



PROPOSED WIND ENERGY FACILITY EIA PROCESS

RECORD OF SCOPING PHASE PUBLIC MEETING

LUTZVILLE HOTEL, LUTZVILLE

Held on
Wednesday 22 August 2007,
Lutzville Hotel

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

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SCOPING PHASE PUBLIC MEETING: LUTZVILLE HOTEL, LUTZVILLE

Venue: Lutzville Hotel

Date: Wednesday, 22 August 2007

Time: 19:00

A poster session where the Eskom and EIA teams were available to discuss I&AP issues was held from 17:00 to 18:30

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND APOLOGIES

Shawn Johnston, process facilitator for the proposed Eskom Wind Energy Facility Public Participation Process opened the meeting. He introduced the team of Sustainable Futures ZA and outlined his role as facilitator. He provided an overview of the project and the process that lead up to the current phase of the environmental impact assessment process. Specific reference to the involvement of local communities in the information gathering and information dissemination exercises was made – which included the various municipal offices, business and individuals from local communities in Vredendal, Koekenaap, Lutzville, Doringbaai, Strandfontein and Ebenhaeser. He introduced the core team present from Eskom and Savannah Environmental.

- » Morore Mashoa - Chief Engineer - Division Client Office. Acts as the client for Generation.
- » Deidre Herbst – Eskom Generation Environmental Manager
- » Kubentheran Nair - EIA project manager from Eskom Generation
- » Mervin Theron – Project Manager – Project Development Department
- » Ian Smit - Eskom Wind Energy technical expert
- » Thandi Nkonzo - Eskom Generation
- » Patience Selepe – Eskom Land and Rights
- » Ntombikana Malinga – Eskom Stakeholder Management
- » Isaac Blou - Eskom Enterprise Engineering
- » Karen Jodas – Savannah Environmental, undertaking the EIA for the project
- » Shawn Johnston - Sustainable Futures ZA, the public participation consultant for the project
- » David Abrahams – Sustainable Futures ZA
- » René Ngwenya – Sustainable Futures ZA

Apologies were received from:

- » Paul Herselman – Department of Agriculture and Land Care in Vredendal
- » Jeffrey Williams – Western Cape Government Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning

- » Akhona Damane – Assistant Director, Information Services (GIS), Western Cape Government Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning.
- » Nakkie Pienaar – Landowner

MEETING ATTENDEES

- » T. Turner – Professional Engineer
- » P. Reynders – West Coast District Municipality
- » A. van der Westhuizen – Matzikama Municipality
- » S.A. Visagie – Eskom technician at Juno Substation
- » D.A. Witbooi – Lutzville resident
- » J.J. Claase – Lutzville resident
- » M. Mfene – DEAT Western Cape
- » J.J. Bester – Private Individual
- » L.M. Boonzaaii – Private Individual
- » F.H. De Waal – Private Individual/Landowner
- » N. Beukes – Private Individual
- » C. Timlin – Namakwa Sands Environmental Manager
- » H.F. Smook – Private Individual
- » A. Dittmer – Private Individual
- » N. Plaatjies – West Coast District Municipality in Moorreesburg
- » W. Klazen – Saclawa
- » Inspector E.H. Truter – SAPS Lutzville
- » J. Wiggins – Private Individual
- » J. Kritzinger – Cape Nature
- » R. Rhoode – Western Cape Provincial Government Department of Transport and Public Works
- » Brian Classen – ORBEEF
- » John Piennaar – Western Cape Provincial Government Roads Department
- » R. Saul – Private Individual
- » P.J. Huysamen – Diamond Contractor

MEETING AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Apologies
3. Rules of Engagement
4. Purpose of the meeting
5. Presentations
 - Background & technical aspects of Eskom Project
 - EIA process and feedback of the findings of the Scoping Phase
6. Question and answer session

7. Way forward and closure

BACKGROUND & TECHNICAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND FEEDBACK OF THE SCOPING PHASE

A formal presentation was delivered to the attendees. This presentation covered the following:

- » A technical overview of the proposed Wind Energy Facility (presented by Morore Mashao)
- » An overview of the Environmental Assessment (EIA) Process and feedback of the findings of the Scoping Phase (presented by Karen Jodas).

The presentations covered the following:

- » A technical overview of the proposed Eskom Wind Energy Facility focused on the following themes:
 - How wind turbines work;
 - Inside of a wind turbine;
 - Wind energy facts;
 - Wind resource;
 - Timelines for the project;
 - Technology; and
 - Anticipated project costs.
- » An overview of the EIA process and feedback of the findings of the Scoping Phase included the following information:
 - Wind energy development in the Western Cape;
 - Project specific details;
 - The legal context;
 - Alternatives;
 - The Scoping Phase;
 - Construction impacts;
 - Planning and design considerations;
 - Operation impacts;
 - Evaluation of impacts;
 - EIA process and public involvement;
 - The way forward.

Detailed information on the presentations delivered by Morore Mashao and Karen Jodas are attached for reference.

After the completion of the presentations, the facilitator opened the floor for comments and questions of clarification.

DISCUSSION SESSION

The following questions were raised:

- » *Mr. Smook (a resident on the Skaapvlei Road) raised a concern about the number of trucks that would have to pass his home. He requested that Eskom consider tarring the Skaapvlei Road as it seems from the information presented that thousands of trucks would have to use the road over the construction period. He urged Eskom to calculate the volume and type of heavy vehicle traffic anticipated for the project as well as the durability of the road to be used as the haul road. He estimated a 1000 cement trucks during the foundation-pouring phase of the project alone. He requested that a specific study on traffic volumes for the construction stage be undertaken and the results include in the environmental impact assessment phase. He suggested that the study focus on the greater impact of the additional traffic on the road for all seasons. His specific concerns relate to volume and type of traffic, how the road will be affected, the state of the road once construction is completed, dust and mud associated with heavy traffic on the road.*

Deidre Herbst (Eskom) acknowledges that this is considered a real concern by Eskom. She indicated that the engineering team will be asked to investigate the road durability and the required number of heavy vehicle movements on the Skaapvlei Road. She advised that Eskom will then be in a position to understand what needs to be done with regards to the haul road.

- » *Ms. Annali van der Westhuizen (Matzikama Local Municipality) reminded the meeting that mining activities are already underway and that Skaapvlei Road will be used for heavy vehicles by the mines too – that is other groups are also looking to make use of this road as a haul road. She reiterated that it was important to consider testing the durability of the road and agreed that Skaapvlei Road should be tarred.*
- » *Mr. Reynders (West Coast District Municipality) supported the tarring of the road, saying that this could be done in co-operation with other companies also making use/planning to make use of the road.*
- » *Mr. Pedro Huysmen (diamond mining contractor) indicated that he has used the Skaapvlei Road for the past 23 years for work purposes and agreed that the road will not be able to take the increased traffic. He advised that the road would be required to be upgraded, especially the road surface which is not stable.*
- » *Mr. Kobus Kritzenger (Cape Nature) pointed out that the current road is fairly narrow and has several tight bends – which may not make the road suitable for the abnormal truck loads if not upgraded.*

- » *Mr. Timlyn (Namakwa Sands) agreed that it may be necessary to consider tarring the road. He commented that this road is also used by tourists, and enquired if the road would be able to accommodate tourist traffic too.*

Shawn Johnston (facilitator) advised that the concerns and questions were noted for Eskom's consideration and action.

- » *Ms. Annali van der Westhuizen (Matzikama Local Municipality) asked that comments about land use and jurisdictions be forwarded to their municipality soon in order that it could be discussed at Council level.*

Shawn Johnston (facilitator) advised that this comment was noted for Eskom's consideration and action.

- » *Mr. Reynders (West Coast District Municipality) enquired about the anticipated levels of noise during construction as well as the noise levels of the turbines. He enquired how this would compare to ambient noise levels.*

Ian Smit (Eskom) explained that at the Klipheuwel site noise measurements were taken before and after installation and that no considerable increase was noticed. He reassured the meeting that the noise from the facility would be assessed through the EIA, but is not anticipated to create a disturbance above the ambient noise levels. While the sound of the blades can be heard when standing in close proximity to one of the turbines, this sound is not readily audible some distance away from the turbine.

- » *Mr. Visagie (Eskom) enquired about the voltage per unit.*

Ian Smit (Eskom) explained that the turbines will be operating within approximately 33 kV.

- » *Mr. F. de Waal (landowner) enquired whether the turbines/towers would be fenced off and if there would be any restrictions for cattle to graze.*

Deidre Herbst (Eskom) explained that a normal fence will be erected for control purposes especially while construction is underway. She advised that no decision has been taken at this time regarding the end-use of the facility, and that the success for rehabilitation of disturbed areas needs to be considered. Morore Mashoa (Eskom) added that where the substation is to be built will definitely be fenced off for safety and security reasons. No grazing would be permissible within the substation high-voltage yard. Ian Smit (Eskom) advised that each turbine is secure, and would not require any fencing around a single turbine unit.

- » *Mr. de Waal (landowner) suggested that it would be impossible to have sheep graze in the area during the construction phase, which would extend over a few seasons. He also advised that grazing would be difficult during rehabilitation. He advised that his sheep are free-range, and are rotated between camps. Without grazing rights, his grazing would be impacted.*

Shawn Johnston (facilitator) noted that grazing rights during construction and post-construction should be considered by the impact study.

- » *Ms. N. Plaatjies (West Coast District Municipality) advised that the WCDM view this project as a good initiative for the West Coast. He advised that in terms of the integrated development planning for the District Municipality, some clarity must be sought regarding the roles of the Local Municipality and the District Municipality, especially with regards to roads. She also wanted to know the intention of Eskom to create employment opportunities in the area with this project. Further, she enquired about the mechanisms used to inform and involve communities and people in general towards an inclusive public participation process.*

Deidre Herbst (Eskom) expressed appreciation regarding the question about the involvement of the municipalities, and advised that Eskom would welcome the opportunity to engage with the relevant authorities. She proposed that a maintenance agreement for roads be considered between Eskom and the municipalities. This would be considered and discussed outside of the EIA process.

Shawn Johnston (Sustainable Futures ZA) advised of the mechanisms used in engaging and informing local communities and interested and affected parties of the project and explained that the process was inclusive and extensive. He noted that a database of district and local stakeholders is in place, media namely; the local newspapers and Radio Namakwaland were approached, visits throughout area were undertaken and communities consulted. The required process for information dissemination for public participation processes was followed – including advertisements, background information documents, letters, posters, focus group meetings and one-on-one discussions.

- » *Ms. Plaatjies sought further clarity on the intended spin-offs for the community and how this could be incorporated in the Municipality's Integrated Development Planning.*

Deidre Herbst (Eskom) explained that the wind energy facility would not require more than 15 people per crew during construction, with only approximately 6 people during operations. However, Eskom has a policy to use local suppliers and this needs be explored with the local municipalities. She also stated that the potential spin-off is that it will be a site that could attract tourists. Klipheuwel for instance has had about 4000 official visitors.

Thandi Nkondo (Eskom) proposed that the municipalities compile a database reflecting the known skills in the community. Eskom could make use of such a database when procuring skills for the wind farm project.

- » *Mr. Lewellen Rhooide (Regional Director of Department of Transport and Public Works) advised this his Department can offer Eskom support with regards to the issue of the roads. He advised that the Department is also responsible for expanded public works opportunities. He asked about the local procurement process and whether it includes local contractors and using the database. He also suggested that labour-intensive construction methods could be considered by Eskom during construction where possible. This will assist in creating a community-partnership with Eskom.*

Deidre Herbst (Eskom) thanked Mr Rhooide for the support. She agreed that the issues raised can be considered by Eskom.

Ian Smit (Eskom) commented that the execution of the project will include what makes best sense for the success of the project and community involvement, where possible.

- » *Mr. Klazen (Saclawa) asked whether the concrete could be batched/prepared on the site. This may assist in reducing excessive heavy vehicles on the roads.*

Shawn Johnston (facilitator) advised that the raw materials would still be required to be brought to site – which would still result in haulage along the road. In addition, water would also be required to be brought to site to batch the cement.

- » *Mr. Kobus Kritzenger (Cape Nature) enquired whether the facility would straddle both sides of the Skaapvlei road. He enquired if Eskom had clarity on the specific area/footprint for the project.*

Morore Mashoa (Eskom) explained that Eskom has not yet concluded on the site design and layout (i.e. micro-siting of turbines etc). This is highly dependant on harnessing the best wind resource in the area. The turbines might need to be installed on both sides of the road.

- » *Ms. Annali van der Westhuizen (Matzikama Local Municipality) requested clarity on where the substation would be built. She enquired if it would be on the portion of the site under the Matzikama LM, or the portion of the site under the WCDM.*

Morore Mashoa (Eskom) explained that the position for the substation would be determined together with the turbine micro-siting exercise. The substation needs to be optimally located in relation to the turbines.

- » *Ms. Annali van der Westhuizen (Matzikama Local Municipality) enquired whether the turbines should always be painted white.*

Ian Smit (Eskom) explained that the standard RAL90/10 colour is used for the towers. This is off-white. This colour is used world-wide, and has been tested internationally to be the best colour for use.

WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE

Mr Johnston thanked everybody for their participation and questions. The attendees were informed that the next steps in the EIA process are:

- » Distribution of notes from the meeting;
- » Draft Scoping Report for public review and comment until 14 September 2007;
- » Finalisation of Scoping Report for submission to DEAT.

The meeting was closed at 20h30.