



GAUTENG PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Reference: GAUT 002/21-22/E3054

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Soventix South Africa (Pty) Ltd
8 Quantum Road
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By Registered Mail

Email: jp.devilliers@soventix.com

Telephone number: 021 852 7333

Dear Mr. Jean-Paul De Villiers,

GDARD
Office of the HOD
31 AUG 2022 000015

ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION GRANTED FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOVENTIX UNILEVER 3.2MWP SOLAR PLANT PHOTO-VOLTAIC (PV) PLANT ON ERF 757 AND 758 OF BOKSBURG EAST EXTENSION 19 (THE REMAINDER OF PORTION 127 OF THE FARM VOGELFONTEIN 84-IR), CITY OF EKURHULENI METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY.

With reference to the above subject, please be advised that the Department has decided to grant environmental authorisation. An 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, you must notify all registered interested and affected parties, in writing, within 14 days of the date of this EA, of the Department's decision in respect of your application as well as the provisions that are contained on the Appeal Regulations regarding the submission of appeals. A copy of this EA must also be appended to the letter of notification to the interested and affected parties.

Your attention is drawn to Chapter 2 of the National Appeals Regulations, 2014, which prescribes the appeal procedure to be followed. Should any person wish to lodge an appeal against this decision or any aspect of 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 on 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. The appeal(s) must be submitted in writing by any of the following means:

Postal Address:

The Appeals Administrator
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
P.O. Box 8769
Johannesburg
2000

Physical Address

The Appeals Administrator
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
56 Eloff Street, Umnotho House, 23rd Floor
Johannesburg
2000

Fax No: 011 240 3158/2700

Email Address: appeals@gauteng.gov.za

The appeal must be submitted in the prescribed appeal form obtainable from the appeal administrator, Ms. Tsholofelo Mere, at telephone number 011 240 3204 or email address tsholofelo.mere@gauteng.gov.za. The appeal form is also available from the website: www.gauteng.gov.za. Should you have any queries or require additional information regarding the appeal process, you can contact the appeal administrator on any of the mentioned contact details.

Kindly take note that in terms of Section 43(7) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA), as amended, the lodging of an appeal suspends an environmental authorisation as well as its associated Environmental Management Programme. This means that the activity authorised by this EA must not commence until such time that the appeal is finalised.

Kind regards,



MS MATILDA GASELA

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: 31 August 2022

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Office of the HOD
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GAUTENG PROVINCE

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION

Reference Number:	GAUT 002/21-22/E3054
Holder of Authorisation:	Soventix South Africa (Pty) Ltd
Location of Activity / Activities:	Erf 757 and 758 Boksburg East Extension 19 (the Remainder of Portion 127 of the farm Vogelfontein 84-IR)

Coordinates:	Latitude (S)	Longitude (E)
	26°13'09.65"	28°16'02.19"

21 Digit SG Number	T0IR00760000075700000	
	T0IR00760000075800000	
	T0IR000000000008400127	

1. Decision

The Department is satisfied, on the basis of the 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.

2. Activities Authorised

Under the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (as amended) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, the Department hereby authorises- **Soventix South Africa (Pty) Ltd**

with the following contact details-

8 Quantum Road
SOMERSET WEST
7130

Tel No.: 021 852 7333

Email: jp.devilliers@soventix.com

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to undertake the activities listed in the table below:

Activity number and description	Proposed activity/development description
GN R. 983: Listing Notice 1 Activity Number 1 The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where- (i) the electricity output is more than 10 megawatts but less than 20 megawatts; or (ii) the output is 10 megawatts or less but the total extent of the facility covers an area in excess of 1 hectare;	The proposed renewable energy electricity generating facility and associated infrastructure. The solar PV facility will have a maximum export capacity of 3.2MWp in an area of approximately 3.6 hectares in extent.
GN R. 983: Listing Notice 1 Activity Number 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 proposed mounting system (piled system) will require the excavation or removal of soil where a metal pile is driven into the soil on which the main structural beam is mounted. The area proposed for drilling is a depression wetland and falls within Ecological Support Areas (ESAs).
GN R. 985: Listing Notice 3 Activity Number 12 (c) (ii) The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation. c. Gauteng ii. Within Critical Biodiversity Areas or Ecological Support Areas identified in the Gauteng Conservation Plan or bioregional plans	The proposed facility is located on undeveloped land which consists of primary vegetation as per the Gauteng C-plan Version 3; 3 and such land parcels cover 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation.

GN R. 985: Listing Notice 3 Activity 14

The development of (ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more; where such development occurs -within a watercourse; in Gauteng iv. Sites identified as Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) or Ecological Support Areas (ESAs) in the Gauteng Conservation Plan or in bioregional plans;

The proposed mounting system (piled system) will require the excavation or removal of soil where a metal pile is driven into the soil on which the main structural beam is mounted. The area proposed for drilling is a depression wetland and falls within Ecological Support Areas (ESAs).

- for the proposed soventix unilever 3.2 MWp solar photo voltaic plant facility on Erf 757 and 758 Boksburg East Extension 19 (the Remainder of Portion 127 of the farm Vogelfontein 84-IR), City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality.

Conditions of this Environmental Authorisation.

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3. Scope of Environmental Authorisation

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- 3.1 Environmental Authorisation is granted for the proposed Soventix Unilever (Alternative 2) 3.2MWp solar photo-voltaic (PV) plant on Erf 757 and 758 Boksburg East Extension 19 (the Remainder of Portion 127 of the farm Vogelfontein 84-IR).
- 3.2 The applicant must appoint Environmental Control Officer to supervise the development of the proposed activity.
- 3.3 The approval of this Environmental Authorisation include installation of:
 - Vehicle service tracks
 - Inverters and
 - Lighting and fencing on a 3.6 hectares of development footprint.
- 3.4 All activities on the site must be undertaken in accordance with the Local Authority's By-Laws.
- 3.5 Preferred Layout Plan 2 attached as Appendix A dated 17 May 2022 is approved and forms part of this EA.

4. Commencement and completion of the development activities

- 4.1 The proposed activities must be concluded within a period of 10 years from the date of signature of this EA. If the authorised activities have not been concluded within that period, the authorisation lapses.
- 4.2 Continuation of the authorised activity or activities after the lapsing period of this EA and where such continuation will meet the threshold of any listed activity or activities, will constitute an offence.
- 4.3 Commencement with one listed activity authorised in terms of this environmental authorisation constitutes commencement with all other authorised activities.

5. Management of the activity or activities

- 5.1 The Environmental Management Programme ("EMPr") submitted as part of the application for EA is approved and must be implemented.
- 5.2 This Department (GDARD) must be informed of any environmental and pollution incidents relating to the proposed activity within twenty-four (24) hours of such incidents occurring.
- 5.3 Management of all waste streams generated during construction and operational phase must be managed in accordance with the hierarchy of waste management principles.
- 5.4 The Applicant must submit recommendations to amend the EMPr where the findings of the environmental audit reports indicate insufficient mitigation of environmental impacts

associated with the undertaking of the activities, or insufficient levels of compliance with the environmental authorisation or the EMPr.

- 5.5 The request to amend the EMPr must contain recommendations or mitigation to rectify the shortcomings identified in the environmental audit report.
- 5.6 The recommendation to amend the EMPr must be submitted to the Department for approval together with the environmental audit report in accordance with the regulations. Such updated EMPr must have been subjected to public participation process, which has been agreed to by the competent authority prior submission.
- 5.7 In assessing whether to grant approval of an amended EMPr because of an audit report, the competent authority may request such amendments to the EMPr as it deems appropriate to ensure that the EMPr or closure plan sufficiently provides for avoidance, management and mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activities.
- 5.8 The environmental audit report must be compiled in accordance with appendix 7 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 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 EMPr.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

- 6.1 Records relating to monitoring and auditing must be kept on the site and made available to any authorised person(s) acting on behalf of the relevant competent authority in respect of the development.
- 6.2 The Environmental Control Officer must submit audit reports during the commencement of the development activity, halfway through the construction phase and post rehabilitation phase and as when the ECO deems necessary in between the said intervals.
- 6.3 The report must contain information on the different environmental features identified on the development site and how such issues were considered during the construction process.

7. Notification of commencement of activity

- 7.1 A written notification of commencement of the activities, including site preparation, must be given to the Department 14 days prior to commencement of the activities on the site. The notice must include the date on which it is anticipated that the activities will commence as well as the EA reference number and be submitted to Director: Compliance Monitoring Ms Sasa Sekhotha, the official of the Department at the email address Sasa.Sekhotha@gauteng.gov.za.

8. General Conditions

- 8.1 The conditions of this EA are binding on the holder of the EA ("The Holder"), including any person acting on his or her behalf, including but not limited to an agent, sub-contractor, employee or person rendering a service to the holder of the EA.
- 8.2 The activities authorised may only be carried out at the property or site indicated in this EA.
- 8.3 Any changes to, or deviation from, the activities description set out in this EA must follow the appropriate amendment process described in the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, and be approved, in writing, by the Department before such changes or deviation are effected. In assessing whether to approve such changes 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 EA to apply for further authorisations in terms of the Regulations.
- 8.4 Where any of the applicant's contact details changes, including the name of the holder of the EA, the physical or postal address and/or telephonic details, the applicant must follow the relevant amendment process as prescribed in the Environmental Impact Assessment

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- Regulations, by submitting an amendment application to the Department for consideration and decision making as soon as the new details become known to the applicant.
- 8.5 This EA does not negate the holder's responsibility to comply with any other statutory requirements that may be applicable to the undertaking of the activities.
- 8.6 This EA and EMPr must be kept at the property or site where the activities will be undertaken. The documents must be produced to any authorised official of the Department who requests to inspect them and must also be made available for inspection by any employee or agent of the holder of the EA who works or undertakes work at the property.
- 8.7 Non-compliance with a condition of this EA may result in criminal prosecution or other actions provided for in the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (as amended) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.
- 8.8 If the Department has reason to believe that the EA was obtained through, fraud, non-disclosure of material information or misrepresentation of a material fact, the Department may, in writing, suspend or partially suspend, with immediate effect, the EA and direct the holder of such EA forthwith to cease any activities that have been commenced with or to refrain from commencing any activity, pending a decision to withdraw the EA.

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Date of the Environmental Authorisation:

31 August 2022

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ANNEXURE 1: REASON FOR DECISION

1. Background

The applicant, applied for an EA for the development of the proposed solar PV facility on Erf 757 and 758 Boksburg East Extension 19 (the Remainder of Portion 127 of the farm Vogelfontein 84-IR), City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality.

The applicant appointed Ecologes Environmental Consultants to undertake a Basic Assessment Process.

1. Information considered in making the decision

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

- 1.1 The information contained in the Basic Assessment report received by the Department on 05 July 2022.
- 1.2 The relevant information contained in the Departmental information base including the Geographical Information System (GIS), Gauteng Conservation Plan Version 3.3, the Gauteng Pollution Buffer Zone Guidelines, 2017 and the Gauteng Provincial Environmental Management Framework (GPEMF), 2015.
- 1.3 The objectives and requirements of relevant legislation, policies and guidelines, including Section 2 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (as amended).
- 1.4 Screening tool report generated on 19 October 2021.
- 1.5 The finding of the site inspection undertaken by Mr. Thabane Sibeko, the official of the Department on 25 April 2022.

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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.

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- 2.1 The need and desirability of the proposed solar voltaic plant.
- 2.2 The environmental status quo of the site together with socio-economic impacts posed by the proposed development.
- 2.3 The Gauteng Provincial Environmental Management Framework (GPEMF), 2015 which indicates that the site falls within Environmental Zone 1 and 2.
- 2.4 Public participation process undertaken as part of the proposed development.

3. Findings

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

- 3.1 The proposed solar plant forms part of "green energy" initiative being implemented at various Unilever facilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce their environmental footprint and improve electricity supply.
- 3.2 The proposed development is in a semi-industrial area and will assist in maintaining job security for the factory workers of Unilever. This renewable energy project will work towards the IDP goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, climate change and improving the air quality within the Ekurhuleni Municipality.
- 3.3 The Site Selection Matrix indicated that Alternative 2 scoring a Medium-Low impact (impact score of 36) compared to other alternatives.

- 3.4 Alternative 2 is supported as the preferred site with a potential marginal overlap into Alternative 1 to provide adequate space for the full generation capacity in light of the various services and servitudes and requisite setback distances (e.g. Eskom powerlines).
- 3.5 The recommendations pertaining to the potential impact on the heritage artefacts must be implemented noting that the proposed activity has a very low impact on materials buried underneath the areas surface.
- 3.6 The nature of the proposed development is such that it will likely not be significantly affected by the existence of ash dump/refuse on the site. However, should that be the case, the applicant must submit the rehabilitation and mitigation plan to manage such impacts through the implementation and monitoring system provided in Part 3 and Part 4 of the EIA Regulations, 2014.
- 3.7 The Public Participation process carried out is in accordance with the requirements of Public Participation Process as outlined in the EIA Regulations 2014.

In view of the above, the Department is satisfied that, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in this EA, the activities will not conflict with the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (as amended) and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the proposed activities can be mitigated to an acceptable level. The Environmental Authorisation is accordingly granted.

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