

Appendix C7:  
Minutes of Meetings

Minutes of meetings to be included in final EIAr

# SCOPING PHASE

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESSES FOR THE  
100MW VREDE SOLAR PV FACILITY, BATTERY ENERGY  
STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
AND THE  
RONDAVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY, BATTERY ENERGY  
STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED  
INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED NEAR KROONSTAD, FREE  
STATE PROVINCE**

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**MEETING NOTES OF THE FOCUS GROUP MEETING HELD WITH THE  
MOQHAKA FOR THE PEOPLE (MFP) EXECUTIVE MEMBERS  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 06 JANUARY 2021 AT 10H00  
VENUE: VIRTUAL MEETING USING MICROSOFT TEAMS PLATFORM**

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**Meeting notes prepared by:**

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

**100MW VREDE SOLAR PV FACILITY, BESS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE and the 100MW RONDAVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY, BESS AND ASSOCIATED INSTRUCTURE PROJECTS NEAR KROONSTAD, FREE STATE PROVINCE.**

**MEETING ATTENDEES**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Spiro Khoury	Chairman	Moqhaka for the People
Keke Ramontso	Executive Member	Moqhaka for the People
Braam Visagie	Secretary	Moqhaka for the People
Mojalefa Mohanoe	Executive Member	Moqhaka for the People
Doctor Motsapele	Executive Member	Moqhaka for the People
Anton Meyer	Administrative Secretary	Moqhaka for the People
Daniel George	Executive Member	Moqhaka for the People
Paul Pie	Executive Member	Moqhaka for the People
Semang Simila	Executive Member	Moqhaka for the People
Eugene Marais	Applicant (Proponent)	SA Mainstream Renewable Power
Liza Janse van Vuuren	Project Assistant	
Karen Jodas	Director	Savannah Environmental
Gideon Raath	Environmental Assessment Practitioner	
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation and Social Consultant	

It was mentioned that the Executive Members of Moqhaka for the People (MFP) are also affiliated to other organisations and businesses within the Moqhaka Local Municipality.

**APOLOGIES:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Gesie Theron	Project Manager	SA Mainstream Renewable Power

The proof of attendance is attached as **Appendix A**.

**INTRODUCTION**

Nicolene Venter welcomed all attendees at the online focus group meeting (FGM) for the Vrede Solar PV facility and the Rondavel Solar PV facility projects located approximately 6 and 11km south of Kroonstad in the Moqhaka Local Municipality, Fezile Dabi District Municipality in the Free State Province. She requested that the participants introduced themselves and their representation at the FGM. She also requested the participants to register their attendance by submitting their names and roles on the chat function of Microsoft Teams.

She informed the participants that comments can be submitted on the chat function and verbally during the meeting and advised that any additional comments after the meeting can be submitted via e-mail, WhatsApp or SMS to the public participation team.

Spiro Khoury, Chairman: MFP, provided the project team with context as to who the MFP is, how it was formed and what their role as a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) is. Reference was also made to various projects that MFP initiated and are pursuing currently i.e. the Smart city proposal of which the repurposing of Moqhaka's power station in Kroonstad is proposed (amongst others), a solar park project, etc.

He informed the project team that the MFP is not against the proposed projects, rather the opposite and that the MFP welcomes projects such as these. The MFP's interest is in the best interest of the community and not for individual gain and the main interest of theirs is looking at electricity supply to the community, as well as general interests in energy supply.

Gideon Raath presented an overview of the projects and a summary of the key environmental findings as documented in the scoping reports available for a 30-day review and comment period. The slides presented during the virtual meeting was e-mailed to the MFP and a copy is attached as **Appendix B**.

The meeting was conducted and recorded in English, as the preferred language of the attendees, and the meeting notes for the record, are not captured verbatim.

## DISCUSSION SESSION

Question / Comment	Response
<p>Anton Meyer requested that the Global Positioning System (GPS) points of both properties be included in the minutes.</p>	<p>The Surveyor GPS for both Rondavel and Vrede Solar PV Facilities were detailed in Appendix O of the draft Scoping reports made available to the public during the report review period. These appendices were circulated to all members along with these meeting minutes (refer Appendix 1 and 2 of these minutes).</p>
<p>Anton Meyer stated that in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, access roads to a proposed development must be indicated on the maps. The locality map as presented only indicates the road to Kroonstad, the N1 and the R34 but not the Hennenman Road where it crosses the Bloem Spruit towards Hennenman.</p>	<p>The access road to the Vrede Solar PV Facility development site, which is the road turning off from the R34 towards Hennenman, is indicated on the locality map but is not clear on the presentation slide.</p>
<p>Spiro Khoury summarised the concern raised by Anton Meyer as to how to get the project information to the communities, especially also with COVID-19. To ensure that information reached communities, the MFP disseminate the information at Ward meetings.</p> <p>He recommended that the public participation team make use of the Lesedi FM and Radio Oranje, ensuring that communities are informed about the projects. As the MFP welcomes the projects, it is the MFP's aim to avoid any mistakes.</p> <p>He also suggests that Savannah Environmental secure a slot with the radio station giving the public the opportunity to participate in the process.</p> <p>Should it be required, the MFP will assist with the contact details of these radio stations, to ensure transparency.</p>	<p>Nicolene Venter informed the MFP members that community members can reach the public participation office through the dedicated mobile number which include the function of <i>please call me</i> making it accessible for community members to contact the public participation team.</p> <p>The suggestion regarding securing a discussion slot on the radio stations will be discussed with the project team.</p> <p>She thanked the MFP for the information and confirmed that the office does have the contact details of these radio stations. However, should assistance be required, contact will be made with the MFP.</p>
<p>The questions submitted by the MFP prior to the FGM are listed below and responded to</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the advantage for the MFP from these two projects?</li> </ul>	<p>Gideon Raath responded that there will be no specific advantages to the MFP itself but there will be advantages to the broader community, i.e. economic investment which includes the supply of electricity, job creation of which the bulk would be during construction and less</p>

	<p>during the operational phase i.e. permanent employment.</p> <p>Spiro Khoury, in response to Gideon Raath's response, informed the project team that, as mentioned during the introductions that the MFP is a public participation vessel acting on behalf of the communities. Therefore, the discussion points submitted as per the Agenda are not applicable to the MFP members personally, but for the communities in general.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment opportunity &amp; training (skills) – expanded upon by Eugene Marais</li> </ul>	<p>Eugene Marais responded that the company approach their projects in three phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development phase: going through the EIA process and other applicable permitting processes as to legally construct and operate this type of facilities;</li> <li>• tender phase: tender in terms of the REIPPPP (or similar, suitable procurement programme). Once a preferred bidder, the project is handed over to the appointed construction company. During this phase, consisting between 16 to 22 months, job opportunities are created. In terms of trailing, the current the ratio of employment is 70% unskilled and semi-skilled and these are sourced from the local areas.</li> <li>• Operation phase: employment opportunities are limited and therefore big emphases is placed, in terms of the economic development (ED) funding, is placed on economic and social development. As part of the BID submission, commitment is made towards training and skills transfer. During COVID-19, communities are provided with masks, hand sanitisers, etc. However, during the normal cause of business, ED funding will go to further training and support to local enterprise development.</li> </ul> <p>References were made regarding Mainstream's project in Noupoot where a community member selling eggs has been supported to extend his business almost going into commercial production, dress and hat making businesses, etc. (as</p>



	<p>examples of economic development related to project development)</p> <p>Another skill transfer opportunity from these projects are panel assembly.</p> <p>The aim is to ensure that once the construction period has ended, community members can find employment opportunities elsewhere.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would cheaper electricity be supplied to Moqhaka Local Municipality</li> </ul>	<p>Gideon asked for clarification regarding this question, as it is not sure who the recipients would be.</p> <p>Eugene Marias responded that, in short, no, the electricity will not be supplied directly to the supplied to the Moqhaka Local Municipality. Currently the system is set up as a single buyers' market and electricity generated can only be sold to Eskom. In terms of Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2019 provision has been made for 500MW local generation enabling mining companies, data centres, breweries, etc that utilised a large amount of electricity to procure electricity directly. The Minister also alluded that Municipalities will also be allowed to procure electricity directly from Independent Power Producers (IPP) however, the regulations have not been made available yet and it is envisaged that only a few Metros are financially secured to purchase electricity directly from an IPP.</p> <p>The rate that Eskom charges their clients are not up to the IPP.</p>
<p>Spiro Khoury commented that as mentioned by Eugene Marias' feedback that looking at a project, SA Mainstream Renewable Power only look at communities that are associated with the area. The MFP see this as a fundamental difference between their approach and what Mainstream is offering. SA Mainstream Renewable Power would like to sell the electricity generated to Eskom, but the expectation from the public, since the MFP's public participation efforts were</p>	<p>Eugene Marias reiterated that the currently the business model of Mainstream is to develop and supply energy to Eskom directly once preferred bidder status is awarded under any of the IRP procurement programmes, and that direct sales to other entities may be possible in the future but is not presently a possibility for Mainstream.</p>

<p>started, since Kroonstad has its own grid network and that is where Moqhaka, as a whole, comes into play. This grid extends to Viljoenskroon, Vierfontein, Steynsrus and Moqhaka, which has power lines going out to Welkom and this network is owned by Moqhaka. It is the expectation from the public that when electricity is produced in this area, it must be fed into this grid network and it will benefit the community at first, and any excess electricity to be sold to Eskom.</p> <p>Anton Meyer elaborated on the above differences by stating that in terms of the IRP October 2020, Sections 33 &amp; 34, IPP can be bought and developed by mining houses and that they have the capacity. However, Kroonstad, has its own IPP which has been seeded to Imperial Investments (an affiliate of MFP) and part of the appointment is on risk, and as per the agenda point submitted by Braam Visser “our grid, our rules”.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda item inquiring if there is any economic development if purchaser is Eskom</li> </ul>	<p>Gideon Raath requested clarification from the MFP.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda item around the the mantra of “charity begins at home” – our house, our rules</li> </ul>	<p>Anton Meyer informed the project team that part of the agreements the MFP has with one or two landowners is that 30% to 40% local employment will be sourced firstly from Moqhaka, then Kroonstad and then the Free State and then the rest of the country (please note: this is in the context of ongoing projects being pursued by the MFP). It was emphasised that “charity begins at home” – meaning benefits derived from the project should benefit the local community first before benefits are derived further afield. He mentioned that there are various local companies that can produce materials required for the building of panels, etc and it is not necessary to source these outside the borders of South Africa.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda item relating to the impact of the two projects on the MFP's Smart City proposal</li> </ul>	<p>Response was provided later in the meeting and copied below:</p> <p><i>Spiro provided the project team with background to the concept of the Smart City. The purpose of the proposed Smart City is to</i></p>

<p>Gideon Raath requested clarification and what is the background and scope of the Smart City</p>	<p><i>develop a biogas system, using the products from Moqhaka Municipality's sewage farm. This will also work toward a cleaner Kroonstad.</i></p> <p><i>He informed the project team that the Vals River, which flows into the Vaal River, and Bloem Spruit, which also flows through SA Mainstream Renewable's project site, the MFP is proposing creating several dams by totally cutting off the waterflow and pumping it between the several dams.</i></p> <p><i>Imperial Investment (an affiliate of the MFP) is proposing constructing a University City for the whole of Africa. The University will serve to train Africa and South Africa in renewable energy and recycling.</i></p>
<p>Additional comments / questions as per Agenda</p>	
<p>Anton Meyer asked whether SA Mainstream Renewable is operating as an Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC).</p>	<p>Eugene Marais responded that they are not an EPC, SA Mainstream Renewable Power is a project developer and IPP.</p>
<p>Anton Meyer, as a follow-up question, ask who SA Mainstream Renewable's EPC is.</p>	<p>Eugene Marais responded that the EIA process just commenced and as per SA Mainstream Renewable's project development process, they will tender the project and if a preferred bidder, then an EPC will be appointed to do final design. It is too early in these projects' timeframes to know who would be the EPCs.</p> <p>Eugene Marias reiterates that during the REIPPP, the IPP must make, during the bidding process, commitments to local content and that the percentage are determined by Government and not the IPP. SA Mainstream Renewable does not only meet the requirements but try to exceed it.</p> <p>The REIPPP system, in terms of your ED &amp; SED commitments, it should benefit the district municipality, starting closer at home and then extend to the district municipality.</p> <p>He mentioned that the reality is that there are professional services that are not locally readily available, i.e. panel manufacturers. It needs to be noted that approximately 80% of the project</p>

	cost will go into the manufacturing of the panels.
<p>Spiro Khoury clarified the point raised by Anton Meyer, that the MFP's biggest concern is that the energy is reaped in their area and the term "charity begins at home" means that the need of the area's energy supply needs to be looked at first. All are aware of Eskom's downfall resulting in the country looking at energy resources elsewhere. Although the green energy is mandatory worldwide, Eskom should have implemented these types of projects long ago, and now private companies, including the MFP, are doing it.</p> <p>The MFP's concern is that the energy generated from these projects will supply Eskom and Moqhaka needs to buy it back from Eskom. Moqhaka has an IPP and PPA allowing to produce its own electricity. The MFP has been working had on these projects and these projects were already presented to the Municipality, which are similar to these projects.</p> <p>He mentioned that discussions have also taken place with De Beers for putting up a possible solar farm at their Voorspoed Mine.</p> <p>The problem is not with SA Maintream Renewable's product, but where is the end product going to.</p> <p>What the MFP had achieved so far is a company, signed on risk, that will produce 1 300MW, of which the offset of 300MW for free to the Moqhaka Municipality. The MFP is not expecting this the same, but what the MFP is saying is that Moqhaka must benefit from the energy REIPPP in the area. It is not acceptable that energy is generated in this area and then given to neighbouring towns before Moqhaka had looked after their own interest.</p> <p>Spiro Khoury stated that the above is the core interest in the project.</p>	<p>Eugene Marias reiterated that the currently the business model of Mainstream is to develop and supply energy to Eskom directly once preferred bidder status is awarded under any of the IRP procurement programmes, and that direct sales to other entities may be possible in the future but is not presently a possibility for Mainstream.</p>

<p>He stated that it is important that the MFP and SA Mainstream Renewable holds hand and work together.</p>	
<p>Doctor Motsapele informed the project team that in the mindset of the people of Moqhaka in terms of the MFP's power station project, they already expect that there will be cheaper electricity when electricity is generated.</p> <p>He asked, in terms of the short term, on what scale will the community benefit economically and in the long term from these projects.</p>	<p>Eugene Marais responded that as mentioned earlier, the bulk of short-term employment will be during the construction phase envisaged to be between 16 to 22 months.</p> <p>During the operation phase, as everyone knows on both wind and solar farms, the employment opportunity is less. The REIPPP is set up in such a way that during the operation phase the developer commits to assist with local enterprises and socio-economic developments apart from employment opportunities. As mentioned previously, the percentage are set in the bidding documents as minimum requirement and SA Mainstream Renewable tries not only to achieve the set percentage, but to exceed it. This will be the major benefit for the community from these projects.</p> <p>Eugene further informed the MFP that these projects will have an increase in Rates and Taxes where currently taxes are only paid on agricultural value. Once the projects are operational, the taxes will be recalculated at commercial rates.</p>
<p>Anton Meyer informed the project team that as per his knowledge, there are no REIPPP regulations currently available or published. The last regulations he is aware of is the procurement one dated September / October 2020.</p> <p>He raised the question that if SA Mainstream Renewable is going to work on the existing regulations i.e. Window 4 REIPPP, what will SA Mainstream approach be should there be substantial changes.</p>	<p>Eugene Marais, after clarifying the key point of the question, responded that what SA Mainstream Renewable are currently busy with is the EIA process as this process is one of the main boxes that need to be completed and ticked off, and apart from this process, no other processes are embarked on. Subsequent phases and process will only be embarked on once an Environmental Authorisation has been granted.</p> <p>The previous REIPPP process, i.e. Round 4.5, was cancelled. There is a lot of speculations regarding the possible changes to the RFP and SA Mainstream Renewable expect that one of these changes will be the local content, black ownership, etc and not necessarily the project specific details.</p>

<p>Spiro Khoury acknowledged the response provided by Eugene in terms of the REIPPP phase and raised the question whether SA Mainstream Renewable had any discussions with the Moqhaka Local Municipality regarding these projects.</p>	<p>Nicolene Venter responded that in terms of the public participation process, a meeting was requested but due to other commitments the Municipality could not attend. A meeting will be arranged with the Municipality as part of the ongoing public participation process.</p> <p>Nicolene informed the attendees that it is important to note that although there are strict timeframes associated to the EIA i.e. report review periods, submissions of reports to the decision-making authorities, the public participation process is a transparent, open and ongoing process throughout the EIA. Consultation with organs of state and I&amp;APs continues until the environmental authorisation is issued.</p>
<p>Spiro Khoury said that it is important that the MFP and the project team take hands as the MFP had also embarked on a similar project during which the MFP had contacted NERSA and De Beers (their Voorspoed Mine), saying that if the MFP fails with the local municipality, their project will provide electricity to Eskom.</p> <p>It is important that both the projects, that of the MFP and SA Mainstream Renewable, succeeds, and as previously mentioned, that it is not the MFP's intention to shoot these projects down, but to it is the MFP's intention to make these projects work. To make these projects to work, one needs an end buyer.</p> <p>The MFP's strength is with the community, and as the Municipality has the IPP and the PPA they are currently facing major challenges with the political leadership within the local municipality. It is the MFP's intention to bring as many IPP projects to Moqhaka as possible and the 200MW these two projects will contribute is great and the MFP would like to add it to their projects. It is acknowledged that these projects need to go through local government before reaching national government.</p>	<p>Eugene Marais acknowledged and understood what is being said and stated by the MFP as SA Mainstream Renewable had gone through these processes at numerous times before. In the initial stage of the project, local municipalities are not actively involved but as the process progress, they contribute valuable inputs.</p> <p>The municipalities involvement at a later stage of a project is understood as the project is tangible once you are a preferred bidder. Obtaining an environmental authorisation is not yet a guarantee that your project will receive bidder status.</p> <p>The legislated process is followed, and engagement will take place with the municipality and it is envisaged that the project will be presented to the Council in the same format as being presented to the MFP.</p>

<p>Spiro expressed, on behalf of the MFP, that these projects will make progress with the local municipality because if progress had been made, it make the job of the MFP easier.</p>	
<p>Spiro Khoury asked who SA Mainstream Renewable is, i.e. who is behind this application and provided Eugene the opportunity to refrain from answering the question.</p>	<p>Eugene Marais responded by providing a summary of who SA Mainstream Renewable is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project developers and IPPs financed by SA Mainstream Renewable</li> <li>• Have investors investing in the company</li> <li>• Utilising development funding to develop projects Some projects are on SA Mainstream Renewable's books for 10 years and one keeps tendering until you are successful. These are risks taken by the company and there is no government funding involved in the development of these type of projects.</li> <li>• When a preferred bidder, the company comply with the local requirement for example as recalled, Round 4 required 40% black ownership, 50% local ownership and woman and youth ownership are also coming into the fold now. At financial close, the company sells off to individual investors to comply with the above. Currently all proposed developments are owned by SA Mainstream Renewable</li> </ul>
<p>Spiro Khoury asked what projects SA Mainstream Renewable are currently running, i.e. securing their income from.</p> <p>The reason for raising this type of questions is that the MFP are representing the public and the public pose these questions to the MFP expecting responses as to whether companies are reputable or not. It also assists the MFP to try and ensure that these projects become a reality.</p>	<p>Eugene Marais replied in terms of their success in South Africa, Round 1 to 4 that various projects were won and briefly explained details of these projects.</p> <p>He further detailed that they are operating various developments in Africa and Internationally. He further explained the various offices SA Mainstream Renewable have and the company structure.</p> <p>Eugene summarised by informing the attendees that the company finance projects themselves and then sell the projects.</p>
<p>Spiro Khoury, on behalf of the MFP, thanked SA Mainstream Renewable Energy for putting the organisation at ease with his response regarding the company and said that the MFP is ready to assist with the projects brought to their area as it will contribute with the development of the community.</p>	<p>Eugene Marais noted and thanked the MFP for their contributions.</p>

<p>Nicolene Venter asked, for confirmation purpose, whether only the MFP's executive members will be registered on the project database and that they, as representatives for the MFP member, will disseminate the information to their members.</p> <p>She requested that all future correspondence the executive members of the MFP receives regarding these proposed projects, also be shared with their members</p> <p>She informed the MFP executive members that any of their members who contact the public participation office and request to register, will be register on the project database.</p>	<p>Spiro Khoury informed Savannah Environmental that the MFP's attendance register, which will contain the contact details of the MFP's executive members will be forwarded to Savannah Environmental. He reiterated the importance of the proposed projects and that the project team and the MFP, going forth, must work together</p> <p>He confirmed that, although COVID-19 regulations prevent the MFP to conduct meeting, the information received at the meeting will be shared with their members. A copy of the minutes will be distributed to Imperial Investment who is proposing the development of the Smart City development and that of their members (an affiliate of MFP).</p>
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**CLOSURE**

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Nicolene Venter provided the attendees an opportunity to submit any last comment they wish to make before officially closing the meeting.

Spiro Khoury thanked the project team in manner which the meeting was conducted, the transparency of the process, and acknowledges the MFP's interest in the project. The MFP are committed to the assist with the projects to ensure that it becomes a reality.

The project team members expressed their appreciated towards the MFP's valuable contributions made during the meeting and looking forward to the next phase of the EIA.

Nicolene Venter informed the executive members of the MFP that, as previously mentioned, that although the comment period of the scoping report is ending on Monday, 11 January 2021, any additional comments and queries they, or their members have, can still be submitted.

Anton Meyer stated that more outreach is needed to create a rainbow nation, and this can be reached by working together. He reiterated the fact that the projects need to be presented to the communities, as the MFP had held massive meetings where the response from communities were very positive and the options raised by community members, absolutely astound the MFP.

Nicolene Venter thanked the participants for their valuable inputs into the scoping phase of the EIA processes. The meeting was closed at 11h45.



# APPENDIX A

MFP		ATTENDANCE REGISTER		Moghaka For the People
MFP Executive - Savannah 06.01.2021				
Name/Surname	Represent/Ward	Tel/Cell	email	
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ANTON B. MEYER	WARD 16	074-265-3962	meyelab7@gmail.com	
Louise George	Ward 9	079 747 5026		
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## MS TEAMS RECORD

Full Name	User Action	Timestamp
Nicolene Venter	Joined	1/6/2021, 9:49:44 AM
MFP	Joined before	1/6/2021, 9:49:44 AM
Karen	Joined	1/6/2021, 9:50:59 AM
Eugene Marais	Joined	1/6/2021, 9:57:39 AM
Gideon Raath	Joined	1/6/2021, 9:58:17 AM
Liza Janse van Vuuren	Joined	1/6/2021, 9:59:13 AM

## 100MW Vrede Solar PV facility, Battery Energy Storage System and associated infrastructure, Kroonstad, Free State Province &

## 100MW Rondavel Solar PV facility, Battery Energy Storage System and associated infrastructure, Kroonstad, Free State Province

Public Participation Presentation  
January 2021



## AGENDA

- Welcome and Introduction
- Meeting Conduct
- Project Overview
- Environmental Process, Studies & Findings
- Discussion
  - Responding to MFP's agenda items:
    - Advantage for MFP from Vrede SEF & Rondavel SEF projects
    - Employment opportunity
    - Training (skills)
    - Would cheaper electricity be supplied to Mochaka Local Municipality
    - Economic development if purchaser is Eskom
    - The mantra of "charity begins at home" – our house, our rules (to be queried)
    - Impact of these two projects on the MFP's Smart City proposal
  - Additional comments / questions
- Way Forward



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## CONDUCT OF THE MEETING

- Please stay on mute during the presentation
- Register attendance on Chat function (name, surname & affiliation)
- Please raise your hand to indicate comment / question to raise
- Questions submitted in Chat function will be responded to after the presentation
- Equal opportunity
- Recording of meeting
- Attendees welcome to switch video on



## PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

- Provide stakeholder & IAPs with an overview of the two respective Vrede & Rondavel Solar PV Facilities (separate projects)
- Summary of the **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) & Public Participation** being undertaken for both projects
- Present summary of key environmental findings as documented in the **Scoping Reports** of both projects
- Provide stakeholders the opportunity to seek clarity regarding the projects and their respective environmental studies
- Opportunity to provide valuable input into/to inform the EIA processes for both projects
- Obtain and record comments for inclusion in the **Final Scoping Reports** to be submitted to the DEFF



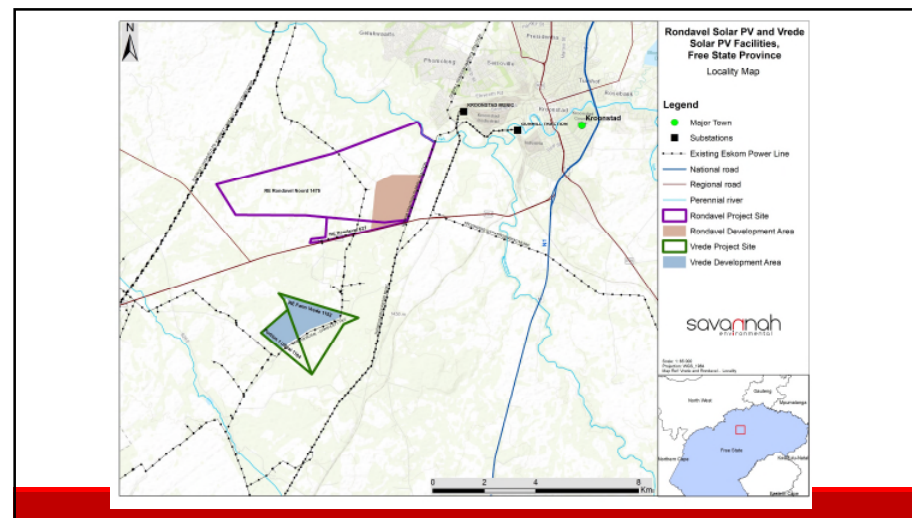
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## PROJECTS OVERVIEW

- **Applicant –**
  - Vrede Solar PV Facility: South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Developments (Pty) Ltd
  - Rondavel Solar PV Facility: South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Developments (Pty) Ltd
- **Location –**
  - Vrede Solar PV Facility: Farm Vrede No. 1152 and the Farm Uitval No. 1104;
  - Rondavel Solar PV Facility: Remaining Extent of the farm Rondavel Noord No. 1475 and Remaining Extent of the farm Rondavel No. 627.
- **Project proposal –**
  - Proposed construction and operation of two separate 100MWac Photovoltaic Solar Energy Facilities including Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure near Kroonstad in the Moqhaka Local Municipality, Fezile Dabi District in the Free State Province.
  - Projects respectively called Vrede Solar PV Facility and Rondavel Solar PV Facility.

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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

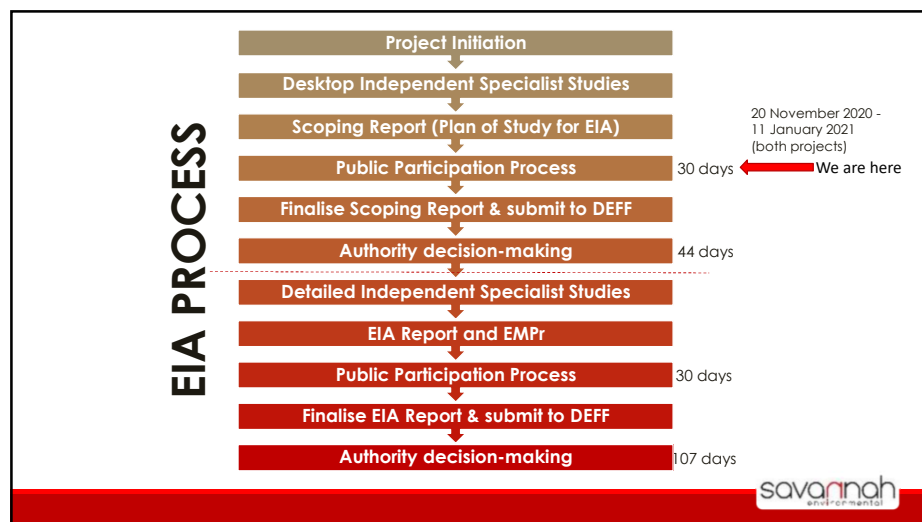
- **Infrastructure associated with both solar PV facilities will include:**
  - Solar PV array comprising PV modules and mounting structures.
  - Inverters and transformers.
  - Underground cabling between the project components.
  - On-site facility substation to facilitate the connection between the solar PV facility and the Eskom electricity grid.
  - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).
  - Site offices and maintenance buildings, including workshop areas for maintenance and storage.
  - Laydown areas and temporary man camp area.
  - Access roads, internal distribution roads and fencing around the development area.
  - Telecommunication infrastructure;
  - Stormwater channels and water pipelines.

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## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- **Activities associated with both solar PV facilities may include:**
  - Surveys and studies during planning, including obtaining all permits and required approvals
  - Procurement of contractor teams
  - Establishment of access roads
  - Site preparation, including vegetation clearing and soil preparation
  - Component and equipment transport to site
  - Establishment of laydown areas
  - Erection of PV panels and installation of structural and electrical infrastructure (cabling, substations, inverters etc.)
  - Establishment of support infrastructure
  - Site rehabilitation
  - Operation and maintenance
  - Site decommissioning

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## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS/SENSITIVITIES IDENTIFIED

- Understanding the nature of the proposed development and the impacts associated with the projects (as identified in the Scoping phase), the following has been considered and assessed within the Scoping phase (for both projects):
  - Impacts on ecology (including flora and fauna)
  - Impacts on freshwater resources
  - Impacts on avifauna
  - Impacts on soils, geology, agricultural potential and land-use
  - Impacts on heritage (archaeology and palaeontology)
  - Visual impacts
  - Social impacts
  - Evaluation of potential cumulative impacts associated with the project

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## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- The following findings were determined for both the Vrede Solar PV and Rondavel Solar PV facilities respectively:
  - Potential impact of low significance to ecology related to loss of vegetation, habitat and faunal species. Disturbance to fauna and flora, impact on CBA or ESA and spread of invasive alien plants.
  - Potential impact of low significance to freshwater features related to sedimentation, erosion, habitat and wetland vegetation loss, runoff and surface water quality alteration
  - Potential impact of medium to low significance on avifauna related to priority species displacement, habitat transformation, collisions, fence entrapment, electrocutions
  - Potential impact of high to low significance on agricultural potential and soils related to soil compaction, erosion, loss of soil fertility, soil pollution, and change in land capability

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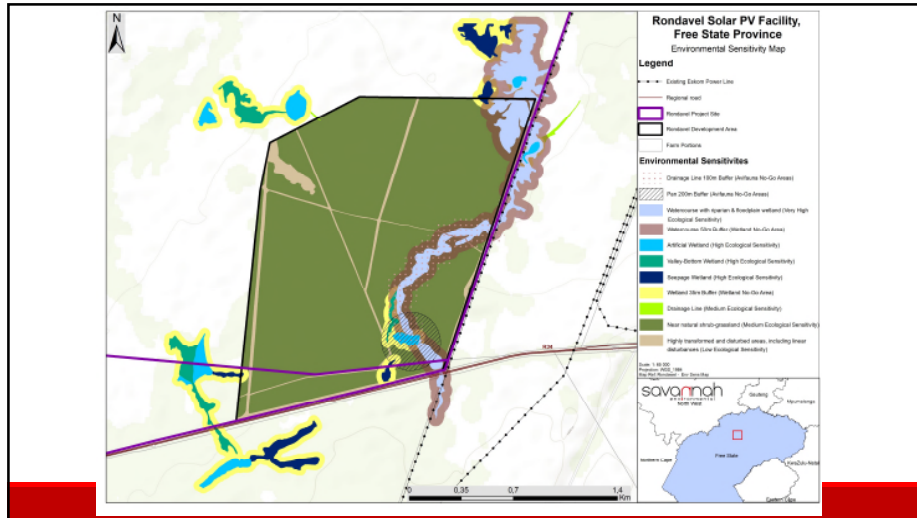
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## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

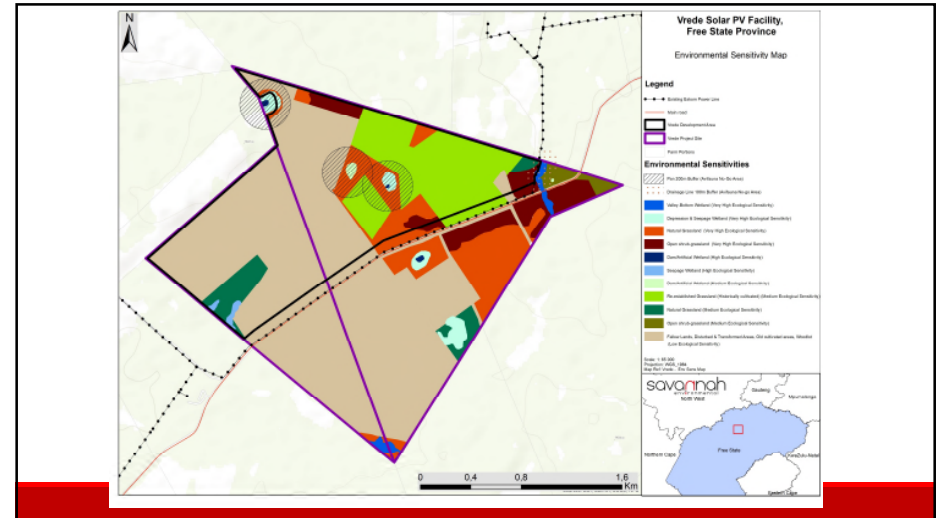
- The following findings were determined for both the Vrede Solar PV and Rondavel Solar PV facilities respectively:
  - Potential impact of high to low significance on heritage resources related to damage to archaeological or Palaeontological heritage resources
  - Potential impact of high to low significance on visual receptors
  - Potential impact of low to medium significance (both positive and negative) on the social environment related to direct and indirect employment opportunities, pressure on infrastructure, social conflict, temporary security concerns, alteration of sense of place, socio-economic development and economic multiplier effects.
  - No environmental fatal flaws were determined for either of the Vrede or Rondavel solar PV projects.
  - Further specialist studies to be conducted in the EIA phase
  - Mitigation measures proposed may reduce impact significance

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## PLAN OF STUDY FOR EIA PHASE ASSESSMENTS

- » Based on the findings of the Scoping assessments (both projects), the following further investigation within the EIA phase are required:
  - Ecology impact assessment
  - Freshwater impact assessment
  - Avifaunal impact assessment
  - Soils, land use, land capability and agricultural potential
  - Visual impact assessment
  - Heritage (archaeology and palaeontology) impact assessment
  - Socio-economic impact assessment

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## WAY FORWARD

- » Meeting notes will be distributed for verification
- » Presentation will be distributed
- » Review and comment period ending **11 January 2021**
- » Incorporate issues and concerns raised during the Public Participation Process into the respective Final Scoping Reports
- » Submission of final Scoping Reports to DEFF for decision-making

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## WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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## DISCUSSION SESSION

