

## **BIRD MONITORING PROGRAMME FOR THE OPERATIONAL PHASE**

### **1. Purpose**

This document serves as a framework for the set-up of the bird monitoring during the operational phase of the wind energy facility. The relevant best practice guidelines published by BirdLife (version as relevant at the time of setting up the programme) should also be read in conjunction with this framework document and should be considered when setting up bird monitoring.

### **Operational Phase Monitoring**

Operation phase bird monitoring must be implemented in line with the most recent and applicable officially accepted guidelines. The aims of this monitoring will include:

- » To compare the abundance index for all the priority species within the development area after construction against the pre-construction baseline to measure actual displacement due to the construction and operation of the wind farm. Recommended survey method is line transect counts.
- » To estimate the risk of priority species colliding with the wind turbines by recording actual collisions and comparing post-construction flight patterns with pre-construction baseline data. Recommended methods are carcass searches and Vantage Point (VP) watches.

As stated in the best practice guideline<sup>1</sup>, As a minimum, survey protocols used in the pre-construction monitoring should be repeated during the first two years of operation and should be combined with monitoring of fatalities. The need for further monitoring of bird abundance and movements should be reviewed at the end of this to determine if it is necessary to continue with some, or all, components of this work. The need for further monitoring of fatalities should also be reviewed after the first two years, and then again on an annual basis. Carcass searches must, however, be repeated in the fifth year, and again every five years thereafter.

The findings and recommendations of the 2021 habitat & nest survey, and layout walkthrough (EnviroSci, July 2021) must also be used to inform the operational phase monitoring programme.

A suitably qualified avifaunal specialist must be appointed to design the operational monitoring programme prior to the commencement of the operational period. The monitoring programme must be implemented immediately once the wind farm becomes operational.

The monitoring reports must be submitted annually (at a minimum) to the DFFE and BirdLife South Africa.

### **1. Landowner Consultation**

Before the carcass search commences and before a carcass search team is appointed for monitoring in the operation phase, the Landowners/ Farmers must be consulted. The consultation should outline the methods of the carcass searches. Details, e.g. frequency of searches, contact/ responsible persons, access control, etc. must be discussed and agreed with the Landowners/ Farmers. To ensure the safety of Landowners/ Farmers it is also recommended that a background check is done on all employees/

<sup>1</sup> A.R. Jenkins, C.S. van Rooyen, J.J. Smallie, J.A. Harrison, M. Diamond, H.A. Smit---Robinson and S. Rolston (2015). Best---Practice Guidelines for assessing and monitoring the impact of wind energy facilities on birds in southern Africa. Third Edition, 2015

members of the carcass search team before they are appointed and that proof of this is kept. The carcass search team should be introduced to the Landowners/ Farmers. Landowners/ Farmers should at all times be kept informed of the whereabouts of the carcass search team. All relevant EMPr conditions, e.g. no hunting/ killing of animals, no fires on site, no camping on site, etc. will apply to the carcass search team. They must therefore be inducted to the Wind Farm and made aware of all rules, regulations and code of conduct. Landowner Requirements agreed upon will be signed and form part of this Report.

***This document must be updated as and when required to ensure compliance with the relevant Best Practice Guidelines.***