# Compliance Statement

for the proposed

# Zulu Alpha Facility

near Sutherland

October 2025

EnviroAfrica
Environmental Management and Impact Assessment
Omgewingsbestuur en Impakbeoordeling

WATSAN *Africa*

## Introduction

A telescope housing facility is planned to the north of Sutherland in the Central Karoo of the Western Cape. This facility will house telescopes for exploring the universe above. This facility will consist of three units, each unit with a telescope.

An environmental impact assessment is required for this new development in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998). One of the requirements is that national Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) screening tool be applied to this new development.

The screening tool indicated that the sensitivity of the aquatic biodiversity theme is "Low". The regulations demand that a Compliance Statement be drafted because of this assessment and its rating. This is a short statement to answer to the demands of the DFFE Screening Tool.

No aquatic features occur on the site.

## The Statement

The statement follows the content, format and numbering as published on the DFFE screening tool webpage.

*3. Aquatic Biodiversity Compliance Statement*

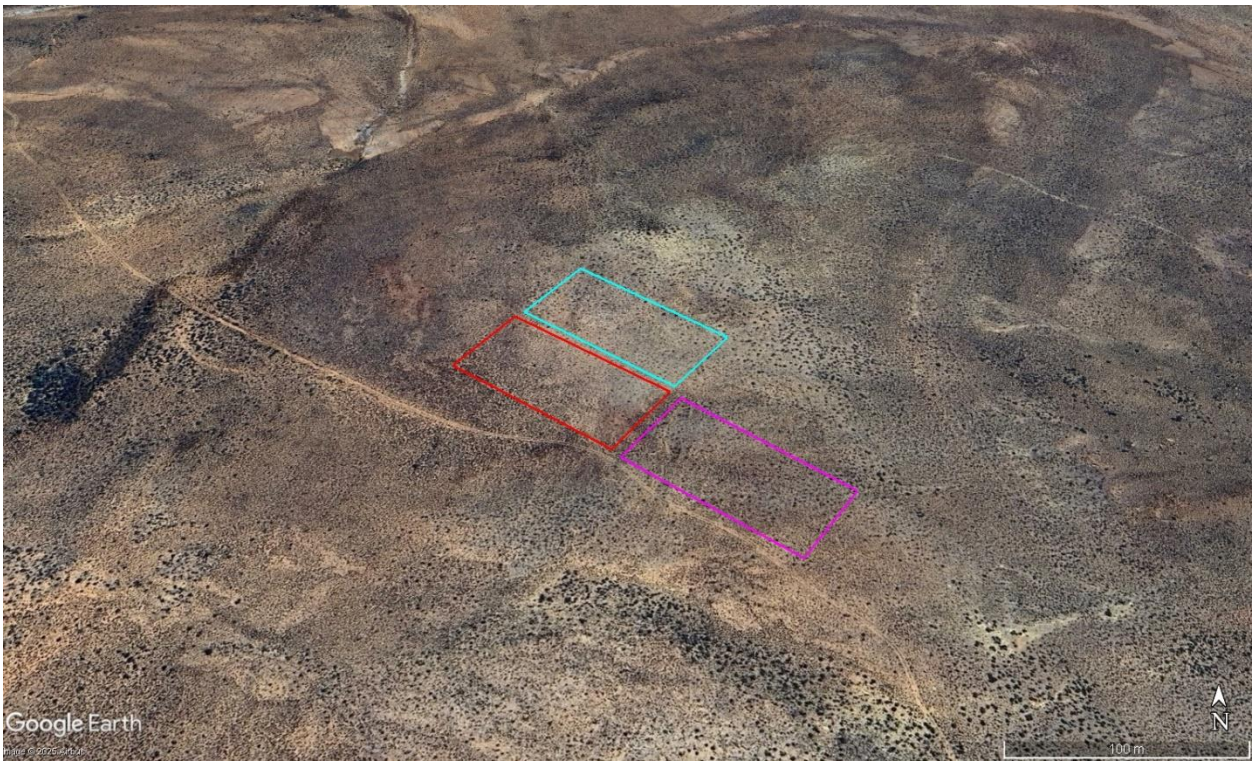
*3.1. The compliance statement must be prepared by a suitably qualified specialist registered with the SACNASP, with expertise in the field of aquatic sciences.*

See attached to the end of this report.

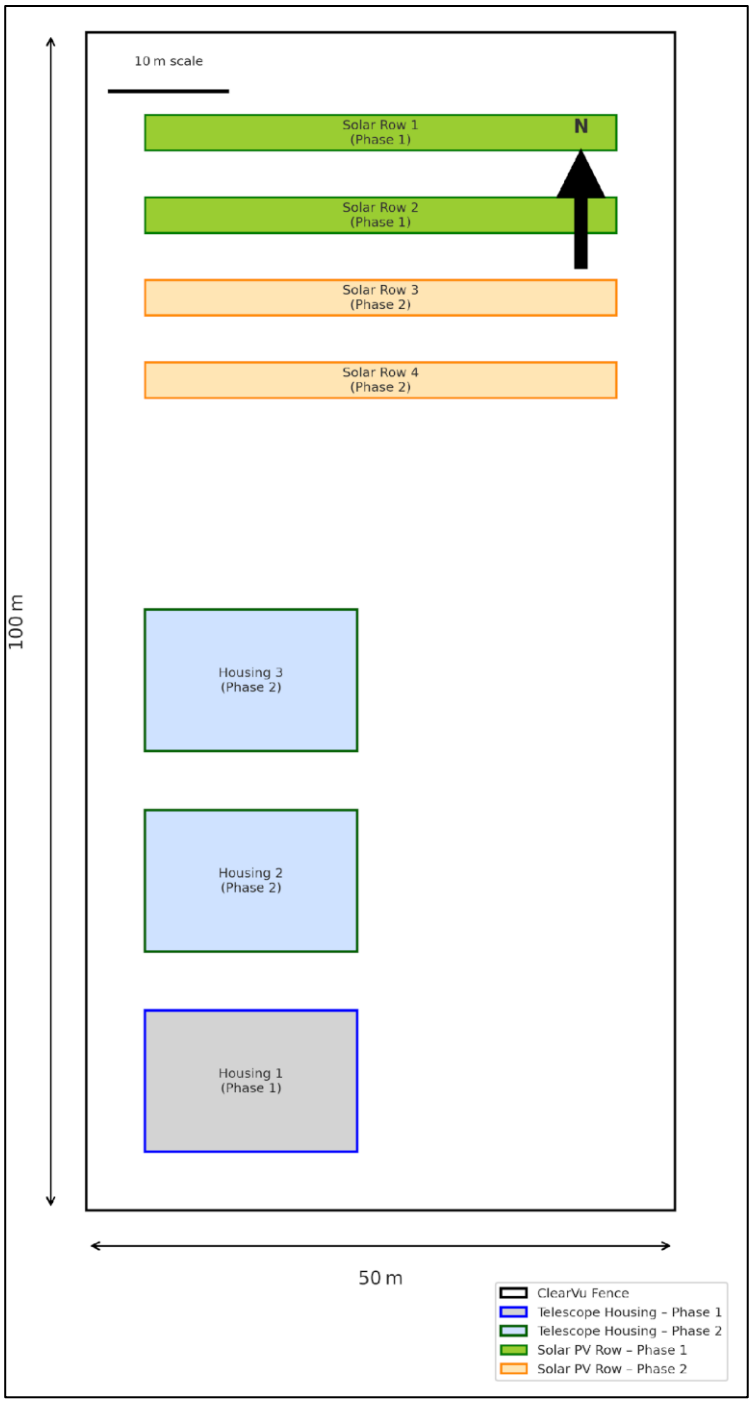
*3.2. The compliance statement must:*

*3.2.1. be applicable to the preferred site and the proposed development footprint;*


Location of the facility




Facility terrain




Telescope Housing Facility Outlay

Each of these three units consists of four rows of solar panels and three telescope housing facility built over two phases. Each unit has a footprint of 0.5ha and each surrounded by a security fence.

This is essentially a low-impact development with a very small footprint.

The site is 3.5km to the north-northwest of Sutherland in the central Karoo.

The site covers a total area of 1.5 hectares.

From the northwest corner clockwise around the 3 units, including all the units, the coordinates are as follows:

32°21’17.28”S and 20°38’48.27”E
32°21’18.69”S and 20°38’47.17”E
32°21’20.90”S and 20°38’47.17”E
32°21’22.66”S and 20°38’38.17”E
32°21’22.60”S and 20°38’54.16”E
32°21’21.31”S and 20°38’55.27”E

The site’s elevation is 1568 metres above sea level (masl) at the most northern corner and 1575masl at the mist southern corner, an incline of 7m over 173m, an average slope of 4 vertical metres in every 100 horizontal metres.

*3.2.2. confirm that the site is of “low” sensitivity for aquatic biodiversity;*

According to the DFFE screening tool, the site’s sensitivity is rated as “Low” for the aquatic biodiversity theme.

This compliance statement confirms that this is most likely to be correct.

*3.2.3. indicate whether or not the proposed development will have an impact on the aquatic features.*

The proposed telescope housing facility will not have any measurable effect on the aquatic environment.

The closest aquatic feature is a faint drainage line to the northwest. This is just more than 100m away from the northwest corner of the proposed development.

*3.3. The compliance statement must contain, as a minimum, the following information:*

*3.3.1. contact details of the specialist, their SACNASP registration number, their field of expertise and a Curriculum Vitae;*

See attached in the Appendix

*3.3.2. a signed statement of independence by the specialist;*

See attached to the end of this report.

*3.3.3. a statement on the duration, date and season of the site inspection and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment;*

A site visit was not deemed necessary as there are no aquatic features on the site, as shown on Google Earth. The closest is a very faint drainage line more than 100m away. The specialist is familiar with Sutherland and surrounds. Several site visits were conducted for other projects, the first was on 14 October 2017. An Enviro Africa team visited the site during the first week of October 2025.

*3.3.4. a baseline profile description of biodiversity and ecosystems of the site;*

The on-site vegetation is identified as Roggeveld Shale Renosterveld. The conservation status thereof is listed as “Least Concern”. This is regular renosterveld in the wide expanse of the Sutherland Karoo. Sheep farming is the major economic activity with overgrazing the major threat.

*3.3.5. the methodology used to verify the sensitivities of the aquatic biodiversity features on the site including the equipment and modelling used where relevant;*

This assessment is based on several site visits in the Sutherland district over a number of years for a variety of projects and observation from GoogleEarth and screening tools.

*3.3.6. in the case of a linear activity, confirmation from the aquatic biodiversity specialist that, in their opinion, based on the mitigation and remedial measures proposed, the land can be returned to the current state within two years of completion of the construction phase;*

There are no aquatic features on the site that can be impacted or need to be returned to its original condition once construction has been completed.

*3.3.7. where required, proposed impact management outcomes or any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr;*

There are no aquatic features on the site that need to be included in an EMPr.

*3.3.8. a description of the assumptions made as well as any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge or data; and*

Assumptions or gaps in knowledge are not applicable as there are no aquatic features on the site.

*3.3.9. any conditions to which this statement is subjected*

No conditions are specified, as long as construction and operation of the telescope housing facility remains within the specified demarcation of the site.

*3.4. A signed copy of the compliance statement must be appended to the Basic Assessment Report or Environmental Impact Assessment Report.*

**Conclusion**

According to the DFFE screening tool, the site's sensitivity is rated as "Low" for the aquatic biodiversity theme. It is hereby confirmed that this is indeed a low impact development, as there are no aquatic features on the proposed site.

## Declaration of Independence

I, Dirk van Driel, as the appointed independent specialist hereby declare that I:

- Act/ed as the independent specialist in this application
- Regard the information contained in this report as it relates to my specialist input/study to be true and correct and;
- Do not have and will not have any financial interest in the undertaking of the activity, other than remuneration for work performed in terms of the NEMA, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended) and any specific environmental management act;
- Have and will not have vested interest in the proposed activity;
- Have disclosed to the applicant, EAP and competent authority any material information have or may have to influence the decision of the competent authority or the objectivity of any report, plan or document required in terms of the NEMA, the environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended) and any specific environmental management act.
- Am fully aware and meet the responsibilities in terms of the NEMA, the Environmental Impacts Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended) and any specific environmental management act and that failure to comply with these requirements may constitute and result in disqualification;
- Have ensured that information containing all relevant facts in respect of the specialist input / study was distributed or made available to interested and affected parties and the public and that participation by interested and affected parties facilitated in such a manner that all interested and affected parties were provided with reasonable opportunity to participate and to provide comments on the specialist input / study;
- Have ensured that all the comments of all the interested and affected parties on the specialist input were considered, recorded and submitted to the competent authority in respect of the application;
- Have ensured that the names of all the interested and affected parties that participated in terms of the specialist input / study were recorded in the register of interested and affected parties who participated in the public participation process;
- Have provided the competent authority with access to all information at my disposal regarding the application, whether such information is favourable or not and;
- Am aware that a false declaration is an offence in terms of the Environmental Impacts Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended).

Signature of the specialist:  6 October 2025

**Résumé**


**Experience**

**USAID/RTI, ICMA & Chemonics.** Iraq & Afghanistan **2007 -2011**
Program manager.

**City of Cape Town** **1999-2007**
Acting Head: Scientific Services, Manager: Hydrobiology.

**Department of Water & Sanitation, South Africa** **1989 – 1999**
Senior Scientist

**Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria** **1979 – 1998**
Head of Department

**University of Western Cape and Stellenbosch University 1994 - 1998** part-time
- Lectured post-graduate courses in Water Management and Environmental Management to under-graduate civil engineering students
- Served as external dissertation and thesis examiner

**Service Positions**
- Project Leader, initiator, member and participator: Water Research Commission (WRC), Pretoria.
- Director: UNESCO West Coast Biosphere, South Africa
- Director (Past Deputy Chairperson): Grotto Bay Homeowner's Association
- Past Member Dassen Island Protected Area Association (PAAC)

**Membership of Professional Societies**
- South African Council for Scientific Professions. Registered Scientist No. 400041/96
- Water Institute of South Africa. Member

## Reports

Dr Dirk van Driel produced more than 150 reports since 2013. These include Freshwater Reports for Water Use License Applications for wastewater treatment works, mining, roads, power lines, pipelines, agricultural developments, water abstractions, dams, canals, irrigation, urban developments and industry. Other reports include wetland delineations, biodiversity and botanical assessments and on a wide range of environmental matters from small to mega developments.