

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 132 KV LOOP IN
LOOP OUT POWERLINE FROM MAKONDE T-OFF
POINT TO THE PROPOSED MUTSHIKILI
SUBSTATION AT THENGWE WITHIN THULAMELA
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, VHEMBE DISTRICT
MUNICIPALITY

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This Background Information Document (BID) has been structured to provide all potential Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with a concise overview of the proposed project activities and the associated Environmental Authorization and Water Use Licence Application Processes. Furthermore, this BID is also intended to provide I&APs with information on how I&APs can voice any issues concerning the proposed project. The compilation and distribution of this BID form part of the Public Participation Process (PPP) for this project.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

According to Vhembe District Municipality, IDP 2017, the district currently has 12 existing substations with a backlog of 9 x 132/22kV substations to be built. Tshilamba is one of the areas that is listed as requiring a substation. There is a need to strengthen the network currently supplied by the Makonde substation, specifically the Makonde-Thengwe 22kV feeder, which has problems with overloading and non-compliance with the reliability guide in terms of its total length of 295 km. The strengthening of the network will:

- a) reduce the customer base of Makonde substation (MTG).
- b) reduce the load on MTG.
- c) improve the voltage profile of MTG.
- d) Reduce the length of MTG.

Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd therefore intends to construct a 132kV loop in loop out powerline and a new substation to strengthen the Makonde network. The work associated with the strengthening of the network is listed according to National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, Government Notice R326 of 2017 (as amended), for which an Environmental Authorisation (EA) is required before the powerlines and substation can be constructed. In addition, a Water Use Licence (WUL)/ General Authorisation (GA) will also be required. Eskom has therefore appointed DIGES to lodge applications for EA and WUL/GA with the relevant Competent Authorities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The scope of work entails the following:

- i. Construction and operation of ± 6 km, 2 x 132kV loop in and out powerlines from the Makonde-Sanari line to the new Mutshikili 132/22kV 2x20MVA substation at Tswera/Thengwe village.
- ii. Construction and operation of a 132/22kV substation. The structure will also comprise the following components:
 - 132kV Line bays.
 - sectionalized 132kV tubular busbar.
 - 2 x 20MVA 132/22kV Transformers.
 - Linear 22kV busbar.
 - 3 x 22kV feeder bays (outdoor MV Box structure configuration).

- 2 x future 22kV feeder bays (busbar only, no equipment).
 - Build a standard control room to house all secondary equipment.
 - Build a palisade fence around the substation.
 - 15 m communication mast.
- iii. Construction of a 4 m wide road from the gravel road to the proposed substation. The length of the road is approximately ± 200 m measured from the gravel road.

LOCATION

Two powerline corridors and four substation alternatives have been identified and will be assessed. Table 1 gives a summary of the project location.

Table 1: Location

PROVINCE	Limpopo
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY	Vhembe
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY	Thulamela
WARD NOs.	4 and 5
AFFECTED FARMS AND ERVEN	Tengwe's Location 255MT 439 MT 444 MT 445MT
NEARBY SETTLEMENTS	Thengwe, Makwilidza, Tswera, Tshivhase
WATER MANAGEMENT AREA	Limpopo
QUARTERNARY CATCHMENT	A92B

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT (ACT 107 OF 1998)

EIA Regulations [GNR982 as amended]/ GNR326], published in terms of sections 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), makes provision for two types or levels of assessment, namely Basic Assessment and Scoping and EIA. The EIA regulations specify that all activities that appear in Listing 1 [GN No. R. 983 (as amended)/GNR 327] and Listing 3 [GN No. R. 985 (as amended)/GNR 324] require a Basic Assessment whilst activities indicated in Listing 2 [GN No. R. 984 (as amended)/GNR 325] require a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment. The construction of 132kV loop in loop out powerlines and substation are listed in Listing Notices 1 and 3; hence a Basic Assessment is being undertaken. An application will be lodged with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) to obtain an Environmental Authorisation. The Table overleaf indicates the listed activities being applied for. These are subject to change based on responses from Public Participation and comments from DFFE:

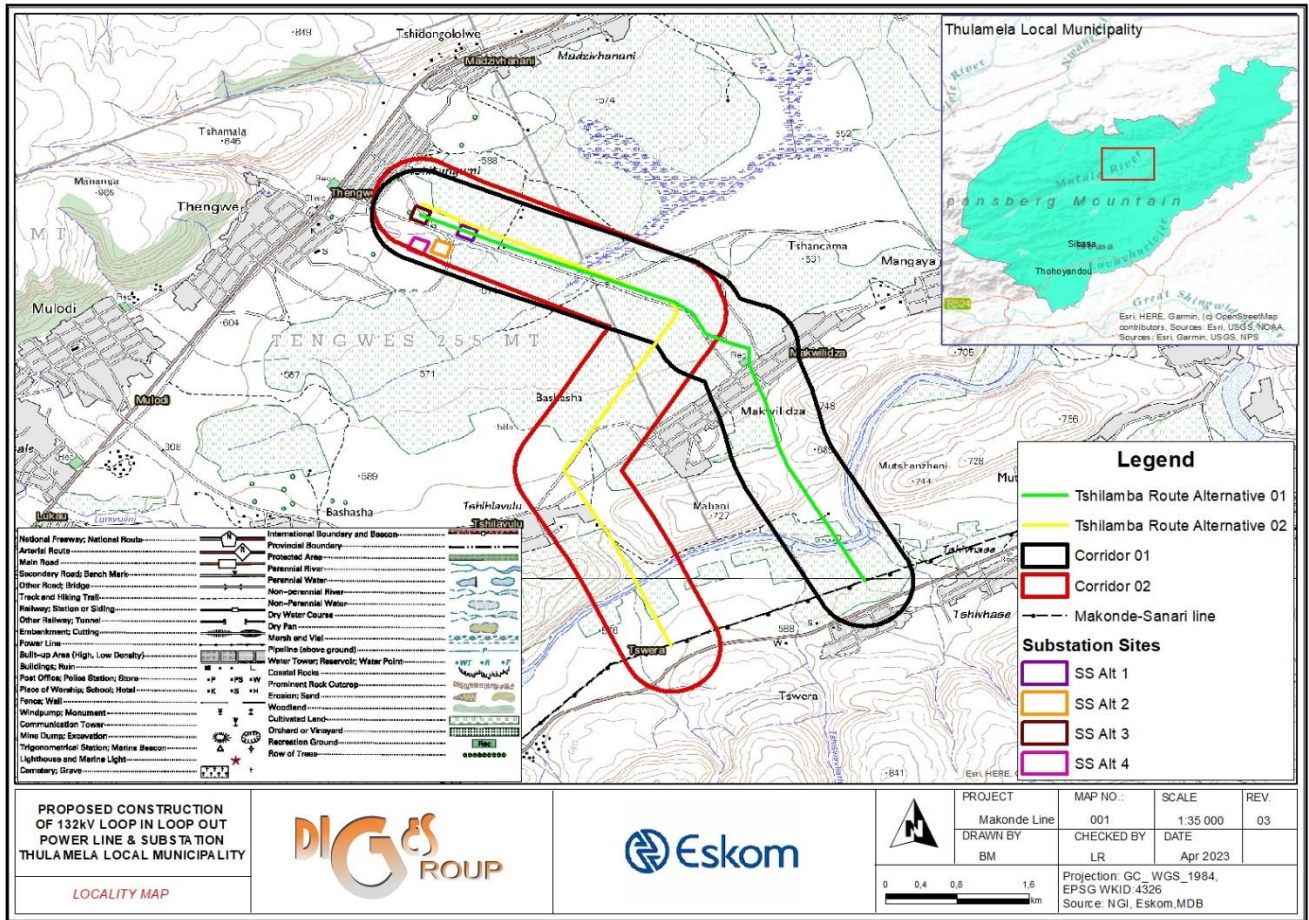


Figure 1: Location of the proposed corridors

Table 2: List of Activities being applied for

ACTIVITY NO	ACTIVITY AS SET OUT IN LISTING NOTICE R327 of 2017 (AS AMENDED)	APPLICABILITY
11	The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity— (i) Outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts.	Construction of a ±6km, 132 kV loop in loop out powerline from the Makonde-Sanari T-off point to the proposed Mutshikili substation. The project is within a rural area.
19	The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse	The possible excavation and infilling of Mulondi, Mutale Rivers and wetlands by more than 10 m ³ of material during construction.
27	The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation.	Clearing approximately 1 ha of indigenous vegetation for constructing the Mutshikili substation. Of note is the total site footprint of 2.5ha.
ACTIVITY NO	ACTIVITY AS SET OUT IN LISTING NOTICE R324 OF 2017 (AS AMENDED)	APPLICABILITY
12e(ii)	The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan in Limpopo within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans	Clearing of approximately 2700m ² of indigenous vegetation within the mountain in areas classified as CBA1 and CBA2 in the Vhembe Bioregional Plan.

The BA process will follow the procedure prescribed in Regulations 19 and 20; however, the timeframes within which DFFE has to issue a decision are shortened from 107 days to 57 days as it is a Strategic Infrastructure Project (SIP). The following diagram outlines the steps followed in undertaking a BA process.

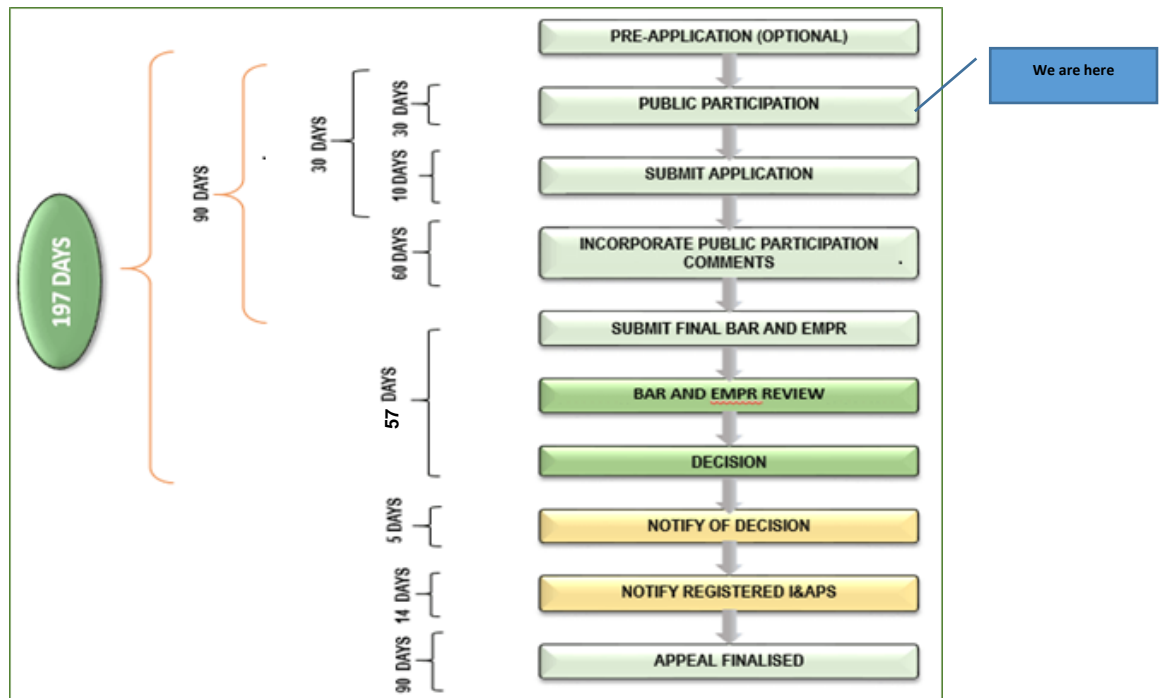


Figure 2: Basic Assessment Process

OTHER PERMITS

Another license/authorization that will be required for the development is discussed in the Table below.

Legislation	Permit/ Authorisations/ Approval	Relevance
National Water Act, 1998	(WUL) / General Authorisation (GA) in terms of S21(c) and (i)	The corridor is within 500m of various wetlands and will traverse across streams such that there is a likelihood that structures will be placed within a 1:100-year floodline. Therefore, a WUL / GA will be required before any work commences in these areas.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Some of the potential impacts associated with the project are given below. Of note is that the list is not exhaustive, and impacts will be detailed in the Basic Assessment Report and the associated Specialist Reports:

- Impacts on Biodiversity and Species of Conservation Concern.
- Impacts on soil and agricultural potential.
- Stormwater and erosion.
- Impact on water resources.
- Nuisance impacts such as noise and dust.
- Waste generation.
- Impact on visual aesthetics.

- Impact of cultural and heritage resources.
- Socio-economic impacts.

HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

A Public Participation Process (PPP) will be conducted as part of the Basic Assessment Process. The steps that will be undertaken as part of the PPP conform to the requirements laid down in Regulation 4(2), 41-44 of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2017, as amended. The PPP will provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with a platform to voice any matters or issues relating to the proposed project. The following activities will be undertaken:

- (i) DIGES Group will notify the identified IAPs about the reapplication of the project and the amended BID will also be sent.
- (ii) Site notices will be placed at prominent points within the project area and its surroundings.
- (iii) Notification of the availability of the draft report will be done via adverts in the local newspapers.
- (iv) Public meetings will be held during the draft report's 30-day comment period.
- (v) Where necessary telephonic consultation will be undertaken with registered stakeholders; and
- (vi) The registered stakeholders will be notified of DEFF's decision on whether the authorization has been granted/declined.

To be registered as an Interested and Affected Party, please complete and return the registration form included with the BID by no later than 21 July 2023. This will ensure that you can raise your concerns and receive further information (documents) about the project. All issues raised will be addressed and incorporated into the Basic Assessment Report.

For enquiries, please get in touch with **DIGES Group**, Livhuwani Rasilingwani, P.O. Box 7068, Midrand, 1685, Email: livhuwanir@diges.co.za/ livhuras@gmail.com



REGISTRATION AND COMMENTS FORM

Please complete the form and return it to the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (as above)

TITLE		NAME	
SURNAME			
ORGANIZATION <small>(Please do not use any acronyms)</small>			
ADDRESS			
			POSTAL CODE
TELEPHONE NO		FAX NO	
EMAIL ADDRESS			
CELLPHONE NO			
DATE		SIGNATURE	

Please formally register me as an interested and/or affected party (I&AP) so that I may receive further information and notifications during the Basic Assessment process	YES	NO
I would like to receive documents for comment as follows:	By Email	
	By post	
	By fax	

COMMENTS (please use separate sheets if you wish)

I suggest that the following issues of concern be considered in the Basic Assessment Report:

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Please register the following colleagues/friends/neighbours as I&APs for this project:

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION

