



PALAEONTOLOGICAL DESKTOP ASSESSMENT

Soyuz 6 Wind Energy Facility

NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE 2022

COMPILED FOR: CES – ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES

### Declaration of Independence

I, Elize Butler, declare that –

General declaration:

- I act as the independent palaeontological specialist in this application
- I will perform the work relating to the application in an objective manner, even if this results in views and findings that are not favorable to the applicant
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work;
- I have expertise in conducting palaeontological impact assessments, including knowledge of the Act, Regulations and any guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity;
- I will comply with the Act, Regulations, and all other applicable legislation;
- I will take into account, to the extent possible, the matters listed in section 38 of the NHRA when preparing the application and any report relating to the application;
- I have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity;
- I undertake to disclose to the applicant and the competent authority all material information in my possession that reasonably has or may have the potential of influencing - any decision to be taken with respect to the application by the competent authority; and - the objectivity of any report, plan, or document to be prepared by myself for submission to the competent authority;
- I will ensure that information containing all relevant facts in respect of the application is distributed or made available to interested and affected parties and the public and that participation by interested and affected parties is facilitated in such a manner that all interested and affected parties will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to participate and to provide comments on documents that are produced to support the application;
- I will provide the competent authority with access to all information at my disposal regarding the application, whether such information is favorable to the applicant or not
- All the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct;
- I will perform all other obligations as expected a palaeontological specialist in terms of the Act and the constitutions of my affiliated professional bodies; and
- I realize that a false declaration is an offense in terms of regulation 71 of the Regulations and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the NEMA.

### Disclosure of Vested Interest

I do not have and will not have any vested interest (either business, financial, personal, or other) in the proposed activity proceeding other than remuneration for work performed in terms of the Regulations.

PALAEONTOLOGICAL CONSULTANT: CONTACT PERSON: Banzai Environmental (Pty) Ltd Elize Butler Tel: +27 844478759 Email: elizebutler002@gmail.com

SIGNATURE:



The heritage impact assessment report has been compiled considering the National Environmental Management Act 1998 (NEMA) and Environmental Impact Regulations 2014 as amended, requirements for specialist reports, Appendix 6, as indicated in the table below.

Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA	The relevant	Comment
Regulations of 7 April 2017	section in the	where not
	report	applicable.
1.(1) (a) (i) Details of the specialist who prepared the	Page ii and	-
report	Section 2 of	
	Report –	
	Contact details	
	and company	
	and Appendix A	
(ii) The expertise of that person to compile a	Section 2 – refer	-
specialist report including a curriculum vita	to <b>Appendix A</b>	
(b) A declaration that the person is independent in a	Page ii of the	-
form as may be specified by the competent	report	
authority	Тероп	
(c) An indication of the scope of, and the purpose for	Section 4 –	-
which, the report was prepared	Objective	
(cA) An indication of the quality and age of base data	Section 5 –	-
used for the specialist report	Geological and	
	Palaeontologica	
	l history	
(cB) a description of existing impacts on the site,	Section 1;10	-
cumulative impacts of the proposed development	and 11	
and levels of acceptable change;		
(d) The duration, date and season of the site		
investigation and the relevance of the season to	Section 9	
the outcome of the assessment		
(e) a description of the methodology adopted in		-
preparing the report or carrying out the	Section 7	
specialised process inclusive of equipment and	Approach and	
modelling used	Methodology	
(f) details of an assessment of the specifically		
identified sensitivity of the site related to the	Section 1 & 10	

#### Table 1: NEMA Table

6	

Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA	The relevant	Comment
Regulations of 7 April 2017	section in the	where not
	report	applicable.
proposed activity or activities and its associated		
structures and infrastructure, inclusive of a site		
plan identifying site alternatives;		
(g) An identification of any areas to be avoided,	Desktop	
including buffers	Assessment	
(h) A map superimposing the activity including the	Section 5 –	
associated structures and infrastructure on the	Geological and	
environmental sensitivities of the site including	Palaeontologica	
areas to be avoided, including buffers;	l history	
(i) A description of any assumptions made and any	Section 7.1 -	-
uncertainties or gaps in knowledge;	Assumptions	
	and Limitation	
(j) A description of the findings and potential		
implications of such findings on the impact of the	Desktop	
proposed activity, including identified alternatives,	Assessment	
on the environment		
(k) Any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr	Desktop	
	Assessment	
(I) Any conditions for inclusion in the environmental	Desktop	
authorisation	Assessment	
(m) Any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the	Desktop	
EMPr or environmental authorisation	Assessment	
(n)(i) A reasoned opinion as to whether the	Section 1 and	
proposed activity, activities or portions thereof	10	
should be authorised and		
(n)(iA) A reasoned opinion regarding the		
acceptability of the proposed activity or		
activities; and		
(n)(ii) If the opinion is that the proposed activity,		-
activities, or portions thereof should be		
authorised, any avoidance, management and	Section 1 and	
mitigation measures that should be included in	10	
the EMPr, and where applicable, the closure		
plan		



Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA	The relevant	Comment
Regulations of 7 April 2017	section in the	where not
	report	applicable.
(o) A description of any consultation process that		Not
was undertaken during the course of carrying out		applicable. A
the study		public
		consultation
		process was
		handled as
		part of the
		Environmenta
		l Impact
		Assessment
		(EIA) and
		Environmenta
		I
		Management
		Plan (EMP)
	N/A	process.
(p) A summary and copies of any comments that		Not
were received during any consultation process		applicable. To
		date, no
		comments
		regarding
		heritage
		resources
		that require
		input from a
		specialist
		have been
	N/A	raised.
(q) Any other information requested by the		Not
competent authority.	N/A	applicable.
(2) Where a government notice by the Minister provides	Section 3	
for any protocol or minimum information requirement to	compliance	
be applied to a specialist report, the requirements as	with SAHRA	
indicated in such notice will apply.	guidelines	



#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Banzai Environmental was appointed by CES – ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES to conduct the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment (PDA) to assess the Soyuz 6 commercial Wind Energy Facility (WEF) and associated infrastructure approximately 53 km South East of Britstown within the Ubuntu Local Municipality and the Pixley ka Seme District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province. In accordance with the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and to comply with the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999, section 38) (NHRA), this PDA is necessary to confirm if fossil material could potentially be present in the planned development area, to evaluate the potential impact of the proposed development on the Palaeontological Heritage and to mitigate possible damage to fossil resources.

The Soyuz 6 WEF is underlain by Late Caenozoic alluvium, Jurassic Karoo dolerite, and the Middle Permian Abrahamskraal Formation of the Beaufort Group (Karoo Supergroup). This part of the basin is extensively intruded by dolerite dykes and sills and the surrounding Beaufort sediments have been baked, thus compromising the fossil heritage of the area through thermal metamorphism. According to the PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) database, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the alluvium is Moderate, while that of the Abrahamskraal Formation (Beaufort Group) is Very High. The Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Jurassic Karoo dolerite is Zero as it is igneous in origin (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond et al., 2013). The Very High Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Abrahamskraal Formation.

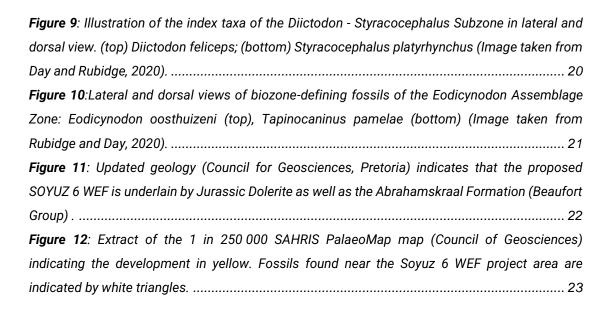
As this study was only a desktop Assessment of the baseline environment it is recommended that a site investigation of the proposed development is completed during the EIA phase of the project. This study will assess the value and importance of fossils in the development area as well as the effect of the proposed development on the palaeontological heritage. The purpose of the Report is to elaborate on the issues and potential impacts identified during the EIA Assessment. A field-based assessment would be conducted with research in the site-specific study area, as well as a comprehensive assessment of the impacts identified during this desktop study.

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### APPENDIX A:

Curriculum Vitae Elize Butler



#### 1 INTRODUCTION

The applicant Soyuz 6 (Pty) Ltd is proposing the development of a commercial Wind Energy Facility (WEF) and associated infrastructure on a site located approximately 53 km South East of Britstown within the Ubuntu Local Municipality and the Pixley ka Seme District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province (**Figure 1-4**).

Five additional WEF's are concurrently being considered on the surrounding properties and are assessed by way of separate impact assessment processes contained in the 2014 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (GN No. R982, as amended) for listed activities contained in Listing Notices 1, 2 and 3 (GN R983, R984 and R985, as amended). These projects are known as Soyuz 1 WEF, Soyuz 2 WEF, Soyuz 3 WEF, Soyuz 4 WEF and Soyuz 5 WEF.

A preferred project site with an extent of approximately 125 000 ha has been identified as a technically suitable area for the development of the six WEF projects. It is proposed that each WEF will comprise of up to 75 turbines with a contracted capacity of up to 480 MW. It is anticipated that each WEF will have an actual (permanent) footprint of up to 150 ha.

#### **1.1** Soyuz 6 WEF project

The Soyuz 6 WEF project site covers approximately 17 800 ha and comprises the following farm portions:

- Remaining Extent of Portion 3 of the Farm No. 16.
- Remaining Extent (Portion 0) of the Farm No 16.
- Remaining Extent (Portion 0) of the Farm No 141.
- Remaining Extent (Portion 0) of the Farm No. 148.
- Portion 4 of the Farm No. 16.
- The Farm No. 157.
- The Farm No. 156.
- Portion 2 (a portion of Portion 13) of the Farm Wonderboom No. 13.
- Portion 1 of the Farm Wonderboom No. 13.
- Remaining Extent of Portion 1 of the Farm Sterkfontein No. 12.



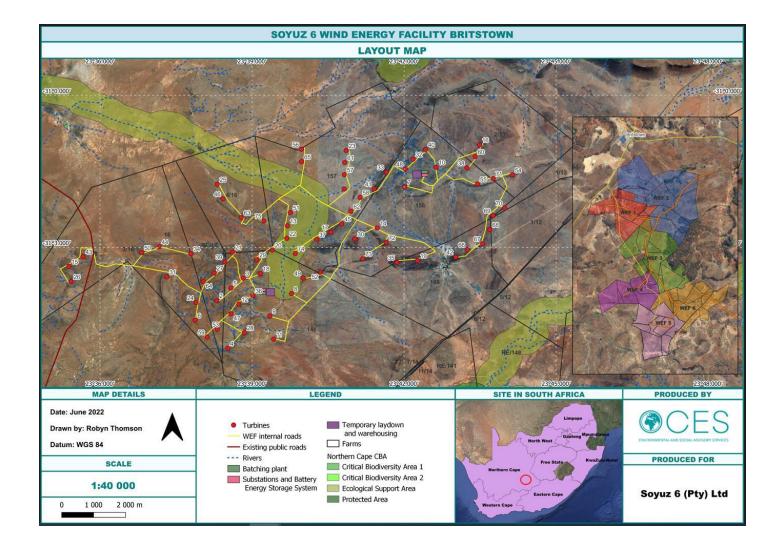


Figure 1: Layout map of the Soyuz 5 Wind Energy Facility near Britstown in the Northern Province.



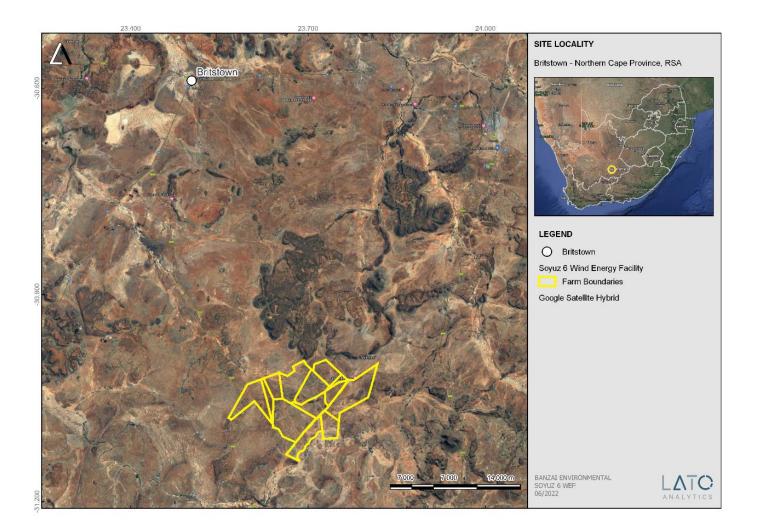


Figure 2: Regional locality of the Soyuz 6 WEF in the Northern Cape.



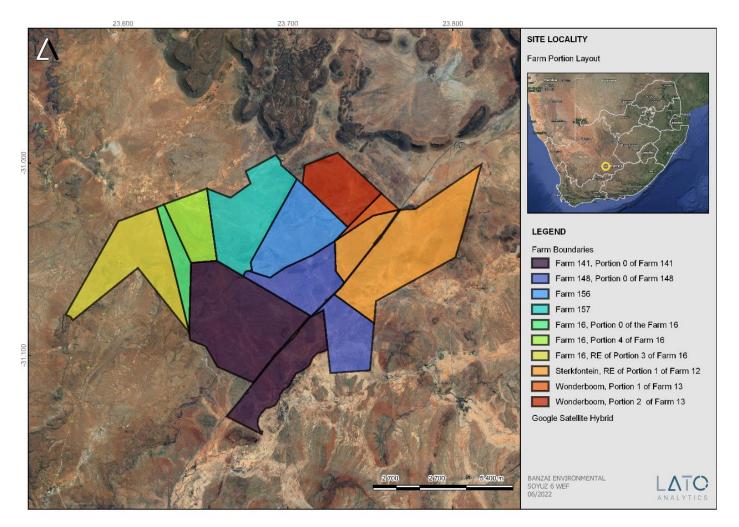


Figure 3: Soyuz 6 Wind Energy Farm near Britstown in the Northern Cape.



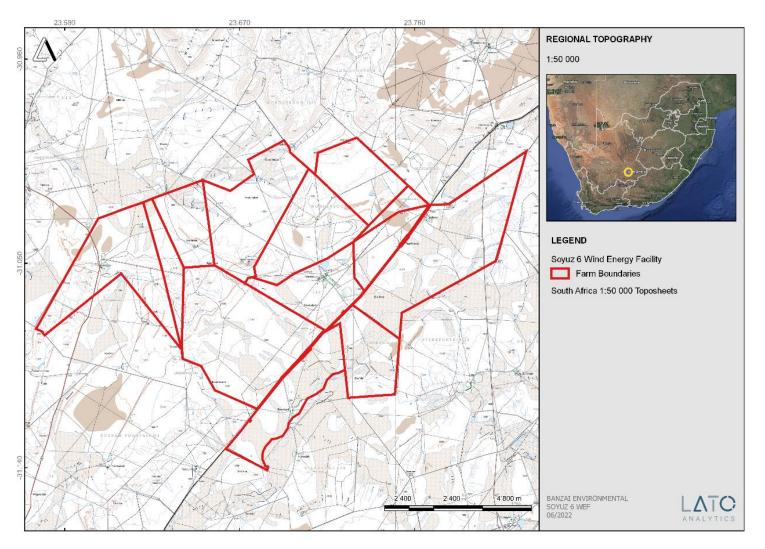


Figure 4: Topographic image of the proposed Soyuz 6 Wind Energy Facility Project.

The Soyuz 6 WEF project site is proposed to accommodate the following infrastructure, which will enable the wind farm to supply a contracted capacity of up to 480 MW:

- Up to 75 wind turbines with a maximum hub height of up to 160 m and a rotor diameter of up to 200 m;
- A transformer at the base of each turbine;
- Concrete turbine foundations;
- Turbine, crane, and blade hardstands;
- Temporary laydown areas (with a combined footprint of up to 14 ha) which will accommodate the boom erection, storage, and assembly area;
- Cabling between the turbines, to be laid underground where practical;
- Battery Energy Storage System (with a footprint of up to 5 ha);
- Two on-site substations with a combined footprint of up to 4 ha in extent to facilitate the connection between the wind farm and the electricity grid;
- Access roads to the site and between project components inclusive of stormwater infrastructure. A 12 m road corridor may be temporarily impacted upon during construction and rehabilitated to 6m wide after construction. The WEF will have a total road network of up to 125 km.
- A temporary site camp establishment and concrete batching plants (with a combined footprint of up to 2 ha); and
- Operation and Maintenance buildings (with a combined footprint of up to 2 ha) including a gate house, security building, control centre, offices, warehouses, a workshop, and visitor's centre.

In order to evacuate the energy generated by the WEF to the national grid, a separate Basic Assessment will be undertaken to assess two grid connection alternatives:

- Alternative 1: A 132 / 400kV overhead powerline (OHL) within a 500 m assessment corridor from the Switching Station on site to a proposed new 132 / 400 kV MTS located north of the WEF and adjacent to the Hydra – Kronos 400 kV line.
- Alternative 2: A 132 / 400 kV overhead powerline (OHL) within a 500 m assessment corridor from the Switching Station on site to a proposed new 132 / 400 kV MTS located south of the WEF and adjacent to the Droerivier - Hydra 400 kV line.

The EA applications for the wind farm project and grid connection infrastructure are being undertaken in parallel as they are co-dependent, i.e., one will not be developed without the other.

#### **1.2** Legislative Context

In terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended), the development of a WEF with a generation capacity of (or exceeding) 20 MW will require an Environmental Authorisation (EA) application supported by a full Scoping and Environmental Impact Reporting process (S&EIR).

Since the project falls within a Strategic Transmission Corridor (central corridor), large scale electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure (inclusive of substations) can benefit from GN 113 16 February 2018 and as such, the EA applications for the grid connection will be supported by a Basic Assessment process.

#### 2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR

This study has been conducted by Mrs Elize Butler. She has conducted approximately 400 palaeontological impact assessments for developments in the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern, Central, and Northern Cape, Northwest, Gauteng, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga. She has an MSc (*cum laude*) in Zoology (specializing in Palaeontology) from the University of the Free State, South Africa and has been working in Palaeontology for more than twenty-eight years. She has experience in locating, collecting, and curating fossils. She has been a member of the Palaeontological Society of South Africa (PSSA) since 2006 and has been conducting PIAs since 2014.

#### 3 LEGISLATION

#### National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999)

Cultural Heritage in South Africa, includes all heritage resources, is protected by the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) (NHRA). Heritage resources as defined in Section 3 of the Act include "all objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens".

The identification, evaluation and assessment of any cultural heritage site, artefact or finds in the South African context is required and governed by the following legislation:

- National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) Act 107 of 1998
- National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) Act 25 of 1999
- Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) Act 28 of 2002
- Notice 648 of the Government Gazette 45421- general requirements for undertaking an



initial site sensitivity verification where no specific assessment protocol has been identified.

The next section in each Act is directly applicable to the identification, assessment, and evaluation of cultural heritage resources.

GNR 982 (Government Gazette 38282, 14 December 2014) promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) Act 107 of 1998

- Basic Assessment Report (BAR) Regulations 19 and 23
- Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA) Regulation 23
- Environmental Scoping Report (ESR) Regulation 21
- Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) Regulations 19 and 23

National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) Act 25 of 1999

- Protection of Heritage Resources Sections 34 to 36
- Heritage Resources Management Section 38

The NEMA (No 107 of 1998) states that an integrated EMP should (23:2 (b)) "...identify, predict and evaluate the actual and potential impact on the environment, socio-economic conditions and cultural heritage".

In agreement with legislative requirements, EIA rating standards as well as SAHRA policies, the following comprehensive and legally compatible PIA report has been compiled.

Palaeontological heritage is exceptional and non-renewable and is protected by the NHRA. Palaeontological resources may not be unearthed, broken moved, or destroyed by any development without prior assessment and without a permit from the relevant heritage resources authority as per section 35 of the NHRA.

This Palaeontological Impact assessment will inform the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and adhere to the conditions of the Act. According to Section 38 (1), an HIA is required to assess any potential impacts to palaeontological heritage within the development footprint where:

- the construction of a road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300 m in length.
- the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50 m in length.
- any development or other activity which will change the character of a site-
- (Exceeding 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> in extent; or
- involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof; or



- involving three or more erven or divisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years; or
- the costs of which will exceed a sum set in terms of regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority
- the re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000 m<sup>2</sup> in extent.
- or any other category of development provided for in regulations by SAHRA or a Provincial heritage resources authority.

#### 4 OBJECTIVE

The aim of a Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) is to decrease the effect of the development on potential fossils at the development site.

According to the "SAHRA APM Guidelines: Minimum Standards for the Archaeological and Palaeontological Components of Impact Assessment Reports" the purpose of the PIA is: 1) to identify the palaeontological importance of the rock formations in the footprint; 2) to evaluate the palaeontological magnitude of the formations; 3) to clarify the impact on fossil heritage; and 4) to suggest how the developer might protect and lessen possible damage to fossil heritage.

The palaeontological status of each rock section is calculated as well as the possible impact of the development on fossil heritage by a) the palaeontological importance of the rocks, b) the type of development and c) the quantity of bedrock removed.

When the development footprint has a moderate to high palaeontological sensitivity a fieldbased assessment is necessary. The desktop and the field survey of the exposed rock determine the impact significance of the planned development and recommendations for further studies or mitigation are made. Destructive impacts on palaeontological heritage usually only occur during the construction phase while the excavations will change the current topography and destruct or permanently seal-in fossils at or below the ground surface. Fossil Heritage will then no longer be accessible for scientific research.

Mitigation usually precedes construction or may occur during construction when potentially fossiliferous bedrock is exposed. Mitigation comprises the collection and recording of fossils. Preceding excavation of any fossils a permit from SAHRA must be obtained and the material will have to be housed in a permitted institution. When mitigation is applied correctly, a positive impact is possible because our knowledge of local palaeontological heritage may be increased



The terms of reference of a PIA are as follows:

#### General Requirements:

- Adherence to the content requirements for specialist reports in accordance with Appendix 6 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended.
- Adherence to all applicable best practice recommendations, appropriate legislation, and authority requirements.
- Submit a comprehensive overview of all appropriate legislation, guidelines.
- Description of the proposed project and provide information regarding the developer and consultant who commissioned the study.
- Description and location of the proposed development and provide geological and topographical maps.
- Provide Palaeontological and geological history of the affected area.
- Identification sensitive areas to be avoided (providing shapefiles/kml's) in the proposed development.
- Evaluation of the significance of the planned development during the Pre-construction, Construction, Operation, Decommissioning Phases and Cumulative impacts. Potential impacts should be rated in terms of the direct, indirect, and cumulative:
  - a. **Direct impacts** are impacts that are caused directly by the activity and generally occur at the same time and at the place of the activity.
  - b. **Indirect impacts** of an activity are indirect or induced changes that may occur as a result of the activity.
  - c. Cumulative impacts result from the incremental impact of the proposed activity on a common resource when added to the impacts of other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future activities.
- Fair assessment of alternatives (in this case the No-Go alternative has been assessed as there are no alternatives to the existing road crossings):
- Recommend mitigation measures to minimise the impact of the proposed development; and
- Implications of specialist findings for the proposed development (such as permits, licenses etc).

#### 5 GEOLOGICAL AND PALAEONTOLOGICAL HISTORY

The Soyuz 6 WEF is depicted on the 1:250 000 Britstown 3022 (1991) and 3122 Victoria West (1989) Geological Map (Council for Geosciences, Pretoria) (**Figure 5, Table 2-3**). The project is underlain by the alluvium (Qs, yellow single bird figure), Jurassic Karoo dolerite (Jd, red), as well as the Abrahamskraal Formation (Pa- light green) (Beaufort Group, Karoo Supergroup). This part of the basin is extensively intruded by dolerite (Jd, red) dykes and sills and the surrounding

Beaufort Group sediments have been baked, thus compromising the fossil heritage of the area through thermal metamorphism. According to the PalaeoMap on the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) database, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Quaternary superficial deposits is Moderate while that of the Adelaide Subgroup is Very High (Almond *et al*, 2013; SAHRIS website).

The Quaternary superficial deposits are the youngest geological deposits formed during the most recent geological period. Most of the superficial deposits are unconsolidated sediments and consist of clay, gravel, sand, silt, that form relatively thin, discontinuous patches of sediments. These sediments comprise of channel, floodplain, and stream deposits.

The Late Caenozoic deposits are very important because palaeoclimatic changes are reflected in the different geological formations (Hunter *et al.*, 2006). During the climate fluctuations in the Cenozoic Era most geomorphologic features in southern Africa where formed (Maud, 2012). Barnosky (2005) indicated that various warming and cooling events occurred in the Cenozoic but states that climatic changes during the Quaternary Period, specifically the last 1.8 Ma, were the most drastic climate changes relative to all climate variations in the past. Climate variations that occurred in the Quaternary Period were both drier and wetter than the present and resulted in changes in river flow patterns, sedimentation processes and vegetation variation (Tooth *et al.*, 2004).

Late Caenozoic fossil assemblages are generally rare and low in diversity and occur over a wideranging geographic area. These fossil assemblages may in some cases occur in extensive alluvial and colluvial deposits. In the past, palaeontologists did not focus on superficial deposits although they sometimes comprise of significant fossil deposits. These fossil assemblages resemble modern animals and may comprise of mammalian teeth, bones and horn corns, reptile skeletons and fragments of ostrich eggs. Microfossils, non-marine mollusc shells are also known from Quaternary deposits. Plant material such as foliage, wood, pollens, and peats are recovered as well as trace fossils like vertebrate tracks, burrows, termitaria (termite heaps/ mounds) and rhizoliths (root casts).

A few dolerite dykes and sills are present in the development footprint while the area north and west of the development is extensively intruded by dolerite dikes and sills (Jd, red) of the Karoo Igneous Province. These dolerite intrusions have baked the surrounding potentially fossiliferous bedrock through thermal metamorphism thus influencing the quality of fossil preservation. The Karoo Igneous Province in southern Africa is a classic continental flood basalt province that was formed during the Early Jurassic Period. This province occurs over a comprehensive area in southern Africa and comprises a widespread system well developed igneous bodies (dykes, sills) that invaded the sediments of the Main Karoo Basin. Flood basalts do not typically form any

visible volcanic structures, but with a series of outbursts form a suite of fissures of subhorizontal lava flows that may vary in thickness. The Karoo is an old flood basalt province and is preserved today as erosional remnants of a more extensive lava cap that covered much of southern Africa in the geological past. This Suite is entirely unfossiliferous.

The flood plains of the Beaufort Group (Karoo Supergroup) are internationally renowned for the early diversification of land vertebrates and provide the world's most complete transition from early "reptiles" to mammals. The Beaufort Group is subdivided into a series of biostratigraphic units based on its faunal content (**Figure 6**; Kitching 1977; Keyser *et al*, 1977; Rubidge 1995; Smith *et al*, 2020; Viglietti 2020).

The Soyuz 6 WEF is underlain by the Abrahamskraal Formation that is biostratigraphically represented by the *Tapinocephalus* (**Figure 7**) and upper *Eodicynodon* AZ (**Figure 8-10**). As the second oldest tetrapod biozone in the Karoo, the *Tapinocephalus* AZ is basically restricted to the Abrahamskraal Formation. The lower margin of the AZ is variable due to diachrony. This AZ comprises of the upper third of the *Abrahamskraal* Formation in the southwestern boundary of the basin. The Abrahamskraal Formation is present in the southern portion of the main Karoo Basin and consists of abundant greenish-grey and less common reddish-brown mudrock. Subordinate light grey fine-grained sandstone is arranged in fining -upward cycles. This Formation is at its thickest (2200 to 2565 m) in the southwestern part of the basin thinning north-eastward. In the southwestern portion of the basin the Abrahamskraal Formation is discussed arenaceous zones. These sediments were deposited on a large alluvial plain (Cole et al, 2016).

The *Tapinocephalus* AZ is characterised by the tapinocephalid dinocephalian species *Tapinocephalus atherstonei* and *Moschops capensis*, the dicynodont *Eosimops newtoni*, and *Robertia broomiana* and the pareiasaur *Bradysaurus baini*. The *Tapinocephalus* AZ is a rich tetrapod assemblage zone that consists of basal members of therapsid clades Biarmosuchia, Anomodontia, Dicynodontia, Therocephalia, and Gorgonopsia; basal members of the parareptilian clade Pareiasauria; and rare varanopids as well as derived members of the therapsid clade Dinocephalia.

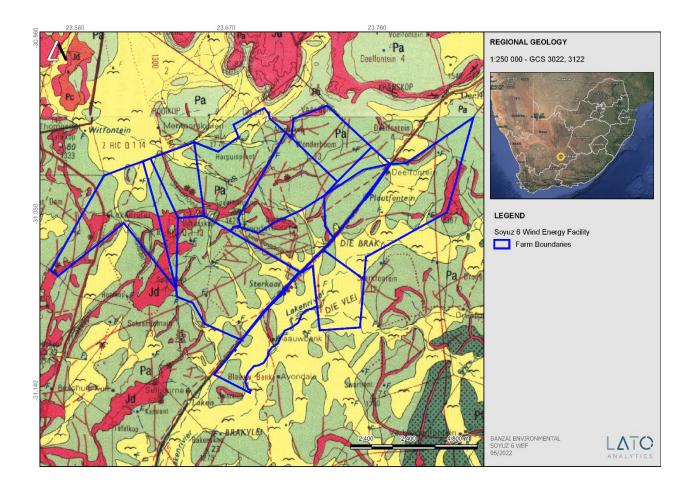
This AZ includes dinocephalians (*Moschops capensis*), basal pareiasaurs (*Bradysaurus*) that cooccur with pylaecephalid dicynodonts *Eosimops*. and *Robertia*. This AZ has a maximum thickness of about 1500 m. The Assemblage Zone can be subdivided into two subzones based on the absence of the dicynodont *Diictodon feliceps*: in the lower Eosimops - Glanosuchus Subzone and the presence of Diictodon in the upper Diictodon Eosimops - Glanosuchus Subzone. The contact between these subzones is the first appearance of *Diictodon felips* at the base of the Moordenaars Member. The upper part of the biozone reflects the Capitanian mass



extinction and the low diversity post extinction. The first appearance of *Endothiodon bathystoma* terminates the zone.

Rubidge et al (2000) described silicified wood fragments, leaves, and stems from this Formation while *Glossopteris* leaf impressions are abundant in the east (Mason, 2007). Bivalve fossils have been uncovered in the Formation. Trace fossils include fish trails, arthropod trackways (*Monomorphichnus and Umfolozia*) with some occurrences of therapsid footprints and vertebrate burrow casts (Smith, 1986, 1990a; Smith and Keyser, 1995a).





*Figure 5*: Extract of the 1:250 000 Geological map 3022 (1991) Britstown and 3122 Victoria West (1989) (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria) indicating the proposed Soyuz 6 WEF in blue. The proposed WEF development is underlain by the Quaternary alluvium (Qs, yellow single bird figure), Jurassic dolerite (Jd, red), as well as the Abrahamskraal Formation (Pa- light green) (Beaufort Group, Karoo Supergroup).

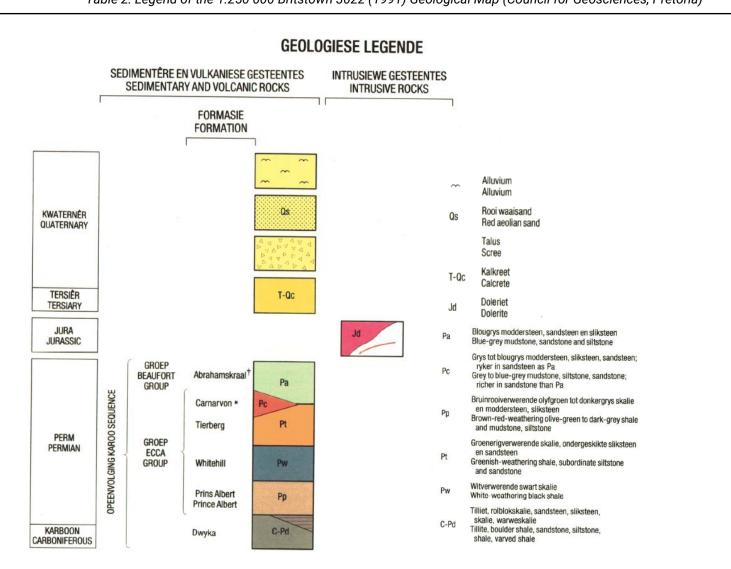


Table 2: Legend of the 1:250 000 Britstown 3022 (1991) Geological Map (Council for Geosciences, Pretoria)

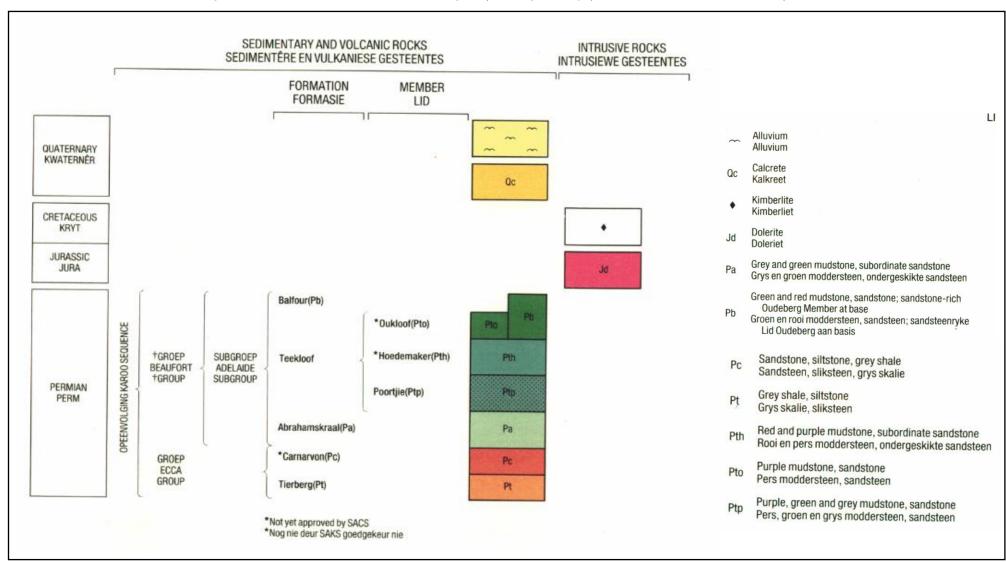
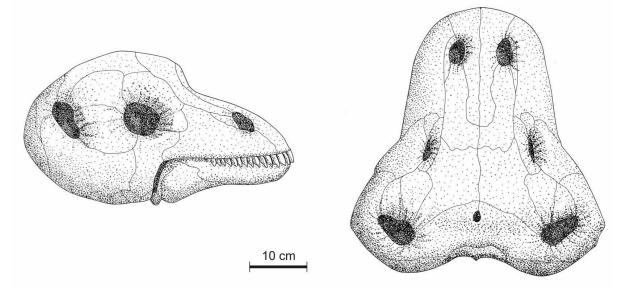


Table 3: Legend of the 1:250 000 Victoria West 3122 (1989) Geological Map (Council for Geosciences, Pretoria).

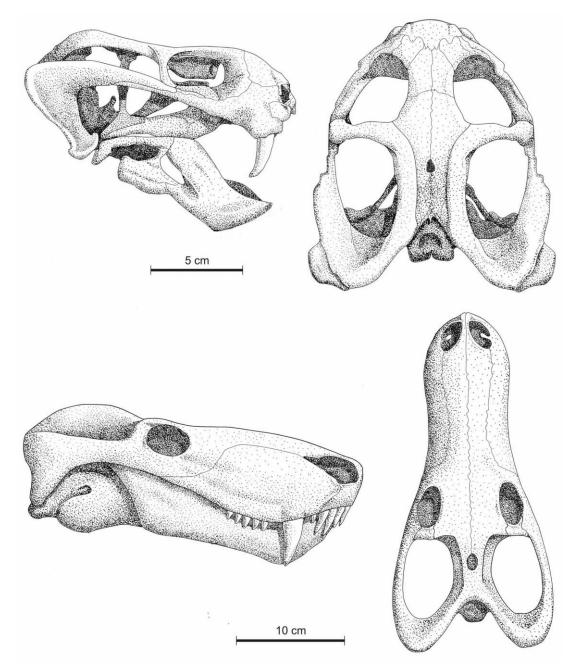


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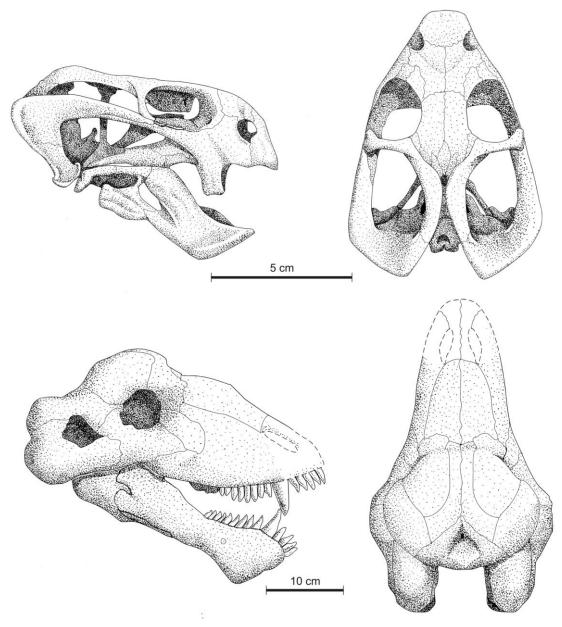
**Figure 6**: Vertebrate biozonation range chart for the Main Karoo Basin of South Africa. Solid lines indicate known ranges, wavy lines indicate unconformities. (PLYCSR=Pelycosauria and MAMMFMES+Mammaliaformes. Gp=group, Subgp-Supbroup, Fm=Formation, M=Member). The proposed Soyuz 6 WEF are indicated by the red arrow (Image taken from Smith et al, 2020).



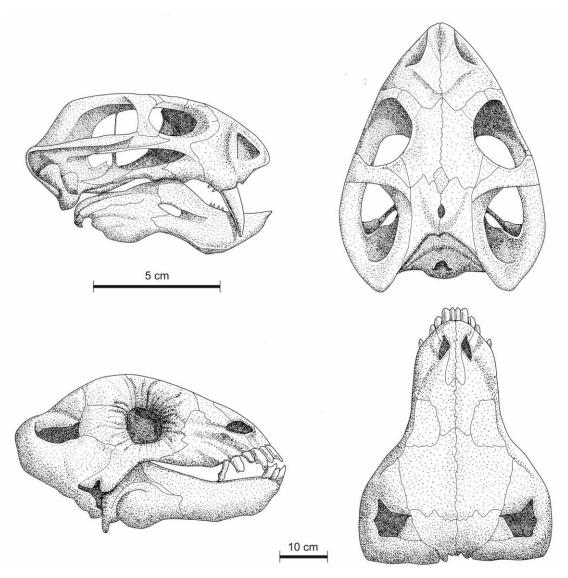
**Figure 7**: Tapinocephalus atherstonei, the index taxon of the Tapinocephalus Assemblage Zone, in lateral and dorsal view (Image taken from Day and Rubidge, 2020).



**Figure 8:** Lateral and dorsal view of the index taxa of the Eosimops - Glanosuchus Subzone in (top) Eosimops newtoni; (bottom) Glanosuchus macrops (Image taken from Day and Rubidge, 2020)

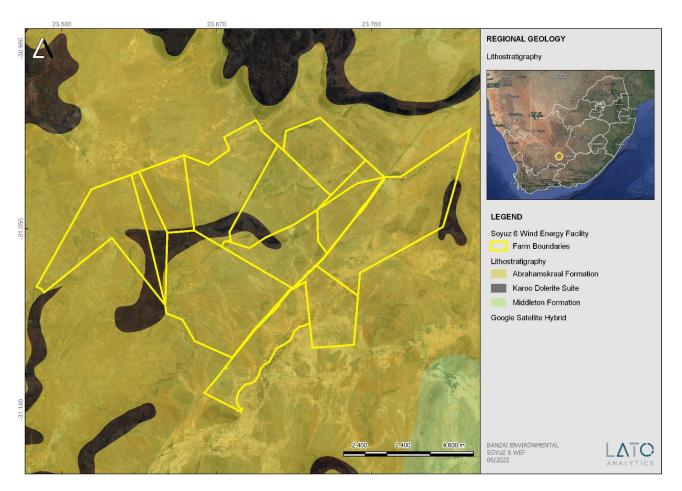


*Figure 9*: Illustration of the index taxa of the Diictodon - Styracocephalus Subzone in lateral and dorsal view. (top) Diictodon feliceps; (bottom) Styracocephalus platyrhynchus (Image taken from Day and Rubidge, 2020).



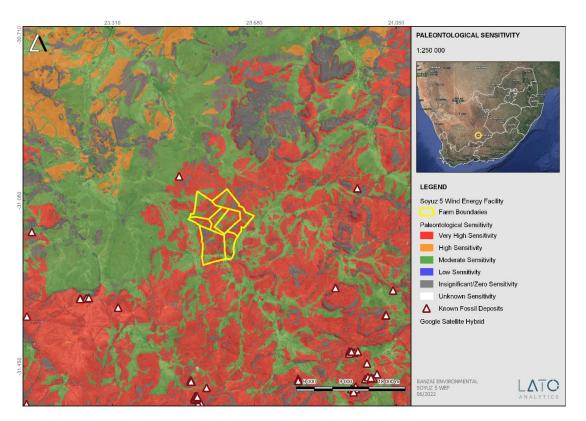
**Figure 10**:Lateral and dorsal views of biozone-defining fossils of the Eodicynodon Assemblage Zone: Eodicynodon oosthuizeni (top), Tapinocaninus pamelae (bottom) (Image taken from Rubidge and Day, 2020).





**Figure 11**: Updated geology (Council for Geosciences, Pretoria) indicates that the proposed SOYUZ 6 WEF is underlain by Jurassic Dolerite as well as the Abrahamskraal Formation (Beaufort Group).

Updated geology (Council of Geosciences) indicates that the proposed development is underlain by the Abrahamskraal Formation of the Beaufort Group, Karoo Supergroup)



*Figure 12*: Extract of the 1 in 250 000 SAHRIS PalaeoMap map (Council of Geosciences) indicating the development in yellow. Fossils found near the Soyuz 6 WEF project area are indicated by white triangles.

According to the SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity map (**Figure 12**) the development is underlain by sediments with a Very High (red), Moderate (green) and Zero (grey) Palaeontological Significance.

Extensive research has been conducted in the Karoo Basin in the last decades and a National Palaeontological database has been compiled (Nicolas, 2007). According to the National Palaeontology Database fossils have been found in the Britstown area. Fossils in close proximity to the Soyuz 6 WEF is indicated in Figure 12 by white triangles.



Colour	Sensitivity	Required Action
RED	VERY HIGH	Field assessment and protocol for finds is required
ORANGE/YELLOW	HIGH	Desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the
		desktop study; a field assessment is likely
GREEN	MODERATE	Desktop study is required
BLUE	LOW	No palaeontological studies are required however a protocol
		for finds is required
GREY	INSIGNIFICANT/ZERO	No palaeontological studies are required
WHITE/CLEAR	UNKNOWN	These areas will require a minimum of a desktop study. As
		more information comes to light, SAHRA will continue to
		populate the map.

Table 4: Palaeontological Sensitivity according to the SAHRIS PalaeoMap (Almond et al, 2013; SAHRIS website)

The colors on the PalaeoMap indicate the following degrees of sensitivity: red = very highly sensitive; orange/yellow = high; green = moderate; blue = low; grey = insignificant/zero.

#### 6 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SITE

The proposed Soyuz 6 and associated infrastructure on a site located approximately 53 km South East of Britstown within the Ubuntu Local Municipality and the Pixley ka Seme District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province.

#### 7 METHODS

The aim of a desktop study is to evaluate the possible risk to palaeontological heritage in the proposed development. This includes all trace fossils as well as all fossils in the proposed footprint. All possible information is consulted to compile a desktop study, and this includes the following: all Palaeontological Impact Assessment reports in the same area; aerial photos and Google Earth images, topographical as well as geological maps.

#### 7.1 Assumptions and Limitations

The focal point of geological maps is the geology of the area and the sheet explanations of the Geological Maps were not meant to focus on palaeontological heritage. Many inaccessible regions of South Africa have never been reviewed by palaeontologists and data is generally based on aerial photographs alone. Locality and geological information of museums and universities databases have not been kept up to date or data collected in the past have not always been accurately documented.



Areas with similar Assemblage Zones in other areas is also used to provide information on the existence of fossils in an area which has not documented in the past. When using similar Assemblage Zones and geological formations for Desktop studies it is generally **assumed** that exposed fossil heritage is present within the footprint. A field-assessment will thus improve the accuracy of the desktop assessment and thus this study has been commissioned.

#### 8 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONSULTED

In compiling this report the following sources were consulted:

- Geological map 1:100 000, Geology of the Republic of South Africa (Visser 1984)
- Palaeontological Sensitivity Map on SAHRIS
- A Google Earth kmz files of the proposed development was obtained from CES ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES as well as background information.
- Topographic maps (1:50 000) of the 3022 Britstown area.
- 1:250 000 Geological map 3022 (1991) Britstown and 3122 Victoria West (1989) (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria)

#### 9 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Soyuz 6 WEF is underlain by Late Caenozoic alluvium, Jurassic dolerite, and the Abrahamskraal Formation of the Beaufort Group (Karoo Supergroup). According to the PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) database, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the alluvium is Moderate, while that and that of the Abrahamskraal Formation (Beaufort Group) is Very High. The Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Jurassic dolerite is Zero as it is igneous in origin (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond et al., 2013). The Very High Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Abrahamskraal Formation triggers a site investigation.

As this study was only a desktop Assessment of the baseline environment it is recommended that a site investigation of the proposed development is completed during the EIA phase of the project. This study will assess the value and importance of fossils in the development area as well as the effect of the proposed development on the palaeontological heritage. The purpose of the Report is to elaborate on the issues and potential impacts identified during the EIA Assessment. A field-based assessment would be conducted with research in the site-specific study area, as well as a comprehensive assessment of the impacts identified during this desktop study.



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## CURRICULUM VITAE

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**Butler, E. 2015.** Palaeontological Heritage Impact Assessment report on the establishment of the 65 mw Majuba Solar Photovoltaic facility and associated infrastructure on portion 1, 2 and 6 of the farm Witkoppies 81 HS, Mpumalanga Province. Bloemfontein.

**Butler, E. 2015.** Palaeontological Impact Assessment of the proposed township establishment on the remainder of portion 6 and 7 of the farm Sunnyside 2620, Bloemfontein, Mangaung metropolitan municipality, Free State, Bloemfontein.

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Butler, E. 2016. Palaeontological Impact Assessment construction of the proposed Metals Industrial Cluster and associated infrastructure near Kuruman, Northern Cape Province. Savannah South Africa. Bloemfontein.
Butler, E. 2016. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the proposed construction of up to a 132kv power line and associated infrastructure for the proposed Kalkaar Solar Thermal Power Plant near Kimberley, Free State and Northern Cape Provinces. PGS Heritage. Bloemfontein.



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**Butler, E. 2017.** Palaeontological Desktop Assessment for the Proposed Development of a Wastewater Treatment Works at Lanseria, Gauteng Province. Bloemfontein.

**Butler, E. 2017.** Palaeontological Scoping Report for the Proposed Construction of a Warehouse and Associated Infrastructure at Perseverance in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province.

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**Butler, E. 2017.** Palaeontological impact assessment of the proposed construction of the Lehae training and fire station, Lenasia, Gauteng Province. Bloemfontein.

**Butler, E. 2017.** Palaeontological Desktop Assessment of the proposed development of the new open cast mining operations of the Impunzi mine in the Mpumalanga Province. Bloemfontein.

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