

# Background Information Document

May 2012

**Proposed 75MWp Photovoltaic Power Plant and its associated infrastructure on a portion of the remaining extent of ERF 1 Prieska, Northern Cape**

**“ABC Prieska Solar 1 project”**  
**NEAS Reference: DEA/EIA/0001221/2012**  
**DEA Reference: 14/12/16/3/3/2/345**

**Dear Interested and Affected Party**

## **1. Purpose of this document**

The purpose of this document is to:

- Inform interested and affected parties (I & APs) about the proposed environmental process for a photovoltaic project;
- Provide a brief background on the proposed project.
- Provide an overview of the public participation process that will be undertaken and opportunity to register and comment on the draft Scoping and EIA Reports; and
- Invite I & AP's to participate by completing the attached Registration or Response sheet at the end of this document;

### **Comments and Queries can be directed to:**

Kala-hari Survey Solutions and Products  
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**Please send your comments on this BID by the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2012**

## **2 Background**

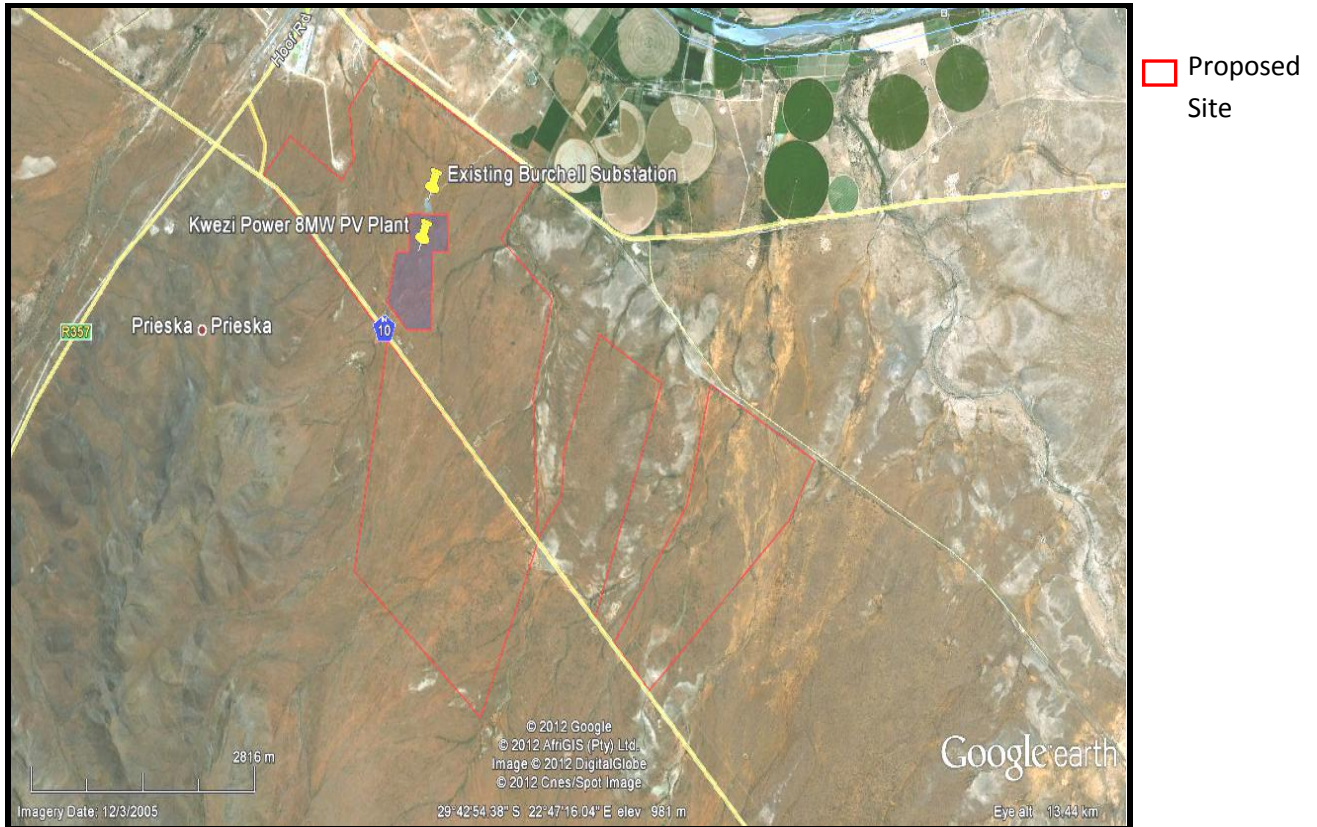
In line with the growing need for cleaner energy production in South Africa, ABC Prieska Solar (Pty) Ltd proposes to construct and operate a 75MWp photovoltaic (PV) power plant and its associated infrastructure on a portion of ERF 1 Prieska, Northern Cape (see figure 1). The proposed development is located in an area of high solar irradiation and in close proximity to Eskom infrastructure.

In terms of the EIA Regulations Section 24 (5), an application of this nature has to undergo both Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment. Kala-hari Survey Solutions and Products has therefore been commissioned by ABC Prieska Solar (Pty) Ltd as the Environmental Assessment Practitioners (EAP) to undertake the EIA and submit all relevant documentation to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) for approval.

## **3 Project Locality**

The proposed development is located within a portion of the remaining extent of Erf 1 Prieska. The total extent of this portion of Erf 1 Prieska is 1003 ha, but only 300 ha are required for the proposed PV plant and its associated infrastructure. The site can be accessed via the N10 in the west, the R357 in the east and R386 in the north of the site. The site is currently zoned agriculture.

The site is located within the jurisdiction of the Siyathemba Local Municipality in the Northern Cape Province. Siyathemba Municipality is located within the Karoo district area, within the Northern Cape Province and is constituted of Prieska, Niekerkshoop and Marydale. Prieska, which is the largest of the three towns in Siyathemba, and is located approximately 240km south-west of Kimberley on the N10 route (Figure 1).



**Figure 1: Locality Plan**

#### **4 Project Description**

The PV plant is expected to have a power generation capacity of 75MVA (electricity peak). ABC Prieska Solar (Pty) Ltd proposes to construct a PV plant to generate approximately 174GWh annually on a portion of the remaining extent of Erf 1, Prieska. The proposed PV plant will cover an area of approximately 300ha. The plant is expected to operate continuously for approximately 20 years.

The PV plant is likely to have the following components:

- The construction of new internal roads to accommodate the construction vehicles and access to site and upgrading of existing accesses;
- Construction of water supply line, water booster pump station and water storage facility
- Construction of ablution facilities, mess area and conservancy tanks
- Construction of an overhead power line and substations/transformers to connect the proposed PV plant to the Eskom grid;
- Boundary fence to prevent illegal trespassing; and
- Other infrastructure includes an office, guard house and a warehouse.

#### **5 The need for an EIA**

The National Environmental Management Act, No. 107 of 1998, prescribed that an EIA process must be followed to evaluate the impact of certain activities on the environment. In terms of section 24 and 24(D) of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No.107 of 1998), as read with Government

Notice R543 and R545, a Scoping/full EIA is required to be undertaken for the construction and operation of the PV plant and its associated infrastructure in terms of the following activities:

Number and date of the relevant Notice	Description of listed activities
<b>R545, 18 June 2010 Activity 1</b>	The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more;
<b>R545, 18 June 2010 Activity 15</b>	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;
<b>R545, 18 June 2010 Activity 10(i)</b>	The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity-  1) Outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts.
<b>R544, 18 June 2010 Activity 9</b>	The construction of facilities or infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water, sewage or stormwater- (i) with an internal diameter of 0,36 metres or more; or (ii) with a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more,
<b>R544, 18 June 2010 Activity 22(ii)</b>	The construction of a road, outside urban areas  i) with a reserve wider than 13,5meters or; ii) where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 metres.

## **6. The Scoping/EIA Process**

The Scoping Phase aims to identify the key project issues raised by the proponent (ABC Prieska Solar (Pty) Ltd), consultants and the public; consider project alternatives; and through public participation ensure consensus is reached regarding the process to be followed in the EIA phase. At the end of the Scoping Phase, a report known as a Scoping Report is compiled. Prior to submission of the final Scoping Report to the authorities (DEA), the public is provided with an opportunity to comment on the report. Once the draft Scoping Report has been reviewed by the public, the comments are collated and the report is amended as appropriate and final. The final Scoping Report is then submitted to DEA together with a Plan of Study for Environmental Impact Assessment.

Once the final Scoping Report and the Plan of Study has been accepted by the DEA, the project will proceed into its detailed Impact Assessment Phase with specialist investigation. After completion of the specialist studies, a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is produced. The EIR will provide an assessment of all identified key issues and associated impacts identified during the Scoping phase.

### The Scoping/EIA Process Flow Diagram

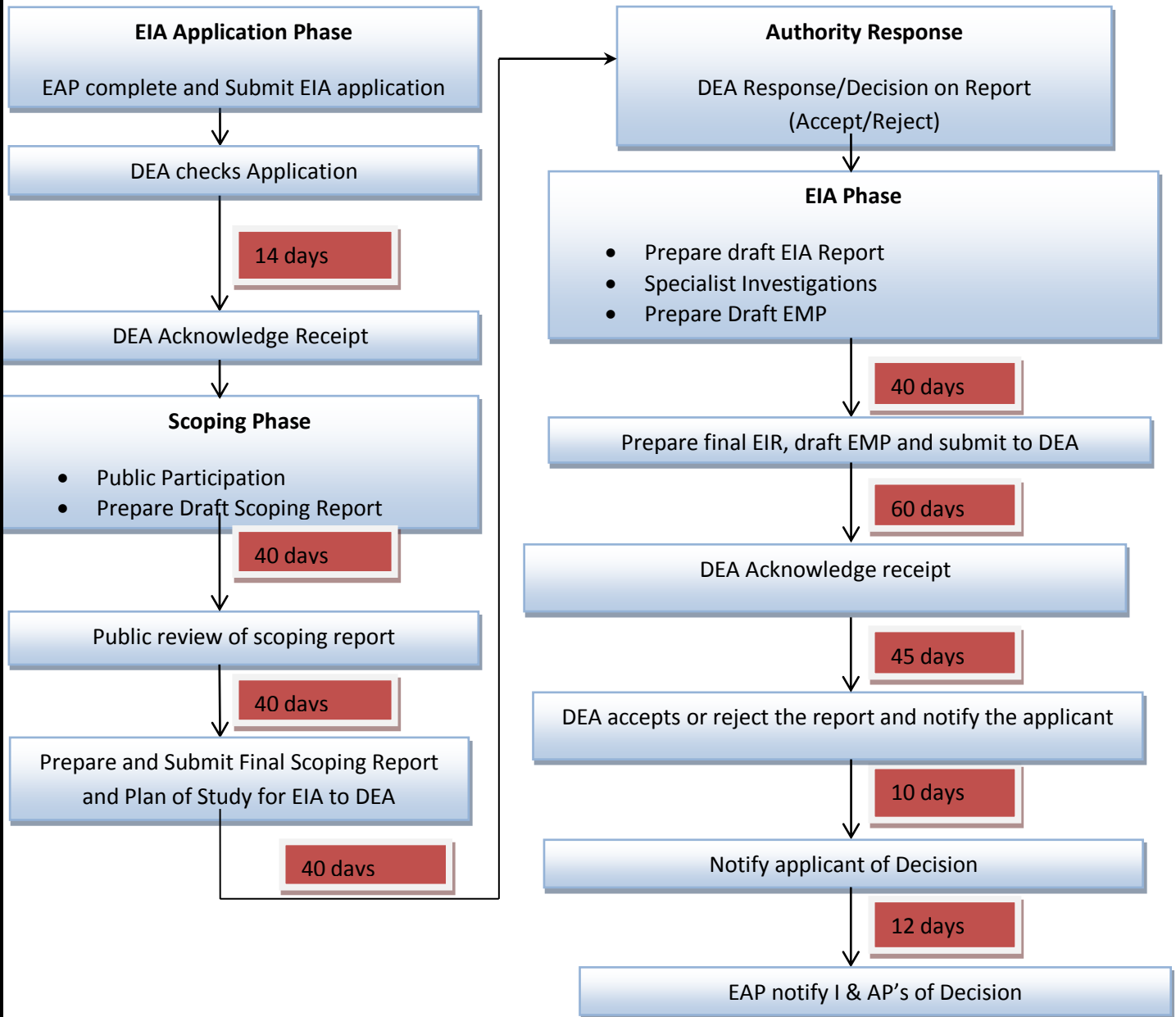


Figure 2: Scoping/EIA process

## **7 Invitation to a Public Meeting**

This letter also serves to invite you to a Public meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for all interested and affected parties to familiarise themselves with the proposed project. This meeting will further provide an opportunity for the interested and affected parties to raise any issues or concerns that need to be taken into account during the EIA process. The details of the meeting are as follows:

**DATE:** 15 June 2012

**TIME:** 18:00

**VENUE:** Prieska Town Hall