

NEXT STEPS

IAPs have until the 12th April 2021 to register as an IAP in the first round of stakeholder engagement and to raise issues about the proposed project.

The next step is the release of the BAR. Copies of the reports will be placed in selected accessible public venues as well as online platforms such as Dropbox for easy access. We will inform registered IAPs where to review the report and you will be given 30 days to comment on the report. If you wish to raise any initial issues or concerns regarding the proposed project, or if you would like to register as an IAP, please contact the public participation office, on the details provided below:



**MYEZO ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT SERVICES**
Environmental Stewardship

Myezo Environmental Management Services (Pty) Ltd

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Contact Person: Lyn Madziwanzira 073 894 7282
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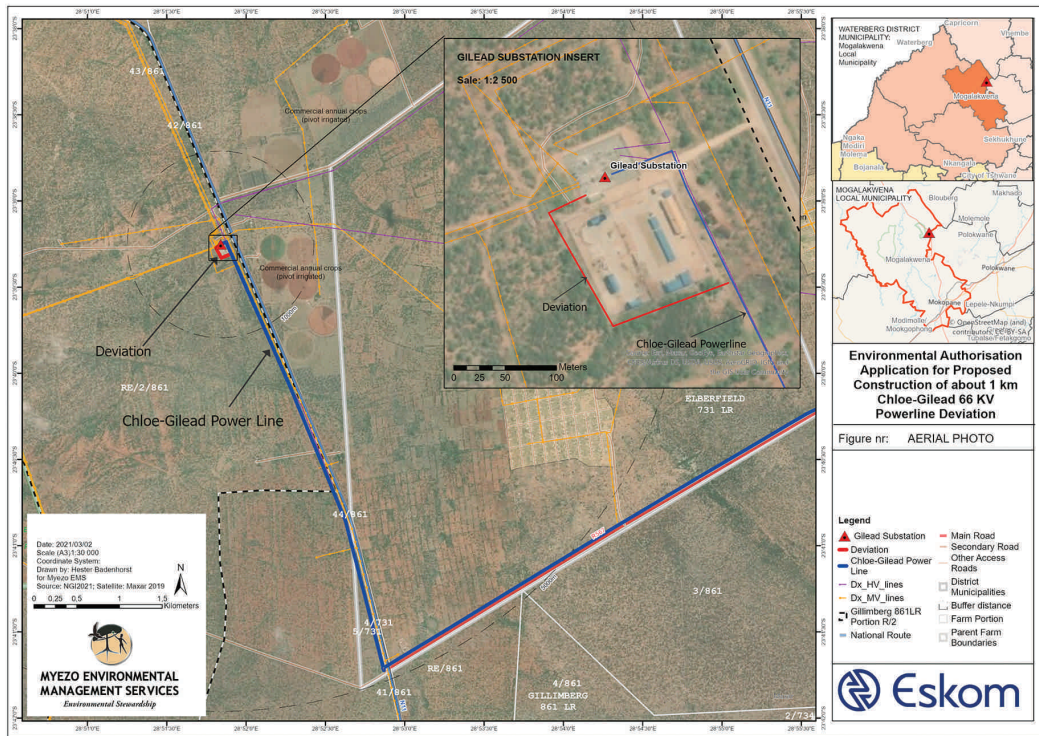
MYEZO ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Environmental Stewardship

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 41 (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (e) and (3) of National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA): Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2014, which were published in Government Notice (GN) R982 (Government Gazette No. 3822), as amended in 2017 under GN R326.

Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) are being notified of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Basic Assessment) process, which is being undertaken for the proposed construction activities for the deviation of an existing Gilead 66 kV powerline (approximately 1km deviation) located within Mogalakwena Local Municipality, Waterberg District Municipality Limpopo Province.



Aerial Map (Figure 1)



Gilead substation

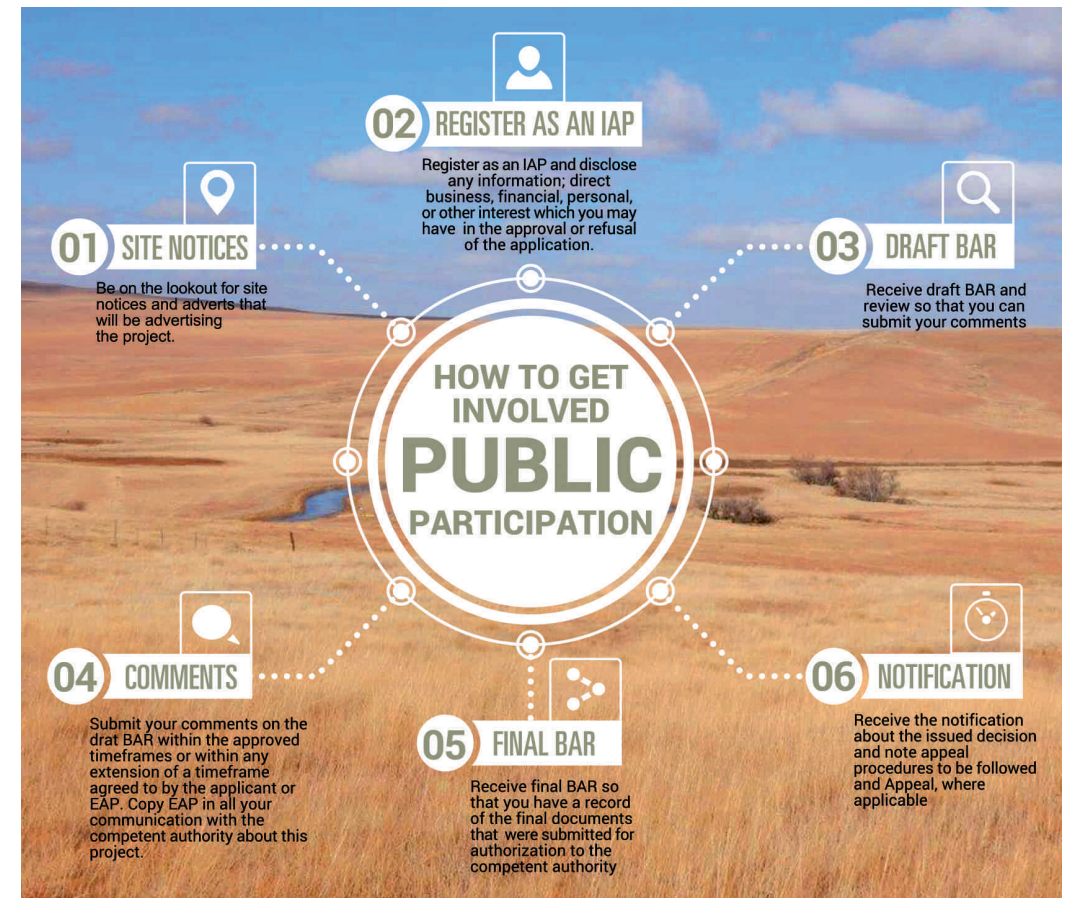
HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

The Public Participation Process (PPP) is an integral part of the EIA Process which runs throughout the assessment phases and only ends after the decision for authorization of the proposed project is finalized.

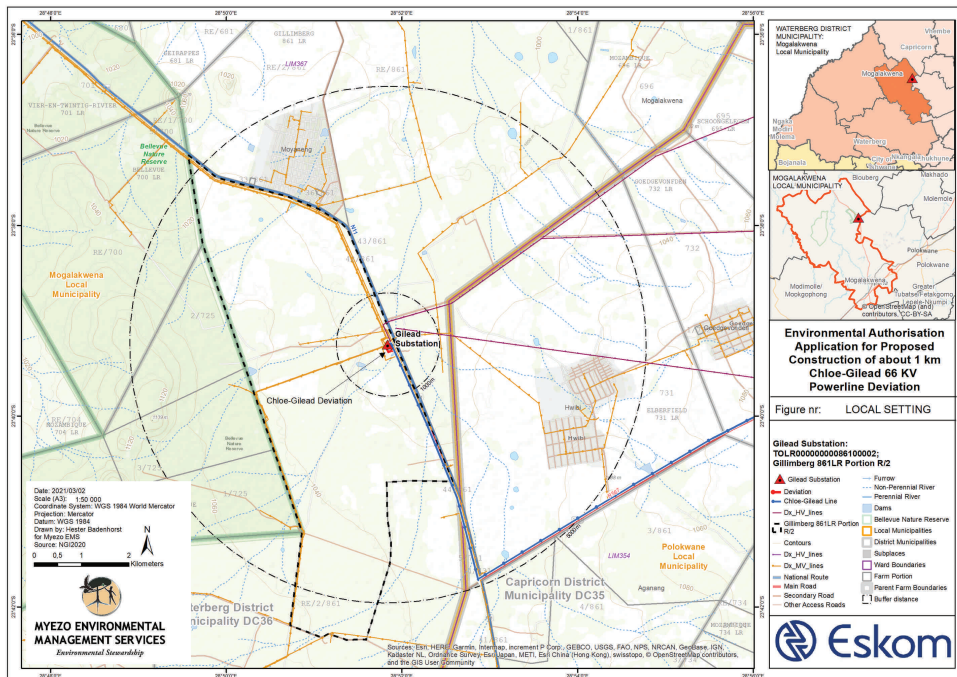
Anyone who represents an affected organization or organ of state, or anyone who owns or lawfully occupies either the affected property or adjacent properties of the project, are already automatically registered as IAP's on the project database, even though we still request your involvement to ensure that your details are up to date and are accurate.

If you do not fall under these groups, but have an interest in the project, please register as an IAP. You are welcome to use the provided comment sheet or send your own email with your full contact details and represented organisation. Registered IAPs will be notified about the public commenting periods, as well as submission of documents to the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF). These notifications will detail the environmental process timelines and methods for submitting environmental comments or issues pertaining to the project.

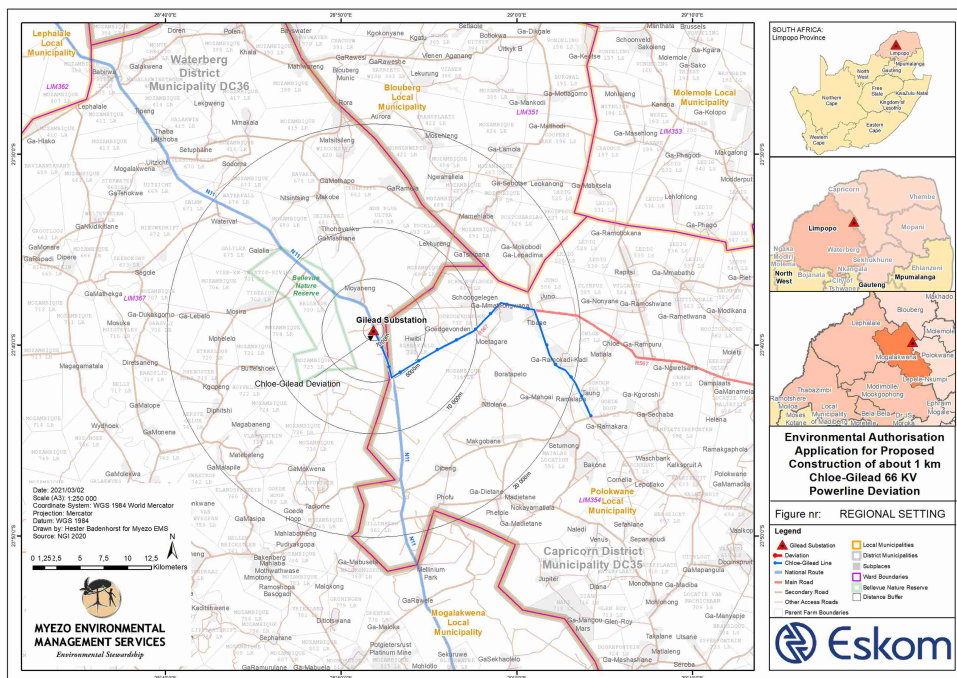
Below is an illustration of how you can be involved in this process



PROPOSED LOCATION



Local setting map (Figure 2)



Regional setting map (Figure 3)

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document has been compiled as an information sharing tool, to facilitate gathering of issues for the basic assessment process, which is being undertaken in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No.107 of 1998), as amended (NEMA). The purpose of the document is to provide:

- Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) with background information and an overview of the planned construction activities;
- An overview of the Basic Assessment Process;
- Details on how IAPs can become involved in the basic assessment process and raise issues, concerns and/or suggestions, regarding this proposed project.

WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED & WHERE?

Eskom Holdings (SOC) Limited (Eskom) identified the need to upgrade the infrastructure between the two substations in order to improve the reliability of the existing electricity supply and also where possible, provide new electricity supply for any additional customers. Eskom was granted an environmental authorisation (EA) for the proposed development of the Chloe-Gilead powerline, nonetheless, the activities for which the authorisation was granted are yet to be undertaken.

After some considerations, a decision was made to deviate part of the powerline, hence this proposed project. For the proposed project Eskom seeks to deviate 1km of the existing 66kV Chloe-Gilead powerline and have it connected to a new feeder, as well as dismantle the existing 66kV Chloe-Gilead powerline on Portion R/2 of Farm Gillimberg 861LR, Eskom Gilead Substation, within Mogalakwena Local Municipality, A map indicating the powerline deviation can be viewed as Figure 1. The project regional and local setting maps can be viewed as Figure 2 and Figure 3, respectively.

MOTIVATION FOR THE PROJECT

Electricity in Mogalakwena Local Municipality is supplied and serviced by Eskom in conjunction with the local municipality. However, the majority of the rural areas receive their electricity supply directly from Eskom. Eskom is divided into several operating units and the unit that manages and supplies within Mogalakwena Local Municipality is the Limpopo Operating Unit (LOU). LOU has identified a need to upgrade the electricity distribution infrastructure between the existing Chloe and Gilead substations in order to improve the reliability of the existing electricity supply and also where possible provide new supply for any additional customers.

For the pole structures, Eskom will make use of wooden material which is currently being used on site. However, it has been observed that the wooden poles that are currently being utilised do not have a long lifetime span due to wood material's susceptibility to environmental effects which can lead to overall deterioration of the wood structure through decay. This has therefore necessitated the use of steel monopole structures which a stronger and cheaper option in terms of cost per year. Thus, the use of steel monopoles is considered as an alternative option to wooden poles which are considered as the preferred option.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The scope of work for the proposed project entails the following activities:
 About one (1) km deviation of the existing 66kV Chloe-Gilead powerline and have it connected to a new feeder; and dismantling the existing 66kV Chloe-Gilead powerline.

The technical undertaking will involve the following:

- The erection of steel monopoles poles and lines for a length of about one km
- A servitude with about 18 metres, 36 m on either side of the powerline
- The clearance of vegetation on the servitude and construction laydown area
- There are no access roads to be constructed since the proposed powerline is situated along existing routes

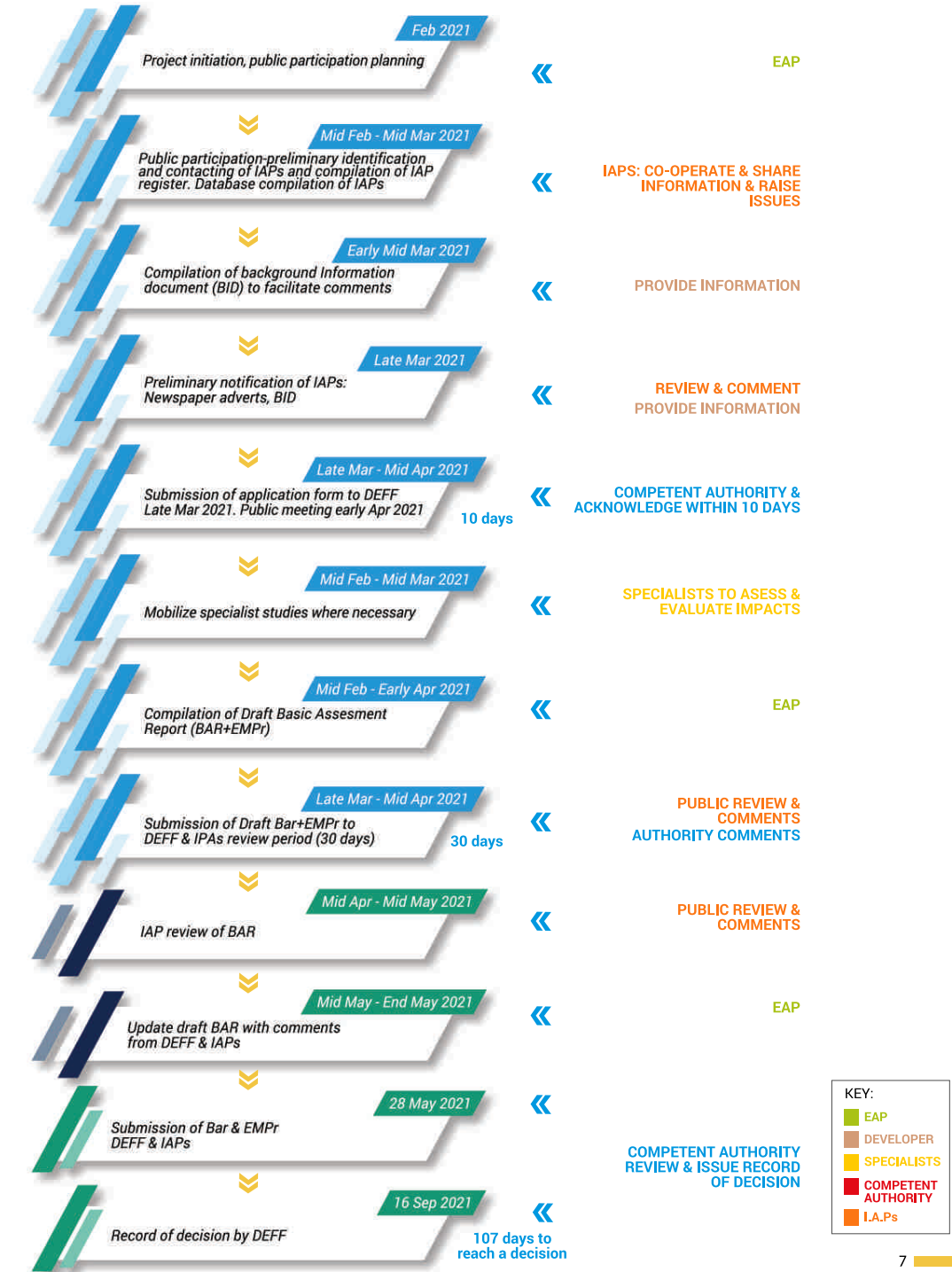


Powerline segment to be dismantled



Access to Gilead substation from off the N11

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS TO BE FOLLOWED & ROLES TO BE PLAYED BY VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN THIS PROCESS



POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Preliminary biophysical and socio-economic screening as well desktop review of the existing current studies, identified certain issues that would need to be investigated to ascertain the impacts. Consequently, the following specialist investigations are underway:

- Biodiversity studies
- Avifauna studies
- Heritage studies
- Paleontology studies

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Public participation is the basic foundation of an EIA process. The principles of the NEMA govern most aspects of Environmental Impact Assessments, including public participation. These include the ongoing transparent provision of sufficient information to IAP's. During the public participation process ,IAP's, technical experts, government authorities and the public will be gathered to result in a better understanding of the project for an involved, and more informed decision-making throughout the process. IAPs will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings of environmental and specialist studies during the specified commenting periods.

The stakeholder engagement will include media adverts, erection of site notices, consultation with appropriate stakeholders, public notification of IAPs about the competent authority's decision.



Access to Eskom Gilead substation and offices and a portion of the powerline to be dismantled



Proposed deviation pathway of the Gilead powerline

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

■ **Biological Diversity**

The project area falls within a Savanna Biome, the vegetation is characterised by the Makhado Sweet Bushveld, which is prevalent between the Southpansberg and Waterberg of the Limpopo Province. The Makhado Sweet Bushveld is known for its shrubby bushveld and the area has patches of well-developed grass cover. The indigenous trees and shrubs present at the project site include, *Vachellia tortilis*, *Dichrostachys cinerea*, *Cussonia natalensis*, *Euphorbia ingens*, *Mundulea sericea*, *Elephantorrhiza burkei*, *Annona senegalensis*, *Ficus glumosa*, *F. tettensis*, *F. ingens*, *Elephantorrhiza burkei*, *Vangueria parvifolia*, *Burkea africana*, *Englerophytum magalismontanum*, *Nuxia congesta* and *Ormocarpum trichocarpum*, to name a few. The soils are characterised by greyish sands, eutrophic plinthic catenas, red, yellow apedal drained soils with a high base and clayey soils in the low lying areas. The mean annual precipitation in the area is between 350-550mm, with summer rainfalls and dry winters. The altitude ranges from 850- 1200m.

■ **Considered Alternatives**

The considered alternatives pertaining to project designs are:

1. Pole Structure:- this option is currently being used on site and is the preferred one; and
2. Steel Monopole Structure:- this option is considered as an alternative to the pole structure.

■ **Socio-economic**

The proposed construction of a powerline will be undertaken on Portion R/2 of Farm Gillimberg 861LR, Gilead, under the jurisdiction of Mogalakwena Local Municipality within Waterberg District Municipality, Limpopo Province. The site is approximately 3 km south of Ham Number 1 (Moyaneng) village; 8 km north-west of Hwibi Village; 12 km south-east of Bellevue Nature Reserve; 64 km north of Mokopane and 80 km north east of Polokwane. The site can be accessed via the N11 road. Mokopane is town is the service town for the area.



Eskom Gilead substation offices

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING continued...

■ *Socio-economic continued*

The development site is currently under use by Eskom, owned by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, and much of the area comprises of shrubs. Due to the availability of villages close to the project site, and the presence of the N11 road, the proposed project area is surrounded by a number of businesses. Also, there are two schools which have been identified in the closest village, Ham Number 1. In addition, the area is located in a rural setting, thus, under Traditional Authority, headed by a Chief meaning the area is both headed by Chief and a Ward Councilor.

WHY ARE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES REQUIRED?

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (No.107 of 1998) [NEMA], as amended, and associated EIA Regulations published in 2014, an Environmental Authorisation must be obtained from the relevant decision-making Competent Authority, Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), prior Authority, prior to the commencement of certain listed activities, that may result in potential negative impacts on the environment. This proposed development is triggering some of the listed activities in terms of NEMA regulations. An application for environmental authorisation must be lodged to the competent authority, who in this instance is the, who in this case is the, Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries.

CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES WILL ENTAIL

- Clearance of vegetation;
- Erection of structures as steel monopole and powerlines;
- The establishment of a construction laydown area, if need be
- Dismantling of an existing powerline, approximately 200 metres in length, including associated infrastructures such as poles (3 to 4 poles)

ROLE PLAYERS IN THE BASIC ASSESMENT & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Eskom SOC Holdings Limited have appointed Myezo Environmental Management Services (Pty) Ltd, as an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), to undertake the Environmental Impact Assessment.

It should be noted that during this process there are various stakeholders who are key role players in the success of the process. These stakeholders are:

- The developer: who would be required to provide information pertaining to their development plans. This information is then processed and assessed for fatal flaws and risks by the environmental assessment practitioner.
- There is a suite of technical experts who will be providing input into the environmental process by supplying technical information.

Their Respective Roles Are:

- Determination of the most feasible site for the proposed construction activities
- The provision of architectural and civil design in compliance with the required legislation documents
- The environmental assessment practitioner act as a facilitator to ensure that the information and project plans are scientifically analysed and that the best options are recommended
- The IAPs are given an opportunity to process the information and provide their comments. Should there be fatal flaws, the developers respond to the comments and re-visit plans to ascertain how certain identified impacts can be best addressed
- The other key role players are the competent authority, who are the decision makers in this process

BASIC ASSESMENT PROCESS

Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) is the competent authority for the proposed project and as such an environmental authorisation will be submitted to them through procedures that are prescribed in the EIA regulations, Government Notice R982 and a basic assessment process will be followed.

Basic Assessment Process: is the environmental impact assessment process, applied to activities listed in Listing 1 and 3 of the EIA regulations, which are smaller scale activities, the impacts of which are generally known and can be easily managed. Typically, these activities are considered less likely to have significant environmental impacts and, therefore, do not require a full EIA process. Notice is hereby given in terms of Sections 41(2), (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (3) of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA): Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, published in Government Notice (GN) R982 and Government Gazette No. 3822, as amended in 2017, under GNR326. These regulations were promulgated in terms of Sections 24 (5) and 44 of the NEMA.

The activities to be undertaken under this planned application which are triggered under the NEMA regulations include Listed Activities: 11 (under Listing Notice 1-GN R983 2014, as amended in 2017 under GN R327); 12e (ii) (under Listing Notice 3- GN R985 2014, as amended in 2017 under GN R324) and therefore, basic assessment procedures will be followed for this application.