



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: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2217

Enquiries: Ms Olivia Letlalo

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Mr. Cornelius Weyers Janse van Rensburg
Keren Energy Doornrivier No.3 (Pty) Ltd
23 Periwinkle Way, Atlantic Beach Estate
MELKBOSSTRAND
7441

Cell phone Number: 065 803 8687
Email Address: weyers@kerenenergy.com

PER E-MAIL / MAIL

Dear Mr. Van Rensburg

ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT, ACT NO. 107 OF 1998, AS AMENDED FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOORNRIVIER 3 SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) FACILITY ON THE REMAINDER OF FARM DOORNRIVIER NO. 330, VIRGINIA, FREE STATE 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 fourteen (14) 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@dffe.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@dffe.gov.za

Yours faithfully


Mr Sabelo Malaza
Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment
Date: 21/07/2023

cc:	Mr Clinton Geysler/Mr Bernard de Witt	EnviroAfrica cc	Tel: 021 851 1616	Email: clinton@enviroafrica.co.za / bernard@enviroafrica.co.za
	Mothusi Lepheana	Matjhabeng Local Municipality	Tel: 057 391 3100	Email: tshidi.lenong@matjhabeng.co.za
	Grace Mkhosana/ Teboho Maine	Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism & Environmental Affairs	Tel: 051 400 4800/12	Email: mkhosana@destea.fs.gov.za teboho.maine@mangaung.co.za



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

Proposed development of the Doornrivier 3 Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Facility on the Remainder of the Farm Doornrivier No. 330, Virginia, Free State Province

Lejweleputswa District Municipality

Application Register Number:	<i>14/12/16/3/3/2/2217</i>
Applicant:	<i>Keren Energy Doornrivier No.3 (Pty) Ltd</i>
Location of activity:	<i>Remainder of Farm Doornrivier No. 330 near Virginia within Matjhabeng Local Municipality in the Free State 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, 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 –

Keren Energy Doornrivier No.3 (Pty) Ltd

with the following contact details –

Mr. Cornelius Weyers Janse van Rensburg
23 Periwinkle Way, Atlantic Beach Estate
MELKBOSSTRAND
7441

Cell phone Number: 065 803 8687

Email Address: weyers@kerenenergy.com

to undertake the following activities (hereafter referred to as "the activity") indicated in Listing Notice 1, Listing Notice 2 and Listing Notice 3 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended:

Activity number	Activity description
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Activity 11(i):</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><i>Excluding the development of bypass infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity where such bypass infrastructure is:</i></p> <p><i>(a) temporarily required to allow for maintenance of existing infrastructure,</i></p> <p><i>(b) 2 km or shorter in length,</i></p> <p><i>(c) Within an existing transmission line servitude; and (d) Will be removed within 18 months of the commencement of development.</i></p>	<p>The proposed grid connection to the Springbok Solar Collector substation will be via a 132kV powerline. The proposed sub-surface connection to the inverters to the grid connection station will be via 1 -33kV lines. The site is located outside an urban area or industrial complex.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 1, Activity 28(ii):</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 1 hectare. excluding where such land has already been developed for residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial, or institutional purposes.</i></p>	<p>A solar PV farm (industrial development), including associated infrastructure, exceeding 1ha (192ha), will be developed on land that was used for agriculture. The site is located outside an urban area.</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 2, Activity 1:</u></p> <p><i>The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the electricity output is 20 MW or more,</i></p>	<p>The proposed development (solar PV) will generate up to approximately 92MW. The site is located outside an urban area.</p>

Activity number	Activity description
<p><i>excluding where such development of facilities or infrastructure is for photovoltaic installations & occurs,</i></p> <p><i>(a) within an urban area; or</i></p> <p><i>(b) on existing infrastructure.</i></p>	
<p><u>Listing Notice 2, Activity 15:</u></p> <p><i>The clearance of an area of 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation, excluding where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for,</i></p> <p><i>(i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or</i></p> <p><i>(ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.</i></p>	<p>The proposed development will cover an area of approximately 192ha, of which about 181ha of vegetation will be cleared. The vegetation has been transformed by ploughing and planting of maize and sunflower in some areas whereas in other areas ploughed lands have gone fallow and are now grazed by beef cattle. The vegetation is in different phases of cultivation and lying fallow. Since the land has lain fallow, it has been encroached by <i>Vachellia karoo</i> (soetdoring, sweet-thorn) (formerly <i>Acacia karoo</i>).</p>
<p><u>Listing Notice 3, Activity 12(b)(i)(iv)</u></p> <p><i>The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation except where such clearance of vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.</i></p> <p><i>b. In the Free State</i></p> <p><i>i. Within any critically endangered or endangered ecosystem listed in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA.</i></p> <p><i>iv. Areas within a watercourse or wetland; or within 100m from the edge of a watercourse or wetland.</i></p>	<p>The development will have a footprint of approximately 192ha, large parts of this is cultivated/ploughed land. Approximately 181ha of land, with some degree of natural vegetation, will still be cleared. The site is partially within endangered vegetation, and within 100m of a watercourse. The site is located within Vaal-Vet Sandy Grassland which is listed as Endangered. Although the site is located within a CBA, the bioregional plans have not been gazetted.</p>

as described in the final Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAr) dated May 2023:

21 Digit SG Codes

F	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
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Co-ordinate Points of the Properties for the listed activities

Point	Latitude	Longitude
Coordinates of Centre point of study area		
Approximate central point	28° 11' 11.10" S	26° 47' 02.40" E

Point	Latitude	Longitude
Coordinates of corner points of study area		
1	28°10'29.60"S	26°46'56.60"E
2	28°10'36.70"S	26°47'09.30"E
3	28°11'08.40"S	26°47'28.60"E
4	28°11'28.40"S	26°47'27.90"E
5	28°11'44.40"S	26°46'35.70"E
6	28°11'16.80"S	26°46'25.60"E

- for the proposed development of the Doornrivier 3 Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Facility on the Remainder of the Farm Doornrivier No. 330, Virginia, Free State Province, hereafter referred to as "the property".

The proposed project infrastructure is as follows:

- The proposed property covers an area of 243ha, of which approximately 192ha will be available for the development and the total footprint for the PV array is approximately 157ha.
- The proposed development will consist of either fixed or single axis tracking systems, internal roads.
- The PV tables will be raised approximately 0.5m off the ground and will not exceed 3m in height at maximum tilt.
- Underground electrical power lines transfer generates electricity from blocks of solar panels to inverter/transformer stations within the solar panel area. From these stations, the generated power of the solar block is conveyed through underground electrical power cables to the grid connection station.
- From the switching station, grid connection to the Eskom Theseus Substation will be via an approximately 2km long 132kV overhead powerline (25m high monopole) that runs south adjacent to the access road towards the R730, then east-north-east parallel to the R730 towards the Springbok Solar Collector Substation.
- Associated infrastructure includes office buildings with ablutions, maintenance sheds, inverter-transformer stations on concrete pads, grid connection station, battery storage banks/containers, with construction and operational laydown area is also included. The entire site will be fenced off.

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- The inverter/transformer station, grid connection station and battery storage facilities will be located adjacent to the offices and laydown area. The combined associated infrastructure/operational area is ~ 6ha (Doornrivier 2 and 3).
- There is a water connection to Doornrivier on the Sedibeng pipeline running parallel with the R730 road. Water will be distributed to the proposed switching station via a 4.15km, 110mm diameter pipeline.

Dimensions of associated components of the Solar PV facility:

Infrastructure	Description/ Dimensions
Solar PV array	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 157ha, 92MW
Access road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7m wide, 1km long
Internal access roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4m wide, 18km long
Water supply pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 110mm diameter, 4.15km length (shared with Doornrivier 3). Connection point with Sedibeng Water pipeline shared with Doornrivier 2.
Overhead powerlines (grid connection to Springbok Solar Collector Sub-Station)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 132kV, 25m high steel monopole. ▪ Length: 2.85km length. ▪ Number of towers: ~10 towers. ▪ Tower spacing: 250m mean and 300m maximum. ▪ Tower height: up to 25m typically. ▪ Conductor attachment Height: 17 to 20m. ▪ Ground Clearance: 6.7m minimum.
Subsurface powerlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low voltage (0 – 1000V) = 19km ▪ Medium voltage (1000 – 33 000V) = 8km

Conditions of this Environmental Authorisation

Scope of authorisation

1. The development of the Doornrivier 3 Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Facility on the Remainder of the Farm Doornrivier No. 330, Virginia, Free State 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 for the activity to be undertaken.
8. Construction must be completed within ten (10) 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 –

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- 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. Doornrivier 1 Solar PV facility: Layout Map dated March 2023 attached to the final EIAr dated May 2023 as Appendix 2A is not approved.
14. A copy of the final site layout map must be made available for comments to the 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. Existing infrastructure must be used as far as possible e.g., roads. The layout map must indicate the following:
 - 14.1. Solar PV array comprising PV modules.
 - 14.2. Inverters and transformers.
 - 14.3. Cabling between the panels.
 - 14.4. On-site switching station.
 - 14.5. Construction laydown areas, storage area, buildings, and their coordinates.
 - 14.6. Office buildings.
 - 14.7. Cabling from the onsite substation to the collector substation (either underground or overhead).
 - 14.8. Access roads and internal distribution roads road (length and width).
 - 14.9. Water supply pipelines.
 - 14.10. Battery Energy Storage System and coordinates.

- 14.11. 132kV Overhead powerlines (grid connection to Springbok Solar Collector Sub-Station).
- 14.12. All infrastructure coordinates; and
- 14.13. All sensitive features, and all "no-go" and buffer areas as identified by various specialists.
15. The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) for the PV facility submitted as part of the EIAR is not approved and must be amended to include measures as dictated by the final site lay-out map. The EMPr must be made available for comments by registered Interested and Affected Parties and the holder of this environmental authorisation must consider such comments. Once amended, the final EMPr must be submitted to the Department for written approval prior to commencement of the activity. Once approved the EMPr must be implemented and adhered to.
16. The generic EMPr for the powerline and substation are hereby approved. The generic EMPr for the powerline and substation must form part of the amended version of the facility EMPr to be submitted for approval.
17. The EMPr must be implemented and strictly enforced during all phases of the project. It shall be seen as a dynamic document and shall be included in all contract documentation for all phases of the development when approved.
18. Changes to the approved EMPr must be submitted in accordance to the EIA Regulations applicable at the time.
19. The Department reserves the right to amend the approved EMPr should any impacts that were not anticipated or covered in the EIAR be discovered.

Frequency and process of updating the EMPr

20. The EMPr must be updated where the findings of the environmental audit reports, contemplated in Condition 25 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.
21. The updated EMPr must contain recommendations to rectify the shortcomings identified in the environmental audit report.
22. 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.
23. In assessing whether to grant approval of an EMPr which has been updated because 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.

24. 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

25. 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.
- 25.1. The ECO must be appointed before commencement of any authorised activities.
- 25.2. Once appointed, the name and contact details of the ECO must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
- 25.3. The ECO must keep record of all activities on site, problems identified, transgressions noted, and a task schedule of tasks undertaken by the ECO.
- 25.4. 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

26. 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.
27. 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.
28. The frequency of auditing and of submission of the environmental audit reports must be as per the frequency indicated in the EMPr, considering the processes for such auditing as prescribed in Regulation 34 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.

29. 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.
30. 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.
31. 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

32. 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

33. 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

34. 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

35. The highly sensitive areas as identified by botanical and heritage specialists must be clearly demarcated as no-go areas.
36. The entire 132kV power line length must be fitted with bird flight diverters.
37. The footprint of the development and access routes must be limited to the areas required for actual construction works.

38. A permit must be obtained from the relevant authorities for the removal or disturbance of any TOPs, Red Data listed or provincially protected species prior construction.
39. No exotic plants must be used for rehabilitation purposes. Only indigenous plants of the area must be utilised.
40. 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.
41. Hazardous substances must be stored in a bunded and designated area to avoid accidental leakage into the environment.
42. 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

43. A copy of this Environmental Authorisation, the audit and compliance monitoring reports, and the approved EMPr, must be made available for inspection and copying-
 - 43.1. at the site of the authorised activity,
 - 43.2. to anyone on request; and
 - 43.3. Where the holder of the Environmental Authorisation has a website, on such publicly accessible website.
44. 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: 21/07/2023



Mr Sabelo Malaza

Chief Director, Integrated Environmental Authorisations

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

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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 23 September 2022, amended application form received with final EIAr on 31 May 2023 and amended application form received on 18 July 2023.
- b) Confirmation that the proposed development will share the grid connection with the Springbok Solar Power Plant received on 07 July 2023.
- c) The information contained in the final EIAr dated May 2023.
- d) The comments received from all interested and affected parties as included in the final EIAr dated May 2023.
- e) Mitigation measures as proposed in the EMPr for the facility and the generic EMPs included in the EIAr dated May 2023.
- f) The information contained in the specialist studies contained within the appendices of the final EIAr.

2. Key factors considered in making the decision

All information presented to the Department was considered 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 proposed project ties in with the national government policies, plans, and programmes which have relevance to energy planning and production.
- c) The final EIAr dated May 2023 identified all legislations and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the EIAr.
- d) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the final EIAr dated May 2023 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 final EIAr dated May 2023 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 proposed mitigation of impacts identified and assessed adequately curtails the identified impacts.
- d) EMPr measures for the pre-construction, construction and rehabilitation phases of the development were proposed and included in the EIAr 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