

Date: 31 May 2019

Dear Interested and Affected Party,

**NOTICE OF THE AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND A PUBLIC MEETING**

EIA PROCESS, WATER USE LICENSE APPLICATION AND BORROW PIT APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED LEPHALALE RAILWAY YARD EXPANSION, AT STEENBOKPAN, LEPHALALE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, WATERBERG DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE (DEA reference: 14/12/16/3/3/2/1116)

Notice is hereby given that the Transnet SOC Limited has submitted an application for an Environmental Authorisation (EA) in terms of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) on 5 November 2018 for the expansion of its Lephalale Railway Yard. The submission of a Water Use License (WUL) in terms of the National Water Act 36 of 1998 (NWA), and a Mining Permit (Borrow Pit Application) will soon follow.

Transnet intends to expand the existing Lephalale Yard from a 100 - to a 200 wagon train yard to allow for the compilation of 200 wagon trains from the surrounding mines. The yard expansion will take place along the existing single track Thabazimbi-Lephalale railway line on Portion 1 (remaining extent) of the farm Geelhoutkloof 359LQ, farm Geelhoutkloof 717LQ, Enkeldraai 718LQ and Buffelsjagt 744LQ. Two borrow pits will also be established on the farm Buffelsjagt 744LQ. It will go beyond Transnet servitude and requires 22 hectares of land to be acquired. The yard will include four new service tracks and numerous ancillary infrastructures to enable more trains to enter and exit Lephalale, switching of crew including service and maintenance of diesel locomotives.

The study site is situated behind Medupi Power Station approximately 30km west of Lephalale town (Ellisras) in the game farming area of Steenbokpan. It falls within the jurisdiction of Lephalale Local Municipality in the Waterberg District of Limpopo Province.

As part of the environmental authorisation application documentation, Transnet must submit a Scoping Report, Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) to DEA, which has been subjected to a public participation process.

Naledzi Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd is the independent environmental practitioner (EAP), appointed to obtain the relevant authorisations and to facilitate the EIA Study. The draft EIR has now been prepared by Naledzi on acceptance of the Scoping Report and advice by DEA on 19 February 2019 to proceed with the tasks contemplated in the Plan of Study for EIA, including public participation process. Specialist investigations as detailed in the Plan of Study for the EIA have now been completed and the findings have been consolidated in the draft EIR. The EIR includes an independent assessment of the project's environmental consequences and recommends ways to reduce the impact of the project by imposing mitigation/management measures.

We are thus now in the second round of public engagement for the project, where the EIR is made available for public review and comment to solicit the final views and comment on the applications. This letter serves as notification of the project and we draw your attention to the following:

- Availability of the draft EIR and EMPR for public review and comment until 1 July 2019;
- A public meeting scheduled during the public review period, on 18 June 2019;
- Way forward

**DRAFT EIR AND EMPR AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT**

The draft EIR and EMPr will be made available for public comment from Friday, 31 May 2019 until Monday, 1 July 2019. An electronic version of the report and comment sheet will be available on the following website: <http://www.naledzi.co.za/public-documents-naledzi.php> . Hard copies of the report and comment sheet will be available at the following public venues for public review and comment:

- Lephalale Public Library
- Marapong Public Library
- Lesedi Tshukudu Thusong Centre

**If you wish to comment on the draft EIR and EMPr, you can:**

- Complete the enclosed Comment Sheet and submit it to NEC;
- Write a letter; or any additional written submission by email or fax; or
- Contact NEC at the below given contact details.

Please submit your comments together with your name and contact details to Ms. Marissa Botha at the following details: Tel: 015 296 3988 / 084 226 5584 or send us your comments by email to [botham@naledzi.co.za](mailto:botham@naledzi.co.za) or either by fax number to 015 296 4021. Please ensure to submit your comments on or before Monday, 1 July 2019.

**SCHEDULED PUBLIC MEETING**

A public meeting has been scheduled to facilitate comments on the draft EIR and EMPr. The EAP will talk over the findings of the EIA Study and Transnet will be available to answer any technical related questions. Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) will be given an opportunity to meet the project team, obtain clarity and provide comments on the project at the meeting. You are invited to attend the following public meeting for the project:

Venue	Date	Time
<b>Komunati Lodge, Farm Altoostyd, Onverwacht, Lephalale 23°45'47.60"S 27°31'33.70"E</b>	<b>Tuesday, 18 June 2019</b>	<b>2pm - 4pm</b>

**What's next?**

The draft EIR and EMPr will be made available for public review for 30 calendar days until 1 July 2019 at the above stated public venues and on the Naledzi website. A public meeting will take place on 13 June 2019 in the project area to facilitate comments. NEC will record and consolidate all the comments and issues raised at the public meeting and received during the public review period on the draft EIR. The EIR and EMPr will be finalised and the Issues and Response Report will be updated to incorporate public inputs received and subsequently will be submitted to DEA for approval.

It must however be highlighted that due the strict NEMA EIA Regulations regulated timeframes, Transnet is required to submit the EIR and EMPR for decision making to DEA by 6 June 2019 to avoid application lapse. Naledzi will thus submit the current EIR and EMPr to DEA and explicitly state that it is still subject to public review and comment until 1 July 2019. Once the public review period lapses Naledzi will update the EIR and EMPR to incorporate all public inputs received on the reports during the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of consultation and submit it as a final to DEA for decision making. DEA will thereafter have 107 days to reach a decision on the application.

Thank you for your participation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Botha', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marissa Botha (*Pr.Sci.Nat*)  
Naledzi Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd

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