



## **NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT APPLICATION: BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)**

**THE PROPOSED DWAALBOOM SOLAR 1 PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR NORTHAM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

**THE PROPOSED DWAALBOOM SOLAR 2 PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR NORTHAM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

**THE PROPOSED DWAALBOOM SOLAR 3 PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR NORTHAM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

**THE PROPOSED DWAALBOOM SOLAR 4 PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR NORTHAM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

**THE PROPOSED DWAALBOOM SOLAR 5 PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR NORTHAM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

Dwaalboom Solar 1 (Pty) Ltd, Dwaalboom Solar 2 (Pty) Ltd, Dwaalboom Solar 3 (Pty), Dwaalboom Solar 4 (Pty) Ltd and Dwaalboom Solar 5 (Pty) Ltd are proposing the construction of photovoltaic (PV) solar facilities on surrounding properties located within the Thabazimbi Local Municipality within the Waterberg District Municipality. The five (05) projects are envisaged to operate simultaneously and therefore will be described in this combined Background Information Document. All five (05) projects are subject to independent Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (S&EIA) processes.

### **Dwaalboom Solar 1 (Pty) Ltd**

The proposed development is located on Portions 5 & 6 of the Farm Einde No. 420 approximately 5 km east of the town of Northam in the Limpopo Province. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 150 MW. The site is accessible via the existing District Road, 3717 (along the Brits Road) located South of the development area. The proposed Dwaalboom Solar 1 will cover approximately 325 ha.



### **Dwaalboom Solar 2 (Pty) Ltd**

The proposed development is located on Portion 1 of the Farm Einde No. 420 approximately 5.5 km east of the town of Northam in the Limpopo Province. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 240 MW. The site is accessible via the existing District Road, 3717 (along the Brits Road) located South of the development area. The proposed Dwaalboom Solar 2 will cover approximately 481 ha.

### **Dwaalboom Solar 3 (Pty) Ltd**

The proposed development is located on the Remaining Extent of the Farm Koedoesdoorn No. 414 approximately 3 km north east of the town of Northam in the Limpopo Province. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 180 MW. The site is accessible either directly of the R510 Regional Road or via the existing District Road, 3717 (along the Brits Road) located South of the development area. The proposed Dwaalboom Solar 3 will cover approximately 355 ha.

### **Dwaalboom Solar 4 (Pty) Ltd**

The proposed development is located on Portion 2 of the Farm Koedoesdoorn No. 414 approximately 3.5 km north east of the town of Northam in the Limpopo Province. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 180 MW. The site is accessible directly of the R510 Regional Road. The proposed Dwaalboom Solar 4 will cover approximately 359 ha.

### **Dwaalboom Solar 5 (Pty) Ltd**

The proposed development is located on the Remaining Extent of the Farm Goevernements Plaats No. 417 and Portion 2 of the Farm Goevernements Plaats No. 417 approximately 7 km north east of the town of Northam in the Limpopo Province. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 125 MW. The site is accessible directly of the R510 Regional Road. The proposed Dwaalboom Solar 5 will cover approximately 250 ha.

Dwaalboom Solar 1, Dwaalboom Solar 2, Dwaalboom Solar 3, Dwaalboom Solar 4 and Dwaalboom Solar 5 will each include the following infrastructure:

- » PV modules and mounting structures
- » Inverters and transformers
- » Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- » Site and internal access roads (up to 8 m wide)
- » Operation and Maintenance buildings including a gate house and security building, control centre, offices, warehouses and workshops for storage and maintenance.
- » Temporary and permanent laydown area
- » Facility grid connection infrastructure, including:
  - 33 kV cabling between the project components and the facility substation;
  - A 132 kV facility substation;
  - A 132 kV Eskom collector switching station; and
  - Loop-in-Loop-out (LILO) overhead 132 kV power line between the back-to-back facility substation and Eskom collector switching station and the existing Spitskop–Mamba 132 kV power line.



A separate Basic Assessment is being undertaken to assess the grid connection infrastructure required to evacuate energy generated from the facilities to the existing Spitskop Main Transmission Substation for each of these projects.

The EA applications for the solar facility and grid connection infrastructure are being undertaken in parallel as they are co-dependent, i.e., one will not be developed without the other.

Refer to the Locality Map provided with the BID.

Blue Crane Environmental has been appointed to undertake the S&EIA process for the proposed development of the Dwaalboom Solar 1, Dwaalboom Solar 2, Dwaalboom Solar 3, Dwaalboom Solar 4 and Dwaalboom Solar 5 PV facilities. The total extent of the development footprint for the three combined developments are 1770 hectares.

## 1. Purpose of the Background Information Document

You and/or the organisation/institution which you represent has been identified as a potential interested and/or affected party (I&AP) for the proposed development. This BID therefore aims to provide you with:

- An overview of the proposed development, including details of the location and infrastructure being proposed;
- An overview of the S&EIA process and independent specialist studies being undertaken;
- The details of how to get involved in the S&EIA process, including to receive information, raise issues and comment and participate in the process as a whole.

## 2. Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment Process

Notice is hereby formally given, in terms of the 2014 EIA Regulations (as amended in 2017) published in Government Notice No. R326 under Section

24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act No. 107 of 1998), of the intent to lodge an Application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) and the undertaking of a S&EIA process (i.t.o. Listing Notice 1, 2 and 3 – G.N. R327, 325 & 324).

The need for the S&EIA process stems from listed activities triggered in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. Environmental Authorisation is required for certain listed activities that are considered to potentially have a negative impact on the environment. The following listed activities have been identified to be relevant to the proposed development:

- Activity 11(i) (GN.R. 327): “The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts.”
- Activity 24(ii) (GN.R. 327): “The development of a road (ii) with reserve wider than 13,5 meters, or where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 meters”
- Activity 28(ii) (GN.R. 327): “Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture or afforestation on or after 1998 and where such development (ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare.”
- Activity 56(ii) (GN.R. 327): “The widening of a road by more than 6 metres, or the lengthening of a road by more than 1 kilometre (ii) where no reserve exists, where the existing road is wider than 8 metres...”
- Activity 1 (GN.R. 325): “The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more...”
- Activity 15 (GN.R. 325): “The clearance of an area of 20 hectare or more of indigenous vegetation...”
- Activity 10(e)(i) (GN.R. 324): “The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure for the storage, or storage and handling of a



*dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 30 but not exceeding 80 cubic metres in (e) the Limpopo Province (i) all areas.”*

- Activity 18(e)(i)(gg) (GN.R. 324): “The widening of a road by more than 4 metres, or the lengthening of a road by more than 1 kilometre (e) Limpopo Province (i) Outside urban areas (gg) Areas within 10 kilometres from national parks or world heritage sites or 5 kilometres from any other protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA or from the core area of biosphere reserve”

Activities required for the development of the solar facilities which are listed under Listing Notice 1, 2 and 3 (GN.R. 327, 325 and 324) implies that the development could potentially have an impact on the environment that will require mitigation. Subsequently a ‘thorough assessment process’ is required as described in Regulations 21-24. Blue Crane Environmental has been appointed as the independent consultant to undertake the S&EIA process on behalf of the applicants, Dwaalboom Solar 1 (Pty) Ltd, Dwaalboom Solar 2 (Pty) Ltd, Dwaalboom Solar 3 (Pty), Dwaalboom Solar 4 (Pty) Ltd and Dwaalboom Solar 5 (Pty) Ltd.

The National Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment, has been identified as the competent authority for the proposed development and will therefore be the decision-maker on the Application for Environmental Authorisation.

### 3. Environmental Impacts and Independent Specialist studies

Potential environmental impacts could occur as part of the development of the proposed solar PV facilities. These impacts need to be assessed fully as part of the S&EIA process and appropriate mitigation measures need to be recommended by independent specialists as part of the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr). The following preliminary impacts are expected to occur:

- Biodiversity – which includes ecology, wetlands, fauna and flora and assesses the potential impact and the associated disturbance of vegetation on the ecology and biodiversity (including critical biodiversity areas and broad-scale processes).
- Avifauna – which includes seasonal survey and assesses the impact on avifaunal habitats and sensitive species.
- Soils and agricultural potential - which assesses the significance of loss of agricultural land and soil degradation and/or erosion.
- Heritage - which includes archaeology and palaeontology and assesses the potential of disturbance to or destruction of heritage sites and fossils during the construction phase through excavation activities.
- Visual – which include the visual quality of the area and assesses the impact on the aesthetics of the area.

Specialist studies will be informed by existing information, field observations and input from the public participation process. As an I&AP, your input is considered as an important part of the process, and we urge you to become involved.

### 4. Public Participation Process

The sharing of information forms the basis of the Public Participation Process (PPP) and offers you the opportunity to become actively involved in the S&EIA process from the outset. The Public Participation Process will be undertaken in line with the requirements of Chapter 6 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

Comment and input from I&APs are encouraged in order to ensure that all potential impacts are considered within the ambit of the study.

In terms of Section 24J of the NEMA, Act 107 of 1998 and the Department of Environmental Affairs Public Participation Guideline 2017, as part of the S&EIA process, an I&AP has the responsibility to:



- Submit comment within the specified timeframes communicated;
- Submit comment directly to the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), which is Blue Crane Environmental; and
- Disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which that I&AP may have in the approval or refusal of the Application for Environmental Authorisation.

## 5. How to become involved

If you consider yourself an I&AP, we urge you to participate in the process and provide comment, or raise those issues and concerns which affect and/or interest you, and about which you would like more information. Become involved by:

- Responding (by phone, email, WhatsApp) to our notification and invitation for your involvement;
- Getting in touch with the relevant contact person and registering as an I&AP on the project database;
- Contacting Blue Crane Environmental with queries or comments; and
- Reviewing and commenting on the project documentation including the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) within the timeframe prescribed by Blue Crane Environmental.

## 6. Comments and Queries

Kindly direct all comments, queries and responses to:

Blue Crane Environmental

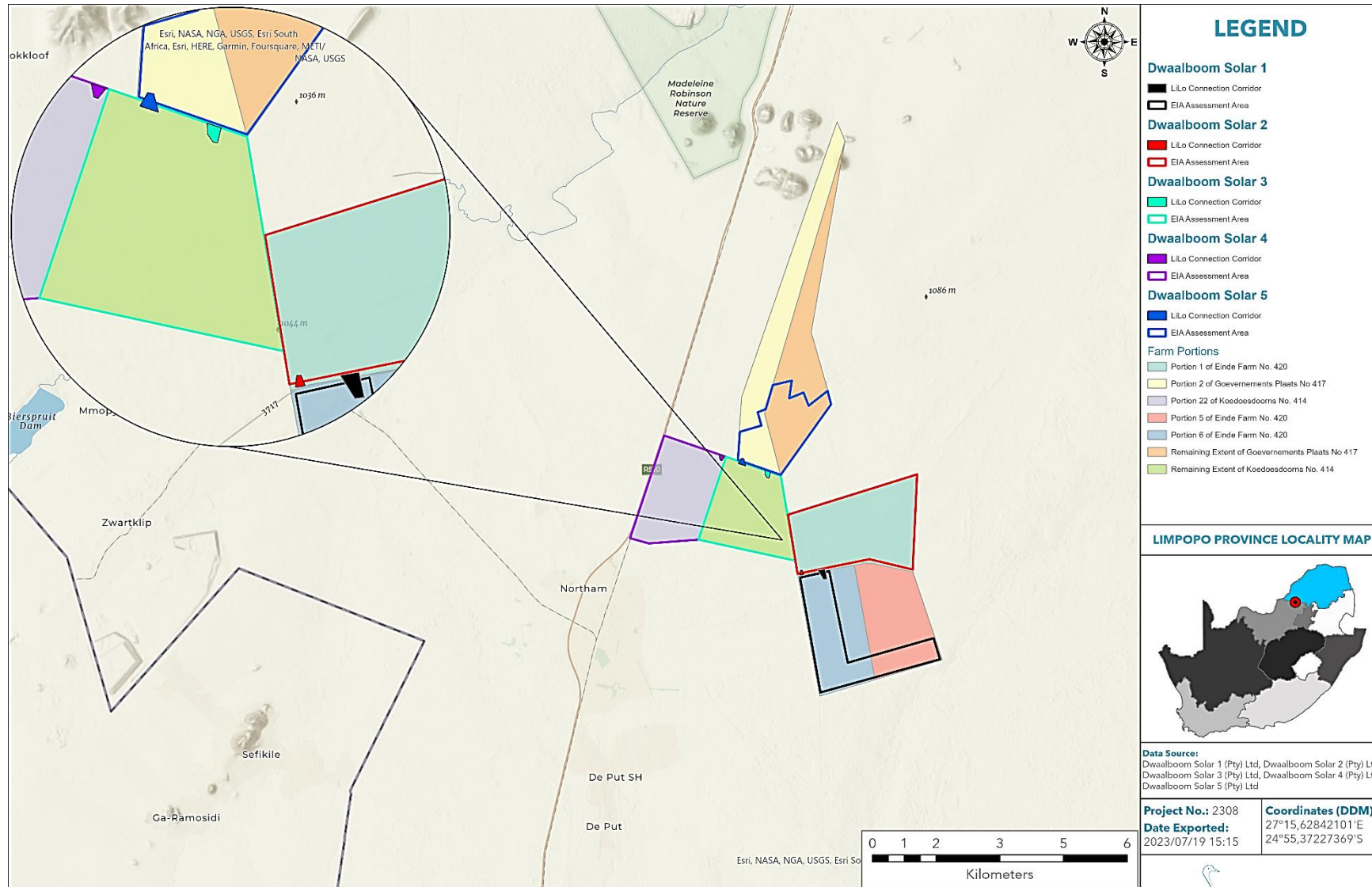
EAP: Roschel Maharaj

Cell: 063 062 7725

E-mail: [dwaalboom@bcrane.co.za](mailto:dwaalboom@bcrane.co.za)

Alternatively, please visit our website at [www.bcrane.co.za](http://www.bcrane.co.za) or scan the QR Code in the document header.

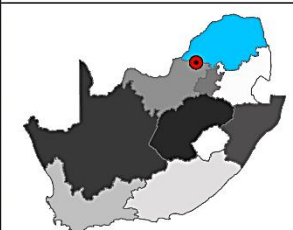




### LEGEND

- Dwaalboom Solar 1**
  - L/Lo Connection Corridor
  - EIA Assessment Area
- Dwaalboom Solar 2**
  - L/Lo Connection Corridor
  - EIA Assessment Area
- Dwaalboom Solar 3**
  - L/Lo Connection Corridor
  - EIA Assessment Area
- Dwaalboom Solar 4**
  - L/Lo Connection Corridor
  - EIA Assessment Area
- Dwaalboom Solar 5**
  - L/Lo Connection Corridor
  - EIA Assessment Area
- Farm Portions**
  - Portion 1 of Einde Farm No. 420
  - Portion 2 of Goevernements Plaats No 417
  - Portion 22 of Koedoesdoorns No. 414
  - Portion 5 of Einde Farm No. 420
  - Portion 6 of Einde Farm No. 420
  - Remaining Extent of Goevernements Plaats No 417
  - Remaining Extent of Koedoesdoorns No. 414

### LIMPOPO PROVINCE LOCALITY MAP



**Data Source:**  
Dwaalboom Solar 1 (Pty) Ltd, Dwaalboom Solar 2 (Pty) Ltd  
Dwaalboom Solar 3 (Pty) Ltd, Dwaalboom Solar 4 (Pty) Ltd  
Dwaalboom Solar 5 (Pty) Ltd

**Project No.:** 2308      **Coordinates (DDM):**  
**Date Exported:** 2023/07/19 15:15      27°15,62842101'E  
24°55,37227369'S

**LOCALITY MAP:** PROPOSED DWAALBOOM SOLAR 1, 2, 3, 4 AND 5 PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR NORTHAM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE