

APPENDIX C7
MEETING NOTES



**SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE
STATE PROVINCE**

**MEETING NOTES OF THE FOCUS GROUP MEETING HELD WITH THE
AUTHORITIES
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12 APRIL 2023 AT 09H00
VENUE: Virtual, MS Teams Meeting**

Notes for the Record prepared by:

Cornelius Holtzhausen
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

*Please note that these notes are not verbatim, but a summary of the comments submitted at the meeting.
Please address any comments to Savannah Environmental at the above address*

SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Property Name / Organisation	Position
Kamogelo Mathetja	DFFE: Biodiversity Conservation	Biodiversity and conservation team, case officer for the project
Mmatlala Rabothata	DFFE: Biodiversity Conservation	Biodiversity and conservation team, case officer for the project
Jack Armour	Free State Agriculture	Commercial Manager
Assan Ralebona	Harmony Gold	Environmental Officer
Henk Nel	Harmony Gold	Senior Environmental Coordinator
John van Wyk	Harmony Gold	Environmental Manager
David Williams	Energy Group	Project Manager
Jason Faurhurst	Energy Group	Project Manager
Chantelle Geyer	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant
Cornelius Holtzhausen	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant

WELCOME, INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF THE INFORMATION SHARING DISCUSSION

Nicolene Venter welcomed the attendees at the Focus Group Meeting for the Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility project near Theunissen, Free State. She informed the attendees that the purpose of the meeting was to inform them of the Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility project, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Public Participation process which is being conducted.

The attendance record is attached as **Appendix A** to the meeting notes.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECTS

Chantelle Geyer presented the following information to the attendees:

- » a summary of the Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment & Public Participation Process;
- » a summary of the key environmental findings of the EIA process;
- » the specialist environmental studies; and
- » present key summary of the environmental findings as documented in the EIA.

The presentation is attached as **Appendix B** to the meeting notes.

DISCUSSION

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
<p>Jack Armour</p>	<p>Questioned how the increase in traffic flow would affect local farmers in the area.?</p>	<p>Chantelle Geyer responded that the studies indicated that while there will be an increase in traffic during the construction phases, there will be a negligible increase during the operation phase of the project, and thus will not have a large impact on the surrounding landowners.</p>
	<p>Stated that, in terms of security, the local farmers have a security network that included cameras over the area of concern.</p>	<p>Henk Nel answered that Harmony Gold would work alongside the local farmers regarding safety and security. Additionally, Harmony Gold will add additional security to its existing systems to protect its investment.</p>
	<p>Regarding fire hazards, the local farmers were part of the local fire protection association.</p>	<p>Henk Nel responded that the mine would ensure that fire breaks are introduced and maintained as this will also protect the solar PV plant.</p>
	<p>Regarding road infrastructure, it was mentioned that although the farmers were part of a WhatsApp group established by the Department of Roads, the farmers largely maintain the roads themselves.</p> <p>It was recommended that the mine make use of these resources to improve the roads, security, and fire protection of the area.</p>	<p>Henk Nel informed the stakeholder that additional roads would not be constructed and that the main access road to the Harmony Joel mine will continue to be used for access to the renewable facility.</p>
<p>Mmatlala Rabothata</p>	<p>It was recommended that the final layout map should show that highly sensitive areas have been avoided or recommended as no-go areas.</p>	<p>Chantelle Geyer responded that the only no-go areas as identified by the specialist are heritage sites, and they are already avoided by the proposed layout. The layout also took into consideration the 500m buffers for the rivers.</p> <p>She confirmed that the applicant made every effort to ensure all high-sensitivity areas were similarly avoided.</p>

	<p>For clarification purposes, who is the competent authority for this project.</p>	<p>Nicolene Venter responded that DESTEA is the decision-making authority on the project, and the information was confirmed by Chantelle Geyer and responded that the information would be updated on the presentation to reflect the correct decision-making authority.</p>
	<p>It was commented that there were no slides addressing cumulative impacts.</p>	<p>Chantelle Geyer acknowledged the comment and referred the stakeholder to Chapter 8 of the EIA Report which provides information regarding the cumulative impacts.</p>
<p>Kamogelo Mathetja</p>	<p>Clarification is requested on the ecological cumulative impact on the wetlands which is indicated as high.</p>	<p>Chantelle Geyer confirmed this impact rating in the report and explained that the ecologist determined that since the area has already been transformed by mining and social activities in the area, the physical rating will be medium. The ecologist is in the process of reviewing his report and providing feedback regarding this.</p> <p>It is important to note that the ecologist needs to make a like-for-like comparison between the renewable facilities' impact on land already disturbed by mining and other activities.</p>

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Nicolene Venter and Chantelle Geyer thanked everyone for making time available to meet and for the valuable information shared.

Nicolene added that the presentation will be shared and anyone that wishes to submit any further comments could do so.

The Focus Group Meeting was concluded at 11h45.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

<p>DFFE</p>	<p>Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment</p>	<p>DESTEA</p>	<p>Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs</p>
-------------	---	---------------	--

APPENDIX A: Attendance Record

Meeting title	Harmony Joel Solar PV & Associated Infrastructure: Focus Group Meeting - Authorities
Attended participants	11
Start time	12/04/23, 09:05 AM
End time	12/04/23, 11:45 AM

Participants

Name	Position	Company / Organisation	Email
Kamogelo Mathetja	Case Officer	DFFE: Biodiversity Conservation	KMathetja@dffe.gov.za
Matlala Rabothata	Case Officer	DFFE: Biodiversity Conservation	mrabothata@environment.gov.za
Jack Armour	Commercial Manager	Free State Agriculture	jack@vslandbou.co.za
Assan Ralebona	Environmental Officer	Harmony Gold	assan.ralebona@harmony.co.za
Henk Nel	Senior Environmental Coordinator	Harmony Gold	henel@harmony.co.za
John van Wyk	Environmental Manager	Harmony Gold	jvwyk@harmony.co.za
David Williams	Project Manager	Energy Group	david@engp.co.za
Jason Faurhurst	Project Manager	Energy Group	jason@engp.co.za
Chantelle Geyer	Environmental Assessment Practitioner	Savannah Environmental	chantelle@savannahsa.com

**HARMONY GOLD
RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES**

HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY

FREE STATE PROVINCE

Public Participation Meeting

April 2023



1

AGENDA


- Welcome and Introduction
- Meeting Conduct
- Purpose of the Meeting
- Project Description
- Need and Desirability
- Environmental Sensitivities Identified
- Way Forward
- Discussions



2

MEETING CONDUCT


- Recording of the meeting
- Please stay on mute during the presentation
- Register attendance on the Chat function (name, surname, affiliation & email address)
- Equal opportunity
- Questions and comments can be submitted on the chat function during the presentation – team will respond after the presentation
- Please hold all verbal questions until after the presentation
- Please raise your hand (virtual function) to ask a question



3

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

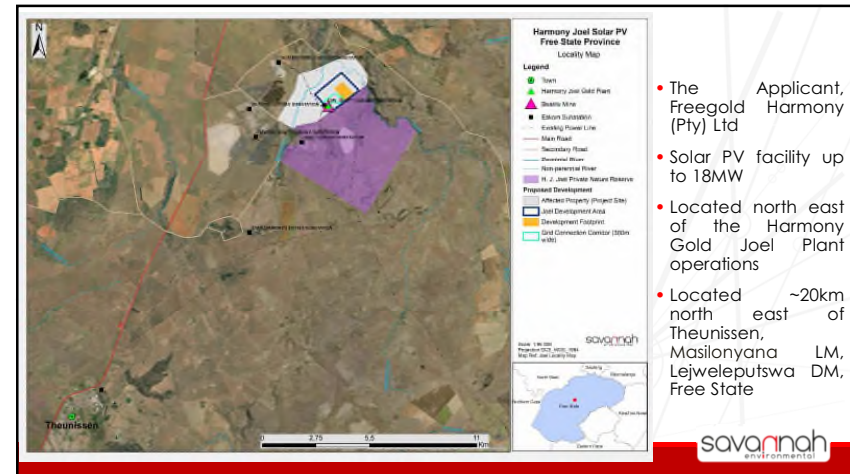
- Provide an overview of the **Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility**
- Present a summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation Process**
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings of the **EIA process**
- Provide stakeholders the opportunity to seek clarity regarding the project and environmental studies, as well as the opportunity to provide valuable input into/to inform the EIA process
- Provide an opportunity to provide further input and comment
- Obtain and record comments for inclusion in the FEIA Report to be submitted to the DESTEA



4

PROJECT OVERVIEW (Chantelle Geyer)

5

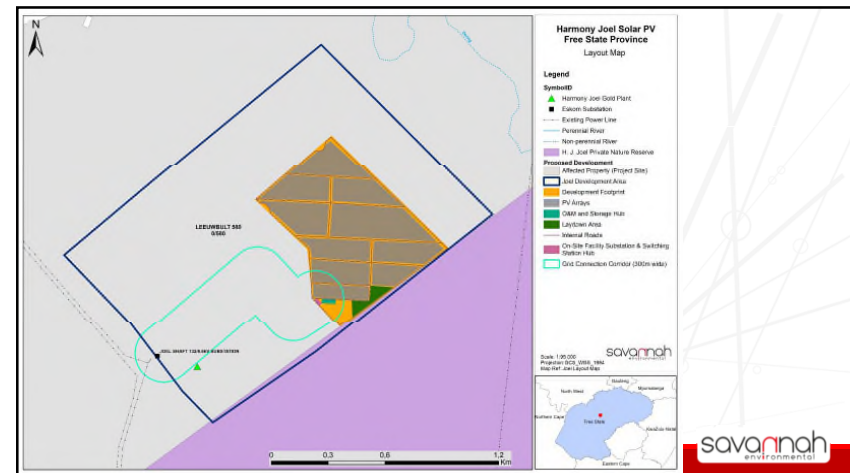


6

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Solar PV facility up to 18MW
- The extent of the development area is ~220ha with a footprint of ~47ha
- The on-site infrastructure includes:
 - PV modules and mounting structures
 - Inverters and transformers a SCADA room, and maintenance room
 - Cabling between the project components, to be laid underground where practical
 - Access roads, internal roads and fencing around the development area.
 - Temporary and permanent laydown areas and O&M buildings.
 - Grid connection solution including an on-site facility substation and switching substation, to be connected via an overhead power line to the Shafts 1 & 2 HJ Joel Mining Substation (located ~830m south west of the development footprint)

7



8

NEED AND DESIRABILITY

- Freegold Harmony (Pty) Ltd aims to accomplish their decarbonisation goals by using renewable energy to reduce their carbon footprint
- Generation for own-use with any excess electricity to be wheeled to the national grid. PV to provide the Mine with electricity – reduced reliance on Eskom and electricity cost savings (est. ~R500 million electricity savings for the Harmony group from 2025 onwards. ~R80 million per year in electricity savings for Joel)
- Solar resource readily available at the project sites
- Property owned by Harmony Gold
- To connect into the existing Eskom infrastructure
- Employment and business opportunities during the construction and operation, and opportunity for skills development for local communities.
- Shift towards sustainable development and pollution reduction
- National, local and regional policy supports development of renewable energy projects

WHAT IS A SOLAR PV PLANT?

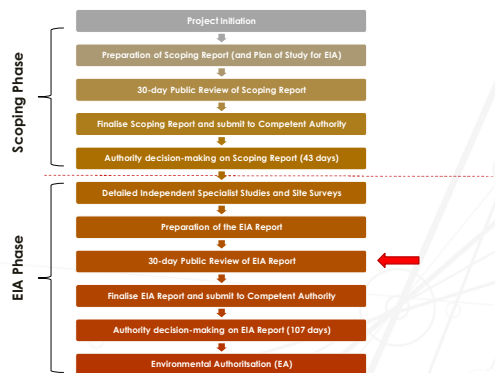


7MW RustMo1 Solar Farm near Rustenburg - Operational



50MW De Wildt Solar Power Plant near Brits – Commenced commercial operation in January 2021

EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



SPECIALIST STUDIES

Specialist	Field of study
Darius Van Rensburg of DPR Ecologists & Environmental Services	Terrestrial Ecology and Wetlands
Lukas Niemand of Pachnoda Consulting CC	Avifauna (including monitoring)
Marinè Pienaar of Terra Africa Environmental Consultants	Soil, Land Use, Land Capability and Agricultural Potential
Jenna Lavin of CTS Heritage	Heritage (including archaeology, palaeontology and cultural landscape)
Brogan Geldenhuys of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Visual
Marti Le Roux of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Social

APPROACH TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT

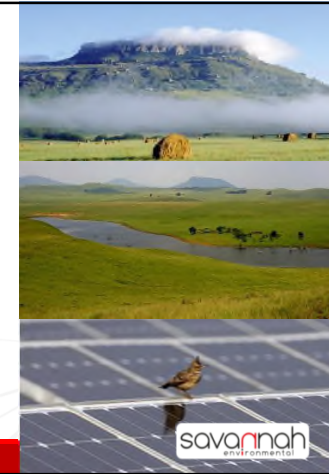
- Identification of issues – social and biophysical environment
- Potential sensitive areas identified through detailed specialist and in-field studies
- Design of appropriate facility layout informed by identified sensitive features and/or areas
- Application of the mitigation hierarchy (i.e., avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset)
- Micro-siting of facility layout



13

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Ecological Impacts
 - Loss of indigenous vegetation
 - Displacement and mortality of species
 - Alien invasive species
- Wetland Impacts
 - Loss of wetland soils and vegetation
 - Erosion and sedimentation
 - Pollution of water sources
- Avifauna Impacts
 - Habitat destruction
 - Collision and mortality
 - Disturbance and displacement
 - Electrocutation



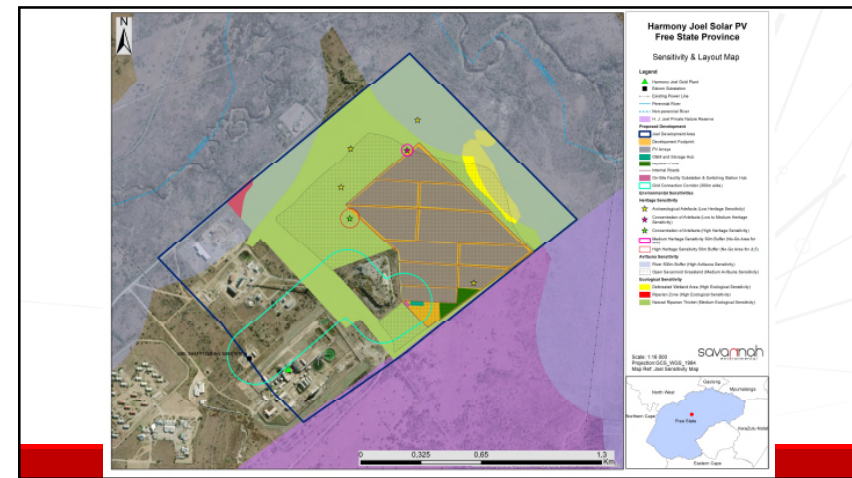
14

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Agricultural Impacts
 - Loss of soil and land capability
- Heritage Impacts
 - Archeological significant resources
 - Paleontological resources
 - Cultural landscape resources
- Visual Impact
 - Viewshed impacts
 - Community impacts
- Socio Economic Impacts
 - Employment and business procurement
 - Skills development
 - Foreigners and local communities



15



16

IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Specialist Field	Significance of impacts (after mitigation)	
	Construction Phase	Operation Phase
Ecology	Medium to Low	Medium to Low
Avifauna	Medium	Medium to Low
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Medium to Low	Low
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium to Low	Medium
Social	Medium to Low	Medium

17

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

Specialist Field	Cumulative significance of impact of the project and other projects in the area	
	In Isolation	Combined with Other Projects in the Area
Ecology	Medium	High
Avifauna	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Medium
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium	Medium
Social	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)

18

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Current layout does not result in unacceptable environmental impacts
- The optimised layout avoids aquatic, avifauna, ecological and archaeological sensitivities and honours buffer zones - location of infrastructure is considered acceptable
- Where impacts cannot be avoided - appropriate mitigation proposed to minimise impacts & included in project EMPrs
- Specialist study conclusions - development will not result in unacceptable environmental impacts (subject to mitigation measures)
- Benefits of the project is expected to occur at a national, regional and local level

19

WAY FORWARD (Cornelius Holtzhausen)

20

WAY FORWARD

- EIA Report review period: **24 March 2023 – 26 April 2023** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final EIA Report to be submitted to DESTEA – April/May 2023
- Registered parties will be notified of decision once issued
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the development and register any additional I&APs to receive important project information as it becomes available.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

Nicolene Venter

Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157

Tel: 011 656 3237

Mobile: 060 978 8396

Fax: 086 684 0547

www.savannahSA.com

**SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE
STATE PROVINCE**

**MEETING NOTES OF THE KEY STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP
HELD ON THURSDAY, 13 APRIL 2023 AT 09H00
VENUE: Virtual, MS Teams Meeting**

Notes for the Record prepared by:

Cornelius Holtzhausen
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

*Please note that these notes are not verbatim, but a summary of the comments submitted at the meeting.
Please address any comments to Savannah Environmental at the above address*

SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Property Name / Organisation	Position
Bradley Gibbons	Endangered Wildlife Trust	Senior Field Officer
Assan Ralebona	Harmony Gold	Environmental Officer
Henk Nel	Harmony Gold	Senior Environmental Coordinator
John van Wyk	Harmony Gold	Environmental Manager
David Williams	Energy Group	Project Manager
Chantelle Geyer	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant
Cornelius Holtzhausen	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant

The attendance record is attached as **Appendix A** to the Key Stakeholder Workshop notes.

The MS Outlook calendar invitation to the Officials was sent to the relevant commenting Officials and none of the stakeholders joined the virtual Key Stakeholder Workshop. The team stayed online for fifteen minutes, providing the stakeholders with the opportunity to join the workshop.

APPENDIX A: Attendance Record

Meeting title	Harmony Joel Solar PV & Associated Infrastructure: Key Stakeholder Workshop
Attended participants	10
Start time	13/04/23, 09:05 AM
End time	13/04/23, 09:18 AM

Participants			
Name	Position	Company / Organisation	Email
Igor Scheukogel	Ward Councilor	Matjhabeng Municipality	igors@matjhabeng.co.za
Bradley Gibbons	Senior Field Officer	Endangered Wildlife Trust	bradleyg@ewt.org.za
Assan Ralebona	Environmental Officer	Harmony Gold	assan.ralebona@harmony.co.za
Henk Nel	Senior Environmental Coordinator	Harmony Gold	henel@harmony.co.za
Ipeleng Sebetlele	Environmental Intern	Harmony Gold	ipeleng.sebetlele@harmony.co.za
David Williams	Project Manager	Energy Group	david@engp.co.za
Jason Faurhurst	Project Manager	Energy Group	jason@engp.co.za
Chantelle Geyer	Environmental Assessment Practitioner	Savannah Environmental	chantelle@savannahsa.com
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant	Savannah Environmental	nicolene@savannahsa.com
Cornelius Holtzhausen	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant	Savannah Environmental	cornelius@savannahsa.com

**HARMONY GOLD
RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES**

HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY

FREE STATE PROVINCE

Public Participation Meeting

April 2023



1

AGENDA


- Welcome and Introduction
- Meeting Conduct
- Purpose of the Meeting
- Project Description
- Need and Desirability
- Environmental Sensitivities Identified
- Way Forward
- Discussions



2

MEETING CONDUCT


- Recording of the meeting
- Please stay on mute during the presentation
- Register attendance on the Chat function (name, surname, affiliation & email address)
- Equal opportunity
- Questions and comments can be submitted on the chat function during the presentation – team will respond after the presentation
- Please hold all verbal questions until after the presentation
- Please raise your hand (virtual function) to ask a question



3

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

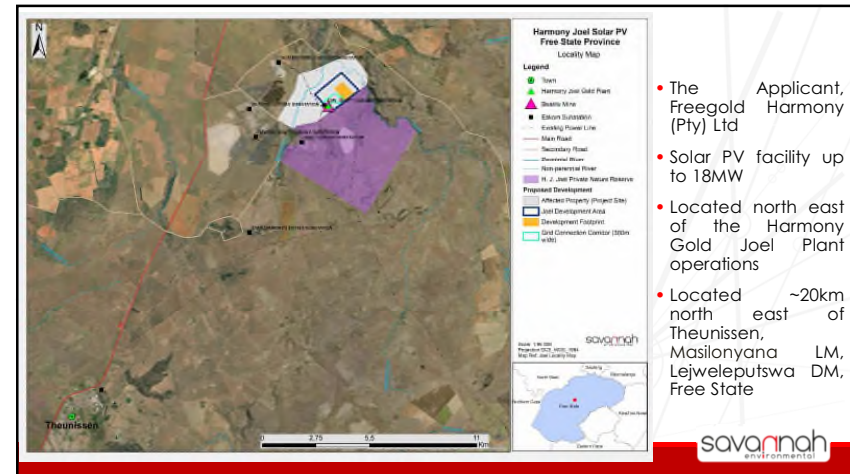
- Provide an overview of the **Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility**
- Present a summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation Process**
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings of the **EIA process**
- Provide stakeholders the opportunity to seek clarity regarding the project and environmental studies, as well as the opportunity to provide valuable input into/to inform the EIA process
- Provide an opportunity to provide further input and comment
- Obtain and record comments for inclusion in the FEIA Report to be submitted to the DESTEA



4

PROJECT OVERVIEW (Chantelle Geyer)

5



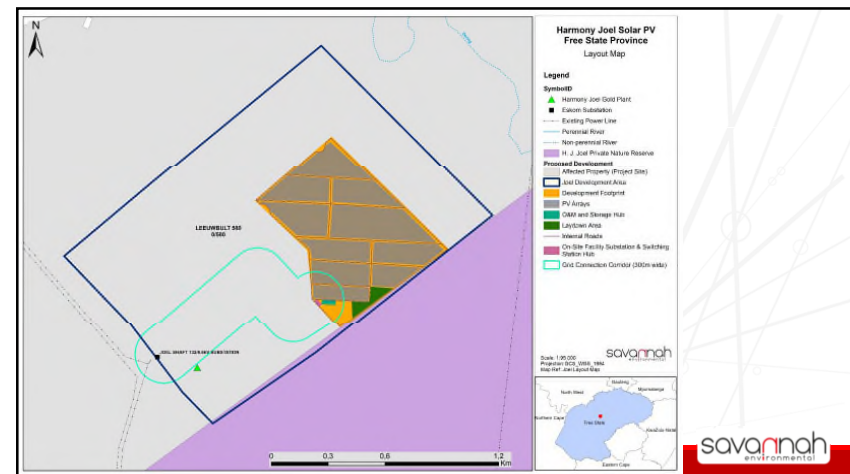
- The Applicant, Freegold Harmony (Pty) Ltd
- Solar PV facility up to 18MW
- Located north east of the Harmony Gold Joel Plant operations
- Located ~20km north east of Theunissen, Masilonyana LM, Lejweleputswa DM, Free State

6

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Solar PV facility up to 18MW
- The extent of the development area is ~220ha with a footprint of ~47ha
- The on-site infrastructure includes:
 - PV modules and mounting structures
 - Inverters and transformers a SCADA room, and maintenance room
 - Cabling between the project components, to be laid underground where practical
 - Access roads, internal roads and fencing around the development area.
 - Temporary and permanent laydown areas and O&M buildings.
 - Grid connection solution including an on-site facility substation and switching substation, to be connected via an overhead power line to the Shafts 1 & 2 HJ Joel Mining Substation (located ~830m south west of the development footprint)

7



8

NEED AND DESIRABILITY

- Freegold Harmony (Pty) Ltd aims to accomplish their decarbonisation goals by using renewable energy to reduce their carbon footprint
- Generation for own-use with any excess electricity to be wheeled to the national grid. PV to provide the Mine with electricity – reduced reliance on Eskom and electricity cost savings (est. ~R500 million electricity savings for the Harmony group from 2025 onwards. ~R80 million per year in electricity savings for Joel)
- Solar resource readily available at the project sites
- Property owned by Harmony Gold
- To connect into the existing Eskom infrastructure
- Employment and business opportunities during the construction and operation, and opportunity for skills development for local communities.
- Shift towards sustainable development and pollution reduction
- National, local and regional policy supports development of renewable energy projects

WHAT IS A SOLAR PV PLANT?

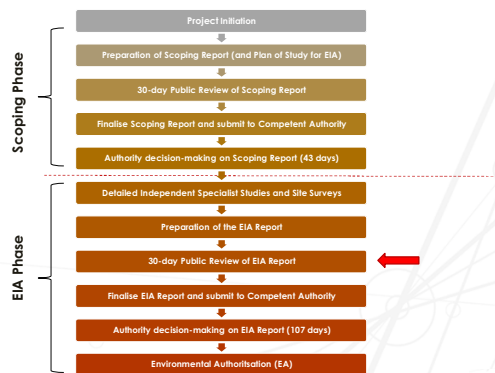


7MW RustMo1 Solar Farm near Rustenburg - Operational



50MW De Wildt Solar Power Plant near Brits – Commenced commercial operation in January 2021

EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



SPECIALIST STUDIES

Specialist	Field of study
Darius Van Rensburg of DPR Ecologists & Environmental Services	Terrestrial Ecology and Wetlands
Lukas Niemand of Pachnoda Consulting CC	Avifauna (including monitoring)
Marinè Pienaar of Terra Africa Environmental Consultants	Soil, Land Use, Land Capability and Agricultural Potential
Jenna Lavin of CTS Heritage	Heritage (including archaeology, palaeontology and cultural landscape)
Brogan Geldenhuys of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Visual
Marti Le Roux of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Social

APPROACH TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT

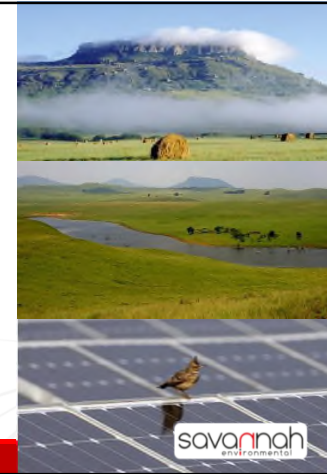
- Identification of issues – social and biophysical environment
- Potential sensitive areas identified through detailed specialist and in-field studies
- Design of appropriate facility layout informed by identified sensitive features and/or areas
- Application of the mitigation hierarchy (i.e., avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset)
- Micro-siting of facility layout

savannah
environmental

13

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Ecological Impacts
 - Loss of indigenous vegetation
 - Displacement and mortality of species
 - Alien invasive species
- Wetland Impacts
 - Loss of wetland soils and vegetation
 - Erosion and sedimentation
 - Pollution of water sources
- Avifauna Impacts
 - Habitat destruction
 - Collision and mortality
 - Disturbance and displacement
 - Electrocutation



savannah
environmental

14

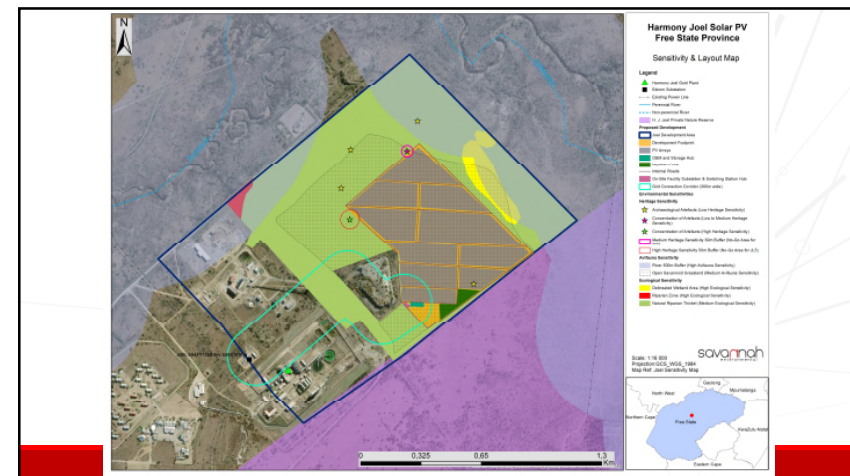
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Agricultural Impacts
 - Loss of soil and land capability
- Heritage Impacts
 - Archeological significant resources
 - Paleontological resources
 - Cultural landscape resources
- Visual Impact
 - Viewshed impacts
 - Community impacts
- Socio Economic Impacts
 - Employment and business procurement
 - Skills development
 - Foreigners and local communities



savannah
environmental

15



16

IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Specialist Field	Significance of impacts (after mitigation)	
	Construction Phase	Operation Phase
Ecology	Medium to Low	Medium to Low
Avifauna	Medium	Medium to Low
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Medium to Low	Low
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium to Low	Medium
Social	Medium to Low	Medium

17

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

Specialist Field	Cumulative significance of impact of the project and other projects in the area	
	In Isolation	Combined with Other Projects in the Area
Ecology	Medium	High
Avifauna	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Medium
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium	Medium
Social	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)

18

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Current layout does not result in unacceptable environmental impacts
- The optimised layout avoids aquatic, avifauna, ecological and archaeological sensitivities and honours buffer zones - location of infrastructure is considered acceptable
- Where impacts cannot be avoided - appropriate mitigation proposed to minimise impacts & included in project EMPrs
- Specialist study conclusions - development will not result in unacceptable environmental impacts (subject to mitigation measures)
- Benefits of the project is expected to occur at a national, regional and local level

19

WAY FORWARD (Cornelius Holtzhausen)

20

WAY FORWARD

- EIA Report review period: **24 March 2023 – 26 April 2023** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final EIA Report to be submitted to DESTEA – April/May 2023
- Registered parties will be notified of decision once issued
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the development and register any additional I&APs to receive important project information as it becomes available.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

Nicolene Venter

Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157

Tel: 011 656 3237

Mobile: 060 978 8396

Fax: 086 684 0547

www.savannahSA.com

**SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE
STATE PROVINCE**

**MEETING NOTES OF THE FOCUS GROUP MEETING HELD WITH
LANDOWNERS
HELD ON THURSDAY, 13 APRIL 2023 AT 09H00
VENUE: Virtual, MS Teams Meeting**

Notes for the Record prepared by:

Cornelius Holtzhausen
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

*Please note that these notes are not verbatim, but a summary of the comments submitted at the meeting.
Please address any comments to Savannah Environmental at the above address*

SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Property Name / Organisation	Position
Bradley Gibbons	Endangered Wildlife Trust	Senior Field Officer
Assan Ralebona	Harmony Gold	Environmental Officer
Henk Nel	Harmony Gold	Senior Environmental Coordinator
Ipeleng Sebetlele	Harmony Gold	Environmental Intern
John van Wyk	Harmony Gold	Environmental Manager
David Williams	Energy Group	Project Manager
Jason Faurhurst	Energy Group	Project Manager
Chantelle Geyer	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Cornelius Holtzhausen	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant

The attendance record is attached as **Appendix A** to the Focus Group Meeting notes.

The MS Outlook calendar invitation was sent to the affected and adjacent landowners to the development site and none of the landowners joined the virtual Focus Group Meeting. The team stayed online for fifteen minutes, providing the landowners with the opportunity to join the meeting.

APPENDIX A: Attendance Record

Meeting title	Harmony Joel Solar PV & Associated Infrastructure: Focus Group Meeting - Landowners
Attended participants	10
Start time	12/04/23, 14:05 AM
End time	12/04/23, 14:19 AM

Participants

Name	Position	Company / Organisation	Email
Igor Scheukogel	Ward Councilor	Matjhabeng Municipality	igors@matjhabeng.co.za
Bradley Gibbons	Senior Field Officer	Endangered Wildlife Trust	bradleyg@ewt.org.za
Assan Ralebona	Environmental Officer	Harmony Gold	assan.ralebona@harmony.co.za
Henk Nel	Senior Environmental Coordinator	Harmony Gold	henel@harmony.co.za
Ipeleng Sebetlele	Environmental Intern	Harmony Gold	ipeleng.sebetlele@harmony.co.za
David Williams	Project Manager	Energy Group	david@engp.co.za
Jason Faurhurst	Project Manager	Energy Group	jason@engp.co.za
Chantelle Geyer	Environmental Assessment Practitioner	Savannah Environmental	chantelle@savannahsa.com
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant	Savannah Environmental	nicolene@savannahsa.com
Cornelius Holtzhausen	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant	Savannah Environmental	cornelius@savannahsa.com

**HARMONY GOLD
RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES**

HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY

FREE STATE PROVINCE

Public Participation Meeting

April 2023



1

AGENDA


- Welcome and Introduction
- Meeting Conduct
- Purpose of the Meeting
- Project Description
- Need and Desirability
- Environmental Sensitivities Identified
- Way Forward
- Discussions



2

MEETING CONDUCT


- Recording of the meeting
- Please stay on mute during the presentation
- Register attendance on the Chat function (name, surname, affiliation & email address)
- Equal opportunity
- Questions and comments can be submitted on the chat function during the presentation – team will respond after the presentation
- Please hold all verbal questions until after the presentation
- Please raise your hand (virtual function) to ask a question



3

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

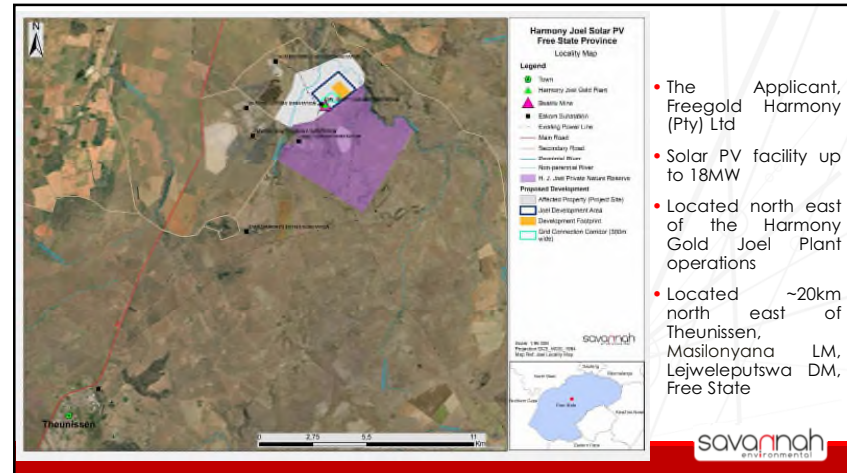
- Provide an overview of the **Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility**
- Present a summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation Process**
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings of the **EIA process**
- Provide stakeholders the opportunity to seek clarity regarding the project and environmental studies, as well as the opportunity to provide valuable input into/to inform the EIA process
- Provide an opportunity to provide further input and comment
- Obtain and record comments for inclusion in the FEIA Report to be submitted to the DESTEA



4

PROJECT OVERVIEW (Chantelle Geyer)

5



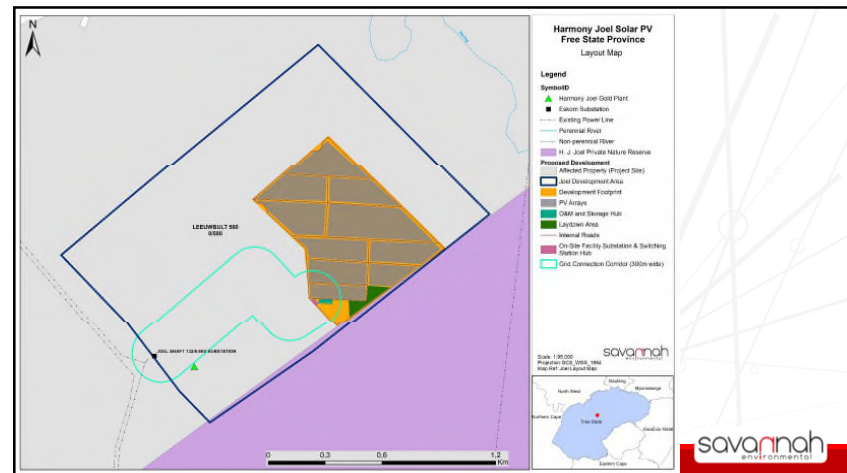
- The Applicant, Freegold Harmony (Pty) Ltd
- Solar PV facility up to 18MW
- Located north east of the Harmony Joel Plant operations
- Located ~20km north east of Theunissen, Masilonyana LM, Lejweleputswa DM, Free State

6

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Solar PV facility up to 18MW
- The extent of the development area is ~220ha with a footprint of ~47ha
- The on-site infrastructure includes:
 - PV modules and mounting structures
 - Inverters and transformers a SCADA room, and maintenance room
 - Cabling between the project components, to be laid underground where practical
 - Access roads, internal roads and fencing around the development area.
 - Temporary and permanent laydown areas and O&M buildings.
 - Grid connection solution including an on-site facility substation and switching substation, to be connected via an overhead power line to the Shafts 1 & 2 HJ Joel Mining Substation (located ~830m south west of the development footprint)

7



8

NEED AND DESIRABILITY

- Freegold Harmony (Pty) Ltd aims to accomplish their decarbonisation goals by using renewable energy to reduce their carbon footprint
- Generation for own-use with any excess electricity to be wheeled to the national grid. PV to provide the Mine with electricity – reduced reliance on Eskom and electricity cost savings (est. ~R500 million electricity savings for the Harmony group from 2025 onwards. ~R80 million per year in electricity savings for Joel)
- Solar resource readily available at the project sites
- Property owned by Harmony Gold
- To connect into the existing Eskom infrastructure
- Employment and business opportunities during the construction and operation, and opportunity for skills development for local communities.
- Shift towards sustainable development and pollution reduction
- National, local and regional policy supports development of renewable energy projects

WHAT IS A SOLAR PV PLANT?

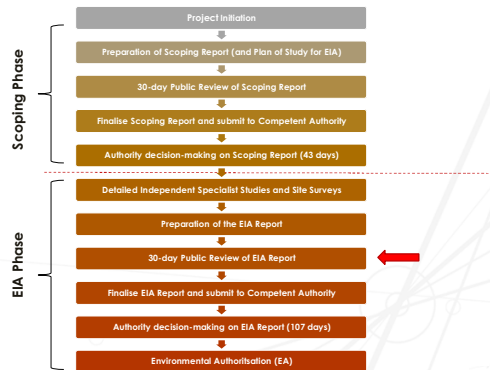


7MW RustMo1 Solar Farm near Rustenburg - Operational



50MW De Wildt Solar Power Plant near Brits – Commenced commercial operation in January 2021

EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



SPECIALIST STUDIES

Specialist	Field of study
Darius Van Rensburg of DPR Ecologists & Environmental Services	Terrestrial Ecology and Wetlands
Lukas Niemand of Pachnoda Consulting CC	Avifauna (including monitoring)
Marinè Pienaar of Terra Africa Environmental Consultants	Soil, Land Use, Land Capability and Agricultural Potential
Jenna Lavin of CTS Heritage	Heritage (including archaeology, palaeontology and cultural landscape)
Brogan Geldenhuys of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Visual
Marti Le Roux of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Social

APPROACH TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT

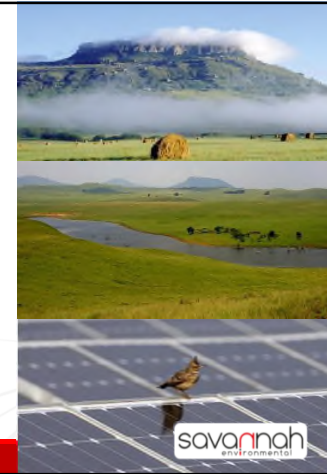
- Identification of issues – social and biophysical environment
- Potential sensitive areas identified through detailed specialist and in-field studies
- Design of appropriate facility layout informed by identified sensitive features and/or areas
- Application of the mitigation hierarchy (i.e., avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset)
- Micro-siting of facility layout

savannah
environmental

13

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Ecological Impacts
 - Loss of indigenous vegetation
 - Displacement and mortality of species
 - Alien invasive species
- Wetland Impacts
 - Loss of wetland soils and vegetation
 - Erosion and sedimentation
 - Pollution of water sources
- Avifauna Impacts
 - Habitat destruction
 - Collision and mortality
 - Disturbance and displacement
 - Electrocutation



savannah
environmental

14

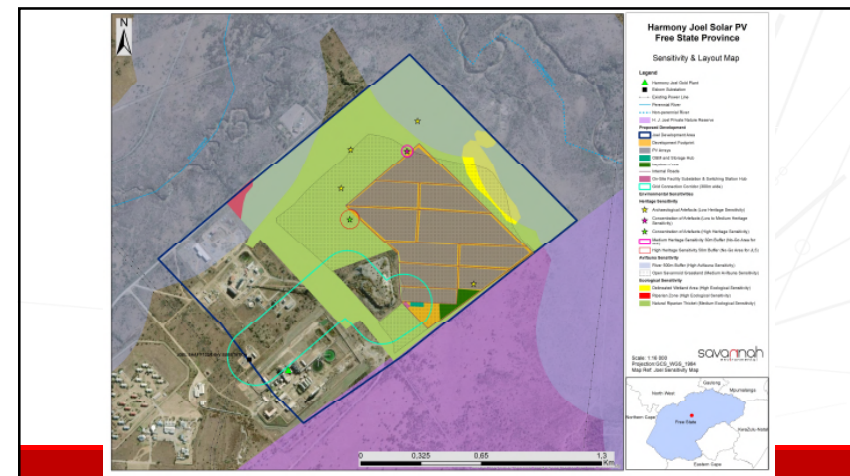
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Agricultural Impacts
 - Loss of soil and land capability
- Heritage Impacts
 - Archeological significant resources
 - Paleontological resources
 - Cultural landscape resources
- Visual Impact
 - Viewshed impacts
 - Community impacts
- Socio Economic Impacts
 - Employment and business procurement
 - Skills development
 - Foreigners and local communities



savannah
environmental

15



16

IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Specialist Field	Significance of impacts (after mitigation)	
	Construction Phase	Operation Phase
Ecology	Medium to Low	Medium to Low
Avifauna	Medium	Medium to Low
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Medium to Low	Low
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium to Low	Medium
Social	Medium to Low	Medium

17

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

Specialist Field	Cumulative significance of impact of the project and other projects in the area	
	In Isolation	Combined with Other Projects in the Area
Ecology	Medium	High
Avifauna	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Medium
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium	Medium
Social	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)

18

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Current layout does not result in unacceptable environmental impacts
- The optimised layout avoids aquatic, avifauna, ecological and archaeological sensitivities and honours buffer zones - location of infrastructure is considered acceptable
- Where impacts cannot be avoided - appropriate mitigation proposed to minimise impacts & included in project EMPrs
- Specialist study conclusions - development will not result in unacceptable environmental impacts (subject to mitigation measures)
- Benefits of the project is expected to occur at a national, regional and local level

19

WAY FORWARD (Cornelius Holtzhausen)

20

WAY FORWARD

- EIA Report review period: **24 March 2023 – 26 April 2023** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final EIA Report to be submitted to DESTEA – April/May 2023
- Registered parties will be notified of decision once issued
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the development and register any additional I&APs to receive important project information as it becomes available.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

Nicolene Venter

Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157

Tel: 011 656 3237

Mobile: 060 978 8396

Fax: 086 684 0547

www.savannahSA.com

**SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE
STATE PROVINCE**

**MEETING NOTES OF THE FOCUS GROUP MEETING HELD WITH THE
MASILONYANA LOCAL AND LEJWELEPUTSWA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES
HELD ON THURSDAY, 13 APRIL 2023 AT 11H00
VENUE: Virtual, MS Teams Meeting**

Notes for the Record prepared by:

Cornelius Holtzhausen
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

*Please note that these notes are not verbatim, but a summary of the comments submitted at the meeting.
Please address any comments to Savannah Environmental at the above address*

SCOPING & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR THE HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR THEUNISSEN, FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Organisation	Position
Igor Scheukogel	Matjhabeng Municipality	Ward Councilor
Bradley Gibbons	Endangered Wildlife Trust	Senior Field Officer
Assan Ralebona	Harmony Gold	Environmental Officer
Henk Nel	Harmony Gold	Senior Environmental Coordinator
Ipeleng Sebetlele	Harmony Gold	Environmental Intern
David Williams	Energy Group	Project Manager
Jason Faurhurst	Energy Group	Project Manager
Chantelle Geyer	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant
Cornelius Holtzhausen	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant

WELCOME, INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF THE INFORMATION SHARING DISCUSSION

Nicolene Venter welcomed the attendees at the Focus Group Meeting for the Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility project near Theunissen, Free State. She informed the attendees that the purpose of the meeting was to inform them of the Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility project, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Public Participation process, which is being conducted, and for local knowledge of the area of the proposed development sites to be shared.

The attendance record is attached as **Appendix A** to the meeting notes.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECTS

Chantelle Geyer presented the following information to the attendees:

- » a summary of the Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment & Public Participation Process;
- » a summary of the key environmental findings of the EIA process;
- » the specialist environmental studies; and
- » present key summary of the environmental findings as documented in the EIA.

The presentation is attached as **Appendix B** to the meeting notes.

DISCUSSION

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
Nicolene Venter	<p>Recollects that Bradley Gibbons had previously enquired after the Sungazer Lizards in the area, and asked Chantelle to provide update on the matter.</p>	<p>Chantelle Geyer answered that the specialists have been requested to look into the matter, and a statement regarding this matter is included in the EIA Report in Section 6.4.4.</p> <p>The ecologist confirmed (Appendix D to the EIA Report) that their survey specifically targeted this species but was found to be absent from the area. The habitat on the site is also unsuitable for this species while its distribution range is also situated to the north of the site. It is therefore not relevant to this development.</p>
Igor Scheurkogel	<p>He mentioned that in a previous project in the area, the community experienced confusion regarding the use of local contractors. He asked how the project will contribute to local employment.</p> <p>He commented that it is important to avoid a situation where construction would have a stop-start approach or even delay the construction of the plant.</p> <p>In response to Henk Nel's response, it was mentioned that he was referring particularly to direct community involvement and local economic development.</p> <p>His concern raised is due to the fact that previously there was no structure or a steering committee to facilitate the process, and the confusion caused a lot of pain amongst the community".</p>	<p>Henk Nel responded Harmony, diligently follows their procurement processes, in which it is clear what is expected of contractors. Much is done to ensure they follow the strict legislative and regulatory procedures, and that each contractor is treated fairly.</p> <p>At the appropriate time, invitations to tender are published and sent out to all the contractors in the area that is on Harmony's database.</p> <p>Henk Nel assured that the local community will have an equal opportunity to tender for contracts for the solar PV project. He indicated that should community members be interested in job opportunities they are welcome to contact Harmony Gold's Commercial Department, which will be able to assist them.</p>

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Nicolene Venter thanked everyone for their contributions and stated again that the purpose of these meetings is to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to share their local knowledge and submit comments and or concerns on the proposed development.

Chantelle Geyer thanked everyone for making time available to meet and for the valuable information shared.

Nicolene added that the presentation will be shared and that anyone that wishes to submit any further comments could do so.

The Focus Group Meeting concluded at 11h45.

APPENDIX A: Attendance Record

Meeting title	Harmony Joel Solar PV & Associated Infrastructure: Focus Group Meeting - Lejweleputswa District and Masilonyana Local Municipalities
Attended participants	10
Start time	13/04/23, 11:05 AM
End time	13/04/23, 11:45 AM

Participants			
Name	Position	Company / Organisation	Email
Igor Scheukogel	Ward Councilor	Matjhabeng Municipality	igors@matjhabeng.co.za
Bradley Gibbons	Senior Field Officer	Endangered Wildlife Trust	bradleyg@ewt.org.za
Assan Ralebona	Environmental Officer	Harmony Gold	assan.ralebona@harmony.co.za
Henk Nel	Senior Environmental Coordinator	Harmony Gold	henel@harmony.co.za
Ipeleng Sebetlele	Environmental Intern	Harmony Gold	ipeleng.sebetlele@harmony.co.za
David Williams	Project Manager	Energy Group	david@engp.co.za
Jason Faurhurst	Project Manager	Energy Group	jason@engp.co.za
Chantelle Geyer	Environmental Assessment Practitioner	Savannah Environmental	chantelle@savannahsa.com
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant	Savannah Environmental	nicolene@savannahsa.com
Cornelius Holtzhausen	Public Participation and Social Impact Consultant	Savannah Environmental	cornelius@savannahsa.com

**HARMONY GOLD
RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES**

HARMONY JOEL SOLAR PV FACILITY

FREE STATE PROVINCE

Public Participation Meeting

April 2023



1

AGENDA


- Welcome and Introduction
- Meeting Conduct
- Purpose of the Meeting
- Project Description
- Need and Desirability
- Environmental Sensitivities Identified
- Way Forward
- Discussions



2

MEETING CONDUCT


- Recording of the meeting
- Please stay on mute during the presentation
- Register attendance on the Chat function (name, surname, affiliation & email address)
- Equal opportunity
- Questions and comments can be submitted on the chat function during the presentation – team will respond after the presentation
- Please hold all verbal questions until after the presentation
- Please raise your hand (virtual function) to ask a question



3

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

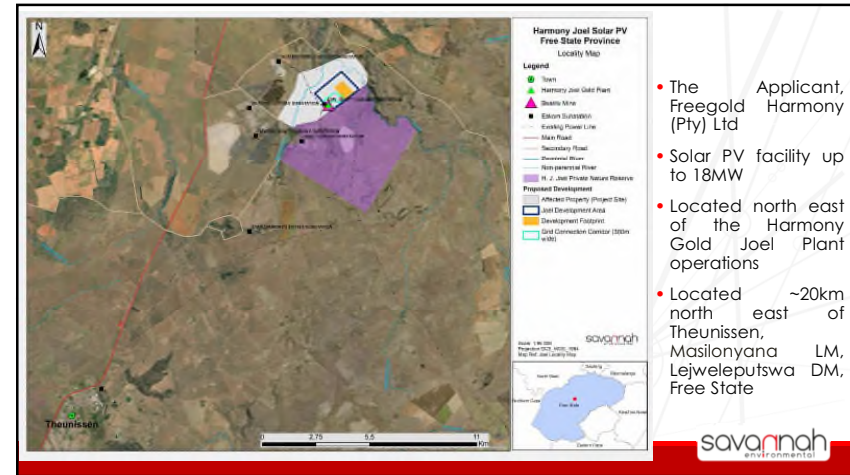
- Provide an overview of the **Harmony Joel Solar PV Facility**
- Present a summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation Process**
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings of the **EIA process**
- Provide stakeholders the opportunity to seek clarity regarding the project and environmental studies, as well as the opportunity to provide valuable input into/to inform the EIA process
- Provide an opportunity to provide further input and comment
- Obtain and record comments for inclusion in the FEIA Report to be submitted to the DESTEA



4

PROJECT OVERVIEW (Chantelle Geyer)

5

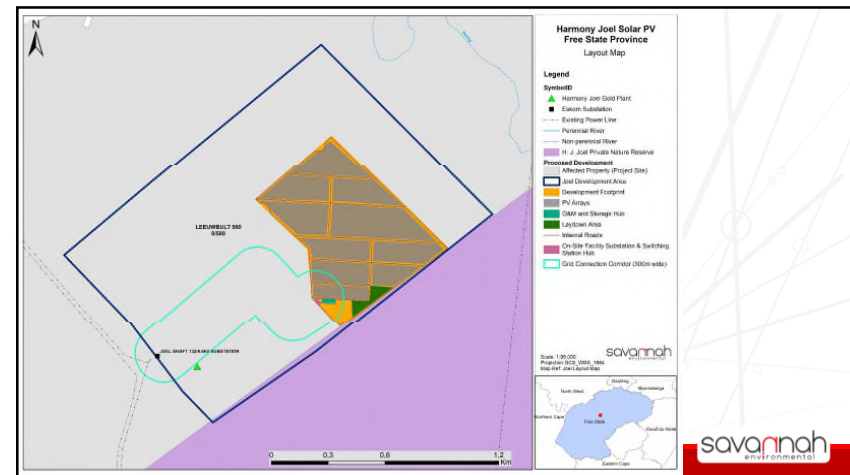


6

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Solar PV facility up to 18MW
- The extent of the development area is ~220ha with a footprint of ~47ha
- The on-site infrastructure includes:
 - PV modules and mounting structures
 - Inverters and transformers a SCADA room, and maintenance room
 - Cabling between the project components, to be laid underground where practical
 - Access roads, internal roads and fencing around the development area.
 - Temporary and permanent laydown areas and O&M buildings.
 - Grid connection solution including an on-site facility substation and switching substation, to be connected via an overhead power line to the Shafts 1 & 2 HJ Joel Mining Substation (located ~830m south west of the development footprint)

7



8

NEED AND DESIRABILITY

- Freegold Harmony (Pty) Ltd aims to accomplish their decarbonisation goals by using renewable energy to reduce their carbon footprint
- Generation for own-use with any excess electricity to be wheeled to the national grid. PV to provide the Mine with electricity – reduced reliance on Eskom and electricity cost savings (est. ~R500 million electricity savings for the Harmony group from 2025 onwards. ~R80 million per year in electricity savings for Joel)
- Solar resource readily available at the project sites
- Property owned by Harmony Gold
- To connect into the existing Eskom infrastructure
- Employment and business opportunities during the construction and operation, and opportunity for skills development for local communities.
- Shift towards sustainable development and pollution reduction
- National, local and regional policy supports development of renewable energy projects

WHAT IS A SOLAR PV PLANT?

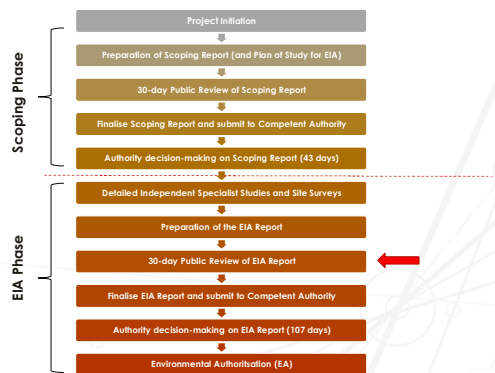


7MW RustMo1 Solar Farm near Rustenburg - Operational



50MW De Wildt Solar Power Plant near Brits – Commenced commercial operation in January 2021

EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



SPECIALIST STUDIES

Specialist	Field of study
Darius Van Rensburg of DPR Ecologists & Environmental Services	Terrestrial Ecology and Wetlands
Lukas Niemand of Pachnoda Consulting CC	Avifauna (including monitoring)
Marinè Pienaar of Terra Africa Environmental Consultants	Soil, Land Use, Land Capability and Agricultural Potential
Jenna Lavin of CTS Heritage	Heritage (including archaeology, palaeontology and cultural landscape)
Brogan Geldenhuys of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Visual
Marti Le Roux of Eco-Thunder Consulting	Social

APPROACH TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT

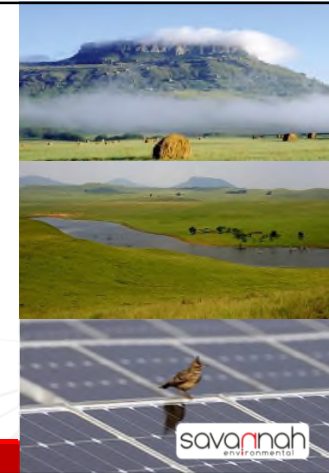
- Identification of issues – social and biophysical environment
- Potential sensitive areas identified through detailed specialist and in-field studies
- Design of appropriate facility layout informed by identified sensitive features and/or areas
- Application of the mitigation hierarchy (i.e., avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset)
- Micro-siting of facility layout

savannah
environmental

13

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Ecological Impacts
 - Loss of indigenous vegetation
 - Displacement and mortality of species
 - Alien invasive species
- Wetland Impacts
 - Loss of wetland soils and vegetation
 - Erosion and sedimentation
 - Pollution of water sources
- Avifauna Impacts
 - Habitat destruction
 - Collision and mortality
 - Disturbance and displacement
 - Electrocutation



savannah
environmental

14

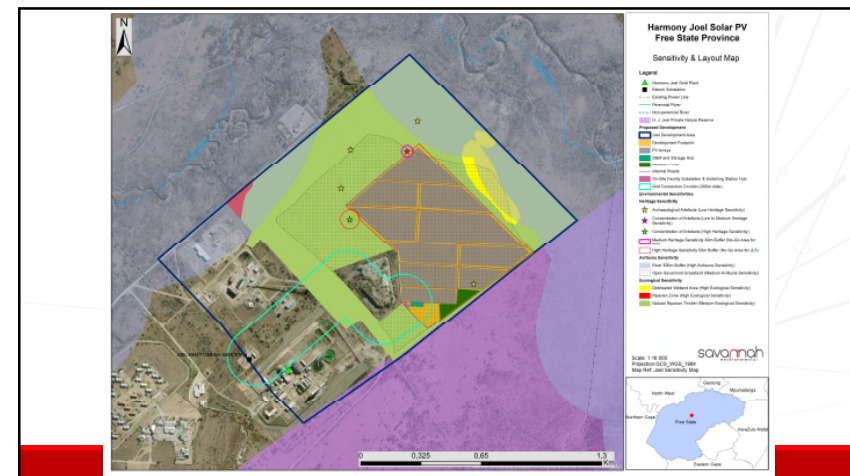
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED

- Agricultural Impacts
 - Loss of soil and land capability
- Heritage Impacts
 - Archeological significant resources
 - Paleontological resources
 - Cultural landscape resources
- Visual Impact
 - Viewshed impacts
 - Community impacts
- Socio Economic Impacts
 - Employment and business procurement
 - Skills development
 - Foreigners and local communities



savannah
environmental

15



16

IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Specialist Field	Significance of impacts (after mitigation)	
	Construction Phase	Operation Phase
Ecology	Medium to Low	Medium to Low
Avifauna	Medium	Medium to Low
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Medium to Low	Low
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium to Low	Medium
Social	Medium to Low	Medium

17

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

Specialist Field	Cumulative significance of impact of the project and other projects in the area	
	In Isolation	Combined with Other Projects in the Area
Ecology	Medium	High
Avifauna	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Medium
Land Use, Soil & Agriculture	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)
Heritage	Low	Low
Visual	Medium	Medium
Social	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)	Low to Medium (depending on the impact being considered)

18

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Current layout does not result in unacceptable environmental impacts
- The optimised layout avoids aquatic, avifauna, ecological and archaeological sensitivities and honours buffer zones - location of infrastructure is considered acceptable
- Where impacts cannot be avoided - appropriate mitigation proposed to minimise impacts & included in project EMPrs
- Specialist study conclusions - development will not result in unacceptable environmental impacts (subject to mitigation measures)
- Benefits of the project is expected to occur at a national, regional and local level

19

WAY FORWARD (Cornelius Holtzhausen)

20

WAY FORWARD

- EIA Report review period: **24 March 2023 – 26 April 2023** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final EIA Report to be submitted to DESTEA – April/May 2023
- Registered parties will be notified of decision once issued
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the development and register any additional I&APs to receive important project information as it becomes available.

WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

Nicolene Venter

Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com

PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157

Tel: 011 656 3237

Mobile: 060 978 8396

Fax: 086 684 0547

www.savannahSA.com