

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the project background and purpose of this report, outlines how to comment and describes the structure of the report.

## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Petroleum Agency SA (PASA) on 16 July 2020 acknowledged the acceptance of a Reconnaissance Permit submitted by Spectrum Geo Limited for the undertaking of a multi-client speculative two-dimensional (2D) seismic survey in a number of petroleum licence blocks in the Orange Basin off the West Coast of South Africa (see Figure 1-1). Section 74 of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (No. 28 of 2002; MPRDA) makes provision for such an application.

The proposed survey area would be in the order of 180 000 km<sup>2</sup>, stretching from the Namibian border along the entire West Coast up to a point approximately 200 km southwest of Cape Point and ranges between 40 and 440 km from the coast. Water depths in the proposed survey area range from 100 m to beyond 4 500 m.

Actual survey commencement would ultimately depend on a permit award date and the availability of a survey vessel. It is currently anticipated that the survey would take up to five months to complete. Should the permit be awarded, it is anticipated that the proposed survey could commence on 01 December 2021.

At the time the Reconnaissance Permit Application was submitted to PASA, there was no requirement in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 (as amended) to apply for an Environmental Authorisation when applying for a Reconnaissance Permit, and as such PASA requested that Spectrum '*develop a plan for managing potential environmental impacts that may result from the proposed operations and notify and consult with affected parties*' and submit it to them for consideration by the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy. For this application, the plan is referred to as an "Environmental Management Plan (EMP)". Although the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) subsequently published amendments to the EIA Regulations 2014, which now requires Environmental Authorisation for Reconnaissance Permit Applications, the transitional arrangements apply. Thus, this Reconnaissance Permit Application will be dispensed with in terms of the previous Regulations that were in place at the time of application submission (refer to Section 2.2.3 for further detail in this regard).

Spectrum has appointed SLR Consulting (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd (SLR) to compile this EMP and undertake the required public participation process for the proposed speculative seismic survey.

This draft version of the EMP has been compiled and distributed for review and comment as part of the EMP process. Interested and Affected Parties (I&AP) are asked to comment on this draft report (see Section 1.3). After completion of the comment period, the document will be updated to a final report, giving due consideration to the comments received. The final EMP will then be submitted to PASA for consideration and recommendation to the Minister responsible for mineral resources or the delegated authority, the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE), for decision-making.

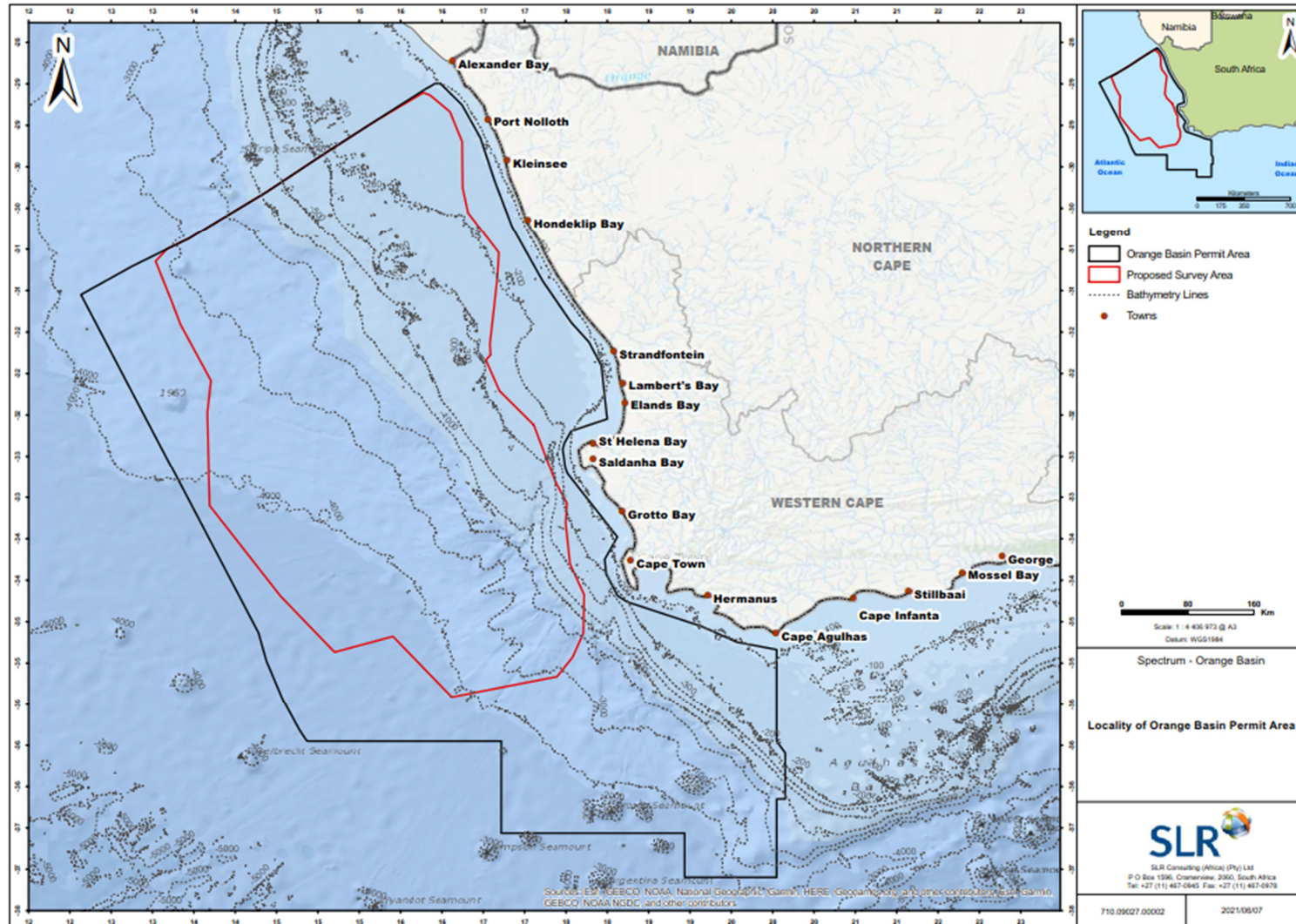


Figure 1-1: Location of the Reconnaissance Permit area and proposed survey area in the Orange Basin off the West Coast of South Africa.

## 1.2 STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This EMP consists of ten chapters and seven appendices as outlined below.

Section	Contents
Executive Summary	Provides an overview of the main findings of the EMP.
Chapter 1	<b>Introduction</b> Provides a brief description of the project background, summarises the legislative authorisation requirements, describes the structure of the report and outlines the opportunity for comment.
Chapter 2	<b>Administrative and Legal Framework</b> Outlines the key administrative authorities and legislative framework applicable to the proposed project and associated EMP process.
Chapter 3	<b>EMP Approach and Process</b> Presents the Project Team, assumptions, and outlines the approach to the EMP process.
Chapter 4	<b>Public Participation Process</b> Presents the public participation process tasks to be undertaken as part of the EMP process.
Chapter 5	<b>Need and Desirability</b> Summarises the national and policy framework relevant to the need and desirability for the proposed exploration activities.
Chapter 6	<b>Project Description</b> Provides general project information and presents a description of the proposed seismic survey activities.
Chapter 7	<b>Description of the Affected Environment</b> Describes the existing physical, biological and socio-economic environment that could potentially be affected by the proposed seismic survey.
Chapter 8	<b>Impact Assessment</b> Describes and assesses the potential impacts related to the proposed seismic survey on the affected environment. It also presents mitigation/management or optimisation measures that could be used to reduce the significance of any negative impacts or enhance any benefits, respectively.
Chapter 9	<b>Action Plan, Procedures and Environmental Specifications</b> Provides the detail of the action plan, procedures and environmental specifications developed for the implementing of the proposed project.
Chapter 10	<b>Conclusions and Recommendations</b> Provides conclusions to the EMP and summarises the mitigation and monitoring measures that would be implemented for the proposed project.
Chapter 11	<b>References</b> Provides a list of the references used in compiling this report.
Appendices	Appendix 1: EAP Undertaking Appendix 2: Curricula Vitae (including registrations) of the Project Team Appendix 3: Public Participation Process: Appendix 3.1: I&AP database Appendix 3.2: Advertisements Appendix 4: Sound Transmission Loss Modelling Study Appendix 5: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Impact Assessment Appendix 6: Commercial Fisheries Impact Assessment Appendix 7: Method of Assessing Impact Significance

### 1.3 OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT

This draft version of the EMP has been distributed for a 30-day review and comment period from **04 August to 06 September 2021** in order to provide I&APs with an opportunity to comment on any aspect of the proposed project and the findings of the EMP. Copies of the full report are available on the SLR website (<https://slrconsulting.com/public-documents/spectrum-west-coast>) and on a data free website (<https://slrpublicdocs.datafree.co/public-documents>). Due to current Covid-19 protocols being implemented at local libraries, full hard copies of reports could not practically be made available for review. Hard copies of this Executive Summary (English and Afrikaans) have, however, been made available for collection at the Saldanha Bay Library (Berg Street, Saldanha), Lamberts Bay Library (Church Street, Lamberts Bay) and at the AJ Bekeur Library in Port Nolloth (Robson Street). Any person who has trouble accessing the full report or Executive Summary is welcome to contact SLR for assistance.

Any comments should be sent to SLR at the address or e-mail address shown below. Comments may also be sent by sending a written message or voice message (including leaving your contact information) by WhatsApp or SMS to the mobile number provided below. For comments to be included in the final EMP, comments should reach SLR by **no later than 06 September 2021**.

**Please use "Spectrum" as reference when submitting comments or requests.**

**SLR Consulting (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd**

Attention: Eloise Costandius

PO Box 798, Rondebosch, 7701

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Newlands on Main Building, Newlands, 7700

Tel: (021) 461 1118    WhatsApp / SMS: 063 900 5536

Email: [ecostandius@slrconsulting.com](mailto:ecostandius@slrconsulting.com)