



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X 447 · PRETORIA · 0001 · Environment House · 473 Steve Biko Road, Arcadia · PRETORIA

DFFE Reference: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2260

Enquiries: Ms Constance Musemburi

Telephone: (012) 399 9416 E-mail: CMusemburi@environment.gov.za

Mr Eugene Marais
South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Mierdam (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 45063
CAPE TOWN
7735

Telephone Number: (021) 657 4045
Email Address: eugene.marais@mainstreammrp.com

PER EMAIL / MAIL

Dear Mr Marais

ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT, ACT NO. 107 OF 1998, AS AMENDED: FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE AUTHORISED MIERDAM PHOTO VOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY LOCATED NEAR LOCATED THE TOWN OF PRIESKA, SIYATHEMBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, PIXLEY KA SEME DISTRICT, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE.

With reference to the above application, please be advised that the Department has decided to grant authorisation. The Environmental Authorisation (EA) and reasons for the decision are attached herewith.

In terms of Regulation 4(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended (the EIA Regulations), you are instructed to notify all registered interested and affected parties, in writing and within fourteen (14) days of the date of the decision as well as the provisions regarding the submission of appeals that are contained in the Regulations.

In terms of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act No. 3 of 2000, you are entitled to the right to fair, lawful and reasonable administrative action; and to written reasons for administrative action that affects you negatively. Further your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, Act No. 4 of 2013 which stipulates that the Department should conduct itself in a responsible manner when collecting, processing, storing and sharing an individual or another entity's personal information by holding the Department accountable should the Department abuses or compromises your personal information in any way.

Your attention is drawn to Chapter 2 of National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998 National Appeal Regulations published under Government Notice R993 in Government Gazette No. 38303 dated 08 December 2014 (National Appeal Regulations, 2014), which prescribe the appeal procedure to be followed. Kindly include a copy of this document (National Appeal Regulations, 2014) with the letter of notification to interested and affected parties in this matter.

Should any person wish to lodge an appeal against this decision, he/she must submit the appeal to the appeal administrator, and a copy of the appeal to the applicant, any registered interested and affected party, and any organ of state with interest in the matter within 20 days from the date that the notification of the decision was sent to the registered interested and affected parties by the applicant; or the date that the notification of the decision was sent to the applicant by the Department, whichever is applicable.

Appeals must be submitted in writing in the prescribed form to:

The Director: Appeals and Legal Review of this Department at the below mentioned addresses.

By email: appeals@environment.gov.za

By hand: Environment House
473 Steve Biko Road
Arcadia
PRETORIA
0083; or

By post: Private Bag X447
PRETORIA
0001

Please note that in terms of Section 43(7) of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, the lodging of an appeal will suspend the environmental authorisation or any provision or condition attached thereto. In the instance where an appeal is lodged, you may not commence with the activity until such time that the appeal is finalised.

To obtain the prescribed appeal form and for guidance on the submission of appeals, please visit the Department's website at https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms#legal_authorisations or request a copy of the documents at appeals@environment.gov.za.

Yours faithfully



Mr Sabelo Malaza
Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

Date: 13/05/2021

cc:	Mr. T Mthombeni	Northern Cape Department of Environment and Nature Conservation	Email: tmthombeni@ncpg.gov.za
	Mr Amos Mpela	Siyathemba Local Municipality	Email: mpela@umsobomvumun.co.za
	Liandra Scott-Shaw	SIVEST SA (Pty) Ltd	Email: liandras@sivest.co.za





forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Environmental Authorisation

In terms of Regulation 25 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended

The proposed construction and operation of the battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure for the authorised Mierdam PV Solar Energy Facility, located near the town of Prieska, in the Siyathemba Local Municipality, Northern Cape Province.

PIXLEY KA SEME DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

Authorisation register number:	<i>14/12/16/3/3/1/2260</i>
Last amended:	<i>First issue</i>
Holder of authorisation:	<i>South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Mierdam (Pty) Ltd</i>
Location of activity:	<i>Remainder of Kaffirs Kolk No 118, within the Siyathemba Local Municipality, in the Northern Cape Province.</i>

This authorisation does not negate the holder of the authorisation's responsibility to comply with any other statutory requirements that may be applicable to the undertaking of the activity.

MS

Decision

The Department is satisfied, on the basis of information available to it and subject to compliance with the conditions of this Environmental Authorisation, that the applicant should be authorised to undertake the activities specified below.

Non-compliance with a condition of this Environmental Authorisation may result in criminal prosecution or other actions provided for in the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

Details regarding the basis on which the Department reached this decision are set out in Annexure 1.

Activities authorised

By virtue of the powers conferred on it by the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended, the Department hereby authorises –

SOUTH AFRICA MAINSTREAM RENEWABLE POWER MIERDAM (PTY) LTD

(hereafter referred to as the **holder of the authorisation**)

with the following contact details –

Mr. Eugene Marais
South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Mierdam (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 45063
CAPE TOWN
7735

Tel: (021) 657 4045

Cell: (073) 871 5781

E-mail: eugene.marais@mainstreammrp.com

to undertake the following activities (hereafter referred to as "the activity") indicated in Listing Notice 1 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended:

Activity number	Activity description
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 12 (ii) (c):</u> <i>The development of—</i></p> <p><i>(ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more; where such development occurs—</i></p> <p><i>(c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;</i></p>	<p>Infrastructure associated with the BESS will be located within 32m of a watercourse.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 19:</u> <i>The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic meters into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic meters from a watercourse.</i></p>	<p>The proposed BESS and associated infrastructure will involve the infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic meters into, or the dredging, excavation, removal of material from a water course.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 27:</u> <i>The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for—</i></p> <p><i>(i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or</i></p> <p><i>(ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.</i></p>	<p>The proposed BESS will involve the clearance of more than 1ha of indigenous vegetation.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 28(ii):</u> <i>"Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture, game farming, equestrian purposes or afforestation on or after 01 April 1998 and where such development:</i></p> <p><i>(ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare;"</i></p>	<p>The proposed development site is currently zoned for agricultural land use and an area greater than 1ha will be transformed into industrial / commercial use.</p>

as described in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) dated January 2021 at:

SG 21 Code

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BESS	Latitude	Longitude
Centre point	30° 3' 32.739"S	22° 19' 42.426"E

- the proposed construction and operation of the battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure for the authorised Mierdam PV Solar Energy Facility, located near the town of Prieska, in the Siyathemba Local Municipality, within the Northern Cape Province, hereafter referred to as "the property".

The facility will comprise of the following:

- A 200MWh Battery Energy Storage Facility (BESS) with an up to 2ha development footprint within the authorised Mierdam Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility footprint.
- The BESS will serve the authorised Mierdam PV Solar Energy Facility (12/12/20/2320/2/AM3).
- **Solid State Lithium Ion Batteries** will be used for the proposed development. The container unit dimensions are approximately 17m long, 3.5m wide, and 4m high. Containers will be placed on a raised concrete plinth (30cm) and may be stacked on top of each other to a maximum height of approximately 15m. Additional instrumentation, including inverters and temperature control equipment, may be positioned between the battery containers.

Details of the BESS:

Component	Description/ Dimensions
Footprint of battery storage area (including associated infrastructure such as roads)	A maximum of approximately 2ha
Proposed technology	Solid State Lithium Ion Batteries
Capacity of battery storage (MWh)	200MWh

Conditions of this Environmental Authorisation

Scope of authorisation

1. The proposed construction and operation of the battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated infrastructure for the authorised Mierdam PV Solar Energy Facility, located near the town of Prieska, in the Siyathemba Local Municipality, within the Northern Cape Province is approved as per the centre point geographic coordinates cited in the table above.
2. Authorisation of the activity is subject to the conditions contained in this Environmental Authorisation, which form part of the Environmental Authorisation and are binding on the holder of the authorisation.
3. The holder of the authorisation is responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions contained in this Environmental Authorisation. This includes any person acting on the holder's behalf, including but not limited to, an agent, servant, contractor, sub-contractor, employee, consultant or person rendering a service to the holder of the authorisation.
4. The activities authorised must only be carried out at the property as described above.
5. Any changes to, or deviations from, the project description set out in this Environmental Authorisation must be approved, in writing, by the Department before such changes or deviations may be effected. In assessing whether to grant such approval or not, the Department may request such information as it deems necessary to evaluate the significance and impacts of such changes or deviations and it may be necessary for the holder of the authorisation to apply for further Environmental Authorisation in terms of the regulations.
6. The holder of an Environmental Authorisation must apply for an amendment of the Environmental Authorisation with the Competent Authority for any alienation, transfer or change of ownership rights in the property on which the activity is to take place.
7. This activity must commence within a period of ten (10) years from the date of issue of this Environmental Authorisation. If commencement of the activity does not occur within that period, the authorisation lapses and a new application for Environmental Authorisation must be made in order for the activity to be undertaken.
8. Construction must be completed within five (05) years of the commencement of the activity on site.
9. Commencement with one activity listed in terms of this Environmental Authorisation constitutes commencement of all authorised activities.

Notification of authorisation and right to appeal

10. The holder of the authorisation must notify every registered interested and affected party, in writing and within 14 (fourteen) calendar days of the date of this Environmental Authorisation, of the decision to authorise the activity.
11. The notification referred to must –
 - 11.1. specify the date on which the authorisation was issued;
 - 11.2. inform the interested and affected party of the appeal procedure provided for in the National Appeal Regulations, 2014;
 - 11.3. advise the interested and affected party that a copy of the authorisation will be furnished on request; and
 - 11.4. give the reasons of the Competent Authority for the decision.

Commencement of the activity

12. The authorised activity must not commence until the period for the submission of appeals has lapsed as per the National Appeal Regulations, 2014, and no appeal has been lodged against the decision. In terms of Section 43(7), an appeal under Section 43 of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended will suspend the Environmental Authorisation or any provision or condition attached thereto. In the instance where an appeal is lodged you may not commence with the activity until such time that the appeal has been finalised.

Management of the activity

13. The site locality map attached as Figure 2 of the FBAR dated January 2021 is approved.
14. The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) submitted as Appendix 8 of the FBAR dated January 2021 is approved and must be implemented and adhered to.
15. The EMPr must be implemented and strictly enforced during all phases of the project. It shall be seen as a dynamic document and shall be included in all contract documentation for all phases of the development when approved.
16. Changes to the approved EMPr must be submitted in accordance to the EIA Regulations applicable at the time.
17. The Department reserves the right to amend the approved EMPr should any impacts that were not anticipated or covered in the FBAR be discovered.

Frequency and process of updating the EMPr

18. The EMPr must be updated where the findings of the environmental audit reports, contemplated in Condition 28 below, indicate insufficient mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity, or insufficient levels of compliance with the environmental authorisation or EMPr.
19. The updated EMPr must contain recommendations to rectify the shortcomings identified in the environmental audit report.
20. The updated EMPr must be submitted to the Department for approval together with the environmental audit report, as per Regulation 34 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended. The updated EMPr must have been subjected to a public participation process, which process has been agreed to by the Department, prior to submission of the updated EMPr to the Department for approval.
21. In assessing whether to grant approval of an EMPr which has been updated as a result of an audit, the Department will consider the processes prescribed in Regulation 35 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended. Prior to approving an amended EMPr, the Department may request such amendments to the EMPr as it deems appropriate to ensure that the EMPr sufficiently provides for avoidance, management and mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity.
22. The holder of the authorisation must apply for an amendment of an EMPr, if such amendment is required before an audit is required. The amendment process is prescribed in Regulation 37 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. The holder of the authorisation must request comments on the proposed amendments to the impact management outcomes of the EMPr or amendments to the closure objectives of the closure plan from potentially interested and affected parties, including the competent authority, by using any of the methods provided for in the Act for a period of at least 30 days.

Monitoring

23. The holder of the authorisation must appoint an experienced Environmental Control Officer (ECO) for the construction phase of the development that will have the responsibility to ensure that the mitigation/rehabilitation measures and recommendations referred to in this environmental authorisation are implemented and to ensure compliance with the provisions of the approved EMPr.
 - 23.1. The ECO must be appointed before commencement of any authorised activities.
 - 23.2. Once appointed, the name and contact details of the ECO must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.

- 23.3. The ECO must keep record of all activities on site, problems identified, transgressions noted and a task schedule of tasks undertaken by the ECO.
- 23.4. The ECO must remain employed until all rehabilitation measures, as required for implementation due to construction damage, are completed and the site is ready for operation.

Recording and reporting to the Department

24. All documentation e.g. audit/monitoring/compliance reports and notifications, required to be submitted to the Department in terms of this environmental authorisation, must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
25. The holder of the environmental authorisation must, for the period during which the environmental authorisation and EMPr remain valid, ensure that project compliance with the conditions of the environmental authorisation and the EMPr are audited, and that the audit reports are submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
26. The frequency of auditing and of submission of the environmental audit reports must be as per the frequency indicated in the EMPr, taking into account the processes for such auditing as prescribed in Regulation 34 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.
27. The holder of the authorisation must, in addition, submit environmental audit reports to the Department within 30 days of completion of the construction phase (i.e. within 30 days of site handover) and a final environmental audit report within 30 days of completion of rehabilitation activities.
28. The environmental audit reports must be compiled in accordance with Appendix 7 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended and must indicate the date of the audit, the name of the auditor and the outcome of the audit in terms of compliance with the environmental authorisation conditions as well as the requirements of the approved EMPr.
29. Records relating to monitoring and auditing must be kept on site and made available for inspection to any relevant and competent authority in respect of this development.

Notification to authorities

30. A written notification of commencement must be given to the Department no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the activity. Commencement for the purposes of this condition includes site preparation. The notice must include a date on which it is anticipated that the activity will commence, as well as a reference number.

Operation of the activity

31. A written notification of operation must be given to the Department no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the activity operational phase.

Site closure and decommissioning

32. Should the activity ever cease or become redundant, the holder of the authorisation must undertake the required actions as prescribed by legislation at the time and comply with all relevant legal requirements administered by any relevant and Competent Authority at that time.

Specific conditions

33. Vegetation clearing must be limited to the required footprint for actual construction works and operational activities. Mitigation measures must be implemented to reduce the risk of erosion and the invasion of alien species.
34. No exotic plants must be used for rehabilitation purposes.
35. Should any archaeological sites, artefacts, paleontological fossils or graves be exposed during construction, work in the immediate vicinity of the find must be stopped, SAHRA must be informed and the services of an accredited heritage professional obtained for an assessment of the heritage resources to be made.
36. An integrated waste management approach must be implemented that is based on waste minimisation and must incorporate reduction, recycling, re-use and disposal where appropriate.
37. Any solid waste, which will not be recycled, must be disposed of at a landfill licensed in terms of section 20 (b) of the National Environment Management Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008). No waste material may be left on site after construction.
38. The recommendations of the EAP in the FBAR dated January 2021 and the specialist studies attached must be adhered to. In the event of any conflicting mitigation measures and conditions of the Environmental Authorisation, the specific condition of this Environmental Authorisation will take preference.

General

39. A copy of this Environmental Authorisation, the audit and compliance monitoring reports, and the approved EMP, must be made available for inspection and copying-
- 39.1. at the site of the authorised activity;
- 39.2. to anyone on request; and

- 39.3. where the holder of the Environmental Authorisation has a website, on such publicly accessible website.
40. National government, provincial government, local authorities or committees appointed in terms of the conditions of this authorisation or any other public authority shall not be held responsible for any damages or losses suffered by the holder of the authorisation or his/her successor in title in any instance where construction or operation subsequent to construction be temporarily or permanently stopped for reasons of non-compliance by the holder of the authorisation with the conditions of authorisation as set out in this document or any other subsequent document emanating from these conditions of authorisation.

Date of Environmental Authorisation: 13/05/2021



Mr Sabelo Malaza

Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

Annexure 1: Reasons for Decision

1. Information considered in making the decision

In reaching its decision, the Department took, *inter alia*, the following into consideration -

- a) The listed activities as applied for in the amended application form received on 25 January 2021.
- b) The information contained in the FBAR dated January 2021.
- c) Mitigation measures as proposed in the FBAR and the EMPr.
- d) The information contained in the specialist studies/compliance statements contained within the appendices of the FBAR dated January 2021 and as appears below:

Title	Prepared by	Date
Agricultural Compliance Statement	Johann Lanz	1 November 2020
Geotechnical Impact Assessment	GaGE Consulting (Pty) Ltd –	5 November 2020
Terrestrial Ecology Impact Assessment	Dr David Hoare –	November 2020
Heritage Impact Assessment	PGS Heritage Pty Ltd	2 November 2020
Palaeontology Impact Assessment	Elize Butler (Banzai Environmental (Pty) Ltd	8 November 2020:
Social Impact Assessment	Dr Neville Bews & Associates	5 November 2020:
Aquatic Impact Assessment	Dr Bruce Scott-Shaw (Nature Stamp)	October 2020
Noise Impact Assessment	Enviro-Acoustic Research cc-	October 2020
Transportation Compliance Statement	Merchandt Le Maitre	5 November 2020

2. Key factors considered in making the decision

All information presented to the Department was taken into account in the Department's consideration of the application. A summary of the issues which, in the Department's view, were of the most significance is set out below.

- a) The findings of all the specialist studies conducted, the specialist confirmation letters and their recommended mitigation measures.
- b) The need for the proposed project stems from the provision of electricity to the national grid.
- c) The FBAR dated January 2021 identified all legislation and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the FBAR.

- d) The location of the proposed BESS facility within the authorised footprint of the Mierdam SEF.
- e) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the FBAR dated January 2021 and the specialist studies have been adequately indicated.
- f) A sufficient public participation process was undertaken and the applicant has satisfied the minimum requirements as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended for public involvement.

3. Findings

After consideration of the information and factors listed above, the Department made the following findings -

- a) The identification and assessment of impacts are detailed in the FBAR dated January 2021 and sufficient assessment of the key identified issues and impacts have been completed.
- b) The procedure followed for impact assessment is adequate for the decision-making process.
- c) The information contained in the FBAR dated January 2021 is deemed to be accurate and credible.
- d) The proposed mitigation of impacts identified and assessed adequately curtails the identified impacts.
- e) EMPr measures for the pre-construction, construction and rehabilitation phases of the development were proposed and included in the FBAR and will be implemented to manage the identified environmental impacts during the construction phase.

In view of the above, the Department is satisfied that, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in the environmental authorisation, the authorised activities will not conflict with the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the authorised activities can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The environmental authorisation is accordingly granted.