Appendix C7
Meeting Notes

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESSES FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES, AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Ummbila Emoyeni Wind Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2160
Ummbila Emoyeni Solar Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2161
Ummbila Emoyeni Electrical Grid Infrastructure – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2162

MEETING NOTES OF THE FOCUS GROUP MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 05 OCTOBER 2022 AT 10H00 VENUE: OPPI PLAAS PADSTAL, MORGENZON & MICROSOFT TEAMS

Notes for the Record prepared by:
Nicolene Venter
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: 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

UMMBILA EMOYENI CLUSTER OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTRUE LOCATED BETWEEN BETHAL AND MORGENZON, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Position
In-Person	
Roelf Badenhorst	Landowner
Frik Meiring	Landowner
Johan Swart	Landowner
Gerhard van der Merwe	Landowner
Savannah Environmental	
Jo-Anne Thomas	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation & Social Consultant
Virtual: MS Teams	
Windlab Developments	
Ben Brimble	Project Manager
Belinda Mills	Project Manager
Braam Botha	Project Manager
Savannah Environmental	
Nkhensani Masondo	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Chantelle Geyer	Jnr Environmental Assessment Practitioner

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Nicolene Venter welcomed the attendees at the Focus Group Meeting (FGM) for the Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities. After introducing herself, she requested the project team to introduce themselves to the attendees.

Permission by the attendees was granted to present the project information in English, and where required Nicolene Venter will translate into Afrikaans. The attendees were informed that they can ask their questions / submit their comments in Afrikaans and if required, it will be translated into English for the project team to respond accordingly.

She presented the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

Gerhard Venter
Carin Booysen
Freddie Mahangu
Willie Nel
Gert Fourie
Pieter van Wyk
Jacobus Pieterse
Christiaan van Staden
Jarren Hurwitz

A copy of the electronic Attendance Record is attached as **Appendix A** to the FGM notes.

BACKGROUND AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Jo-Anne Thomas presented the following:

- Project description for the proposed Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities and Electrical Grid Infrastructure.
- Overview of the Scoping, EIA and public participation processes followed to date.
- A summary of the key environmental findings as documented in the Environmental Impact Assessment Reports
- The conclusions and recommendations of the EIA process.

Information regarding the following was presented:

- Locality of the various projects.
- Components of the projects.
- Potential environmental impacts.
- Wind turbine locations, Solar PV site and grid connection corridors.
- An overview of the environmental sensitivities – including sensitivity mapping.
- Conclusion and Recommendations.

Jo-Anne Thomas informed the attendees that the Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EMPrs) for the Solar Energy Facility and the Electrical Grid Infrastructure will be made available for 30-day review and comment as from 14 October 2022 to 14 November 2022 and the attendees will receive the formal notification thereof. The review period for the Wind Energy Facility EIA Report would conclude on 10 October 2022.

Nicolene Venter concluded the presentation by presenting the Way Forward.

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

DISCUSSION SESSION

It was agreed that the following information will be e-mailed to the attendees:

- Copy of the presentation
- Combined KMZ file – including the various access roads
- Layout Maps
- Sensitivity Maps

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
Johan Swart	Raised the concern regarding safety and security associated with the projects. There should be some form of access control.	Jo-Anne Thomas replied that the project site would have controlled access during the construction phase and that a communication strategy will be drafted between the landowners and the developer. It is important that the attendees read the EMPr which contains the conditions that the developer needs to adhere to. The EMPr also includes a grievance mechanism which must be implemented.
	Requested that maps presented in the presentation be provided to them as the information it contains is important to the landowners.	Jo-Anne thomas responded that it would not be a problem making the maps available. However, it must be clearly understood that the layouts still need to be finalised as there might be some changes, depending on the consultation with the landowners and environmental conditions in the Authorisation and other permits. Nicolene Venter confirmed that the maps will be e-mailed to the attendees.
	It was asked whether this project is phase 1 of a series of developments as other properties have been earmarked for renewable developments.	Braam Botha confirmed that he is in the process of securing additional properties towards the Davel area for another project that he is involved with. Ben Brimble responded that due to the size of the projects, they would be constructed in phases but that the gaps between the phases would be insignificant. The phasing may however feel like a long construction period.
Frik Meiring	Requested timelines associated with the project, i.e. when will construction start.	Nicolene Venter proposed that the envisaged timelines be provided in the meeting notes, to which all present agree. **Post-meeting note**: The envisaged timelines are:

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
		• EA process: 18 months. Expecting the EA in the first quarter of 2022 22 • Landowner agreements: • Legal process: • Rezoning Application: • WUL: • Construction Tender: Envisaged construction to start in the first quarter of 2023. The above-mentioned are envisaged dates as there are a number of factors outside of the developer's control which potentially could push out the above envisaged timeframes.
	It was requested that a copy of the afternoon's meeting notes be distributed to the attendees at this meeting as well.	Nicolene Venter acknowledged the request and confirmed that a copy will be shared with the attendees. For clarification purposes, Ben Brmble confirmed that the same presentation will be presented at the afternoon's meeting.
	It was requested as to who would be the contact person to submit comments to.	Nicolene Venter responded that comments and queries on the EIA process can be submitted to her and provided her contact details to the attendees.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

The presentation was e-mailed to all attendees during the technical presentation.

Nicolene Venter informed the attendees that it is also important that the information shared at the meeting be shared with any other interested or affected party that believe should be informed regarding the proposed project. She reminded all present that the review period for the EIAr for the wind energy facility is ending on Monday, 10 October 2022 and that the report is available for download from Savannah Environmental's website, and that once the report has been updated with written comments received during the 30-day review and comment period, the final EIAr will be submitted to the DFFE for decision-making.

Jo-Anne Thomas thanked the attendees for their time and comments submitted.

Ben Brimble thanked the landowners for making time attending to attend the meeting and their participating, as this is one step in a long journey forward. He indicated that although Savannah Environmental is the first point of contact, that the landowners are welcome to contact him or any of his team members should they so require.

The meeting ended at 11h15.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EA	Environmental Auhthorisation	EMPr	Environmental Management Programme

APPENDIX A

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' FOCUS GROUP FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	**10h00**	**14h00**
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Johan Duant

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' FOCUS GROUP FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	**10h00**	**14h00**
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Roelf Badenhorst

MOBILE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	10h00	14h00
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: [illegible] v d Merwe

MOBILE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

savannah environmental

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MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	10h00	14h00
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: FRIK MEIRING

MOBILE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

APPENDIX B

PRESENTATION

UMMBILA EMOYENI WIND ENERGY FACILITY, SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY (PV) AND ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

October 2022

1

AGENDA

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

2

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

3

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

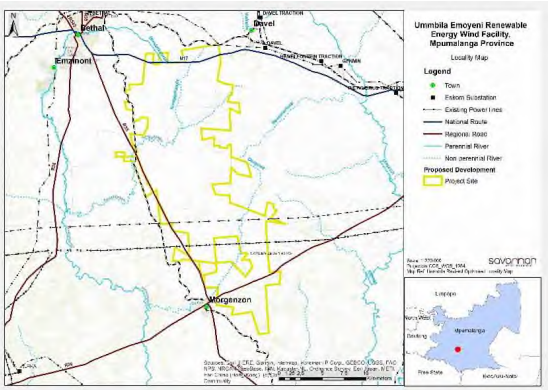
- Provide stakeholders & I&APs with an overview of the **Ummbila Emoyeni Renewable Energy Farm (separate projects)**
- Summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation** being undertaken
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings of the **EIA process**
- 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

4

PROJECT OVERVIEW
(Jo-Anne Thomas)

5

LOCATION



- Cluster of renewable energy facilities, which include a 666MW Wind Energy Facility, 150MW Solar Energy Facility and a grid connection solution consisting of a 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS) and two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line.
- Located ~6km southeast of the town of Bethal in the Mpumalanga Province. The project site is located across the Govan Mbeki, Lekwa, and Msukaligwa Local Municipalities within the Gert Sibande District Municipality.

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COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECTS

Solar Energy Facility	Wind Energy Facility	Electrical Grid Infrastructure
• PV modules in the range of 330Wp to 450Wp mounted on either a fixed tilt or single axis tracker structure, dependent on optimisation, technology available and cost. • Inverters and transformers. • 33kV cabling to connect to the onsite collector substation, to be laid underground where practical. • 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation. • 132kV overhead power line from the onsite collector substation to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between project components. • Laydown and O&M hub (approximately 300m x 300m): o Construction compound (temporary). o Maintenance office. • Access roads (up to 12m wide) and internal distribution roads (up to 12m wide).	• Up to 111 wind turbines with a maximum hub height of up to 200m. The tip height of the turbines will be up to 300m. • 33kV cabling to connect the wind turbines to the onsite collector substations, to be laid underground where practical. • 3 x 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation, each being 5ha. • 3 x 132kV overhead power lines from the onsite collector substations to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between turbines, to be laid underground where practical. • Construction compounds including site office (approximately 300m x 300m in total but split into 3ha each of 150m x 200m): o Batching plant of up to 4ha to 7ha. o 3 x O&M office of approximately 1.5ha each adjacent to each collector SS. o 3 x construction compound / laydown area, including site office of 3ha each (150m x 200m each). • Laydown and crane hardstand areas (approximately 75m x 120m). • Access roads of 12-13m wide, with 12m at turning circles.	• A new 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS), to be located on the Camden SOL Lines. • Two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line. • On-site switching stations (132kV in capacity) at each renewable energy facility. • 132kV power lines from the switching stations to a new MTS. • Access roads up to 8m wide to the substation.

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SCOPING & EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

8

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Terrestrial ecology	• Loss of vegetation and listed or protected plant and animal species • Impact on fauna • Soil erosion • Alien plant invasion
Aquatic ecology	• Loss of freshwater features • Increase in sedimentation • Impact on water quality • Impacts on aquatic systems as a result of increased runoff from hard surfaces
Avifauna	• Habitat destruction • Disturbance and displacement • Direct mortality during construction and operation as a result of collision with infrastructure • Electrocution
Bats	• Modification of bat foraging/commuting habitat • Destruction of/Disturbance to bat roosts • Bat mortality • Disturbance to bats

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POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Soils and agricultural potential	• Loss of land capability
Heritage resources (archaeology, palaeontology & cultural landscape)	• Destruction of archaeological heritage • Destruction of palaeontological heritage • Negative impact to significant cultural landscapes
Noise	• Noise impacts during construction • Noise impacts during operation (wind farm)
Visual	• Change in the character and sense of place of the landscape setting • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from the local roads • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from local agricultural homesteads • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from private nature reserves • Shadow Flicker impacts (wind farm) • Lighting impacts

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POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Socio-economic	• Impact on production and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) • Employment creation and skills development • Household income and standard living • Increase in government revenue. • Safety and security • Agricultural operations • Influx of people • Daily movement patterns • Visual and sense of place impacts • Impacts on agricultural operations
Traffic	• Construction traffic • Operation traffic (minimal)
Cumulative impacts	• Impacts that have the potential to be compounded through the development of the projects in proximity to other similar developments • All impacts assessed to consider whether the project will result in unacceptable cumulative impacts

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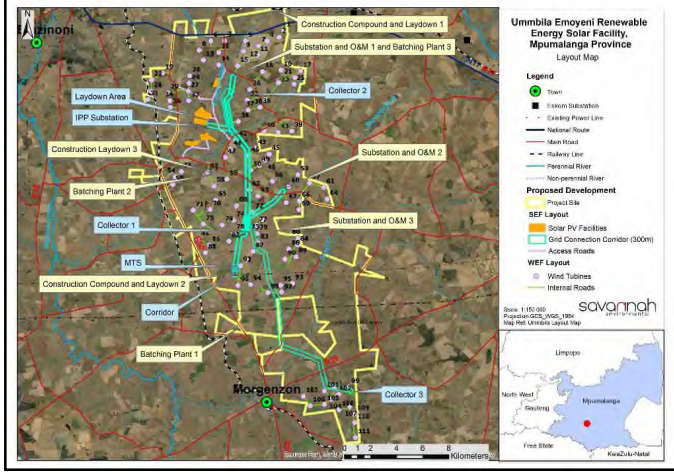

LAYOUT

12

OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Terrestrial ecology	• Freshwater resources – very high sensitivity (no-go) • Primary grassland (CBA: Irreplaceable) – very high sensitivity (no-go) • Primary grassland (CBA: Optimal) – high sensitivity • Secondary grassland – medium to high sensitivity • Primary grassland – medium sensitivity • Cultivated areas – Low sensitivity • Infrastructure – very low sensitivity

Aquatic ecology	• All small, endorheic seepages and depressions with a High Ecological Importance: 50m buffers from the outer edge of the freshwater resource features.
	• All larger interconnected wetland features with Very Ecological Importance: 100m buffers from the outer edge of the freshwater resource features.
	• All freshwater features with their buffer areas have been classified as either Very High- or High sensitive and should be regarded as "No-Go" areas apart from the following activities and infrastructure which may be allowed (although restricted to an absolute minimum footprint):
	  • only activities relating to the route access and cabling;
	  • the use/upgrade of existing roads and watercourse crossings are the preferred options;
	• Where no suitable existing roads and watercourse crossings exist, the construction of new access roads and watercourse crossings can be allowed, however this should be deemed as a last resort.
	• All underground cabling should be laid either within access roads or next to access roads (as close as possible).

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Avifauna	• Areas of natural or near-natural habitat • Wetlands and rivers/drainage lines • Flight paths of sensitive species that represented an elevated risk or preferred movement corridors • High sensitivity areas are no-go for the development of wind turbines and blade tips are not to encroach on these areas. Linear infrastructure (including roads) can traverse these areas where necessary following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures. • Development in medium sensitivity areas should be avoided and reduced wherever practically possible.
Bats	• Bat roosting sites such as buildings associated with farmsteads within and bordering the project site and large trees • Farm dams, wetlands, rivers/streams and CBA irreplaceable areas (natural areas) • No part of the wind turbines, including the blade tips, shall intrude into the no-go buffers • 200m buffer around sensitive features for placement of power line pylons
Agriculture	• Area predominantly "Moderately Low" to "Moderate" sensitivities • Some small areas of "Moderately High" sensitivity • Crop field boundaries - "High" sensitivities with one area being classified as "Very High" sensitivity

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers

Heritage	• Area proposed for development has medium to high local historic significance
	• No significant archaeological heritage resources were identified during the field assessment
	• Six burial grounds or graves close to or within the proposed development footprint - 50m no-go development buffer
	• Very high, very low, and moderate palaeontological sensitivity
	• Sensitive cultural landscape elements:
	  • Turbines should be located on only one side of the N17
	  • 500m no development buffer on either side of the N17, R35 and R39.
	  • 200m no development buffer on either side of the secondary routes that run through the development area.
	  • 500m no development buffer around the identified farm werfs.

Noise (wind)	• Potential noise-sensitive developments, receptors and communities in the development area • Turbines located within 1 000m from NSRs should be moved further than 1 000m

Visual	• Highly sensitive areas include:
	  • Areas immediately surrounding settlement and homesteads - 1000m buffer
	  • Corridors beside the main roads including the N17, the R35, and the R39 - 500m corridor should be sufficient to ensure that development does not totally dominate views.

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Socio-economic	• No identified areas of sensitivity • Positive and negative impacts anticipated during construction and operation • The net positive impacts associated with the development and operation of the proposed project are expected to outweigh the net negative effects.
Traffic	• No identified areas of sensitivity • The proposed site is bounded by the N17 in the south, the R39 in the south and east and the R35 in the west. Access to the proposed site can be obtained from any of these three roads, depending on the traffic volumes of each road • The road carrying the least traffic will be considered as the best option • Impacts expected mainly during construction phase

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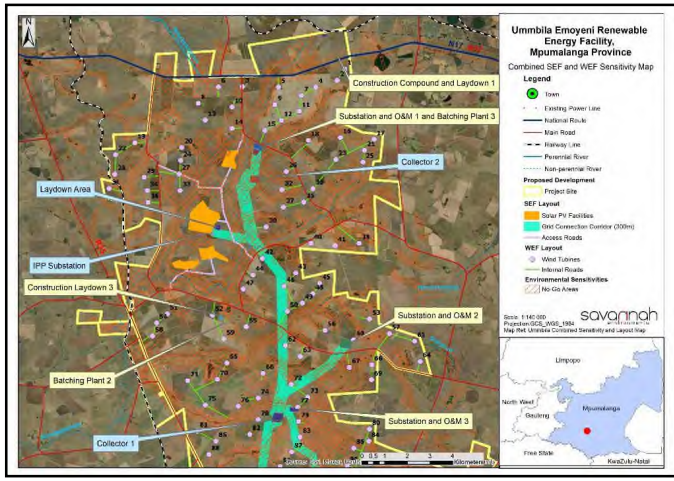
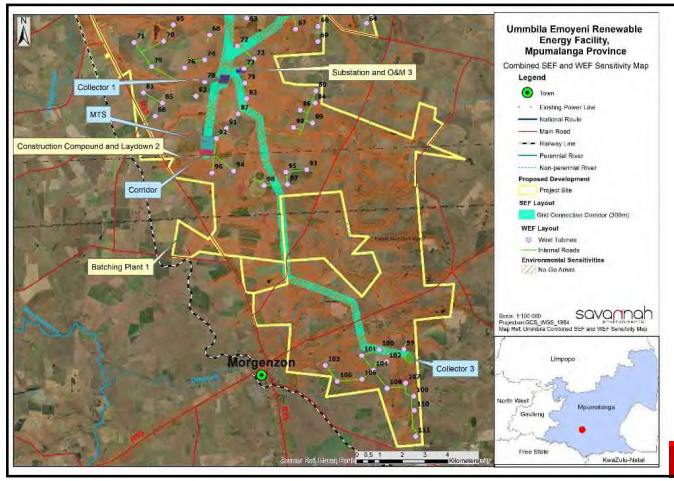


SENSITIVITY MAP

Northern section

17



SENSITIVITY MAP

Southern section

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Projects are well aligned with the national, provincial and local policy framework
- From a biodiversity perspective, location of infrastructure considered acceptable
- Optimised layout proposed ensures that all aquatic, avifauna and bat sensitivities identified are avoided and recommended buffer areas are honoured
- Where impacts could not be avoided, appropriate mitigation has been proposed to minimise impacts

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- No identified fatal flaws associated with the implementation of the projects within the project site subject to implementation of the recommended mitigation measures
- Benefits of the projects are expected to occur at a national, regional and local level
- Costs to the environment at a site-specific level have been largely limited through the layout optimisation
- Based on the conclusions of the specialist studies, it is concluded that the development of the projects will not result in unacceptable environmental impacts (subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures)

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WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE
(Nicolene Venter)

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WAY FORWARD

- EIA Report review period: **08 September 2022 – 10 October 2022** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final EIA Report to be submitted to DFFE – October 2022
- Decision expected end-2022
- Registered parties will be notified of decision once issued
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the projects

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WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
Nicolene Venter
Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com
PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157
Tel: 011 656 3237
Mobile: 060 978 8396 *(including "please call me")*
Fax: 086 684 0547
www.savannahSA.com

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESSES FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES, AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

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MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Position
In-Person	
Almero du Pisanie	Landowner
Louis du Pisanie	Landowner
Hannes Human	Landowner
Eddie Toerien	Representative Landowner
Blackie Zwart	Landowner
Savannah Environmental	
Jo-Anne Thomas	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation & Social Consultant
Virtual: MS Teams	
Windlab Developments	
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Louis du Pisanie	Is the project team aware of the Sereti Mining Right Application on the Farm Goedgedag and whether this project could prevent the application going forward.	Ben Brimble replied that they are aware of the application and that Windlab is in consultation with Sereti as the wind farm and mining cannot co-exist on the same property. He indicated that it would be preferable if Sereti keep their mining right because should they let the mining right lapse, someone else will take the opportunity to buy it.
	Would the EIA for the wind farm override the EIA for the mining right application?	Ben Brimble replied that the Remhoogte EIA for the mining right is being submitted to the DMRE and the wind farm EIA is being submitted to the DFFE. Therefore, two EIAs are being undertaken on one piece of land, and both EIAs will continue.
Eddie Toerien	Asked who would ensure that the recommendations in the EMPr are adhered to, and should these not be adhered to, who can the transgression be reported to.	Jo-Anne Thomas replied that the EMPr contains all the mitigations and recommendations as recommended by the various specialists within the EIA process. The EA will also have a set of conditions that the applicant needs to comply with. In terms of monitoring to ensure that the conditions set out in the documents are enforced, the DFFE requires that an ECO, an independent party, be appointed to monitor compliance and submit monthly reports to the Department which are reviewed. There is also a Compliance Directorate within the Department, referred to as the green scorpions, who also do inspections of construction sites of projects. In terms of enforcing the compliance, should an issue on site occur, the Department can issue a non-compliance with a pre-directive giving the transgressor a certain period to correct the transgression. If not corrected, they can be issued with a non-compliance and the

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
		construction can be stopped, be forced to do rehabilitation, or they can be issued with a fine which could be in the excess of R10m. It needs to be noted that the Department are very strict on construction of renewable energy projects. The EMPr also includes a grievance mechanism whereby the landowners, noticing a non-compliance, can report the matter to the ECO or Community Liaison Officer, who will investigate the grievance and feedback on the how the grievance has been dealt with.
	Were any no-go areas been identified in terms of agricultural activities.	Jo-Anne Thomas responded that there were no "no-go" areas identified. However, where crops might be affected, it is recommended that negotiations be undertaken with the landowner. As mentioned during the presentation, there will still be negotiations with the landowner to determine the final turbine layout.
Blackie Zwart	Would rehabilitation of the property be undertaken, who would be responsible for the rehabilitation and how long would the contractor be responsible for the rehabilitation of the land, before it becomes the owner's responsibility. The question is raised due to the track record of mining houses in terms of rehabilitation.	Jo-Anne Thomas responded that the rehabilitation of disturbed areas is included in the EMPr. Rehabilitation is an ongoing process throughout the construction phase. The EMPr also includes that rehabilitation needs to be monitored not only during construction, but also during the operational phase of the facility. Belinda Mills responded that the contractor will be responsible for rehabilitation during the construction phase of the project. Should the contractor not comply with the conditions set out in the EMPr, Windlab and the contractor will receive a fine. Full rehabilitation of the site is required at the end of the construction phase.

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
		The responsibility for rehabilitation, after the construction sign-off, would be the responsibility of the IPP. Ben Brimble informed the attendees that after two (2) years of operation the IPP would do an inspection of the site. There is a post-construction warranty in place to ensure rehabilitation takes place during the operation phase of the project. Belinda Mills added that the site would be constantly maintained which includes the roads, etc as the developer and contractors also would be utilising the road to and from the sites. Funds have been made available for rehabilitation throughout the operation phase of the facility.
	Would the electrical infrastructure connecting the various wind turbines be underground.	Ben Brimble replied that the electrical cable connecting the wind turbines, and from there to the on-site substation would be underground as far as possible.
Almero du Pisane	On which properties are the solar PV project planned.	Belinda Mills responded that looking at the project in totality, 30 landowners would be affected. Only five (5) landowners would be affected by the solar PV project. Discussions and negotiations would take place with those landowners where the solar PV project is being proposed during the final design phase to ensure appropriate placement of infrastructure.
	Were there any negative impacts associated with the project identified.	Jo-Anne Thomas responded that there were negative impacts identified by the various specialist and recommendations have been made where the infrastructure must avoid areas, or mitigation measures proposed to minimise the impact.
Hannes Human	Asked for confirmation whether all the electrical infrastructure connections between the wind turbines would be underground.	Ben Brimble confirmed that were possible all 33kV cables from the wind turbines to the substation would be underground, except in

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
		instances where a water crossing is required.
	Requested timelines associated with the project i.e. when will construction start.	Nicolene Venter propose that the envisaged timelines be provided in the meeting notes, to which all present agreed. **Post-meeting note**: The envisaged timelines are: • EA process: 18 months. Expecting the EA the first quarter of 2023. • Landowner agreements: • Legal process: • Rezoning Application: • WUL: • Construction Tender: Envisaged construction to stat at the end of the first quarter of 2023. The above-mentioned are envisaged dates as there are a number of factors outside of the developer's control which potentially could push out the above envisaged dates.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

The presentation was e-mailed to all attendees during the technical presentation.

Nicolene Venter informed the attendees that it is also important that the information shared at the meeting be shared with any other interested or affected party that believe should be informed regarding the proposed project. She reminded all present that the review period for the EIAr for the wind energy facility is ending on Monday, 10 October 2022 and that the report is available for download from Savannah Environmental's website, and that once the report has been updated with written comments received during the 30-day review and comment period, the final EIAr will be submitted to the DFFE for decision-making.

Jo-Anne Thomas thanked the attendees for their time and comments submitted.

Ben Brimble thanked the landowners for making time attending to attend the meeting and their participating, as this is one step in a long journey forward. He indicated that although Savannah Environmental is the first point of contact, that the landowners are welcome to contact him or any of his team members should they so require.

The meeting ended at 15h15.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DFFE	Department of Fishery, Forestry and the Environment	EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
DMRE	Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	EMPr	Environmental Management Programme
EA	Environmental Authorisation	IPP	Independent Power Producer
ECO	Environmental Control Officer		

APPENDIX A

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' FOCUS GROUP FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	**10h00**	**14h00**
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: J. H. ZWARTS (BLACKIE)

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' FOCUS GROUP FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	**10h00**	**14h00**
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: EDDIE TOERIEN

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	**10h00**	**14h00**
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Hannes Human

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' FOCUS GROUP FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	**10h00**	**14h00**
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Louis du Preezie

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE: L du Preezie

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

savannah environmental

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDED (Please circle time applicable)		
Wednesday, 05 October 2022	10h00	14h00
Oppi Plaas Padstal, Morgenzon		

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Almero du Rsanie

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

APPENDIX B

PRESENTATION

UMMBILA EMOYENI WIND ENERGY FACILITY, SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY (PV) AND ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

October 2022

1

AGENDA

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

2

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

3

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

- Provide stakeholders & I&APs with an overview of the **Ummbila Emoyeni Renewable Energy Farm (separate projects)**
- Summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation** being undertaken
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings of the **EIA process**
- 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

4

PROJECT OVERVIEW
(Jo-Anne Thomas)

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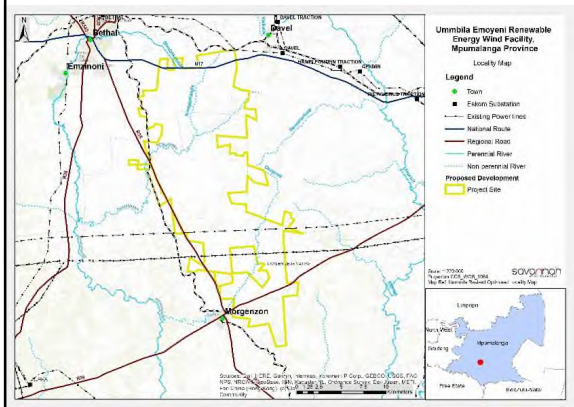
LOCATION



- Cluster of renewable energy facilities, which include a 666MW Wind Energy Facility, 150MW Solar Energy Facility and a grid connection solution consisting of a 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS) and two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line.
- Located ~6km southeast of the town of Bethal in the Mpumalanga Province. The project site is located across the Govan Mbeki, Lekwa, and Msukaligwa Local Municipalities within the Gert Sibande District Municipality.

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COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECTS

Solar Energy Facility	Wind Energy Facility	Electrical Grid Infrastructure
• PV modules in the range of 330Wp to 450Wp mounted on either a fixed tilt or single axis tracker structure, dependent on optimisation, technology available and cost. • Inverters and transformers. • 33kV cabling to connect to the onsite collector substation, to be laid underground where practical. • 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation. • 132kV overhead power line from the onsite collector substation to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between project components. • Laydown and O&M hub (approximately 300m x 300m): o Construction compound (temporary). o Maintenance office. • Access roads (up to 12m wide) and internal distribution roads (up to 12m wide).	• Up to 111 wind turbines with a maximum hub height of up to 200m. The tip height of the turbines will be up to 300m. • 33kV cabling to connect the wind turbines to the onsite collector substations, to be laid underground where practical. • 3 x 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation, each being 5ha. • 3 x 132kV overhead power lines from the onsite collector substations to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between turbines, to be laid underground where practical. • Construction compounds including site office (approximately 300m x 300m in total but split into 3ha each of 150m x 200m): o Batching plant of up to 4ha to 7ha. o 3 x O&M office of approximately 1.5ha each adjacent to each collector SS. o 3 x construction compound / laydown area, including site office of 3ha each (150m x 200m each). • Laydown and crane hardstand areas (approximately 75m x 120m). • Access roads of 12 -13m wide, with 12m at turning circles.	• A new 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS), to be located on the Camden SOL Lines. • Two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line. • On-site switching stations (132kV in capacity) at each renewable energy facility. • 132kV power lines from the switching stations to a new MTS. • Access roads up to 8m wide to the substation.

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SCOPING & EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

8

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Terrestrial ecology	• Loss of vegetation and listed or protected plant and animal species • Impact on fauna • Soil erosion • Alien plant invasion
Aquatic ecology	• Loss of freshwater features • Increase in sedimentation • Impact on water quality • Impacts on aquatic systems as a result of increased runoff from hard surfaces
Avifauna	• Habitat destruction • Disturbance and displacement • Direct mortality during construction and operation as a result of collision with infrastructure • Electrocution
Bats	• Modification of bat foraging/commuting habitat • Destruction of/Disturbance to bat roosts • Bat mortality • Disturbance to bats

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POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Soils and agricultural potential	• Loss of land capability
Heritage resources (archaeology, palaeontology & cultural landscape)	• Destruction of archaeological heritage • Destruction of palaeontological heritage • Negative impact to significant cultural landscapes
Noise	• Noise impacts during construction • Noise impacts during operation (wind farm)
Visual	• Change in the character and sense of place of the landscape setting • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from the local roads • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from local agricultural homesteads • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from private nature reserves • Shadow Flicker impacts (wind farm) • Lighting impacts

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POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Socio-economic	• Impact on production and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) • Employment creation and skills development • Household income and standard living • Increase in government revenue. • Safety and security • Agricultural operations • Influx of people • Daily movement patterns • Visual and sense of place impacts • Impacts on agricultural operations
Traffic	• Construction traffic • Operation traffic (minimal)
Cumulative impacts	• Impacts that have the potential to be compounded through the development of the projects in proximity to other similar developments • All impacts assessed to consider whether the project will result in unacceptable cumulative impacts

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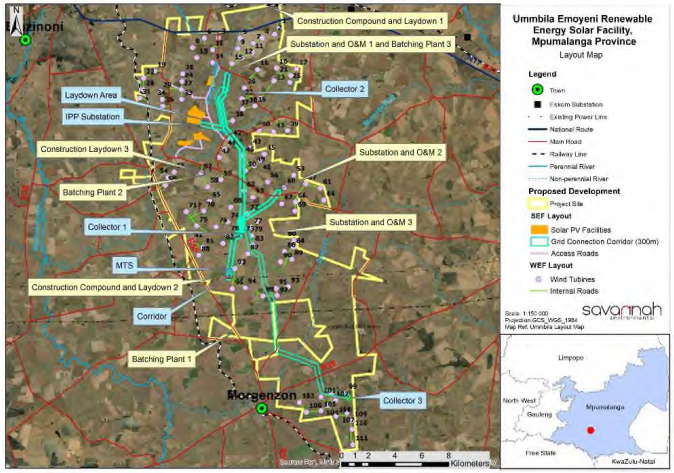

LAYOUT

12

OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Terrestrial ecology	• Freshwater resources – very high sensitivity (no-go) • Primary grassland (CBA: Irreplaceable) – very high sensitivity (no-go) • Primary grassland (CBA: Optimal) – high sensitivity • Secondary grassland – medium to high sensitivity • Primary grassland – medium sensitivity • Cultivated areas – Low sensitivity • Infrastructure – very low sensitivity

Aquatic ecology	• All small, endorheic seepages and depressions with a High Ecological Importance: 50m buffers from the outer edge of the freshwater resource features.
	• All larger interconnected wetland features with Very Ecological Importance: 100m buffers from the outer edge of the freshwater resource features.
	• All freshwater features with their buffer areas have been classified as either Very High- or High sensitive and should be regarded as "No-Go" areas apart from the following activities and infrastructure which may be allowed (although restricted to an absolute minimum footprint):
	  • only activities relating to the route access and cabling;
	  • the use/upgrade of existing roads and watercourse crossings are the preferred options;
	• Where no suitable existing roads and watercourse crossings exist, the construction of new access roads and watercourse crossings can be allowed, however this should be deemed as a last resort.
	• All underground cabling should be laid either within access roads or next to access roads (as close as possible).

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Avifauna	• Areas of natural or near-natural habitat • Wetlands and rivers/drainage lines • Flight paths of sensitive species that represented an elevated risk or preferred movement corridors • High sensitivity areas are no-go for the development of wind turbines and blade tips are not to encroach on these areas. Linear infrastructure (including roads) can traverse these areas where necessary following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures. • Development in medium sensitivity areas should be avoided and reduced wherever practically possible.
Bats	• Bat roosting sites such as buildings associated with farmsteads within and bordering the project site and large trees • Farm dams, wetlands, rivers/streams and CBA irreplaceable areas (natural areas) • No part of the wind turbines, including the blade tips, shall intrude into the no-go buffers • 200m buffer around sensitive features for placement of power line pylons
Agriculture	• Area predominantly "Moderately Low" to "Moderate" sensitivities • Some small areas of "Moderately High" sensitivity • Crop field boundaries - "High" sensitivities with one area being classified as "Very High" sensitivity

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers

Heritage	• Area proposed for development has medium to high local historic significance
	• No significant archaeological heritage resources were identified during the field assessment
	• Six burial grounds or graves close to or within the proposed development footprint - 50m no-go development buffer
	• Very high, very low, and moderate palaeontological sensitivity
	• Sensitive cultural landscape elements:
	  • Turbines should be located on only one side of the N17
	  • 500m no development buffer on either side of the N17, R35 and R39.
	  • 200m no development buffer on either side of the secondary routes that run through the development area.
	  • 500m no development buffer around the identified farm werfs.

Noise (wind)	• Potential noise-sensitive developments, receptors and communities in the development area • Turbines located within 1 000m from NSRs should be moved further than 1 000m

Visual	• Highly sensitive areas include:
	  • Areas immediately surrounding settlement and homesteads - 1000m buffer
	  • Corridors beside the main roads including the N17, the R35, and the R39 - 500m corridor should be sufficient to ensure that development does not totally dominate views.

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Socio-economic	• No identified areas of sensitivity • Positive and negative impacts anticipated during construction and operation • The net positive impacts associated with the development and operation of the proposed project are expected to outweigh the net negative effects.
Traffic	• No identified areas of sensitivity • The proposed site is bounded by the N17 in the south, the R39 in the south and east and the R35 in the west. Access to the proposed site can be obtained from any of these three roads, depending on the traffic volumes of each road • The road carrying the least traffic will be considered as the best option • Impacts expected mainly during construction phase

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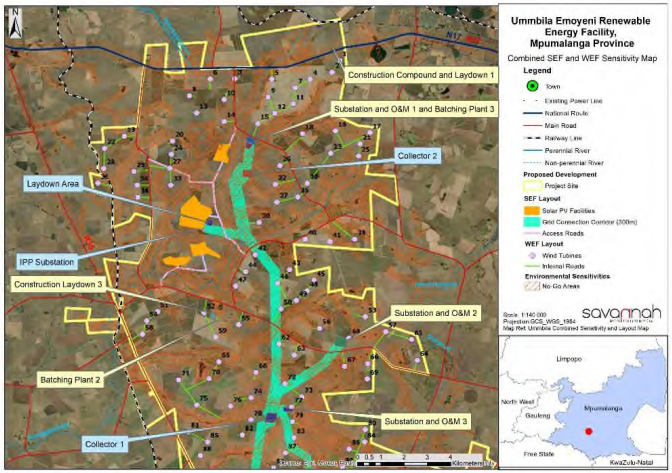

SENSITIVITY MAP

Northern section

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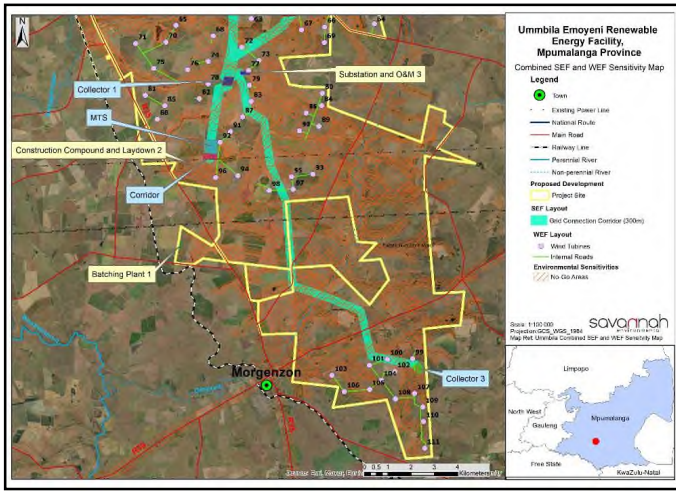

SENSITIVITY MAP

Southern section

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Projects are well aligned with the national, provincial and local policy framework
- From a biodiversity perspective, location of infrastructure considered acceptable
- Optimised layout proposed ensures that all aquatic, avifauna and bat sensitivities identified are avoided and recommended buffer areas are honoured
- Where impacts could not be avoided, appropriate mitigation has been proposed to minimise impacts

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- No identified fatal flaws associated with the implementation of the projects within the project site subject to implementation of the recommended mitigation measures
- Benefits of the projects are expected to occur at a national, regional and local level
- Costs to the environment at a site-specific level have been largely limited through the layout optimisation
- Based on the conclusions of the specialist studies, it is concluded that the development of the projects will not result in unacceptable environmental impacts (subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures)

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WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE
(Nicolene Venter)

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WAY FORWARD

- EIA Report review period: **08 September 2022 – 10 October 2022** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final EIA Report to be submitted to DFFE – October 2022
- Decision expected end-2022
- Registered parties will be notified of decision once issued
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the projects

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WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
Nicolene Venter
Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com
PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157
Tel: 011 656 3237
Mobile: 060 978 8396 *(including "please call me")*
Fax: 086 684 0547
www.savannahSA.com

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESSES FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES, AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Ummbila Emoyeni Wind Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2160
Ummbila Emoyeni Solar Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2161
Ummbila Emoyeni Electrical Grid Infrastructure – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2162

KEY STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES
HELD ON FRIDAY, 07 OCTOBER 2022 AT 10H00
VENUE: MS TEAMS

Notes for the Record prepared by:
Nicolene Venter
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: 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

UMMBILA EMOYENI CLUSTER OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTRUE LOCATED BETWEEN BETHAL AND MORGENZON, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING ATTENDEES

Name	Position
Gert Sibande District Municipality	
Tebogo Mogakabe	Environmental Manager
Amanda Mbasane	Administrator: Research & Administration Support Services
Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd	
Faans van Zyl	Distribution Network Planning: Mpumalanga
Riaan Smit	Centre of Excellence
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	
Cyprian Mabuza	Representing Emalahleni and Local Government Support
Portia Makitla	Directorate: Biodiversity and Conservation
Transnet Properties	
Cynthia Ranjapedi	
Windlab Developments	
Ben Brimble	Project Manager
Belinda Mills	Project Manager
Braam Botha	Project Manager
Savannah Environmental	
Jo-Anne Thomas	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nkhensani Masondo	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation and Social Consultant
Chantelle Geyer	Jnr Environmental Assessment Practitioner

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Nicolene Venter welcomed the Stakeholder at the Key Stakeholder Workshop (KSW) for the Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities. She requested the project team to introduce themselves to the attendees and thereafter the attendees introduced themselves and the Department / Organisation they represent.

She presented the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

John Geering: Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd
TH Ludere: Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd
Serame Mothlake: Sentech

A copy of the electronic Attendance Record is attached as **Appendix A** to the FGM notes.

BACKGROUND AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Jo-Anne Thomas presented the following:

- Project description for the proposed Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities and Electrical Grid Infrastructure.
- Overview of the Scoping, EIA and public participation processes followed to date.
- A summary of the key environmental findings as documented in the Environmental Impact Assessment Reports
- The conclusions and recommendations of the EIA process.

Information regarding the following was presented:

- Locality of the various projects.
- Components of the projects.
- Potential environmental impacts.
- Wind turbine locations, Solar PV site and grid connection corridors.
- An overview of the environmental sensitivities – including sensitivity mapping.
- Conclusion and Recommendations.

Jo-Anne Thomas informed the attendees that the Environmental Impact Assessment Reports for the Solar Energy Facility and the Electrical Grid Infrastructure will be made available for 30-day review and comment as from 14 October 2022 to 14 November 2022 and the attendees will receive the formal notification thereof. The review period for the Wind Energy Facility EIA Report would conclude on 10 October 2022.

Nicolene Venter concluded the presentation by presenting the Way Forward.

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

DISCUSSION SESSION

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
Tebogo Mogakabe	Asked whether local knowledge was obtained in terms of the positioning of the wind turbines.	Ben Brimble responded that the environmental studies guided the placement of the wind turbines but confirmed that local knowledge (i.e. that of the landowners) had also been taken into consideration, including with regards to access roads, cultivated land, existing infrastructures, etc. Jo-Anne Thomas replied that the socio-economic specialist had also

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
		undertaken consultation with the landowners. The heritage specialist had consulted with SAHRA to obtain their inputs, especially around the cultural landscape and heritage homesteads in the area. Ben Brimble added that buffers around any sensitive areas have been placed to ensure that the infrastructures are constructed outside those buffers.
Portia Makitla	Would strategic water resource areas be affected.	Jo-Anne Thomas confirmed that the aquatic specialist had taken strategic water resource areas into consideration in their assessment. As presented, water resources have been avoided by the developer and buffer zones have been introduced around these areas. Due to the nature of the project, it is expected that there would be no impact on ground water. Ben Brimble replied that a water use license is applicable for the project and that this process is underway. It was added that water would mainly be used during the construction phase of the project and thereafter only for the cleaning of the solar panels.
	CBA irreplaceable, is no-go areas, does it mean that it has been excluded from development footprint?	Jo-Anne Thomas responded that all no-go areas as recommended by the specialists have been avoided. As presented, a large portion of the southern section of the study area was excluded from the development and that was largely due to the presence of irreplaceable CBA. These exclusions are not applicable for the proposed grid infrastructures where the specialists had indicated that these could cross those areas.
	It was asked whether the sensitivity map included in the Report that was	Jo-Anne Thomas replied that the sensitivity map included in the EIAr

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
	submitted for comment for the wind farm application, whether it also include the sensitivity areas for the PVs and grid connection Reports.	for the Wind Energy Facility only covers the wind energy footprint and not that of the solar PV and grid infrastructure.
	Has the report been submitted to the DFFE BC for comment.	Nicolene Venter confirmed that the Department did receive notification of the availability of the report. This notification was submitted to the e-mail address as communicated to the public participation practitioner on previous applications.
Faans van Zyl	With the placement of the wind turbines, have these been placed to minimize environmental impacts? The concern is post-construction and during the operation phase that certain conditions are imposed that makes the maintenance of the grid infrastructure costly and a burden to Eskom in the long run.	Ben Brimble replied that Windlab would be responsible for the construction of the grid infrastructure and therefore the EA would be issued to Windlab, placing the responsibility with Windlab. After the construction of the grid infrastructure, it would be handed over to Eskom, however the infrastructure would still be within the project boundary which will include overhead lines from each collector substation and from there to the MTS, resulting in Windlab being responsible for the maintenance of the infrastructure. Jo-Anne Thomas added that the EIA Report includes the Generic EMPr which has been approved by Eskom. Any additional inputs from Eskom on the site-specific mitigations would be welcomed.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Nicolene Venter reminded the stakeholder that the review period for the EIAr for the wind energy facility is ending on Monday, 10 October 2022 and that the report is available for download from Savannah Environmental's website, and that they will receive notification of the availability of the EIArs availability for the Solar Energy Facility and the Electrical Grid Infrastructure.

Jo-Anne Thomas thanked the stakeholders for their time and valuable comments submitted.

Ben Brimble thanked the stakeholders for making time available to attend the workshop and for their participation.

The meeting ended at 11h00.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EA	Environmental Authorisation	MTS	Main Transmission Substation
EIAr	Environmental Impact Assessment Report	PV	Photovoltaic
EMPr	Environmental Management Programme	SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
KSW	Key Stakeholder Workshop		

APPENDIX A

ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Meeting title	UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES, AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
Attended participants	12
Meeting duration	1h 31m 3s
PARTICIPANTS	
Gert Sibande District Municipality	
Tebogo Mogakabe	Environmental Manager
Amanda Mbasane	Administrator: Research & Administration Support Services
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	
Cynthia Ranjapedi	Representing Emalahleni and Local Government Support
Portia Makitla	Directorate: Biodiversity and Conservation
Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd	
Faans Van Zyl	Distribution Network Planning: Mpumalanga
Riaan Smit	Centre of Excellence
Transnet Properties	
Cyprian Mabuza	
Windlab Developments	
Ben Brimble	Project Manager
Belinda Mills	Project Manager
Braam Botha	Project Manager
Savannah Environmental	
Jo-Anne Thomas	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nkhensani Masondo	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter	Public Participation and Social Consultant
Chantelle Geyer	Jnr Environmental Assessment Practitioner

APPENDIX B

PRESENTATION

UMMBILA EMOYENI WIND ENERGY FACILITY, SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY (PV) AND ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

October 2022

1

AGENDA

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

2

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

3

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

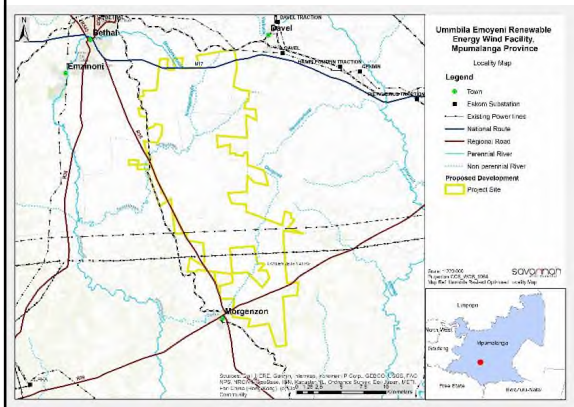
- Provide stakeholders & I&APs with an overview of the **Ummbila Emoyeni Renewable Energy Farm (separate projects)**
- Summary of the **Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) & Public Participation** being undertaken
- Present a summary of the key environmental findings of the **EIA process**
- 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

4

PROJECT OVERVIEW
(Jo-Anne Thomas)

5

LOCATION



- Cluster of renewable energy facilities, which include a 666MW Wind Energy Facility, 150MW Solar Energy Facility and a grid connection solution consisting of a 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS) and two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line.
- Located ~6km southeast of the town of Bethal in the Mpumalanga Province. The project site is located across the Govan Mbeki, Lekwa, and Msukaligwa Local Municipalities within the Gert Sibande District Municipality.

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COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECTS

Solar Energy Facility	Wind Energy Facility	Electrical Grid Infrastructure
• PV modules in the range of 330Wp to 450Wp mounted on either a fixed tilt or single axis tracker structure, dependent on optimisation, technology available and cost. • Inverters and transformers. • 33kV cabling to connect to the onsite collector substation, to be laid underground where practical. • 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation. • 132kV overhead power line from the onsite collector substation to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between project components. • Laydown and O&M hub (approximately 300m x 300m): o Construction compound (temporary). o Maintenance office. • Access roads (up to 12m wide) and internal distribution roads (up to 12m wide).	• Up to 111 wind turbines with a maximum hub height of up to 200m. The tip height of the turbines will be up to 300m. • 33kV cabling to connect the wind turbines to the onsite collector substations, to be laid underground where practical. • 3 x 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation, each being 5ha. • 3 x 132kV overhead power lines from the onsite collector substations to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between turbines, to be laid underground where practical. • Construction compounds including site office (approximately 300m x 300m in total but split into 3ha each of 150m x 200m): o Batching plant of up to 4ha to 7ha. o 3 x O&M office of approximately 1.5ha each adjacent to each collector SS. o 3 x construction compound / laydown area, including site office of 3ha each (150m x 200m each). • Laydown and crane hardstand areas (approximately 75m x 120m). • Access roads of 12 -13m wide, with 12m at turning circles.	• A new 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS), to be located on the Camden SOL Lines. • Two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line. • On-site switching stations (132kV in capacity) at each renewable energy facility. • 132kV power lines from the switching stations to a new MTS. • Access roads up to 8m wide to the substation.

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SCOPING & EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Terrestrial ecology	• Loss of vegetation and listed or protected plant and animal species • Impact on fauna • Soil erosion • Alien plant invasion
Aquatic ecology	• Loss of freshwater features • Increase in sedimentation • Impact on water quality • Impacts on aquatic systems as a result of increased runoff from hard surfaces
Avifauna	• Habitat destruction • Disturbance and displacement • Direct mortality during construction and operation as a result of collision with infrastructure • Electrocution
Bats	• Modification of bat foraging/commuting habitat • Destruction of/Disturbance to bat roosts • Bat mortality • Disturbance to bats

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POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Soils and agricultural potential	• Loss of land capability
Heritage resources (archaeology, palaeontology & cultural landscape)	• Destruction of archaeological heritage • Destruction of palaeontological heritage • Negative impact to significant cultural landscapes
Noise	• Noise impacts during construction • Noise impacts during operation (wind farm)
Visual	• Change in the character and sense of place of the landscape setting • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from the local roads • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from local agricultural homesteads • Change in the character of the landscape as seen from private nature reserves • Shadow Flicker impacts (wind farm) • Lighting impacts

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POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Aspect	Potential impacts
Socio-economic	• Impact on production and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) • Employment creation and skills development • Household income and standard living • Increase in government revenue. • Safety and security • Agricultural operations • Influx of people • Daily movement patterns • Visual and sense of place impacts • Impacts on agricultural operations
Traffic	• Construction traffic • Operation traffic (minimal)
Cumulative impacts	• Impacts that have the potential to be compounded through the development of the projects in proximity to other similar developments • All impacts assessed to consider whether the project will result in unacceptable cumulative impacts

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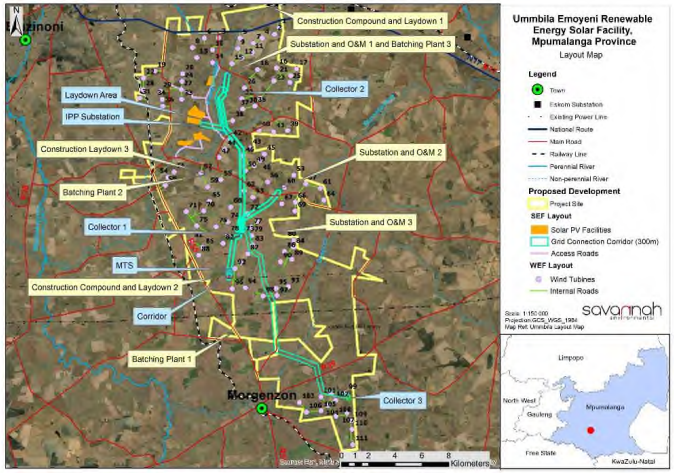

LAYOUT

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Terrestrial ecology	• Freshwater resources – very high sensitivity (no-go) • Primary grassland (CBA: Irreplaceable) – very high sensitivity (no-go) • Primary grassland (CBA: Optimal) – high sensitivity • Secondary grassland – medium to high sensitivity • Primary grassland – medium sensitivity • Cultivated areas – Low sensitivity • Infrastructure – very low sensitivity

Aquatic ecology	• All small, endorheic seepages and depressions with a High Ecological Importance: 50m buffers from the outer edge of the freshwater resource features.
	• All larger interconnected wetland features with Very Ecological Importance: 100m buffers from the outer edge of the freshwater resource features.
	• All freshwater features with their buffer areas have been classified as either Very High- or High sensitive and should be regarded as "No-Go" areas apart from the following activities and infrastructure which may be allowed (although restricted to an absolute minimum footprint):
	  • only activities relating to the route access and cabling;
	  • the use/upgrade of existing roads and watercourse crossings are the preferred options;
	• Where no suitable existing roads and watercourse crossings exist, the construction of new access roads and watercourse crossings can be allowed, however this should be deemed as a last resort.
	• All underground cabling should be laid either within access roads or next to access roads (as close as possible).

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Avifauna	• Areas of natural or near-natural habitat • Wetlands and rivers/drainage lines • Flight paths of sensitive species that represented an elevated risk or preferred movement corridors • High sensitivity areas are no-go for the development of wind turbines and blade tips are not to encroach on these areas. Linear infrastructure (including roads) can traverse these areas where necessary following the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures. • Development in medium sensitivity areas should be avoided and reduced wherever practically possible.
Bats	• Bat roosting sites such as buildings associated with farmsteads within and bordering the project site and large trees • Farm dams, wetlands, rivers/streams and CBA irreplaceable areas (natural areas) • No part of the wind turbines, including the blade tips, shall intrude into the no-go buffers • 200m buffer around sensitive features for placement of power line pylons
Agriculture	• Area predominantly "Moderately Low" to "Moderate" sensitivities • Some small areas of "Moderately High" sensitivity • Crop field boundaries - "High" sensitivities with one area being classified as "Very High" sensitivity

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OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers

Heritage	• Area proposed for development has medium to high local historic significance
	• No significant archaeological heritage resources were identified during the field assessment
	• Six burial grounds or graves close to or within the proposed development footprint - 50m no-go development buffer
	• Very high, very low, and moderate palaeontological sensitivity
	• Sensitive cultural landscape elements:
	  • Turbines should be located on only one side of the N17
	  • 500m no development buffer on either side of the N17, R35 and R39.
	  • 200m no development buffer on either side of the secondary routes that run through the development area.
	  • 500m no development buffer around the identified farm werfs.

Noise (wind)	• Potential noise-sensitive developments, receptors and communities in the development area • Turbines located within 1 000m from NSRs should be moved further than 1 000m

Visual	• Highly sensitive areas include:
	  • Areas immediately surrounding settlement and homesteads - 1000m buffer
	  • Corridors beside the main roads including the N17, the R35, and the R39 - 500m corridor should be sufficient to ensure that development does not totally dominate views.

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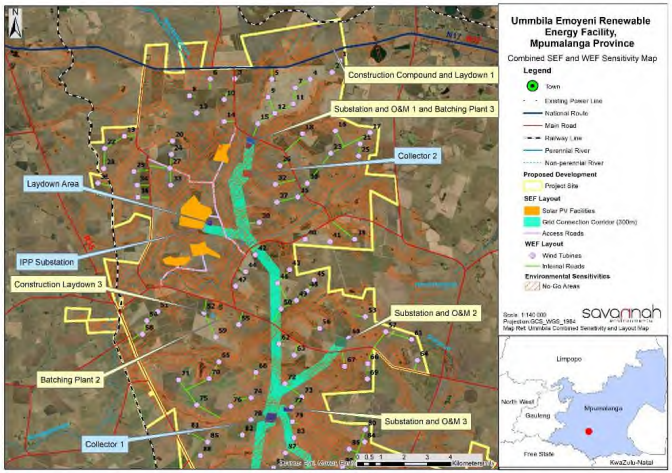
OVERVIEW OF SENSITIVITIES

Environmental Aspect	Sensitivities and associated buffers
Socio-economic	• No identified areas of sensitivity • Positive and negative impacts anticipated during construction and operation • The net positive impacts associated with the development and operation of the proposed project are expected to outweigh the net negative effects.
Traffic	• No identified areas of sensitivity • The proposed site is bounded by the N17 in the south, the R39 in the south and east and the R35 in the west. Access to the proposed site can be obtained from any of these three roads, depending on the traffic volumes of each road • The road carrying the least traffic will be considered as the best option • Impacts expected mainly during construction phase

16



SENSITIVITY MAP

Northern section

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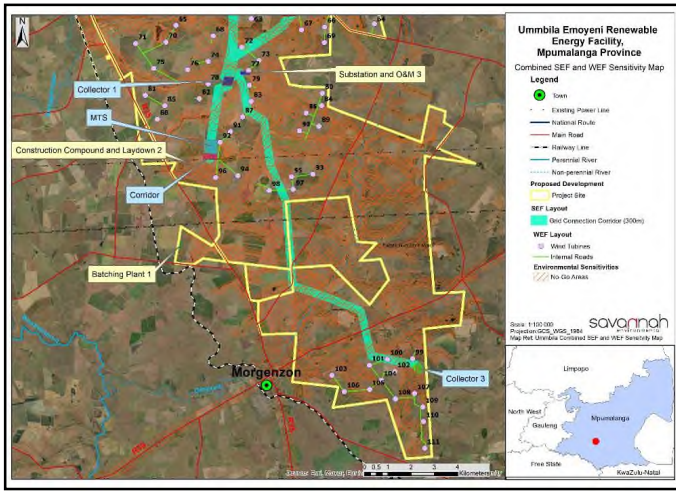

SENSITIVITY MAP

Southern section

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Projects are well aligned with the national, provincial and local policy framework
- From a biodiversity perspective, location of infrastructure considered acceptable
- Optimised layout proposed ensures that all aquatic, avifauna and bat sensitivities identified are avoided and recommended buffer areas are honoured
- Where impacts could not be avoided, appropriate mitigation has been proposed to minimise impacts

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- No identified fatal flaws associated with the implementation of the projects within the project site subject to implementation of the recommended mitigation measures
- Benefits of the projects are expected to occur at a national, regional and local level
- Costs to the environment at a site-specific level have been largely limited through the layout optimisation
- Based on the conclusions of the specialist studies, it is concluded that the development of the projects will not result in unacceptable environmental impacts (subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures)

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WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE
(Nicolene Venter)

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WAY FORWARD

- EIA Report review period: **08 September 2022 – 10 October 2022** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final EIA Report to be submitted to DFFE – October 2022
- Decision expected end-2022
- Registered parties will be notified of decision once issued
- Our Public Participation team is available to answer any questions on the projects

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WHO TO CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
Nicolene Venter
Email: publicprocess@savannahsa.com
PO Box 148, Sunninghill, 2157
Tel: 011 656 3237
Mobile: 060 978 8396 *(including "please call me")*
Fax: 086 684 0547
www.savannahSA.com

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SCOPING PHASE

Savannah Public Process

From: Savannah Public Process
Sent: Wednesday, 22 June 2022 14:28
To: themba.ph@govanmbeki.gov.za; MMatlala Rabothata; MMatlala Rabothata; Jan Oliver (NR); John Geeringh; john.geeringh@eskom.co.za
Cc: Nondumiso Bulunga
Subject: SE3292: Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities - KSW meeting notes
Attachments: SE3292-Ummbila Emoyeni Renewable Cluster KSW-FINAL.pdf

Dear Stakeholders,

Please find attached for your review and inputs the meeting notes of the Key Stakeholder Workshop held on Wednesday, 15 June 2022.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any clarification or additional information.

Kind regards,

savannah environmental

t: +27 (0)11 656 3237
f: +27 (0) 86 684 0547

Nicolene Venter
Public Participation and Social Consultant

e: publicprocess@savannahsa.com
c: +27 (0)60 978 8396

SAWEA Award for Leading Environmental Consultant on Wind Projects in 2013 & 2015

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Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | Directors: KM Jodas, J Thomas, M Matsabu
Company Reg No.: 2006/000127/07
VAT Reg No.: 4780226736

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESSES FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES, AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Ummbila Emoyeni Wind Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2160
Ummbila Emoyeni Solar Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2161
Ummbila Emoyeni Electrical Grid Infrastructure – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2162

MEETING NOTES OF THE KEY STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 15 JUNE 2022 AT 11H00 VENUE: VIRTUAL MEETING, MICROSOFT TEAMS

Notes for the Record prepared by:
Nicolene Venter
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: 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

UMMBILA EMOYENI CLUSTER OF RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTRUE LOCATED BETWEEN BETHAL AND MORGENZON, MPUMALANGA PROVINCES

MEETING ATTENDEES
(Captured according to Organisation)

Name	Organisation	Position
Mmatlala Rabothata	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE): Directorate Biodiversity Conservation	Biodiversity Mainstreaming
John Geeringh	Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd (Eskom)	Snr Environmental Advisor: Transmission Land & Rights
Themba Phungwayo	Govan Mbeki Local Municipality	Deputy Director: IDP, LED & PMS
Jan Olivier	South African National Roads Agency SOC Ltd (SANRAL)	Land Manager
Ben Brimble	Windlab Developments	Project Manager
Mmakoena Mmola	Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
Nicolene Venter		Public Participation & Social Consultant

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Nicolene Venter welcomed the attendees at the Key Stakeholder Workshop (KSW) for the Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Wind and Solar PV Facilities and Grid Connection Infrastructure. After introducing herself, she requested the project team to introduce themselves to the stakeholders and thereafter requested the stakeholders to introduce themselves to the project team.

She presented the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

No apologies were presented.

A copy of the electronic Attendance Record is attached as **Appendix A** to the KSW notes.

BACKGROUND AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Mmakoena Mmola presented the following:

- project description for the proposed Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Wind and Solar PV Facilities and Grid Connection Infrastructure;
- the Scoping Phase and public participation processes followed to date;
- a summary of the key environmental findings as documented in the Scoping Reports; and
- the plan of study for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Phase.

Nicolene Venter informed the attendees that it is important to note that the public participation process is an ongoing process which commenced when site notices were erected at the project site and the Background Information Document (BID) was distributed to Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), and is not only limited to the 30-day review and comment period of the various Reports as presented in the presentation. The public participation process is only concluded once registered I&APs are notified of the DFFE decision to issue an Environmental Authorisation (EA) for each project.

She ended the presentation by providing the way forward on the Scoping and consultation process.

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

DISCUSSION SESSION

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
Mmatlala Rabothata	For clarification purposes, the presentation indicates the Scoping Reports review period as 12 May to 13 June 2022, although in a follow-up e-mail it was indicated that the review period is ending on Monday, 13 July 2022.	Nicolene Venter confirmed that the review period ended on Monday, 13 June 2022 and that the date as referred to in the e-mail mentioned was a typing error.
	Also, for clarification purposes, are the reports that require comment the draft Scoping Reports or the final Scoping Reports.	Nicolene Venter responded that as per the presentation, the draft Scoping Reports were made available for review and comment and that it is envisaged that the Final Scoping Reports will be submitted to the DFFE by end of June 2022. It was further mentioned that it is envisaged that the EIA Reports and EMPr will be made available for review and comment towards mid- or end of July 2022.
	It was commented that the DFFE: Biodiversity Conservation did not receive the notification of the	Mmakoena Mmola confirmed that the Directorate can submit their formal written comments on the final

	availability of the draft Scoping, but as they are now aware of the reports, that their Directorate will comment on the final Scoping Reports.	Scoping Reports, and these will be incorporated into the EIA Reports.
Jan Olivier	Where are the access points to the development sites from the national roads?	Mmakoena Mmola responded as follows by referencing the findings of the Traffic Assessment as documented in the Scoping Reports: • Should components be imported into the country, it will be via the Port of Richard's Bay. The route would follow the N2 north, passing through Pongola and Piet Retief before turning off on the N17 in Ermelo, leading to an unnumbered gravel road towards the proposed site. alternatively • -Alternatively, it will be via the Port of East London. The route would follow the N6 north-west to Bloemfontein before taking the N1 north-east to Johannesburg. From there the convoy would head east on the N12 and N17, passing through Bethal and then turn off on an unnumbered gravel road to the proposed site. • The third alternative would be the Port of Ngqura. The route would follow the N10 north up to Cradock before taking the R390 further north, passing through the town of Steynsburg and turning onto the N1 at Gariep. The route would then continue north-east along the N1, through Bloemfontein up to Johannesburg. From there, the vehicles would head east on the N12 and N17, passing through Bethal and then turn off on an unnumbered gravel road to the proposed site. The proposed alternative routes and entry points to the development sites are indicated in **Figures 8.19 to 8.21**

		of the Scoping Report for the Wind Energy Facility.
Themba Phungwayo	The following will be commented on in the EIA Phase: • Socio-economic studies and related impacts. • Traffic studies and related impacts on the local road networks. • Bat species and their mitigation measures. Reference has been made to a wind energy project located in the Eastern Cape where the project was not granted an EA due to the impacts on Bats.	The comment that Govan Mbeki LM will be submitting written comments on these environmental studies during the EIA Phase has been acknowledged.
	The contact details of Mr Ben Brimble were requested to discuss Local Economic Development (LED) on Provincial level as this discussion would not form part of the EIA process.	Ben Brimble confirmed the sharing of his contact details with Mr Phungwayo. Ben Brimble's e-mail address was forwarded to Mr Phungwaya on 20 June 2022.
John Geeringh	It was asked whether the developer is looking at establishing a new 400Kv Main Transmission Substation (MTS).	Ben Brimble responded that a new 400Kv MTS is part of this proposed development and would have the same scope as that of Eskom's Gamma MTS.
	It was requested that the proposed location of the 400Kv MTS be provided, and it was asked whether the proposed 400Kv MTS forms part of this EIA process.	Ben Brimble responded that a preliminary location will be included in the EIA Report for the Grid Connection Infrastructure and will be shared with Mr Geeringh. It was confirmed that the proposed 400Kv MTS is part of the EIA process.
	It was commented that should the 400Kv MTS be located in the middle of project site, access to the MTS could eliminate any other infrastructure developments in the area that would need to / want to link to the MTS.	Ben Brimble responded that further discussions regarding the location of the proposed 400Kv MTS will take place in due course as the current location might change after discussions with Eskom.
	It was recommended that a separate discussion regarding this matter, outside of the EIA process, be held with Eskom's planning team as they are aware of other interest in the area and would be able to optimise the proposed 400Kv MTS location.	Ben Brimble confirmed that Winlab would set up a meeting with Eskom in due course.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

The presentation was e-mailed to all attendees during the technical presentation.

Nicolene Venter reminded all present that the review period for the Scoping Reports ended on Monday, 13 June 2022 and that the reports are still available for download from Savannah Environmental's website, and that once the reports have been updated with written comments received during the 30-day review and comment period, the final Scoping Reports will be submitted to the DFFE for decision-making.

She thanked the participants for making time to attend the KSW and for their valuable inputs into the EIA and public participation process.

Ben Brimble thanked the participants for their time attending and participating in the KSW and stated that he is looking forward to their comments to ensure that all matters are addressed as early as possible in the EIA process.

The workshop was closed at 12h15.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BA	Basic Assessment	KSW	Key Stakeholder Workshop
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	LED	Local Economic Development
EA	Environmental Auhthorisation	LM	Local Municipality
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	MTS	Main Transmission Substation

APPENDIX A: Attendance Record	
Total Number of Participants	8
Meeting Title	SE3292: Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities - Invitation to Key Stakeholder Workshop
Meeting Start Time	6/15/2022, 10:54:20 AM
Meeting End Time	6/15/2022, 12:10:30 PM
Meeting Id	59225230-52e8-403e-8b9b-da024a99cb64
Attendees	**Company / Organisation**
Nicolene Venter	Savannah Environmental
Mmakoena Mmola	Savannah Environmental
Themba Phungwayo	Govan Mbeki Local Municipality
Jan Oliver	South African National Roads Agency
Ben Brimble	Windlab
Matlala Rabothata	DFFE: Biodiversity Conservation
John Geeringh	Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd

UMMBILA EMOYENI WIND ENERGY FACILITY, SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY (PV) AND ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Key Stakeholder Workshop
Wednesday, 15 June 2022

1

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PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

- Provide stakeholders & I&APs with an overview of the **Ummbilla Emoyeni Renewable Energy Farm (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

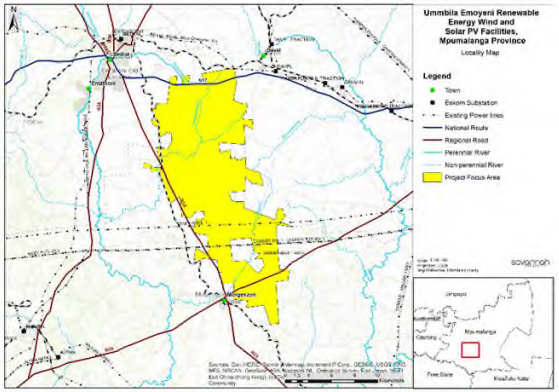
4

PROJECT OVERVIEW
(Mmakoena Mmola)

savannah environmental

5

LOCALITY MAP



- Cluster of renewable energy facilities, which include a 666MW Wind Energy Facility, 150MW Solar Energy Facility and a grid connection solution consisting of a 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS) and two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line.
- Located ~6km southeast of the town of Bethal in the Mpumalanga Province. The project site is located across the Govan Mbeki, Lekwa, and Msukaligwa Local Municipalities within the Gert Sibande District Municipality.

savannah environmental

6

COMPONENTS OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI WIND ENERGY FACILITY, SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL GRID INFRASTRUCTURE

Solar Energy Facility	Wind Energy Facility	Electrical Grid Infrastructure
• PV modules in the range of 330Wp to 450Wp mounted on either a fixed tilt or single axis tracker structure, dependent on optimisation, technology available and cost. • Inverters and transformers. • 33kV cabling to connect to the onsite collector substation, to be laid underground where practical. • 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation. • 132kV overhead power line from the onsite collector substation to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between project components. • Laydown and O&M hub (approximately 300m x 300m): o Construction compound (temporary). o Maintenance office. • Access roads (up to 12m wide) and internal distribution roads (up to 12m wide).	• Up to 111 wind turbines with a maximum hub height of up to 200m. The tip height of the turbines will be up to 300m. • 33kV cabling to connect the wind turbines to the onsite collector substations, to be laid underground where practical. • 3 x 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation, each being 5ha. • 3 x 132kV overhead power lines from the onsite collector substations to the MTS. • Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). • Cabling between turbines, to be laid underground where practical. • Construction compounds including site office (approximately 300m x 300m in total but split into 3ha each of 150m x 200m): o Batching plant of up to 4ha to 7ha. o 3 x O&M office of approximately 1.5ha each adjacent to each collector SS. o 3 x construction compound / laydown area, including site office of 3ha each (150m x 200m each). • Laydown and crane hardstand areas (approximately 75m x 120m). • Access roads of 12-13m wide, with 12m at turning circles.	• A new 400/132kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS), to be located on the Camden SOL Lines. • Two 400kV loop-in loop-out power lines to the existing Camden-Sol 400kV transmission line. • On-site switching stations (132kV in capacity) at each renewable energy facility. • 132kV power lines from the switching stations to a new MTS. • Access roads up to 8m wide to the substation.

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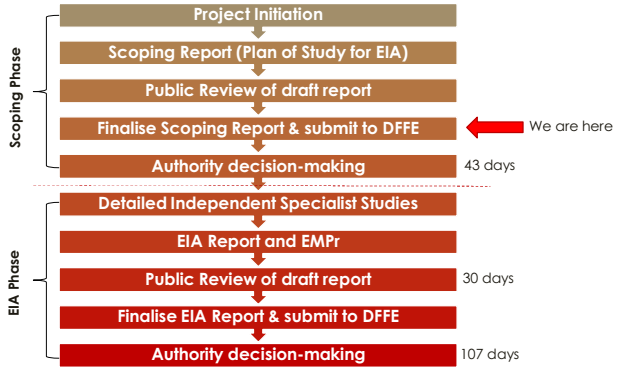
SCOPING & EIA PROCESS & PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



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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
Gerhard Botha of Nkurenkuru Ecology and Biodiversity (Pty) Ltd	Ecology (Flora, Fauna and Freshwater)
Owen Davies of Arcus Consulting	Avifauna
Jonathan Aronson of Camissa	Bats
Andrew Husted of the Biodiversity Company	Soils and Agricultural Potential
Morné de Jager of Enviro-Acoustic Research	Noise
Jon Marshall of Environmental Planning & Design CC	Visual
Pierre van Jaarsveld of Urban-Econ Development Economist (Pty) Ltd	Socio-Economic
Jenna Lavin of CTS Heritage	Heritage (including Archaeology Palaeontology and Cultural Heritage)
Iris Wink of JG Afrika	Traffic

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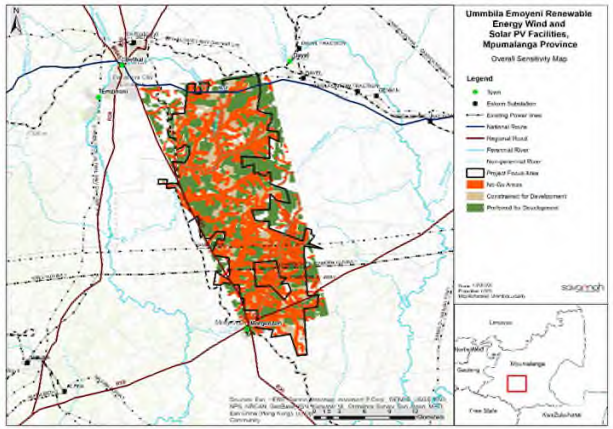
SENSITIVITY MAPPING (all projects)



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SENSITIVITY MAPPING (all projects)

Restricted for Development (Highest Risk – No-go Areas)	• Confirmed CBAs (Irreplaceable). • Freshwater resource features and the recommended freshwater buffers (100m buffer around exorheic features and 50m buffer around endorheic features). It should be noted that activities relating to route access and cabling are permitted within these features and their recommended buffers. • Farms dams, trees, buildings, rivers/streams, and wetlands (200m buffer inside which no turbines may be installed). • Historic farm werfs (1km buffer has been recommended around these sites). • Noise sensitive receptors (160m and 500m no-go buffer). • N17, R35, R39 (500m corridor).
Constrained for Development (Moderate to High Risk)	• Primary grassland. • CBA Optimal. • Ecological Support Area (ESA) landscape corridor. • ESA local corridor. • Other Natural Areas.
Preferred for development (Lowest Risk)	• Agricultural/cultivated areas. • Areas with infrastructure. • Secondary grassland. • Moderately and heavily modified land. • Valley side slopes.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED (all projects)

	Scoping of Issues
Impacts on Ecology (fauna & flora)	• Impacts on vegetation and protected plant species • Direct faunal impacts • Soil erosion and associated degradation of ecosystems • Alien plant invasion • Impacts on Critical Biodiversity Areas and Broad-Scale Ecological Processes
Impacts on Freshwater Features	• Increased loss of soil. • Loss of/or disturbance to indigenous wetland vegetation. • Loss of sensitive wetland habitats. • Loss or disturbance to individuals of rare, endangered, endemic and/or protected species that occur in wetlands. • Fragmentation of sensitive habitats. • Impairment of wetland function. • Change in channel morphology in downstream wetlands, potentially leading to further loss of wetland vegetation. • Reduction in water quality in wetlands downstream.
Impacts on Bats	• Modification of bat foraging/commuting habitat. • Destruction of/Disturbance to bat roosts. • Bat mortality. • Disturbance to bats. • Barrier effects. • Polarized light pollution.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED (all projects)

	Scoping of Issues
Impacts of Avifauna	Construction Phase: • Direct Habitat Destruction – modification, removal and clearing of vegetation for development of infrastructure such as temporary laydown areas, site buildings, solar PV arrays, access roads and servitudes. • Disturbance/Displacement – indirect habitat loss and/or reduced breeding success due to displacement by noise and activity associated with machinery and construction activity. • Direct Mortality – fatalities of avifauna due to vehicle collision, entrapment, entanglement, or collision with temporary infrastructure (e.g., fencing), entrapment in uncovered excavations and increased predation pressure. Operational Phase: • Direct Habitat Destruction – Contamination of habitats due to routine operational maintenance activity (e.g., cleaning of solar PV arrays). • Disturbance/Displacement – indirect habitat loss, reduced breeding success, obstruction of movement corridors due to displacement by infrastructure and noise/activity associated with ongoing, routine operational tasks/maintenance activity; and • Direct Mortality – fatalities of avifauna due to collision with solar PV arrays and wind turbines, collision or entrapment with perimeter fencing, collision with overhead power lines, and electrocution from electrical components.
Impacts on Agricultural Potential and Soils	• The primary impact on soils expected to be associated with the proposed developments is compaction/soil stripping/transformation of land use, which leads to loss of land capability.
Impacts on Heritage (Cultural Landscape, Archaeology and Palaeontology)	• Direct impact to archaeological heritage of scientific significance. • Direct impact to palaeontological heritage of scientific significance. • Indirect impact to significance of cultural landscapes.

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IDENTIFIED (all projects)

	Scoping of Issues
Impacts on Visual Quality	• Potential change to the rural landscape. • Potential visual impacts as experienced by visitors to the Rietvlei Reserve. • Potential visual impacts as experienced by visitors to the Silver Stream Reserve. • Potential visual impacts as experienced by users of adjacent local roads particularly users of the N17, the R35, the R38 and the R39. • Potential visual impacts as experienced by residents of homesteads. • Potential visual impacts as experienced by residents of local settlements particularly residents on the south-eastern edge of Bethal and the north-western edge of Morgenzon. • Potential Shadow Flicker impacts particularly affecting local homesteads.
Impacts on Sensitive Noise Receptors	• Increased noises or disturbing noises may increase annoyance levels with project. Noise levels could exceed 45 dBA during construction.
Impacts on Traffic	• Potential traffic congestion and delays on the surrounding road network. The associated noise, dust and exhaust pollution due to the increase in traffic.
Impacts on the Socio-Economic Environment	• Temporary stimulation of the national and local economy (GDP and Production). • Increase in employment in the national and local economies. • Contribution to skills development in the country and local economy. • Increase in household earnings and improved standards of living for benefiting households. • Increase in national and local government revenue. • Negative changes to the sense of place. • Temporary increase in social conflicts associated with the influx of people. • Impacts on daily movement patterns. • Sustainable rental revenue for farms where the wind farm is located. • Sustainable increase in electricity available for the local region and South Africa. • Negative impact on agricultural operations.

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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, fauna and freshwater)
  - Avifauna Impact Assessment
  - Bat Impact Assessment (informed by monitoring)
  - Soils and Agricultural Potential Impact Assessment
  - Noise Impact Assessment
  - Visual Impact Assessment
  - Socio-Econimic Impact Assessment
  - Heritage Impact Assessment (including archaeology, palaeontology and cultural heritage)
  - Traffic Impact Assessment

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WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE
(Nicolene Venter)

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WAY FORWARD

- Scoping Report review period: **12 May 2022 – 13 June 2022** (can be downloaded from the Savannah Environmental website)
- Final Scoping Report to be submitted to DFFE – June 2022
- EIA & EMPr for review – envisaged July 2022 (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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Mobile: 060 978 8396 *(including "please call me")*
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Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | Directors: KM Jodas, J Thomas, M Matsabu
Company Reg No.: 2006/000127/07
VAT Reg No.: 4780226736

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESSES FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES, AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Ummbila Emoyeni Wind Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2160
Ummbila Emoyeni Solar Energy Facility – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2161
Ummbila Emoyeni Electrical Grid Infrastructure – DFFE Ref No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2162

MEETING NOTES OF LANDOWNER'S (Southern Section) INFORMATION MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2022 AT 10H00
VENUE: FARM ROODEKRANS, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Notes for the Record prepared by:
Nicolene Venter
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
E-mail: 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

UMMBILA EMOYENI CLUSTER OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED BETWEEN BETHAL AND MORGENZON, MPUMALANGA PROVINCES

MEETING ATTENDEES
(Captured according to Surname)

Name	Organisation
JP Swart	Farm Roodekrans
Johan Swart	Farm Roodekrans
Corné Swart	
Louis du Pisanie	Farm Maisefield
Nicolene Venter	Savannah Environmental

APOLOGIES

- Wiekie Erasmus
- Almero du Pisanie

A copy of the signed Attendance Record is attached as **Appendix A** to the Meeting Notes.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Nicolene Venter welcomed the attendees at the Landowners Information Meeting for the Ummbila Emoyeni Cluster of Renewable Energy Facilities (Wind and Solar Energy Facilities) and Grid Connection Infrastructure.

She informed the attendees that the purpose of the meeting was to present the cluster of renewable projects, including the grid connection infrastructure, currently proposed and to obtain any comments and/or concerns that they, as adjacent landowners, might have at this stage for consideration in the impact phase of the projects. It was also mentioned that it is important to obtain as much local knowledge as possible for inclusion in the process, thereby allowing the decision-making authority, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), to make an informed decision.

BACKGROUND AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Nicolene Venter presented the list of the various environmental studies being undertaken and informed the attendees that the results of the studies as documented in the Scoping Reports are mostly desk-top based.

She informed the attendees that it is important to note that the public participation process is an ongoing process which commenced when site notices were erected at the project area and with the distribution of the Background Information Document (BID), and that the comments, concerns and issues raised at this meeting will be included in the final Scoping Reports that will be submitted to the DFFE for their review and acceptance.

DISCUSSION SESSION

Raised by	Question / Comment	Response
The following are collective questions and comments raised by the attendees.	It was asked why the properties located in the centre of the Southern Landowners' Map are excluded for development.	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola** The properties located in the centre of the Southern Landowner's Map are excluded for development as there are no agreements in place with these landowners to undertake the S&EIA process for the proposed projects over their properties.
	How many hectares would be taken up by the WEFs and SEFs respectively?	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola** The exact footprints of the Wind Energy Facility and Solar Energy Facility are not available at this stage. The footprints will however be included in the EIA Reports to be prepared as part of the EIA Phase of the process.
	The following maps have been requested to enable the landowners to comment meaningful regarding the proposed projects: • Locality of the SEFs • Locality of the WEFs • Access roads • Substation locations	Nicolene Venter responded that the preliminary layouts for the renewable energy facilities and grid connection infrastructure are not available at this stage. Once these maps are available, they will be e-mailed to the landowners.
	The request for information regarding access roads has been raised as these access roads could traverse their properties and could have a negative impact on the infrastructures on the properties. It was requested that existing roads be considered for access to the development sites.	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola** Access to the project site is ample with the presence of existing roads mainly consisting of national and regional roads. The project site is situated directly adjacent to the N17 and near the N2 and N11 national road, which provides access to the project site and development area. Transport of components would be routine via the N2 highway from the Richards Bay deep-water port, via Ermelo. Wherever possible, existing access roads will be utilised to access the project site and development area. It is unlikely that access roads will need to be upgraded as part of the proposed development. Internal roads of up to 12-13m in width will be required to access each turbine, the

		solar panels and the on-site substations. For the grid connection infrastructure, where necessary, new access roads (up to 12 wide) will be established to provide access to the Main Transmission Substation (MTS). During construction, a permanent access road along the length of the power line corridor (300m wide) between 4 -6m wide will be established to allow for large crane movement. This track will then be utilised for maintenance during operation. The preliminary layouts for the renewable energy facilities and grid connection infrastructure, including the proposed access roads, will be distributed to the landowners once available.
	It was requested where will water be sourced from for construction and the cleaning of the solar panels.	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola** Either via borehole / municipal / dam or a combination of all 3 will be used to provide water. Should water availability at the time of construction and operation be limited, water will be transported to site via water tanks. Water will be used for sanitation and potable water on site as well as construction works. Water will be also used to clean the solar panels during the operational phase of facility.
	How deep would the underground cable be as the agricultural activities on the properties need to be taken into consideration i.e. planning and harvesting activities need to be taken into consideration?	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola** The cabling associated with the renewable energy facilities will be installed at a depth of up to 1.5m. Where not technically feasible to place cabling underground, this will be installed above-ground. The cabling will have a capacity of 33kV and will connect the turbines and solar panels to their respective on-site substations.
	It was recommended that the construction of the infrastructures need to take place during the dry	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola**

	season and farming activities must also be taken into consideration.	This comment is noted and will be included in the project EMPrs for implementation during the construction phase.
	What impact would the Wake Effect have on climate change?	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola** Based on current knowledge, the wake effect has no impact on climate change. The wake effect is the aggregated influence on the energy production of the wind farm, which results from the changes in wind speed caused by the impact of the turbines on each other.
	What is the size of each of the wind turbines?	**Post-meeting note provided by Mmakoena Mmola** Each wind turbine will have a hub height of 200m, a tip height of 300m and a rotor diameter between 150 – 200m. Individual turbines will have a capacity between 6MW and 15MW.
	It was recommended that the DMRE be consulted to ascertain which of the affected and adjacent properties have mining rights.	Nicolene Venter responded that the DMRE is a key stakeholder on the project and that information on whether any of the affected and adjacent properties have mining rights will be requested in writing.
	A list of affected and adjacent landowners was requested to assist with the grouping of landowners for the upcoming meetings in the impact phase.	Nicolene Venter responded that a landowner's map will be shared with the attendees and thanked them for assisting in grouping the landowners for the meetings to be conducted either prior to the EIA Reports' review period or meetings to be conducted during the EIA Reports' review period.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Nicolene Venter thanked the attendees for making time available during the harvesting season to attend the meeting and also for the valuable information received. She reiterated that it is important to obtain local knowledge as part of the EIA process.

The meeting closed at 11h15.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DMRE	Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	SEF	Solar Energy Facilities
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	WEF	Wind Energy Facilities

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ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, 14 June 2022
MEETING TIME: 10h00
MEETING VENUE: Farm Roodekrans

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: JP SWART.

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

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ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, 14 June 2022
MEETING TIME: 10h00
MEETING VENUE: Farm Roodekrans

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Johan Swart

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

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ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, 14 June 2022
MEETING TIME: 10h00
MEETING VENUE: Farm Roodekrans

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Corné Swart

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

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ATTENDANCE REGISTER

ATTENDANCE AT THE LANDOWNERS' INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE UMMBILA EMOYENI RENEWABLE ENERGY WIND AND SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, 14 June 2022
MEETING TIME: 10h00
MEETING VENUE: Farm Roodekrans

ATTENDEE:

NAME & SURNAME: Louis du Rusanie

MOBILE NUMBER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE: