



**SUSTAINABLE  
FUTURES ZA**

# PROPOSED BIOTHERM ENERGY KLIPHEUWEL/DASSIESFONTEIN WIND ENERGY FACILITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

## PUBLIC MEETING

### MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Held on  
Tuesday, 23 November 2010,  
Caledon Spa and Hotel Conference Venue

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**Notes for the Record prepared by:**

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Please address any comments to Shawn Johnston at the above address.

**EIA PROCESS SCOPING PHASE PUBLIC MEETING:  
PROPOSED BIOTHERM ENERGY KLIPHEUWEL/DASSIESFONTEIN  
WIND ENERGY FACILITY**

**Venue:** Caledon Spa and Hotel Conference Venue  
**Date:** Tuesday, 23 November 2010  
**Time:** 18h00 – 19h30

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

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Shawn Johnston, process facilitator from Sustainable Futures ZA, welcomed all present and asked each person present to introduced themselves.

**MEETING ATTENDEES**

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| <b>Name</b>        | <b>Organisation &amp; Position</b>                      |
|--------------------|---|
| Shawn Johnston     | Sustainable Futures ZA- Public Participation Specialist |
| Gerhard Cronje     | Savannah Environmental                                  |
| Jo-Anne Thomas     | Savannah Environmental                                  |
| Brian McMahon      | Individual Greyton                                      |
| Danie Du Toit      | Landowner Heuweltjieskraal                              |
| Johan van den Berg | BioTherm Energy   |
| Charles Rose       | BioTherm Energy   |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer | BirdLife Overberg                                       |
| Hugh Ashby         | Consultatnt to Overberg Wind Power                      |
| Uri Epstein        | BioTherm Energy   |

**APOLOGIES**

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Apologies were received from Dr. John Wynne-Edwards.

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**BACKGROUND & TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

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Shawn Johnston thanked all present for their attendance. He provided an overview of the objectives of the phase public meeting and then introduced Johan van der Berg who

presented the background and history of BioTherm Energy and its projects. The presentation on BioTherm Energy is attached as **Appendix A**.

Shawn Johnston then introduced Jo-Anne Thomas of Savannah Environmental who presented the findings of the draft EIA Report. The presentation of the findings is attached as **Appendix B**.

## **DISCUSSION SESSION**

| <b>Question / Comment</b>  | <b>Response</b>  |
|--|--|
| Danie du Toit: How many wind turbines would be placed on the Dassiesfontein area of the site?  | Jo-Anne Thomas: The current layout indicated 6 at Dassiesfontein and 10 at Klipheuwel.   |
| Danie du Toit: I would like to see some turbines on my farm at Heuweltjieskraal.   | Shawn Johnston: The matter relating to whether the wind turbines would be on Dassiesfontein or Heuweltjieskraal should be clarified with Johan van der Berg from BioTherm after the meeting.   |
| Danie du Toit: Will there be two substations per site?   | Jo-Anne Thomas: No, only one substation per site is proposed.  |
| Brian McMahon: What is the overall site area considered for this study?  | Jo-Anne Thomas: The area considered in the EIA studies was 602 ha.   |
| Brian McMahon: Does the 3,5% transformed include all permanently disturbed areas?  | Jo-Anne Thomas: yes, permanent disturbance refers to all disturbance which are longer than 15 years, this includes the turbine foundations and access roads which will be used over a 25-30 year period to operate the facility.   |
| Brian McMahon: Is there any upgrade of the Houw Hoek substation required to accommodate this project?  | Johan van der Berg: No, there is no need for any upgrades on this project. There might be for some of the other wind projects which wish to link into the substation.  |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer: Why are there no representatives of the Theewaterskloof Municipality present at the public meeting?  | Shawn Johnston: All stakeholders have been invited to attend the meeting, and the meeting was advertised in the local media. The draft environmental impact assessment report was sent to the Theewaterskloof Municipality. We cannot say why there is no presence at the meeting. |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer: We are concerned about the cumulative effects of the Caledon Wind, the Biotherm Klipheuwel and Dassiesfontein and SAGIT Caledon projects. These projects are all | Jo-Anne Thomas: We are aware of only two EIA processes currently underway, namely, the Caledon Wind and BioTherm Klipheuwel and Dassiesfontein EIAs. SAGIT is only doing wind monitoring at the moment. An EIA or a wind   |

| Question / Comment  | Response   |
|---|--|
| interlinked and would cover the area.   | energy facility has not commenced.   |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer: They might be doing wind monitoring now, however they could also start an EIA process in seeking an environmental authorisation.                                | Shawn Johnston: This point is noted on the cumulative effects and a possible third wind energy facility application in the Caledon area.   |
| Johan van der Berg: A great number of people are concerned about the cumulative effects of wind energy facilities.  | Shawn Johnston: Point noted.   |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer: There is very little information in the report about the bat study, why is this so? Why not include more detail in the EIA? There are no bat experts mentioned. | <p>Uri Epstein: We are still busy with our bat study. We have placed a number of bat monitoring devices on the two sites under investigation as well as on sites outside of the study area. At the point of putting the draft environmental impact assessment report out for public comment, very little information was available in terms of a full season on bat migration patterns. We will be making this information available to the public as the study progresses. Bat Conservation International has looked at our original Scoping report and approved of our methods. Our study and the data will be available to all scientists once it has been collected..</p> <p>Charles Rose: We are committed to ensuring that the results of this study are used in any mitigation measures around the two sites. We are committed to maintaining the highest standards and best practice for the implementation of this project.</p> |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer: We are purely interested in the bat study to understand bat and avifauna migration in this area.  | Shawn Johnston: As indicated by Uri Epstein and Charles Rose, as the data becomes available it would be shared and made available. Point noted.  |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer: What will happen to the comments raised during this phase? Will they just go into the final report?   | Jo-Anne Thomas: The comments will go into the final environmental impact assessment comments and responses report and we will send the final comments and response report to all registered interested and affected parties.   |
| Dr. Stuart Shearer: Why was the Dassiesfontein wind monitoring mast   | Uri Epstein: We were made aware of this error after it happened and we were extremely upset  |

| Question / Comment   | Response   |
|--|--|
| <p>not built and placed on the original point/place identified? Why was it placed in Renosterveld and the Renosterveld cleared?</p>  | <p>that this had occurred. The farmer apparently requested that the team installing the mast move it slightly without realizing that doing so would put it into a Renosterveld area. For this mistake we are now clearing a large section of alien species which have invaded natural areas on the site in order to offset the Renosterveld that has been removed.</p> <p>Jo-Anne Thomas: The clearing of the Renosterveld was noted up by Nick Helme the botanist who visited the site. It's been noted in his botanical report. Nick Helme informed all parties concerned and the rehabilitation of the site is being done in conjunction with CapeNature.</p> |
| <p>Dr. Stuart Shearer: So the rehabilitation plan for this activity has been developed with CapeNature.</p>  | <p>Jo-Anne Thomas: The plan was done with CapeNature and their land use planning team. One of their approved contractors will be responsible for the rehabilitation of the area.</p>   |
| <p>Brian McMahon: You indicated that you have the necessary funding to develop a project of this nature. What does this funding entail? Could you clarify it? I'm interested in successful and well implemented wind energy facilities that could create a South African industry.</p> | <p>Charles Rose: We take this project very seriously. We have the relevant funding and technical expertise to implement it and to grow a local industry to service the South African wind industry.</p> <p>Johan van der Berg: We are South African company and have the backing of a substantial American Private Equity Fund.</p>  |

## **WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE**

Shawn Johnston thanked all present for their inputs and reminded all present of the due date for comments on the draft environmental impact assessment report, being 4 December 2010.

The meeting closed at 19h30.