

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Glossary of terminology

“Interested and Affected Party”- means an interested and affected party in section 24(4)(d) of the Act (NEMA), and which in terms of that section includes (a) any person, group of persons, or organization interested in or affected by an activity and (b) any organ of state that may have jurisdiction over any aspect of the activity.

“Public Participation Process”- means a process in which potential interested and affected parties are given an opportunity to comment on, or raise issues related to, specific matters.

“Registered interested and affected party”- in relation to an application, means an interested and affected party whose name is recorded in the register opened for that application in terms of Regulation 57.

5.1 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Public Participation plays an important role in the planning, design and implementation of any development. It is an integral requirement of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998). The process followed has taken all aspects of public participation as stipulated in legislation into account.

Public Participation gives an opportunity for any Interested and Affected parties to participate in an informed basis to ensure that their needs and comments are considered.

A successful Public Participation Process should achieve the following:

- Provide an opportunity for public input and the facilitation of negotiated outcomes;
- Create trust and partnership;
- Minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts;
- Provide an up-front indication of issues which may prevent project continuation resulting in costly delays, or may result in enhanced and shared benefits.

The aims of this report are:

- To provide a description of the PPP that has been conducted to date;
- To provide a list of issues that has been raised

As the Public Participation Process is an integral part of the Environmental Assessment Process, the PPP principles listed by DEAT (1998) include:

- Meaningful and timely participation of I & AP's;
- Focus on Important Issues;
- Consideration of any alternatives;
- Accountability for information used for decision-making;
- The needs, interests and values of I & AP's must be considered in the decision-making process.

5.2 METHODOLOGY

The approach towards any PPP is dependent upon the details of the project, the reason being that each project has a different geographic and technical nature. The following methods were used during the process;

- Identification and Registration of Stakeholders on a Database

Through networking and advertising, stakeholders were identified and registered. Geographically, nearby landowners, institutions and organs of state that might be affected by, or could make a contribution to the project, but who are not necessarily in its direct sphere of impact.

- Creating Awareness

Use was made of newspaper advertisements, Site Notices and personally delivered information letters to:

- Create awareness of the proposed development;
 - To advise the public on their right to register and comment;
 - To advise the public on the process that would be followed.
- Newspaper advertisements informing members of the public of the project, register as an I & AP in “Die Kwêvoël” (Thabazimbi)
Annexure D: Newspaper advertisement
 - A Site Notice Board was attached to the Main Gate of Farm Kwikstaart were the developed site is as well as a notice letter at the entrance of the small farm shop in Koedoeskop and at the office of Allied Farms.
Annexure D: Site Notice Board
 - Registration Sheet for all identified I & AP's.
Annexure D: The Notification Letter and Registration for I & AP's.

The purpose of the Notification Letter was to provide I & AP's with background information on the development. It also provides stakeholders to register as I & AP's by using the enclosed Registration form. The Registration Form will also act as a source of contact details for all I & AP's for future correspondence. The Registration Form also allowed for the establishing of an Issues & Comments Sheet for the Public Participation Process.

See Annexure D for List of I & AP's.

5.3 SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES RAISED BY THE I & AP'S

None to date

6. PLAN OF STUDY (PROPOSED APPROACH TO THE EIA)

6.1 DESCRIPTION OF TASKS AS PART OF THE EIA

6.1.1 Proceeding with public participation process

After the acceptance of the Scoping Report by the competent authorities, the public participation process can proceed according to Section 56 of NEMA 2010 Regulations. Steps to be taken in 6.5

6.1.2 Register Interested and Affected Parties (I &AP's)

All Departments and organisations having jurisdiction in respect of any aspect of the proposed development will be included in the list of I & AP's. Also all persons giving written comments or persons directly influenced by the proposed development will also be registered. I & AP's include any Stakeholders, public registered people and surrounding landowners.

A summary of all the issues raised through the public participation process, as well as the response from the EAP or relevant specialist will be included in the EIA Report.

6.1.3 Development Alternatives

Site and activity alternatives are not applicable for this project. Therefore the proposed activity and the alternative no to proceed (no-go option) will also be assessed.

6.1.4 Assessment of identified potentially significant impacts:

Potential Impacts

The identified potential impacts listed in the Scoping Report will be discussed in terms of:

- Cumulative impact
- Nature of the impact
- Extent and duration of the impact
- Probability of impact occurring
- Significance of the impact

Summary of Findings

A summary of all significant findings will be drawn up and it will include:

- Summary of the key findings of the EIA
- An indication of the extent to which the issues could be addressed by the adoption of mitigation measures.
- Recommendations from specialists and Environmental Practitioner
- Any relevant specialist reports
- Description of uncertainties and gaps in knowledge
- Option to whether the activity should be authorized and any conditions that should be made in respect of the authorization.

6.2 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The required process regarding specialist reports for the proposed development is as follows:

- Specialists will be appointed by the applicant;
- Obtained reports will be incorporated into the EIA Report;
- Project plans will be reviewed according to recommendations of specialists to ensure minimum environmental impact;
- The relevant specialist studies includes:
 - Ecological Assessment;
 - Archaeological and Heritage Assessment;
 - Palaeontological Assessment

6.3 STAGES OF AUTHORITY CONSULTATION

LEDET will be consulted at stages when guidance is required in terms of correct processes to be followed in the case of unusual events or requests.

6.4 METHODOLOGY OF ASSESSING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVES

The EIA will address the biophysical as well as the socio-economic environments for all alternative site locations and activities by means of:

- Site visits to determine the setting, visual character and land-use in the area;
- Site surveys to address the identified impacts of the development on all plant and animal populations;
- The development plans will be based on the environmental information of identified impacts;
- The development plans will be revised according to the identified environmental sensitive areas to ensure the least environmental impact possible;
- Discussions will be held with the applicant to address specific aspects of the development which could have affect the environment;

- I & AP's will be consulted by phone, letters or meetings if necessary, to capture additional issues of importance at this stage;
- Making recommendations and presenting guidelines for the mitigation of impacts addressed during this exercise;
- The option of the no-go alternative will be discussed and evaluated.

6.5 PARTICULARS OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS AS PART OF EIA.

The public participation process will be continued as part of the EIA and the necessary steps will be included, which can be the following:

- Recording all comments of I & AP's, according to Section 57 of the Regulations;
- Respond to any concerns or complaints from I & AP's;
- A public meeting if deemed necessary;
- A Draft EIA will be compiled and will be made available for review by I & AP's for a period of 30 days.
- Notify all I & AP's of the outcome of the application in writing within the period determined by the competent authority;
- Advertise the Environmental authorization' Refusal in a local newspaper/ official Gazette/ provincial newspaper if required by the competent authority.

6.6 SPECIFIC INFORMATION REQUIRED BY THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Additional relevant information will be provided on request of the competent authority.

6.7 CONSIDERATION OF SCOPING REPORTS

Steps to be taken by the competent authority after submission of the Scoping for EIA:

- Consider the Scoping Report within 30 days of receipt;
- Accept the Scoping and Plan of Study for the EIA;
- Advise the EAP to proceed with tasks set out in the Plan of Study for the EIA;
- Request EAP to amend the Scoping Report and Plan of Study for the EIA;
- Reject the Scoping Report or EIA if:
 - It does not contain material/information required;
 - Has not taken the relevant guidelines into account.

7. CONCLUSION

Allied Rivers Farming Pty Ltd is the applicant as well as the landowner, proposes to develop Farm Kwikstaart 431 KQ portion 2, Koedoeskop district, Thabazimbi, Limpopo province. The site is located approximately 45km South of Thabazimbi next to the P20/2 road to Northam within the Crocodile River-west Irrigation Valley. The proposed development entails the clearing of 380 hectares of natural vegetation for 4 crop circles (Agriculture).

The overall terms of reference for this scoping exercise are to:

- Scope for issues that would be associated with this proposal;
- Do an initial assessment of the bio-physical and socio-economic aspects and focusing on key issues;
- Identify and advise the applicant about potential impacts (negative or positive) of the proposed development, and the implications for the design, construction and operational phases of the development;
- Facilitate public input on environmental matters.

Identified issues documented in this report are related to the biophysical environment, which will require appropriate mitigation by the proponent as will be specified in the EIA Report.

The following potential issues were identified during the scoping phase:

- Clearance of natural vegetation;
- Soil and erosion;
- Impact on Fauna;
- Visual impact;

The identified issues will be addressed and mitigated, which will be included in the EIA Report.

Specialist studies undertaken include:

- Ecological Assessment
- Archaeological and Heritage Assessment
- Palaeontological Assessment
- Soil analysis (Done by Department Agriculture)

The Plan of Study for the EIA stipulates the steps to be taken and the information to be included in the EIA Report.

8. LITERATURE

National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998). Publication of the Companion Guideline on the Implementation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2010.

National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No 107 of 1998). Publication of Public Participation Guideline, 2010.

LIST OF ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A:	LOCALITY PLAN
ANNEXURE B:	SITE LAYOUT PLAN
ANNEXURE C:	SITE PHOTOGRAPHS
ANNEXURE D:	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
ANNEXURE E:	PERMIT FROM DEPARTMENT AGRICULTURE

ANNEXURE F: PERMIT FROM DEPARTMENT FORESTRY

ANNEXURE G: WATER USE CERTIFICATES

ANNEXURE H: SPECIALIST STUDIES

- Ecological Survey
- Heritage & Archaeological Assessment
- Palaeontological Assessment