

BACKGROUND

Eskom transmission and the Coega Development Corporation (CDC) propose the installation of electrical infrastructure within the Coega Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) near Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape. The project includes the installation of 400kV and 132kV powerlines, substations for stepping down the power for end users, radio towers for communications, and the upgrade of the existing Grassridge substation. Some of the proposed powerlines within the IDZ will link up to a proposed Combined Cycle Gas Turbine Power Station, which is proposed at a future date, and will require a separate EIA.

The installation of electrical infrastructure on this scale is a listed activity in terms of current environmental legislation, requiring that the proponent undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process ahead of any construction activities.

Accordingly, Eskom and Coega (joint project proponents) have appointed Eyethu Engineers cc to undertake the required EIA.

The aim of the project is to obtain a Record of Decision (ROD) from the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) regarding the installation and integration of electrical infrastructure within the Coega IDZ.

WHAT IS AN EIA?

An EIA is an environmental study that assesses the potential impacts (both positive and negative) that a project may have on the biophysical, social and economic environments, as well as the impacts that the different environments may have on the project. The EIA also looks at alternatives and provides recommendations on how to minimise or avoid the negative impacts and maximise the positive impacts.

THE EIA PROCESS FOR THIS PROJECT

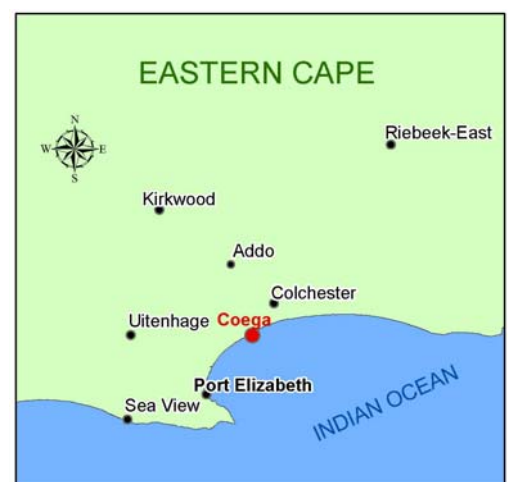
The environmental scoping phase is the first phase in the Environmental Impact Assessment process, and can be followed by a full EIA when more detailed investigation is deemed necessary. Specialist studies have been commissioned at the scoping phase. By this, avi-fauna (bird), archaeology, geology and ecology specialists will be feeding into the scoping process. The scoping phase includes a full public participation process to ensure that all potential issues or concerns raised by interested or affected parties are identified and addressed through the Scoping Process.

The Final Scoping Report will be considered by the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), with input from the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Affairs, Environment & Tourism (DEAET).

Should gaps in the data, which make decision-making difficult, be identified, the project may proceed to the full EIA phase.

ALTERNATIVES

A limited choice of powerline corridors and substation sites exist within the Coega IDZ in line with the Coega IDZ masterplan that outlines specific zones, open spaces, and utility corridors. The required power infrastructure needs to fit into this framework that limits alternative corridors that can be assessed within the Coega IDZ. Other types of alternatives i.e. the "no go" option, pylon design alternatives etc. still exist and will be examined in the Scoping Report.



ANTICIPATED PROGRAMME

Study begins: *Mid February 2006*

Project announcement: (advertisements, distribution of this Background Information Document)
28 February 2006

Identification of Issues: (from key stakeholders, IAPs, specialists) *(Ongoing)*

Public Meeting and Key Stakeholder Workshop:
29 March 2006

Closing date for public comments: *07 April 2006*

Drafting of Scoping Report: *April 2006*

Distribution of Draft Scoping Report for comment:
±28 April 2006

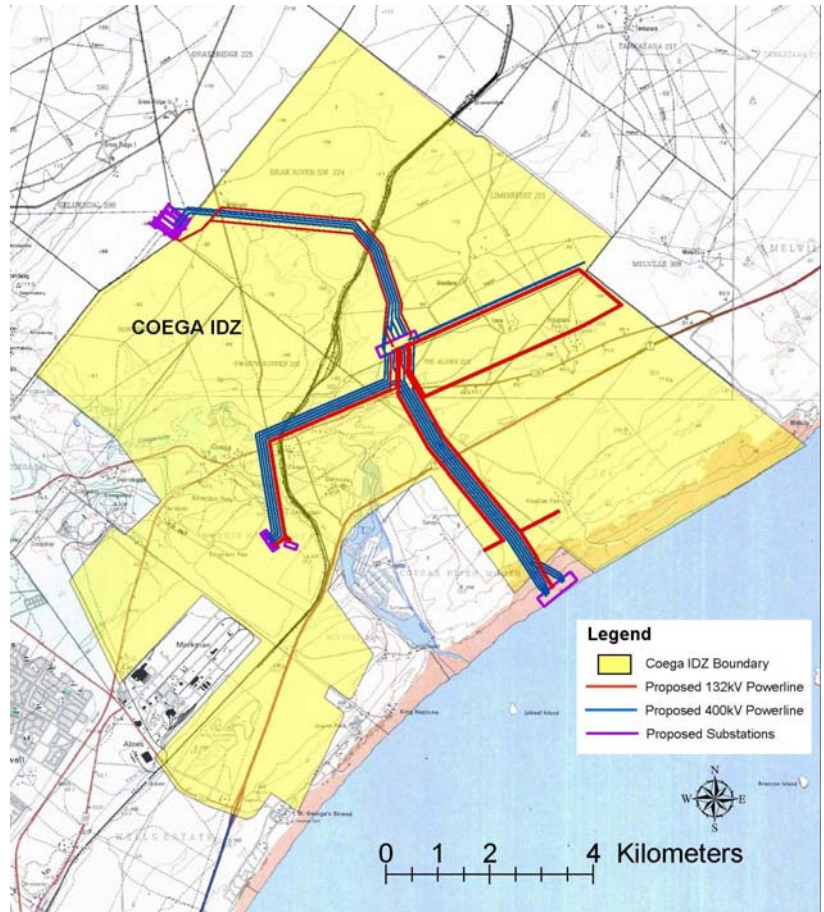
Closing date for public comments on DSR:
±29 May 2006

Submission of Final Scoping Report to DEAT:
±22 June 2006

Decision from DEAT: *(dependant on DEAT)*

Feedback to stakeholders:
(dependant on Record of Decision date)

Possible EIR Phase:
(dependant on Record of Decision)



Map showing Coega Industrial Development Zone , and proposed electrical infrastructure

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Public participation is an integral part of an EIA. Anyone who is interested or affected by the proposed project has a right to participate.

Please make use of the following opportunities:

- Study the information made available in this Background Information Document, at meetings, on the website, and in the draft Scoping Report.
- Attend a public meeting to obtain further project information, interact on a one-to-one basis with the Project Team, and / or raise issues and concerns (see details on map)
- Contact the Public Participation Office to obtain further project information, and / or raise issues or concerns.
- Register as an interested and affected party and be included on the database in order to receive future project information and / or formally record issues and concerns.
- Complete the comment sheet and return either in person, or by mail, fax or e-mail.
- Visit Eskom or Coega's website to register, view information and / or submit comment.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?

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DETAILS OF PUBLIC MEETING

DATE: 29 March 2006
TIME: 17h30
VENUE: Port Elizabeth City Hall

Please note that a second public meeting will be held to discuss the Draft Scoping report once all IAPs have had a chance to view this documents. All IAPs on the database will be notified of the availability of the DSR, and of the details of the meeting to discuss the DSR.

