



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NEAS Reference: DEA/EIA/0000316/2011

DEA Reference: 12/12/20/2169

Enquiries: Fiona Grimett

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Ms Jo-Anne Thomas
Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 148
SUNNINGHILL
2157

Fax No: 086 684 0547

PER FACSIMILE / MAIL

Dear Ms Thomas

APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION: ACCEPTANCE OF THE SCOPING REPORT FOR: GN R.543 R.544 & R.545: FOR THE PROPOSED PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY ON A SITE NORTH-EAST OF UPINGTON, WITHIN THE SIYANDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

The Final Scoping Report (FSR) and Plan of Study for Environmental Impact Assessment (PoSEIA) dated May 2011 and received by the Department on 23 May 2011 refers.

The Department has evaluated the submitted FSR and the PoSEIA dated May 2011 and is satisfied that the documents comply with the minimum requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2010. The FSR is hereby accepted by the Department in terms of regulation 30(1)(a) of the EIA Regulations, 2010.

You may proceed with the environmental impact assessment process in accordance with the tasks contemplated in the Plan of Study for Environmental Impact Assessment as required in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2010.

Please ensure that comments from all relevant stakeholders are submitted to the Department with the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This includes, but is not limited to, the South Africa Heritage Resource Agency, the Department of Water Affairs, the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), the South African National Roads Agency; the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Northern Cape Department of Environment and Nature Conservation, the municipality and any other stakeholders which deal with environmental matters within the Province.

Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders must be included in the Final EIR. Should you be unable to obtain comments, proof should be submitted to the Department of the attempts that were made to obtain comments.

In addition, the following amendments and additional information are required for the EIR:

- a) Details of the future plans for the site and infrastructure after decommissioning in 20-30 years and the possibility of upgrading the proposed infrastructure to more advanced technologies.
- b) The total footprint of the proposed development must be indicated. Exact locations of the proposed PV solar energy facility and associated infrastructure shall be mapped at an appropriate scale.
- c) Specific design, layout and route alternatives must be provided in the EIR, along with the final preferred alternatives.
- d) The Heritage Impact Assessment must include an assessment of archaeological, paleontological, Built Environment (e.g. structures over 60 years), Cultural Landscapes and associated Living Heritage (e.g. sacred sites) components.
- e) Comments from the Forestry Branch of the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, submitted to the EAP on 29 June 2011, must be taken into consideration and be addressed in the EIR.
- f) Details regarding water requirements for the cleaning of the PV panels.
- g) Possible impacts and effects of the development on the surrounding residential area.
- h) The issue of squatter communities on the site must be addressed in the EIR / Social Impact Assessment.
- i) Economic viability of the facility to the surrounding area and how the local community will benefit.
- j) Information on services required on the site, e.g. sewage, refuse removal, water and electricity. Who will supply these services and has an agreement and confirmation of capacity been obtained?
- k) A construction and operational phase EMP to include mitigation and monitoring measures.

The applicant is hereby reminded to comply with the requirements of GN R.543 (67) with regard to the time period allowed for complying with the requirements of the EIA Regulations, 2010, and GN R.543 (56 & 57) with regard to the allowance of a comment period for interested and affected parties on all reports submitted to the competent authority for decision-making. The reports referred to are listed in regulation 56(3a-3h).

Please ensure that the Final EIR includes at least one A3 regional map of the area and the locality maps included in the final EIR illustrate the different proposed layouts. The maps must be of acceptable quality and as a minimum, have the following attributes:

- Maps are relatable to one another;
- Cardinal points;
- Co-ordinates;
- Legible legends;
- Indicate alternatives;
- Latest land cover;
- Vegetation types of the study area; and
- A3 size locality map.

Further, it must be reiterated that, should an application for Environmental Authorisation be subject to the provisions of Chapter II, Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999, then this Department will not be able to make nor issue a decision in terms of your application for Environmental Authorisation pending a letter from the pertinent heritage authority categorically stating that the application fulfils the requirements of the relevant heritage resources authority as described in Chapter II, Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999.

You are requested to submit two (2) copies of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to the Department as per regulation 34(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations, 2010. Please submit at least one electronic copy (CD/DVD) of the complete final report with the hard copy documents.

Please also find attached information that must be used in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Report. This will enable the Department to speedily review the EIAR and make a decision on the application.

You are hereby reminded that the activity may not commence prior to an environmental authorisation being granted by the Department.

Yours sincerely



Mr Ishaam Abader

Deputy Director General: Environmental Quality and Protection

Department of Environmental Affairs

Letter signed by: Mr Dumisani Mthembu

Designation: Director: Environmental Impact Evaluation

Date: 22/07/2011

CC:

Mr R. Longhi / G. Chunnet
Ms E. Botes
Mr W.J.B Engelbrecht

African Rainbow Energy (Pty) Ltd
Northern Cape DE&NC
//Khara Hais Local Municipality

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A. EIA INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES

1. General site information

The following general site information is required:

- Descriptions of all affected farm portions
- 21 digit Surveyor General codes of all affected farm portions
- Copies of deeds of all affected farm portions
- Photos of areas that give a visual perspective of all parts of the site
- Photographs from sensitive visual receptors (tourism routes, tourism facilities, etc.)
- Solar plant design specifications including:
 - Type of technology
 - Structure height
 - Surface area to be covered (including associated infrastructure such as roads)
 - Structure orientation
 - Laydown area dimensions (construction period and thereafter)
 - Generation capacity
- Generation capacity of the facility as a whole at delivery points

This information must be indicated on the first page of any Scoping or EIA document. It is also advised that it be double checked as there are too many mistakes in the applications that have been received that take too much time from authorities to correct.

2. Site maps and GIS information

Site maps and GIS information should include at least the following:

- All maps/information layers must also be provided in ESRI Shapefile format
- All affected farm portions must be indicated
- The exact site of the application must be indicated (the areas that will be occupied by the application)
- A status quo map/layer must be provided that includes the following:
 - Current use of land on the site including:
 - Buildings and other structures
 - Agricultural fields
 - Grazing areas
 - Natural vegetation areas (natural veld not cultivated for the preceding 10 years) with an indication of the vegetation quality as well as fine scale mapping in respect of Critical Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Support Areas
 - Critically endangered and endangered vegetation areas that occur on the site
 - Bare areas which may be susceptible to soil erosion
 - Cultural historical sites and elements
 - Rivers, streams and water courses
 - Ridgelines and 20m continuous contours with height references in the GIS database
 - Fountains, boreholes, dams (in-stream as well as off-stream) and reservoirs
 - High potential agricultural areas as defined by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
 - Buffer zones (also where it is dictated by elements outside the site):
 - 500m from any irrigated agricultural land
 - 1km from residential areas

- Indicate isolated residential, tourism facilities on or within 1km of the site
- A slope analysis map/layer that include the following slope ranges:
 - Less than 8% slope
 - between 8% and 12% slope
 - between 12% and 14% slope
 - steeper than 18 % slope
- A map/layer that indicate locations of birds and bats including roosting and foraging areas (specialist input required)
- A site development proposal map(s)/layer(s) that indicate:
 - Positions of solar facilities
 - Foundation footprint
 - Permanent laydown area footprint
 - Construction period laydown footprint
 - Internal roads indicating width (construction period width and operation period width) and with numbered sections between the other site elements which they serve (to make commenting on sections possible)
 - River, stream and water crossing of roads and cables indicating the type of bridging structures that will be used
 - Substation(s) and/or transformer(s) sites including their entire footprint.
 - Cable routes and trench dimensions (where they are not along internal roads)
 - Connection routes to the distribution/transmission network (the connection must form part of the EIA even if the construction and maintenance thereof will be done by another entity such as ESKOM)
 - Cut and fill areas along roads and at substation/transformer sites indicating the expected volume of each cut and fill
 - Borrow pits
 - Spoil heaps (temporary for topsoil and subsoil and permanently for excess material)
 - Buildings including accommodation

With the above information authorities will be able to assess the strategic and site impacts of applications.

3. Regional map and GIS information

The regional map and GIS information should include at least the following:

- All maps/information layers must also be provided in ESRI Shapefile format
- The map/layer must cover an area of 20km around the site
- Indicate the following:
 - roads including their types (tared or gravel) and category (national, provincial, local or private)
 - Railway lines and stations
 - Industrial areas
 - Harbours and airports
 - Electricity transmission and distribution lines and substations
 - Pipelines
 - Waters sources to be utilised during the construction and operational phases
 - A visibility assessment of the areas from where the facility will be visible
 - Critical Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Support Areas
 - Critically Endangered and Endangered vegetation areas
 - Agricultural fields
 - Irrigated areas



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2157

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PER FACSIMILE / MAIL

Dear Ms Ajodhapersadh

APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION: PROPOSED PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY ON A SITE NORTH-EAST OF UPINGTON, WITHIN THE SIYANDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

The Department confirms having received the Application Form and Declaration of Interest submitted by you on 27 January 2011 for environmental authorisation for the abovementioned project. You have submitted these documents to comply with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2010.

The Department also confirms having received, on 24 February and 1 March 2011, the required proof described in section 12 (2) (b) (i) of the EIA Regulations, 2010. The Application is accepted.

You are hereby reminded that the activity may not commence prior to an environmental authorisation being granted by the Department.

Yours sincerely

Ms Sibusisiwe Hlela
Chief Director: Environmental Impact Management (Acting)
Department of Environmental Affairs
Letter signed by: Ms Hilda Bezuidenhout
Designation: Assistant Director: Environmental Impact Evaluation
Date: 15/03/2011



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PER FACSIMILE / MAIL

Dear Ms Ajodhapersadh

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF DRAFT SCOPING REPORT: PROPOSED
PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY ON A SITE NORTH EAST OF UPINGTON,
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

The Department confirms having received the draft Scoping Report for the abovementioned project on 1 April 2011.

Please note that the Department will start reviewing once the final Scoping Report is received.

Yours sincerely

Mr Dumisani Mthembu
Chief Director: Environmental Impact Management (Acting)
Department of Environmental Affairs
Letter signed by: Ms Hilda Bezuidenhout
Designation: Assistant Director: Environmental Impact Evaluation
Date: 20/04/2011