

Rendani Rasivhetshele

Importance: High

From: Mahlatse Shubane <MSHUBANE@dffe.gov.za>

Sent: Tuesday, 05 April 2022 11:51 AM

To: Jo-Anne Thomas <joanne@savannahsa.com>; Tebogo Mapinga <tebogo@savannahsa.com>

Cc: Olivia Letlalo <OLetlalo@dffe.gov.za>; Thando Booi <TBooi@dffe.gov.za>; Thembisile Hlatshwayo <THLATSHWAYO@dffe.gov.za>; Makhosi Yeni <MYeni@dffe.gov.za>

Subject: APPROVAL OF PP PLAN 2022-03-0025

Importance: High

Dear Jo-Anne,

The amended Public Participation (PP) Plan received by this Department on 05 April 2022, refers.

Based on the information provided this Department decided to approve the PP Plan for the proposed project. You may proceed with the PP process in accordance with tasks contemplated in the PP plan. Should you wish to deviate from the submitted PP Plan, the amended PP Plan must be submitted to the Department for approval prior commencement.

A copy of the PP Plan and this approval must be submitted as part of the application form when the application is lodged.

Also note that submission of a PP Plan and approval thereof do not negate your responsibility to comply with the requirements for public participation in terms of Regulations 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended.

Best regards,

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

CASTLE WIND FARM AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

EMPr AMENDMENT TO COMPLY WITH CONDITIONS 15 & 16 AND PRESENTATION OF THE FINAL FACILITY LAYOUT TO COMPLY WITH CONDITION 12 & 13 OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION

(DFFE Ref. No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/278)

March 2022

The restrictions enforced in terms of Government Gazette 43096 which placed the country in a national state of disaster limiting the movement of people to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus has placed some limitations on the commencement and continuation of the public consultation. Considering these limitations, the following consultation process has been designed and will be implemented, on approval by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE).

Projects Details

Castle Wind Farm (Pty) Ltd received an Environmental Authorisation (EA) for the construction of Castle Wind Energy Facility (WEF) on the 02 May 2015 (as subsequently amended). The Castle Wind Energy Facility is proposed to be located on the following farm portions:

- Portion 12 of Farm 165 (Vendussie Kuil);
- Portion 13 of Farm 165 (Vendussie Kuil); and
- The Remaining Extent of Portion 0 of Farm 8 (Knapdaar).

In terms of Condition 15 of the EA, the EMPr for the project was not approved at the time the EA was granted, and the EMPr was required to be updated in accordance with conditions 15 and 16 of the EA. Similarly, Condition 16 stipulated that the layout must be updated in accordance with the provisions of Condition 16 and submitted to the Department for approval.

Public Participation Plan:

The public participation (PP) process will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Regulations 41(5) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended, (GNR 326). The aim of the public participation process is primarily to ensure that:

- » information containing all relevant facts in respect of the proposed amendment is made available to potential stakeholders and I&APs;
- » participation by I&APs is facilitated in such a manner that all potential stakeholders and I&APs are provided with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments; and
- » comments received from potential stakeholders and I&APs are recorded and incorporated into the amendment process.

The traditional means and opportunities available for the undertaking of public participation is still covered and implemented as part of this plan considering the current limitations. Alternative means of undertaking

consultation has been designed and will be implemented by Savannah Environmental to ensure that I&APs are afforded sufficient opportunity to raise comments on the projects through an interactive web-based platform readily available and accessible to any person illustrating interest in the projects and enables the public participation process to be undertaken in line with Regulations 41 (5) of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

The use of online tools enables stakeholders and I&APs to explore the project-specific content in their own time and allow them to participate in a meaningful way in the consultation process. The online platform allows for feedback and comments to be submitted by I&APs, in so doing saving time for the stakeholder and also giving the assurance that their comments have been submitted for inclusion in the project's reporting. The online stakeholder engagement platform considers the limitations applied by the Disaster Management Act Regulations prohibiting the gathering of people, as well as limitations which certain I&APs may have in terms of access to computers and internet as well as access to public spaces that are not open for operation or which have restricted access.

The benefits of the online stakeholder engagement platform include:

- Ability to create a dedicated project-specific online platform to enable easy access to project-related information.
- Allowing registered stakeholders and I&APs the opportunity to engage on a project without leaving their office or home.
- Enabling the PP team to maintain a complete database of I&APs through maintaining a record of persons accessing the online stakeholder consultation platform.
- Provides a resilient solution to a public consultation process.

Where registered I&APs do not have the applicable facilities (i.e. access to internet, mobile phones, or computers), provision has been made to include these I&APs in the consultation process by consulting with the Ward Councillor, the ward committee members, community representatives and local community forum members. It is critical to note that all avenues to exhaust direct notifications will firstly be exercised (i.e., including forming part of any local communication groups WhatsApp and Telegram groups).

The schematic illustration below provides an overview of the tools that are available to I&APs and stakeholders to access project information and interact with the public participation team to obtain project information and resolve any queries that may arise, and to meet the requirements for public participation.

i. Register of I&APs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Update the registered I&AP database were required•Receive all project related information
ii. Notifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Notifications regarding the EMPr amendment process and availability of the amendment of the EMPr for public review to be sent via email, post or SMS notifications
iii. Public Involvement and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Submission of comments or queries via email, WhatsApp/SMS, or the Savannah Environmental Website to the PP team, and where required post•Availability of project information via Savannah Environmental Website which is accessible and user friendly, email, other electronic platform (Dropbox, WeTransfer), and if requested in writing CD/Hardcopies
iv. Comment on the EMPr and Final Layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Submission of comments via the online Savannah Environmental Website, Whatsapp/SMS, email, and where required post to the PP team•Comments recorded and responded to as part of the process
v. Recording of comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Comments and Responses Report, including all comments received to be included in the PP reporting.

The PP plan, as set out in the table below, has been drafted for the above-mentioned project to ensure compliance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations and that reasonable opportunity is provided to I&APs and that all administrative actions are reasonable. Proof of all notifications will be included in the public participation report which will be submitted along with the Final EMPr and Final Layout.

The PP plan is submitted to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), agreement before the PP process is undertaken for the proposed EMPr and Layout amendment.

Public Participation Plan: Discussion of approach and methodology to meet the requirements of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended)

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
<p>Regulation 41(5)(a)(b) - where public participation is conducted in terms of this regulation for an application or proposed application, subregulation (2)(a), (b), (c) and (d) need not be complied with again during the additional public participation process contemplated in regulations 19(1)(b) or 23(1)(b) or the public participation process contemplated in regulation 21(2)(d), on condition that-</p> <p>(a) Such a process has been preceded by a public participation process which included compliance with subregulation (2)(a), (b), (c) and (d); and</p> <p>(b) Written notice is given to registered and affected parties regarding where the-</p> <p>(i) Revised basic assessment report or, EMPr or closure plan, as contemplated in regulation 19(1)(b);</p> <p>(ii) Revised environmental impact assessment report or EMPr as contemplated in regulation 23(1)(b); or</p> <p>(iii) Environmental impact assessment report and EMPr as contemplated in regulation 21(2)(d);</p> <p>May be obtained, the manner in which and the person to whom representations on these reports or plans may be made and the date on which such representations are due.</p>	<p><u>Notification of availability of the EMPr and period for review using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification letter (to be sent via email, fax and/or or post, as may be most applicable) to registered I&As. • SMS and/ or WhatsApp notifications where possible and available. • <u>Notification to the municipal councillor of the ward in which the site is situated and any organisation of ratepayers that represent the community in the area in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 41(2)(b)(iii) and Section 4.1(b)(iv) of the Guideline for Public Participation.</u> <p><u>Availability of the report for review, comments and consultation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report available on the Savannah Environmental website for download. • Electronic copies can be made available to parties via a secure Dropbox link (or other means) that will be emailed upon request for the documentation. • CDs to be posted, if requested. • <u>Hard copies to be posted on request.</u> • Report will be submitted to the DFFE using the DFFE online portal. • Report will be submitted to Organs of State and commenting authorities via an agreed electronic platform (from the Savannah Environmental's website, CD, via a secure Dropbox link or WeTransfer, etc). • Virtual focus group meeting only using an appropriate platform agreeable to all parties (such as Teams, Skype, Zoom), if required throughout consultation process. <p><u>Submission of comments to PP team:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments can be submitted directly to the PP team using the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform.

Regulation	Approach & Methodology to meet requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written comments can also be submitted via email, WhatsApp/SMS or post or fax whichever is most applicable. • Any comments provided telephonically or via instant message will be transcribed and recorded as formal comments.
<p>Regulation 4(2) – Notification of decision on application</p>	<p><u>Notification of the approval of the Final EMPr and Final Layout using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification letter with details as outlined in the approved Final EMPr and Layout issued will be sent via email and fax. • Notifications that the approved Final EMPr and Layout has been issued and where to download and/or obtain a copy to communities via Ward Councillor and his/her ward committee members and identified and confirmed community representatives. These channels will be closely facilitated where no direct notification is possible. • SMS or WhatsApp notification.