

17 March 2021

Dear Stakeholder and Interested & Affected Party,

**GEELSTERT GRID CONNECTION FOR THE PROPOSED GEELSTERT 1 AND GEELSTERT 2 SOLAR PV FACILITIES
NEAR AGGENEYS, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
(DEFF Ref.No.: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2223)**

NOTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION GRANTED

ABO Wind Renewable Energies (Pty) Ltd submitted an application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) to the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries¹ (DEFF) in November 2020 for the development of the grid connection infrastructure for the proposed Geelstert 1 and Geelstert 2 solar photovoltaic (PV) facility on sites located south-east of Aggeneys located within the Khâi-Ma Local Municipality, Namakwa District Municipality, Northern Cape Province.

The Applicant hereby notifies all registered interested and affected parties, as instructed by the decision issued by the Department on 15 March 2021, and in terms of Regulation 4(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended, of the outcome of the Application for Environmental Authorisation. The Department granted Environmental Authorisation for the above-mentioned project.

The reasons for the decision are outlined in the attached copy of the EA and are as follows:

1. Information considered in making the decision:

In reaching its decision, the Department took, *inter alia*, the following into consideration

- a) The listed activities as applied for in the amended application form received in November 2020.
- b) The information contained in the BAR dated November 2020.
- c) The comments received from South African Heritage Resources Agency, Northern Cape Department of Environment Nature Conservation, Eskom, and Birdlife South Africa and interested and affected parties as included in the BAR dated November 2020.
- d) The information contained in the specialist studies contained within the appendices of the BAR dated November 2020 and as appears below:

¹ Previously known as the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA)

Title	Prepared by	Date
Fauna and Flora Specialist Study	3Foxes Biodiversity Consulting (Pty) Ltd	July 2020
Avifaunal Specialist Study	3Foxes Biodiversity Consulting (Pty) Ltd	July 2020
Freshwater Resource Study and Assessment	Nkurenkuru Ecology and Biodiversity	July 2020
Soils and Agricultural Potential Impact Assessment	Agricultural Research Council: Soil, Climate, Water (SCW)	June 2020
Heritage Impact Assessment	CTS Heritage (Pty) Ltd	October 2020
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Environmental Planning and Design (Pty) Ltd	August 2020
Social impact assessment	Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd and Neville Bews and Associates	June 2020

2. Key factors considered in making the decision:

All information presented to the Department was taken into account in the Department's consideration of the application. A summary of the issues which, in the Department's view, were of the most significance is set out below.

- a) The findings of all the specialist studies conducted and their recommended mitigation measures.
- b) The Geelstert Grid Connection will facilitate the transmission of the electricity generated by the proposed Geelstert 1 and Geelstert 2 solar PV facilities into the national grid and is considered essential infrastructure for the operation of the solar PV facilities. Therefore, the need for the Geelstert Grid Connection is directly linked to the need and desirability of the proposed Geelstert 1 and Geelstert 2 solar PV facilities, which are aligned with national and regional policies and plans
- c) The BAR dated November 2020 identified all legislation and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the BAR dated November 2020.
- d) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the BAR dated November 2020 and the specialist studies have been adequately indicated.
- e) A sufficient public participation process was undertaken and the applicant has satisfied the minimum requirements as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended for public involvement.

3. Findings

After consideration of the information and factors listed above, the Department made the following findings:

- a) The identification and assessment of impacts are detailed in the BAR dated November 2020 and sufficient assessment of the key identified issues and impacts have been completed.
- b) The procedure followed for impact assessment is adequate for the decision-making process.
- c) The information contained in the BAR dated November 2020 is deemed to be accurate and credible.
- d) The proposed mitigation of impacts identified and assessed adequately curtails the identified impacts.

- e) EMPr measures for the pre-construction, construction and rehabilitation phases of the development were proposed and included in the BAR and will be implemented to manage the identified environmental impacts during the construction phase.

In view of the above, the Department is satisfied that, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in the environmental authorisation, the authorised activities will not conflict with the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the authorised activities can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The environmental authorisation is accordingly granted.

NOTICE OF APPEAL PROCESS

As an interested and affected party, your attention is drawn to Chapter 2, Regulation 4(2) of Government Notice No. 993, which prescribes the appeal procedure to be followed. Should you wish to appeal the decision, or any part of the decision, by the Department, you must submit your appeal to the appeal administrator, and a copy of the appeal to the applicant, any registered interested and affected party and any organ of state with interest in the matter within **20 days** from the date that the notification of the decision was sent to registered interested and affected parties by the applicant (i.e. Wednesday, 17 March 2021).

Appeals must be submitted, in writing, on the prescribed form to:

The Director: Appeals and Legal Review

Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries

By e-mail: appeals@environment.gov.za

By hand: Environmental House, 473 Steve Biko Street, Arcadia, Pretoria, 0083

or

By post: Private Bag X447, Pretoria, 0001

To obtain the prescribed appeal form and for guidance on the submission of appeals, please visit the DEFF's website at: https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms#legal_authorisations or request a copy of the documents at appealsdirector@environment.gov.za

A copy of the appeal Regulations is included with this notification letter.

Please note that **appeals should be submitted to the DEFF and not to the consultant** (Savannah Environmental).

Kind regards,



Nicolene Venter

Public Participation and Social Consultant

Document Attached: Environmental Authorisation
National Appeals Regulations, 2014
National Appeal Amendment Regulations, 2015



environment, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X 447· PRETORIA ·0001· Environment House ·473 Steve Biko Road, Arcadia· PRETORIA

DEA Reference: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2223

Enquiries: Ms Thulisile Nyalunga

Telephone: 012 399 9405 E-mail: tnyalunga@environment.gov.za

Mr Robert Wagener
ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd
Unit B1 Mayfair Square
Century Way
CENTURY CITY
7441

Telephone Number : 021 276 3620
Cellphone Number : 064 030 3633
Email Address : robert.wagener@abo-wind.com

Dear Mr Wagener

APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT, ACT NO. 107 OF 1998, AS AMENDED: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF A GRID CONNECTION FOR THE PROPOSED GEELSTERT 1 AND GEELSTERT 2 SOLAR PV FACILITIES ON A SITE LOCATED SOUTH-EAST OF AGGENEYS IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

With reference to the above application, please be advised that the Department has decided to grant authorisation. The Environmental Authorisation (EA) and reasons for the decision are attached herewith.

In terms of Regulation 4(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended (the EIA Regulations), you are instructed to notify all registered interested and affected parties, in writing and within 14 (fourteen) days of the date of the decision as well as the provisions regarding the submission of appeals that are contained in the Regulations.

In terms of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act No. 3 of 2000, you are entitled to the right to fair, lawful and reasonable administrative action; and to written reasons for administrative action that affects you negatively. Further your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, Act No. 4 of 2013 which stipulate that the Department should conduct itself in a responsible manner when collecting, processing, storing and sharing an individual or another entity's personal information by holding the Department accountable should the Department abuse or compromise your personal information in any way.

Your attention is drawn to Chapter 2 of National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998 National Appeal Regulations published under Government Notice R993 in Government Gazette No. 38303 dated 08 December 2014 (National Appeal Regulations, 2014), which prescribes the appeal procedure to be followed. Kindly include a copy of this document (National Appeal Regulations, 2014) with the letter of notification to interested and affected parties in this matter.

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Should any person wish to lodge an appeal against this decision, he/she must submit the appeal to the appeal administrator, and a copy of the appeal to the applicant, any registered interested and affected party, and any organ of state with interest in the matter within 20 days from the date that the notification of the decision was sent to the registered interested and affected parties by the applicant; or the date that the notification of the decision was sent to the applicant by the Department, whichever is applicable.

Appeals must be submitted in writing in the prescribed form to:

The Director: Appeals and Legal Review of this Department at the below mentioned addresses.

By email: appeals@environment.gov.za;

By hand: Environment House
473 Steve Biko
Arcadia
Pretoria
0083; or

By post: Private Bag X447
Pretoria
0001

Please note that in terms of Section 43(7) of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, the lodging of an appeal will suspend the environmental authorisation or any provision or condition attached thereto. In the instance where an appeal is lodged, you may not commence with the activity until such time that the appeal is finalised.

To obtain the prescribed appeal form and for guidance on the submission of appeals, please visit the Department's website at https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms#legal_authorisations or request a copy of the documents at appeals@environment.gov.za.

Yours faithfully



Mr Sabelo Malaza
Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries

Date: 15/03/2021

cc:	Ms. Jo-Anne Thomas	Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd.	Email: joanne@savannahsa.com
	Mr. Bryan Fisher	Northern Cape DAEARD&LR	Email: Bfisher@ncpg.gov.za
	Mr. Edward Vries	Khâi-Ma Local Municipality	Email: Mmsecretary@khaima.gov.za



environment, forestry & fisheries

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Environmental Authorisation

In terms of Regulation 25 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended

The development and operation of a grid connection for the Geelstert 1 and Geelstert 2 solar PV facilities on a site located south-east of Aggeneys in the Northern Cape Province.

Namakwa District Municipality

Authorisation register number:	14/12/16/3/3/1/2223
Last amended:	First issue
Holder of authorisation:	ABO Wind Renewable Energies (Pty) Ltd
Location of activity:	<i>NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE: WITHIN WARD 4 KHÂI-MA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY</i>

This authorisation does not negate the holder of the authorisation's responsibility to comply with any other statutory requirements that may be applicable to the undertaking of the activity.

Decision

The Department is satisfied, on the basis of information available to it and subject to compliance with the conditions of this Environmental Authorisation, that the applicant should be authorised to undertake the activities specified below.

Non-compliance with a condition of this Environmental Authorisation may result in criminal prosecution or other actions provided for in the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

Details regarding the basis on which the Department reached this decision are set out in Annexure 1.

Activities authorised

By virtue of the powers conferred on it by the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended, the Department hereby authorises –

ABO Wind Renewable Energies (Pty) Ltd

(hereafter referred to as the **holder of the authorisation**)

with the following contact details –

Mr Robert Wagener
ABO Wind Renewable Energies (Pty) Ltd
Unit B1 Mayfair Square
Century Way
CENTURY CITY
7441

Telephone Number : 021 276 3620
Cellphone Number : 064 030 3633
Email Address : robert.wagener@abo-wind.com

to undertake the following activities (hereafter referred to as "the activity") indicated in Listing Notice 1 and 3, of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended:

Listed activities	Activity/Project description
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 11:</u></p> <p><i>The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity -</i></p> <p><i>(i) outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts.</i></p>	<p>The Geelstert Grid Connection will require the construction and operation of the Geelstert Collector Substation stepping power up to 220kV; a double-circuit power line of up to 220kV between the Geelstert Collector Substation and the Aggeneis Main Transmission Substation; and a 220kV single-circuit power line to connect the authorised Aggeneis 1 and 2 collector substations to the Geelstert Collector Substation. The 1km wide grid connection corridor being assessed for the development of the Geelstert Grid Connection is located outside of an urban area.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 12(ii)(c)</u></p> <p><i>The development of –</i></p> <p><i>(i) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more;</i></p> <p><i>Where such development occurs -</i></p> <p><i>(a) within 32 metres of a watercourse</i></p>	<p>The Geelstert Grid Connection will require the construction of infrastructure within 32m of watercourses within the grid connection corridor.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 14:</u></p> <p><i>The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure, for the storage, or for the storage and handling, of a dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 80 cubic meters or more but not exceeding 500 cubic meters.</i></p>	<p>The development and operation of the Geelstert grid connection will require the storage of 80 cubic metres of dangerous goods, which will include flammable and combustible liquids such as oils associated with the on-site facility substation transformers, lubricants, and solvents.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 19</u></p>	

Listed activities	Activity/Project description
<p><i>The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic meters into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic meters from a watercourse.</i></p>	<p>The development of the Geelstert Grid Connection may require the removal and moving of soil, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres during the construction phase, as several ephemeral watercourses and depression wetlands are located within and in the vicinity of the grid connection corridor.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 27</u> <i>The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation.....</i></p>	<p>The Geelstert Collector Substation will have an extent of ~ 1.25ha, therefore the clearance of an area exceeding 1ha of indigenous vegetation will be required during construction.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 28 (i)</u> <i>Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial, or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture, game farming, equestrian purposes or afforestation on or after 01 April 1998 and where such development</i> <i>(ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare.</i></p>	<p>The Geelstert Collector Substation will have an extent of ~ 1.25ha on land currently used for agricultural activities (i.e., grazing by livestock).</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 4(g)(ii)(bb)(ee)</u> <i>The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13.5 metres in the</i> <i>(g) Northern Cape</i> <i>(ii) outside an urban area:</i> <i>(bb) a National Protected Area Expansion Strategy Focus Areas</i> <i>(ee) Critical biodiversity area as identified in systematic biodiversity plan adopted by the competent authority or biosphere reserves.</i></p>	<p>The Geelstert Grid Connection will require the development of a 6m wide access road to provide access to the Geelstert Collector Substation and 4m wide jeep tracks to provide access to and along the power line servitude during the construction and operation phase of the project. The grid connection corridor for the Geelstert Grid Connection is located within the Kamiesberg-Bushmanland-Augrabies National Protected Expansion Strategy Focus Area and within a Critical Biodiversity 2 Area (CBA 2).</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 10(g)(ii)(iii)(bb)(ee):</u> <i>The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure for the storage, or storage and handling of a dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 30 but not exceeding 80 cubic metres in the</i></p>	<p>The Geelstert Grid Connection will require infrastructure for the storage and handling of transformer oil and other chemicals, where such storage is 80 cubic metres and occurs within 100m of ephemeral watercourses and depression wetlands</p>

Listed activities	Activity/Project description
<p>(g) Northern Cape Province, (ii) Areas within a watercourse or wetland; or within 100 metres from the edge of a watercourse or wetland, (iii) outside an urban area within (bb) a National Protected Expansion Strategy Focus Area and (ee) Critical biodiversity area as identified in systematic biodiversity plan adopted by the competent authority or biosphere reserves.</p>	<p>within the Kamiesberg-Bushmanland-Au-grabies National Protected Expansion Strategy Focus Area and a Critical Biodiversity Area 2 (CBA 2). The grid connection infrastructure (i.e. pylons/towers, etc) will span the watercourses and the depression wetlands (including the associated buffers) identified within the grid connection corridor.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 12 (g)(ii)</u> The clearance of an area of up to 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation in the (g) Northern Cape Province within a (ii) Critical Biodiversity Area.</p>	<p>The Geelstert Grid Connection will require the clearance of an area exceeding 300 square metres of indigenous vegetation for the placement of the power line pylons/towers within a Critical Biodiversity Area 2 (CBA 2).</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 14(ii)(c)(g)(ii) (bb)(ff)</u> The development of – (ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more; Where such development occurs - (c) within 32 metres of a watercourse, (g) Northern Cape Province (ii) outside an urban areas (bb) a National Protected Area Expansion Strategy Areas (ff) Critical biodiversity area as identified in systematic biodiversity plan adopted by the competent authority or biosphere reserves.</p>	<p>The Geelstert Grid Connection will require the development of power line pylons/towers with a physical footprint exceeding 10 square metres within watercourses and within 32m of the watercourses. The grid connection corridor for the Geelstert Grid Connection is located within the Kamiesberg-Bushmanland-Au-grabies National Protected Area Expansion Focus Area and within a Critical Biodiversity 2 Area (CBA 2).</p>

as described in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) dated November 2020 at:

Farm Name, Portions and 21 Digit SG Code:

Farm Details	SG 21 Digit code
Remaining Extent of the Farm Bloemhoek 61	C05300000000006100000
Remaining Extent of the Farm Aggeneys 56	C05300000000005600000

Remaining Extent of Portion 1 of the Farm Aggeneys 56	C05300000000005600001
Portion 2 of the Farm Aggeneys 56	C05300000000005600002
Portion 12 of the Farm Aggeneys 56	C05300000000005600002
Portion 13 of the Farm Aggeneys 56	C05300000000005600003

Geelstert Grid Connection Corridor Coordinates

	Latitude	Longitude
Start	29°17'41.82"S	18°57'29.44"E
Middle	29°17'20.24"S	18°53'4.27"E
End	29°17'48.98"S	29°17'48.98"S
Geelstert Collector Substation	29°17'45.24"S	18°57'4.20"E

- for the proposed development and operation of a grid connection for the Geelstert 1 and Geelstert 2 solar PV facilities on a site located south-east of Aggeneys in the Northern Cape Province, hereafter referred to as "the property".

Proposed infrastructure will include the following:

The development of the Geelstert Grid Connection will include the following infrastructure components:

- A new Collector Substation/Switching Station of up to 1.25ha in extent, including:
 - ✓ Construction of a new platform with earth mat and civil works.
 - ✓ New feeder bay/s and busbar/s (up to 220kV) complete with protection equipment.
- A double-circuit power line of up to 220kV between the Geelstert Collector Substation and the existing Aggeneis MTS, complete with structures, foundations, conductor, fibre layout, insulation, and assemblies.
- A 6m wide access road to access the Geelstert Collector Substation and 4m wide jeep tracks to provide access to and along the power line servitude.
- A single-circuit power line (of up to 220kV) to connect the authorised Aggeneys 1 and Aggeneys 2 Collector Substation to the proposed Geelstert Collector Substation, including a 6m wide access road along this power line.
- Works within the Aggeneis MTS HV yard:
 - ✓ Establish new feeder bay/s (up to 220kV), inclusive of line bays, busbars, bussection and protection equipment.
 - ✓ Install a new transformer (up to 500MVA 400/132kV).

Conditions of this Environmental Authorisation

Scope of authorisation

1. The 17.5km and 1km wide grid connection corridor (extending to 2km at the Aggeneis Main Transmission Substation (MTS)) and associated infrastructure, located on south-east of Aggeneis adjacent to other linear infrastructure such as the existing Aries/Aggeneis 400kV Power Line; the N14 and other power lines in the area that connect to the Aggeneis MTS on Remaining Extent of the Farm Bloemhoek 61, Remaining Extent of the Farm Aggeneys 56, Remaining Extent of Portion 1 of the Farm Aggeneys 56, Portion 2 of the Farm Aggeneys 56, Portion 12 of the Farm Aggeneys 56, Portion 13 of the Farm Aggeneys 56 in the Northern Cape Province is approved as per the geographic coordinates cited in the table above.
 2. Authorisation of the activity is subject to the conditions contained in this Environmental Authorisation, which form part of the Environmental Authorisation and are binding on the holder of the authorisation.
 3. The holder of the authorisation is responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions contained in this Environmental Authorisation. This includes any person acting on the holder's behalf, including but not limited to, an agent, servant, contractor, sub-contractor, employee, consultant or person rendering a service to the holder of the authorisation.
 4. The activities authorised may only be carried out at the property as described above.
 5. Any changes to, or deviations from, the project description set out in this Environmental Authorisation must be approved, in writing, by the Department before such changes or deviations may be effected. In assessing whether to grant such approval or not, the Department may request such information as it deems necessary to evaluate the significance and impacts of such changes or deviations and it may be necessary for the holder of the authorisation to apply for further Environmental Authorisation in terms of the regulations.
 6. The holder of an Environmental Authorisation must apply for an amendment of the Environmental Authorisation with the Competent Authority for any alienation, transfer or change of ownership rights in the property on which the activity is to take place.
 7. This activity must commence within a period of ten (10) years from the date of issue of this Environmental Authorisation. If commencement of the activity does not occur within that period, the authorisation lapses and a new application for Environmental Authorisation must be made in order for the activity to be undertaken.
 8. Construction must be completed within five (05) years of the commencement of the activity on site.
 9. Commencement with one activity listed in terms of this Environmental Authorisation constitutes commencement of all authorised activities.
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Notification of authorisation and right to appeal

10. The holder of the authorisation must notify every registered interested and affected party, in writing and within 14 (fourteen) calendar days of the date of this Environmental Authorisation, of the decision to authorise the activity.
11. The notification referred to must –
 - 11.1. specify the date on which the authorisation was issued;
 - 11.2. inform the interested and affected party of the appeal procedure provided for in the National Appeal Regulations, 2014;
 - 11.3. advise the interested and affected party that a copy of the authorisation will be furnished on request; and
 - 11.4. give the reasons of the Competent Authority for the decision.

Commencement of the activity

12. The authorised activity shall not commence until the period for the submission of appeals has lapsed as per the National Appeal Regulations, 2014, and no appeal has been lodged against the decision. In terms of Section 43(7), an appeal under Section 43 of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended will suspend the Environmental Authorisation or any provision or condition attached thereto. In the instance where an appeal is lodged you may not commence with the activity until such time that the appeal has been finalised.

Management of the activity

13. The Generic Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) for the Development and Expansion for Overhead Electricity Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure, and the Generic EMPr for the Development and Expansion of Substation Infrastructure for the Transmission and Distribution of Electricity submitted as part of the Application for EA must be amended as follows and submitted to the Department for approval prior to commencement of the activity.
 - 13.1. The following additions must be included in Part C (Site Specific Environmental Attributes) of the generic EMPrs:
 - 13.1.1. The requirements and conditions of this environmental authorisation;

- 13.1.2. All recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the final BAR dated November 2020;
and
- 13.1.3. A final development layout plan and all mitigation measures as dictated by the final development layout plan.
14. The final development layout plan to be included in Part C of the generic EMPr for the Development and Expansion for Overhead Electricity Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure must indicate the following:
 - 14.1. The final delineation of the centreline of the power lines within the approved corridor;
 - 14.2. The specific position of the pylon structures and foundation footprints;
 - 14.3. All existing infrastructure on the site, especially roads;
 - 14.4. Any sensitive environmental features that will be affected by the power lines; and
 - 14.5. All "no-go" and buffer areas.
15. The amended generic EMPrs, including the final site layout map, must be made available for comments to registered Interested and Affected Parties, and the holder of this environmental authorisation must consider such comments prior to submission of the generic EMPrs to the Department for written approval.
16. Once approved, the EMPrs must be implemented and strictly enforced during all phases of the project. It shall be a dynamic document and shall be included in all contract documentation for all phases of the development when approved.
17. Changes to the approved EMPrs must be submitted in accordance to the EIA Regulations applicable at the time.
18. The Department reserves the right to amend the approved EMPrs should any impacts that were not anticipated or covered in the BAR be discovered.

Frequency and process of updating the EMPr

19. The EMPr must be updated where the findings of the environmental audit reports, contemplated in Condition 26 below, indicate insufficient mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity, or insufficient levels of compliance with the environmental authorisation or EMPr.
20. The updated EMPr must contain recommendations to rectify the shortcomings identified in the environmental audit report.
21. The updated EMPr must be submitted to the Department for approval together with the environmental audit report, as per Regulation 34 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended. The updated EMPr must

- have been subjected to a public participation process, which process has been agreed to by the Department, prior to submission of the updated EMPr to the Department for approval.
22. In assessing whether to grant approval of an EMPr which has been updated as a result of an audit, the Department will consider the processes prescribed in Regulation 35 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended. Prior to approving an amended EMPr, the Department may request such amendments to the EMPr as it deems appropriate to ensure that the EMPr sufficiently provides for avoidance, management and mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity.
23. The holder of the authorisation must apply for an amendment of an EMPr, if such amendment is required before an audit is required. The amendment process is prescribed in Regulation 37 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. The holder of the authorisation must request comments on the proposed amendments to the impact management outcomes of the EMPr or amendments to the closure objectives of the closure plan from potentially interested and affected parties, including the competent authority, by using any of the methods provided for in the Act for a period of at least 30 days.

Monitoring

24. The holder of the authorisation must appoint an experienced Environmental Control Officer (ECO) for the construction phase of the development that will have the responsibility to ensure that the mitigation/rehabilitation measures and recommendations referred to in this environmental authorisation are implemented and to ensure compliance with the provisions of the approved EMPr.
- 24.1. The ECO must be appointed before commencement of any authorised activities.
- 24.2. Once appointed, the name and contact details of the ECO must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
- 24.3. The ECO must keep record of all activities on site, problems identified, transgressions noted and a task schedule of tasks undertaken by the ECO.
- 24.4. The ECO must remain employed until all rehabilitation measures, as required for implementation due to construction damage, are completed and the site is ready for operation.

Recording and reporting to the Department

25. All documentation e.g. audit/monitoring/compliance reports and notifications, required to be submitted to the Department in terms of this environmental authorisation, must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.

26. The holder of the environmental authorisation must, for the period during which the environmental authorisation and EMPr remain valid, ensure that project compliance with the conditions of the environmental authorisation and the EMPr are audited, and that the audit reports are submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
27. The frequency of auditing and of submission of the environmental audit reports must be as per the frequency indicated in the EMPr, taking into account the processes for such auditing as prescribed in Regulation 34 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.
28. The holder of the authorisation must, in addition, submit environmental audit reports to the Department within 30 days of completion of the construction phase (i.e. within 30 days of site handover) and a final environmental audit report within 30 days of completion of rehabilitation activities.
29. The environmental audit reports must be compiled in accordance with Appendix 7 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended and must indicate the date of the audit, the name of the auditor and the outcome of the audit in terms of compliance with the environmental authorisation conditions as well as the requirements of the approved EMPr.
30. Records relating to monitoring and auditing must be kept on site and made available for inspection to any relevant and competent authority in respect of this development.

Notification to authorities

31. A written notification of commencement must be given to the Department no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the activity. Commencement for the purposes of this condition includes site preparation. The notice must include a date on which it is anticipated that the activity will commence, as well as a reference number.

Operation of the activity

32. A written notification of operation must be given to the Department no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the activity operational phase.

Site closure and decommissioning

33. Should the activity ever cease or become redundant, the holder of the authorisation must undertake the required actions as prescribed by legislation at the time and comply with all relevant legal requirements administered by any relevant and Competent Authority at that time.
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Specific conditions

Conditions for Non-operational aspects

34. The grid connection infrastructure for the GeelstertGrid connection must be developed and optimised within the authorised grid connection corridor and must be placed within areas of low sensitivity and span features of very high and high environmental sensitivity (including the associated buffers applied).
35. All mitigation measures detailed within the BA Report dated November 2020, as well as the specialist reports must be included in the EMPr and be implemented.
36. The final design of the grid connection infrastructure and a final layout must be submitted to the Department, as part of the amended EMPr as stated in condition 13 and 14 above, for review and approval prior to commencement of construction activities.
37. A pre-construction walk-through of the grid connection corridor must be undertaken to identify areas of avifaunal sensitivity, such as raptor nests in the proximity of the grid connection infrastructure. Powerline pylons/towers that are considered safe for birds must be erected to avoid the electrocutions of birds (particularly large raptors) perching or attempting to perch. Where necessary, deterrent devices such as bird guards must be mounted on relevant parts of the pylons to further reduce the possibility of electrocutions.
38. Prior to construction, the design and layout of the proposed single and double circuit power lines and collector substation infrastructure must be endorsed by members of the Eskom-EWT Strategic Partnership, considering the mitigation guidelines recommended by Birdlife South Africa. Letter of endorsement must be included in the final EMPr to be submitted to the Department for final review and approval.
39. Bird diverters such as brightly coloured 'aviation balls, thickened wire spirals, or flapping devices that increase the visibility of the power line must be fitted where necessary to make the power lines as visible as possible to collision-susceptible species.
40. Before construction commences individuals of listed species within the development footprint that would be affected by the infrastructure and associated servitude must be counted and marked and translocated, where deemed necessary, by the ecologist/botanist conducting the pre-construction walk-through survey. The pre-construction walk-through survey must be undertaken during peak flowering season. Permits from the relevant provincial authorities, i.e., the Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform (DAEARD&LR) must be obtained before the individuals are disturbed.

41. All indigenous protected species listed in Schedule 1, 2 and 3 respectively, in terms of the Northern Cape Nature Conservation Act (Act No. 9 of 2009) must not be picked, damaged, destroy or removed without relevant permits being in place from the relevant authority.
42. A search and rescue operation must be undertaken for all identified species of conservation concern prior to the commencement of the construction phase.
43. Vegetation clearing within the power line servitude and at site earmarked for the development of the collector substation must be kept to a minimum. No unnecessary vegetation must be cleared.
44. Annual Monitoring for erosion and alien invasive plant species must be undertaken within the power line servitude. Alien Management (including monitoring) should be undertaken in accordance with an Alien Management Plan. Woody alien invasive plant species must be monitored and managed on an annual basis using the appropriate control techniques as determined by the woody plant species present in the area.
45. The necessary water authorisation must be obtained from the Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation prior to the commencement of the construction activities.
46. The depression wetland located within the grid connection corridor and associated with a very high sensitivity should be excluded from development. There must be no development of infrastructure within this feature, or the associated 15m buffer area.
47. Use only the existing service roads (of the existing Aries/Aggeneys 400kV Power Line) when crossing any of the ephemeral watercourses and the depression wetlands.
48. A Chance Find Procedure/Protocol must be developed and implemented if archaeological or palaeontological resources are found during the construction and operation of the grid connection infrastructure. In the case where the proposed development activities bring these materials to the surface, work must cease and the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) must be contacted immediately.
49. A person must be trained as a site monitor to report any archaeological sites found during the development. Construction managers/foremen and/or the Environmental Control Officer (ECO) must be informed before construction starts on the possible types of heritage sites and cultural material they may encounter and the procedures to follow when they find sites; A Chance Finds Procedure and a Fossil Finds Protocol are recommended to be followed.
50. Should any evidence of archaeological sites or remains (e.g. remnants of stone-made structures, indigenous ceramics, bones, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell fragments, charcoal and ash concentrations), fossils or other categories of heritage resources be found during the proposed development, SAHRA APM Unit (Natasha Higgitt/Phillip Hine 021 462 5402) must be alerted. If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit (Mimi Seetelo 012 320 8490), must be

alerted immediately as per section 36(6) of the NHRA. A professional archaeologist must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the findings. A Phase 2 rescue excavation operation may be required subject to permits issued by SAHRA.

51. An integrated waste management approach must be implemented that is based on waste minimisation and must incorporate reduction, recycling, re-use and disposal where appropriate. Any solid waste must be disposed of at a landfill licensed in terms of Section 20 (b) of the National Environment Management Waste Act, 2008 (Act No.59 of 2008).

General

52. A copy of this Environmental Authorisation, the audit and compliance monitoring reports, and the approved EMPr, must be made available for inspection and copying-

52.1. at the site of the authorised activity;

52.2. to anyone on request; and

52.3. where the holder of the Environmental Authorisation has a website, on such publicly accessible website.

53. National government, provincial government, local authorities or committees appointed in terms of the conditions of this authorisation or any other public authority shall not be held responsible for any damages or losses suffered by the holder of the authorisation or his/her successor in title in any instance where construction or operation subsequent to construction be temporarily or permanently stopped for reasons of non-compliance by the holder of the authorisation with the conditions of authorisation as set out in this document or any other subsequent document emanating from these conditions of authorisation.

Date of Environmental Authorisation: 15/03/2021



Mr Sabelo Malaza

Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries

Annexure 1: Reasons for Decision

1. Information considered in making the decision

In reaching its decision, the Department took, *inter alia*, the following into consideration -

- a) The listed activities as applied for in the application form received on November 2020.
- b) The information contained in the BAR dated November 2020.
- c) The comments received from South African Heritage Resources Agency, Northern Cape Department of Environment Nature Conservation, Eskom, and Birdlife South Africa and interested and affected parties as included in the BAR dated November 2020.
- d) The information contained in the specialist studies contained within the appendices of the BAR dated November 2020 and as appears below:

Title	Prepared by	Date
Fauna and Flora Specialist Study	3Foxes Biodiversity Consulting (Pty) Ltd	July 2020
Avifaunal Specialist Study	3Foxes Biodiversity Consulting (Pty) Ltd	July 2020
Freshwater Resource Study and Assessment	Nkurenkuru Ecology and Biodiversity	July 2020
Soils and Agricultural Potential Impact Assessment	Agricultural Research Council: Soil, Climate, Water (SCW)	June 2020
Heritage Impact Assessment	CTS Heritage (Pty) Ltd	October 2020
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Environmental Planning and Design (Pty) Ltd	August 2020
Social impact assessment	Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd and Neville Bews and Associates	June 2020

2. Key factors considered in making the decision

All information presented to the Department was taken into account in the Department's consideration of the application. A summary of the issues which, in the Department's view, were of the most significance is set out below.

- a) The findings of all the specialist studies conducted and their recommended mitigation measures.

- b) The Geelstert Grid Connection will facilitate the transmission of the electricity generated by the proposed Geelstert 1 and Geelstert 2 solar PV facilities into the national grid and is considered essential infrastructure for the operation of the solar PV facilities. Therefore, the need for the Geelstert Grid Connection is directly linked to the need and desirability of the proposed Geelstert 1 and Geelstert 2 solar PV facilities, which are aligned with national and regional policies and plans.
- c) The BAR dated November 2020 identified all legislation and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the BAR dated November 2020.
- d) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the BAR dated November 2020 and the specialist studies have been adequately indicated.
- e) A sufficient public participation process was undertaken and the applicant has satisfied the minimum requirements as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended for public involvement.

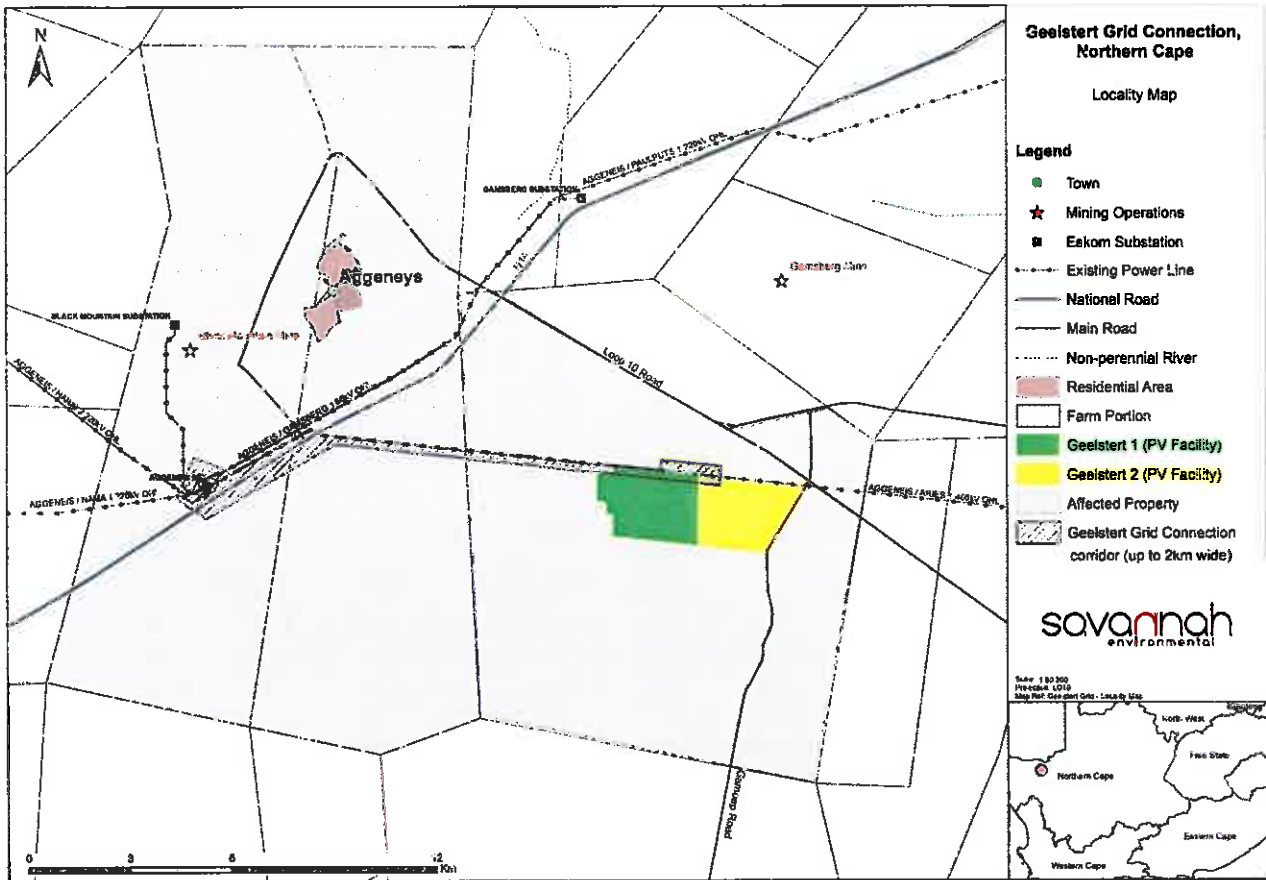
3. Findings

After consideration of the information and factors listed above, the Department made the following findings -

- a) The identification and assessment of impacts are detailed in the BAR dated November 2020 and sufficient assessment of the key identified issues and impacts have been completed.
- b) The procedure followed for impact assessment is adequate for the decision-making process.
- c) The information contained in the BAR dated November 2020 is deemed to be accurate and credible.
- d) The proposed mitigation of impacts identified and assessed adequately curtails the identified impacts.
- e) EMPr measures for the pre-construction, construction and rehabilitation phases of the development were proposed and included in the BAR and will be implemented to manage the identified environmental impacts during the construction phase.

In view of the above, the Department is satisfied that, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in the environmental authorisation, the authorised activities will not conflict with the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the authorised activities can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The environmental authorisation is accordingly granted.

Annexure 2: Locality Plan



M/S