

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS  
FINAL BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROPOSED HARMONY ELAND PV SOLAR  
FACILITY, FREE STATE PROVINCE

(DEA REF: 14/12/16/3/3/1/1471)

December 2015

Prepared for:

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## environmental affairs

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

(For official use only)

**File Reference Number:**

**Application Number:**

**Date Received:**


Basic assessment report in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended.

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### Kindly note that:

1. This **basic assessment report** is a standard report that may be required by a competent authority in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014 and is meant to streamline applications. Please make sure that it is the report used by the particular competent authority for the activity that is being applied for.
2. This report format is current as of **08 December 2014**. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ascertain whether subsequent versions of the form have been published or produced by the competent authority.
3. The report must be typed within the spaces provided in the form. The size of the spaces provided is not necessarily indicative of the amount of information to be provided. The report is in the form of a table that can extend itself as each space is filled with typing.
4. Where applicable **tick** the boxes that are applicable in the report.
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6. The use of "not applicable" in the report must be done with circumspection because if it is used in respect of material information that is required by the competent authority for assessing the application, it may result in the rejection of the application as provided for in the regulations.
7. This report must be handed in at offices of the relevant competent authority as determined by each authority.
8. No faxed or e-mailed reports will be accepted.
9. The signature of the EAP on the report must be an original signature.
10. The report must be compiled by an independent environmental assessment practitioner.
11. Unless protected by law, all information in the report will become public information on receipt by the competent authority. Any interested and affected party should be provided with the information contained in this report on request, during any stage of the application process.

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14. Two (2) colour hard copies and one (1) electronic copy of the report must be submitted to the competent authority.
15. Shape files (.shp) for maps must be included on the electronic copy of the report submitted to the competent authority.

## PROJECT DETAILS

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- Title** : Environmental Basic Assessment Process  
Final Basic Assessment Report: Proposed Harmony Eland PV Solar Energy Facility, Free State Province
- Authors** : Savannah Environmental:  
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Evolutionary Studies Institute (Palaeontological specialist)
- Client** : BBEntropie (Pty) Ltd
- Report Status** : Final Basic Assessment Report submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs
- Submission** : December 2015

**When used as a reference this report should be cited as:** Savannah Environmental (2015) Final Basic Assessment Report: Proposed Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility, Free State Province.

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## SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

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**BBEntropie (Pty) Ltd**, an Independent Power Producer (IPP), is proposing the development of a photovoltaic (PV) Solar Energy Facility within the farms Rietpan RE/17, Tochgekregen RE/99 and Wesselia 101 owned by the Harmony Gold Mining Company. The location of the proposed development falls within Ward 35 and Ward 24 under the jurisdiction of the Matjhabeng Local Municipality and the Lejweleputswa District Municipality, Odendaalsrus, Free State Province.

The purpose of the proposed project is to generate electricity for exclusive use by the Harmony Gold Mining Company Ltd. BBEntropie (Pty) Ltd propose to develop and operate the PV plant for Harmony Gold. The facility will supply power to the Blinkpoort Shaft substation located in close proximity (~500m south east from the proposed site) to the Harmony Eland Mine on the Harmony Gold Mining Company's property. The facility will have a generating capacity of up to 10MW and will have a facility footprint of less than 20ha. The construction of the PV facility aims to reduce the Harmony Gold Mining Company's dependency on direct supply from Eskom's National grid for operation activities, while simultaneously decreasing the Mine's carbon footprint.

In order to evacuate the generated power to the Blinkpoort Shaft Substation located at the Harmony Eland Mine a new overhead 11KV power line will be constructed between the mini-substation of the PV Solar Facility footprint and the Blinkpoort Shaft 44/6.6KV Substation.

The site identified for the proposed Eland PV facility is located within the Mine's boundary and has been historically disturbed, however no active mining activity has took place on the site. The entire area has been severely impacted on by numerous anthropogenic activities and has over time led to the entire transformation and degradation of the area including the seepage zones (small slope seepage wetlands) which occur on site. The vegetation is in a state of severe retrogression past the point of self-recovery to its original, natural state. Currently the study area is open veld used predominantly for communal grazing by livestock from the surrounding settlements. A number of human activities within the study area have occurred in the past, with remnants of old infrastructure still present on site, which has been reduced to rubble. A few narrow, quite deep, trenches are present surrounding the decommissioned infrastructure and were most probably created to channel storm water runoff away from the infrastructure. To the west of the study area a strip of turned over earth is present. The northern and southern boundary is bordered by gravel roads running parallel with the site and to the west the regional road, R30. To the east of the site, extensive rubble from decommissioned infrastructure remains. South of the study site the area is characterised by mining activities (the Harmony Eland Mine) and associated infrastructure whereas to the north the land is largely used for crop cultivation.

Through the Basic Assessment process, both positive and negative impacts have been identified to be associated with the proposed project. The construction of the proposed project will include direct and indirect benefits at the local and regional scale. The generation of electricity from a renewable resource will have a widespread benefit due to the minimisation of the need to use non-renewable resources for this purpose and the avoidance of associated environmental impacts. The proposed PV solar facility will not only secure the supply of power to the Harmony Eland Mining Shaft, but also indirectly add capacity to the electricity grid (due to the reduced reliance of Harmony Eland Mine on this supply). Improved power supply will result in benefits to society at a national scale. As the proposed site falls within an area within the mine boundary which has been degraded and transformed from its natural state. The placement of the PV facility in this area will reduce impacts on ecological systems, and will provide a beneficial alternative land use to mining as the construction and operation of a PV solar facility will have lower impacts on the environment than mining. The potential negative impacts that could possibly occur is the contamination and further degradation of the wetlands associated with the project site, a loss and alteration of vegetation, a loss of habitat and the occurrence of erosion. These potential negative impacts can be avoided and mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measures.

Overall the proposed project includes benefits that outweigh the impacts associated with the construction and operation of the PV solar facility not only on a local level but also at a regional level.

The nature and characteristics of the proposed project result in Listed Activities (as listed in the EIA Regulations) being triggered. The following activities require authorisation (refer to Section A 1(b) for full description):

- » The PV Solar Facility will have a generating capacity of up to 10 MW in an area that is in excess of 1 hectare. The development of the infrastructure associated with the facility will have an impact on the environment as the installation process requires construction.
- » The construction of ancillary infrastructure associated with the PV Solar Facility will occur within 32 meters of a wetland (watercourse).

In terms of sections 24 and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act (No 107 of 1998), as read with the EIA Regulations of GN R982 – R985 a Basic Assessment process is required to be undertaken for the proposed project.

The nature and extent of the proposed project is explored in more detail in this Basic Assessment Report. This report has been compiled in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations and includes details of the activity description; the site, area and property description; the public participation process; the impact assessment; and the recommendations of the Environmental Assessment Practitioner.

### **1.1. Details of Environmental Assessment Practitioner and Expertise to conduct the Basic Assessment**

Savannah Environmental has been appointed as the independent environmental consultancy to undertake the Environmental Basic Assessment in order to identify and assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed PV solar facility. Neither Savannah Environmental nor any of its specialist sub-consultants on this project are subsidiaries of or are affiliated to Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility. Furthermore, Savannah Environmental does not have any interests in secondary developments that may arise out of the authorisation of the proposed project.

Savannah Environmental is a specialist environmental consulting company providing holistic environmental management services, including environmental impact assessments and planning to ensure compliance and evaluate the risk of development; and the development and implementation of environmental management tools. Savannah Environmental benefits from the pooled resources, diverse skills and experience in the environmental field held by its team.

The Savannah Environmental team has considerable experience in environmental impact assessments and environmental management, and have been actively involved in undertaking environmental studies, for a wide variety of projects throughout South Africa, including those associated with electricity generation.

The project team responsible for this Basic Assessment process include:

- Karen Jodas, the principle Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) for this project, is a registered Professional Natural Scientist and holds a Master of Science degree. She has 18 years of experience consulting in the environmental field. Her key focus is on strategic environmental assessment and advice; management and co-ordination of environmental projects, which includes integration of environmental studies and environmental processes into larger engineering-based projects and ensuring compliance to legislation and guidelines; compliance reporting; the identification of environmental management solutions and mitigation/risk minimising measures; and strategy and guideline development. She is currently responsible for the project management of EIAs for several renewable energy projects across the country.
- Lisa Opperman, the principle author of this report holds a Bachelor degree with Honours in Environmental Management and has 5 months experience in the environmental field. Her key focus is on environmental impact assessments, public participation, environmental management plans and programmes, as well as mapping using ArcGIS for a variety of environmental projects. She is currently involved in several EIAs for renewable energy project EIAs across the country

- Gabriele Wood, has eight (8) years consulting experience in public participation and social research. Her experience includes the design and implementation of public participation programmes and stakeholder management strategies for numerous integrated development planning and infrastructure projects. Her work focuses on managing the public participation component of Environmental Impact Assessments and Basic Assessments undertaken by Savannah Environmental.

## **FINAL BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT SUBMITTED TO DEA**

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This Final Basic Assessment Report has been prepared by Savannah Environmental in order to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed activities. This process is being undertaken in support of an application for Environmental Authorisation from the National Department of Environmental Affairs in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA; Act 107 of 1998).

The Draft Basic Assessment report was made available for a 30-day review period from **11 September 2015 – 12 October 2015** at the following locations:

- » Odendaalsrus Public Library
- » Welkom Public Library
- » [www.savannahsa.com](http://www.savannahsa.com)

As required in terms of Regulation 19(1)(a), this Basic Assessment Report has been subjected to a public participation process undertaken in terms of Chapter 6 Regulation 39 – 44 of the EIA Regulations, 2014. The Basic Assessment Report was made available to I&APs and Organs of State for a 30 day review period for comment. The Basic Assessment Report was also submitted to DEA for comment for the 30-day review period.

Relevant contact details are as follows:

<b><u>National DEA</u></b> <b><u>Herman Alberts</u></b> <b><u>Tel: 012 399 9371</u></b> <b><u>Email: HAlberts@henvironment.gov.za</u></b> <b><u>Post: Private Bag X 447, Pretoria, 0001</u></b>	<b><u>Savannah Environmental(EAP):</u></b> <b><u>Gabriele Wood</u></b> <b><u>Tel: 011 656 3237</u></b> <b><u>Fax: 086 699 5796</u></b> <b><u>Email: gabriele@savannahsa.com</u></b> <b><u>Post: P O Box 148 Sunninghill 2157</u></b>
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## SECTION A: ACTIVITY INFORMATION

Has a specialist been consulted to assist with the completion of this section?  NO

If YES, please complete the form entitled "Details of specialist and declaration of interest" for the specialist appointed and attach in Appendix I.

### 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### a) Describe the project associated with the listed activities applied for

**BBEntropie (Pty) Ltd**, an Independent Power Producer (IPP), is proposing the development of a photovoltaic (PV) Solar Energy Facility within the farms Rietpan RE/17, Tochgekregen RE/99 and Wesselia 101 owned by the Harmony Gold Mining Company. The location of the proposed development falls within Ward 35 and Ward 24 under the jurisdiction of the Matjhabeng Local Municipality and the Lejweleputswa District Municipality, Odendaalsrus, Free State Province.

The purpose of the proposed project is to generate electricity for exclusive use by the Harmony Gold Mining Company Ltd. BBEntropie (Pty) Ltd propose to develop and operate the PV plant for Harmony Gold. The facility will supply power to the Blinkpoort Shaft substation located in close proximity (~500m south east from the proposed site) to the Harmony Eland Mine on the Harmony Gold Mining Company's property. The facility will have a generating capacity of up to 10MW and will have a facility footprint of less than 20ha. The construction of the PV facility aims to reduce the Harmony Gold Mining Company's dependency on direct supply from Eskom's National grid for operation activities, while simultaneously decreasing the Mine's carbon footprint.

In order to evacuate the generated power to the Blinkpoort Shaft Substation located at the Harmony Eland Mine a new overhead 11KV power line will be constructed between the mini-substation within the PV Solar Facility footprint and the Blinkpoort Shaft 44/6.6KV Substation.

The site identified for the proposed Eland PV facility is located within the Mine's boundary and has been historically disturbed, however no active mining activity took place on the site.

The following infrastructure will be associated with the development of the Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility:

- » Photovoltaic (PV) panels of up to 4m in height (fixed-tilt/static technology) with a generating capacity of up to 10MW.
- » Mounting structures to be either rammed steel piles or piles with pre-manufactured concrete footings to support the PV panels.

- » Cabling between the project components, to be lain in trenches ~ 1-2m deep.
- » Power inverters between the PV arrays.
- » Transformers with a step-up of 11KV.
- » A mini-substation.
- » An overhead distribution power line for the distribution of the generated power to the Blinkpoort Shaft Substation.
- » A main external access road (5 meters in width) that leads to the development site and minor internal roads between the PV arrays.
- » Office, workshop area for maintenance and storage.
- » A water pipeline, of 40cm in diameter that will transport water from the Harmony Eland Mine to the PV facility.
- » Lighting and fencing in and around the facility for security.
- » During construction (temporary infrastructure) such a laydown areas will also be required.

The nature and characteristics of the proposed project results in Listed Activities (as listed in the EIA Regulations) being triggered. The following activities require authorisation (refer to Section A 1(b)):

- » The PV Solar Facility will have a generating capacity of up to 10 MW in an area that is in excess of 1 hectare. The development of the infrastructure associated with the facility will have an impact on the environment as the installation process requires construction.
- » The construction of ancillary infrastructure associated with the PV Solar Facility will occur within 32 meters of a wetland (watercourse).

The technology to be implemented in the proposed development will be as follows:

### **Photovoltaic Cells**

Solar energy facilities, such as those using PV panels, use the energy from the sun to generate electricity through a process known as the Photovoltaic Effect. This effect refers to photons of light colliding with electrons, and therefore placing the electrons into a higher state of energy to create electricity.

Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels consist primarily of glass and various semiconductor materials and in a typical solar PV project, will be arranged in rows to form solar arrays. The PV cell is positively charged on one side and negatively charged on the other side and electrical conductors are attached to either side to form a circuit. This circuit then captures the released electrons in the form of an electric current (direct current). An inverter must be used to change the direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC). The electricity is then transmitted through a power line for distribution and use.

### **Support Structure**

The photovoltaic (PV) modules will be mounted to steel support structures. The PV panels will be installed at a fixed-tilt angle, optimised to receive the maximum amount of solar radiation.

### **Fixed Mounted PV System**

In a fixed mounted PV system, PV panels are installed at a pre-determined angle from which they will not move during the lifetime of the plant's operation. The advantages which are gained from fixed mounted systems include:

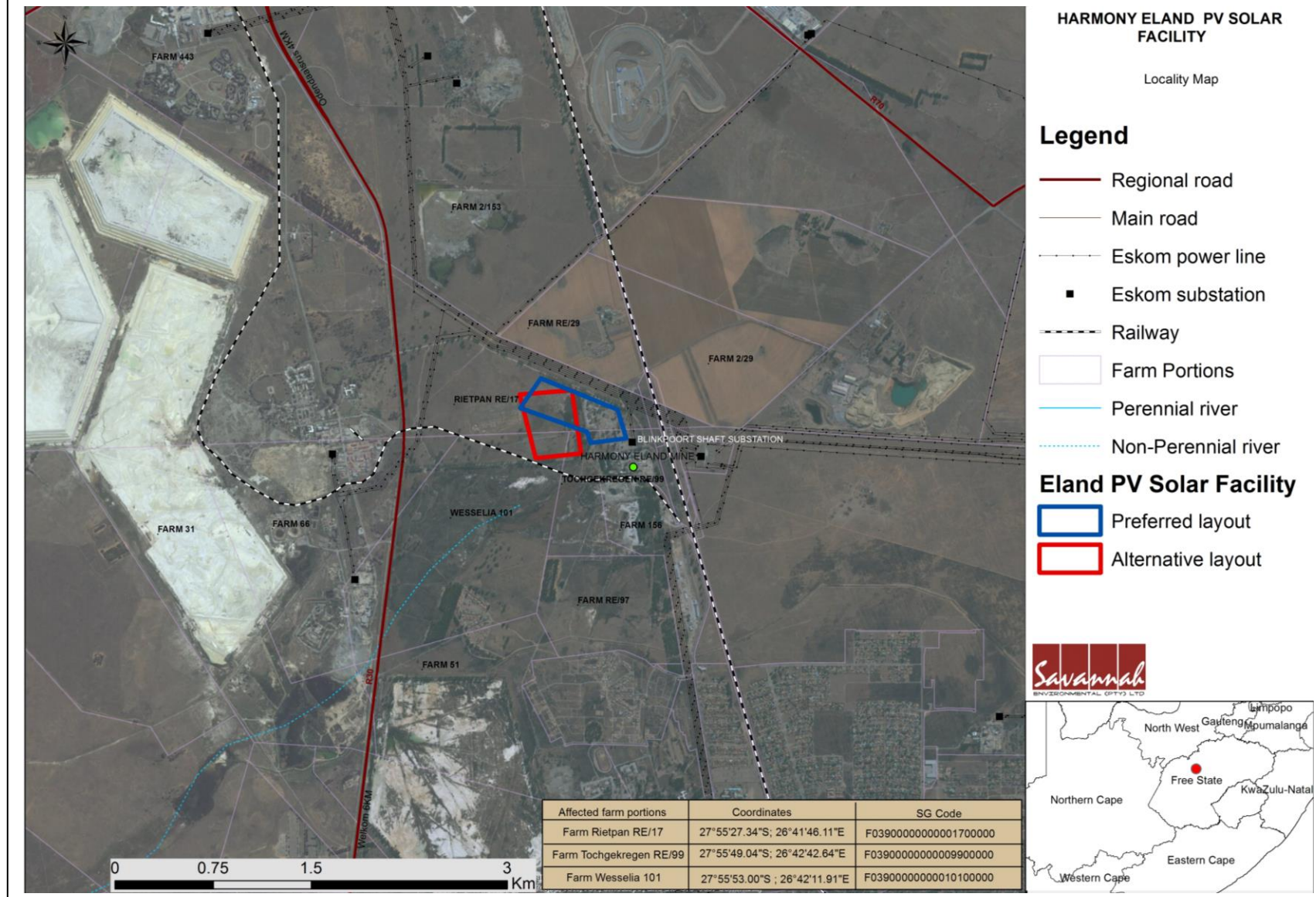
- » The maintenance and installation costs of a fixed mounted PV system are lower than that of a tracking system, which is mechanically more complex given that these PV mountings include moving parts.
- » Fixed mounted PV systems are an established technology with a proven track record in terms of reliable functioning. In addition, replacement parts are able to be sourced more economically and with greater ease than with alternative systems such as tracking PV systems.
- » Fixed mounted systems are robustly designed and able to withstand greater exposure to winds than tracking systems.

### **Inverter**

The photovoltaic effect produces electricity in direct current (DC). Therefore an inverter must be used to change the electricity to alternating current (AC) in order to be used by consumers. The inverters convert the DC electric input into AC electric output, and then a transformer steps up the current to 33 kV for on-site distribution of the power. The inverter and transformer are housed at the power conversion station (PCS). The PV combining switchgear (PVCS), which are dispersed among the arrays, collect the power from the arrays for transmission to the project's substation.

The solar facility is designed to operate continuously for more than 25 years with minimal maintenance required.





**Figure 1:** Locality map indicating the location of the Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility, Free State Province

**b) Provide a detailed description of the listed activities associated with the project as applied for**

<b>Listed activity as described in GN 983, 984 and 985</b>	<b>Description of project activity</b>
GN 983, December 2014, Activity 1 (ii)  The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the output is 10 megawatts or less but the total extent of the facility covers an area in excess of 1 hectare.	<p><b><i>The proposed PV Solar Facility will generate up to 10 MW of power and will cover an area of 19.4 hectares.</i></b></p>
GN 983, December 2014, Activity 12 (xii)  The construction of: (xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more  Where such development occurs (a) within a watercourse, or (b) within 32 metres of a watercourse.	<p><b><i>Infrastructure associated with the PV Solar facility exceeding 100m<sup>2</sup> in extent will be constructed within 32m of the edge of a watercourse</i></b></p>

**2. FEASIBLE AND REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES**

**"alternatives"**, in relation to a proposed activity, means different means of meeting the general purpose and requirements of the activity, which may include alternatives to—

- (a) the property on which or location where it is proposed to undertake the activity;
- (b) the type of activity to be undertaken;
- (c) the design or layout of the activity;
- (d) the technology to be used in the activity;
- (e) the operational aspects of the activity; and
- (f) the option of not implementing the activity.

Describe alternatives that are considered in this application as required by Regulation. Alternatives should include a consideration of all possible means by which the purpose and need of the proposed activity (NOT PROJECT) could be accomplished in the specific instance taking account of the interest of the applicant in the activity. The no-go alternative must in all cases be included in the assessment phase as the baseline against which the impacts of the other alternatives are assessed.

The determination of whether site or activity (including different processes, etc.) or both is appropriate needs to be informed by the specific circumstances of the activity and its environment. After receipt of this report the, competent authority may also request the applicant to assess additional alternatives that could possibly accomplish the purpose

and need of the proposed activity if it is clear that realistic alternatives have not been considered to a reasonable extent.

The identification of alternatives should be in line with the Integrated Environmental Assessment Guideline Series 11, published by the DEA in 2004. Should the alternatives include different locations and lay-outs, the co-ordinates of the different alternatives must be provided. The co-ordinates should be in degrees, minutes and seconds. The projection that must be used in all cases is the WGS84 spheroid in a national or local projection.

**a) Site alternatives**

The proposed site for the construction of the solar facility falls within the farms Rietpan RE/17, Farm Tochgekregen RE/99 and Wesselia 101, land owned by the Harmony Gold Mining Company. As the overall purpose of the facility is to generate power for the exclusive use by the Harmony Eland Mine, Harmony Gold has identified this area as the most feasible option for the development of the facility. This decision was based on the availability of land for the development of a PV solar facility, the proximity to the Harmony Eland Mine located to the South of the site (exclusive user of the generated power) and the proximity to the Blinkpoort Shaft Substation as the connection point. Thus only this one site/area, located within the farms Rietpan RE/17, Farm Tochgekregen RE/99 and Wesselia 101, is available and deemed feasible and practicable for the proposed PV solar facility.

To ensure that the best placement option for the facility is accomplished within this broader area, two site layout options have been identified (refer to **Figure 1**). Through this identification process a preferred site layout and an alternative site layout have been designed. These site layouts are assessed in this report. For the coordinates of the site corners refer to **Appendix A4**.

<b>Proposed Site</b>		
<b>Description</b>	<b>Lat (DDMMSS)</b>	<b>Long (DDMMSS)</b>
Proposed site for the development within which two site layout options are being considered.	27°55'36.42"S	26°42'26.39"E
<b>Alternative 2</b>		
Description	Lat (DDMMSS)	Long (DDMMSS)
<b>Alternative 3</b>		
Description	Lat (DDMMSS)	Long (DDMMSS)

**In the case of linear activities:**

**Overhead distribution power line**

The proposed Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility will require the development of an overhead power line to distribute the generated power to the Blinkpoort Shaft 44/6.6KV Substation for use by the Harmony Eland Mine. No alternative routes are being considered for the power line as the proposed route falls within an area that has been previously disturbed and would be the shortest option for the connection to the substation. Due to the proximity of the proposed development footprint to the substation no other practicable alternative exists.

**Alternatives:**

**Latitude (S):**

**Longitude (E):**

Preferred Layout (power line route)

- Starting point of the activity
- Middle/Additional point of the activity
- End point of the activity

27°55'42.08"S	26°42'41.68"E
27°55'42.48"S	26°42'43.20"E
27°55'42.84"S	26°42'44.59"E

Alternative Layout (power line route)

- Starting point of the activity
- Middle/Additional point of the activity
- End point of the activity

27°55'44.06"S	26°42'29.99"E
27°55'43.43"S	26°42'37.34"E
27°55'42.84"S	26°42'44.59"E

**Water pipeline**

The proposed Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility will require the development of a water pipeline to transport water from the Harmony Eland Mine to the site for use during the construction phase and operation phase (i.e. maintenance purposes).

**Alternatives:**

**Latitude (S):**

**Longitude (E):**

**Preferred Site** (water pipeline route)

- Starting point of the activity
- Middle/Additional point of the activity
- End point of the activity

27°55'42.34"S	26°42'39.67"E
27°55'44.08"S	26°42'39.95"E
27°55'45.79"S	26°42'40.24"E

**Alternative Site** (water pipeline route)

- Starting point of the activity
- Middle/Additional point of the activity
- End point of the activity

27°55'44.26"S	26°42'30.01"E
27°55'43.57"S	26°42'37.69"E
27°55'45.79"S	26°42'40.24"E

For route alternatives that are longer than 500m, please provide an addendum with co-ordinates taken every 250 meters along the route for each alternative alignment.

In the case of an area being under application, please provide the co-ordinates of the corners of the site as indicated on the lay-out map provided in Appendix A.

**b) Layout alternatives**

Two layout alternatives for the construction of the facility are being considered for the development of the project (refer to **Figure 1**). A Preferred Site Layout and an Alternative Site Layout have been designed for the proposed project. These two layout options are assessed within this report.

<b>Alternative 1 (preferred alternative)</b>		
<b>Description</b>	<b>Lat (DDMMSS)</b>	<b>Long (DDMMSS)</b>
Preferred site layout for the PV Solar Facility (centre point)	27°55'35.19"S	26°42'29.91"E
<b>Alternative 2</b>		
Description	Lat (DDMMSS)	Long (DDMMSS)
Alternative site layout for the PV Solar Facility (centre point)	27°55'38.15"S	26°42'22.18"E
<b>Alternative 3</b>		
Description	Lat (DDMMSS)	Long (DDMMSS)

**c) Technology alternatives**

<b>Alternative 1 (preferred alternative)</b>
<p>Few technological options exist in as far as PV technologies are concerned. Those that are available are usually differentiated by weather and temperature conditions that prevail so that optimality is obtained by the final selection. While the impacts of all PV technologies are not identical (tracking PV requires a greater area per megawatt installed), the choice of technology does not materially affect the environmental impact of the proposed development as the development footprint is considered or assessed as 'total loss'. The construction, operation and decommissioning of the facility will also be the same irrespective of the technology chosen. Therefore, no alternatives were assessed in this regard.</p> <p>No other renewable technology alternatives were assessed because the site has been identified by BBEntropie and the Harmony Gold Mining Company as being desirable for the establishment of a photovoltaic plant, and the development of other renewable technologies such as wind or concentrated solar power (CSP) are not considered viable or feasible as a result of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A wind energy installation was not considered as a feasible and reasonable alternative as the proposed developmental area does not have the required wind resource.</li> <li>» A CSP installation was not considered as a feasible and reasonable alternative as the facility is proposed to have a generating capacity of up to 10 MW, which is not</li> </ul>

considered feasible for CSP technology. In addition, large volumes of water are required for cooling, unlike PV where water is only required for cleaning purposes.
Therefore, a PV facility is considered by BBEntropie and the Harmony Gold Mining Company to be the only feasible power generation activity for the proposed site.
<b>Alternative 2</b>
N/A
<b>Alternative 3</b>
N/A

**d) Other alternatives (e.g. scheduling, demand, input, scale and design alternatives)**

No other alternatives are applicable.

<b>Alternative 1 (preferred alternative)</b>
.
<b>Alternative 2</b>
<b>Alternative 3</b>

**e) No-go alternative**

This is the option of not constructing the PV facility and associated infrastructure as proposed. This option is assessed as the "no go alternative" or 'do nothing' in this Basic Assessment Report.

Paragraphs 3 – 13 below should be completed for each alternative.

**3. PHYSICAL SIZE OF THE ACTIVITY**

**a) Indicate the physical size of the preferred activity/technology as well as alternative activities/technologies (footprints):**

**Alternative:**

Preferred Site Layout  
 Alternative Site Layout  
 Alternative A3 (if any)

**Size of the activity:**

Approx. 194000m <sup>2</sup>
Approx. 194000m <sup>2</sup>
m <sup>2</sup>

or for linear activities:

**Overhead distribution power line**

**Alternative:**

Alternative A1 (preferred site layout power line route)

Alternative A2 (alternative site layout power line route)

Alternative A3 (if any)

**Length of the activity:**

Approx.85m
Approx. 404m
m

**Water pipeline**

**Alternative:**

Alternative A1 (preferred site layout water pipeline route)

Alternative A2 (alternative site layout water pipeline route)

Alternative A3 (if any)

**Length of the activity:**

Approx.108m
Approx. 420m
m

**b) Indicate the size of the alternative sites or servitudes (within which the above footprints will occur)**

**Alternative:**

Preferred Site Layout power line route

Alternative Site Layout power line route

Alternative A3 (if any)

**Size of servitude:**

Approx. 22m
Approx. 22m
m <sup>2</sup>

**4. SITE ACCESS**

**Preferred Site Layout**

Does ready access to the site exist?

If NO, what is the distance over which a new access road will be built

<b>NO</b>
Approximately 40m from an existing gravel road passing the site

**Alternative Site Layout**

Does ready access to the site exist?

<b>NO</b>
-----------

If NO, what is the distance over which a new access road will be built

Approximately 69m  
from an existing  
gravel road passing  
the site

Describe the type of access road planned:

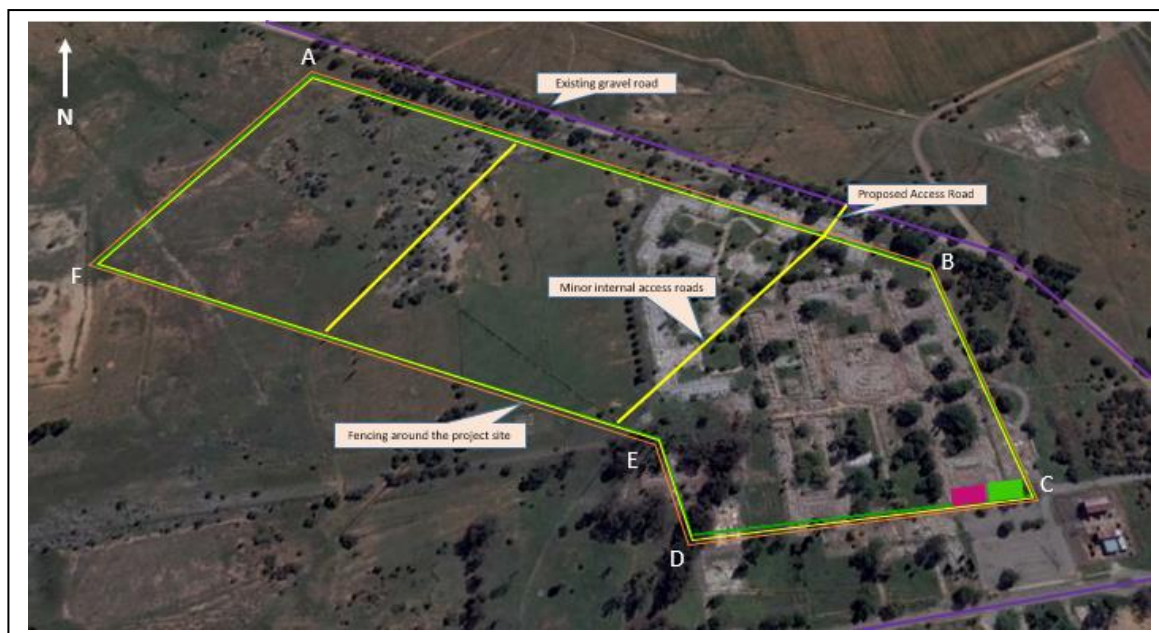
The site is accessible via the regional road, R30. A main access road of up to 5 meters in width (gravel road) will be constructed and connected to an existing gravel road (which connects to the R30) leading to the Harmony Gold Mining Company's Eland Mine for both the preferred and alternative site layouts – refer to **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**. The PV Solar facility will also include minor internal access roads of up to 5 meters in width between the project components for maintenance and security purposes.

Include the position of the access road on the site plan and required map, as well as an indication of the road in relation to the site (refer to **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**).



**Figure 2:** Map indicating access roads for the alternative site layout of the proposed PV Solar Facility





**Figure 3:** Map indicating access roads for the preferred site layout of the proposed PV Solar Facility

## 5. LOCALITY MAP

An A3 locality map must be attached to the back of this document, as Appendix A. The scale of the locality map must be relevant to the size of the development (at least 1:50 000. For linear activities of more than 25 km, a smaller scale e.g. 1:250 000 can be used. The scale must be indicated on the map.). The map must indicate the following:

- an accurate indication of the project site position as well as the positions of the alternative sites, if any;
- indication of all the alternatives identified;
- closest town(s);
- road access from all major roads in the area;
- road names or numbers of all major roads as well as the roads that provide access to the site(s);
- all roads within a 1km radius of the site or alternative sites; and
- a north arrow;
- a legend; and
- locality GPS co-ordinates (Indicate the position of the activity using the latitude and longitude of the centre point of the site for each alternative site. The co-ordinates should be in degrees and decimal minutes. The minutes should have at least three decimals to ensure adequate accuracy. The projection that must be used in all cases is the WGS84 spheroid in a national or local projection).

A locality map has been included as part of this report as **Appendix A1**.

## 6. LAYOUT/ROUTE PLAN

A detailed site or route plan(s) must be prepared for each alternative site or alternative activity. It must be attached as Appendix A to this document.

The site or route plans must indicate the following:

- the property boundaries and numbers of all the properties within 50 metres of the site;
- the current land use as well as the land use zoning of the site;
- the current land use as well as the land use zoning each of the properties adjoining the site or sites;
- the exact position of each listed activity applied for (including alternatives);
- servitude(s) indicating the purpose of the servitude;
- a legend; and
- a north arrow.

A layout plan for each layout alternative on the site has been included as part of this report within **Appendix A2**.

## 7. SENSITIVITY MAP

The layout/route plan as indicated above must be overlain with a sensitivity map that indicates all the sensitive areas associated with the site, including, but not limited to:

- watercourses;
- the 1:100 year flood line (where available or where it is required by DWA);
- ridges;
- cultural and historical features;
- areas with indigenous vegetation (even if it is degraded or infested with alien species); and
- critical biodiversity areas.

The sensitivity map must also cover areas within 100m of the site and must be attached in Appendix A.

The layout plan for each layout alternative has been overlain on a sensitivity map, and is included in **Appendix A3**.

## 8. SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Colour photographs from the centre of the site must be taken in at least the eight major compass directions with a description of each photograph. Photographs must be attached under Appendix B to this report. It must be supplemented with additional photographs of relevant features on the site, if applicable.

Site photographs from the centre of the site taken in the eight major compass directions have been included as part of this report within **Appendix B**.

## 9. FACILITY ILLUSTRATION

A detailed illustration of the activity must be provided at a scale of at least 1:200 as Appendix C for activities that include structures. The illustrations must be to scale and must represent a realistic image of the planned activity. The illustration must give a representative view of the activity.

A facility illustration has been included as part of this report within **Appendix C**.

## 10. ACTIVITY MOTIVATION

Motivate and explain the need and desirability of the activity (including demand for the activity):

<b>1. Is the activity permitted in terms of the property's existing land use rights?</b>	<b>NO</b>	Please explain
The proposed project site falls within the authorised mining boundary/Mining Right area of the Harmony Gold Mining Company and is proposed to be developed on property owned by the mine. The proposed development site is currently zoned for agricultural use. Therefore, the development footprint or site will be required to be rezoned to 'special use' as required by the municipality.		
<b>2. Will the activity be in line with the following?</b>		
<b>(a) Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF)</b>	<b>YES</b>	Please explain
The Free State PSDF is a provincial spatial and strategic planning policy that responds to and complies with, in particular, the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030 and the National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP). This framework promotes a developmental state in accordance with the principles of global sustainability as is stated by, among others, the South African Constitution and the enabling legislation. The FS PSDF is based on six growth and development pillars, each of which has its own set of drivers with long-term programmes. Pillar 1 highlights the job creation, economic and sustainable growth by expanding and maintaining basic road		

<p>infrastructures and through the implementation of alternative electricity infrastructures. The proposed project will contribute towards job creation during the construction of the proposed facility. The proposed project is a renewable energy facility that will feed power into the Harmony Eland Mine, resulting in a reduction of pressure from the mine on the Eskom national grid to supply them with electricity for operations. Therefore the proposed project is in line with the Free State PSDF.</p>		
<p><b>(b) Urban edge / Edge of Built environment for the area</b></p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>The proposed project site (including the preferred layout and alternative layout) are located approximately 7km south of the town of Odendaalsrus and approximately 6km north of the town of Welkom. Both sites fall outside of the urban edge and within the authorised Harmony mining boundary.</p>		
<p><b>(c) Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Spatial Development Framework (SDF) of the Local Municipality (e.g. would the approval of this application compromise the integrity of the existing approved and credible municipal IDP and SDF?).</b></p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>One of the identified sustainable business practices for the Matjhabeng Local Municipality (as per the 2011 IDP) is to implement practices and procedures that reduce reliance on non-renewable resources with similar PV projects planned for development. The manufacturing of solar panel components is a project identified in terms of the municipality's Local Economic Development Plan.</p> <p>The proposed solar energy facility is therefore in line with the municipality's IDP and it will assist in meeting the set objectives. The solar facility will also create direct job opportunities that will stimulate local economic growth. The project will not compromise the integrity of the IDP.</p>		
<p><b>(d) Approved Structure Plan of the Municipality</b></p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>There are several renewable energy projects that are proposed in the Lejweleputswa District Municipality under the DoE's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Procurement Programme (REIPPPP). However, the proposed Harmony Eland Solar Facility will not be bid under the REIPPPP Programme as it is the Harmony Gold Mining Company's intention to utilise the power exclusively for their existing mining operations as a way of reducing total carbon emissions and diversifying electricity supply to the mine. The municipality will need to confirm whether the existing municipal infrastructure available will have the capacity for the proposed project, including the capacity for waste in the associated waste landfill.</p>		

<p><b>(e) An Environmental Management Framework (EMF) adopted by the Department (e.g. Would the approval of this application compromise the integrity of the existing environmental management priorities for the area and if so, can it be justified in terms of sustainability considerations?)</b></p>		<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>The Matjhabeng Local Municipality does not have an Environmental Management Framework as a development guiding tool in its jurisdiction. The Free State Department of Tourism and Economic Development is in the process of developing a provincial biodiversity plan.</p>			
<p><b>(f) Any other Plans (e.g. Guide Plan)</b></p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>N/A</p>			
<p><b>3. Is the land use (associated with the activity being applied for) considered within the timeframe intended by the existing approved SDF agreed to by the relevant environmental authority (i.e. is the proposed development in line with the projects and programmes identified as priorities within the credible IDP)?</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>		<p>Please explain</p>
<p>The main purpose of the development is to generate electricity from a renewable resource, which will be fed into the Harmony Eland Mine for exclusive. The project is not specifically considered within the approved municipal SDF. However the municipality identified basic service delivery such as electricity, job creation and economic growth as priorities within the SDF both locally and within the district municipality. The proposed development will assist in achieving these objectives.</p>			
<p><b>4. Does the community/area need the activity and the associated land use concerned (is it a societal priority)? (This refers to the strategic as well as local level (e.g. development is a national priority, but within a specific local context it could be inappropriate.)</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>		<p>Please explain</p>
<p>The evacuation of additional power for use by the Harmony Gold Mining Company Eland Shaft will serve to improve the stability of the national grid within the immediate area as a reduction in the demand for electricity by the mine will reduce the supply pressure on the national grid for the area. The proposed project will also assist the government in achieving the goal of 17GW renewable energy as part of the electricity generation technology mix by 2030. In addition, the project will assist in the reduction in the need to mine non-renewable resources such as coal for conventional power generation.</p>			
<p>The proposed development will benefit the local community through job creation, skills</p>			

development opportunities and training which will, in turn, assist in reducing poverty levels that the area is currently facing, and indirectly strengthen electricity supply for the area.

The proposed project site falls within the authorised mining boundary/mining right area of the Harmony Gold Mining Company. The property is currently zoned for agricultural use. Amendments to the current zoning will be needed and as no specific zoning category exists for the operation of a PV Solar Facility the area will need to be zoned as "special use", subdivision may also be required.

<p><b>5. Are the necessary services with adequate capacity currently available (at the time of application), or must additional capacity be created to cater for the development? (Confirmation by the relevant Municipality in this regard must be attached to the final Basic Assessment Report as Appendix I.)</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>		<p>Please explain</p>
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Consultation between the Applicant, BBEntropie (Pty) Ltd, and the Matjhabeng Local Municipality for the delivery of necessary municipal services for the development is in process and confirmation for capacity from the Municipality in this regard will be confirmed.

<p><b>6. Is this development provided for in the infrastructure planning of the municipality, and if not what will the implication be on the infrastructure planning of the municipality (priority and placement of services and opportunity costs)? (Comment by the relevant Municipality in this regard must be attached to the final Basic Assessment Report as Appendix I.)</b></p>		<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p>Please explain</p>
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The proposed project is to be developed by a private developer (i.e. BBEntropie) and not the municipality. It therefore does not fall within the infrastructure planning of the municipality, although the need for the promotion of alternative energy sources is advocated in the municipal IDP. The project will not have any implications for the infrastructure planning of the municipality.

<p><b>7. Is this project part of a national programme to address an issue of national concern or importance?</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>		<p>Please explain</p>
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Within a policy framework, the development of renewable energy in South Africa is supported by the White Paper on Renewable Energy (November 2003). In order to meet the long-term goal of a sustainable renewable energy industry, a goal of 17.8GW of renewables by 2030 has been set by the Department of Energy (DoE) within the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2010. This energy will be produced mainly from wind, solar, biomass, and small-scale hydro (with wind and solar comprising the bulk of the power generation capacity). This amounts to ~42% of all new power generation being derived from renewable energy forms by 2030. This is however dependent on the

<p>assumed learning rates and associated cost reductions for renewable options.</p> <p>The proposed Eland PV Solar Energy Facility will not feed power directly into the national grid. It will be evacuated for exclusive use by the Harmony Gold Mining Company's Eland Mining Shaft. This will however reduce the Eland Mining Shaft's direct dependency on the supply of energy from the national grid. If in the future the Harmony Gold Mining Company's Eland Shaft closes or no longer requires the generated power, it can then be sold to Eskom or alternatively other entities requiring power.</p>		
<p><b>8. Do location factors favour this land use (associated with the activity applied for) at this place? (This relates to the contextualisation of the proposed land use on this site within its broader context.)</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>The proposed site for the development of the Harmony Eland PV Solar facility is situated within the mining boundary of the Harmony Gold Mining Company and on land owned by the mine. The project is proposed to be constructed north west of and in close proximity to the Harmony Eland Mine. The location of the proposed facility includes benefits such as that the exclusive user of the generated power is situated in close proximity to the project site, the point of connection to the Blinkpoort Shaft Substation is in close proximity, shortening the length of the distribution line needed, and water sourced from the Harmony Eland Mining Shaft (transported via a 40cm in diameter pipeline) will be in close proximity to the site.</p>		
<p><b>9. Is the development the best practicable environmental option for this land/site?</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>The proposed location for the Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility falls north west of and within close proximity to the Harmony Eland Mine on the Farms Rietpan RE/17, Wesselia 101 and Tochgekregen RE/99, within the mining boundary. The proposed site has been transformed and altered through historical anthropogenic activities. Ecological features have been degraded beyond a point of recovery to its natural state. This facility will be contributing to a positive and sustainable function for the site in the long-term, as it will no longer be available for mining activities as well as prevention of further over grazing and other transformation activities taking place on site as fencing will be placed around the facility decreasing accessibility. The PV facility will also reduce the Harmony Eland Mine's dependency on non-renewable power sources for the operation of the shaft, as well as producing "clean" energy that will not have a detrimental effect on the broader environment.</p>		
<p><b>10. Will the benefits of the proposed land use/development outweigh the negative impacts of it?</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p>Please explain</p>
<p>The negative impacts associated with the proposed activity include localised impacts on vegetation, soils and land use and are expected to be limited to the development footprint, and are not considered to be of high significance (refer to Section D). All impacts can be managed and mitigated to acceptable levels, as outlined in the</p>		

Environmental Management Programme.		
<p>The proposed site has been transformed and altered through historical anthropogenic activities. Ecological features have been degraded beyond a point of recovery to its natural state. This facility will be contributing to a positive and sustainable function for the site in the long-term, as it will no longer be available for mining activities as well as prevention of further over grazing taking and other transformation activities taking place on site as fencing will be placed around the facility decreasing accessibility. The PV facility will also reduce the Harmony Eland Mine’s dependency on non-renewable power sources for the operation of the shaft, as well as producing “clean” energy that will not have a detrimental effect on the broader environment.</p> <p>Positive impacts associated with the facility include i) the diversifying of the power use for the mine ii) generation of electricity from a renewable resource also reduces reliance (although limited) on conventional power sources; iii) local economic upliftment and minimal job creation iv) and the reduction of the carbon footprint of the Harmony Eland Mine. These positive impacts will extend beyond the boundary of the site and are expected to outweigh the negative impacts.</p>		
<b>11. Will the proposed land use/development set a precedent for similar activities in the area (local municipality)?</b>	<b>NO</b>	Please explain
<p>Applications for the development of PV solar facilities in the surrounding areas of Hennenman, Victoria, Allanridge and Rheederpark have been submitted. Each similar project will need to be assessed in terms of its particular impacts on the environment. The proposed development will therefore not set a precedent for the construction of PV solar facilities in the area.</p>		
<b>12. Will any person’s rights be negatively affected by the proposed activity/ies?</b>	<b>NO</b>	Please explain
<p>The proposed project will take place on privately owned land which falls within the Harmony Gold Mining Company’s mining boundary. The Harmony Eland Mine is intended to be the exclusive user/offtaker of the power to be generated. Harmony Gold Mining Company would enter into a lease agreement with the developer (BBEntropie) who will develop and operate the PV plant to supply power to Harmony Gold. No infrastructure will extend beyond the boundaries of the mine. Therefore, no rights of any persons will be negatively affected.</p>		
<b>13. Will the proposed activity/ies compromise the “urban edge” as defined by the local municipality?</b>	<b>NO</b>	Please explain
<p>The project will not undermine the urban edge in any way as the site is located outside of the urban areas of Odendaalsrus and Welkom.</p>		
<b>14. Will the proposed activity/ies contribute to any of the 17 Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPS)?</b>	<b>NO</b>	Please explain
<p>It must be noted that the project is a potential SIP project and would only become registered as a SIP project if selected as a preferred bidder project by the DoE (or</p>		



through some other entity as may be legally able to do so at the time when the project is implemented).	
<b>15. What will the benefits be to society in general and to the local communities?</b>	Please explain
<p>Job opportunities, although limited, will be created during the construction and operation of the proposed facility. In addition, local and regional economic benefits would be realised through the additional revenue generated as a result of the proposed project (through direct and indirect job opportunities, local spend, local procurement, etc.).</p> <p>The primary benefit to society in general will be a reduction in the use of non-renewable resources for the generation of power, contributing to a sustainable environment and development.</p>	
<b>16. Any other need and desirability considerations related to the proposed activity?</b>	Please explain
<p>The project developer (BBEntropie) together with Harmony Gold Mining Company has identified the need for the PV Solar Facility and the associated infrastructure. The power generated at the PV facility is proposed to be used exclusively by the Harmony Eland Mine. The project is considered to be desirable for the Harmony Gold Mining Company as it will reduce the overall carbon emissions and footprint of the mine, and also diversify electricity supply for the existing Harmony Eland Mine.</p>	
<b>17. How does the project fit into the National Development Plan for 2030?</b>	Please explain
<p>By 2030 South Africa aims to reduce carbon emissions, promote economic development and increase the GDP. This project will fit into this vision since it aims to contribute towards electricity supply through renewable energy sources. This solar power facility with which the activities are associated will assist in reducing the country's carbon footprint, as it will be generating renewable energy, and will facilitate the infrastructure growth in the area through employment and increasing infrastructure.</p>	
<b>18. Please describe how the general objectives of Integrated Environmental Management as set out in section 23 of NEMA have been taken into account.</b>	
<p>The general objectives of Integrated Environmental Management have been taken into account for this Basic Assessment Report by means of identifying, predicting and evaluating the actual and potential impacts on the environment, socio-economic conditions and cultural heritage component. The risks, consequences, alternatives as well as options for mitigation of activities have also been considered with a view to minimise negative impacts, maximise benefits and promote compliance with the principles of environmental management</p>	
<b>19. Please describe how the principles of environmental management as set out in section 2 of NEMA have been taken into account.</b>	
<p>The principle of environmental management as set out in section 2 of NEMA states</p>	

that:

- » Environmental management must place people and their needs at the forefront of its concern, and serve their physical, psychological, developmental, cultural and social interests equitably;
- » Development must be sustainable socially (people), environmentally (planet) and economically (prosperity);and
- » Sustainable development requires the consideration of all the relevant factors,

The current state of the proposed project site is degraded to such an extent by historical anthropogenic activities and overgrazing that recovery to its former natural state is not deemed possible. As recovery is not an option, use of the site for the proposed project will be beneficial to not only the availability of non-renewable power resources in the country but also the proposed site. The fencing placed around the site will protect the portion of land associated with the site from further overgrazing and degradation. From a project perspective the development can be considered sustainable as it makes use of a renewable energy resource, does not result in any significant impacts during its construction, and does not emit any pollution during the operational phase.

These principles of sustainable development further taken into account by including measures within the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) to mitigate impacts that may occur thereby further reducing the environmental impacts. The EMPr would provide mitigation measures in terms of disturbance to ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, pollution and degradation to the environment, waste and stormwater management.

## **11.APPLICABLE LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND/OR GUIDELINES**

List all legislation, policies and/or guidelines of any sphere of government that are applicable to the application as contemplated in the EIA regulations, if applicable. Refer to Table 1 overleaf.

**Table 1:** Relevant legislative and permitting requirements applicable to the establishment of the proposed Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility.

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
<b>National Legislation</b>			
<p>National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998)</p>	<p>The EIA Regulations have been promulgated in terms of Chapter 5 of the Act. Listed activities which may not commence without an environmental authorisation are identified within these Regulations.</p> <p>In terms of S24(1) of NEMA, the potential impact on the environment associated with these listed activities must be assessed and reported on to the competent authority charged by NEMA with granting of the relevant environmental authorisation.</p> <p>In terms of GNR 983 of December 2014, a Basic Assessment process is required to be undertaken for the proposed project</p>	<p>Department of Environmental Affairs – competent authority</p> <p>Free State Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (FS DEDTEA) – commenting authority</p>	<p>The listed activities triggered by the proposed solar energy facility have been identified and assessed in the EIA process being undertaken (i.e. Basic Assessment).</p> <p>This Basic Assessment Report will be submitted to the competent and commenting authorities in support of the application for authorisation.</p>
<p>National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998)</p>	<p>In terms of the Duty of Care Provision in S28(1) the project proponent must ensure that reasonable measures are taken throughout the life cycle of this project to ensure that any pollution or degradation of the environment associated with this project is avoided, stopped or minimised.</p> <p>In terms of NEMA, it has become the legal duty of a project proponent to consider a project holistically, and to consider the</p>	<p>Department of Environmental Affairs</p>	<p>While no permitting requirements arise from this section of the Act, this will be applicable during construction and operation in order to ensure minimisation of impacts on the environment.</p>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
Environment Conservation Act (Act No 73 of 1989)	cumulative effect of a variety of impacts. National Noise Control Regulations (GN R154 dated 10 January 1992)	Department of Environmental Affairs  Free State Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs  Local Authorities	Noise impacts are expected to be associated with the construction phase of the project and are not likely to present a significant intrusion to the local community. Therefore is no requirement for a noise permit in terms of the legislation.
National Water Act (Act No 36 of 1998)	Water uses under S21 of the Act must be licensed unless such water use falls into one of the categories listed in S22 of the Act or falls under the general authorisation.	Department of Water and Sanitation	A water use license (WUL) is required to be obtained if water resources are impacted on. No water resources will be impacted directly by the proposed preferred layout of the facility. However, should any infrastructure of the facility infringe on the wetlands identified on site, a water use license would be required to be obtained.
National Water Act (Act No 36 of 1998)	In terms of S19, the project proponent must ensure that reasonable measures are taken throughout the life cycle of this project to prevent and remedy the effects of pollution to water resources from occurring, continuing, or recurring.	Department of Water and Sanitation	This section of the Act will apply with respect to the potential impact on the slope seepage wetlands, primarily during the construction phase (i.e. pollution from construction vehicles).
Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (Act No 28 of 2002)	A mining permit or mining right may be required where a mineral in question is to be mined (e.g. materials from a borrow pit) in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Requirements for Environmental Management Programmes and Environmental Management	Department of Mineral Resources	As no borrow pits are expected to be required for the construction of the facility, no mining permit or right is required to be obtained.

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>Plans are set out in S39 of the Act.</p> <p>S53 Department of Mineral Resources: Approval from the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) may be required to use land surface contrary to the objects of the Act in terms of section 53 of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, (Act No 28 of 2002): In terms of the Act approval from the Minister of Mineral Resources is required to ensure that proposed activities do not sterilise a mineral resources that might occur on site</p>		<p>A Section 53 application will be submitted the Free State DMR office by the applicant.</p>
<p>National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act (Act No 39 of 2004)</p>	<p>S18, S19, and S20 of the Act allow certain areas to be declared and managed as "priority areas."</p> <p>Declaration of controlled emitters (Part 3 of Act) and controlled fuels (Part 4 of Act) with relevant emission standards.</p>	<p>Department of Environmental Affairs</p>	<p>No permitting or licensing requirements arise from this legislation.</p> <p>The Act provides that an air quality officer may require any person to submit an atmospheric impact report if there is reasonable suspicion that the person has failed to comply with the Act.</p>
<p>National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999)</p>	<p>S38 states that Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) are required for certain kinds of development including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The construction of a road, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar linear development or barrier exceeding 300 m in length; and</li> </ul>	<p>South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)</p> <p>Free State Heritage Resources</p>	<p>A permit may be required should identified cultural/heritage sites on site be required to be disturbed or destroyed as a result of the proposed development.</p> <p>An Archaeological Impact Assessment</p>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>» Any development or other activity which will change the character of a site exceeding 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> in extent.</p> <p>Stand alone HIAs are not required where an EIA Process is carried out as long as the EIA contains an adequate HIA component that fulfils the provisions of S38. In such cases only those components not addressed by the EIA should be covered by the heritage component.</p>		<p>has been undertaken as part of the Basic Assessment Process to identify heritage sites (refer to <b>Appendix D2</b>). No standing structures occur within the site although the demolished remains of mining related infrastructure occur throughout the area. Due to the extent of the destruction of the features and the fact that these site are most probably not older than 60 years these sites are of no heritage significance. Close to the demolished remains of these structures, various stone and brick cairns occur. These cairns are built using the rubble and bricks of the demolished structures and therefore post-date these structures. These cairns are in no particular order or pattern and vary from a north south orientation to east west and south east to north west. The possibility exists that these cairns might represent informal graves. A buffer of 20m has been recommended as a mitigation measure for the cairns.</p> <p>It should however be noted that if during the construction phase any possible finds such as stone tool scatters, artefacts or bone and fossil</p>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
			<p>remains are made, the operations must be stopped and a qualified archaeologist must be contacted for an assessment of the find.</p> <p>A Palaeontological Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the Basic Assessment Process to identify possible impact of the development on the palaeontology of the site (refer to <b>Appendix D3</b>). The proposed PV Solar Energy Facility will not impact on any palaeontological material.</p> <p>If any fossil discoveries are made during the construction, then it is strongly recommended that a professional palaeontologist be called to assess the importance and rescue them if necessary (with the relevant SAHRA permit).</p>
<p>National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No 10 of 2004)</p>	<p>In terms of S57, the Minister of Environmental Affairs has published a list of critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, and protected species in GNR 151 in Government Gazette 29657 of 23 February 2007 and the regulations associated therewith in GNR 152 in GG29657 of 23 February 2007, which came into effect on 1 June 2007.</p> <p>In terms of GNR 152 of 23 February 2007:</p>	<p>Department of Environmental Affairs</p>	<p>As the applicant will not carry out any restricted activity, as is defined in S1 of the Act, no permit is required to be obtained in this regard.</p> <p>Specialist flora and fauna studies have been undertaken as part of the basic Assessment process. As such the potential occurrence of critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable,</p>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>Regulations relating to listed threatened and protected species, the relevant specialists must be employed during the EIA Phase of the project to incorporate the legal provisions as well as the regulations associated with listed threatened and protected species (GNR 152) into specialist reports in order to identify permitting requirements at an early stage of the EIA Phase.</p> <p>The Act provides for listing threatened or protected ecosystems, in one of four categories: critically endangered (CR), endangered (EN), vulnerable (VU) or protected. The first national list of threatened terrestrial ecosystems has been gazetted, together with supporting information on the listing process including the purpose and rationale for listing ecosystems, the criteria used to identify listed ecosystems, the implications of listing ecosystems, and summary statistics and national maps of listed ecosystems (National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act: National list of ecosystems that are threatened and in need of protection, (G 34809, GoN 1002), 9 December 2011).</p>		<p>and protected species, as well as critically endangered (CR), endangered (EN), vulnerable (VU) or protected ecosystems and the potential for them to be affected has been considered, this report is contained in <b>Appendix D 1</b> (Ecological Impact Assessment).</p>
<p>Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act No 43 of 1983)</p>	<p>Regulation 15 of GNR1048 provides for the declaration of weeds and invader plants, and these are set out in Table 3 of GNR1048.</p>	<p>Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>This Act will find application throughout the life cycle of the project. In this regard, soil erosion</p>



Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>Weeds are described as Category 1 plants, while invader plants are described as Category 2 and Category 3 plants. These regulations provide that Category 1, 2 and 3 plants must not occur on land and that such plants must be controlled by the methods set out in Regulation 15E.</p>		<p>prevention and soil conservation strategies must be developed and implemented. In addition, a weed control and management plan must be implemented.</p> <p>The permission of agricultural authorities will be required if the Project requires the draining of vleis, marshes or water sponges on land outside urban areas.</p>
<p>National Forests Act (Act No. 84 of 1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» In terms of S5(1) no person may cut, disturb, damage or destroy any protected tree or possess, collect, remove, transport, export, purchase, sell donate or in any other manner acquire or dispose of any protected tree or any forest product derived from a protected tree, except under a license granted by the Minister to an (applicant and subject to such period and conditions as may be stipulated”.</li> <li>» GN 1042 provides a list of protected tree species.</li> </ul>	<p>National Department of Forestry</p>	<p>A permit would need to be obtained for any protected trees that are affected by the development.</p> <p>The protected <i>Hypoxis acuminata</i>, which is listed in the Free State Nature Conservation Ordinance (Act 8 of 1969) as a Protected Plant (Schedule 1) is present on the proposed site. Should individuals of this plant be impacted directly by the proposed facility, a permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation thereof will need to be applied for.</p>
<p>National Veld and Forest Fire Act (Act 101 of 1998)</p>	<p>In terms of S21 the landowner would be obliged to burn firebreaks to ensure that should a veldfire occur on the property, that it</p>	<p>Department of Water and Sanitation</p>	<p>While no permitting or licensing requirements arise from this legislation, and this Act will find</p>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>does not spread to adjoining land.</p> <p>In terms of S12 the landowner must ensure that the firebreak is wide and long enough to have a reasonable chance of preventing the fire from spreading, not causing erosion, and is reasonably free of inflammable material.</p> <p>In terms of S17, the landowner must have such equipment, protective clothing, and trained personnel for extinguishing fires.</p>		<p>application during the construction and operational phase of the project.</p>
<p>Hazardous Substances Act (Act No 15 of 1973)</p>	<p>This Act regulates the control of substances that may cause injury, or ill health, or death due to their toxic, corrosive, irritant, strongly sensitising or inflammable nature or the generation of pressure thereby in certain instances and for the control of certain electronic products. To provide for the rating of such substances or products in relation to the degree of danger; to provide for the prohibition and control of the importation, manufacture, sale, use, operation, modification, disposal or dumping of such substances and products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group I and II: Any substance or mixture of a substance that might by reason of its toxic, corrosive etc., nature or because it generates pressure through decomposition, heat or other means,</li> </ul>	<p>Department of Health</p>	<p>It is necessary to identify and list all the Group I, II, III, and IV hazardous substances that may be on the site and in what operational context they are used, stored or handled. If applicable, a license is required to be obtained from the Department of Health.</p>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>cause extreme risk of injury etc., can be declared as Group I or Group II substance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group IV: any electronic product; and</li> <li>• Group V: any radioactive material.</li> </ul> <p>The use, conveyance, or storage of any hazardous substance (such as distillate fuel) is prohibited without an appropriate license being in force.</p>		
Development Facilitation Act (Act No 67 of 1995)	<p>Provides for the overall framework and administrative structures for planning throughout the Republic.</p> <p>S(2 - 4) provide general principles for land development and conflict resolution.</p>	<p>Matjhabeng Local Municipality</p> <p>Lejweleputswa District Municipality</p>	<p>The applicant must submit a land development application in the prescribed manner and form as provided for in the Act. A land development applicant who wishes to establish a land development area must comply with procedures set out in the Act.</p>
Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act (Act No 70 of 1970)	<p>Details land subdivision requirements and procedures. Applies for subdivision of all agricultural land in the province</p>	<p>Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</p>	<p>The land will be leased by the Harmony Gold Mining Company and subdivision may be required.</p>
National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008)	<p>The Minister may by notice in the <i>Gazette</i> publish a list of waste management activities that have, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the environment.</p> <p>The Minister may amend the list by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Adding other waste management activities to the list.</li> <li>» Removing waste management activities</li> </ul>	<p>National Department of Water and Environmental Affairs</p> <p>Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs (general waste)</p>	<p>As no waste disposal site is to be associated with the proposed project, no permit is required in this regard.</p> <p>Waste handling, storage and disposal during construction and operation is required to be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act, as detailed in the EMPr (refer to <b>Appendix G</b>).</p>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>from the list.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Making other changes to the particulars on the list.</li> </ul> <p>In terms of the Regulations published in terms of this Act (GN 921), A Basic Assessment or Environmental Impact Assessment is required to be undertaken for identified listed activities.</p> <p>Any person who stores waste must at least take steps, unless otherwise provided by this Act, to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The containers in which any waste is stored, are intact and not corroded or in</li> <li>» any other way rendered unfit for the safe storage of waste.</li> <li>» Adequate measures are taken to prevent accidental spillage or leaking.</li> <li>» The waste cannot be blown away.</li> <li>» Nuisances such as odour, visual impacts and breeding of vectors do not arise; and</li> <li>» Pollution of the environment and harm to health are prevented.</li> </ul>		
<p>National Road Traffic Act (Act No 93 of 1996)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The technical recommendations for highways (TRH 11): "Draft Guidelines for Granting of Exemption Permits for the Conveyance of Abnormal Loads and for other Events on Public Roads" outline the rules and conditions which apply to the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» South African National Roads Agency Limited (national roads)</li> <li>» Provincial Department of Transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» An abnormal load/vehicle permit may be required to transport the various components to site for construction. These include route clearances and permits will be required for vehicles carrying</li> </ul>

Legislation	Applicable Requirements	Relevant Authority	Compliance Requirements
	<p>transport of abnormal loads and vehicles on public roads and the detailed procedures to be followed in applying for exemption permits are described and discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Legal axle load limits and the restrictions imposed on abnormally heavy loads are discussed in relation to the damaging effect on road pavements, bridges, and culverts.</li> <li>» The general conditions, limitations, and escort requirements for abnormally dimensioned loads and vehicles are also discussed and reference is made to speed restrictions, power/mass ratio, mass distribution, and general operating conditions for abnormal loads and vehicles. Provision is also made for the granting of permits for all other exemptions from the requirements of the National Road Traffic Act and the relevant Regulations.</li> </ul>		<p>abnormally heavy or abnormally dimensioned loads.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Transport vehicles exceeding the dimensional limitations (length) of 22m.</li> <li>» Depending on the trailer configuration and height when loaded, some of the substation components may not meet specified dimensional limitations (height and width).</li> </ul>
<b>Provincial Legislation</b>			
<p>The Nature Conservation Ordinance 8 of 1969 and amendments</p>	<p>Lists plant and animal species as protected</p>	<p>Free State Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs</p>	<p>The protected <i>Hypoxis acuminata</i>, which is listed in the Free State Nature Conservation Ordinance (Act 8 of 1969) as a Protected Plant (Schedule 1) is present on the proposed site. Should individuals of this plant be impacted directly by the</p>

<b>Legislation</b>	<b>Applicable Requirements</b>	<b>Relevant Authority</b>	<b>Compliance Requirements</b>
			proposed facility, a permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation thereof will need to be applied for.

## 12. WASTE, EFFLUENT, EMISSION AND NOISE MANAGEMENT

### a) Solid waste management

Will the activity produce solid construction waste during the construction/initiation phase?

**YES**

If YES, what estimated quantity will be produced per month?

Not  
determined  
at this stage

How will the construction solid waste be disposed of (describe)?

Construction solid waste will be sorted on site into hazardous waste and general waste. Hazardous waste will be collected and disposed of by an accredited contractor to a registered hazardous waste site. Non-hazardous waste/general waste will be sorted for recycling, where possible. Waste that is not recyclable will be appropriately disposed of at the nearest licensed landfill site.

Where will the construction solid waste be disposed of (describe)?

After the sorting of waste takes place, where recyclable waste, general waste and hazardous waste is identified, each waste class will be disposed of accordingly. Recyclable waste will be recycled through accredited recycling companies, hazardous waste will be disposed of at registered and accredited hazardous waste disposal sites and general solid waste will be disposed of at the registered Matjhabeng municipal solid waste disposal site.

Will the activity produce solid waste during its operational phase?

**NO**

If YES, what estimated quantity will be produced per month?

How will the solid waste be disposed of (describe)?

If the solid waste will be disposed of into a municipal waste stream, indicate which registered landfill site will be used.

Where will the solid waste be disposed of if it does not feed into a municipal waste stream (describe)?

/

*If the solid waste (construction or operational phases) will not be disposed of in a registered landfill site or be taken up in a municipal waste stream, then the applicant should consult with the competent authority to determine whether it is necessary to change to an application for scoping and EIA.*

Can any part of the solid waste be classified as hazardous in terms of the NEM:WA?

	<b>NO</b>
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If YES, inform the competent authority and request a change to an application for scoping and EIA. An application for a waste permit in terms of the NEM:WA must also be submitted with this application.

Is the activity that is being applied for a solid waste handling or treatment facility?

	<b>NO</b>
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If YES, then the applicant should consult with the competent authority to determine whether it is necessary to change to an application for scoping and EIA. An application for a waste permit in terms of the NEM:WA must also be submitted with this application.

**b) Liquid effluent**

Will the activity produce effluent, other than normal sewage, that will be disposed of in a municipal sewage system?

	<b>NO</b>
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If YES, what estimated quantity will be produced per month?

m<sup>3</sup>

Will the activity produce any effluent that will be treated and/or disposed of on site?

	<b>NO</b>
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*If YES, the applicant should consult with the competent authority to determine whether it is necessary to change to an application for scoping and EIA.*

Will the activity produce effluent that will be treated and/or disposed of at another facility?

	<b>NO</b>
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If YES, provide the particulars of the facility:

<b>Facility name:</b>			
<b>Contact person:</b>			
<b>Postal address:</b>			
<b>Postal code:</b>			
<b>Telephone:</b>		<b>Cell:</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>		<b>Fax:</b>	



Describe the measures that will be taken to ensure the optimal reuse or recycling of waste water, if any:

The following measures could be put in place to ensure optimal reuse or recycling of water:

- » During the construction phase measures may be put in place to separate clean water and dirty water.
- » Sewage will be handled/managed through the establishment of portable ablution facilities.
- » Where clean water is available, which has not yet been used/altered, it will be collected and released into nearby water bodies.
- » Water used within the construction process, if tested and found to be within the required limits may be used for dust suppression.

**c) Emissions into the atmosphere**

Will the activity release emissions into the atmosphere other than exhaust emissions and dust associated with construction phase activities?

	<b>NO</b>

If YES, is it controlled by any legislation of any sphere of government?

If YES, the applicant must consult with the competent authority to determine whether it is necessary to change to an application for scoping and EIA.

If NO, describe the emissions in terms of type and concentration:

Solar energy installations operate by converting solar energy into electricity. This is characterised as a non-consumptive use of a natural resources and consumes no fuel for its continuing operation. Solar power produces an insignificant quantity of greenhouse gases over its lifecycle as compared to conventional coal-fired power stations. During the construction phase minor dust impacts and exhaust emissions may occur, but will not exceed acceptable limits. The operational phase of a solar facility does not produce carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide, mercury, particulates, or any other type of pollution.

**d) Waste permit**

Will any aspect of the activity produce waste that will require a waste permit in terms of the NEM:WA?

	<b>NO</b>
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If YES, please submit evidence that an application for a waste permit has been submitted to the competent authority

**e) Generation of noise**

Will the activity generate noise?

	<b>NO</b>

If YES, is it controlled by any legislation of any sphere of government?

If YES, the applicant should consult with the competent authority to determine whether it is necessary to change to an application for scoping and EIA.

If NO, describe the noise in terms of type and level:

Minimal noise will occur during construction phase by moving vehicles and the operation of machinery. This is not regarded as a significant noise source/ impact and will not constitute a "disturbing noise".

**13. WATER USE**

Please indicate the source(s) of water that will be used for the activity by ticking the appropriate box(es):

Municipal	Water board	Groundwater	River, stream, dam or lake	<b>Other</b>	The activity will not use water
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During the construction phase water will be supplied by the Harmony Eland Mine. Water (7.5-10m<sup>3</sup>, 2-3 times per annum) will be sourced from the Harmony Gold Mining Company's Eland Mining Shaft via a 40 cm diameter pipeline during the operational phase. The water will be used for washing and maintenance purposes of the PV panels, approximately 2-3 times per annum, depending on the circumstances and need.

If water is to be extracted from groundwater, river, stream, dam, lake or any other natural feature, please indicate the volume that will be extracted per month:

<b>N/A</b>
<b>NO</b>

Does the activity require a water use authorisation (general authorisation or water use license) from the Department of Water Affairs?

If YES, please provide proof that the application has been submitted to the Department of Water Affairs. **Refer to Appendix D.**

**14. ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

Describe the design measures, if any that have been taken to ensure that the activity is energy efficient:

The activity is in itself an activity that is proposed to generate electricity from a cleaner alternative energy source (i.e. solar radiation).

Describe how alternative energy sources have been taken into account or been built into the design of the activity, if any:

The purpose of a PV installation is to utilise a renewable energy source (i.e. solar radiation) for the production of electricity. Therefore it is not required to consider any additional alternative energy sources.

## SECTION B: SITE/AREA/PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

### Important notes:

- For linear activities (pipelines, etc.) as well as activities that cover very large sites, it may be necessary to complete this section for each part of the site that has a significantly different environment. In such cases please complete copies of Section B and indicate the area, which is covered by each copy No. on the Site Plan.

Section B Copy No. (e.g. A):

- Paragraphs 1 - 6 below must be completed for each alternative.

- Has a specialist been consulted to assist with the completion of this section?

YES

If YES, please complete the form entitled "Details of specialist and declaration of interest" for each specialist thus appointed and attach it in Appendix I. All specialist reports must be contained in Appendix D.

<b>Property description/ physical address:</b>	<b>Province</b>	Free State Province
	<b>District Municipality</b>	Lejweleputswa District Municipality
	<b>Local Municipality</b>	Matjhabeng Local Municipality
	<b>Ward Number(s)</b>	Ward 35 and Ward 24
	<b>Farm name and number</b>	Farm Rietpan RE/17, Farm Tochgekregen RE/99 and Farm Wesselia 101
	<b>Portion number</b>	Remaining extent of Farm Rietpan 17, Remaining extent of Farm Tochgekregen 99, Farm Wesselia 101
	<b>SG Code</b>	F03900000000001700000 F03900000000009900000 F03900000000010100000

Where a large number of properties are involved (e.g. linear activities), please attach a full list to this application including the same information as indicated above.

<b>Current land-use zoning as per local municipality IDP/records:</b>	The proposed site falls within the authorised mining boundary of the Harmony Gold Mining Company. Even though it falls within the mining boundary it is currently zoned for agricultural use
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In instances where there is more than one current land-use zoning, please attach a list of current land use zonings that also indicate which portions each use pertains to, to this application.

Is a change of land-use or a consent use application required?

<b>YES</b>	
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**1. GRADIENT OF THE SITE**

Indicate the general gradient of the site:

**Preferred Site Layout and Alternative Site Layout:**

<b>Flat</b>	1:50	-	1:20	-	1:15	-	1:10	-	1:7,5	-	Steeper than 1:5
	1:20		1:15		1:10		1:7,5		1:5		

**Alternative S2 (if any):**

Flat	1:50	-	1:20	-	1:15	-	1:10	-	1:7,5	-	Steeper than 1:5
	1:20		1:15		1:10		1:7,5		1:5		

**Alternative S3 (if any):**

Flat	1:50	-	1:20	-	1:15	-	1:10	-	1:7,5	-	Steeper than 1:5
	1:20		1:15		1:10		1:7,5		1:5		

**2. LOCATION IN LANDSCAPE**

Indicate the landform(s) that best describes the site:

**Preferred site layout and alternative site layout:**

2.1 Ridgeline	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.4 Closed valley	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.7 Undulating plain / low hills	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Plateau	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.5 Open valley	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.8 Dune	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Side slope of hill/mountain	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.6 <b>Plain</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2.9 Seafront	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3. GROUNDWATER, SOIL AND GEOLOGICAL STABILITY OF THE SITE**

Is the site located on any of the following?

	<b>Preferred and alternative site layout:</b>	<b>Alternative S2 (if any):</b>		<b>Alternative S3 (if any):</b>	
Shallow water table (less than 1.5m deep)	<b>NO</b>	YES	NO	YES	NO
Dolomite, sinkhole or doline areas	<b>NO</b>	YES	NO	YES	NO

Seasonally wet soils (often close to water bodies)	<b>YES</b>		YES	NO	YES	NO
Unstable rocky slopes or steep slopes with loose soil		<b>NO</b>	YES	NO	YES	NO
Dispersive soils (soils that dissolve in water)		<b>NO</b>	YES	NO	YES	NO
Soils with high clay content (clay fraction more than 40%)		<b>NO</b>	YES	NO	YES	NO
Any other unstable soil or geological feature		<b>NO</b>	YES	NO	YES	NO
An area sensitive to erosion		<b>NO</b>	YES	NO	YES	NO

If you are unsure about any of the above or if you are concerned that any of the above aspects may be an issue of concern in the application, an appropriate specialist should be appointed to assist in the completion of this section. Information in respect of the above will often be available as part of the project information or at the planning sections of local authorities. Where it exists, the 1:50 000 scale Regional Geotechnical Maps prepared by the Council for Geo Science may also be consulted.

#### 4. GROUNDCOVER

Indicate the types of groundcover present on the site. The location of all identified rare or endangered species or other elements should be accurately indicated on the site plan(s).

##### Preferred site layout and Alternative Site Layout

Natural veld - good condition <sup>E</sup>	Natural veld with scattered aliens <sup>E</sup>	Natural veld with heavy alien infestation <sup>E</sup>	<b>Veld dominated by alien species<sup>E</sup></b>	Gardens
Sport field	Cultivated land	Paved surface	Building or other structure	Bare soil

If any of the boxes marked with an "E" is ticked, please consult an appropriate specialist to assist in the completion of this section if the environmental assessment practitioner doesn't have the necessary expertise.

#### 5. SURFACE WATER

Indicate the surface water present on and or adjacent to the site and alternative sites?

##### Preferred Site Layout and Alternative Site Layout

Perennial River/watercourse		<b>NO</b>	
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Non-Perennial River/watercourse		NO	
Permanent Wetland		NO	
Seasonal Wetland	YES		
Artificial Wetland		NO	
Estuarine / Lagoonal wetland		NO	

If any of the boxes marked YES or UNSURE is ticked, please provide a description of the relevant watercourse.

### Preferred Site Layout and Alternative Site Layout

Small changes with the topography create small seepage zones, creating the occurrence of small slope seepage wetlands. All of the wetland bodies have been highly impacted and degraded by human activities and associated disturbances within their catchment areas. Due to the highly degraded and transformed state of the small slope seepage wetlands, their ecological functioning has largely been altered and lost. Regardless of the state of the current wetlands, all wetlands are regarded as important ecosystems in need of conservation and therefore should be regarded as sensitive areas. The Free State province also has a "no wetland loss policy", protecting all wetlands within the provincial boundary. Thus these small slope seepage wetlands are required to be accompanied by buffer zones of 32m which should be marked as a no-go areas within which no disturbance or activities may take place.

Outside the PV facility area to the south a large depression- (slope) and a smaller seepage (slope) wetland is present which is classified as NFEPA wetlands. These wetlands are located at a distance from the proposed facility and will not be impacted on by the facility.

Mitigation measures can be implemented, which include amendments to the proposed site facility layouts, so as to avoid infringing on the small slope seepage wetlands present on site, as to adhere to the above mentioned policy and to protect the feature. As per the Ecology specialist's recommendation (refer to **Appendix D1**), a 32 meter buffer must be placed around the wetland and be classified as a no-go area where no development, disturbance or activities may take place during construction or operation of the facility.

## 6. LAND USE CHARACTER OF SURROUNDING AREA

Indicate land uses and/or prominent features that currently occur within a 500m radius of the site and give description of how this influences the application or may be impacted upon by the application:

Natural area	Dam or reservoir	Polo fields
Low density residential	Hospital/medical centre	Filling station <sup>H</sup>

Medium density residential	School	Landfill or waste treatment site
High density residential	Tertiary education facility	Plantation
Informal residential <sup>A</sup>	Church	Agriculture
Retail commercial & warehousing	Old age home	<b>River, stream or wetland</b>
Light industrial	Sewage treatment plant <sup>A</sup>	Nature conservation area
Medium industrial <sup>AN</sup>	Train station or shunting yard <sup>N</sup>	Mountain, koppie or ridge
Heavy industrial <sup>AN</sup>	<b>Railway line<sup>N</sup></b>	Museum
Power station	Major road (4 lanes or more) <sup>N</sup>	Historical building
Office/consulting room	Airport <sup>N</sup>	Protected Area
Military or police base/station/compound	Harbour	Graveyard
Spoil heap or slimes dam <sup>A</sup>	Sport facilities	Archaeological site
Quarry, sand or borrow pit	Golf course	Agriculture

If any of the boxes marked with an "N" are ticked, how will this impact / be impacted upon by the proposed activity?

A railway line, owned by the Harmony Gold Mining Company runs from the Harmony Nyala Mine southwards towards the Harmony Kudu and Eland Mines and is mainly used for the transportation of mining related infrastructure and materials. The railway passes the proposed PV facility to the south western border, and is located approximately 300m from the site. Another railway runs from Odendaalsrus to Welkom and passes the site to the eastern border, and is located approximately 400m from the site. The proposed PV Facility will not be impacted on by the railway and the railway will not be impacted on by the PV facility.

If any of the boxes marked with an "An" are ticked, how will this impact / be impacted upon by the proposed activity? Specify and explain:

N/A

If any of the boxes marked with an "H" are ticked, how will this impact / be impacted upon by the proposed activity? Specify and explain:

N/A

Does the proposed site (including any alternative sites) fall within any of the following:

Critical Biodiversity Area (as per provincial conservation plan)		<b>NO</b>
Core area of a protected area?		<b>NO</b>
Buffer area of a protected area?		<b>NO</b>
Planned expansion area of an existing protected area?		<b>NO</b>
Existing offset area associated with a previous Environmental		<b>NO</b>



Authorisation?		
Buffer area of the SKA?		<b>NO</b>

If the answer to any of these questions was YES, a map indicating the affected area must be included in Appendix A.

## 7. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL FEATURES

Are there any signs of culturally or historically significant elements, as defined in section 2 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999, (Act No. 25 of 1999), including Archaeological or paleontological sites, on or close (within 20m) to the site? If YES, explain:		<b>NO</b>

If uncertain, conduct a specialist investigation by a recognised specialist in the field (archaeology or palaeontology) to establish whether there is such a feature(s) present on or close to the site. Briefly explain the findings of the specialist:

From the Archaeology specialist study undertaken (included in **Appendix D2**) it has been determined that there are no significant archaeological risks associated with the development and both alternatives are acceptable from a heritage point of view.

No Sites dating to the Early or Middle Iron Age have been recorded or is expected for the study area. The same goes for the Later Iron Age period where the study area is situated outside the western periphery of distribution of Late Iron Age settlements in the Free State. However to the north of the study area, ceramics from the Thabeng facies belonging to the Moloko branch of the Urewe tradition were recorded at Oxf 1 and Platberg 32/71 (Maggs 1976, Mason 1986). Similarly to the east Makgwareng ceramics belonging to the Blackburn 17 Branch of the Urewe tradition was recorded (Dreyer 1992 and Maggs 1976). There is however a low likelihood of finding sites dating to this period in the area.

At least 4 stone and brick cairns were recorded of which the purpose is unknown. The cairns measure approximately a meter wide and between 1 and 2 meters long. These cairns are in no particular order or pattern and vary from a north south orientation to east west and south east to north west. The possibility exists that these cairns might represent informal graves. These cairns are located on the southern periphery of the preferred site layout and almost in the middle of the alternative site layout. It is therefore recommended that the area where the cairns are situated is avoided by the development and preserved *in-situ*. The area around the cairns should be fenced off with a buffer zone of 20 meters.

Based on the results of the study there are no significant archaeological risks associated with the proposed solar energy facility.

It should be noted that the cairns fall within a slope seepage wetland, as identified by the Ecological Impacts Assessment (refer to **Appendix D1**). The mitigation measure for the wetlands within the area include a buffer of 32m in which no disturbance or activities may take place. It will thus be required that a buffer of 32meters be applied to the wetland in which the cairns occur, resulting in a much larger buffer around the cairns.

From an archaeological point of view there is no reason why the development should not proceed.

From the Palaeontological specialist desktop study undertaken (included in **Appendix D3**) no reasons were identified that prejudice the progression of the proposed PV solar facility.

The proposed site for the Harmony Eland PV solar facility falls on rocks of the Permian Volksrust Formation which could contain coal deposits. More detailed information of the region shows that Free State Coal Field, between the Vaal River in the north and Theunissen in the south contains a coal zone that is 25 to 50m thick. In the north the coal occurs 50-100m below the surface and in the south it occurs at 320-360m below the surface. At Odendaalsrus, therefore, the coal would be somewhere between 50 and 360m below the ground surface. The coals here are of poor quality and are no longer mined. Coal is made of compressed and heat altered fossil plants and is of no palaeontological interest per se. However, good fossil plant material can occur in the shales and mudstones that occur within and between the coal seams. There are no reports of fossils from this area in the published and unpublished catalogues and field reports of the Evolutionary Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand. Fossil vertebrates do not occur in association with coal deposits.

Since the poor quality coal deposits are well below the surface, and the proposed PV solar facilities will be on the ground surface, with foundations of a few meters depth only, the project will not impact on any palaeontological material. As far as the palaeontology is concerned the proposed development can go ahead and no further palaeontological impact assessment is required.

If fossil plant material is discovered during the construction of foundations, then it is strongly recommended that a professional palaeontologist be called to assess the importance and rescue them if necessary (with the relevant SAHRA permit).

Will any building or structure older than 60 years be affected in any way?

	<b>NO</b>
	<b>NO</b>

Is it necessary to apply for a permit in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999)?

If YES, please provide proof that this permit application has been submitted to SAHRA or the relevant provincial authority.

## 8. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTER

### a) Local Municipality

Please provide details on the socio-economic character of the local municipality in which the proposed site(s) are situated.

#### **Level of unemployment:**

According to the Matjhabeng Local Municipality profile, the unemployment rate in the municipality in 2011 was 14.4%.

#### **Economic profile of local municipality:**

Matjhabeng represents the hub of mining activity in the Free State province. The economy of the Matjhabeng Municipality was based on the gold mining industry, and although the gold mining industry has declined since 1991, three of the biggest gold producers in the world are still active in the area and some are even expanding. The mining activities located in and around Allanridge, Odendaalsrus, Welkom and Virginia. Manufacturing aimed at the mining sector exists to a limited extent in the above towns. Other manufacturing activities are limited.

Mining still dominates the local economic scene by contributing 58% of the GDP of the area and 19% of the province. Major strategies are in place to change the economic base away from the mining dependency. The FGF Development Centre, economic development arm of the Matjhabeng Council is devising major strategies to change the economic base away from the mining dependency  
(source: <http://www.rsa-overseas.com/about-sa/matjhabeng.htm>).

#### **Level of education:**

With regard to education levels, the portion of the population older than 20 years without formal education is 4.6%, while only 9% of the portion of the population has a higher education. 28% of the population older than 20 years has a matric.

### b) Socio-economic value of the activity

What is the expected capital value of the activity on completion?	R100 000 000
What is the expected yearly income that will be generated by or as a result of the activity?	R12 000 000

Will the activity contribute to service infrastructure?		<b>NO</b>
Is the activity a public amenity?		<b>NO</b>
How many new employment opportunities will be created in the development and construction phase of the activity/ies?	» Development Phase = 3 » Construction Phase = 50-100 » Operational Phase = 3	
What is the expected value of the employment opportunities during the development and construction phase?	» Development Phase = R 50 000 » Construction Phase = R 100 000	
What percentage of this will accrue to previously disadvantaged individuals?	Still to be determined	
How many permanent new employment opportunities will be created during the operational phase of the activity?	3	
What is the expected current value of the employment opportunities during the first 10 years?	R30 000 X 12 = R360 000 R360 000 X 10 = R3 600 000	
What percentage of this will accrue to previously disadvantaged individuals?	Still to be determined	

## 9. BIODIVERSITY

Please note: The Department may request specialist input/studies depending on the nature of the biodiversity occurring on the site and potential impact(s) of the proposed activity/ies. To assist with the identification of the biodiversity occurring on site and the ecosystem status consult <http://bgis.sanbi.org> or [BGIShelp@sanbi.org](mailto:BGIShelp@sanbi.org). Information is also available on compact disc (cd) from the Biodiversity-GIS Unit, Ph (021) 799 8698. This information may be updated from time to time and it is the applicant/ EAP's responsibility to ensure that the latest version is used. A map of the relevant biodiversity information (including an indication of the habitat conditions as per (b) below) and must be provided as an overlay map to the property/site plan as Appendix D to this report.

- a) Indicate the applicable biodiversity planning categories of all areas on site and indicate the reason(s) provided in the biodiversity plan for the selection of the specific area as part of the specific category)**

<b>Systematic Biodiversity Planning Category</b>	<b>If CBA or ESA, indicate the reason(s) for its selection in biodiversity plan</b>
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<b>Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA)</b>	<b>Ecological Support Area (ESA)</b>	<b>Other Natural Area (ONA)</b>	<b>No Natural Area Remaining (NNR)</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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**b) Indicate and describe the habitat condition on site**

<b>Habitat Condition</b>	<b>Percentage of habitat condition class (adding up to 100%)</b>	<b>Description and additional Comments and Observations (including additional insight into condition, e.g. poor land management practises, presence of quarries, grazing, harvesting regimes etc.).</b>
Natural	0%	Transformation of the area has historically been taking place and has contributed to the severe disturbance of the area, past the point of recovery.
Near Natural (includes areas with low to moderate level of alien invasive plants)	10%	Near natural areas occur on site where transformation has taken place but not to an extent that all natural characteristics have been lost.
Degraded (includes areas heavily invaded by alien plants)	30%	Moderately invaded by invasive alien plants, including the replacement of natural climatic vegetation with indigenous pioneer and sub-climatic weeds and grasses on the proposed project site. As a result of historical and on-going anthropogenic activities severe degradation to the wetland bodies has taken place.
Transformed (includes cultivation, dams, urban, plantation, roads, etc.)	60%	Transformation activities that has occurred on site which has led to complete transformation of the area. This includes activities associated with construction rubble present on the site, old excavated and turned patches, twin tracks, footpaths, gravel roads, overgrazing (historical and present) and the construction of trenches. The wetland bodies present on site have also been severely degraded due to transformation activities within the catchment area , including the construction of roads, pylons and agricultural practices.

**c) Complete the table to indicate:**

- (i) the type of vegetation, including its ecosystem status, present on the site; and
- (ii) whether an aquatic ecosystem is present on site.

<b>Terrestrial Ecosystems</b>		<b>Aquatic Ecosystems</b>		
Ecosystem threat status as per the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act	Critical	<b>Wetland (including rivers, depressions, channelled and unchannelled wetlands, flats, seeps pans, and artificial wetlands)</b>	Estuary	Coastline
	Endangered			
	Vulnerable			
	<b>Least Threatened</b>			

Terrestrial Ecosystems		Aquatic Ecosystems				
No. 10 of 2004)	<b>Grassland biome; Western Free State Clay Grassland (Gh 9)</b>	<b>YES slope seepage wetland</b>		<b>NO</b>		<b>NO</b>

**d) Please provide a description of the vegetation type and/or aquatic ecosystem present on site, including any important biodiversity features/information identified on site (e.g. threatened species and special habitats)**

The study area is situated in the Grassland biome, and is covered by the Western Free State Clay Grassland (Gh 9). This least threatened ecosystem has been described by Mucina and Rutherford (2006) as a flat bottomland which support dry, species-poor grassland.

Overall the study area is species poor and low in diversity. No rare, endangered or endemic species were found with only on species, *Hypoxis acuminata*, noted that is listed in the Free State Nature Conservation Ordinance (Act 8 of 1969) as a Protected Plant (Schedule 1). Furthermore, 19 weeds and alien invasive species have been recorded for the study area of which a few were exotic trees that have been planted in the past. Four vegetation units were identified namely:

- » Unit 1: *Eragrostis lehmanniana* – *Cynodon dactylon* unit: this vegetation unit is highly transformed and degraded, with a low conservation value, a low ecosystem functionality and is considered as having a low sensitivity.
- » Unit 2: *Mestoklema arburiforme* – *Pentzia globosa* unit: this vegetation unit is highly transformed and degraded, with a low conservation value, a low ecosystem functionality and is considered as having a low sensitivity.
- » Unit 3: *Acacia karroo* – *Aristida congesta* subsp. *congesta* unit: this vegetation unit is highly transformed and degraded, with a low conservation value, a low ecosystem functionality and is considered as having a low sensitivity.
- » Unit4: *Cynodon dactylon* – *Juncus rigidus* unit: this vegetation unit is associated with the slope seepage wetlands present on site. It is considered as highly transformed and degraded, with medium to high conservation value, a low to medium ecosystem functionality and a high sensitivity.

Most of the study area is suitable for the development of the PV facility with the exception of small slope seepage wetlands found on the proposed project site (refer to the Sensitivity map included in **Appendix A**). Due to severe transformation and degradation of the slope seepage wetlands, the wetlands are not considered to contribute significantly to the overall ecological functionality. Regardless of the state of the current wetland, all wetlands are regarded as important ecosystems in need of

conservation and therefore should be regarded as a sensitive area, where no development, activity or further disturbance should take place (no-go areas). A recommended buffer of 32m is required as a mitigation measure (refer to the Ecological Specialist study included in **Appendix D1**).



## SECTION C: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### 1. ADVERTISEMENT AND NOTICE

<b>Publication name</b>	The Vista Newspaper	
<b>Date published</b>	17-September-2015	
<b>Site notice position</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>
	27° 55' 5.3"S	26° 40' 55" E
<b>Date placed</b>	20-06-2015	

Include proof of the placement of the relevant advertisements and notices in **Appendix E1**.

### 2. DETERMINATION OF APPROPRIATE MEASURES

Provide details of the measures taken to include all potential I&APs as required by Regulation 54(2)(e) and 54(7) of GN R.543.

The public consultation process has included the publishing of notices regarding the proposed project as well as the distribution of notification letters to the identified I&APs. Affected and neighbouring landowners have been consulted through one-on-one consultation sessions and via telephone, as required.

Key stakeholders (other than organs of state) identified in terms of Regulation 41(2)(b) of GN R982:

**Refer to the database attached within Appendix E5,**

<b>Title, Name and Surname</b>	<b>Affiliation/ key stakeholder status</b>	<b>Contact details (tel number or e-mail address)</b>
Simon Gear	BirdLife South Africa, Policy and Advocacy Manager	advocacy@birdlife.org.za
Samantha Ralston	BirdLife South Africa	energy@birdlife.org.za
Johan Koegelenberg	Sentech Ltd, Coverage Planner: RF Networks	koegelenbergJ@sentech.co.za
John Wesson	Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), Northern Region	jwesson@wessanorth.co.za

Include proof that the key stakeholder received written notification of the proposed activities as **Appendix E2**. This proof may include any of the following:

- e-mail delivery reports;
- registered mail receipts;
- courier waybills;

- signed acknowledgements of receipt; and/or
- or any other proof as agreed upon by the competent authority.

Proof that the key stakeholders received written notification of the proposed activities is included in **Appendix E2**.

### 3. ISSUES RAISED BY INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES

The following comments have been received to date:

Summary of main issues raised by I&APs	Summary of response from EAP
<p>The main issues raised in regards to the proposed project raised are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the amount of job opportunities which will be available for the local community members</li> <li>ii. which specialist studies have been undertaken as part of the EIA process and</li> <li>iii. site alternatives for the each of the facilities have significant impacts and should not be considered feasible alternatives for development.</li> <li>iv. a palaeontological assessment is required to be undertaken before the start of the development (SAHRA).</li> <li>v. <u>the Free State land cover data indicates wetlands other than the NFEPA maps.</u></li> <li>vi. <u>A wetland specialist needs to be appointed by the EAP to delineate these wetlands and other wetlands that may occur and to determine appropriate buffers for these (which is not necessarily 32m, the latter being a legislative threshold to indicate whether environmental authorisation is required or not). It is suggested that they use the wetland buffer tool recently published by the Department of Water Affairs and Sanitation (DWAS).</u></li> </ol>	<p>The response from the EAP regarding the issues raised was as follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. As the project is of a small nature only a few job opportunities will be created.</li> <li>ii. An ecological and wetland impact assessment was undertaken, as well as a archaeological impact assessment (HIA), <u>including an Archaeological Impact Assessment and a Palaeontological Impact Assessment.</u></li> <li>iii. The sites identified for alternative project sites were considered due to limited land availability as well as the proximity to the relevant mining shaft. The preferred site layouts were designed to avoid sensitive areas and the alternative sites are not be considered feasible for development as they infringe on sensitive areas.</li> <li>iv. A desktop palaeontology impact assessment has been conducted and was submitted to SAHRA on 6 July 2015 (refer to <b>Appendix D3</b>).</li> <li>v. <u>The Ecological Specialist Study undertaken for the development considers the Free State Land Cover data in regards to the potential for wetlands to occur within the site in specified areas.</u></li> <li>vi. <u>The ecologist responsible for the Ecological Specialist Study has adequate experience and a clear understanding of the area, the development footprint for the proposed Eland PV Solar Energy Facility, as well as the ecological function of the area to</u></li> </ol>

	<p><u>conduct a wetland delineation. The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) buffer tool was utilised to determine the minimum buffer required for the wetlands in order to maintain their current ecological function. The application of the DWS buffer tool to the identified wetlands resulted in a required minimum buffer of 15m. As per the Ecological Specialist Study a minimum buffer of 32m is required, which is larger than the 15m buffer as per the DWS buffer tool and can be considered as the correct buffer size for the wetlands.</u></p>
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Comments received will be included in **Appendix E6(a)**.

#### 4. COMMENTS AND RESPONSE REPORT

The practitioner must record all comments received from I&APs and respond to each comment before the BAR is submitted. The comments and responses have been captured in a comments and response report as prescribed in the EIA regulations and be attached to the Final BAR as **Appendix E3**.

Comments received are included in the Comments and Responses Report contained in **Appendix E3**.

#### 5. AUTHORITY PARTICIPATION

Authorities and organs of state identified as key stakeholders:

Refer to Organ of State list attached within **Appendix E5**.

Authority/Organ of State	Contact person (Title, Name and Surname)	Tel No	Fax No	e-mail	Postal address
Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries	Thoko Buthelezi	012-319-7634	-	thokob@daff.gov.a	Private Bag X120 Pretoria 0001
Department of Agriculture, Forestry	Mashudu Marubini	012-319-	-	mashuduma@daff.gov.za	Private Bag X120

<b>Authority/Organ of State</b>	<b>Contact person (Title, Name and Surname)</b>	<b>Tel No</b>	<b>Fax No</b>	<b>e-mail</b>	<b>Postal address</b>
& Fisheries		-7619			Pretoria 0001
Department of Energy	The Director: Free State	057-391-1326/ 1300	057-352-2673	-	Private Bag X33 Welkom 9463
Department of Energy	Pheladi Masipa	012-406-7650	012-323-5819	Pheladi.Masipa@energy.gov.za	Private Bag X96 Pretoria 0001
Department of Mineral Resources	Mashudu Mulaudzi	057-391-1386	086-710-1479	mashudu.mulaudzi@dmr.gov.za	Private Bag X 33, Welkom, 9460
Department of Mineral Resources	Shawn Janneker	057-391-1356	057-357-6003	shawn.janneker@dmr.gov.za	Private Bag X 33, Welkom, 9460
Department of Mineral Resources	Meshack Mudau	082-521-8489	-	meshack.mudau@dmr.gov.za	Private Bag X 33, Welkom, 9460
Department of Mineral Resources	Azwihangwisi Nemulodi	057-391-1342	-	azwihangwisi.nemulodi@dmr.gov.za	Private Bag X 33, Welkom, 9460
Department of Mineral Resources	Selani Shitlhangu	057-391-1382	086-275-8340	salani.shitlhangu@dmr.gov.za	Private Bag X 33, Welkom, 9460
Department of Rural Development and Land Reform	Debbie Khan	012-312-9490	012-323-6072	DGOffice@ruraldevelopment.gov.za	Private Bag X833 Pretoria 0001
Department of Water and Sanitation	George Motheo	015-405-9000	015-430-8146	motheog@dwa.gov.za	PO Box 528 Bloemfontein 9300
Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd	John Geeringh	011-516-7233	086-661-4064	john.geeringh@eskom.co.za	PO Box 1091 Johannesburg 2001
Free State	Thabita	051-	051-	thabita@agric.fs.gov	PO Box

<b>Authority/Organ of State</b>	<b>Contact person (Title, Name and Surname)</b>	<b>Tel No</b>	<b>Fax No</b>	<b>e-mail</b>	<b>Postal address</b>
Department of Agriculture and Rural Developmen	Mokone	875-1160	875-2271	v.za	990 Thaba Nchu 9780
Free State Department of Economic Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs	Grace Mkhosana	051-400-4817	-	Mkhosana@detea.fs.gov.za	-
Free State Department of Police, Roads & Transportation	W.A Naude	051-409-8584	086-275-7396	naudew@freetrans.gov.za	PO Box 119 Bloemfontein 9300
Free State Provincial Heritage Resources Agency	Ntando Mbatha	051-410-4750	086-401-0431	mbatha.npz@sacr.fs.gov.za	Private Bag X20606 Bloemfontein 9300
Free State Provincial Heritage Resources Agency	L. Philip	051-410-4750	086-401-0431	mbatha.npz@sacr.fs.gov.za	-
Lejweleputswa District Municipality	Moss Mthombeni	057-353-3094	-	moss@lejwe.co.za	PO Box 2163 Welkom 9460
Lejweleputswa District Municipality	Nontsikelelo Aaron	057-353-3094	057-391-8970	-	PO Box 2163 Welkom 9460
Lejweleputswa District Municipality	Dewald Kirsten	057-391-3195	057-352-4585	dewald@lejwe.co.za	PO Box 2163 Welkom 9460
Lejweleputswa District Municipality	Archie Jonas	057-353-3094	-	archie@lejwe.co.za	PO Box 2163 Welkom 9460
Matjhabeng Local Municipality	Mothusi Lepheana	057-391-3359	057-357-4393	mothusi.lepheana@matjhabeng.co.za	PO Box 708 Welkom 9460
Matjhabeng Local Municipality	Joe Molawa	057-391-8588	-	joe.molawa@matjhabeng.co.za	PO Box 708 Welkom 9460
Matjhabeng Local	Cllr Ivan Riet	083-	-	ivanriet@gmail.co	-

Authority/Organ of State	Contact person (Title, Name and Surname)	Tel No	Fax No	e-mail	Postal address
Municipality		612-3295		m	
National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA)	Andile Gxasheka	012-401-4775	012-401-4700	andile.gxasheka@nersa.org.za	PO Box 40343 Arcadia 0007
National Nuclear Regulator	Patle Mohajane			PEMohajane@nnr.co.za	
South African Civil Aviation Authority	Lizell Stroh	011-545-1232	011-545-1282	strohl@caa.co.za	Private Bag X73 Halfway House 1685
South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)	Andrew Salomon	021-462-4502	-	asalomon@sahra.org.za	-
Square Kilometre Array (SKA): South Africa	Adrian Tiplady	011-442-2434	-	atiplady@ska.ac.za	-
Telkom SA Limited	Amanda Bester	051-401-6260	-	WayleaCR@telkom.co.za	-
Telkom SA Limited	Leonard Shaw	012-311-2012	012-311-1686	shawls@telkom.co.za	-

Include proof that the Authorities and Organs of State received written notification of the proposed activities as Appendix E2.

Proof that the Authorities and Organs of State received written notification of the proposed project has been included in **Appendix E2**.

In the case of renewable energy projects, Eskom and the SKA Project Office must be included in the list of Organs of State.

## 6. CONSULTATION WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Note that, for any activities (linear or other) where deviation from the public participation requirements may be appropriate, the person conducting the public participation process may deviate from the requirements of that sub-regulation to the extent and in the manner as may be agreed to by the competent authority.

Proof of any such agreement must be provided, where applicable. Application for any deviation from the regulations relating to the public participation process must be submitted prior to the commencement of the public participation process.

A list of registered I&APs has been included as **Appendix E5**.

Copies of all correspondence and minutes of all meetings held to date are included in **Appendix E6(b)**.

## **SECTION D: IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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The assessment of impacts must adhere to the minimum requirements in the EIA Regulations, 2014, and should take applicable official guidelines into account. The issues raised by interested and affected parties should also be addressed in the assessment of impacts.

### **1. IMPACTS THAT MAY RESULT FROM THE PLANNING AND DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, OPERATIONAL, DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASES AS WELL AS PROPOSED MANAGEMENT OF IDENTIFIED IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES**

Provide a summary and anticipated significance of the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts that are likely to occur as a result of the planning and design phase, construction phase, operational phase, decommissioning and closure phase, including impacts relating to the choice of site/activity/technology alternatives as well as the mitigation measures that may eliminate or reduce the potential impacts listed. This impact assessment must be applied to all the identified alternatives to the activities identified in Section A(2) of this report.



**Preferred Site Layout and Alternative Site Layout Impact Assessment**

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
Upgrading and/or creation of site access road and internal maintenance tracks	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Loss of vegetation.</li> <li>» Increase in runoff and erosion.</li> <li>» Possible distribution of alien invasive species.</li> <li>» Possible disturbance and reduction of habitat or injury to burrowing vertebrates.</li> <li>» Possible change of natural runoff and drainage patterns.</li> <li>» Possible loss of protected species.</li> <li>» Possible permanent loss of revegetation potential of soil surface.</li> </ul>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Exclude all seepage wetlands from this activity. A minimum buffer zone of 32 m should be placed around all seepage areas.</li> <li>» A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be applied for.</li> <li>» During construction: create designated turning areas and strictly prohibit any off-road driving or parking of vehicles and machinery outside designated areas</li> <li>» Keep the clearing of semi-natural grasslands to a minimum</li> <li>» If filling material is to be used, this should be sourced from areas free of invasive species</li> <li>» Topsoil (the upper 25 cm of soil) is an important natural resource; where it must be stripped, never mix it with subsoil or any other material, store and protect it separately until it can be re-applied, minimise handling of topsoil</li> <li>» Reinforce portions of existing access routes that are prone to erosion, create structures or low banks to drain the access road rapidly during rainfall events, yet preventing erosion of the track and</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b> None</p>	-	
	<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Possible erosion of areas lower than the access road, possible contamination of lower-lying wetlands to the east due to oil or other spillage.</li> <li>» Possible spread and establishment of alien invasive species.</li> </ul>	Low	
	<p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Altered vegetation composition and structure.</li> <li>» Altered topsoil conditions.</li> <li>» Potential barren areas.</li> <li>» Potential for erosion and invasion by weed or alien species.</li> </ul>	Low	

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
			surrounding areas » Ensure that runoff from compacted or sealed surfaces is slowed down and dispersed sufficiently to prevent accelerated erosion from being initiated (storm water and erosion management plan required) » Prevent leakage of oil or other chemicals or any other form of pollution » Monitor the establishment of (alien) invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed » After decommissioning, if access road or portion thereof will not be of further use to the landowner, remove all foreign material and rip area to facilitate the establishment of vegetation, followed by a suitable revegetation program
Fencing of the project site– which may also serve as a maintenance track/minor internal road to the PV panels and as a possible fire-break	<b>Direct impacts:</b> » Loss of vegetation and protected species. » Loss of window of opportunity for the establishment of alien invasive species. » Altered topsoil characteristics prone to capping. » Increased runoff and erosion. » Possible reduction of habitat and forage availability to terrestrial vertebrates and livestock.	Low	» A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be applied for. » Animal burrows must be monitored by an ECO prior to construction for activity/presence of animal species. If detected, such animals must be removed and relocated by a qualified professional/contractor.

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b> None</p> <p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Possible erosion of cleared areas and associated accelerated erosion within surrounding areas.</li> <li>» Possible loss of ecosystem functioning due to increase in invasive species.</li> </ul> <p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Altered vegetation composition.</li> <li>» Compacted topsoils.</li> <li>» Possibility for erosion and invasion by alien invasives.</li> </ul>	<p>-</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» During the design phase, the possible impact of burrowing vertebrates (ground squirrels) on the development must be determined, and fencing must be designed to either exclude such fauna if it will be detrimental or enable occasional migration of smaller vertebrates onto and across the site (which could be beneficial to small vertebrate populations).</li> <li>» Minimise area affected, especially during construction</li> <li>» During construction: strictly prohibit any off-road driving or parking of vehicles and machinery outside the footprint areas</li> <li>» Prevent leakage of oil or other chemicals, strictly prohibit littering of any kind</li> <li>» Monitor the establishment of alien and indigenous invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed</li> <li>» If the area will be used as fire-break as well, maintain a suitably low grass layer by regular mowing or appropriate species selection, but do not leave soil bare. Alternatively, ensure that the soil has a covering that prevents erosion.</li> </ul>
<p>Construction and operation of fixed PV panels disturbed areas.</p>	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Loss of vegetation and/or species of conservation concern.</li> </ul>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be</li> </ul>

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Loss of and alteration of microhabitats.</li> <li>» Strongly altered and reduced vegetation cover.</li> <li>» Site-specific altered distribution of rainfall and resultant runoff patterns.</li> <li>» Increase in concentrated runoff from PV panels and higher accelerated erosion.</li> <li>» Reduction of habitat and resource availability for terrestrial fauna.</li> <li>» Possible increase of detrimental effects during periods of extreme weather events.</li> <li>» Severe erosion or dust due to lower buffering capacity of sparser vegetation.</li> </ul>		<p>applied for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Animal burrows must be monitored by ECO prior to construction for activity/presence of animal species. If detected, such animals must be removed and relocated by a qualified professional/contractor.</li> <li>» Keep areas affected to a minimum, strictly prohibit any disturbance outside the demarcated footprint area</li> <li>» Clear as little grassland vegetation as possible, aim to maintain all indigenous vegetation where it will not interfere with the construction or operation of the development, rehabilitate an acceptable vegetation layer according to rehabilitation recommendations of the relevant EMPr. Use only species that were part of the original indigenous species composition as described in the specialist report</li> <li>» After construction, rehabilitate an acceptable vegetation layer according to rehabilitation recommendations of the relevant EMP</li> <li>» Use species that were part of the original indigenous species composition but with high percentage of <i>Themeda triandra</i> whilst <i>Digitaria eriantha</i> and <i>Panicum coloratum</i> can also be included. It is expected that the <i>Cynodon dactylon</i>,</li> </ul>
<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b> None</p>	-		
<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b> If mitigation measures are not strictly followed the following could occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Erosion of areas around the panels and continued erosion of the development area and erosion of seepage wetlands.</li> <li>» Contamination of the wetlands.</li> <li>» Alteration of occupancy by terrestrial fauna, possible reduction of available habitat and food availability to terrestrial fauna.</li> <li>» Spread and establishment of invasive species.</li> </ul>	Medium		
<p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Altered topsoil characteristics.</li> <li>» Altered vegetation composition.</li> </ul>	Medium		

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
			<p><i>Eragrostis lehmanniana</i> and <i>Eragrostis chloromelas</i> will resettle itself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The higher level of shading anticipated from fixed panels may prevent or slow the re-establishment of desirable grass species, thus re-establishment must be monitored and species composition adapted if the above species fail to establish sufficiently.</li> <li>» A strong herb layer will also suppress the re-emergence of weed species from existing seed banks</li> <li>» Aim to maintain a buffer zone of a minimum of 32 m around the seepage areas.</li> <li>» Remove all invasive vegetation before and after construction and continuously up to decommissioning</li> <li>» If filling material is to be used, this should be sourced from areas free of invasive species</li> <li>» Topsoil (the upper 25 cm of soil) is an important natural resource; where it must be stripped, never mix it with subsoil or any other material, store and protect it separately until it can be re-applied, minimise handling of topsoil</li> <li>» Temporarily stored topsoil must be re-applied within 6 months, topsoil stored for</li> </ul>

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
			<p>longer need to be managed according to a detailed topsoil management plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Due to the fixed nature and larger runoff surfaces of the PV panels, the development area should be adequately landscaped and rehabilitated to include vegetated contour buffer strips that can contain expected accelerated erosion</li> <li>» Runoff may have to be specifically channeled or storm water adequately controlled to prevent localised rill and gully erosion</li> <li>» Prevent leakage of oil or other chemicals, strictly prohibit littering of any kind</li> <li>» Monitor the establishment of all invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed</li> </ul>
Construction of a short 11KV power line as part of the grid connection	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Loss of vegetation.</li> <li>» Increase in runoff and erosion.</li> <li>» Disturbance of burrowing animals.</li> <li>» Possible collision or electrocution of birds</li> </ul>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be applied for.</li> <li>» Animal burrows must be monitored by ECO prior to construction for activity/presence of animal species. If detected, such animals must be removed and relocated by a qualified professional/contractor.</li> <li>» During construction: create designated servitude areas and strictly prohibit any</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b> None</p>	-	
	<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Possible erosion of surrounding areas if no mitigation is implemented, no major cumulative</li> </ul>	Low	

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	impact on flora or fauna expected (excluding avifauna). » Contamination of wetlands		off-road driving or parking of vehicles and machinery outside designated areas » Limit clearing of indigenous vegetation to pylon positions only.
	<p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> » Very localised alteration of soil surface characteristics.	Low	» Prevent spillage of construction material, oils or other chemicals, strictly prohibit other pollution. » Monitor the establishment of invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed. » The final rout of the line should be planned to avoid any construction or placement of pylons within the seepage wetlands. » A buffer zone of 32 m should be placed around the wetland. » No Pylons may be placed within the wetland or buffer zone. » Eskom has guidelines and standards for the construction of 'bird friendly' pole and pylon structures to be adhered to. It is recommended that the structure used include the standard Eskom Bird Perch installed on all pole tops to provide safe perching substrate for birds, well clear of all dangerous hardware. » The high risk sections of this power line must be installed with suitable, Eskom approved anti bird collision line marking

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
			<p>devices. The most common bird marking devices include Bird Flight Diverters and Bird Flappers, both of which are very effective, however in South Africa, Bird Flappers have proven to be more so. Either Eskom or BBEntropie (whoever maintains the line) will be responsible for ensuring that these devices are in working order, and replacing them if not.</p>
<p>Construction of substation and other electricity-related buildings, workshops, offices, guardhouses, etc.</p>	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Loss of vegetation and/or species of conservation concern.</li> <li>» Loss of microhabitats.</li> <li>» Altered and reduced vegetation cover.</li> <li>» Altered distribution of rainfall and resultant runoff patterns.</li> <li>» Increase in <i>concentrated</i> runoff from sealed surfaces and possibly higher accelerated erosion.</li> <li>» Reduction of habitat and resource availability for terrestrial fauna</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be applied for.</li> <li>» Maintain a minimum buffer of 32 m from any wetland.</li> <li>» Limit disturbance to footprint area as far as practically possible.</li> <li>» Place infrastructure as far as possible on sites that have been transformed already.</li> <li>» During construction: stay within demarcated footprint areas and strictly prohibit any off-road driving or parking of vehicles and machinery outside designated areas.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b> None</p>	<p>-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be applied for.</li> <li>» Animal burrows must be monitored by ECO</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» If mitigation measures are not strictly followed the following could occur:</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	



Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• erosion of areas around sealed surfaces and continued erosion of the development area with associated siltation and/or erosion of lower-lying wetlands</li> <li>• contamination of wetlands</li> <li>• spread and establishment of invasive species</li> </ul> <p>» Alteration of occupancy by terrestrial fauna, small reduction of available habitat and food availability to terrestrial fauna.</p>		<p>prior to construction for activity/presence of animal species. If detected, such animals must be removed and relocated by a qualified professional/contractor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintain a minimum buffer of 32 m from any wetland.</li> <li>» Limit disturbance to footprint area as far as practically possible.</li> <li>» Place infrastructure as far as possible on area that have been transformed already</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Altered topsoil characteristics.</li> <li>» Altered vegetation composition.</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» During construction: stay within demarcated footprint areas and strictly prohibit any off-road driving or parking of vehicles and machinery outside designated areas</li> <li>» Prevent spillage of construction material and other pollutants, contain and treat any spillages immediately</li> <li>» Topsoil (the upper 25 cm of soil) is an important natural resource; where it must be stripped, never mix it with subsoil or any other material, store and protect it separately until it can be re-applied, minimise handling of topsoil</li> <li>» Temporarily stored topsoil must be re-applied within 6 months, topsoil stored for longer need to be managed according to a detailed topsoil management plan</li> <li>» Rehabilitate and revegetate all areas</li> </ul>

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
			<p>outside footprint area that have been disturbed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» After decommissioning remove all foreign material prior to starting the rehabilitation</li> <li>» The rehabilitation plan for all temporarily affected areas and for the development area after decommissioning must aim to re-introduce all non-weed indigenous species listed in the specialist report as a minimum,</li> <li>» Re-seeding should include a high percentage of <i>Themeda triandra</i> whilst <i>Digitaria eriantha</i> and <i>Panicum coloratum</i> can also be included.</li> <li>» It is expected that the <i>Cynodon dactylon</i>, <i>Eragrostis lehmanniana</i> and <i>Eragrostis chloromelas</i> will resettle itself.</li> <li>» Monitor the establishment of invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed</li> </ul>
<p>Temporary construction camps and sites where machinery is kept during construction</p>	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Loss of vegetation and/or species of conservation concern.</li> <li>» Loss of microhabitats.</li> <li>» Altered vegetation cover.</li> <li>» Altered distribution of rainfall and resultant runoff patterns.</li> <li>» Increase in concentrated runoff from sealed or</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Exclude high sensitivity zones from this activity.</li> <li>» A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be applied for.</li> <li>» Animal burrows must be monitored by ECO prior to construction for activity/presence</li> </ul>

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	<p>compacted surfaces and possibly higher accelerated erosion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Reduction of habitat and resource availability for terrestrial fauna.</li> <li>» Possible contaminated topsoil.</li> <li>» Possible contaminated wetland.</li> </ul>		<p>of animal species. If detected, such animals must be removed and relocated by a qualified professional/contractor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintain a minimum buffer of 100 m from any seepage area.</li> <li>» Place infrastructure as far as possible on sites that have been transformed already</li> <li>» Stay within demarcated temporary construction areas and strictly prohibit any off-road driving or parking of vehicles and machinery outside designated areas</li> <li>» Prevent spillage of construction material and other pollutants, contain and treat any spillages immediately, strictly prohibit any pollution/littering according to the relevant EMPr</li> <li>» No fires may be lit for cooking or any other purposes</li> <li>» Facilities may not be used as staff accommodation</li> <li>» Topsoil (the upper 25 cm of soil) is an important natural resource; where it must be stripped, never mix it with subsoil or any other material, store and protect it separately until it can be re-applied, minimise handling of topsoil</li> <li>» Temporarily stored topsoil must be re-applied within 6 months, topsoil stored for longer need to be managed according to a</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b> None</p>	-	
	<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» If mitigation measures are not strictly followed the following could occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• erosion of the development area and lower-lying wetlands</li> <li>• contamination of wetlands</li> <li>• spread and establishment of invasive species.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Low	
	<p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Altered topsoil characteristics.</li> <li>» Altered vegetation composition.</li> </ul>	Low	

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
			detailed topsoil management plan » After construction remove all foreign material prior to starting the rehabilitation » The rehabilitation plan for all temporarily affected areas must aim to re-introduce all non-weed indigenous species listed in the specialist report as a minimum, taking the observed original cover percentages as a guideline of acceptable vegetation cover » Monitor the establishment of invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed
Topsoil stockpiles that may be required during or after construction	<b>Direct impacts:</b> » Loss of vegetation and/or species of conservation concern. » Loss of microhabitats. » Altered vegetation cover. » Altered distribution of rainfall and resultant runoff patterns. » Possibly higher accelerated erosion. » Possible loss of topsoil resources. » Reduction of habitat and resource availability for terrestrial fauna.	Low	» Exclude high sensitivity zones from this activity » A permit from the provincial conservation authority for the removal/relocation of protected plant species will need to be applied for. » Animal burrows must be monitored by ECO prior to construction for activity/presence of animal species. If detected, such animals must be removed and relocated by a qualified professional/contractor. » Maintain a minimum buffer of 100 m from any wetland » Stay within demarcated areas and access routes for extraction and/or movement of materials
	<b>Indirect impacts:</b> None	-	
	<b>Cumulative impacts:</b> » If mitigation measures are not strictly followed	Low	

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	<p>the following could occur:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continued erosion of the altered surfaces with associated siltation and/or erosion of lower-lying seepages</li> <li>• contamination of wetlands</li> <li>• spread and establishment of invasive species</li> </ul> <p>» Alteration of occupancy by terrestrial fauna, small reduction of available habitat and food availability to terrestrial fauna.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Strictly prohibit any off-road driving or parking of vehicles and machinery outside designated areas</li> <li>» Prevent spillage of pollutants, contain and treat any spillages immediately, strictly prohibit any pollution</li> <li>» Topsoil (the upper 25 cm of soil) is an important natural resource; where it must be stripped, never mix it with subsoil or any other material, store and protect it separately until it can be re-applied, minimise handling of topsoil, manage stored topsoil according to a dedicated topsoil management plan</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Altered topsoil characteristics.</li> <li>» Altered vegetation composition.</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Temporarily stored topsoil must be re-applied within 6 months, topsoil stored for longer need to be managed according to a detailed topsoil management plan</li> <li>» Monitor erosion of areas and control where necessary</li> <li>» After construction remove all foreign material prior to starting the rehabilitation</li> <li>» The rehabilitation plan for all temporarily affected areas must aim to re-introduce all non-weed indigenous species listed in the specialist report as a minimum,</li> <li>» The rehabilitation plan for all temporarily affected areas and for the development area after decommissioning must aim to</li> </ul>

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
			<p>re-introduce all non-weed indigenous species listed in the specialist report as a minimum,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Re-seeding should include a high percentage of <i>Themeda triandra</i> whilst <i>Digitaria eriantha</i> and <i>Panicum coloratum</i> can also be included.</li> <li>» It is expected that the <i>Cynodon dactylon</i>, <i>Eragrostis lehmanniana</i> and <i>Eragrostis chloromelas</i> will resettle itself.</li> <li>» Monitor the establishment of invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed</li> </ul>
<p>Transport of materials to site, movement of vehicles on site during construction and maintenance</p>	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Loss of vegetation.</li> <li>» Increase in runoff and erosion.</li> <li>» Disturbance or possible mortality incidents of terrestrial fauna.</li> <li>» Possible contamination of soil and groundwater by oil- or fuel spillages.</li> <li>» Possible establishment and spread of undesirable weeds and alien invasive species that could further damage ecosystem functionality.</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Strictly restrict all movement of vehicles and heavy machinery to permissible areas, these being designated access roads, maintenance roads, turning points and parking areas. No off-road driving beyond designated areas may be allowed</li> <li>» Parking areas should be regularly inspected for oil spills and covered with an impermeable or absorbent layer (with the necessary storm water control) if oil and fuel spillages are highly likely to occur</li> <li>» Strict speed limits must be set and adhered to</li> <li>» Driving between dusk and dawn should be permissible to emergency situations only</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b> None</p>	<p>-</p>	
	<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Possible pollution of surrounding areas if no mitigation is implemented.</li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Possible spread of alien invasive species beyond the site if no mitigation is implemented.</li> </ul> <p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Related to access roads and internal maintenance tracks only.</li> </ul>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Prevent spillage of any, oils or other chemicals, strictly prohibit other pollution</li> <li>» Monitor the establishment of invasive species and remove as soon as detected, whenever possible before regenerative material can be formed, destroy all material to prevent re-establishment</li> </ul>
PV array components and their continued maintenance and eventual decommissioning: regular washing and possible breakage of panels	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Localised increase in runoff and accelerated erosion.</li> <li>» Possible damage to terrestrial fauna by broken PV panels/infrastructure</li> </ul>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Where panels need to be washed, no polluting chemicals may be used, and the use of water should be minimal.</li> <li>» Where water is used for washing, monitor areas around the PV arrays for signs of accelerated erosion and establishment of weeds or alien invasive species and manage according to the erosion- and invasive species management plan</li> <li>» Prior to construction and up to decommissioning, clear instructions must be drafted and at all times available on site on how any breakages of PV panels will be dealt with, including the correct salvage, disposal and preferably also recycling methods (or possibilities) for any broken materials.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b></p> <p>None</p>	-	
	<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Possible pollution of surrounding areas if no mitigation is implemented</li> <li>» Possible increase in and spread of alien invasive species beyond the site if no mitigation is implemented.</li> </ul>	Low	
	<p><b>Residual impacts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» None expected if mitigation measures are implemented</li> </ul>	-	
Construction of the PV facility can have a negative impact on heritage resources	<p><b>Direct impacts:</b></p> <p>None</p>	Low	It is recommended that an area of 20m around the cairns is not considered for the PV facility and fenced off with an access gate. Alternatively it should be determined whether the cairns are grades. If the cairns are
	<p><b>Indirect impacts:</b></p> <p>None</p>	Low	
	<p><b>Cumulative impacts:</b></p>	Low	

Activity	Impact summary	Significance after mitigation	Proposed mitigation
	None <b>Residual impacts:</b> None	Low	confirmed to be graves relocation of the graves can be considered as a last resort.  If during the construction phase an archaeological and/or palaeontological resource is discovered, all construction operations need to be paused and an archaeologist and/or palaeontologist needs to be appointed for further investigation and study.
Alternative 2: N/A			
Alternative 3: N/A			

A complete impact assessment in terms of Appendix 1 of GN R.982 has been included as **Appendix F**.



## 2. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Taking the assessment of potential impacts into account, please provide an environmental impact statement that summarises the impact that the proposed activity and its alternatives may have on the environment after the management and mitigation of impacts have been taken into account, with specific reference to types of impact, duration of impacts, likelihood of potential impacts actually occurring and the significance of impacts.

### Preferred Site Layout and Alternative Site Layout

The proposed activities assessed within this Final Basic Assessment Report are required to provide essential infrastructure associated with the development of the Eland PV Solar Facility, Free State Province. In summary, this Basic Assessment has assessed potential impacts and identified appropriate management and mitigation measures. No environmental fatal flaws and no significant negative impacts have been identified to be associated with the proposed project (for both the preferred and alternative site layouts) provided the recommended mitigation and management measures are implemented.

Environmental costs can be expected to arise as a result of the project proceeding (for both the preferred and alternative site layouts). This could include:

- » Possible disturbance of slope seepage wetlands on the proposed site. Changes to the preferred site layout have been included within the facility design in order to ensure that the wetlands will not be impacted on by the proposed PV Solar Facility. A buffer of 32m has also been included around the wetlands, as per the ecology specialist recommendation (refer to **Appendix D1**) to avoid any disturbance and further degradation of these sensitive areas.
- » Direct loss of vegetation and faunal habitat due to the clearing of land and vegetation for the development of the proposed Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility. This impact can be reduced through the minimisation of vegetation clearance as far as possible.
- » The disturbance of possible archaeological resources (cairns) discovered on site, specifically within the alternative site layout (refer to **Appendix D2**). At least 4 stone and brick cairns were recorded of which the purpose is unknown. The cairns measure approximately a meter wide and between 1 and 2 meters long. These cairns are in no particular order or pattern and vary from a north south orientation to east west and south east to north west. The possibility exists that these cairns might represent informal graves. These cairns are located on the southern periphery of the preferred site layout and almost in the middle of the alternative site layout. It is therefore recommended that the area where the cairns are situated is avoided by the development and preserved in-situ. The area around the cairns should be fenced off with a buffer zone of 20 meters.

These costs are expected to occur at a local and site level and are considered acceptable provided the mitigation measures as outlined in this Basic Assessment and the EMP are implemented.

Benefits of the project include the following:

- » The proposed project is located on a site which has been historically transformed, with little remaining natural vegetation. Therefore, there will be limited impacts on natural ecosystems as a result of the development of the project
- » The proposed PV Solar Facility will result in important economic benefits at the local and regional scale through job creation, procurement of materials and provision of services and other associated downstream economic development. These will extend beyond the site and would be experienced at a local and regional scale.
- » The use of renewable resources for the development of electricity will contribute to a reduction in environmental impacts at a broader scale. The generation of clean/green electricity encourages environmental health as well as local upliftment in the affected communities.
- » A reduction of pressure on the national electricity (Eskom) grid will occur due to the reduced pressure to supply electricity to the Harmony Eland Mine.
- » The direct dependency of the Harmony Eland Mine on the national grid to supply energy will be reduced. This will result in operations within the mine to run more smoothly, especially when the national grid is put under pressure to provide electricity to all parties.
- » The development of the proposed project will contribute towards the reduction in the carbon footprint of the mine.

Benefits of the project extend beyond the boundaries of the site and are expected to be experienced at a local, regional and national level. The benefits of the project are expected to outweigh the costs. The development of the proposed project is therefore considered to be sustainable from an environmental perspective.

**Alternative B: N/A**

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**Alternative C: N/A**

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**No-go alternative (compulsory)**

The 'do-nothing' alternative is the option of not constructing the Harmony Eland PV Solar Facility on the identified site. This alternative would result in no new environmental impacts on the site or surrounding area. Due to the transformed nature of the site as a result of historic anthropogenic activities, the potential for impact on the site is considered to be low with development, and therefore the do nothing alternative has little benefit to the current environment.

**BBEntropie** is proposing the establishment of a solar energy facility within the Harmony Gold Mining Company mining area for the purpose of reducing total carbon emissions and diversifying electricity supply to the Harmony Eland Mine. Should the facility not be constructed, Harmony Gold Mining Company's reliance on fossil-fuel based power as a sole-source of power to the plant will continue and the demand on Eskom's electricity supply will increase over time.

Failure to establish an exclusive power supply source for the Harmony Eland Mine would also result in a constant demand of power to be supplied from Eskom, which will add pressure on the grid infrastructure in the region (and would require the additional consumption of fossil fuels to achieve the same level of electrical supplied to the factory). The electricity demand in South Africa is placing increasing pressure on the country's existing power generation capacity. There is, therefore, a need for additional electricity generation options to be developed throughout the country.

The support for renewable energy policy is guided by the need to address climate change as well as a rationale that South Africa has a very attractive range of renewable resources, particularly solar and wind and that renewable applications are in fact the least-cost energy service in many cases - and more so when social and environmental costs are taken into account. The generation of electricity from renewable energy in South Africa offers a number of socio-economic and environmental benefits. These benefits include:

- » *Exploitation of our significant renewable energy resource:* At present, valuable national resources including biomass by-products, solar radiation and solar power remain largely unexploited. The use of these energy flows will strengthen energy security through the development of a diverse energy portfolio.
- » *Pollution reduction:* The releases of by-products through the burning of fossil fuels for electricity generation have a particularly hazardous impact on human health and contribute to ecosystem degradation.
- » *Climate friendly development:* The uptake of renewable energy offers the opportunity to address energy needs in an environmentally responsible manner and thereby allows South Africa to contribute towards mitigating climate change through the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. South Africa is estimated to be responsible for ~1% of global GHG emissions and is currently ranked 9<sup>th</sup> worldwide in terms of per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- » *Employment creation:* The sale, development, installation, maintenance, and management of renewable energy facilities have significant potential for job creation in South Africa.
- » *Acceptability to society:* Renewable energy offers a number of tangible benefits to society including reduced pollution concerns, improved human and ecosystem health and climate friendly development.
- » *Support to a new industry sector* - the development of renewable energy offers the opportunity to establish a new industry within the South African economy.

The 'do nothing' alternative will not assist the Harmony Gold Mining Company in addressing issues such as diversifying their electricity supply at the Harmony Eland Mine and reducing total carbon emissions from the operations. As detailed above, the benefits associated with the construction of the proposed facility outweigh the costs, and the project is therefore considered to be sustainable. The costs of the '**do nothing alternative**' are expected to outweigh the benefits and, **therefore, this alternative is not a preferred alternative.**

## SECTION E. RECOMMENDATION OF PRACTITIONER

Is the information contained in this report and the documentation attached hereto sufficient to make a decision in respect of the activity applied for (in the view of the environmental assessment practitioner)?

YES

If "NO", indicate the aspects that should be assessed further as part of a Scoping and EIA process before a decision can be made (list the aspects that require further assessment).

If "YES", please list any recommended conditions, including mitigation measures that should be considered for inclusion in any authorisation that may be granted by the competent authority in respect of the application.

The following mitigation and management measures should be implemented:

- » The slope seepage wetlands, which occurs within the proposed project site should be considered as a no-go area where no activities or development may take place. For the protection of the wetland a recommended 32 meter buffer should be placed around the wetland area.
- » A stormwater management and erosion control plan as well as a rehabilitation plan should be developed and implemented.
- » Limit vegetation clearance as far as possible and restrict construction activities to designated construction areas.
- » As four cairns are situated within a slope seepage wetland (no-go area) a buffer of 20m is not recommended as the fencing to be placed will infringe on the wetland and cause further degradation. Thus the 32m buffer of the wetland is recommended (as per the Ecological Impact Assessment) to include both the cairns and the wetland into the no-go area, where no disturbance or activity may take place.
- » If during the construction phase an archaeological and/or palaeontological resource is discovered, all construction operations need to be paused and an archaeologist and/or palaeontologist needs to be appointed for further investigation and study.
- » An alien plant control programme should be initiated as part of the development, as to ensure that alien invasive species will not spread across the site.
- » It is also recommended that the preferred site layout receive approval for the construction of the facility as no sensitive areas (both ecological and archaeological) fall within this site layout. This layout has been designed in such a manner as to avoid these sensitive areas as well as provide enough space for the recommended mitigation measures (protective buffers).
- » It is recommended that the proposed development receive authorisation as the benefits of the facility will exceed the costs. The facility will contribute to the

surrounding communities as limited job opportunities will be created and will contribute to the overall welfare of society as the use of non-renewable resources for the generation of power will be reduced. The Harmony Gold Mining Company will also have the opportunity to diversify their electricity supply and reduce their dependency on the national electricity grid for power, while simultaneously reducing the power supply pressure for Eskom.

Is an EMPr attached?

YES

The EMPr must be attached as **Appendix G**.

The details of the EAP who compiled the BAR and the expertise of the EAP to perform the Basic Assessment process must be included as **Appendix H**.

If any specialist reports were used during the compilation of this BAR, please attach the declaration of interest for each specialist in **Appendix I**.

Any other information relevant to this application and not previously included must be attached in Appendix J.

KAREN JODAS

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME OF EAP

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF EAP

8 December 2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

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## SECTION F: APPENDICES

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The following appendices are attached:

**Appendix A: Maps**

- » Appendix A1: Locality map
- » Appendix A2: Facility layout map
- » Appendix A3: Sensitivity map
- » Appendix A4: Coordinates

**Appendix B: Site Photographs**

**Appendix C: Facility Illustration(s)**

**Appendix D: Specialist(s)**

- » Appendix D1: Ecological specialist study
- » Appendix D2: Archaeological specialist study
- » Appendix D3: Palaeontological specialist study

**Appendix E: Record of Public Involvement Process**

- » Appendix E1: Advertisements and Site Notices
- » Appendix E2: Proof of stakeholder consultation
- » Appendix E3: Comments and Response Report
- » Appendix E4: Authority Consultation
- » Appendix E5: I&AP Database
- » Appendix E6(a): Comments received
- » Appendix E6(b): Meeting Minutes

**Appendix F: Impact Assessment**

**Appendix G: Environmental Management Programme**

**Appendix H: EAP Affirmation and CV's**

**Appendix I: Specialist Declarations and CV's**