

## Notification of Environmental Impact Assessment in support of Application for a Waste Management License, Komati Power Station

Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd re-commissioned the Komati Power Station in Mpumalanga Province which can produce up to 970 MW of electricity. The combustion of coal at power stations produces ash that requires disposal. At Komati Power Station a wet-ashing system is used and the ash is deposited as slurry in engineered ash disposal facilities. The existing ash disposal facilities at Komati do not have sufficient capacity for the planned life of the station and it was therefore necessary to develop an additional ash disposal facility.

Eskom identified Ash Dam Extension 3 as a feasible solution to provide ash disposal capacity until the end of life of the power station. In August 2008 Eskom was granted a positive record of decision (RoD) for the construction and operation of Ash Dam Extension 3 in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, No. 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and the 2006 EIA Regulations. Ash Dam Extension 3 was constructed between February 2009 and November 2010. Ash disposal in the ash dam has not yet commenced.

In July 2009 the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, No. 59 of 2008 (NEMWA) was enacted. The NEMWA introduced new legal requirements for waste disposal, including ash from electricity generation. The disposal of waste to land requires a waste management licence in terms of the NEMWA (GNR 718, 3 July 2009). The Department of Environmental Affairs advised Eskom that a waste management licence is required for the operation of Ash Dam Extension 3 as the facility was not operational at the time that the NEMWA was enacted.

Eskom submitted an application to the Department of Environmental Affairs for a waste management licence (Ref: 12/9/11/L1010/6). A scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment process, as stipulated in the EIA Regulations (GNR 543, 18 June 2010) made under Section 24(5) of the NEMA, is required to support the application. Synergistics Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd has been appointed as the independent environmental assessment practitioner and will undertake the work required to inform the waste management licence in terms of the NEMWA.

Eskom applied to the Department of Environmental Affairs for exemption from some provisions of the 2010 EIA Regulations on the basis that Ash Dam Extension 3 was previously subjected to a scoping and EIA process, that a positive RoD was obtained and that the ash disposal facility has been constructed. On 23 January 2013 the Department granted exemption from the scoping process and approved a 21-day public commenting period. Interested and affected party are advised that a Scoping Report will not be produced. An updated Environmental Impact Assessment report will be made available to registered interested and affected parties for review and comment from 25 February 2013 until 15 March 2013.

To receive further information on the project you must register as an interested and affected party. To do so, or to raise any environmental concerns regarding the project, please contact: **Matthew Hemming of Synergistics Environmental Services:**

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**Please respond to this notice on or before 22 February 2013**