



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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

DFFE Reference: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2457

Enquiries: Mr Herman Alberts

Telephone: (012) 399 9371 E-mail: HAlberts@dffe.gov.za

Mr Eugene Marais
Sutherland Wind Farm (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 45063
CLAREMONT
7735

Telephone Number: (021) 657 4052
Email Address: Eugene.Marais@mainstreamrp.com

PER EMAIL

Dear Mr Marais

ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT, ACT NO. 107 OF 1998, AS AMENDED: FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW 132KV POWER LINE, 132KV SWITCHING STATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE SUTHERLAND AND RIETRUG WIND ENERGY FACILITIES, 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, of the Department's 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 stipulates 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 abuses or compromises your personal information in any way.

Your attention is drawn to Chapter 2 of the 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 prescribe 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 (twenty) 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@dfef.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



Ms Millicent Solomons
Acting Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
Date: 14/05/2022.

cc:	Bryan Fisher	NC: DAEARDLR	E-mail: BFisher@ncpg.gov.za
	Allistar Gibbons	Karoo Hoogland Local Municipality	E-mail: a.gibbons@karochoogland.gov.za
	Arlene Singh	Nala Environmental (Pty) Ltd	E-mail: arlene@veersgroup.com



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Environmental Authorisation

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

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW 132KV POWERLINE, 132KV SWITCHING STATION AND
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE SUTHERLAND AND RIETRUG WIND ENERGY
FACILITIES, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

Namakwa District Municipality

Authorisation register number:	<i>14/12/16/3/3/1/2457</i>
Last amended:	<i>First issue</i>
Holder of authorisation:	<i>Sutherland Wind Farm (Pty) Ltd</i>
Location of activity:	<i>Remainder of Farm Nooitgedacht 148; Sutherland; Karoo Hoogland Local Municipality; Namakwa District Municipality; Northern Cape Province</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, 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, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended, the Department hereby authorises –

SUTHERLAND WIND FARM (PTY) LTD

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

with the following contact details –

Mr Eugene Marais
4th Floor Mariendahl House
Newlands on Main, Corner Main and Campground Road
Claremont
CAPE TOWN
7708

Telephone Number: (021) 657 4052

Cell phone Number: (073) 871 5781

Email Address: Eugene.Marais@mainstreamrp.com

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

Activity number	Activity 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>A 132kV overhead power line approximately 0,46km - 1,35km long will be developed for connecting the 132kV substation to the authorised electrical grid infrastructure that connects to the Koring Main Transmission Substation.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 12</u></p> <p><i>"The development of</i></p> <p><i>(ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square meters or more; where such development occurs within</i></p> <p><i>(a) a watercourse and</i></p> <p><i>(c) within 32 meters of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse."</i></p>	<p>The power line route and substation location may cross some drainage lines along it's route. This will result in infringement within watercourses and/or within 32m of watercourses.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 19</u></p> <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 powerline route and substation infrastructure will require the infilling or depositing of material and the extraction, removal or moving of soils of more than 10 cubic meters from watercourses during construction</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 27</u></p> <p><i>"The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for is required for-</i></p> <p><i>(i) The undertaking of a linear activity."</i></p>	<p>Clearance of vegetation will occur within the grid connection corridor during power line construction and at the proposed switching station location which has a footprint of approximately 200m x 200m.</p>

<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 28</u></p> <p><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></p> <p><i>(ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1ha”</i></p>	<p>The proposed grid infrastructure that is intended to be developed will be greater than 1ha.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 4</u></p> <p><i>“The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres</i></p> <p><i>g. Northern Cape</i></p> <p><i>(ee) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans.”</i></p>	<p>Access roads along the proposed powerline and substation will need to be developed for construction and maintenance purposes.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 12</u></p> <p><i>“The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.</i></p> <p><i>g. Northern Cape Province</i></p> <p><i>ii. within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans”</i></p>	<p>Clearance of vegetation will occur within the grid connection corridor during power line construction and at the switching location which has a footprint of approximately 200m x 200m.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 14</u></p> <p><i>“The development of –</i></p> <p><i>(xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more Where such development occurs</i></p> <p><i>(a) Within a watercourse</i></p> <p><i>(c) if no setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse; Excluding the development of infrastructure or structures within existing ports or</i></p>	<p>The development of the new powerline and substation will encroach onto watercourses and will be located within 32m of watercourses.</p>

harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbour."	
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as described in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) dated January 2022 at:

132kV Powerline co-ordinates (Alternative 1) preferred alternative:

	Latitude	Longitude
Start	32°38'04.10"S	20°57'48.14"E
End	32°38'17.48"S	20°57'56.28"E

132kV Switching Station (Alternative 1)- preferred alternative:

	Latitude	Longitude
Corner 1	32°37'58.86"S	20°57'39.48"E
Corner 2	32°37'55.46"S	20°57'54.14"E
Corner 3	32°38'7.96"S	20°57'58.11"E
Corner 2	32°38'11.28"S	20°57'43.36"E

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- the establishment of a 132kv powerline, 132kv switching station and associated infrastructure to support the authorised the Sutherland and Rietrug wind energy facilities, Northern Cape Province, hereafter referred to as "the property".

Infrastructure associated with the project:

<u>Infrastructure Details</u>	<u>Details</u>
Double circuit powerline	132kV Powerline from the Switching Station to the authorised grid connection infrastructure.
Powerline capacity	<u>132kV</u>
132kV Powerline length (alternative 1)	0,46km – the powerline will start at the proposed 132kV switching station (alternative 1) located within the authorised Sutherland WEF and traverse in a southerly direction

	connecting to the authorised grid connection for the Sutherland Cluster.
Powerline servitude	36m
Tower Height	32m
132kV switching station Alternative 1 (Preferred)	The switching station will have a footprint of 200m x 200m in extent. The proposed switching station will be located within the authorised Sutherland WEF.
Access Roads	Access tracks up to 4m wide will be required along the corridor of the 132kV powerline

Conditions of this Environmental Authorisation

Scope of authorisation

1. The establishment of a 132kV powerline, 132kV switching station and associated infrastructure to support the authorised the Sutherland and Rietrug wind energy facilities, Northern Cape Province, as described above is hereby approved.
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.

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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 (5) 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.

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. A final site layout plan for the 132kV powerline and 132kV Switching Station for the Sutherland and Rietrug Wind Energy Facilities and all associated infrastructure, as determined by the detailed engineering phase
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and micro-siting of the powerline route and pylon structures, and all mitigation measures as dictated by the final site layout plan, must be submitted to the Department for approval prior to construction. A copy of 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. Once amended, the final development layout map must be submitted to the Department for written approval prior to commencement of the activity. All available biodiversity information must be used in the finalisation of the layout map. Existing infrastructure must be used as far as possible e.g., roads. The layout map must indicate the following:

- 13.1. The 132kV powerline and the 132kV Switching Station;
 - 13.2. The specific position of the pylon structures and foundation footprints;
 - 13.3. All existing infrastructure on the site, especially roads;
 - 13.4. All associated infrastructure within the assessed study area. The dimensions of the structures must be indicated;
 - 13.5. All sensitive environmental features that will be affected by the development; and
 - 13.6. All "no-go" and buffer areas.
14. Part C (Site Specific Environmental Attributes) of the generic Environmental Management Programmes (EMPrs) for the 132kV powerline and 132kV Switching Station for the Sutherland and Rietrug Wind Energy Facilities, submitted as Annexure J and K of the BAR dated January 2022, is not approved. Part C must be amended to include measures as dictated by the final site lay-out map and micro-siting, and the provisions of this environmental authorisation. Part C of the generic EMPrs must be made available for comments to registered Interested and Affected Parties and the holder of this environmental authorisation must consider such comments. Once amended, the generic EMPrs must be submitted to the Department for written approval of Part C prior to commencement of the activity. Part C of the generic EMPrs must be amended to include the following:
- 14.1. The requirements and conditions of this environmental authorisation;
 - 14.2. Measures as dictated by the final site lay-out map and micro-siting;
 - 14.3. All recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the BAR and the specialist reports as included in the final BAR dated January 2022;
 - 14.4. An effective monitoring system to detect any leakage or spillage of any hazardous substances during their transportation, handling, use or storage. This must include precautionary measures to limit the possibility of oil and other toxic liquids from entering the soil or storm water systems;
 - 14.5. A fire management plan to be implemented during the construction and operation of the facility;

- 14.6. A re-vegetation and habitat rehabilitation plan. The plan must provide for restoration to be undertaken as soon as possible after completion of construction activities, to reduce the amount of habitat converted at any one time and to speed up the recovery to natural habitats.
- 14.7. An aquatic Rehabilitation and Monitoring plan, particularly for watercourse features that will be infilled and / or excavated;
- 14.8. A stormwater management plan; and
- 14.9. The final site layout map.
15. Once approved the generic EMPs must be implemented and adhered to. They shall be seen as dynamic documents and shall be included in all contract documentation for the development.
16. Changes to the approved EMPs must be submitted in accordance to the EIA Regulations applicable at the time.
17. The Department reserves the right to amend the approved EMPs, should any impacts that were not anticipated or covered in the BAR be discovered.

Frequency and process of updating the EMP

18. The EMP must be updated where the findings of the environmental audit reports, contemplated in Condition 29 below, indicate insufficient mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity, or insufficient levels of compliance with the environmental authorisation or EMP.
19. The updated EMP must contain recommendations to rectify the shortcomings identified in the environmental audit report.
20. The updated EMP must be submitted to the Department for approval together with the environmental audit report, as per Regulation 34 of GN R. 982. The updated EMP must have been subjected to a public participation process, which process has been agreed to by the Department, prior to submission of the updated EMP to the Department for approval.
21. In assessing whether to grant approval of an EMP which has been updated as a result of an audit, the Department will consider the processes prescribed in Regulation 35 of GN R.982 as amended. Prior to approving an amended EMP, the Department may request such amendments to the EMP as it deems appropriate to ensure that the EMP sufficiently provides for avoidance, management and mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity.
22. The holder of the authorisation may apply for an amendment of an EMP, if such amendment is required before an audit is required. The amendment process is prescribed in Regulation 37 of GN R.982, 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

23. 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. The ECO must be appointed before commencement of any authorised activities.
25. Once appointed, the name and contact details of the ECO must be submitted to the Director: Compliance Monitoring of the Department at Directorcompliance@environment.gov.za.
26. The ECO must keep record of all activities on site, problems identified, transgressions noted and a task schedule of tasks undertaken by the ECO.
27. 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

28. 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 at Directorcompliance@environment.gov.za.
29. 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 at Directorcompliance@environment.gov.za.
30. 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 GN R. 982, as amended.
31. 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.

32. 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.
33. 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

34. 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

35. 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

36. 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.

Specific conditions

37. A pre-construction walk-through of the development footprint of all infrastructure for species of conservation concern that would be affected and that can be translocated must be undertaken by an ecologist prior to the commencement of the construction phase. Permits from the relevant national and provincial authorities, i.e. the Development and Land Reform to form the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment (DFFE), must be obtained before the individuals are disturbed.

38. The footprint of the development must be limited to the areas required for actual construction works and operational activities.
39. Areas outside of the footprint, including sensitive areas and buffer areas, must be clearly demarcated (using fencing and appropriate signage) before construction commences and must be regarded as "no-go" areas.
40. All areas of disturbed soil must be reclaimed using only indigenous grass and shrubs. Reclamation activities shall be undertaken according to the EMPr.
41. Topsoil from all excavations and construction activities must be salvaged and reapplied during reclamation.
42. An integrated waste management approach must be implemented that is based on waste minimisation and must incorporate reduction, recycling and re-use options where appropriate. Where solid waste is disposed of, such disposal shall only occur at a landfill licensed in terms of section 20(b) of the National Environment Management Waste Act, 2008 (Act 59 of 2008).
43. The holder of this authorisation must take note that no temporary site camps will be allowed outside the footprint of the development area as the establishment of such structures might trigger a listed activity as defined in the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.
44. Borrow materials must be obtained only from authorised and permitted sites. Permits must be kept on site by the ECO.
45. Should any archaeological sites, artefacts, paleontological fossils or graves be exposed during construction work, work in the immediate vicinity of the find must be stopped, the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) must be informed and the services of an accredited heritage professional obtained for an assessment of the heritage resources.
46. All declared aliens must be identified and managed in accordance with the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983 (Act No. 43 of 1983). There should be an alien species monitoring and eradication program to prevent encroachment of these problem plants for the duration of the operation.

General

47. The recommendations of the EAP in the BAR dated January 2022 and the specialist studies attached must be adhered to. In the event of any conflicting mitigation measures and conditions of the Environmental Authorisation, the specific condition of this Environmental Authorisation will take preference.
48. A copy of this environmental authorisation, the audit and compliance monitoring reports, and the approved EMPr, must be made available for inspection and copying-

- 48.1. at the site of the authorised activity;
 - 48.2. to anyone on request; and
 - 48.3. where the holder of the environmental authorisation has a website, on such publicly accessible website.
49. 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: 14/09/2022.



Ms Millicent Solomons

Acting Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

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 16 November 2021.
- b) The information contained in the BAR dated January 2022.
- c) The comments received from interested and affected parties as included in the BAR dated January 2022.
- d) Mitigation measures as proposed in the BAR and the EMPr dated January 2022.
- e) The information contained in the specialist studies contained within the appendices of the BAR dated January 2022.

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 need for the project to connect the Sutherland Facility to the grid infrastructure.
- c) The BAR dated January 2022 identified all legislations and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the BAR.
- d) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the BAR dated January 2022 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 January 2022 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 January 2022 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 dated January 2022 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, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the authorised activities can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The environmental authorisation is accordingly granted.