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Attention: Paul Slabbert

**Historic Mining at the Walviskop Beach Area**

Mr Slabbert

With reference to the status of the Walviskop area in terms of historic disturbances I can state that this area has been subjected to ongoing mining for almost a century. Alexkor SOC Limited ("Alexkor") a state-owned diamond mining company has been actively mining diamonds since 1928. During the period 1928 to 2018, diamonds weighing more than 10,2 million carats have been recovered from marine gravel deposits on beaches and marine terraces at the Alexkor Mine.

Alexkor has a mining lease to mine diamonds on land and in sea concession areas 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 3a, 4a, 4b and 9d as well as the adjacent surf zone areas. In the early years land-based mining at Alexkor was the main activity which was done mainly by means of dry strip mining where the overburden sand was removed to expose the diamond-bearing basal gravels. Mining progressed in time to include the beaches, surf zone and shallow to mid-water offshore areas.

In 2002 Alexkor adopted a new mining model whereby it terminated its own mining operations and started making use of contract miners. Approximately 25 different shallow water contractors are currently undertaking diver-based mining in the sub tidal concession areas. Pumps are used by both boat based operations and beach based shallow water teams to suck gravel off the sea floor and following initial screening, the gravel is processed further at the onshore dense media separation plants. In addition some 10 Beach Mining contractors and 10 Land Mining contractors are responsible for mining diamonds from the beaches and on elevated marine terraces using large earthmoving equipment.

The Contractors and Alexkor share the proceeds of the diamonds recovered from the Alexkor Lease Area on a percentage basis. Alexkor acknowledges that the contractors mining activities are critical to the stabilisation of the job creation in the Namaqualand region and their continuous employment is encouraged.

The Walviskop area is no exception and has seen active mining with surf zone mining taking place on an ongoing basis in this area since 2004 by mainly beach based dredging operations and to a lesser extent dredge mining from small boats in the bay itself.

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Beach mining using heavy earth moving equipment has taken place during at least two mining campaigns since 2013.

Evidence of this mining can be found on the Alexkor mine surveyor's maps where onshore mining excavations are meticulously recorded for submission to the DMR on a quarterly basis. Offshore mining is also recorded and archived by the marine division at Alexkor. In addition to this satellite images unmistakably show mining activities at the Walviskop beach during early 2013 and again early to mid 2018. This can also be seen on the 8/3/2013 and 23/5/2018 Google Earth images.

I trust this will give a better insight into historic activities at Walviskop beach.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hattingh', written in a cursive style.

Dr Johan Hattingh  
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