



BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROPOSED 132KV POWER LINE FROM LETHABO PV
SOLAR POWER PLANT TO THE EXISTING RWB
LETHABO SUBSTATION WITHIN METSIMAHOLO
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY UNDER FEZILE DABI
DISTRICT FREE STATE.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This Background Information Document (BID) has been structured to provide all potential Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and Stakeholders with a concise overview of the proposed project activities as well as the associated Environmental Authorization and General Authorisation Processes. Furthermore, this BID is also intended to provide I&APs with information relating to 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

As part of Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd (Eskom) drive to incorporate more renewable energy sources into the grid, the Generation Division intends to establish a 75MW solar photovoltaic (PV) power plant near the Lethabo Power Station. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process was undertaken for the Solar PV area and an Environmental Authorisation was issued in 2016 with a validity extension issued for another 5 years in 2021. The Solar PV Plant will be connected to the Eskom grid via various grid infrastructures inclusive of a 132kV powerline and an additional 88kV bay, with busbar extension and control plant extension at the existing Rand Water Board (RWB) Lethabo Substation. The proposed 132kV powerline was however not included as part of the initial EIA hence an Environmental Authorisation is required for the construction and operation of this line and associated infrastructure. Eskom has therefore appointed DIGES to lodge an application for the Environmental Authorisation for:

- ❑ ±4.5km, 132 kV powerline from the solar PV power plant to the existing Rand Water Board substation.
- ❑ 1x additional 88kV bay, inclusive of busbar extension and control plant extension at the existing Rand Water Board (RWB) Lethabo Substation.

LOCATION

Two corridor alternatives will be assessed each being 100 m wide. The routes overlap from the RWB Lethabo substation and then deviate into separate directions at the bend point where Corridor 1 (orange) and Corridor 2 (red) become distinct. Refer to Figure 1 overleaf.

The project area is in the Free State Province, within the Metsimaholo Local Municipality adjacent to the Provincial boundary between Gauteng and the Free State. The power line and associated infrastructure will occur on the following farms:

- i. Remainder Portion of Bankfontein No. 9,
- ii. Bankfontein No. 1849
- iii. Remainder Portion of Lethabo Power Station No. 1814

The area falls in quaternary catchment C22F of Vaal Water Management Area and is within a 20km radius of Sasolburg and Vanderbijlpark. Land uses within the servitude and its surroundings are characterised by mining, electricity generation and agricultural activities.

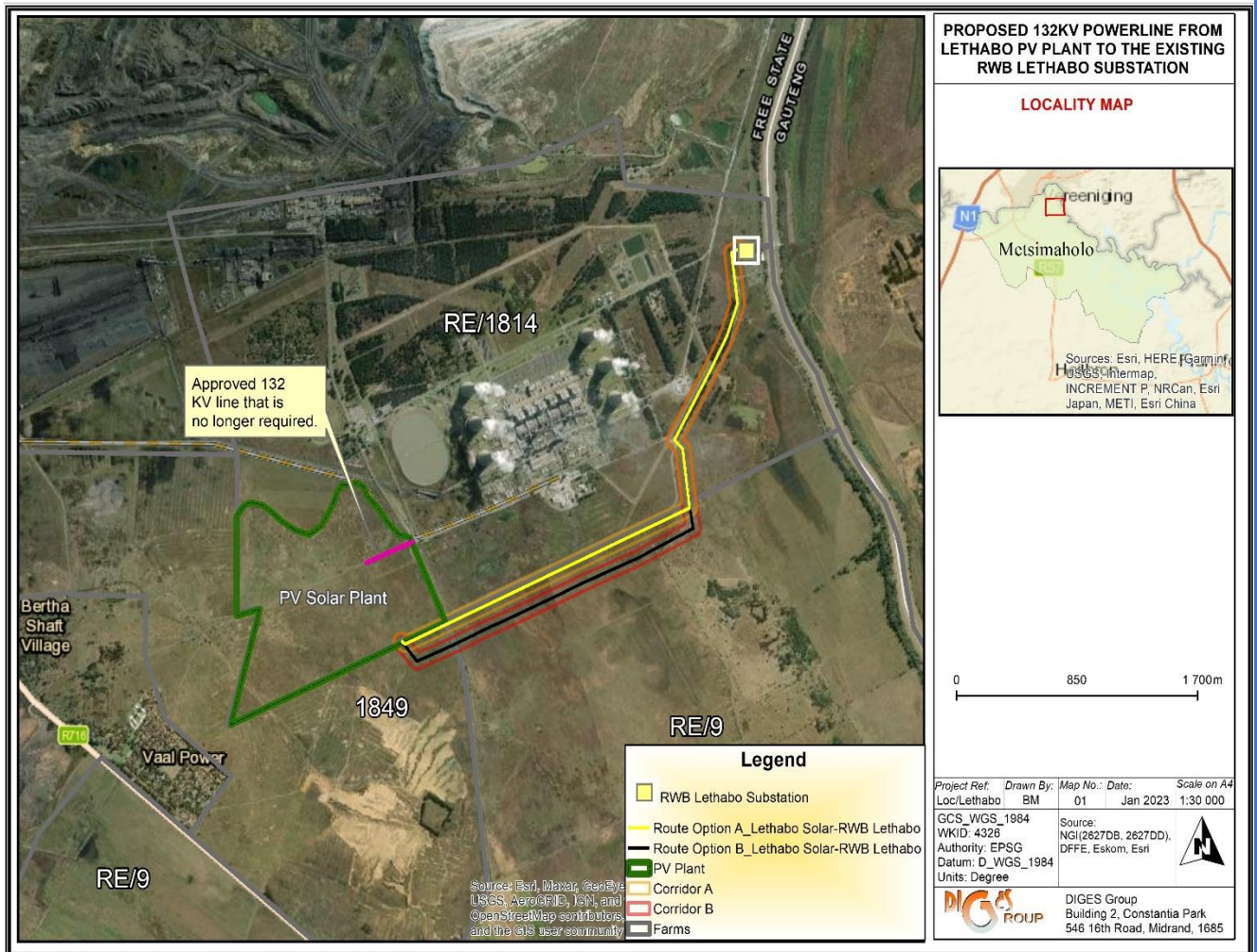


Figure 1: Location of the proposed corridors

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT (ACT 107 OF 1998)

EIA Regulations [GNR982 as amended]/ GNR326 published 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. As the proposed development triggers activities in Listing Notice 1 (GNR 327) a Basic Assessment process will be followed with the application being lodged with the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE). The listed activities being applied for are:

Table 1: List of Activities being applied for

ACTIVITY NO	ACTIVITY AS SET OUT IN LISTING NOTICE 1, GOVERNMENT NOTICE R327 OF 2017	APPLICABILITY
11(i)	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 ±4.5 km, 132 Kv power line from Lethabo Solar PV Plant to the existing RWB Lethabo substation.
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 of more than 10 m ³ and infilling of wetlands with more than 10 m ³ of material during construction.

The BA process will follow the procedure as prescribed in Regulations 19 and 20. The following diagram outlines the steps that are followed in undertaking a BA process.

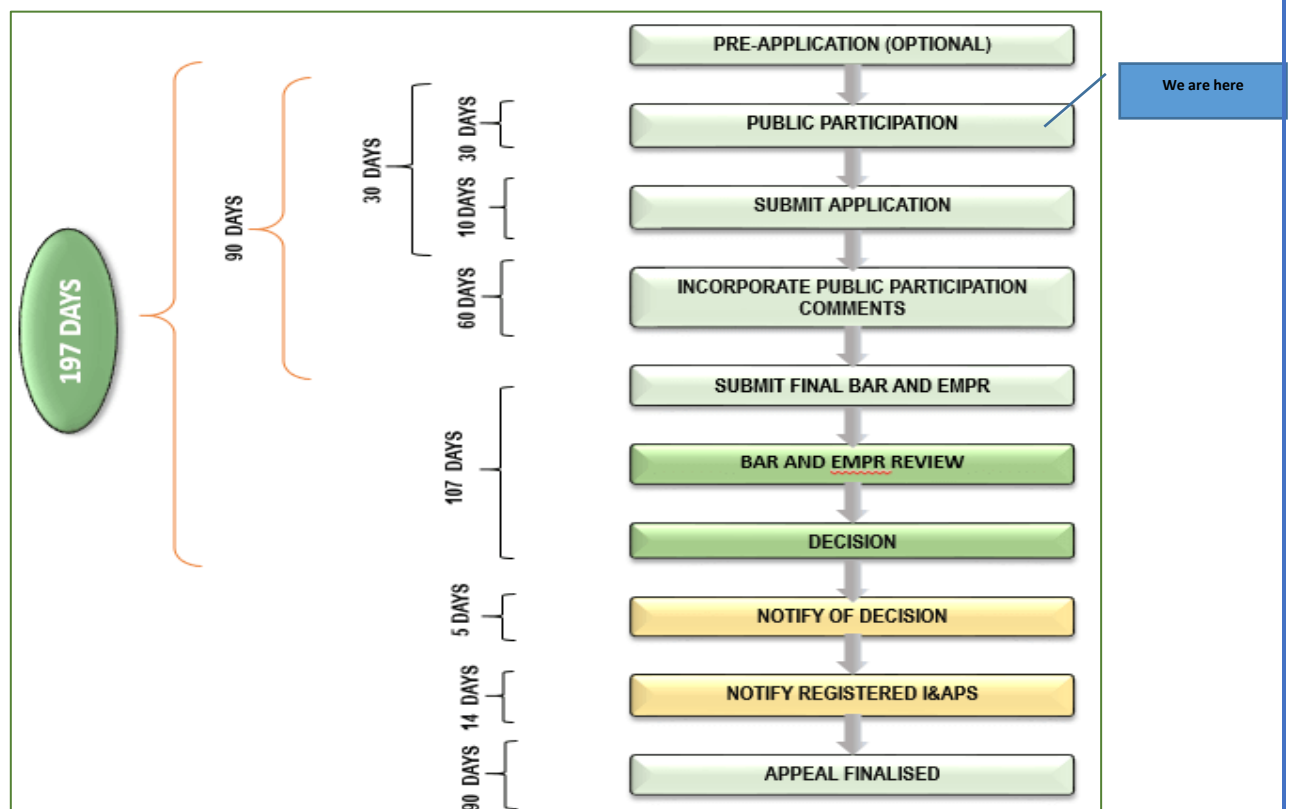


Figure 2: Basic Assessment Process

NATIONAL WATER ACT (ACT 36 OF 1998)

The Government Notice (GN) 509, published in August 2016 in Government Gazette (GG) no. 40229 under Section 39 of the National Water Act (Act no. 36 of 1998) streamlines the application for, and granting of, a Water Use Licence (WUL) in terms of Section 21(c) & (i) water uses. The abovementioned water uses are associated with; c) impeding or diverting the flow of water within a watercourse and i) the altering of the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse. As the proposed powerline and associated infrastructure are within 500m of delineated wetlands, DIGES will also apply to the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) for a General Authorisation in terms of the aforementioned water uses.

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 identify stakeholders in different sectors of society and invite them to register as Interested and or Affected Parties (I&APs).
- (ii) Site notices will be placed at prominent points within the project area and its surroundings.
- (iii) BIDs with notification letters will be e-mailed or hand-delivered to the Ward Councillors (18), ward committee members and relevant stakeholders (including authorities and state departments).
- (iv) Notification of the project and availability of the draft report will be done via an advert in the local newspaper.
- (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 authorisation has been granted/declined.

To be registered as an Interested and Affected Party, please complete and return the registration form included with the BID. 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 contact **DIGES Group**, Brenda Makanza/ Livhuwani Rasingwani, P.O. Box 7068, Midrand, 1685, Email:brendam@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			
ORGANISATION <small>(Please do not use any acronyms)</small>			
ADDRESS			
			POSTAL CODE
TELEPHONE NO		FAX NO	
E-MAIL 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 e-mail	
	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

