

Calvinia Landbou Water

Box 450, Calvinia, 8190

26 November 2021

EnviroAfrica CC
ATT: Clinton Geysler
P.O. Box 5367
Helderberg
7135

Per email: clinton@enviroafrica.co.za

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT: PROPOSED UPGRADE AND EXPANSION OF THE CALVINIA BULK WATER SUPPLY, HANTAM LOCAL MUNICIPALITY NORTHERN CAPE

Dear Sir

We, as an affected group of farmers located around the town of Calvinia (in the Northern Cape), want to officially submit comments on the draft BAR to the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation (DENC).

Who we are:

The list attached hereto as Appendix A, contains the names of farmers with land located nearby the boreholes that the Hantam Municipality plans to extract from. They are commercial farmers using existing boreholes to extract water for their own livelihood as well as for their animals – mainly sheep farming. Some of which have already experienced the detrimental and cumulative impact of the recent drought plus the extraction of water from nearby deep boreholes by the Hantam Municipality.

We request that ALL of them are registered as Interested and Affected Parties for this Project in terms of the NEMA Act No. 107 of 1998.

Comments

1. We objecting to the issuing of a water use licence for the extraction of an additional 3.25 million m³ of water per annum from boreholes. (A water use licence has not been issued by the Department of Water Affairs to date). The reasons for our objection are:
 - 1.1. The impact that the long-term extraction of such quantities of water will have on sustainable agriculture is of great concern. Although the test results at these boreholes (six of them) show that the source is currently sufficient, the longer-term impact on the surrounding boreholes that are much shallower will be catastrophic. Real time case studies are available from neighbouring towns such as Williston, Brandvlei and Loeriesfontein. This impact has not been assessed.
 - 1.2. It is not a long-term solution for the residents of Calvinia. If the resolution is to invest for the short to medium-term, then the total life-cycle cost should be compared with a proper long-term solution such as the piping of surface water from the Doringrivier. Historical cost tends to be forgotten when the boreholes run dry.

- 1.3. The quality of the water planned to be extracted from the six boreholes is suspicious and may hold serious health risk to residents. The mitigation measures proposed ask for high skills levels and sound management to be maintained – coming with added cost.
- 1.4. The process followed to date by the Hantam Municipality has serious shortcomings:
 - The groundwater consultant appointed by the Municipality (Geoss) has interviewed a limited number of affected individuals. The impact will be much wider and more intense than suggested by the few subjective questions listed in the questionnaire. Existing boreholes must be measured and monitored over at least some seasons to determine the real impact of nearby deep extraction. We propose that the list of affected parties attached hereto be included in a scientific survey and monitoring programme.
 - Hantam Municipality equipped some of these boreholes and has installed pipelines and power infrastructure. None of the affected parties listed herein were consulted or informed about the project implementation. There is also no environmental management framework in place for these actions.
2. The engineering studies used to disqualify the alternative solution (Doringrivier surface water) is regarded as pre-feasibility studies. The outcomes were not independently reviewed, and the study is basically executed by the same practitioner to support the so-called cheaper option. We are questioning the following assumptions, just to mention a few:
 - Historical trend in population growth for Calvinia community is much higher than what is assumed in these studies and in this BAR. The nett result is therefore that the “preferred solution” will not be sufficient for 15 to 20-years but closer to 5 years. The cost of the longer-term solution (Doringrivier) is therefore unfavourable compared to a much shorter-term solution.
 - The use of renewable energy and associated benefits were not considered in the studies.
 - The historical cost of infrastructure installed to extract deep boreholes north-east of Calvinia was not considered. These boreholes ran dry as well as the surrounding (much shallower) boreholes used for farming purposes.
 - The economic growth benefits of sufficient fresh water supply to Calvinia as a potential economic hub in the Northern Cape were not considered.

We propose that the engineering studies be independently reviewed, and an economic cost benefit analysis be included.

3. Construction on the power line and water pipeline from the Kreitzberg boreholes has started. A considerable amount of taxpayers’ money has already been spent, without any water use licence, environmental authorisation, or public participation. It makes this Basic Assessment submission an administrative process and the DENC merely a rubber stamp.
4. The backbone of Calvinia and Hantam Municipal area’s economy is still agriculture. The severe impact of this Project on agricultural water resources is not even mentioned in this Draft BAR.
5. The Draft BAR mentions a zero-public response on the initial public participation process. There was no initial public participation process! Official objection from the agricultural community was submitted to the Municipality as well as an official response to the engineering study.

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6. The health risks to the community of Calvinia of excess fluoride and arsenic from borehole water is understated or excluded from this BA submission. The community of Calvinia is also unaware of these risks.

Our proposal

We propose that the piping of surplus surface water from the Doring River be considered as the long-term sustainable solution that will best serve the residents of Calvinia. A pre-feasibility study initiated by the Hantam Municipality should be independently reviewed and taken to a bankable feasibility level before more money is spent on the short-term solution that may prove fruitless.

Communication to the collective group must be sent to the email address below.

We appreciate the inclusion of these comments in your communication to the DENC.

Kind regards



H.J. Wilson

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Email: gouswilson@hantam.co.za

APPENDIX A

List of Affected Parties

	Name	Farm name	Tel no.	Email address
1	C. Francois van Wyk & Seuns	Downes	083 461 8952/ 083 642 3999	downes@hantam.co.za
2	Pierre Kotze	Jaagvlakte	027 341 2129/ 072 875 0934	jaagvlakte@gmail.com
3	Topie Visagie	Witputs	027 341 2170/ 083 231 4159	witputs1@gmail.com
4	Rynard Smit	Ramskop	027 341 1953/ 084 547 1147	rjs@hantam.co.za
5	Jacobus Smit	Bo-Downes	027 341 2458/ 084 771 0766	smitn@hantam.co.za
6	Deon Vlok	Spitskop/Rietmondspoort	082 465 5841/ 071 836 7270	jdvlok@hantam.co.za
7	Gert van Schalkwyk Jnr	De Puts	076 967 0096 Pa 027 3412 150	uyswyk@gmail.com
8	Gawie van Zyl	Rooivlei	0781978050	wilma@hantam.co.za
9	Johan Nel	Vanrhynshoek	0823239033	base@hantam.co.za
10	NW Wilson	Vlakfontein	087 898 4523/ 087 802 7227/ 073 343 5008	vlakfontein@hantam.co.za
11	Hardus Lambrechts	Kareeboom	0731245342	kareeboom@hantam.co.za
12	Wilhelm van Rhyn	Kalkgat	0767041108	wilhelmvanrhyn@gmail.com
13	Francois van der Merwe	Tierhoek	0825573849	Francois@tierhoek.co.za
14	Uys Steenkamp	Boskloof	0730688212	marlizeouw97@gmail.com
15	Appie Lambrechts	Kreitsberg	0836914540 / 0843437479	ajl191@hotmail.com / liezllieb@Yahoo.com
16	Johan Strauss	Platberg	0832311872	platberg@hantam.co.za
17	Sakkie van Niekerk	Calvinia Lande	027 341 1055/ 083 305 5925	wilma@clande.com
18	Johan Steenkamp	Rivierplaas	0834147732	
19	Altus Zandberg	Beeswater	0813485375	beeswater@hantam.co.za
20	Bertie Visagie	Paardekraal	0828907296	paardekraal@hantam.co.za
21	André Hugo	Koppies	0825961746	andre.daleen@gmail.com

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	Name	Farm name	Tel no.	Email address
22	Jansen van Wyk	Kreitsberg	0726124412	hlh@telkomsa.net
23	Willie de Lange	Platpoort	0822900564	platpoort@hantam.co.za
24	Erns van Zyl	Nooiensrivier	0824506988	
25	Maans Nel	Keiskie	0845117615	adolenenel@gmail.com
26	Richard Fryer	Rooierwe	0273412122	lenefryer@gmail.com
27	Oubaas Strauss	Kleinplasia	0781118014	
28	Ettienne Visagie	Kareekamp	0738663565	elmarie@hantam.co.za
29	Jannie Nel	Agterplaas	0736001726	agterplaas@hantam.co.za
30	Jan du Toit	Sonderwater boerdery	0727248963	jan@sonnewaterboerdery.co.za