

## The Proposed Implementation of a Wetland Rehabilitation Programme and Upgrading of an Existing Bridge on Fairbreeze Extension C, near Mtunzini, KwaZulu-Natal

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Oct 2013



#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ Inform Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) about the proposed project, and to invite them to participate;
- ◆ Provide a brief background on the proposed project; and
- ◆ Explain the aims and objectives of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.



#### WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND TO THIS DEVELOPMENT?

As part of the Offset Requirements on Fairbreeze Mine, near Mtunzini, KwaZulu-Natal the Applicant, Tronox KZN Sands Pty Ltd, proposes to implement a Wetland Rehabilitation Programme on the Fairbreeze Extension C Offset site as part of the offset requirements for the planned Fairbreeze Mine, near Mtunzini, KwaZulu-Natal.

The Fairbreeze Extension C Offset site is located within the Siyaya River catchment on Portion 3 and Rem of Lot 91 of Farm Umlalazi 10011, near Mtunzini, KwaZulu-Natal (Figure 1). Targeted wetlands cover an area of approximately 55 ha and have been significantly impacted by sugarcane and forestry activities.

The Rehabilitation Programme primarily aims to restore wetland function and the enhancement of terrestrial areas by re-establishing grassland habitat. The focus for the rehabilitation of this wetland is to maximize the ecological functioning of the site with a focus on reinstating natural habitat types and increasing opportunities for the critically endangered Pickersgill's Reed Frog to colonise the area.

Upgrading of an existing bridge in one of the targeted wetlands is also proposed to improve access for mining operations. This structure will be designed to minimise impacts to the wetland system concerned whilst improving access across the area.

In terms of the EIA Regulations promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), the proposed activities will trigger the following listed activity published within GN R 544:

GNR 544	11	The construction of: ii) channels; iii) bridges; v) weirs; where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse...
GNR 544	18	The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or

		the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand ... from i) a watercourse...
--	--	--

A Basic Assessment will therefore be required. The Applicant, Tronox KZN Sands Pty Ltd, is required to appoint an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), Green Door Environmental, to conduct the necessary process. During the process all the relevant Listed Activities, in terms of NEMA will be identified.



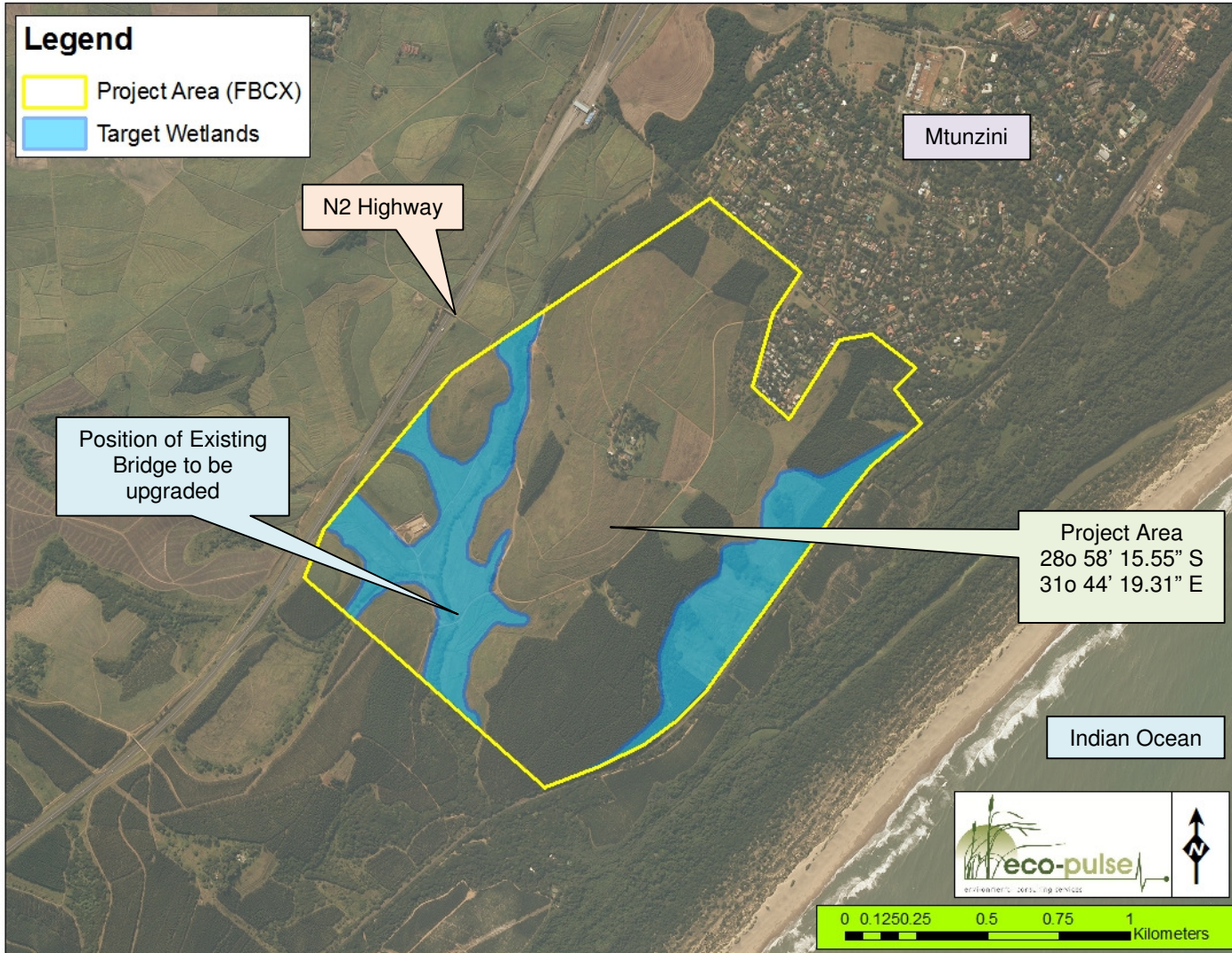
## **WHAT IS PROPOSED?**

---

As part of the Offset Requirements on Fairbreeze Mine, near Mtunzini, KwaZulu-Natal the Applicant, Tronox KZN Sands Pty Ltd, proposes to implement a Wetland Rehabilitation Programme on the Fairbreeze Extension C Offset site, directly west of Mtunzini as part of the offset requirements for the planned Fairbreeze Mine, near Mtunzini, KwaZulu-Natal. Upgrading of an existing bridge in one of the targeted wetlands is also proposed to improve access for mining operations.



## WHERE IS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?



**Figure 1:** Aerial Map showing the area where the Offset Plan and Wetland Rehabilitation will occur and the surrounding areas (Source: Google Earth). The location of the proposed bridge upgrade is also indicated.



## **WHAT IS THE AIM OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process aims to:

- ◆ Inform and involve all potentially Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) of the proposed development;
- ◆ Identify the potential impacts (positive and negative) that the proposed development may have on the ecological and socio-economic environment;
- ◆ Provide recommendations based on the identified impacts and conduct further specialist studies if necessary; and
- ◆ Provide the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (DAEA) with enough information to make an informed decision regarding the proposed development.



## **WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE EIA PROCESS FOR A BASIC ASSESSMENT?**

The EIA Basic Assessment process can be described as follows:

1. Application Form:

An official Application Form is required to be completed and circulated with the Basic Assessment Report to a number of authorities, including the Department of Water Affairs, Department of Transport, and the District Municipality. It provides information on the property, a description of the proposed development and lists the relevant listed activities which are triggered by this proposed development.

2. Public Participation:

The general public and relevant Authorities are notified of the proposed development through newspaper adverts, site notices and direct consultation. This Background Information Document will be circulated to neighbouring landowners, relevant authorities and any other persons registered as I&APs following the adverts and site notices. A public meeting will also be arranged where conceptual plans will be presented for public comment.

3. Identification of Impacts and Alternatives

Environmental issues, concerns, development constraints and possible development alternatives will be identified using professional judgement, project information, experience of similar projects, a review of available literature, site visits, and consultation with authorities and the public.

4. Impact Evaluation

The significance of environmental issues will be evaluated in terms of their expected extent, intensity, duration and probability of occurrence.

5. Mitigation and Management Measures

Measures to manage and minimise impacts to within acceptable levels, as well as measures to maximise the socio-economic benefits associated with the development, will be identified and recorded in the Basic Assessment Report. An Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) will be compiled to facilitate the implementation of mitigation measures.

6. Reporting

The Basic Assessment Report, Draft EMPr will be made available for review and comment by all I&APs and relevant authorities. A Final Basic Assessment Report and EMPr will be compiled and will include comments received on the circulated Basic Assessment Report.

7. Authority Decision

The Final Basic Assessment Report and EMPr will be used by DAEA as the basis for the decision on whether the proposed development should be approved or not.



## **WHAT POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS HAVE INITIALLY BEEN IDENTIFIED?**

The following issues have been identified as potentially problematic and will, amongst other issues, be investigated during the Basic Assessment Process:

- ◆ Negative impacts on fauna and flora during the construction process;
- ◆ Negative impacts on water quality (sedimentation) during the construction process; and
- ◆ Failure of interventions leading to further degradation of wetland areas.

