

**APPENDIX C7**  
**MEETING NOTES**



Meeting notes to be included in the Final EIA  
Report

## SCOPING PHASE

## **CROSSROADS GREEN ENERGY SOLAR PV CLUSTER: PHASE 1:**

**Tafelkop Solar PV; Koppie Alleen Solar PV, Vrede Solar PV, Zionsheuvel  
Solar PV, Amper Daar Solar PV, Wag'n-Bietjie Solar PV, Ruspoort Solar  
PV1, Ruspoort Solar PV2 and Middelpaas Solar PV**

## **NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

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**MEETING NOTES OF THE FOCUS GROUP MEETING HELD WITH  
LANDOWNERS  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2023 AT 09H00  
VENUE: Microsoft Teams**

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Notes for the Record prepared by:

Nicolene Venter

**Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd**  
E-mail: [publicprocess@savannahsa.com](mailto:publicprocess@savannahsa.com)

*Please address any comments to Savannah Environmental at the above address*

## Meeting Notes

Crossroads Green Energy Phase 1: Tafelkop Solar PV; Kopyy Alleen Solar PV, Vrede Solar PV, Zionsheuvel Solar PV, Amper Daar Solar PV, Wag'n-Bietjie Solar PV, Ruspoort Solar PV1, Ruspoort Solar PV2 and Middelpaas Solar PV, Northern Cape Province

### MEETING ATTENDEES

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Name	Organisation	Position
<b>Virtual Attendance: Vanderkloof</b>		
John Francis	Africoast Engineers	Project Developer
Maxime Savinelli	Akuo Energy	Project Manager
Constant Prassette	Akuo Energy	Project Manager
Kennett Sinclair	Kennett Sinclair Golden Sunshine Trading	
Ronel Bellingan	Africoast Investments	
Jaco de Villiers		Landowner
Roello du Plessis		Landowner
Wille Fourie		Landowner
Pierre van den Berg		Landowner
Diederick Vermeulen		Landowner
<b>Virtual Attendance</b>		
Cala Bester		Landowner
Jo-Anne Thomas	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation & Social Consultant
Carina de Ornelas	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Consultant

### APOLOGIES

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Eddie Haumann: Landowner

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

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Nicolene Venter welcomed the landowners present and requested the project team to introduce themselves to the attendees and thereafter the landowners to introduce themselves to the project team.

She requested the attendees to register their attendance by providing their name, surname and email addresses on the chat function which would be used as the attendance register.

Nicolene presented the agenda, conduct of the workshop and the purpose of the Focus Group Meeting.

### PRESENTATION

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Carina de Ornelas presented the following:

- Project description for the Crossroads green energy cluster consisting of 21 PV projects specifically phase one which consisted of nine (9) projects.
- The locality of the project sites.

Meeting Notes

Crossroads Green Energy Phase 1: Tafelkop Solar PV; Koppie Alleen Solar PV, Vrede Solar PV, Zionsheuvel Solar PV, Amper Daar Solar PV, Wag'n-Bietjie Solar PV, Ruspoort Solar PV1, Ruspoort Solar PV2 and Middelpaas Solar PV, Northern Cape Province

- The Scoping, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and public participation processes followed to date.
- The environmental studies undertaken.
- A key summary of the results of the environmental studies as documented in the Scoping Reports.

The presentation is included in Appendix A.

**DISCUSSION SESSION**

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<b>Question / Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>Cala Bester asked whether there are any issues or red flags noted at this stage of the process that they as landowners need to be aware of. He stated that he understood that the process was mainly desktop at this stage and asked if there was anything of importance which should be noted.</p>	<p>Carina de Ornelas confirmed that the studies to date had been mainly desktop and advised that these would be further investigated, and further sensitivity identified within the EIA phase. She noted that there are some areas that are noted as being sensitive in terms of ecology, such as the Critical Biodiversity Areas. From the EIA studies, specialists will provide more detail regarding these areas that should be avoided and will recommend mitigation measures to be implemented to minimise any possible negative impacts.</p> <p>Jo-Anne Thomas confirmed Carina's response and added that the sensitivity issues presented are those that have been identified to date. The purpose of the scoping phase is to identify the sensitivities to inform the layouts in order to ensure sustainable developments. The purpose of the EIA process is to make sure that the development is as environmentally acceptable as possible. The specialists will confirm those sensitivities in the field.</p> <p>Some of the specialists have been to the site as seasonality is important. For example, the bird specialist would be doing two (2) surveys - a dry season survey and a wet season survey. The sensitivity data will be provided to the applicants who will consider these in developing the layout for the facilities. These layouts will be further assessed in the EIA phase. Anything additional identified during the consultation process which needs to either be avoided or mitigated will be assessed and reported to in detail in the EIA phase.</p>

Meeting Notes

Crossroads Green Energy Phase 1: Tafelkop Solar PV; Koppy Alleen Solar PV, Vrede Solar PV, Zionsheuvel Solar PV, Amper Daar Solar PV, Wag'n-Bietjie Solar PV, Ruspoort Solar PV1, Ruspoort Solar PV2 and Middelpaas Solar PV, Northern Cape Province

Question / Comment	Response
<p>Kennett Sinclair asked for the project team to explain the timeframes and where in the process the projects are. He commented that there had already been some specialists on site and requested that the EIA team to clarify the process for the landowners.</p>	<p>Carina de Ornelas explained the EIA process as detailed within the presentation, and indicated that the projects are currently in the scoping phase of the EIA.</p> <p>Jo-Anne Thomas added that the EIA process is a legislated process which includes a two-phased approach –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scoping Phase: consisting largely of desktop studies of which the purpose is to identify issues which have been presented at the Focus Group Meeting.</li><li>• EIA phase which is the more detailed phase and it is during this phase that a more detailed independent environmental studies are undertaken, mitigation measure proposed for negative impacts and recommendations to enhance the positive impacts.</li></ul> <p>There are certain requirements from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) which must be met. For example, for birds there are guidelines that must be followed which don't necessarily match up with the regulated EIA timeframes. Therefore, some of the specialist work is done before the formal EIA process is initiated. It is correct therefore, as alluded to by Mr Sinclair, that specialists have undertaken site visits. Additional field work is required in some cases to complete the EIA Phase assessments. These will be refined based on the layouts which the developer will provide.</p> <p>In terms of timing of the EIA process for these projects, the project initiation was done in June 2022 whereby a Background Information Document was distributed, and an initial advert placed. Scoping reports were compiled which were recently released for public review. The review periods will end 13, 15 &amp; 17 February 2023, as applicable, after which the final report will be submitted to the DFFE.</p>

Meeting Notes

Crossroads Green Energy Phase 1: Tafelkop Solar PV; Koppy Alleen Solar PV, Vrede Solar PV, Zionsheuvel Solar PV, Amper Daar Solar PV, Wag'n-Bietjie Solar PV, Ruspoort Solar PV1, Ruspoort Solar PV2 and Middelpaas Solar PV, Northern Cape Province

Question / Comment	Response
	<p>In terms of the legislation, the Department has 43 days to make a decision on the scoping report. That decision is purely to say that they accept the scoping report detailing the environmental issues identified and the plan of study for EIA including the methodology proposed, the specialist studies to be undertaken and the public participation process. Following the receipt of this acceptance, the EIA Report can be compiled and released for public review. The EIA report will present the detailed environmental assessment of the projects and will include an impact statement, and whether the projects can proceed or not or whether there needs to be some amendments to the layouts.</p> <p>For these projects, it is planned that the EIA Reports would be released for public review in April or May 2023. This is however dependent on the receipt of the Acceptance of the Scoping Report from the Department. There will again be another 30-day public review period for the EIA Report. At that time, there will be further meetings, including and possibly face-to-face meetings. Following this 30-day review period, the reports will be finalised and submitted to the Department for decision-making, and this will be towards the end of June 2023. The Department has 107 days to make a decision in terms of the EIA regulations.</p>
<p>Kennett Sinclair asked a table with specific timeframes and dates be provided for the project to assist the landowners as to where in the process the projects are.</p> <p>He mentioned that there was an announcement by the Department regarding shorter timeframes as per the new Regulations. In addition, the project is part of a presidential lead project, which might also impact on the shortening of the timeframes</p> <p>Kennett Sinclair informed the project team that the Developer had appointed a socio-economic specialist that conducted a</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Thomas responded that specific dates for the process are presented in the Scoping Reports.</p> <p>In terms of the new Regulations referred to, these have not yet Gazetted or promulgated. There was a draft regulation released for comment in October 2022 relating to a possible exemption process which could be followed for PVs. It is expected that provision would be made in these Regulation that should an applicant already be in an EIA process and these regulations come into effect, they can withdraw the application and submit an</p>



Meeting Notes

Crossroads Green Energy Phase 1: Tafelkop Solar PV; Koppy Alleen Solar PV, Vrede Solar PV, Zionsheuvel Solar PV, Amper Daar Solar PV, Wag'n-Bietjie Solar PV, Ruspoort Solar PV1, Ruspoort Solar PV2 and Middelpaas Solar PV, Northern Cape Province

Question / Comment	Response
<p>detailed socio-economic study and recommended that the two studies reference one another.</p>	<p>exemption registration application. This provision could then reduce the time frames.</p> <p>In terms of whether the project is part of the presidential scope or presidential portfolio, this would be applicable if the project is registered as a Strategic Infrastructure Project (SIP). The final decision-making period for SIP registered projects is 57 days instead of 107.</p> <p>A social impact assessment is being undertaken as part of the EIA, of which the process is undertaken independently of the socio-economic study being undertaken by the applicant. Any information from that study that are of relevance and can be fed into the EIA process to inform the assessment would be welcomed.</p>
<p>Kennett Sinclair explained the applicant's approach to the projects, specifically considering the challenges in the Karoo and the reasoning behind the 21 separate applications. He mentioned that the applicant has commissioned a specialist agricultural economist to provide inputs to the projects.</p> <p>It was requested that the environmental specialists be informed of the applicant's approach to these projects and the importance of these projects to the landowners.</p>	<p>Jo-Anne Thomas responded that the approach of the applicant is noted and understood but that it is important to take note of the fact that the EIA process is an independent process for which the specialists need to sign a Declaration of Independence for their reports, and are separate of the studies being undertaken by the developer. All the impacts, positive and negative, will be presented in the reports and the DFFE will make a decision based on the information submitted by the independent specialists.</p> <p>She added that the applicant could provide additional information on the Need and Desirability for the project, and this could be included in the EIA Reports. In addition, any information from the agricultural specialist would be of value.</p>

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## WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Jo-Anne Thomas gave a closing statement in which she thanked the landowners for their attendance and valuable input at the meeting.


Nicolene Venter concluded the meeting at 10h00.

# APPENDIX A: Presentation

**CROSSROADS GREEN ENERGY SOLAR PV CLUSTER**

**NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

Focus Group Meeting  
Thursday, 26 January 2023




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**OVERVIEW**

- **Projects presented:**

Project name	Farm Name and portion Number	Capacity
Tafelkop Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Grass Pan 40	240MW
Koppy Alleen Solar PV Facility	Portion 5 of the Farm Koppy Alleen 83	100MW
Vrede Solar PV Facility	Portion 5 of the Farm Bas Berg 88	150MW
Zionsheuvel Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Leeuwberg 79	240MW
Amper Daar Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Wolwe Kuil 44	100MW
Wag-'n-Bietjie Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Leeuwe Berg 45	100MW
Ruspoort 1 Solar PV Facility (Option A)	Portion 5 of the Farm Bokken Kraal 81 (Option A)	100MW
Ruspoort 1 Solar PV Facility (Option B)	Portion 4 on the Farm Knoffelfontein 74 Portion 1 on the Farm 78 Portion 2 on the Farm Leeuwberg 79 (Option B)	100MW
Ruspoort 2 Solar PV Facility	Portion 2 of the Farm Leeuwberg 79	100MW
Middelplaas Solar PV Facility	Portion 4 of the Farm Grass Pan 40	100MW


- **Applicant:** Akuo Energy Afrique
- **Independent Consultants:** Savannah Environmental



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**AGENDA**


- Welcome and Introduction
- Meeting Conduct
- Purpose of the Meeting
- Project Overview
- Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment Process
- Key Environmental Findings
- Way Forward
- Discussions



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**MEETING CONDUCT**

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



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## PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

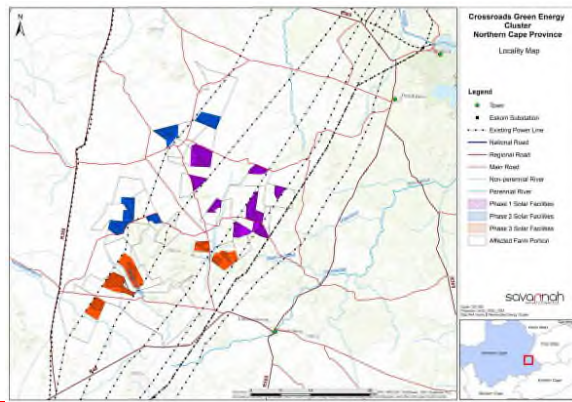
- Provide stakeholders & I&APs with an overview of the **Crossroads Green Energy Cluster of Solar PV Energy Facilities (separate projects)**
- Summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation** being undertaken
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings as documented in the respective **Scoping Reports**
- Provide stakeholders the opportunity to seek clarity regarding the projects and their respective environmental studies, as well as the opportunity to provide valuable input into/to inform the EIA process
- Obtain and record comments for inclusion in the submissions to DFFE

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW (Carina de Ornelas)

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## LOCALITY MAP



Cluster of 21 x Solar PV Energy Facilities, each with a contracted capacity of up to 240MW.

Currently, the project is divided into 3 Phases, with phase 1 consisting of 9 projects.

The project site is located approximately 20km north of Philipstown and 30km west of Petrusville within Renosterberg Local Municipality in the greater Pixley ka Seme District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province

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## CROSSROADS GREEN ENERGY CLUSTER PHASES

No	Project name	Farm Name and portion Number	Capacity	Project Batch
1	Solekop Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Groot Pan 40	240MW	Phase 1
2	Kroppy Aalen Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Kroppy Aalen 83	100MW	Phase 1
3	Wesol Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Wesol 88	100MW	Phase 1
4	Wonthoorn Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Leeuwburg 79	240MW	Phase 1
5	Amper Dooer Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Welwek 41	100MW	Phase 1
6	Weg-Wesol Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Leeuwburg 84	100MW	Phase 1
7.1	Ruspoort 1 Solar PV Facility (Option A)	Portion 3 of the Farm Bokken Kruis 81 (Option A)	100MW	Phase 1
7.2	Ruspoort 1 Solar PV Facility (Option B)	Portion 4 on the Farm Krottefontein 74 Portion 1 on the Farm 78 Portion 2 on the Farm Leeuwburg 79 (Option B)	100MW	Phase 1
8	Ruspoort 2 Solar PV Facility	Portion 2 of the Farm Leeuwburg 76	100MW	Phase 1
9	Middelkop Solar PV Facility	Portion 4 of the Farm Groot Pan 40	100MW	Phase 1
10	JW Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Phas 196	240MW	Phase 2
11	Pho Dep Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Groot Pan 40	100MW	Phase 2
12	Oliva Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Pops 19	100MW	Phase 2
13	Koewal Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Swart Koppes 86	100MW	Phase 2
14	JAN Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Schopp Kruis 38, Portion 1 of the Farm Annes Donker hoek 89, and Remainder of Farm Kuhn Pool 90	240MW	Phase 2
15	Dierlein-Song PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Dierlein 87	100MW	Phase 2
16	Jugopoot Solar PV Facility	Portion 2 of the Farm Dierlein 87, Portion 3 of the Farm Dierlein 87, and Portion 2 of the Farm Koewal 85	150MW	Phase 2
17	Shydam Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Myd Dam 107	240MW	Phase 2
18	Wesol Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Bende Kruis 104	100MW	Phase 2
19	Oosfontein Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Oosfontein 108	100MW	Phase 2
20	Bokken Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Bokken Kruis 81	100MW	Phase 2
21	HCA Solar PV Facility	Portion 4 of the Farm Kroppy Aalen 83	100MW	Phase 2

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## COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECTS

- Each solar PV facility will include the following:
  - » Solar PV array comprising PV modules and mounting structures (monofacial or bifacial and of fixed-tilt, single-axis tracking, and/or double-axis tracking PV technology)
  - » Inverters and transformers
  - » Cabling between the project components
  - » Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
  - » On-site facility substation and power lines between the solar PV facility and the Eskom substation (to be confirmed and assessed through a separate process)
  - » Site offices, Security office, operations and control, and maintenance and storage laydown areas
  - » Access roads, internal distribution roads

## SCOPING & EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



## APPROACH TO SCOPING

- Identification of issues – social and biophysical environment
- Potential sensitive areas identified through specialist desktop and in-field studies
- Design of appropriate facility layout to be informed by sensitive areas identified through the EIA process. The facility layout will be presented and considered in the EIA Phase
- A revised application of the mitigation hierarchy (i.e., avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset)
- Any further micro-siting required to facility layout will be addressed in EIA Phase
- Prepare a Plan of Study for the EIA Phase

## SPECIALIST STUDIES

Specialist	Area of Expertise
Lindi Steyn and Andrew Husted of The Biodiversity Company	Ecology (including fauna, flora, avifauna, soils, agriculture and wetlands)
Laurens du Plessis – LOGIS	Visual
Bryony Van Niekerk- NuLeaf Environmental	Visual
Nicholas Wiltshire and Jenna Lavin of CTS Heritage	Heritage (including archaeology, palaeontology, and cultural landscape)
Tony Barbour – Tony Barbour Consulting	Social
Adrian Johnson – JG Afrika	Traffic

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED (all projects)

	Scoping of Issues
Impacts on Ecology (fauna & flora)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disturbance / degradation / loss to vegetation and habitats.</li> <li>Disruption of ecological corridors.</li> <li>Habitat fragmentation.</li> <li>Encroachment by alien invasive species.</li> <li>Loss of flora and fauna species of conservation concern or threatened or protected species.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Freshwater Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disturbance / degradation / loss to wetland soils or vegetation.</li> <li>Increased erosion and sedimentation, as well as the contamination of surface water resources.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Avifauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destruction, fragmentation and degradation of habitats.</li> <li>Displacement of avifauna community (including several species of conservation concern).</li> <li>Collision with PV panels and fences.</li> <li>Electrocution due to Solar PV connections.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Agricultural Potential and Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of soil / land capability.</li> </ul>

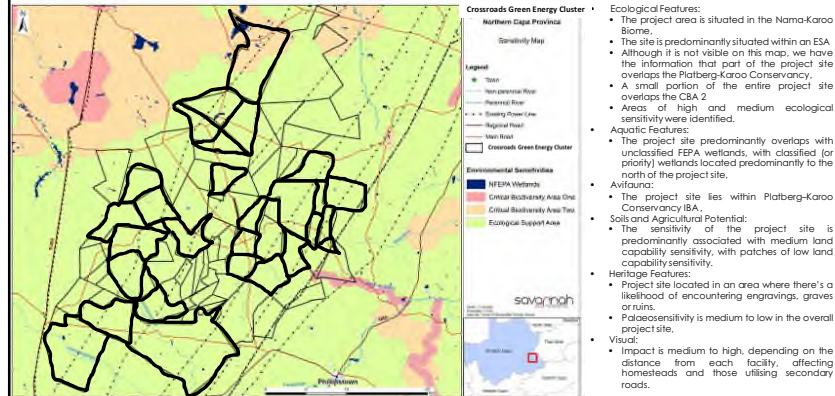
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## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED (all projects)

	Scoping of Issues
Impacts on Heritage (cultural landscape, archaeology and Palaeontology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact to significant heritage resources through destruction during the development phase and disturbance during the operational phase.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Visual Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential change to the rural landscape.</li> <li>Potential visual impacts as experienced by travellers travelling on secondary roads.</li> <li>Potential visual impacts as experienced by residents and visitors to homesteads in close proximity to each facility.</li> <li>Potential visual impacts experienced during the construction phase.</li> <li>Potential lighting impacts.</li> <li>Potential impacts associated with glare impacting on roads.</li> <li>Potential visual impact of the facility on tourist routes or tourist destinations/facilities.</li> </ul>
Impacts on the Socio-Economic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of job opportunities and skills development.</li> <li>Increase in business sales/production for the local and regional economy.</li> <li>Benefits for local landowners.</li> <li>The establishment of infrastructure to improve energy security and support renewable sector.</li> <li>Benefits associated with socio-economic contributions to community development.</li> <li>Sense of place impacts (visual, noise and dust).</li> <li>Improved energy security.</li> <li>Impact on productive farmland.</li> <li>Increased risk of grass fires associated with construction related activities.</li> </ul>

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## ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES (all projects)



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## PLAN OF STUDY FOR THE EIA PHASE

- The Plan of Study for EIA is intended to provide a summary of the key findings of the Scoping Phase and to describe the activities to be undertaken in the EIA Phase of the EIA process.
- Based on the findings of the Scoping assessment, the following further investigations within the EIA Phase are required:**
  - Ecological Impact Assessment (including flora and fauna)
  - Avifauna Impact Assessment
  - Freshwater Impact Assessment
  - Soils and Agricultural Potential Impact Assessment
  - Heritage Impact Assessment (including archaeology, palaeontology and cultural heritage)
  - Visual Impact Assessment
  - Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

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## WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE (Nicolene Venter)



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## WAY FORWARD

- Scoping Report review period for phase 1 projects are as follows:
  - Tafelkop, Kopy Alleen and Vrede Solar PVs: **13 January 2023 – 13 February 2023**
  - Zionsheuvel, Amper Daar and Wag 'n Bietjie Solar PVs: **16 January 2023 - 15 February 2023**
  - Ruspoort 1, Ruspoort 2 and Middelplaas Solar PVs: **18 January 2023 – 17 February 2023**
  - These can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website
- Final Scoping Report to be submitted to DFFE – February-March 2023
- EIA & EMPr for review – envisaged May 2023 (TBC)
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the development and register you as an I&AP so that you can receive important project information as it becomes available.



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## WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

### Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

Nicolene Venter

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PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157

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Fax: 086 684 0547

[www.savannahSA.com](http://www.savannahSA.com)



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## CROSSROADS GREEN ENERGY PV FACILITIES

**MEETING NOTES OF THE FOCUS GROUP MEETING HELD WITH THE  
NORTHERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL  
AFFAIRS AND LAND REFORM AND THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER &**

**SANITATION**

**HELD ON TUESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2023 AT 11H00**

**VENUE: MS Teams**

Notes for the Record prepared by:

Nicolene Venter

**Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd**  
E-mail: [publicprocess@savannahsa.com](mailto:publicprocess@savannahsa.com)

*Please address any comments to Savannah Environmental at the above address*

Meeting Notes

Crossroads Green Energy Phase 1: Tafelkop Solar PV; Koppo Alleen Solar PV, Vrede Solar PV, ZionsheueI Solar PV, Amper Daar Solar PV, Wag'n-Bietjie Solar PV, Ruspoort Solar PV1, Ruspoort Solar PV2 and MiddelpIaas Solar PV, Northern Cape Province

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Due to the fact that no confirmation of attendance was received, contact has been made with the Officials to determine whether they would attend the Key Stakeholder Workshop that is taking place at 14h00 the same day.

It was confirmed that the stakeholders would attend the Key Stakeholder Workshop at 14h00 on Tuesday, 31 January 2023. Please refer to the Key Stakeholder Workshop Notes for the comments raised and the project team's responses.



## CROSSROADS GREEN ENERGY PV FACILITIES

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**MEETING NOTES OF THE KEY STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2023 AT 14H00  
VENUE: MS Teams**

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**Notes for the Record prepared by:**

Nicolene Venter

**Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd**  
E-mail: [publicprocess@savannahsa.com](mailto:publicprocess@savannahsa.com)

*Please address any comments to Savannah Environmental at the above address*

**MEETING ATTENDEES**

Name	Organisation	Position
Jacoline Mans	Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment	Chief Forester
Natalie Uys	Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform	Candidate Scientist: Botanist
Zanele Manyathi	Transnet Freight Rail: Johannesburg	
James Mitchell	Vodacom	Operations Manager
Constant Prassette	Akuo	Project Manager
Maxime Savinelli	Akuo	Project Manager
Ronel Bellingan	Africoast Investments	
John Francis	Africoast Investments	Project Developer
Kennett Sinclair	Kennett Sinclair Golden Sunshine Trading	
Jo-Anne Thomas (JT)	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter (NV)	Savannah Environmental	Public Participation & Social Consultant
Carina de Ornelas (CO)	Savannah Environmental	Environmental Assessment Practitioner

**APOLOGIES**

No apologies were rendered.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Nicolene Venter welcomed the stakeholders present and requested the project team to introduce themselves to the attendees and thereafter the attendees to introduce themselves to the project team.

She requested the attendees to register their attendance by providing their name, surname and email addresses on the chat function which would be used as the attendance register.

Nicolene presented the agenda, conduct of the workshop and the purpose of the Key Stakeholder Workshop.

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

**PRESENTATION**

---

Carina de Ornelas presented the following:

- project description for the Crossroads green energy cluster consisting of 21 PV projects specifically phase one which consisted of nine (9) projects, and highlight that the Electrical Grid Infrastructure would be presented when the Scoping Report is available for review and comment;
- the locality of the project sites;
- the Scoping, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and public participation processes followed to date;
- the environmental studies undertaken; and
- key summary of the results of the environmental studies as documented in the Scoping Reports.

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

**DISCUSSION SESSION**

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Question / Comment	Response
Natalie Uys asked for clarification as to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how the projects are broken up; and</li> <li>• why the projects are broken up in phases;</li> </ul> is it the applicant's approach that it would increase their chance with the bidding process?	John Francis responded that they have been advised to separate the projects into phases as the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment might have an overload of information should it be submitted at one time for evaluation and decision-making.
Natalie Uys asked that it be confirmed whether there was a name change from the initiation of the application to what is being presented at the workshop.	John Francis responded that initially, as per the Background Information Document that was distributed, the developments were known as the Hydra B Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities and Grid Connection Infrastructure, but to avoid any possible confusion between the Hydra B Substation development and that of these renewable energy facilities, as developers they had decided to change the name of the cluster to Crossroad Green Energy (Phase 1) of Renewable Energy Facilities.  The phased approach is also in line with the envisaged construction of these facilities as the construction would also follow a phased approach.
Natalie Uys raised the concern regarding the cumulative impact to the area as there are a number of approved solar projects in the	Jo-Anne Thomas responded that as detailed in the Scoping Report and Plan of Study, the EIA will include a cumulative impact assessment.

Question / Comment	Response
<p>study area and also three new applications for solar PVs.</p> <p>Should the specialists look at these projects individually, the impacts might not be high, but collectively the cumulative impact, especially on birds, bats and the lake effect, especially at night time, would be significantly higher.</p>	
<p>Jo-Anne Thomas enquired that in terms of the comment regarding the impact on bats, whether it is the Department's recommendation that there should be a bats study undertaken or would it be acceptable if the assessment is covered by the Ecology Specialist.</p>	<p>Natalie Uys responded that it is recommended that the Ecology Specialist contact the Bat Advisory Group and obtain their opinion and include it in the report. It is believed that it is not pertinent that a bat study be undertaken, as required for wind projects.</p> <p>It was previously mentioned by Maxime Savinelli that only 10% of agriculture land, as per the Agricultural Guideline, would be used and this already reduces the lake effect on these properties.</p>
<p>Jacoline Mans informed the project team that their Department will submit written comments on the Scoping Reports.</p>	<p>Nicolene Venter thanked Ms Mans for the confirmation of written comments and advised that the team is looking forward receiving these.</p>

**WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE**

Jo-Anne Thomas gave a closing statement to which she thanked the stakeholders for their attendance and valuable input at the workshop.

Nicolene Venter formally concluded the workshop at 12h00.

**APPENDIX A: Attendance Record**


<b>Meeting title</b>	Crossroads Green Energy Phase 1
<b>Attended</b>	12
<b>Meeting duration</b>	21m18s
<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Surname</b>	
Jacoline Mans	
Natalie Uys	
Zanele Manyathi	
James Mitchell	
Constant Prasette	
Maxime Savinelli	
Ronel Bellingan	
John Francis	
Kennett Sinclair	
Jo-anne Thomas	
Nicolene Venter	
Carina de Ornelas	

# APPENDIX B: Presentation

**CROSSROADS GREEN ENERGY SOLAR PV CLUSTER**

**NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

Key Stakeholder Workshop Meeting  
Monday, 31 January 2023




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**OVERVIEW**

- **Projects presented:**

Project name	Farm Name and portion Number	Capacity
Tafelkop Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Grass Pan 40	240MW
Koppy Alleen Solar PV Facility	Portion 5 of the Farm Koppy Alleen 83	100MW
Vrede Solar PV Facility	Portion 5 of the Farm Bas Berg 88	150MW
Zionsheuvel Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Leeuwberg 79	240MW
Amper Daar Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Wolwe Kuil 44	100MW
Wag-'n-Bietjie Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Leeuwe Berg 45	100MW
Ruspoort 1 Solar PV Facility (Option A)	Portion 5 of the Farm Bokken Kraal 81 (Option A)	100MW
Ruspoort 1 Solar PV Facility (Option B)	Portion 4 on the Farm Knoffelfontein 74 Portion 1 on the Farm 78 Portion 2 on the Farm Leeuwberg 79 (Option B)	100MW
Ruspoort 2 Solar PV Facility	Portion 2 of the Farm Leeuwberg 79	100MW
Middelplaas Solar PV Facility	Portion 4 of the Farm Grass Pan 40	100MW


- **Applicant:** Akuo Energy Afrique
- **Independent Consultants:** Savannah Environmental



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**AGENDA**


- Welcome and Introduction
- Meeting Conduct
- Purpose of the Meeting
- Project Overview
- Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment Process
- Key Environmental Findings
- Way Forward
- Discussions



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**MEETING CONDUCT**

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



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## PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

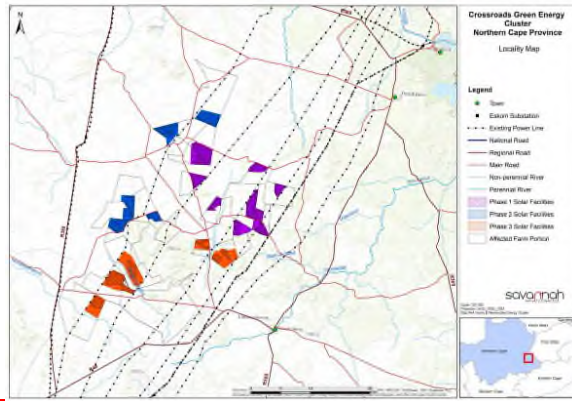
- Provide stakeholders & I&APs with an overview of the **Crossroads Green Energy Cluster of Solar PV Energy Facilities (separate projects)**
- Summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation** being undertaken
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings as documented in the respective **Scoping Reports**
- Provide stakeholders the opportunity to seek clarity regarding the projects and their respective environmental studies, as well as the opportunity to provide valuable input into/to inform the EIA process
- Obtain and record comments for inclusion in the submissions to DFFE

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW (Carina de Ornelas)

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## LOCALITY MAP



Cluster of 21 x Solar PV Energy Facilities, each with a contracted capacity of up to 240MW.

Currently, the project is divided into 3 Phases, with phase 1 consisting of 9 projects.

The project site is located approximately 20km north of Philipstown and 30km west of Petrusville within Renosterberg Local Municipality in the greater Pixley ka Seme District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province

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## CROSSROADS GREEN ENERGY CLUSTER PHASES

No	Project name	Farm Name and portion Number	Capacity	Project Batch
1	Tollatop Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Groot-Pan 40	240MW	Phase 1
2	Kopje-Armen Solar PV Facility	Portion 2 of the Farm Koppie-Armen 81	100MW	Phase 1
3	Prends Solar PV Facility	Portion 5 of the Farm Bos-Berg 81	100MW	Phase 1
4	Dorshoek Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Leuwelberg 79	240MW	Phase 1
5	Armsdal Solar PV Facility	Remainder of Farm Wolke-Ek 44	100MW	Phase 1
6	Weg-tyl-Berge Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Leuwelberg 43	100MW	Phase 1
7.1	Ruopoor 1 Solar PV Facility (Option A)	Portion 3 of the Farm Bokken-Kraai 81 (Option A)	100MW	Phase 1
7.2	Ruopoor 1 Solar PV Facility (Option B)	Portion 4 on the Farm Knothollerton 74 Portion 1 on the Farm 78 Portion 2 on the Farm Leuwelberg 79 (Option B)	100MW	Phase 1
8	Ruopoor 2 Solar PV Facility	Portion 2 of the Farm Leuwelberg 79	100MW	Phase 1
9	Middelpos Solar PV Facility	Portion 4 of the Farm Groot-Pan 40	100MW	Phase 1
10	JW Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Phas 196	240MW	Phase 2
11	Phoandag Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Groot-Pan 40	100MW	Phase 2
12	Ulysses Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Phas 197	100MW	Phase 2
13	Koekoek Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Swart-Koppele 86	100MW	Phase 2
14	JAN Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Schoop-Kraai 36 Portion 1 of the Farm Annes Dorke-Hoek 89 and Remainder of Farm Kuhn Post 90	240MW	Phase 2
15	Dielsonbe Solar PV Facility	Portion 1 of the Farm Dielshoek 87	100MW	Phase 2
16	Jagtoot Solar PV Facility	Portion 2 of the Farm Dielshoek 87, Portion 3 of the Farm Dielshoek 87, and Portion 2 of the Farm Koekoek 85	100MW	Phase 2
17	Shylam Solar PV Facility	Portion 3 of the Farm Myd-Dom 107	240MW	Phase 3
18	Revoer Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Rensde-Kraai 106	100MW	Phase 3
19	Ooibushoek Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Ooibushoek 108	100MW	Phase 3
20	Bokkoo Solar PV Facility	Remainder of the Farm Bokken-Kraai 81	100MW	Phase 3
21	PKK Solar PV Facility	Portion 4 of the Farm Koppie-Armen 81	100MW	Phase 3

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## COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECTS

- Each solar PV facility will include the following:
  - » Solar PV array comprising PV modules and mounting structures (monofacial or bifacial and of fixed-tilt, single-axis tracking, and/or double-axis tracking PV technology)
  - » Inverters and transformers
  - » Cabling between the project components
  - » Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
  - » On-site facility substation and power lines between the solar PV facility and the Eskom substation (to be confirmed and assessed through a separate process)
  - » Site offices, Security office, operations and control, and maintenance and storage laydown areas
  - » Access roads, internal distribution roads

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## SCOPING & EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



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## APPROACH TO SCOPING

- Identification of issues – social and biophysical environment
- Potential sensitive areas identified through specialist desktop and in-field studies
- Design of appropriate facility layout to be informed by sensitive areas identified through the EIA process. The facility layout will be presented and considered in the EIA Phase
- A revised application of the mitigation hierarchy (i.e., avoid, minimise, mitigate and offset)
- Any further micro-siting required to facility layout will be addressed in EIA Phase
- Prepare a Plan of Study for the EIA Phase

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## SPECIALIST STUDIES

Specialist	Area of Expertise
Lindi Steyn and Andrew Husted of The Biodiversity Company	Ecology (including fauna, flora, avifauna, soils, agriculture and wetlands)
Laurens du Plessis – LOGIS	Visual
Bryony Van Niekerk- NuLeaf Environmental	Visual
Nicholas Wiltshire and Jenna Lavin of CTS Heritage	Heritage (including archaeology, palaeontology, and cultural landscape)
Tony Barbour – Tony Barbour Consulting	Social
Adrian Johnson – JG Afrika	Traffic

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## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED (all projects)

	Scoping of Issues
Impacts on Ecology (fauna & flora)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disturbance / degradation / loss to vegetation and habitats.</li> <li>Disruption of ecological corridors.</li> <li>Habitat fragmentation.</li> <li>Encroachment by alien invasive species.</li> <li>Loss of flora and fauna species of conservation concern or threatened or protected species.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Freshwater Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disturbance / degradation / loss to wetland soils or vegetation.</li> <li>Increased erosion and sedimentation, as well as the contamination of surface water resources.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Avifauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Destruction, fragmentation and degradation of habitats.</li> <li>Displacement of avifauna community (including several species of conservation concern).</li> <li>Collision with PV panels and fences.</li> <li>Electrocution due to Solar PV connections.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Agricultural Potential and Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of soil / land capability.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Traffic/Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic congestion due to an increase in traffic caused by the transportation of equipment, material and staff to site.</li> </ul>

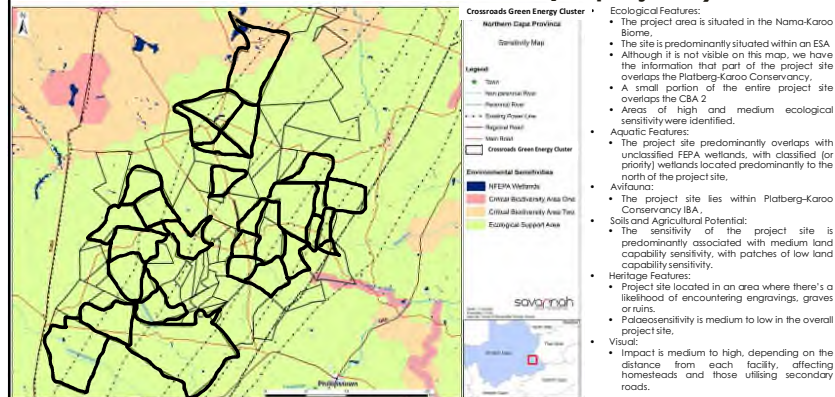
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## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED (all projects)

	Scoping of Issues
Impacts on Heritage (cultural landscape, archaeology and Palaeontology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact to significant heritage resources through destruction during the development phase and disturbance during the operational phase.</li> </ul>
Impacts on Visual Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential change to the rural landscape.</li> <li>Potential visual impacts as experienced by travellers travelling on secondary roads.</li> <li>Potential visual impacts as experienced by residents and visitors to homesteads in close proximity to each facility.</li> <li>Potential visual impacts experienced during the construction phase.</li> <li>Potential lighting impacts.</li> <li>Potential impacts associated with glare impacting on roads.</li> <li>Potential visual impact of the facility on tourist routes or tourist destinations/facilities.</li> </ul>
Impacts on the Socio-Economic Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of job opportunities and skills development.</li> <li>Increase in business sales/production for the local and regional economy.</li> <li>Benefits for local landowners.</li> <li>The establishment of infrastructure to improve energy security and support renewable sector.</li> <li>Benefits associated with socio-economic contributions to community development.</li> <li>Sense of place impacts (visual, noise and dust).</li> <li>Improved energy security.</li> <li>Impact on productive farmland.</li> <li>Increased risk of grass fires associated with construction related activities.</li> </ul>

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## ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES (all projects)



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## PLAN OF STUDY FOR THE EIA PHASE

- The Plan of Study for EIA is intended to provide a summary of the key findings of the Scoping Phase and to describe the activities to be undertaken in the EIA Phase of the EIA process.
- Based on the findings of the Scoping assessment, the following further investigations within the EIA Phase are required:**
  - Ecological Impact Assessment (including flora and fauna)
  - Avifauna Impact Assessment
  - Freshwater Impact Assessment
  - Soils and Agricultural Potential Impact Assessment
  - Heritage Impact Assessment (including archaeology, palaeontology and cultural heritage)
  - Visual Impact Assessment
  - Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

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## WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE (Nicolene Venter)



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## WAY FORWARD

- Scoping Report review period for phase 1 projects are as follows:
  - Tafelkop, Kopy Alleen and Vrede Solar PVs: **13 January 2023 – 13 February 2023**
  - Zionsheuvel, Amper Daar and Wag 'n Bietjie Solar PVs: **16 January 2023 - 15 February 2023**
  - Ruspoort 1, Ruspoort 2 and Middelplaas Solar PVs: **18 January 2023 – 17 February 2023**
  - These can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website
- Final Scoping Report to be submitted to DFFE – February-March 2023
- EIA & EMPr for review – envisaged May 2023 (TBC)
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the development and register you as an I&AP so that you can receive important project information as it becomes available.



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## WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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