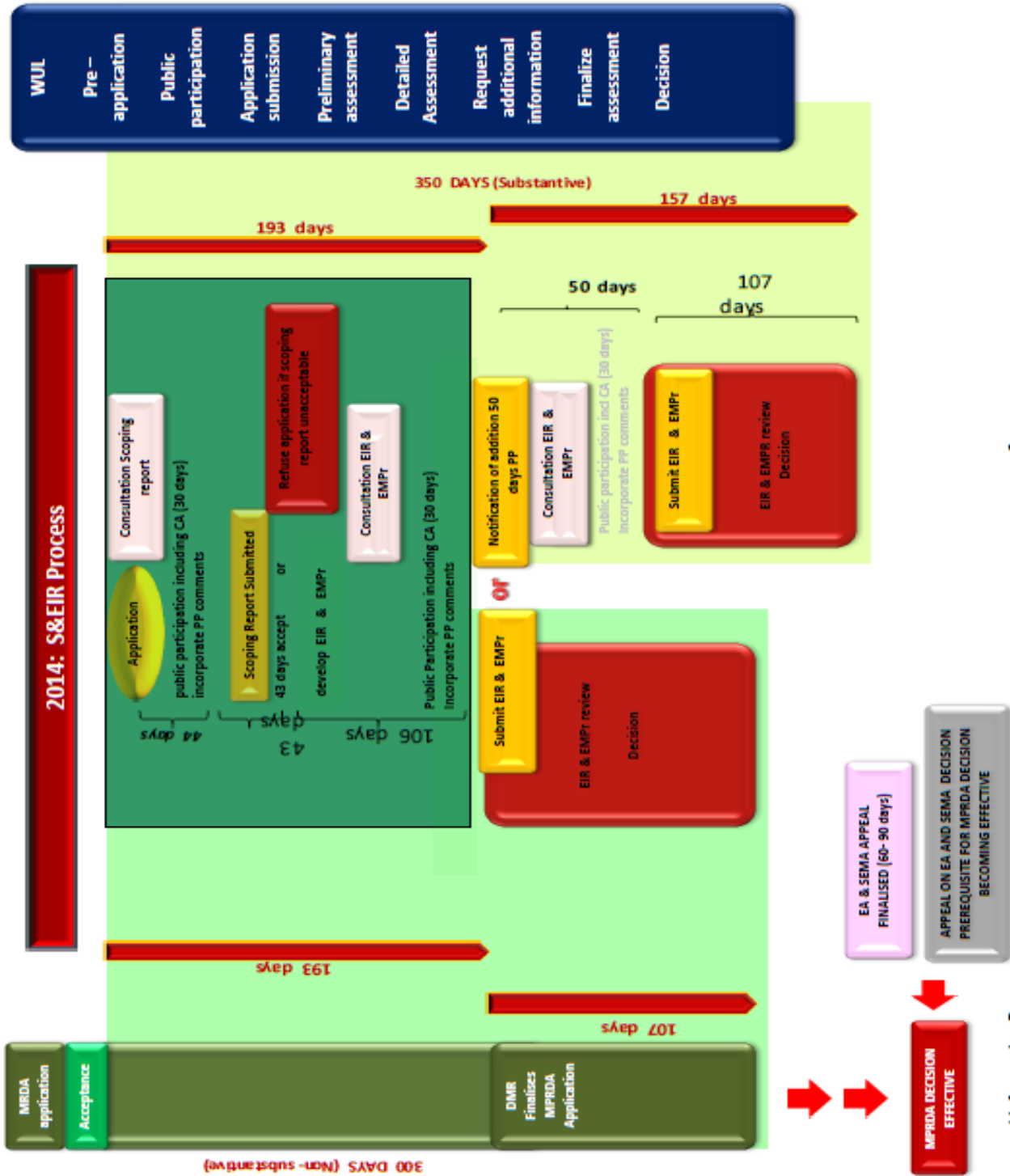
- Project and baseline environmental information is collated. Baseline information for the scoping report is gathered through visual inspections during field visits of the proposed project area and surroundings, desktop studies which include GIS mapping, and review of existing reports, guidelines and legislation.

- Landowners, adjacent landowners, local authorities, environmental authorities, as well as other stakeholders which may be affected by the project, or that may have an interest in the environmental impacts of the project are identified.
 - Interested and affected parties (I&APs) are informed about the proposed project.
 - Environmental authorities are consulted to confirm legal and administrative requirements.
 - Environmental issues and impacts are identified and described.
 - Development alternatives are identified and evaluated, and non-feasible development alternatives are eliminated.
 - The nature and extent for further investigations and specialist input required in the EIA phase is identified.
 - The draft and final scoping reports are submitted for review by authorities, relevant organs of state and I&APs.
 - Key I&AP issues and concerns are collated into an issues and response report for consideration in the EIA phase.
- ✓ **EIA Phase Process**

After the initial scoping phase, the EIA phase of the application includes:

- Specialist investigations are undertaken in accordance with the terms of reference established in the scoping assessment (plan of study for EIA appended to the scoping report). The scope for specialist work is determined accordingly to the nature and scale of the project impacts.
- An evaluation of development alternatives and identification of a proposed option.
- An assessment of existing impacts (no-go development option), environmental impacts that may be associated with the proposed project option, and cumulative impacts using the impact assessment methodology.
- Identification of mitigation measures to address the environmental impacts and development of actions required to achieve the mitigation required.
- Consultation with I&APs.
- Incorporation of public comment received during scoping and the draft EIA into the final EIA report.
- Issuing of the final EIA report for review.
- After the draft EIA report was reviewed, comments received are incorporated in the final EIA report and final Environmental Management Program (EMPr).

The requirements for the S&EIA process are specifically contained in Chapter 4 Part 3 of the NEMA Reg No 326 (amended on 7 April 2017). The EIA process can take up to 300 days to complete (87 days for scoping phase, 106 days for EIA phase, and 107 days for competent authority to review). In addition, an Integrated Water Use License Application (IWULA) will be submitted to the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) in accordance with the National Water Act 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) (NWA) for listed water uses. See illustration below;



6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS (PPP)

6.1 OBJECTIVES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Provides Interested and Affected parties (I&APs) with an opportunity to voice their support, concerns and questions regarding the project, application or decision;
- Provides an opportunity for I&APs, EAP and the Competent Authority (CA) to obtain clear, accurate and understandable information about the environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposed activity or implications of a decision;
- Provides I&APs with the opportunity of suggesting ways of reducing or mitigating negative impacts of an activity and for enhancing positive impacts
- Enables the applicant to incorporate the needs, preferences and values of affected parties into the application;

6.2 LEGISLATION

The PPP must comply with the several important sets of legislation that require public participation as part of an application for authorisation or approval; namely:

- The Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (Act No. 28 of 2002 - MPRDA);
- The National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998 - NEMA);
- The National Environmental Management Waste Act (NEM: WA, Act No. 59 of 2008); and
- The National Water Act (NWA, Act No. 36. Of 1998).

Adherence to the requirements of the above-mentioned Acts will allow for an Integrated PPP to be conducted, and in so doing, satisfy the requirement for public participation referenced in the Acts. The details of the Integrated PPP are provided below.

6.3 IDENTIFICATION OF I&APS

An Interested and Affected Parties (I&AP) database will be compiled of key stakeholders and I&AP's identified for notification of the Environmental Authorisation Application. The I&AP database includes, amongst others; landowners, communities, regulatory authorities and other specialist interest groups. I&AP's are notified of the proposed project through site notices, public notices and newspaper advertisements. Where contact information is available email notifications has also been sent out.

6.4 NOTIFICATION AND REGISTER OF I&APS

The PPP commencement is on 11th of March 2022 where I&AP's are encouraged to send through their concerns or comment and call to **register for a period of 30 days, ending on the 9th of April 2022**. The notification procedure includes:

- Newspaper advertisement;

- Site Notices;
- Public Notices; and
- Letters and emails.

6.5 NOTIFICATION OF AVAILABILITY OF SCOPING REPORT AND SCHEDULED MEETING

With submission of the application to the DMR, the formal 300 day EIA process has been initiated, as per the NEMA Regulations (2014, as amended). The Draft Scoping Report (DSR) will be available to stakeholders and I&APs for a period of 30 days to review and provide comments. All registered I&APs will be notified via email of the **availability of the DSR from 10th of April 2022 to 16th of May 2022** at the following locations:

Addresses	
Public library Piet Retief	Piet Retief, 2380
Driefontein Police Station	141/129 Driefontein Road, Daggakraal, 2431
Dirkiesdorp Police Station	1 Main Street Dirkiesdorp Piet Retief 2386
KwaNgema Clinic	Unnamed Road, Ngema Tribal Trust
Mkhondo Local Municipality	33 Mark & De Wet Streets, eMkhondo

A public meeting is scheduled for the 26th of March 2022

Venue: Dirkiesdorp Community Hall (Injabulo School)

Time: 10H00am

“Registered I&APs will be informed about availability of reports and scheduled stakeholder meetings. Comments raised by stakeholders will assist in informed decision-making for authorities, and provides information to be considered by the project team and specialists conducting studies.”

Tell: 013 692 0041/078 548 1244
 Fax: 086 5144 103
 Email: admin@singoconsulting.co.za
 Email(Alt): rudzani@singoconsulting.co.za



Appendix A: REGISTRATION AND COMMENT FORM SHEET

NOTICE OF COAL MINING RIGHT AND ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORIZATION APPLICATION ON PORTION OF PORTION 1 (EXCLUDING MINING PERMIT WITH REF: MP 30/5/1/3/2/ (12496) MP), PORTIONS 2, 3 AND REMAINING EXTENT OF THE FARM GROOTLAAGTE 70 HT IN THE WAKKERSTROOM MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE: DMRE REF NUMBER: MP 30/5/1/2/2/10358 MR.

Please complete this form and return it to **Singo Consulting (Pty) Ltd** to ensure that you are registered as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP).

By answering the questions below you will help us to develop a better understanding of your information requirements. The form also gives you the opportunity to make comments regarding the project. Additional pages may be attached.

I&AP Details:

Full Names and Surname:							
Contact Details:							
Tel(w):		Tel(h):		Fax No:		Cell No:	
Email:							
Physical Address:							
Postal Address:							
Preferred method of communication: <input type="checkbox"/> fax <input type="checkbox"/> e-mail <input type="checkbox"/> post Preferred telephonic communication: <input type="checkbox"/> cell <input type="checkbox"/> home <input type="checkbox"/> work							
Organisation/Representative:							
Farm name, number and subdivision or Street Address (if applicable):							

Questions(s):

1. Where did you get information about the project?

Newspaper advertisement notice board flyer other (please specify)

Tell: 013 692 0041/078 548 1244
Fax: 086 5144 103
Email: admin@singoconsulting.co.za
Email(Alt): rudzani@singoconsulting.co.za



2. Do you represent a company/organization or is your interest on behalf of yourself?

3. Do you know of anyone that is affected by the proposed activity who was not informed of the project? (Please provide contact details)

Name:		Organization:	
Contact details			
Address:			
Tel No:	Fax No:	Cell No:	
Email address:			

Do you have any specific concerns or comments regarding the project?

YES

NO

If yes, please indicate what the comments are?

.....

Signed

.....

Date