

## MINUTES

### PROPOSED FORSKOR-MERENSKY 275KV±130KM POWERLINE AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATION WORKS

#### Meeting Details

Date: 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2012	Time: 13:00- 16H00
Venue: Maruleng Local Municipality, Hoedspruit	Re: Land Owners and I&APs
Facilitator: Margen Industrial Services:	Ben Koma Moses Mahlangu
Consultant: Nsovo Environmental Consultants	Munyadziwa Rikhotso Amukelani Shiundlana
Proponent: Eskom Transmission:	Henry Nawa Phuti Makweya

#### Attendance Register

The register is attached as Annexure A.

#### Purpose of the Meeting:

- To explain the EIA process followed to date.
- Report to stakeholders about the findings of the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report.
- Discuss further issues of concern.
- Outline and discuss the way forward.

#### Presentation by:

- Mr. Henry Nawa gave a presentation on the project background and the construction process.
- Mrs. Munyadziwa Rikhotso presented the EIA Process (Technical and PPP) and the way forward.

#### General Comment

The meeting was arranged for Landowners, Developers and all other I&APs around Hoedspruit within the Maruleng Local Municipality. The minutes as recorded here under are the reflection of the presentation and discussion of the meeting held with attending stakeholders.

The minutes were captured and recorded with the help of a tape recorder and are not written as verbatim

pronouncement but merely as summary of what was said. Hence questions, comments and issues raised at the meeting are not linked to particular persons.

ITEM	PRESENTATION
Welcome	<p>Mr. Moses Mahlangu declared the meeting opened and welcomed all in attendance. He introduced himself as the facilitator of the meeting and briefly explained the safety protocol.</p> <p>Members of the study team were introduced and the purpose of the meeting explained.</p>
Presentation	Mr. Henry Nawa gave a presentation about the background of the project and Mrs. Munyadziwa Rikhotso explained the EIA studies followed.

QUESTIONS/ISSUES/COMMENTS RAISED ( <i>Not linked to specific individuals</i> )	RESPONSE
Clarity was requested on how Acornhoek features in this whole project as the proposed line is between Merensky substation in Steelpoort and Foskop substation in Phalaborwa and Acornhoek is way out of the alignment. As a result thereof stakeholders around Acornhoek do not understand why this project involves the Acornhoek substation.	The attendees were advised that due to the fact that Foskop and Acornhoek substation supply electricity to the same area and are working as a ring feed for the area, if one substation is being upgraded then the other must also be upgraded.
To what year is Eskom projecting the reliability of these substations without undergoing any upgrading again?	It is projected that the completion of the substation upgrade will be in the year 2035.
Is it not possible for the existing line to carry an additional line so that the whole system becomes a double circuit?	The attendees were advised that due to the design of the existing line it is not designed for additional circuits.
One of the attendees raised a concern that during the first round of public meetings it was said that this line is needed for Phalaborwa mine, and they were now taken aback as it is said that the line is for the benefit of all communities in the area. A question was asked on whether the communities in those areas that are traversed by the line can tap into this line and the response was that this will not be allowed. A question was then posed as to how these communities going to benefit from this line?	<p>The communities, businesses and industries supplied from Foskop and Acornhoek will benefit directly from the improved reliability of supply, according to the reliability criteria set by the National Energy Regulators of South Africa (NERSA).</p> <p>Further to this other communities may benefit indirectly at a macro-economic level. Limited short-term benefits (vending and unskilled-labour opportunity) are possible during construction phase.</p> <p>It was further clarified that the Scoping report addressed the benefits of the project at all levels and that the proposed project is not only for the mine.</p>
Landowners that are potentially affected by this line are not happy that they accidentally came to hear about the project and the related public meetings. Most landowners missed the opportunity of making an input in this study during the scoping phase because the consultation process was poor. It is therefore our feeling that things are done privately because it is known that the powerline project is going to have a negative impact on the ecotourism business in the area.	The public participation process was done according to the requirements of the Act. Advertisement were placed in different newspaper and different languages to ensure reach to all concerned, further notices were placed at distinct conspicuous places along the route and within communities. Letters were also sent to land owners and key stakeholders in the area and notices were distributed to farms that could be accessed. To ensure that the affected

<p>There are about 220 lodges that fall under Kruger National Park that will close down if this project is allowed.</p> <p>The area around Hoedspruit is known for the oldest conservancy in Mpumalanga.</p>	<p>parties are informed effort was made to discuss with Sanparks and they agreed that they would send to the farm owners in their database as well as to the Kruger National Park.</p> <p>Representatives from the farming communities indicated that they represented group of landowners and this was welcomed. It was further agreed that the representatives would become the primary point of contact as and when required.</p>
<p>It was proposed that Electricity sourced from Cabora Basa on the north or electricity supply around Phalaborwa can be strengthened by connecting to the proposed power generating plant that is proposed for construction south of Zimbabwe as it is rumored that the Chinese government is going to build a power station in Zimbabwe.</p>	<p>The said Power Station Project is a mere concept at this stage, so it can't be considered as a solution to short-term and medium-term issues. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Foskor-Merensky line remains the best solution to reinforce the Phalaborwa area.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised with regards to Eskom appointing private contractors to do unsupervised bush clearing. These contractors do not care about the environment and they cut plants without taking into consideration the importance of different plant species in the area. Landowners requested the contact details for the Eskom official who is responsible for servitude management section.</p>	<p>The concern was forwarded to the responsible persons who responded accordingly.</p> <p>We have the Contractors meeting on the monthly basis to ensure that there is a consistence practices within the Servitudes Management process including the use of the PERMIT from Department of Environmental Affairs. The concerns may be the experience of the past before a contractor forum was established, however any concerns in this regards can be directed to the following Senior Advisors if need be with a copy to Lines &amp; Servitudes Manager Lufuno Kwindi (079511 2893)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lephalale and Rusternburg CLN is Senior Advisor Johan de Beer (0834140130)</li> <li>• Polokwane CLN Edward Cronje Senior Advisor (0836565933)</li> </ul>
<p>The specialist who investigated the visual impact of the powerline recommended that the line be placed along the road and seemingly this recommendation is ignored. We would like to submit that alternative 5 as recommended by the visual impact specialist be investigated and the findings must be communicated to landowners. Sentiments were echoed that the landowners are more inclined to agree with the specialist that the powerline close to the road will not have big impact like when it was introduced to a new area.</p>	<p>Grid Planning follows advice from L&amp;R, who will advise on the best approach. GP notes that accommodating this recommendation would i) appease the land-owners, ii) extend the EIA period. GP further notes that ignoring this recommendation may lead to a drawn out process of appeals.</p>
<p>We would like to know who the owners of Phalaborwa mine are. We also want to see the findings of the EMF studies conducted by Eskom for the effect of powerlines on living organisms because it is said that the presence of powerline in an area result in high occurrence of cancer to animals.</p>	<p>The owners of the Phalaborwa mine are unknown. However the details of the contact person with regard to the project are in the database which is part of the Draft Report.</p> <p>The EMF studies will be made available.</p>
<p>Landowners strongly feel that minimal effort was done to make them aware of the project during the scoping phase hence only few people participated. Almost a year after the first round of consultation the study team comes back to</p>	<p>The report has been available for public review from the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012, which implies that there is only two more weeks to comment on the report. The report has been availed to the public for a period of 40 days. Effort was</p>

conduct further consultation. This is considered to be minimal effort of trying to consult with the public. The two weeks comment period given to stakeholders go through the report and comment is very short and unfair when considering the time it took for stakeholders to hear about the project.	made to forward report to individual emails and also reports were placed at public libraries and municipalities. Further adverts were sent to inform the interested and affected parties of the availability of the report as well as to invite them to the public meeting.
Was economic impact assessment conducted for this project to compare the extent to which the project will impact on ecotourism and mines?	A detailed Ecotourism and Social Impact Assessment report was undertaken.
There is a stretch of the powerline of about 10km which will be on highly sensitive area for visual impact and economic impact. Eskom is requested to consider making this section of the line a double circuit line. If this is not possible landowners will want to see the report of the assessment conducted regarding this arrangements.	Double Circuit configuration can be considered. GP (through Line Engineering Services, and other Dept.) can form final opinion on whether D/C line would be suitable in a specific area, once the specific stretch of land has been specified. L&R, together with its EIA consultants, will advise of best final recommendation, after weighing all aspects.
If the government approves the line that passes close to Mica will Eskom then build a new substation at Mica for electricity supply to the mine?	Mica must apply formally to Eskom via Customer Services Dept. Eskom will investigate and recommend the best solution to meet Mica's requirements. The principle is that Eskom has an obligation to provide grid access.
The ecotourism specialist did not give a correct assessment of the development of lodges and the whole ecotourism industry in the area because he was given very short time to conduct the studies and he did not consult a large number of lodge owners in the area. The statement in his report that the ecotourism industry in the area is completely developed is incorrect. This industry is still developing because there are still a large number of new lodges being built in the area.	<p>The EAP responded that time is never an issue when it comes to providing factual information and reiterated that if those where the views of the specialist Possibly the specialist was ill informed.</p> <p>The statement will be corrected and a revised report will be submitted accordingly.</p>
Landowners are concerned that the EAP rate poaching on rhinos as low when this is such a sensitive national issue in our country.	The EAP requested that the concerned stakeholder revisit the report with the need to understand. The safety and security of both black and white rhinos was rated high not as alleged.
This project will have long term negative economic impact on jobs created by environment and short term positive economic impacts coming from the construction side of the project. This is similar to mining activities which create short term economic benefits and when the resources are depleted the mine closes and jobs are lost as opposed to Ecotourism which creates long term sustainable jobs.	Power lines normally supplies electricity for long time and electricity unlike mining will always be used for other purposes like domestic use. There are few instances in this age and time where power lines are decommissioned or stands idling without being used instead are being refurbished to prolong their lifespan.
Landowners are concerned that electricity needs for rural communities is now used as justification for the need of this powerline and yet it is clear that the line is needed for Phalaborwa mine. The important question to ask is what will happen if the mine was to close tomorrow? The rural community around Phalaborwa-Hoedspruit will not increase and as a result Eskom will then seat with surplus electricity. The landowners are of the view that there is no need for the second line. Building this line is a risky economic exercise because the local mines can close any time.	This line is required for general/natural growth in the in greater area of Phalaborwa (supplied by Foskor and Acornhoek subs). It is not for one customer. Eskom has to provide a predetermined level of reliability to every Transmission supply point.
Eskom powerlines affect the area and the environment as giraffes get electrocuted by the small low-hanging	The small low-hanging lines are distribution lines. Longer poles can be used as and when necessary.

powerlines.	
Landowners wanted confirmation that they will see the final report before it is submitted to DEA. This will enable stakeholders to see that alternative 5 is included and will be considered by the authority. There was also a request that the minutes of the meeting be circulated.	A focus group meeting will be held with interested and affected parties to finalise and comment on the final Draft of the report prior to submission.
Eskom is advised to consider the issue of working hours during construction. Landowners will allow construction workers on their properties only between 10h00 and 15h00. This suggest that line 1 and 5 are better options with less interference with construction workers.	Normal working hours are between 08h00 and 17h00; however, working times can always be negotiated with the landowner.

### **Way Forward**

- The attendees where advised that the closing date to comment on the project is the 30<sup>TH</sup> September 2012.
- The attendees where further advised that after the comment period the Final Environmental Impact Report will be compiled and submitted to DEA for a decision and that all registered stakeholders will be informed of the decision of the authority and information on how to appeal will be circulated.
- A focus group meeting would be scheduled to finalise the issues raised and to review the completeness of the EIR prior submission to authorities.

### **Closing Comment**

Mr. Mahlangu thanked all in attendance and declared the meeting closed.