

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT:

Proposed Construction of Off Take 13A Potable Water Pipeline as part of the Lower Thukela Bulk Water Supply at Shaka's Head, iLembe District Municipality, KZN

A Project of iLembe District Municipality



10 December 2014

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide information to interested and affected parties (I&APs) regarding the proposed Construction of the Off Take 13A Potable Water Pipeline as part of the Lower Thukela Bulk Water Supply at Shaka's Head, iLembe District Municipality, KZN.

Triplo4 Sustainable Solutions (hereafter referred to as Triplo4) was appointed as Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner by Black Balance Projects (on behalf of their client, iLembe District Municipality) for the proposed construction of the off take 13A of the potable water pipeline.

LOCATION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

The study site is situated approximately 40 km to the north of Durban and 5km to the north of Ballito and Compensation at Shaka's Head.

Co-ordinates of proposed development

Pipeline starting point– From the N2

Latitude /Longitude	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
South	29	29	39.63
East	31	12	55.33

End point – Adjacent P387

Latitude /Longitude	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
South	29	28	44.17
East	31	10	8.69

Figure 1: Locality Map showing the proposed Off Take 13A Pipeline Route.

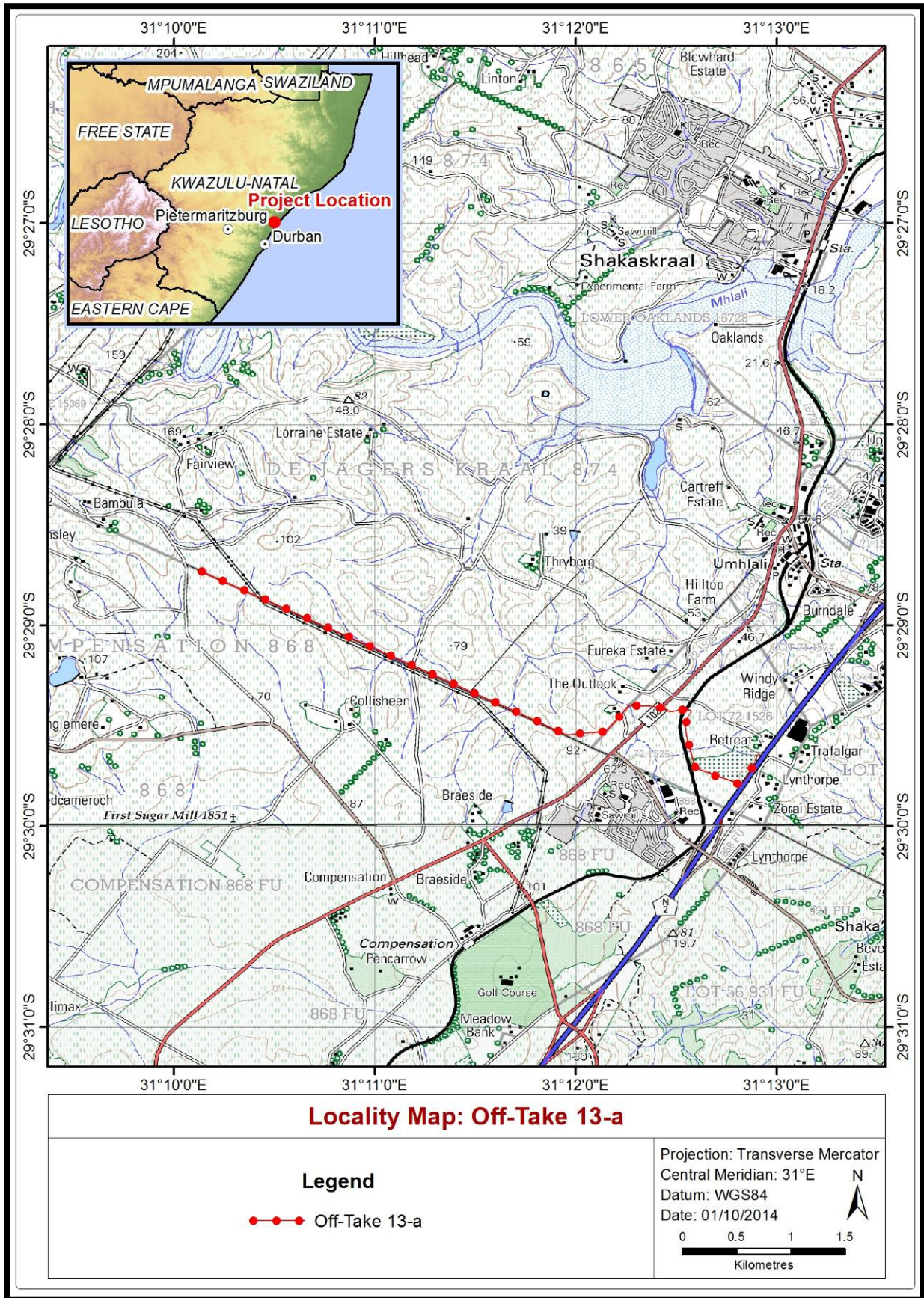


Figure 2: A Map of the proposed Construction of the Off Take 13A Pipeline outlined in Pink



PROJECT DETAIL

The proposed construction for Off-take 13A forms part of the Lower Thukela Bulk Water Supply Scheme which is a project of the iLembe District Municipality and co-funded by the Department of Water Affairs.

The construction of Off-take 13A is part of the sections of the potable water pipeline that forms part of the broader Bulk Water Supply Scheme in the lower Thukela Region. The proposed construction of Off-take 13A potable water pipeline is part of the sections which form part of the water supply to Tongaat Industrial Development.

The proposed pipeline is located in Shaka's Head off the N2 and is approximately 6.3 km in length with an outside diameter of approximately 800 mm. The proposed Off take 13A bulk water pipeline project makes provision for Bulk Supply of Potable water to communities that currently do not have access to reticulated potable water in the Lower Thukela Region.

PROJECT MOTIVATION

There is a growing need and urgency to provide adequate potable water to many communities that do not have access to the life sustaining resource, particularly in rural areas. The proposed construction of the Off take 13A pipeline forms part of the Lower Thukela Bulk Water Supply Scheme that has been developed to address the challenges associated with poor supply of reticulated potable water in Northern KZN. Overall there is an ongoing need to address the current and future water supply backlogs of which requires continued investment in new infrastructure to areas that lack access to safe water.

Thus the construction of the Off Take 13A Pipeline for Bulk water supply meets the objectives of addressing the challenges of inadequate water service provision. The project also brings about socio-economic benefits as it promotes healthier and uplifted communities as the number of people that have access to clean water will increase and the risk associated with use of untreated water will be reduced significantly. The proposed construction of the Off take 13A pipeline is in the interest of the greater public as improving water service provision to those who currently do not have access to safe potable water is indeed a priority that is on top of the development agenda for KZN.

SPECIALIST EVALUATION

An independent Wetland and Ecological Habitat Assessment was conducted by Mr Clayton Cook, and the following is a summary of the findings with an additional figure (figure 3) to indicate the sensitivity of the proposed site:

Ecological Habitat Assessment:

- The Off-take 13A project area is dominated by current sugarcane plantations and secondary succession *Eragrostiscurvula*, *Imperatacylindrica*, *Cynodondactylon* grasslands dominated by anthropogenic grasses and pioneer weedy plant species and invaded by alien invasive plant species.
- The majority of bird species recorded during the site visit were observed in the remnant pockets of indigenous woodland patches along the channelled valley bottom wetlands
- Reptile species are extremely sensitive to habitat destruction and transformation. Low reptile diversity is expected within the adjacent degraded road reserves and current agricultural lands. Medium-low amphibian diversity is expected within the degraded artificially created drainage lines due to extremely limited habitat diversity as well as habitat degradation due to deterioration of water quality and alien vegetation invasion. The channelled valley bottom wetlands offers suitable habitat for certain frog species including Common River Frogs. The moist coastal forest patches along the riparian zone of the channelled valley bottom wetlands offers suitable breeding habitat for Natal or Forest Tree Frogs.

BID for the Proposed construction of Off Take 13A Potable Water Pipeline, iLembe District Municipality, KZN
Wetland Assessment:

- The pipeline bisects the channelled valley bottom wetlands in degraded and transformed sections of riparian zone and little or no hygrophilous vegetation. There have been extensive anthropogenic modifications to the valley bottom wetland and the adjacent footslope seepage vegetation has been completely transformed into sugarcane fields. The areas between the valley bottom wetland and the adjacent footslope seepage wetlands have been impacted on by intensive agricultural activities (ploughing of the soils within the seepage wetlands) and planting with sugarcane.
- The functions of wetland ecosystems have been severely compromised and have lost the natural connectivity due to current and historic agricultural practices. Thus the transformed hillslope seepage wetlands surrounding the pipeline alignment have extremely limited hydrological functioning as the water is directed into artificially created drainage lines. The majority of the hillslope seepage wetland surrounding the site is completely transformed and the natural hydrological patterns totally disrupted. Due to the nature of the transformation, there is little or no chance that these areas will be able to be returned to a natural state, and would likely remain permanently modified

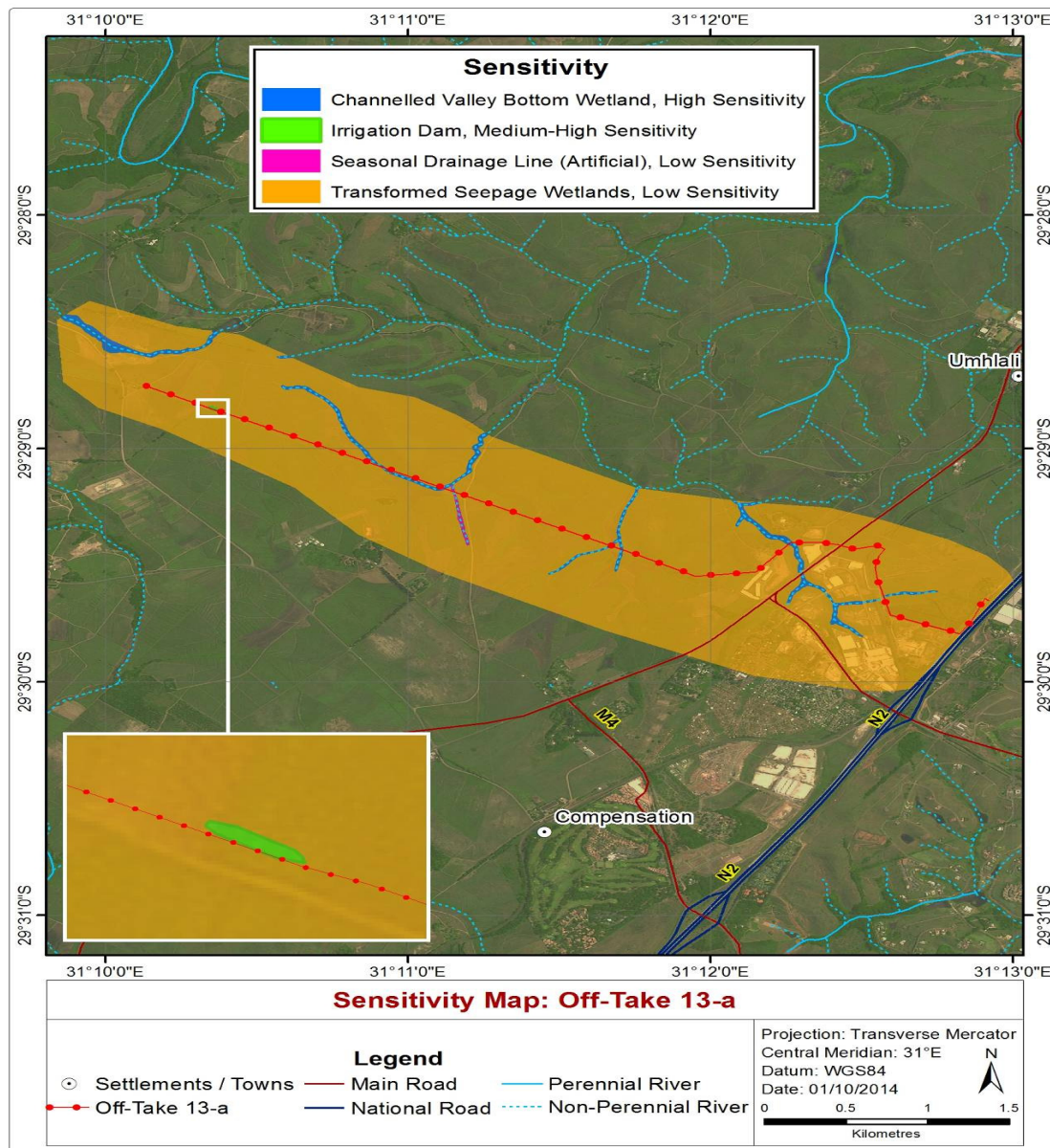


Figure 3: Preliminary Wetland Delineation Map for the Proposed Off-take 13A Bulk Water pipeline Project

A Heritage Impact Assessment to be conducted during the basic assessment process and findings will be incorporated into the draft basic assessment report.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESSES

Relevant Environmental Legislation

The below mentioned environmental activities are potentially being triggered by the proposed development, requiring an Environmental Authorisation from KZN EDTEA:

Listing Notice 1 (GNR 544, 2010):

Activity No.	Listed activity as per the project description
Activity 9	The construction of facilities or infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water, sewage or storm water – (i) with an internal diameter of 0,36 metres or more; or The proposed 13A pipeline will be approximately 6.3 km in length with a diameter of 0.8m
Activity 11	The construction of infrastructure or structures covering 50 square metres or more where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse. The entire project area of the Off-take 13-a bulk water pipeline comprises predominantly of temporary and seasonally inundated transformed (sugarcane) seepage wetlands.
Activity 18	The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic meters into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 5 cubic metres from a watercourse. It is anticipated that more than 5 cubic meters of soil, sand or rock will be excavated or moved during the construction of the pipeline.

A person who wishes to commence, undertake or conduct an activity listed in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, or NEMA EIA Listing Notice 1 activities must conduct a basic assessment process.

Legal requirements for the proposed construction of off take 13A Pipeline

This development triggers activity 9, 11 and activity 18 of Listing Notice 1 of the EIA Regulations (2010) and will conduct a Basic Assessment Report as per The National Environmental Management Act (NEMA).

A Water Use License Application is required for the proposed construction of the Off Take 13A pipeline. A Water Use License (WUL) is a legal process governed by DWA requiring the authorisation of all water uses defined in section 21 of the National Water Act (Act No 36 of 1998) [NWA]. The above mentioned project requires Section 21 (c) and (i) water uses. The NWA defines a Section 21 (c) and (i) water uses as: Section 21 (c) – Impeding and diverting the flow of water in a watercourse, Section 21 (i) – Altering the bed, bank, course or characteristics of a watercourse.

Basic Assessment Process

The basic assessment process being followed comprises of the following:

- Submission of an Application for Authorization to EDTEA;
- Public participation Process:
 - Submission of a Background Information Document (this document) to identified stakeholders;
 - An advertisement in the local newspaper (Stanger Weekly);
 - Placement of a site notification at the site notifying I&AP's of the proposed activity and inviting them to register; and;
 - Relevant I&AP's consultation to address issues and concerns raised;
- Compilation of Draft Basic Assessment Report for I&AP's review and comments, which will be available for review and comment at Illembe House (on the R102, 1B) for a period of 40 days from **30 January 2015 to 10 March 2015**
- Submission of a Basic Assessment Report and details of I&AP consultation to the EDTEA, for a decision;
- Communication to I&AP's regarding the Environmental Authorisation.

Public Participation Process

The public participation process and time frames are summarized as follows:

Announcing the opportunity to participate and register, 10 December 2014

- Distribution of the Background Information Document to all identified stakeholders to announce the project and inviting stakeholders to register as an I&AP and participate in the public participation process;
- Posting of the site notice at the site;
- Advertisement in the "Stanger Weekly" which will be available on **10 December 2014**

Obtaining initial comment,

- Providing this BID and comment sheets to stakeholders; and
- Capturing all comments in a Comment and Response Report / Issues Trial.

Draft BA Report 30 January 2015 to 10 March 2015

- Availability of the draft BA report at iLembe House, R102(1B), Old Main Road , Umhlali, which will contain a full project description, alternatives considered, and relevant information.

Submitting the draft BA report to Authorities, providing a comment period of 40 days (excluding public holidays); and Submitting the final BA report to EDTEA for consideration and communicating the decision to I&AP's.

Your contributions are important

You can get involved in the process:

1. By responding (by phone, fax or e-mail) to our invitation for your involvement in the process;
2. By completing the attached comment form and e-mailing, posting or faxing it to Triplo4 Sustainable Solutions;
3. In writing contacting or telephoning consultants if you have a query, comment or require further project information; and
4. By reviewing and commenting on the BA Report within the allowed 40-day review period.

In terms of the NEMA Regulations (GN 543) you are invited to formally register as an I&AP.

Please note that in terms of Regulation 56 (c), I&AP's need to disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which they may have in the approval or refusal of the application.

Please register by **15 January 2015** by completing the enclosed registration and comment sheet and please declare the interest with regard to the project with your comments.



REGISTRATION FORM:

Proposed Construction of Off Take 13A of the Potable Water Pipeline of the Lower Thukela Bulk Water Supply at Shaka's Head, iLembe District Municipality, KZN

Attention: HantiePlomp

Cell: 083 308 8003

E-mail: hantie@triplo4.com / marilyn@triplo4.com

Fax: 032 946 0192

Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms)		Phone	
Name		Fax	
Organisation / Interes		E-mail	
Signature			

Please tick the appropriate circle and confirm your contact details above:

Registration

<input type="radio"/>	I would like to register as an Interested and Affected Party for the BA process for this Project
<input type="radio"/>	Non stakeholder: I would like you to take me off your distribution sheet for the Proposed. I would not like to receive any further information regarding this process.

Other

If you know of any other individual or organisation that would be interested in registering as an Interested and Affected Party please provide their contact details:

Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms)		Phone	
Name		Fax	
Organisation / Interes		E-mail	
Signature			

