

## APPENDIX O: THE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

This document provides an overview of the policy and legislative context within which the development of a Solar PV Facility, such as Vrede Solar PV Facility, is proposed. It identifies environmental legislation, policies, plans, guidelines, spatial tools, municipal development planning frameworks and instruments that are applicable to this activity and are to be considered in the assessment process which may be applicable to or have bearing on the proposed project.

### 1.1 Legal Requirements as per the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended) for the undertaking of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report

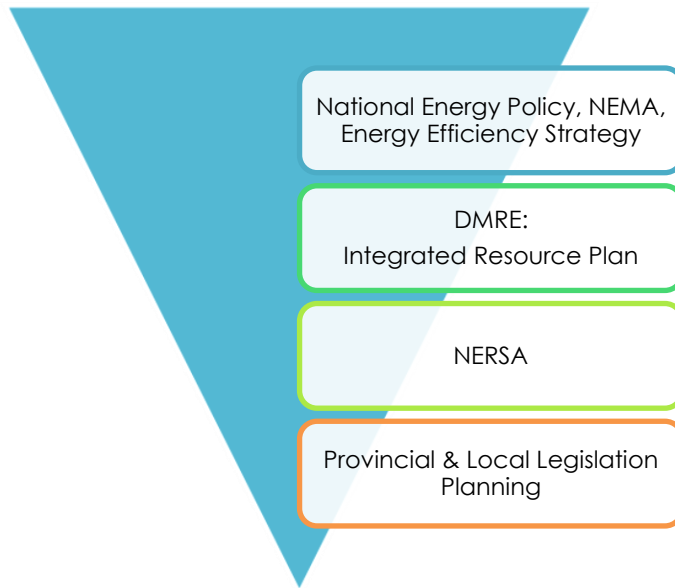
This **Appendix O** of the EIA Report includes the following information required in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014 - Appendix 3: Scope of Assessment and Content of Environmental Impact Assessment Reports:

Requirement	Relevant Section
3(1)(e) a description of the policy and legislative context within which the development is proposed and how the proposed development complies with and responds to the legislation and policy context.	<b>Appendix O</b> provides an overview of the policy and legislative context which is considered to be associated with the development of the solar energy facility. The regulatory and planning context has been considered at national, provincial and local levels. A description of the policy and legislative context within which the Project is proposed is included in <b>sections 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6.</b>

### 1.2. Strategic Electricity Planning in South Africa

The need to expand electricity generation capacity in South Africa is based on national policy and informed by on-going strategic planning undertaken by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE). The hierarchy of policy and planning documentation that support the development of renewable energy projects such as a solar energy facility is illustrated in **Figure 1.1**. These policies are discussed in more detail in the following sections, along with the provincial and local policies or plans that have relevance to the development of the Project.

The South African energy industry is evolving rapidly, with regular changes to legislation and industry role-players. The regulatory hierarchy for an energy generation project of this nature consists of three tiers of authority who exercise control through both statutory and non-statutory instruments – that is National, Provincial and Local levels. As Solar PV developments are a multi-sectoral issue (encompassing economic, spatial, biophysical, and cultural dimensions), various statutory bodies are likely to be involved in the approval process of a Solar PV project and the related statutory environmental assessment process.



**Figure 1.1:** Hierarchy of electricity and planning documents

At **National Level**, the main regulatory agencies are:

- » **Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE):** This Department is responsible for policy relating to all energy forms and for compiling and approving the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) for electricity. Furthermore, the DMRE is also responsible for granting approvals for the use of land which is contrary to the objects of the Mineral and Petroleum Resource Development Act (Act No. 28 of 2002) (MPRDA) in terms of Section 53 of the Act. Therefore, in terms of the Act, approval from the Minister is required to ensure that the proposed activities do not sterilise mineral resources that may occur within the project site and development area.
- » **National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA):** NERSA is responsible for regulating all aspects of the electricity sector and will ultimately issue licenses for IPP projects to generate electricity where these are required.
- » **Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE):** This Department is responsible for environmental policy and is the controlling authority in terms of NEMA and the 2014 EIA Regulations (GN R326) as amended. DFFE is the competent authority for this project (as per GNR 779 of 01 July 2016), and is charged with granting the EA for the project under consideration. Furthermore, the Department is also responsible for issuing permits for the disturbance or destruction of protected tree species listed under Section 15 (1) of the National Forest Act (No. 84 of 1998) (NFA).
- » **The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA):** SAHRA is a statutory organisation established under the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA), as the national administrative body responsible for the protection of South Africa's cultural heritage.
- » **South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL):** This Agency is responsible for the regulation and maintenance of all national road routes.
- » **Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS):** This Department is responsible for effective and efficient water resource management to ensure sustainable economic and social development. This Department is also responsible for evaluating and issuing licenses pertaining to water use (i.e., Water Use License (WUL) and General Authorisation).
- » **The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform (DARDLR):** This Department is the custodian of South Africa's agricultural resources and is primarily responsible for the formulation and

implementation of policies governing the agriculture sector and the initiation, facilitation, coordination and implementation of integrated rural development programmes.

At **Provincial Level**, the main regulatory agencies are:

- » **Provincial Government of the Northern Cape – Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform (DAEARD&LR):** This Department is the commenting authority for the EIA process for the project and is responsible for issuing of biodiversity and conservation-related permits.
- » **Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism:** The Department's mission is to accelerate the economic growth and development of the Northern Cape Province through diversification, empowerment, employment, business creation and sustainable development.
- » **Northern Cape Department of Transport, Safety, and Liaison:** This Department provides effective co-ordination of crime prevention initiatives, provincial police oversight, traffic management and road safety towards a more secure environment.
- » **Ngwao-Boswa Ya Kapa Bokone (NBKB):** This department is responsible for the identification and management of heritage resources in the Northern Cape, which, in a provincial context, have special significance.

At the **Local Level**, the local and district municipal authorities are the principal regulatory authorities responsible for planning, land use and the environment. In the Northern Cape Province, both the local and district municipalities play a role. The local municipality includes the **Renosterberg Local Municipality** which forms part of the **Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality**. In terms of the Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000), it is compulsory for all municipalities to go through an Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process to prepare a five-year strategic development plan for the area under their control.

### 1.3. International Policy and Planning Context

A brief review of the most relevant international policies relevant to the establishment of the Project are provided below in **Table 1.1**. The Project is considered to be aligned with the aims of these policies, even if contributions to achieving the goals therein are only minor.

**Table 1.1:** International policies relevant to the Project

Relevant policy	Relevance to the Vrede Solar PV Facility
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Conference of the Party (COP)	<p>The Conference of the Parties (COP), established by Article 7 of the UNFCCC, is the supreme body and highest decision-making organ of the Convention. It reviews the implementation of the Convention and any related legal instruments and takes decisions to promote the effective implementation of the Convention.</p> <p>The Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 was held in Paris from 30 November to 12 December 2015. From this conference, an agreement to tackle global warming was reached between 195 countries.</p> <p>South Africa signed the Agreement in April 2016 and ratified the agreement on 01 November 2016. The Agreement was assented to</p>

Relevant policy	Relevance to the Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>by the National Council of Provinces on 27 October 2016, and the National Assembly on 1 November 2016.</p> <p>The Paris Agreement sets out that every 5 years countries must set out increasingly ambitious climate action. This meant that, by 2020, countries needed to submit or update their plans for reducing emissions, known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs). The COP26 summit held on 2021 brought parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. On 13 November 2021, COP26 concluded in Glasgow with all countries agreeing the Glasgow Climate Pact to keep 1.5°C alive and finalise the outstanding elements of the Paris Agreement.</p> <p>South Africa's National Climate Change Response Policy (NCCRP) establishes South Africa's approach to addressing climate change, including adaptation and mitigation responses. The NCCRP formalises Government's vision for a transition to a low carbon economy, through the adoption of the 'Peak, Plateau and Decline' (PPD) GHG emissions trajectory whereby South Africa's emissions should peak between 2020 and 2025, plateau for approximately a decade, and then decline in absolute terms thereafter, and based on this the country has pledged to reduce emissions by 34% and 42% below Business As Usual (BAU) emissions in 2020 and 2025, respectively.</p> <p>The policy provides support for the Vrede Solar PV Facility which will contribute to managing climate change impacts, supporting the emergency response capacity, as well as assist in reducing GHG emissions in a sustainable manner.</p>
<p>The Equator Principles IV (October 2020)</p>	<p>The Equator Principles (EPs) IV constitute a financial industry benchmark used for determining, assessing, and managing project's environmental and social risks. The EPs are primarily intended to provide a minimum standard for due diligence to support responsible risk decision-making. The EPs are applicable to large infrastructure projects (such as the Vrede Solar PV Facility) and apply globally to all industry sectors.</p> <p>Such an assessment should propose measures to minimise, mitigate, and offset adverse impacts in a manner relevant and appropriate to the nature and scale of the Vrede Solar PV Facility. In terms of the EPs, South Africa is a non-designated country, and as such the assessment process for projects located in South Africa evaluates compliance with the applicable IFC Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability, and Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines.</p> <p>The Vrede Solar PV Facility is currently being assessed in accordance with the requirements of the 2014 EIA Regulations, as amended (GN R326), published in terms of Section 24(5) of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA), which is South Africa's national legislation providing for the authorisation of</p>

Relevant policy	Relevance to the Vrede Solar PV Facility
<p>International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards and Environmental and Social Sustainability (January 2012)</p>	<p>certain controlled activities. Through this assessment, all potential social and environmental risks are identified and assessed, and appropriate mitigation measures proposed.</p> <p>The (IFC) Performance Standards (PSs) on Environmental and Social Sustainability were developed by the IFC and were last updated on 1 January 2012.</p> <p>Performance Standard 1 requires that a process of environmental and social assessment be conducted, and an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) appropriate to the nature and scale of the project, and commensurate with the level of its environmental and social risks and impacts be established and maintained. The above-mentioned standard is the overarching standard to which all the other standards relate. Performance Standards 2 through 8 establish specific requirements to avoid, reduce, mitigate or compensate for impacts on people and the environment, and to improve conditions where appropriate. While all relevant social and environmental risks and potential impacts should be considered as part of the assessment, the standards 2 and 8 describe potential social and environmental impacts that require particular attention specifically within emerging markets. Where social or environmental impacts are anticipated, the project developer is required to manage them through its ESMS consistent with Performance Standard 1.</p> <p>Given the nature of Vrede Solar PV Facility, it is anticipated Performance Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8 may be applicable to the project (see box 1 below).</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Standard 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts</li> <li>• Performance Standard 2: Labour and Working Conditions</li> <li>• Performance Standard 3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention</li> <li>• Performance Standard 4: Community Health, Safety and Security</li> <li>• <del>Performance Standard 5: Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement</del> – N/A</li> <li>• Performance Standard 6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources</li> <li>• <del>Performance Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples</del> – N/A</li> <li>• Performance Standard 8: Cultural Heritage</li> </ul> </div>

## 1.4. National Policy and Planning Context

Further to the South African government's commitment in August 2011 to support the development of renewable energy capacity, the DMRE initiated the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) to procure renewable energy from the private sector in a series of rounds. According to the IPP Procurement Programme overview report (2021), as at March 2021, 6 422MW of renewable energy capacity from 112 independent power producers (IPPs) has been procured in seven bid rounds<sup>1</sup>, with 5 078MW from 79 IPP projects operational and made available to the grid<sup>2</sup>. National policies have to be considered for the construction and operation of the solar PV Facility to ensure that the development is in line with the planning of the country.

A brief review of the most relevant national policies is provided below in **Table 1.2**. The development of Vrede Solar PV Facility is considered to align with the aims of these policies, even where contributions to achieving the goals therein are only minor.

**Table 1.2:** Relevant national legislation and policies for Vrede Solar PV Facility

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996	<p>Section 24 of the Constitution pertains specifically to the environment. It states that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being, and to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that prevent pollution and ecological degradation, promote conservation and secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.</p> <p>The Constitution outlines the need to promote social and economic development. Section 24 of the Constitution therefore requires that development be conducted in such a manner that it does not infringe on an individual's environmental rights, health, or well-being. This is especially significant for previously disadvantaged individuals who are most at risk to environmental impacts. The undertaking of an EIA process for the proposed project in terms of the requirements of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended) aims to minimise any impacts on the natural and social environment.</p>
National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA)	<p>This piece of legislation is South Africa's key piece of environmental legislation and sets the framework for environmental management in South Africa. NEMA is founded on the principle that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being as contained within the Bill of Rights.</p> <p>The national environmental management principles state that the social, economic and environmental impacts of activities, including disadvantages and benefits, must be considered, assessed and evaluated, and decisions must be appropriate in the light of such consideration and assessment. The project is currently being assessed in accordance with the requirements of the 2014 EIA Regulations, as amended, published in terms of Section 24(5) of NEMA. Through</p>

<sup>1</sup> Bid windows 1, 2, 3, 3.5, 4 and small BW1(1S2) and small BW2(2S2). 2 583 MW of renewable energy capacity was awarded to IPPs in the REIPPPP bid window 5 in October 2021. 1000MW of renewable energy capacity was awarded to IPPs in the REIPPPP bid window 6 in December 2022 and April 2023, all of which were PV facilities.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.cliffedekkerhofmeyr.com/en/news/publications/2019/Corporate/energy-alert-22-october-The-Integrated-Resource-Plan-2019-A-promising-future-roadmap-for-generation-capacity-in-South-Africa.html>

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>this assessment, all potential social and environmental risks are identified and assessed, and appropriate mitigation measures proposed.</p> <p>The need for responsible and informed decision-making by government on the acceptability of environmental impacts is therefore enshrined within NEMA.</p>
<p>National Energy Act (No. 34 of 2008)</p>	<p>The purpose of the National Energy Act (No. 34 of 2008) is to ensure that diverse energy resources are available, in sustainable quantities and at affordable prices, to the South African economy in support of economic growth and poverty alleviation, while taking into account environmental management requirements and interactions amongst economic sectors, as well as matters relating to renewable energy. The National Energy Act also provides for energy planning, increased generation and consumption of renewable energies, contingency energy supply, holding of strategic energy feedstocks and carriers, adequate investment in, appropriate upkeep and access to energy infrastructure. The Act provides measures for the furnishing of certain data and information regarding energy demand, supply, and generation, and for establishing an institution to be responsible for promotion of efficient generation and consumption of energy and energy research.</p> <p>The Act provides the legal framework which supports the development of power generation facilities. The Act also provides for licences and registration as the manner in which generation, transmission, distribution, trading and the import and export of electricity are regulated. The development of the Vrede Solar PV Facility will have to ensure compliance with this Act as a license for the generation of electricity from NERSA or registration will be required.</p>
<p>White Paper on the Energy Policy of the Republic of South Africa (1998)</p>	<p>The White Paper on Energy Policy places emphasis on the expansion of energy supply options to enhance South Africa's energy security. This can be achieved through increased use of RE and encouraging new entries into the generation market.</p> <p>The policy states that the advantages of RE include, minimal environmental impacts during operation in comparison with traditional supply technologies, generally lower running costs, and high labour intensities. Disadvantages include higher capital costs in some cases, lower energy densities, and lower levels of availability, depending on specific conditions, especially with sun and wind-based systems. Nonetheless, renewable resources generally operate from an unlimited resource base and, as such, can increasingly contribute towards a long-term sustainable energy future.</p>
<p>White Paper on the Renewable Energy Policy of the Republic of South Africa (2003)</p>	<p>The White Paper on Renewable Energy Policy Supplements Government's predominant policy on energy as set out in the White Paper on the Energy Policy of the Republic of South Africa (DME, 1998). The policy recognises the potential of RE and aims to create the necessary conditions for the development and commercial implementation of RE technologies.</p> <p>The White Paper on RE sets out Government's vision, policy principles, strategic goals, and objectives for promoting and implementing RE in South Africa. The country relies heavily on coal to meet its energy needs due to its abundant, and accessible and affordable coal resources. However, massive RE resources that can be sustainable alternatives to fossil fuels, have so far remained largely untapped.</p>

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>The development of additional renewable energy projects will promote the use of the abundant South African renewable energy resources and contribute to long-term energy security and diversification of the energy mix.</p>
<p>The Electricity Regulation Act (No. of 2006)</p>	<p>The Electricity Regulation Act of 2006, replaced the Electricity Act (No. 41 of 1987), as amended, except for Section 5B, which provides funds for the energy regulator for the purpose of regulating the electricity industry. The Act establishes a national regulatory framework for the electricity supply industry and introduces the National Energy Regulator (NERSA) as the custodian and enforcer of the National Electricity Regulatory Framework. The Act also provides for licences and registration as the manner in which the generation, transmission, distribution, trading, and import and export of electricity are regulated. Schedule 2 of the Electricity Regulation Act provides for exemptions from the obligation in the Act to apply for (and hold) a licence from National Energy Regulator (NERSA). In terms of this schedule, the threshold for distributed generation was raised to 100MW in August 2021 and completely removed in December 2022. Project developers proposing projects for self-generation purposes are exempted from applying for a license but are required to register with NERSA and comply with the relevant grid code(s).</p>
<p>Integrated Energy Plan (IEP), 2016</p>	<p>The purpose and objectives of the Integrated Energy Plan (IEP) are derived from the National Energy Act (No. 34 of 2008). The IEP takes into consideration the crucial role that energy plays in the entire economy of the country and is informed by the output of analyses founded on a solid fact base. It is a multi-faceted, long-term energy framework which has multiple aims, some of which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» To guide the development of energy policies and, where relevant, set the framework for regulations in the energy sector.</li> <li>» To guide the selection of appropriate technologies to meet energy demand (i.e., the types and sizes of new power plants and refineries to be built and the prices that should be charged for fuels).</li> <li>» To guide investment in and the development of energy infrastructure in South Africa.</li> <li>» To propose alternative energy strategies which are informed by testing the potential impacts of various factors such as proposed policies, introduction of new technologies, and effects of exogenous macro-economic factors.</li> </ul> <p>A draft version of the IEP was released for comment on 25 November 2016. The purpose of the IEP is to provide a roadmap of the future energy landscape for South Africa which guides future energy infrastructure investments and policy development. The development of the IEP is an ongoing continuous process. It is reviewed periodically to take into account changes in the macroeconomic environment, developments in new technologies and changes in national priorities and imperatives, amongst others.</p> <p>The 8 key objectives of the integrated energy planning process are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Objective 1: Ensure security of supply.</li> <li>» Objective 2: Minimise the cost of energy.</li> <li>» Objective 3: Promote the creation of jobs and localisation.</li> <li>» Objective 4: Minimise negative environmental impacts from the energy sector.</li> <li>» Objective 5: Promote the conservation of water.</li> </ul>



Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
<p>Integrated Resource Plan for Electricity (IRP) 2010-2030</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Objective 6: Diversify supply sources and primary sources of energy.</li> <li>» Objective 7: Promote energy efficiency in the economy.</li> <li>» Objective 8: Increase access to modern energy.</li> </ul> <p>The Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) for Electricity 2010 – 2030 is a subset of the IEP and constitutes South Africa's National electricity plan. The primary objective of the IRP is to determine the long-term electricity demand and detail how this demand should be met in terms of generating capacity, type, timing and cost. The IRP also serves as input to other planning functions, including amongst others, economic development and funding, and environmental and social policy formulation.</p> <p>The promulgated IRP 2010–2030 identified the preferred generation technology required to meet expected demand growth up to 2030. It incorporated government objectives such as affordable electricity, reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, reduced water consumption, diversified electricity generation sources, localisation and regional development.</p> <p>Since the promulgated IRP 2010–2030, the following capacity developments have taken place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» A total 6 422 MW under the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Programme (REIPPP) has been procured, with 3 876 MW operational and made available to the grid as of 31 March 2021<sup>3</sup> with 5 078MW from 79 IPP projects operational and made available to the grid<sup>4</sup>.</li> <li>» 2 000MW of generating capacity (comprising various technologies) has been awarded to 8 Independent Power Producers under the RMIPPPP in March 2021.</li> <li>» 2 583MW of electricity in bid window 5 of the REIPPPP, announced on 28 October 2021 (DMRE, 2021).</li> <li>» IPPs have commissioned 1 005 MW from two Open Cycle Gas Turbine (OCGT) peaking plants.</li> <li>» Under the Eskom build programme, the following capacity has been commissioned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 1 332 MW of Ingula pumped storage, 1 588 MW of Medupi, 800 MW of Kusile and</li> <li>* 100 MW of Sere Wind Farm.</li> </ul> </li> <li>» 18 000MW of new generation capacity has been committed to.</li> </ul> <p>Besides capacity additions, a number of assumptions have changed since the promulgation of IRP 2010–2030. Key assumptions that changed include the electricity demand projection, Eskom's existing plant performance, as well as new technology costs. In addition, environmental considerations such as South Africa's contribution to Greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change, local air quality and water availability have come to the fore.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Bid windows 1, 2, 3, 3.5, 4 and small BW1(1S2) and small BW2(2S2). 2 583 MW of renewable energy capacity was awarded to IPPs in the REIPPPP bid window 5 in October 2021. 860MW of renewable energy capacity (all solar PV) was awarded to IPPs in the REIPPPP bid window 6 in December 2022.

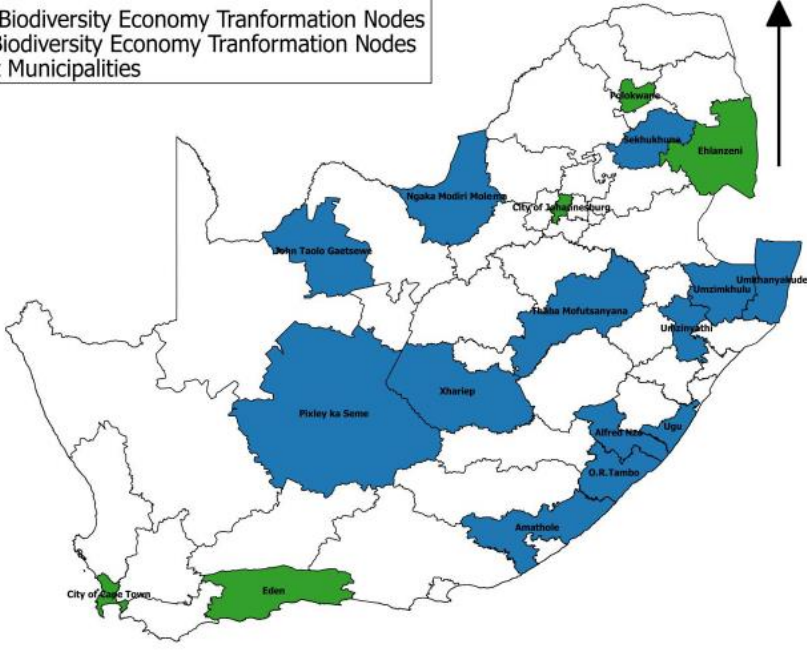
<sup>4</sup><https://www.cliffedekkerhofmeyr.com/en/news/publications/2019/Corporate/energy-alert-22-october-The-Integrated-Resource-Plan-2019-A-promising-future-roadmap-for-generation-capacity-in-South-Africa.html>

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>These considerations necessitated the review and update of the IRP and ultimately the promulgation of a revised plan in October 2019. In terms of the IRP 2019, South Africa continues to pursue a diversified energy mix that reduces reliance on a single or a few primary energy sources. In the period prior to 2030, the system requirements are largely for incremental capacity addition (modular) and flexible technology, to complement the existing installed inflexible capacity. South Africa is a signatory to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and has ratified the agreement. In line with INDCs (submitted to the UNFCCC in November 2016), South Africa's emissions are expected to peak, plateau and from year 2025 decline.</p> <p>Following consideration of all these factors, the following provision has been made for the following new capacity by 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» 1 500MW of coal;</li> <li>» 2 500MW of hydro;</li> <li>» 6 000MW of solar PV;</li> <li>» 14 400MW of wind;</li> <li>» 1 860MW of nuclear;</li> <li>» 2 088MW of storage;</li> <li>» 3 000MW of gas/diesel; and</li> <li>» 4 000MW from other distributed generation, co-generation, biomass and landfill technologies.</li> </ul> <p>Development of the Vrede Solar PV Facility project would contribute towards the allocation for solar energy development.</p>
<p>New Growth Path (NGP) Framework, 23 November 2010</p>	<p>The purpose of the New Growth Path (NGP) Framework is to provide effective strategies towards accelerated job-creation through the development of an equitable economy and sustained growth. The target of the NGP is to create 5 million jobs by 2020; with economic growth and employment creation as the key indicators identified in the NGP. The framework seeks to identify key structural changes in the economy that can improve performance in terms of labour absorption and the composition and rate of growth.</p> <p>To achieve this, government will seek to, amongst other things, identify key areas for large-scale employment creation, as a result of changes in conditions in South Africa and globally, and to develop a policy package to facilitate employment creation in these areas.</p>
<p>National Development Plan 2030 (2012)</p>	<p>The National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 is a plan prepared by the National Planning Commission in consultation with the South African public which is aimed at eliminating poverty and reducing inequality by 2030.</p> <p>In terms of the Energy Sectors role in empowering South Africa, the NDP envisages that, by 2030, South Africa will have an energy sector that promotes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Economic growth and development through adequate investment in energy infrastructure. The sector should provide reliable and efficient energy service at competitive rates, while supporting economic growth through job creation.</li> <li>» Social equity through expanded access to energy at affordable tariffs and through targeted, sustainable subsidies for needy households.</li> </ul>

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>» Environmental sustainability through efforts to reduce pollution and mitigate the effects of climate change.</p> <p>In formulating its vision for the energy sector, the NDP took the IRP 2010 as its point of departure. Therefore, although electricity generation from coal is still seen as part of the energy mix within the NDP, the plan sets out steps that aim to ensure that, by 2030, South Africa's energy system will look very different to the current situation: coal will contribute proportionately less to primary-energy needs, while gas and renewable energy resources – especially wind, solar, and imported hydroelectricity – will play a much larger role.</p> <p>The NDP aims to provide a supportive environment for growth and development, while promoting a more labour-absorbing economy. The development of Vrede Solar PV Facility supports the NDP through the development of energy-generating infrastructure which will not lead to the generation of GHGs and will result in economic development and growth of the area surrounding the development area.</p>
Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs)	<p>The Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission (PICC) is integrating and phasing investment plans across 18 Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) which have 5 core functions, including to unlock opportunity, transform the economic landscape, create new jobs, strengthen the delivery of basic services and support the integration of African economies.</p> <p>SIP 8 of the energy SIPs supports the development of RE projects as follows: Green energy in support of the South African economy: Support sustainable green energy initiatives on a national scale through a diverse range of clean energy options as envisaged in the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP 2010) and supports bio-fuel production facilities.</p> <p>The development of Vrede Solar PV Facility is aligned with SIP 8 as it constitutes a green energy initiative that would contribute clean energy in accordance with the IRP 2010 – 2030.</p>
National Climate Change Response Policy, 2011	<p>The Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 was held in Paris from 30 November to 12 December 2015. From this conference, an agreement to tackle global warming was reached between 195 countries. This Agreement is open for signature and subject to ratification, acceptance or approval by States and regional economic integration organisations that are Parties to the Convention from 22 April 2016 to 21 April 2017. Thereafter, this Agreement shall be open for accession from the day following the date on which it is closed for signature. The agreement can only be sanctioned once it has been ratified by 55 countries, representing at least 55% of emissions.</p> <p>South Africa signed the Agreement in April 2016 and ratified the agreement on 01 November 2016. The Agreement was assented to by the National Council of Provinces on 27 October 2016, and the National Assembly on 1 November 2016. The Agreement was promulgated on 04 November 2016, thirty days after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention, which account for at least 55% of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary.</p>

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>South Africa's National Climate Change Response Policy (NCCRP) establishes South Africa's approach to addressing climate change, including adaptation and mitigation responses. The NCCRP formalises Government's vision for a transition to a low carbon economy, through the adoption of the 'Peak, Plateau and Decline' (PPD) GHG emissions trajectory whereby South Africa's emissions should peak between 2020 and 2025, plateau for approximately a decade, and then decline in absolute terms thereafter, and based on this the country has pledged to reduce emissions by 34% and 42% below Business As Usual (BAU) emissions in 2020 and 2025, respectively.</p> <p>The policy provides support for Vrede Solar PV Facility, which will contribute to managing climate change impacts, supporting the emergency response capacity, as well as assist in reducing GHG emissions in a sustainable manner.</p>
<p>Climate Change Bill, 2018</p>	<p>On 08 June 2018, the Minister of Environmental Affairs published the Climate Change Bill ("the Bill") for public comment. The Bill provides a framework for climate change regulation in South Africa aimed at governing South Africa's sustainable transition to a climate resilient, low carbon economy and society. The Bill provides a procedural outline that will be developed through the creation of frameworks and plans.</p> <p>Vrede Solar PV Facility comprises a renewable energy generation Facility and would not result in the generation or release of emissions during its operation.</p>
<p>Just Transition Framework for South Africa (June 2022) - A Presidential Climate Commission Report</p>	<p>The Presidential Climate Commission (PCC) is a multi-stakeholder body established by the President of the Republic of South Africa to (1) advise on the country's climate change response and (2) support a just transition to a low-carbon climate-resilient economy and society. The PCC facilitates dialogue between social partners on these issues—defining the type of economy and society the country wants to achieve, and detailed pathways for how to get there.</p> <p>One of the first tasks of the PCC was to design a just transition framework for South Africa. In December 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa created the PCC to oversee and facilitate a just transition to a low-emissions and climate-resilient economy. The just transition framework is the first building block towards this objective, bringing coordination and coherence to just transition planning in the country. The just transition framework sets out a shared vision for the just transition, principles to guide the transition, and policies and governance arrangements to give effect to the transition.</p> <p>The Just Transition Framework builds on research, policies, and consultations on the just transition in South Africa, as well as international best practice guidelines.</p> <p>The Just Transition Framework sets out a shared vision for the just transition, principles to guide the transition, and policies and governance arrangements to give effect to the transition from an economy that is predominantly reliant on fossil-fuel based energy, towards a low-emissions and climate-resilient economy. The framework is a planning tool for achieving a just transition in South Africa, setting</p>

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
<p>National Biodiversity Economy Strategy (NBES) (March 2016)</p>	<p>out the actions that the government and its social partners will take to achieve a just transition, and the outcomes to be realised in the short, medium, and long term.</p> <p>The biodiversity economy of South Africa encompasses the businesses and economic activities that either directly depend on biodiversity for their core business or that contribute to conservation of biodiversity through their activities. The commercial wildlife and the bioprospecting industries of South Africa provide cornerstones for the biodiversity economy and are the focus of this strategy.</p> <p>Both the wildlife and bioprospecting sub-sectors of the biodiversity economy have already demonstrated the potential for significant future development and growth. In the study commissioned on the situational analysis of the biodiversity economy, the contribution of the biodiversity economy to the national economy can be measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with the wildlife and bioprospecting industries contributing approximately R3 billion to GDP in 2013. Growth in the wildlife and bioprospecting industries can make a significant impact on the national economy, while contributing to national imperatives such as job creation, rural development and conservation of our natural resources.</p> <p>The Wildlife Industry value chain is centred on game and wildlife farming/ranching activities that relate to the stocking, trading, breeding, and hunting of game, and all the services and goods required to support this value chain. The key drivers of this value chain include domestic hunters, international hunters and a growing retail market demand for wildlife products such as game meat and taxidermy products. This sector is therefore characterised by an interesting combination of agriculture, eco-tourism and conservation characteristics.</p> <p>Over the period 2008-2013, the total Wildlife Industry market grew by more than 14% per year. This growth comprised an average annual growth exceeding 6% in domestic hunting, a decrease in international hunting, and an exponential growth in live auction sales. It is considered likely that the consolidated Wildlife Industry has the potential to experience a weighted average annual growth rate of between 4 %-14 % per year up to 2030.</p> <p>In order for the wildlife and bioprospecting sub-sectors of the biodiversity economy to achieve its full potential, a strategic partnership between the state, private sector and communities is required. To this end, a National Biodiversity Economy Strategy (NBES) is required to guide the sustainable growth of the wildlife and bioprospecting industries and to provide a basis for addressing constraints to growth, ensuring sustainability, identifying clear stakeholder's responsibilities and monitoring progress of the Enabling Actions.</p> <p>The Vision of NBES is to optimise the total economic benefits of the wildlife and bioprospecting industries through its sustainable use, in line with the Vision of the Department of Environmental Affairs. The purpose of NBES is to provide a 14-year national coordination, leadership and guidance to the development and growth of the biodiversity economy.</p> <p>NBES has set an industry growth goal stating that by 2030, the South African biodiversity economy will achieve an average annualised GDP growth rate of 10% per annum. This envisioned growth curve extends into the year 2030 and is aligned to the efforts of the country's National Development Plan, Vision 2030. The NBES</p>

Relevant legislation or policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>seeks to contribute to the transformation of the biodiversity economy in South Africa through inclusive economic opportunities, reflected by a sector which is equitable - equitable access to resources, equitable and fair processes and procedures and equitable in distribution of resources (i.e. business, human, financial, indigenous species, land, water) in the market.</p> <p>To address these transformation NBES imperatives, NBES has the principles of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Conservation of biodiversity and ecological infrastructure</li> <li>» Sustainable use of indigenous resources</li> <li>» Fair and equitable beneficiation</li> <li>» Socio-economic sustainability</li> <li>» Incentive driven compliance to regulation</li> <li>» Ethical practices</li> <li>» Improving quality and standards of products.</li> </ul> <p>The NBES provides the opportunity to redistribute South Africa's indigenous biological/ genetic resources in an equitable manner, across various income categories and settlement areas of the country. The NBES has prioritised nodes in the country for biodiversity economy transformation, referred to as BET nodes. NBES prioritises 18 BET nodes, 13 rural and 5 urban districts across the nine provinces of the country, with communities having been prioritised for development of small and medium size enterprises and community-based initiatives which sustainably use of indigenous biological and/or genetic resources. The Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality within which the Vrede Solar PV Facility is proposed is identified as a Rural Biodiversity Economy Transformation Node.</p> <div data-bbox="528 1182 1481 1899" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Legend</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #4CAF50; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Urban Biodiversity Economy Transformation Nodes</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #2196F3; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Rural Biodiversity Economy Transformation Nodes</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> District Municipalities</li> </ul>  </div>

**Figure 1.2:** Hierarchy of electricity and planning documents

## 1.5. Provincial Policy and Planning Context

A brief review of the most relevant provincial policies is provided below in **Table 1.3**. The Project is considered to align with the aims of these policies, even if contributions to achieving the goals therein are only minor.

**Table 1.3:** Relevant provincial legislation and policies for Vrede Solar PV Facility

Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
<p>Northern Cape Province Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PDP), 2020- 2025</p>	<p>The Northern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (NCPGDS) identifies poverty reduction as the most significant challenge facing the government and its partners. All other societal challenges that the province faces emanate predominantly from the effects of poverty. The NCPGDS notes that the only effective way to reduce poverty is through long-term sustainable economic growth and development. The sectors where economic growth and development can be promoted include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Agriculture and Agro processing.</li> <li>» Fishing and Mariculture.</li> <li>» Mining and mineral processing.</li> <li>» Transport.</li> <li>» Manufacturing.</li> <li>» Tourism.</li> </ul> <p>However, the NCPGDS also notes that economic development in these sectors also requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Creating opportunities for lifelong learning.</li> <li>» Improving the skills of the labour force to increase productivity.</li> <li>» Increasing accessibility to knowledge and information.</li> </ul> <p>The achievement of these primary development objectives depends on the achievement of a number of related objectives that, at a macro-level, describe necessary conditions for growth and development. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Developing requisite levels of human and social capital.</li> <li>» Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of governance and other development institutions.</li> <li>» Enhancing infrastructure for economic growth and social development.</li> </ul> <p>Of specific relevance to the project, the NCPGDS makes reference to the need to ensure the availability of inexpensive energy. The section notes that in order to promote economic growth in the Northern Cape the availability of electricity to key industrial users at critical localities at rates that enhance the competitiveness of their industries must be ensured. At the same time, the development of new sources of energy through the promotion of the adoption of energy applications that display a synergy with the province's natural resource endowments must be encouraged. <i>In this regard the NCPGDS notes "the development of energy sources such as solar energy, the natural gas fields, bio-fuels, etc., could be some of the means by which new economic opportunity and activity is generated in the Northern Cape"</i>. The NCPGDS also highlights the importance of close co-operation between the public and private sectors in order for the economic development potential of the Northern Cape to be realised.</p>

Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>The NCPGDS also highlights the importance of enterprise development and notes that the current level of private sector development and investment in the Northern Cape are low. In addition, the province also lags in the key policy priority areas of SMME Development and Black Economic Empowerment. The proposed solar energy Facility therefore has the potential to create opportunities to promote private sector investment and the development of SMMEs in the Northern Cape Province.</p> <p>In this regard, care will need to be taken to ensure that the proposed development and associated renewable energy facilities do not negatively impact on the region's natural environment. In this regard, the NCPGDS notes that the sustainable utilisation of the natural resource base on which agriculture depends is critical in the Northern Cape with its fragile eco-systems and vulnerability to climatic variation. The document also indicates that due to the provinces exceptional natural and cultural attributes, it has the potential to become the preferred adventure and ecotourism destination in South Africa.</p> <p>The overall energy objective for the province is to promote the development of renewable energy supply schemes which are considered to be strategically important for increasing the diversity of domestic energy supply and avoiding energy imports, while also minimising the detrimental environmental impacts. The implementation of sustainable renewable energy is also to be promoted within the province through appropriate financial and fiscal instruments. With the developed and proposed independent power producer capacity (including the Vrede Solar PV Facility), the province will produce its own electrical power needs from renewable energy resources (although this energy will be fed into the national grid).</p>
<p>Northern Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (SDF) (2016) – Published 2017</p>	<p>Northern Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (NCSD) (2012) lists a number of sectoral strategies and plans that are to be read and treated as key components of the PSDF. Of these there are a number that are relevant to the proposed STPs. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Sectoral Strategy 1: Provincial Growth and Development Strategy of the Provincial Government.</li> <li>» Sectoral Strategy 2: Comprehensive Growth and Development Programme of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.</li> <li>» Sectoral Strategy 5: Local Economic Development (LED) Strategy of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.</li> <li>» Sectoral Strategy 11: Small Micro Medium Enterprises (SMME) Development Strategy of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.</li> <li>» Sectoral Strategy 12: Tourism Strategy of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.</li> <li>» Sectoral Strategy 19: Provincial renewable energy strategy (to be facilitated by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism).</li> </ul> <p>Section C8.2.3, Energy Objectives, sets out the energy objectives for the Northern Cape Province. The section makes specific reference to renewable energy. Of relevance the objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Promote the development of renewable energy supply schemes. Large-scale renewable energy supply schemes are strategically important for increasing the diversity of domestic energy supplies and avoiding energy imports while minimizing detrimental environmental impacts.</li> </ul>



Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» In order to reinforce the existing transmission network and to ensure a reliable electricity supply in the Northern Cape, construct a 400 kV transmission power line from Ferrum Substation (near Kathu/Sishen) to Garona Substation (near Groblershoop). There is a national electricity supply shortage, and the country is now in a position where it needs to commission additional plants urgently. Consequently, renewable energy projects are a high priority.</li> <li>» Develop and institute innovative new energy technologies to improve access to reliable, sustainable, and affordable energy services with the objective to realize sustainable economic growth and development. The goals of securing supply, providing energy services, tackling climate change, avoiding air pollution, and reaching sustainable development in the province offer both opportunities and synergies which require joint planning between local and provincial government as well as the private sector.</li> <li>» Develop and institute energy supply schemes with the aim to contribute to the achievement of the targets set by the White Paper on Renewable Energy (2003).</li> </ul> <p>Section C8.3.3, Energy Policy, sets out the policy guidelines for the development of the energy sector, with specific reference to the renewable energy sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The construction of telecommunication infrastructure must be strictly regulated in terms of the spatial plans and guidelines put forward in the PSDF. They must be carefully placed to avoid visual impacts on landscapes of significant symbolic, aesthetic, cultural or historic value and should blend in with the surrounding environment to the extent possible.</li> <li>» EIAs undertaken for such construction must assess the impacts of such activities against the directives listed in (a) above.</li> <li>» Renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, thermal, biomass and domestic hydroelectricity are to constitute 25% of the province's energy generation capacity by 2020. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The following key policy principles for renewable energy apply.</li> <li>* Full cost accounting: Pricing policies will be based on an assessment of the full economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of energy production and utilisation.</li> <li>* Equity: There should be equitable access to basic services to meet human needs and ensure human well-being. Each generation has a duty to avoid impairing the ability of future generations to ensure their own well-being.</li> <li>* Global and international cooperation and responsibilities: Government recognises its shared responsibility for global and regional issues and act with due regard to the principles contained in relevant policies and applicable regional and international agreements.</li> <li>* Allocation of functions: Government will allocate functions within the framework of the Constitution to competent institutions and spheres of government that can most effectively achieve the objectives of the energy policy.</li> <li>* The implementation of sustainable renewable energy is to be promoted through appropriate financial and fiscal instruments.</li> <li>* An effective legislative system to promote the implementation of renewable energy is to be developed, implemented, and continuously improved.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Public awareness of the benefits and opportunities of renewable energy must be promoted.</li> <li>* The development of renewable energy systems is to be harnessed as a mechanism for economic development throughout the province in accordance with the Sustainable Development Initiative (SDI) approach (refer to Toolkit D10) or any comparable approach.</li> <li>* Renewable energy must, first, and foremost, be used to address the needs of the province before being exported</li> </ul> <p>The development of the proposed PV Facility and its associated grid connection infrastructure will contribute to economic growth and development, which will in turn help eradicate poverty through job creation and skills development in the region which will be in line with the Northern Cape SDF.</p>
<p>Northern Cape Climate Change Response Strategy (2017)</p>	<p>The key aspects of the PCCRS Report are summarised in the MEC's (NCPG: Environment and Nature Conservation) 2011 budget speech: "The Provincial Climate Change Response Strategy will be underpinned by specific critical sector climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies that include the Water, Agriculture and Human Health sectors as the 3 key Adaptation Sectors, the Industry and Transport alongside the Energy sector as the 3 key Mitigation Sectors with the Disaster Management, Natural Resources and Human Society, livelihoods and Services sectors as 3 remaining key Sectors to ensure proactive long term responses to the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as flooding and wild fire, with heightened requirements for effective disaster management".</p> <p>Key points from MEC's address include the NCPG's commitment to develop and implement policy in accord with the National Green Paper for the National Climate Change Response Strategy (2010), and an acknowledgement of the NCP's extreme vulnerability to climate-change driven desertification. The development and promotion of a provincial green economy, including green jobs, is identified as an important provincial intervention in addressing climate change. The renewable energy sector, including solar and wind energy (but also biofuels and energy from waste), is explicitly indicated as an important element of the Provincial Climate Change Response Strategy. The MEC also indicated that the NCP was involved in the processing a number of WEF and Solar Energy Facility EIA applications.</p> <p>This is due to RE sources having considerable potential for increasing security of supply by diversifying the energy supply portfolio and increasingly contributes towards a long-term sustainable energy future. In terms of environmental impacts, RE results in the emission of less GHGs than fossil fuels, as well as fewer airborne particulates, and other pollutants. Furthermore, RE generation technologies save on water consumption in comparison with coal-fired power plants.</p>
<p>Northern Cape Province Green Document (2017-2018)</p>	<p>The NCP Green Document (2017-2018) was prepared by the Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism and provides an impact assessment of IPPs on the communities in the province located within a 50 km radius from existing facilities. The document notes that the NCP is nationally a leader in commercial-scale renewable energy projects. By 2018 a total of 23 IPP projects in the province had been integrated into the national grid. These projects include Solar PV, Concentrated Solar and WEFs. The document notes that through their economic development obligations these projects have already made a significant positive contribution to affected communities. Much of the effort has been directed at supporting local education. The document also notes</p>

Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>that, as these projects are committed to 20-year minimum lifespans, the collectively hold a tremendous potential for socio-economic upliftment.</p> <p>Key issues identified with regard to improving the potential beneficial impact of IPPs in the NCP include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Local community members abusing project benefits for personal gain.</li> <li>» Difficulty in outreach to local community beneficiaries due to high local illiteracy levels.</li> <li>» A lack of business skills generally hampers the successful establishment of local small enterprises which could benefit from projects.</li> <li>» Community benefit obligations are currently met in a piecemeal and uncoordinated fashion.</li> <li>» Anticipated community benefits are often frustrated by inadequate engagement and insufficient ongoing consultation.</li> <li>» The scarcity of people skilled in maths and sciences in local communities hampers meaningful higher-level local skills development and employment.</li> <li>» Insufficient support from local municipalities for IPP development.</li> </ul> <p>The Northern Cape Province Green Document aims at building a sustainable economy to eradicate poverty and improve social development. The proposed Vrede Solar PV Facility will contribute to growth and development of the local area by expanding the economic base and creating employment opportunities.</p>

### 1.6. Local Policy and Planning Context

The local tiers of government relevant to the Vrede Solar PV Facility project are in the Renosterberg- Local Municipality, within the Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality. Instruments and/or policies at both the district and local level contain objectives which align with the development of Vrede Solar PV Facility. These include, economic growth, job creation, community upliftment and poverty alleviation.

**Table 1.4:** Relevant district and local legislation and policies for Vrede Solar PV Facility

Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
<p>Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality Integrated Development Plan (IDP), 2017-2022</p>	<p>The vision for the PKSDM is "Developed and Sustainable District for Future Generations"</p> <p>To mission statement that underpins the vision is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Supporting our local municipalities to create a home for all in our towns, settlements, and rural areas to render dedicated services.</li> <li>» Providing political and administrative leadership and direction in the development planning process.</li> <li>» Promoting economic growth that is shared across and within communities.</li> <li>» Promoting and enhancing integrated development planning in the operations of our municipalities.</li> <li>» Aligning development initiatives in the district to the National Development Plan.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategic Objectives to address the vision that are relevant to the project includes the promotion of economic growth in the district and enhance service delivery. Chapter 4, Development of Strategies, highlights the key strategies of the PKSDM. The promotion of economic development is the most relevant strategy for the project. The IDP also notes that the growth and development context</p>

Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>in the district has also changed radically since 2013 (after it had been stagnant for decades) owing mainly to private and public investments in the area as a hub for renewable energy generation and astronomy.</p> <p>The IDP notes that the economy in the Pixley Ka Seme municipal area is characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» High levels of poverty and low levels of education.</li> <li>» Low levels of development despite the strategic location in terms of the national transport corridors.</li> <li>» High rate of unemployment, poverty and social grant dependence.</li> <li>» Prone to significant environmental changes owing to long-term structural changes (such as climate change, energy crises and other shifts).</li> </ul> <p>Of specific relevance the IDP highlights the potential for renewable energy to help address some of these challenges.</p> <p>The implementation of Vrede Solar PV Facility would therefore contribute positively towards local economic development, as well as the creation of new job opportunities within the Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality.</p>
<p>Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality Spatial Development Framework (2014)</p>	<p>The SDF (2014) notes that the vision for the PKSDM is "Pixley Ka Seme DM, pioneers of development, a home and future for all". The Mission Statement that underpins the vision refers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Effective and efficient service delivery.</li> <li>» Optimal human and natural resource development.</li> <li>» Local economic growth and development, job creation and poverty alleviation.</li> <li>» A vibrant tourism industry.</li> <li>» To participate in the fight to reduce the infection rate and lessen the impact of HIV/ Aids and other communicable diseases.</li> <li>» A safe, secure and community friendly environment.</li> </ul> <p>The SDF identifies the opportunities and constraints associated with the district. Of relevance to the project the opportunities include:</p> <p>Renewable Energy and the identification of a renewable energy hub in the region. The natural environment and maintenance and conservation of the pristine natural environment to support sustainable farming into the future is also identified as an opportunity. The SDF notes that Pixley Ka Seme District area with its abundance of sunshine and vast tracts of available land has attracted considerable interest from solar energy investors. The high solar index of the area provides many opportunities in terms of the development of renewable energy. This has been acknowledged by the Northern Cape Government with the identification of the Renewable Energy Hub. The areas around the northern and eastern borders of the Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality form part of this hub with the potential to stimulate special economic development zoned within the area that have the potential to stimulate industrial development.</p> <p>The PKSDM also falls within the Solar Development Corridor as identified in the Northern Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework. The corridor extends from Kakamas to Upington and down to De Aar in the south-east (Figure 5.3). Section 5.6.1 of the SDF also refers to the establishment of a Renewable Energy Hub proposed for the Northern Cape stretching from the west coast right up to the De Aar region (Figure 5.4). The Hub can accommodate special economic development within the zone as earmarked and entails a 100km wide zone. The proposed project is located within the corridor and proposed hub.</p>

Relevant policy

Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility

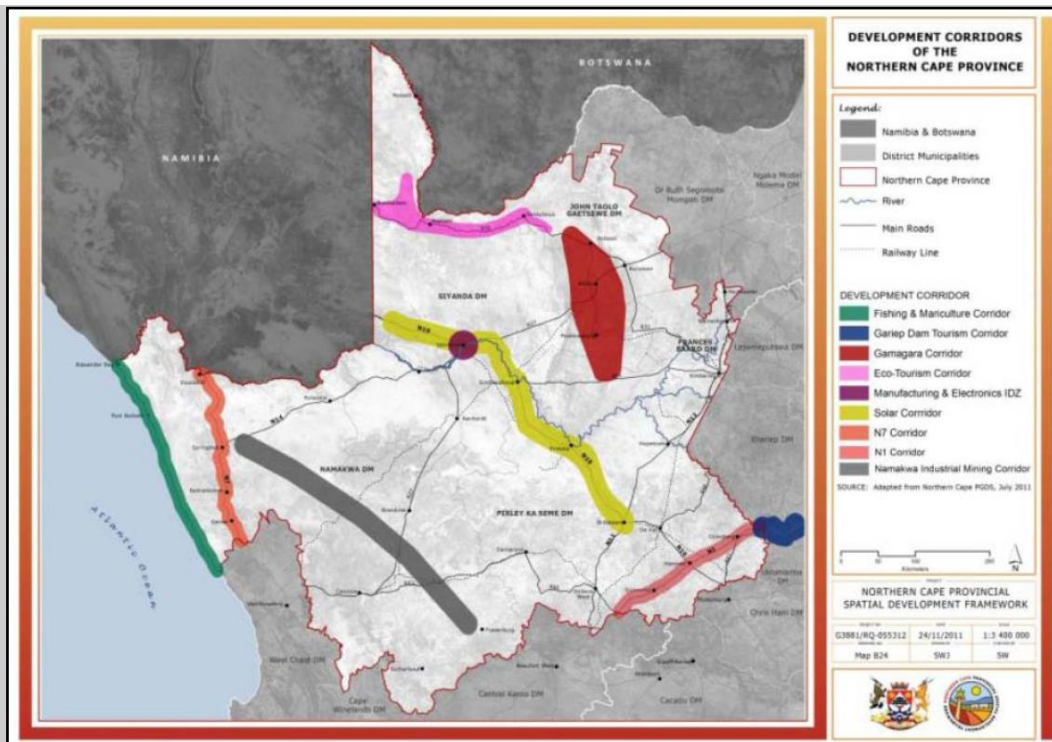


Figure 1.3: Northern Cape Development Corridors-Solar Corridor (yellow) » (Source: Northern Cape SDF)

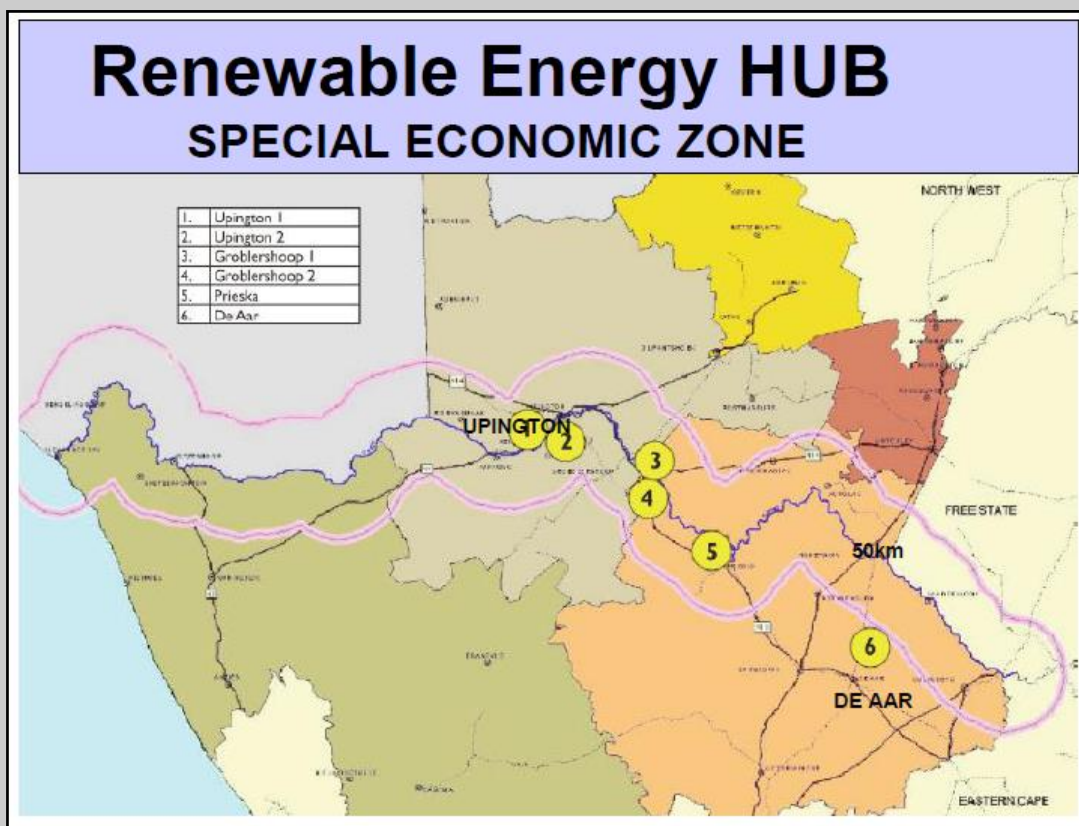
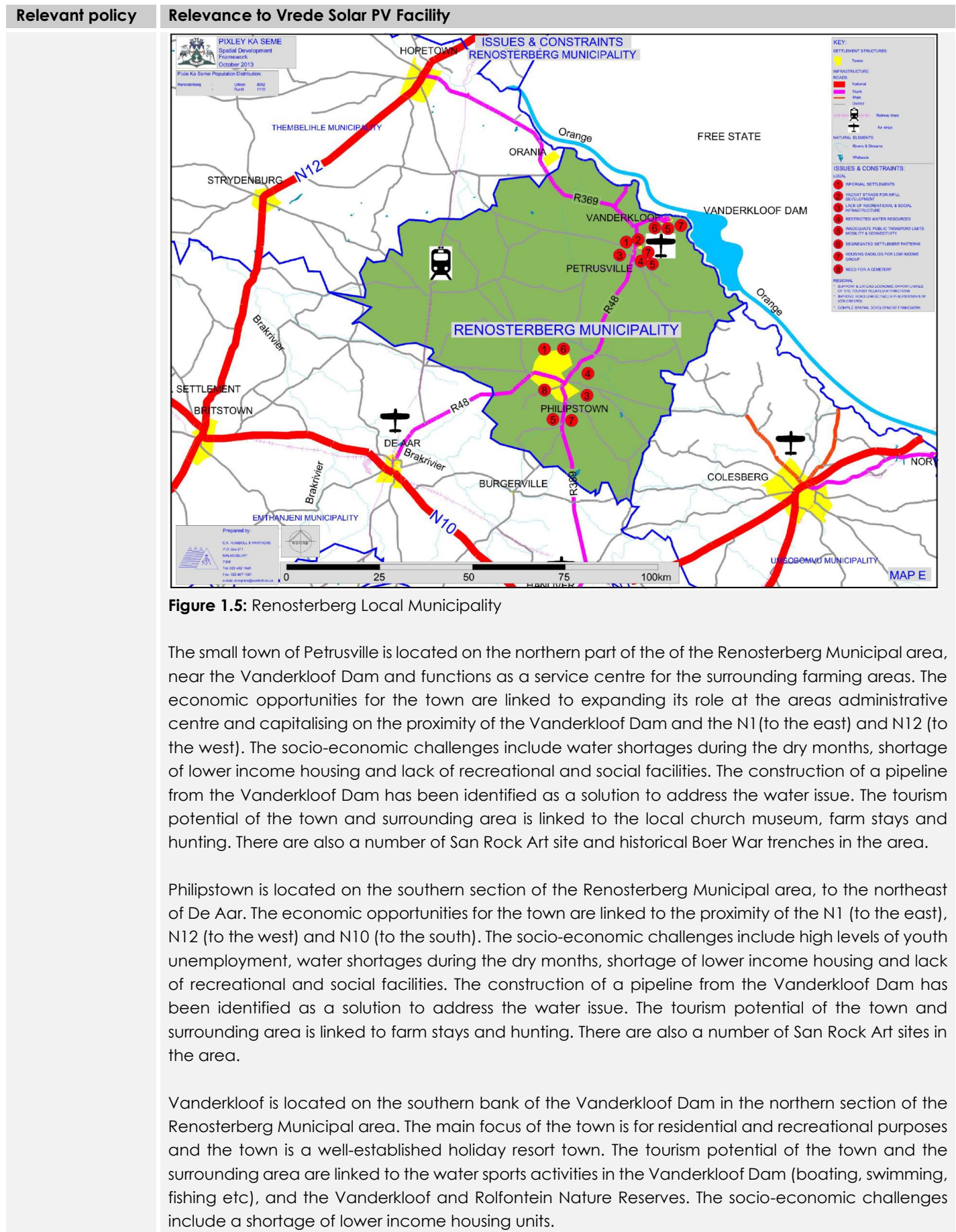


Figure 1.4: Renewable Energy Hub SED (Source: Northern PKSDM SDF)

Relevant policy	Relevance to Vrede Solar PV Facility
	<p>The SDF does however also note that the area is known for its clean air and open skies with limited light pollution. Potential visual impacts are therefore an issue that needs to be considered.</p> <p>In this regard the SDF notes that the topography of Pixley Ka Seme region is one of its main assets with vast open spaces and unspoilt panoramic visual vistas stretching over great distances. This asset makes for excellent scenic drives throughout the whole of the region from the flat plains to crossing the main rivers of South Africa. Visual vistas, ridges and "koppies" are assets within the region and they must be handled with sensitivity.</p> <p>The relevant constraints include high levels of poverty and unemployment, backlog in basic services, including electricity and housing in rural areas, the limited supply of water and overall scarcity of water in the region to support economic development.</p> <p>The development challenges that face the Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality include high unemployment and poverty rates and low income which are placing increasing demand on service delivery because very few people are able to pay for services. Declining population numbers, and alcohol and substance abuse are also key challenges.</p> <p>In terms of services, inadequate schools in farming areas results in children having to travel long distances to areas where they go to school. There are also insufficient health centres and lack of amenities and recreational services. Where these services do exist, they are often poorly managed and maintained. The level of key services, such as refuse removal, are also low, while many rural and a number of urban households rely on boreholes for their water supply.</p> <p>Climate change is also identified as a key risk. The SDF notes that the Karoo is predicted to experience more drought periods, coupled with increased evaporation and temperatures and this will negatively impact already restricted water supply. It is likely that the greatest impacts will be on water supply.</p>
<p>Renosterberg Local Municipality Integrated Development Plan (2017- 2021)</p>	<p>A copy of the latest five-year IDP (2017-2021) for the RLM was not available at the time preparing the Scoping Report. This is likely linked to the dissolution of RLM by the Northern Cape Provincial Government on 7 September 2020. A statement by the Premier of the Northern Cape, Dr, Zamai Saul (7 September 2020) noted that the "Renosterberg Local Municipality has been plagued with political and administrative challenges and failing to fulfil the prescripts of Chapter 7 as enshrined in Section 152 of the Constitution". The statement also note that the intervention efforts made by the Departments of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), Provincial Treasury and the Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality and the respective MECs to monitor and provide support to Renosterberg local municipality had not succeeded. The Municipal Council has also failed to implement and support the National Treasury discretionary Financial Recovery Plan that commenced in 2018 and was on-going until November 2019.</p> <p>The information on the RLM is therefore based on the information contained in the Pixley Ka Seme District SDF 2013 - 2018 Sixth Draft May 2014.</p> <p>The locality of the RLM along the southern bank of the Gariep (Orange) River provides a sustainable water resource and creates a number of development opportunities in terms of tourism and agriculture. Development opportunities are also supported by close locality of Philipstown to the N10 and N1 as major transport routes that cross the Pixley Ka Seme District Municipal Area. The municipal area consists of the towns of Petrusville, Philipstown and Vanderkloof (Figure 5.5). The administrative centre is Petrusville.</p>



## **1.7. Conclusion**

From a review of the relevant policy and planning framework, it can be concluded that the project is well aligned with the policy framework, and a clear need for the project is seen from a policy perspective at a local, provincial, and National level.