ESKOM

Environmental Impact Assessment for two proposed coalfired power stations in the Waterberg area, Limpopo

DEAT Ref No. 12/12/20/1255

DRAFT record of a public meeting to review the Draft Scoping Report

Saturday, 24 January 2009 at 10:00, Old NTK Hall, Steenbokpan

1. INTRODUCTION

The facilitator, **Ms Anelle Odendaal of Zitholele Consulting**, welcomed all participants. The meeting was attended by 58 people, including landowners, their legal representatives, mining companies, the agricultural sector, neighbours to the proposed alternative sites, provincial authorities, the technical team and Eskom officials. The list of attendees is attached (see Appendix 1).

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The facilitator described the main purpose of the meeting as the sharing of information, specifically in terms of the contents of the Draft Scoping Report (DSR), which was available for public comment. The main objectives of the meeting were to:

- present to stakeholders the contents of the DSR;
- obtain comments and inputs by stakeholders on the DSR; and
- obtain suggestions for the planning, impact assessment and public participation processes ahead.

The facilitator announced that the comment period for the DSR had been extended to 30 January 2009, to allow for a meeting with the landowners at their request.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Ms Deidre Herbst, Environmental Manager of Eskom Generation gave a strategic overview of the demand and supply of electricity generation in South Africa currently and into the future. The complete presentation is attached (see Appendix 2).

Ms Herbst noted that the demand for electricity has been increasing on average, although in 2008 there was a slow down in demand. It is anticipated that the average growth rate will continue, resulting in the diminishment of South Africa's generation capacity. She added that if the demand for electricity continues at a moderate growth rate of 2.3 % then South Africa would require 56 710 Megawatt (MW) by 2025, 19 000 MW more than what is currently available. At a high growth rate of 4 %, South Africa would need a total of 77 960 MW, in other words an extra 40 000 MW, by 2025 to fulfil all its commitments. This is in addition to the existing power stations, therefore additional stations would need to be constructed.

Ms Herbst continued that the demand was currently down, it was difficult to determine if the slow down in growth would continue. For planning purposes Eskom continue to assume that it is related to the slow down of the economy and that it will pick up again.

Ms Herbst mentioned that the challenges facing Eskom included avoiding a mismatch between demand and supply. In a mismatch, excess capacity would translate into stranded resources while a capacity shortage would hamper economic growth. Eskom announced recently that the nuclear option has been put on hold and that this was related to cost and funding. However Ms Herbst noted that Eskom and Government were still committed to including nuclear in the electricity mix. The EIA for nuclear 1 would continue.

Ms Herbst added that Eskom is also looking at various alternative energy sources other than coal. A 100 MW solar power station is, for example, being investigated near Upington and will be the biggest in the world should it be constructed. The Cahora Bassa Hydro-Electric Scheme is providing 1 500 MW to South Africa. Future hydro-electric power could come from schemes being planned on the Congo River, but this is still far into the future. Wind energy is another clean, option being investigated by Eskom. South Africa also has large uranium resources that can be used for nuclear power.

The coal resources west of Lephalale are huge and also optimal to mine, because it is shallow, noted Ms Herbst.

Mr Leonard van der Walt of Eskom Enterprises explained how the proposed power stations would operate. Each power station would generate up to 5 400 MW by burning pulverised fuel. He noted that the power stations would be based on the latest super critical technology which is more efficient as it uses less coal and less water per unit generated, and has reduced emissions as well. The power stations would be dry cooled; either direct or indirect dry cooling. Mr van der Walt noted that oxides of sulphur would be removed through Flue Gas Desulphurisation technology. Oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) would also be reduced by installing low NO_x burners, and either bag filters or precipitators would be used to control fine particulate matter.

4. APPROACH TO EIA – TECHNICAL COMPONENT

Mr Ashwin West, Ninham Shand Consulting Services, the project manager of this Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), gave an overview of the EIA process and a detailed presentation of the contents of the DSR. The presentation is attached (see Appendix 3).

Mr West explained that the purpose of the scoping phase is to identify alternatives and potential impacts requiring more detailed investigation in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) phase. The DSR was based on a literature review, professional input (technical and environmental), site visits and public input. The DSR forms the basis for the plan of study for the EIA.

Mr West continued that the DSR also lists all the specialist studies to be undertaken during the EIR phase. Mr West listed the specialist studies and the companies undertaking the respective studies as below:

- Air Quality Assessment Airshed Planning Professionals (Lucian Burger);
- Noise assessment Jongens Keet Associates (Derek Cosijn);
- Visual Impact Assessment Strategic Environmental Focus (Eamonn O'Rourke);
- Groundwater assessment Groundwater Consulting Services (Andrew Johnstone);
- Terrestrial fauna and flora Makecha Development Associates (Johan du Preez);
- Aquatic fauna and flora Golder Associates (Danie Otto);
- Heritage Impact Assessment Private Consultant (Johnny van Schalkwyk);
- Land use and Planning Winterbach, Potgieter & Associates (Wim Jacobsz);
- Toxicology Infotox (Willie van Niekerk);
- Local economic survey Urban Econ (Ben van der Merwe);
- Social Impact Assessment Ptersa Environmental Consultants (Ilse Aucamp);
- Societal Risk Riscom (Mike Oberholzer);
- Agricultural Potential -Ivuzi (Alta van Dyke);
- Traffic Ndodana Consulting Engineers (Louis Roodt); and
- Public participation Zitholele Consulting (Anelle Odendaal).

Mr West added that Ninham Shand had appointed Partridge, Maud and Associates to undertake the geotechnical investigations on behalf of Eskom.

5. APPROACH TO EIA – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMPONENT

Ms Odendaal explained that Zitholele Consulting was conducting the public participation process (her presentation is also included in Appendix 3). She explained that public participation was a process in the EIA that is regulated under the National Environmental Management Act. The process aims to obtain and share information and also to verify that comments have been considered. Ms Odendaal continued that public participation is a process leading to a joint effort amongst stakeholders, technical specialists, the authorities and the applicant who work together to produce better decisions than if they had acted independently.

6. DISCUSSION

Comments and questions raised during the public meeting have been captured in the following table.

	COMMENTS, QUESTIONS	COMMENTATOR(S)	SOURCE	RESPONSE
	AND ISSUES			
1.	If we look at the electricity demand for 2025 then Eskom must tell us now where all the power stations will be built to reach this goal. We want to know how many more power stations are planned after the two we are discussing today. (Asked during the presentation of Ms Herbst)	Transvaalse Landbou Unie (TLU) SA	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Deidre Herbst responded Eskom could use a combination of coal, nuclear and any other feasible technology to reach the 2025 demand. Eskom will have to build more power stations after the two under discussion if there is more demand for energy. Studies to determine specific sites are only carried out for capacity required in the next 10 to 15 years. The decision on building nuclear will influence the timing of future coal fired power stations. There is a high likelihood that if additional coal-fired power stations are required they would be located in the Waterberg area, because of the large coal resource.
2.	Eskom categorically told us three years ago that no further power stations were planned for this region. And further to this you tell us just now that the nuclear option has been stopped.	Mr Jaco de Bruyn, Transvaalse Landbou Unie (TLU) SA	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Deidre Herbst responded two factors influenced the lead times of nuclear power stations. Firstly there is a very strong lobby against nuclear which results in delays in the regulatory approvals. Secondly the cost of nuclear is higher than coal, which is influenced by the more stringent safety requirements. However costs of coal fired power stations and nuclear become closer if one implements all the environmental mitigation measures such as flue gas desulphurisation and reduction of carbon dioxide. Nuclear is also a low carbon technology which contributes to climate change mitigation.
3.	Eskom announced that nuclear power stations were approved now they are stopped and we are confused that you tell us now that a combination of nuclear and coal fired power stations will be needed to meet the 2020 – 2025 goals.	Mr Jaco du Bruyn, Transvaalse Landbou Unie (TLU) SA	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Deidre Herbst stated that no nuclear power stations were approved. The nuclear power station was in the stage of the planning process, the same as the proposed Coal 3 and 4 power stations. Once all the studies are complete, authorisations and permits obtained and a business case is approved could construction begin. The nuclear option has been delayed not stopped completely – the combination of coal fired power stations and nuclear

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				remains and option for base load.
4.	With the Medupi project, nothing was done right. We do not want to hear Eskom's "sweet talk" – we want to hear the facts and want information such as: - Where the roads would be constructed? - Where the water would come from? - Where exactly would the power stations be constructed? - Where the railway lines would be? - How and from where would the coal be transported? - Which roads will be tarred? - Which new roads will be built? We want detailed information timeously on the proposed projects. We are not interested in attending an electricity demand and supply meeting – we want hard facts on the proposed projects as we requested at the last meeting in	Mr Jaco du Bruyn, Transvaalse Landbou Unie (TLU) SA	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Anelle Odendaal, facilitator responded that an environmental impact assessment (EIA) is currently being done for both Coal 3 and 4 to determine the best alternatives (position, supply, etc) for the questions being raised by the participant. During the EIA process the aspects mentioned will be studied and discussed with I&APs. The EIA study's findings will recommend the best access roads, the best layout for the power station, etc.
5.	October 2008. During the Medupi and associated	Mr Willie Brits, Akasia	Comments during	Ms Deidre Herbst responded that Eskom only started
	transmission lines EIAs, we were told at public meetings that no further Eskom developments were planned. He mentioned that the minutes of those meetings can show that. If there are possible projects planned for the Waterberg region, then Eskom should share it with the attendants.	Boerdery	the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	planning the projects under discussion after the Medupi planning process was finalised. Ms Herbst referred back to the Eskom planning process as was explained in her presentation and again emphasised that information is shared with stakeholders from the early stages of prefeasibility of projects. Ms Herbst also noted that during the transmission line EIA process, it had been erroneously stated that no further power stations would be planned for the Waterberg area. The potential for further power stations developed in the region was correctly stated during the Medupi EIA process and is

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				reflected in those minutes. However the site selection process for Coal 3 and 4 was only initiated in 2008.
6.	So, we can expect at least seven more power stations in this area? Medupi is in early stages of construction and already Eskom is in the EIA phase for two more power stations. It seems that Eskom has stopped maintaining their current power stations so that they will let them run down and replace them with new power stations in the Waterberg.		Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Deidre Herbst responded that there is a possibility for more power stations in this area, but that depends on whether the nuclear options go ahead or not, the demand for electricity, and if Eskom could use options such as hydro-electricity from Grand Inga or not. In essence it depends on many variables. She added that Eskom will not decommission assets prematurely. Studies had been initiated to determine whether the life of operating stations could be extended.
7.	Eskom must provide more funds to do comprehensive investigations in this region – it is unacceptable for Eskom to put our lives on hold, just because they do not want to do more research.	Mr Jaco du Bruyn, Transvaalse Landbou Unie (TLU) SA	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted.
8.	What are the time frames for these projects – when will the first sod be turned?	Mr Chris van Niekerk, Zyferbult farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Mr Leonard van der Walt responded that the current plan was for construction of the first power station to begin at the end of 2010 or beginning of 2011 and for the first unit to be commissioned by end 2015 or beginning 2016.
9.	The basis for the mistrust experienced between Eskom and the landowners is misinformation that was shared by Eskom to landowners during previous public meetings with respect to no further power stations in the area (Transmission line EIA process for the Mmamabula-Delta substation). He suggested that this be noted for the record.	Mr Hein Boegman, Mooipan farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted
10.	Where does the prevailing wind come from?	Mr Archie Leitch, Witkop	Comments during the public meeting held on 24	Mr Leonard van der Walt responded that Eskom has weather information from monitoring stations around Matimba power station that goes back many years. He

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			January 2009 at Steenbokpan	noted that the prevailing wind was east north east. The position of an ash dump is always very important and the prevailing winds are always taken into consideration when a new power station is designed.
11.	How did Eskom decide on the selection of the farms in the three alternative sites?	Mr Pieter Peacock, Witvogelfontein farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Mr Ashwin West explained during his presentation that Eskom selected the sites based on a) its geographical location which is off-coal, b) proximity to the coal resource within a feasible transportation distance by conveyor belt (some 30 km from the coal), c) minimum 5 000 ha footprint, d) existing boundaries (roads, railways, major power lines and farm boundaries), buffer zones around residential areas and other infrastructure.
12.	Mr Brits asked that his comments on the Mamabula transmission line be found, since his issues and concerns raised during that process would be valid for this project as well.	Mr Willie Brits, Akasia Boerdery	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted. These comments will be sourced and where relevant considered in this process.
13.	Why did you have a meeting in Lephalale on 26 November 2008 during the week – it looks like window-dressing since the most important stakeholders are staying in the Steenbokpan area.	Mr Willie Brits, Akasia Boerdery	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Anelle Odendaal responded that the meeting was held in Lephalale since there are also interested and affected stakeholders in the Lephalale area and from away as far away as Pretoria and Polokwane who attended the meeting. She added that the current meeting is at Steenbokpan as stakeholders requested a meeting to be held in Steenbokpan.
14.	The minutes of the meeting held in October 2008 was sent out six weeks after the meetings. Some of the content of the minutes was incorrect. If we as landowners are the most important party in this project then we ask for correct minutes. Since the public review period ends on Friday, 30 January 2009, we would like to review and comment on the minutes before then as well.	Mr Hein Boegman, Mooipan farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Anelle Odendaal noted that anyone is welcome to comment on the minutes to add what they believe should be added or corrected. The comments are attached to the Draft and Final Scoping Reports as well as to the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Assessment Report. All efforts will be made to distribute the minutes to stakeholders by Wednesday or Thursday next week.

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15.	Mr Boegman requested that the findings of previous EIAs in the area be reconciled with the findings of the current EIA. He mentioned that in a previous EIA it was recommended that no development should take place in the area which Eskom is currently investigating for the construction of the power stations. He asked that a reconciliation of the findings and decisions be undertaken. He mentioned that a previous study recommended that the area north of the fault line be used for industrial development and the area south of the fault line (where the current alternative sites are) be used for eco-tourism.	Mr Hein Boegman, Mooipan farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Mr Ashwin West responded that if the information in studies undertaken previously is applicable then the information will be used, e.g. air quality information. The previous studies regarding the use of the area south of the Eenzamheid Fault for eco-tourism would be examined.
16.	Mr Boegman noted that discussions should take place between Eskom and the landowners regarding the appointments made by the specialists to see the farms. He said that certain incidences had occurred which had not been agreed to. The matter will be discussed between Eskom and the landowners outside the meeting.	Mr Hein Boegman, Mooipan farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted.
17.	During the Medupi public participation process very few farmers participated – I see the same problems arising in this process. The neighbours of the farms within the candidate sites should also be invited and participate in the EIA process.	Mr Hardus Steenkamp, Doornfontein farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Anelle Odendaal responded that the meetings were broadly advertised, all stakeholders on the database were sent invitations. She asked all participants to please distribute information by word of mouth since it is the intention to have all interested and affected parties participating in the EIA. She also requested that people put forward the names of their neighbours in order to keep them informed of the process. Every effort will be made to ensure that all interested and affected parties have an opportunity to participate.

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18.	If stakeholders read the final report (EIR) will they be able to see the exact location of the power station, where the ash dump will be situated? Will the mine from which coal will be supplied be indentified and where transmission lines will be constructed?	Mr Bertus Steenkamp, Leliefontein farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Mr Ashwin West responded that some of the detail will be included in the EIR (like power station layout, and service corridors), however not everything would be available. The coal supplier for example has not yet been appointed. Mr Leonard van der Walt continued that the coal supplier will only be announced in the latter part of this year – negotiations are still underway. He added that it will be the mine's responsibility to build the conveyer belt and the mine will therefore conduct a separate EIA on the alternatives for the conveyer belt.
19.	An open cast coal mine will pollute the whole region up to the Botswana border – the impacts of polluted winds will affect a much larger area.	Mr Archie Leitch, Mtinyani Boerdery	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted.
20.	When will construction of the power stations start, because our international clients (overseas hunters) would want to know – how long can we still operate our businesses and farms? When do we have to leave our farms?	Ms Esme van der Merwe, Vaalboshoek, Zinyathi Lodge	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Bronwyn Stolp responded that landowners can stay on their farms until construction starts. After Eskom have bought the farms, the farms can be leased back to the current owners who can continue using it right up to the date when construction starts — however these arrangements will be negotiated between Eskom and each individual landowner, and would depend on the construction programme. The facilitator reminded participants that the EIA process still has to be finalised and Eskom also need to finalise their planning in terms of electricity demand. Mr Leonard van der Walt continued that further studies must be done after the initial studies done during the EIA process. Landowners must be aware that should they lease their farm back from Eskom that additional studies will be necessary — this may also require greater access to the land.
				Ms Bronwyn Stolp noted that the property valuer will start visiting farms for valuations from 26 January 2009.

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				Landowners will be contacted to set up individual meetings and an agricultural economist will also visit farms from February 2009 as part of the land purchase process.
21.	The bigger problem is the impact that the proposed development may have on the livelihood of the neighbours — they are the real losers in the process. Eskom must ensure that there is sufficient land around the ash dump so that an American hunter, for example, does not see it while hunting on a neighbouring farm. The proposed area of development is in the middle of the bushveld where hunting is a major source of income. Eskom did not allow for this buffer area with Matimba and Medupi in this regard. I hope that the standard of the current EIA process is much higher and will take this matter into consideration.	Gifboschpan farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted.
22.	What is the future of farm workers? Farm workers may find it difficult to find employment in other sectors since they are trained specifically for the cattle and game farm industries.	Mr Johan Burger, Gifboschpan farm		Noted. Mrs Deidre Herbst noted that this would be addressed in the Social study to be carried out as part of this EIA. The depth of the social study may be extended beyond the requirements of the EIA as may be necessary.
23.	Many hunters from overseas come to farms in this area to hunt and farmers spend between R60 000 and R120 000 per year overseas to market their farms, this area and what is being offered. Our clients come to this area because of the attractiveness of the place and to be in the bush. We cannot		Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted.

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	just pack up and leave because we will lose millions of Rand to start a game farm from scratch – we have invested millions of Rand in this area and one cannot just develop a place like this – pure bushveld – overnight. Tourism may be affected by the proposed industrial development.			
24.	What do you know of Sasol's plans for this area, since you have been including proposed impacts of the Sasol Coal-to-Liquid (CTL) plant in your presentation?		Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Mr Ashwin West responded that Sasol's possible future plans are included and considered in order to assess the worst-case scenario in terms of impacts in this EIA. He noted, for example, that Sasol's Coal to Liquid plant will be considered as a potential source of pollution in the air pollution model, whether it will be built or not. Ms Deidre Herbst added that the team is liaising with Sasol. Eskom understands that Sasol is much further behind in the process, since they have not as yet commenced with their EIAs for proposed developments.
25.	This is the only solid piece of land without coal or mineral rights. Sasol said in a recent meeting that they will need 20 000 ha of land for their proposed development and if Eskom only builds two power stations, will the third alternative site be provided for Sasol's developments?		Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Deidre Herbst responded that this is not in Eskom's plans
26.	Who is responsible for the overall strategic planning for this region to ensure that Eskom, Sasol and the mines planning are coordinated?	Leliefontein farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Deidre Herbst advised that strategic studies would normally and preferably be carried out by an independent party such as the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). There has been some initial discussion with DEAT regarding the need and undertaking of a strategic assessment for the entire area, however, no clear indication is as yet available. Eskom undertakes to continue engaging with DEAT and Sasol on

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				this issue.
27.	Mr Steenkamp said that DEAT is invisible and are never seen at these meetings. He asked if DEAT can take an informed decision if they do not attend the meetings.	Mr Hardus Steenkamp, Doornlaagte farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Deidre Herbst responded that DEAT do not usually attend EIA public meetings, she did not know the reasons for this. However they had been invited to attend the meetings arranged between Eskom and I&AP's to discuss strategic issues in this area.
28.	Eskom only concentrates on studies pertaining to the specific area of their proposed development – and the impact of their development is much broader. How much funds will Eskom have available to compensate for social disruption?	Mr Danie van Niekerk, Rooiboklaagte farm	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Mr Ashwin West responded the team always looks beyond the specific area of a development when an EIA is done. An example in this regard is the air quality study. Ms Deidre Herbst continued that Eskom looks at all the proposed impacts in a larger area and that from a social perspective; Eskom plans to improve on what was done for the Medupi process since there was definitely some aspects that could be improved upon.
29.	Ms Herbst asked that stakeholders provide more specific detail on what kind of issues were of concern and proposed actions so that these could be taken up in the EIA.	Ms Deidre Herbst, Eskom	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Noted.
30.	Will Eskom buy only two of the alternative sites?	Dr Johan van Tonder, Taaiboschpan	Comments during the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at Steenbokpan	Ms Bronwyn Stolp responded that Eskom is currently proposing to buy the farms of all three alternative sites. [Post meeting note: The directly affected landowners requested that Eskom purchase the land on all three sites upfront, rather than taking options against the land, and then only exercising the options once they had authorisation for two sites.]
31.	If water is transferred from the Vaal River system up to Lephalale, will water users along the route not have less water available than now?	Mr Kobus Malan, Kobus Malan Attorneys, Northam	Comments after the public meeting held on 24 January 2009 at	Initial studies by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry showed that sufficient water will be available without affecting existing water users. This will be covered in more detail in the EIA.

COMMENTS, AND ISSUES	QUESTIONS	COMMENTATOR(S)	SOURCE	RESPONSE
			Steenbokpan	

7. NEXT STEPS AND CLOSURE

The facilitator closed the meeting by summarising the proposed next steps in the EIA process, which are:

- The closing of comments on the DSR on 30 January 2009;
- Finalisation of the Scoping Report and submission thereof to the DEAT (February 2009);
- Completion of specialist studies (April 2009); and
- Compilation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report as soon as the specialist studies are completed. The draft report will again be available for public review. Meetings to present the content of the report will be proposed.

The facilitator thanked all for their attendance and contributions to the project. The meeting was closed at 12:45.

Please verify that your contribution at the meeting was correctly captured. Should you wish to notify us of any discrepancies, please contact us: Anelle Odendaal or Andre Joubert, Zitholele Consulting: Tel (011) 254-4855 or 254-4987, Email: aodendaal@zitholele.co.za or Andrej@zitholele.co.za