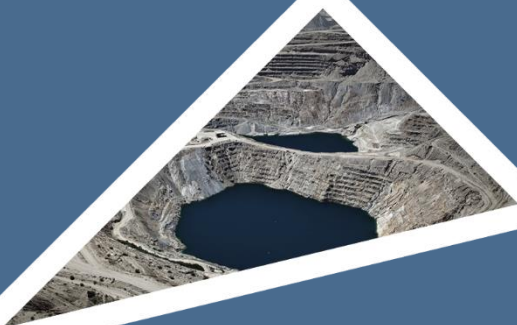


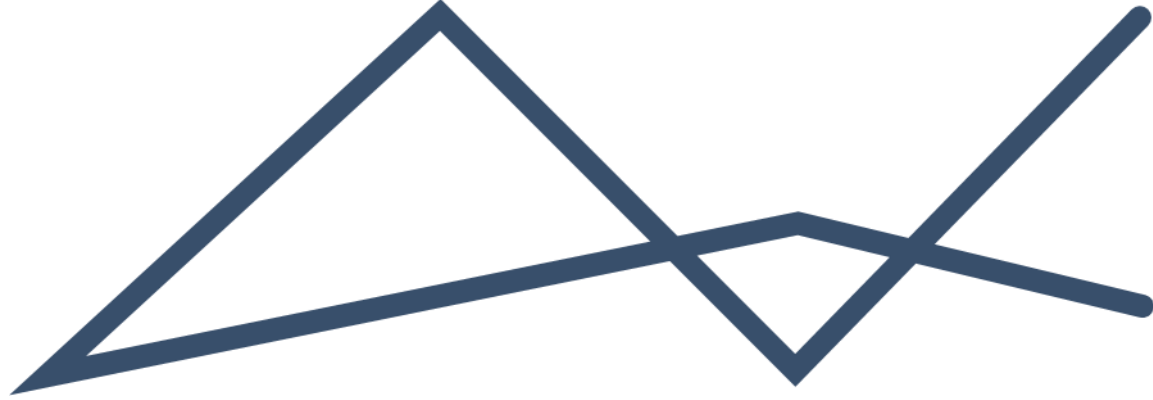


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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REPORT

ESKOM BLANCO NETWORK STRENGTHENING: NARINA SUBSTATION
WITHIN THE GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY OF THE
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE





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Abbreviation List:

EA	Environmental Authorisation
EAP	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMPr	Environmental Management Programme
I&AP	Interested and Affected Party
MTS	Main Transmission Substation
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act
PPP	Public Participation Process
PPR	Public Participation Report



1 INTRODUCTION

Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd. (Eskom) (hereafter referred to as the applicant) has appointed Environmental Impact Management Services (Pty) Ltd (EIMS) as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to assist with undertaking the required authorisation processes (including the statutory public participation), and to compile and submit the required documentation in support of application for the Environmental Authorisation (EA) application in accordance with the NEMA listed activity/ies:

- GNR 983: Activity 11, 12, 14, 19, 24, 27, 28 and 56.
- GNR 984: Activity 9 and 15.
- GNR 945: Activity 4, 12, 14, 15 and 18.

Additional listed activities and/or water uses may be identified during the process.

Eskom through their Transmission Grid Planning division have identified transformation constraints at Proteus Main Transmission Substation (MTS) as well as the sub-transmission constraints on the network supplying the Blanco area located in the Western Cape Province. To resolve the network constraints, Eskom proposes the construction and operation of a new 400/132kV Narina main transmission substation with associated loop-in loop-out powerlines close to the load centre (i.e., central distribution point). The required area size for substation location is 600m x 600m to account for current and future needs/plans. The length of the turn-in lines (loop-in loop-out on the Droerivier Proteus 400kV line and the associated 132kV lines) will be determined by the approved substation location.

Two study areas will be assessed for the proposed project: one in the Blanco area (centre point ~33°57'34.82"S 22°20'12.12"E) and the other in the Outeniqua area (centre point ~33°45'53.30"S 22°21'21.94"E), in the George and Oudtshoorn Local Municipalities of the Western Cape Province, respectively. The sites are located approximately 8km and 26km northwest of George, respectively.

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

South Africa, being one of the countries with the most progressive constitutions, enshrined the public's right to be involved in decisions that may affect them in its Constitution. Section 57(1) of the new Constitution that provides: *"The National Assembly may (b) make rules and orders concerning its business, with due regard to representative and participatory democracy, accountability, transparency and public involvement"*. This provision, along with several others gave rise to many new trends in South African legislation. In environmental legislation, the idea of public participation (or stakeholder engagement) features strongly and especially the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998, NEMA) and the recent regulations passed under the auspices of this Act makes very strict provisions for public participation in environmental decision-making.

Public participation can be defined as...*"a process leading to a joint effort by stakeholders, technical specialists, the authorities and the proponent who work together to produce better decisions than if they had acted independently"*¹. From this definition, it can be seen that the input of the public is regarded as very important indeed.

The Public Participation Process (PPP) is designed to provide sufficient and accessible information to Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) in an objective manner to assist them to:

During the Environmental Authorisation:

- Verify that their issues have been recorded;

¹ Greyling, T. (1999) Towards Managing Environmental Disputes: Appropriate Public Participation. Prepared for Conference on Environmental Dispute Resolution 10-11 June 1998, Fourways, Gauteng, Manyaka Greyling Meiring (Pty) Ltd, South Africa



- Comment on the findings of the environmental assessments; and
- Provide relevant local information and knowledge to the environmental assessment.

The PPP is a requirement of several pieces of South African Legislation and aims to ensure that all relevant I&APs are consulted, involved and their opinions are taken into account and a record included in the reports submitted to Authorities. The process ensures that all stakeholders are provided this opportunity as part of a transparent process which allows for a robust and comprehensive environmental study. The PPP for the necessary authorisation required for the project needs to be managed sensitively and according to best practises in order to ensure and promote:

- Compliance with international best practice options;
- Compliance with national legislation;
- Establishment and management of relationships with key stakeholder groups; and
- Encouragement of involvement and participation in the environmental study and authorisation/approval process.

As such, the purpose of the PPP and stakeholder engagement process is to:

- Introduce the proposed project and process for the authorisation project;
- Explain the environmental authorisation;
- Determine and record issues, concerns, suggestions, and objections to the project;
- Provide opportunity for input and gathering of local knowledge;
- Establish and formalise lines of communication between the I&APs and the project team;
- Identify all significant issues for the project; and
- Identify possible mitigation measures or environmental management plans to minimise and/or prevent negative environmental impacts and maximise and/or promote positive environmental impacts associated with the project.

This Public Participation Report (PPR) lists all verbal and written issues raised by I&APs during the call to register period from the 15th of February 2024 to date. A breakdown of the PPP is given within the remaining sections of this PPR.

2.1 LEGAL COMPLIANCE

The PPP must comply with all environmental legislation that requires public participation as part of an application for authorisation or approval; namely, the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act No. 107 of 1998).

Adherence to the requirements of the above-mentioned Act will allow for an Integrated PPP to be conducted, and in so doing, satisfy the requirements for public participation referenced in the Act. The details of the Integrated PPP are provided below.

3 IDENTIFICATION OF INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES (I&APS)

An initial I&AP database has been compiled from historic projects in the area and Windeed searches to obtain the contact details of the surrounding landowners. The I&APs referred to in the PPR include:

- Pre-identified and registered landowners and surrounding landowners;



- Pre-identified and registered key stakeholders;
- Regulatory authorities;
- Specialist interest groups; and
- All I&APs who responded to the initial notifications and requested to be registered.

Efforts to pre-identify key I&APs involved various avenues such as consultation with the proponent and known landowners within the study area, review of related previously conducted studies, and identification of key interest groups and authorities within the vicinity of the study area and municipality. Refer to Appendix 1 for the Key Stakeholder/I&AP Database.

3.1 LIST OF ORGANS OF STATE IDENTIFIED AND NOTIFIED

The following key I&APs, but not limited to, were notified of the proposed project and invited to participate in the public participation process:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Eskom Holdings SOC Limited | • Oudtshoorn Local Municipality |
| • Garden Route District Municipality | • South African Civil Aviation Authority |
| • George Local Municipality | • South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) |
| • Heritage Western Cape | • South African National Biodiversity Institute |
| • National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development | • South African National Parks |
| • National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) | • South African National Roads Agency Limited |
| • National Department of Human Settlements | • Transnet SOC Limited |
| • National Department of Mineral Resources & Energy (DMRE) | • Ward councillors |
| • National Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs | • Western Cape Department of Agriculture |
| • National Department of Tourism | • Western Cape Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs |
| • National Department of Transport | • Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning |
| • National Department of Water and Sanitation | • Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works |
| • National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) | • Western Cape Department of Water and Sanitation |
| • National House of Traditional Leaders | |

3.2 LIST OF OTHER KEY I&APS IDENTIFIED AND NOTIFIED

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| • Pre-identified and registered landowners and surrounding landowners | • African Conservation Trust |
| • Afgri | • AfriForum |
| • Afgri Agri Services | • Agri SA |



- Agri Western Cape
- BirdLife South Africa
- Botanical Society
- Centre for Environmental Rights
- Conservation South Africa (CSA)
- Council of Geoscience
- Endangered Wildlife Trust
- Federation for a Sustainable Environment
- George Heritage Trust
- Greenpeace Africa
- Simon Van De Stel Foundation Southern Cape
- Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA)
- World Wildlife Fund

4 NOTIFICATION OF INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES

This section provides details on the notifications that were distributed as part of the consultation process to date.

4.1 INITIAL NOTIFICATION OF KEY I&APS

The PPP commenced on the 15th of February 2024 with an initial call to register notification. Notification during this initial consultation was given in the manner described below.

4.1.1 REGISTERED LETTERS, FAXES AND EMAILS

Notification letters (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) were distributed to pre-identified I&APS through either registered letters, faxes, and/or emails.

The notification documents included the following information:

- List of anticipated activities to be authorised;
- Sufficient detail of the proposed development to enable I&APs to assess/surmise what impact the development will have on them or on the use of their land;
- The purpose of the proposed project;
- Details of the application processes associated with proposed activities;
- Details of the affected properties;
- Details of the South African environmental legislation that must be adhered to;
- Contact details of the EAP.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for initial notification and proofs.

4.1.2 SITE NOTICE PLACEMENT

Thirty (30) A1 Correx site notices and four (4) A3 posters (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) were placed at 34 locations along and surrounding the perimeter of the proposed project study area on the 15th of February 2024. The on-site notices included the following information:

- Project name;
- Applicant name;
- Project location;



- Map of proposed project area;
- Project description;
- Legislative requirements; and
- Relevant EIMS contact person for the project.

Please refer to Appendix 3 for proof of site notice and site notice distribution.

4.1.3 NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT

Advertisements (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) describing the proposed project and EIA process were placed in the George Herald newspaper and the Oudtshoorn Courant newspaper with circulation in the vicinity of the study area on the 15th of February 2024. The newspaper adverts included the following information:

- Project name;
- Applicant name;
- Project location;
- Nature of the activity;
- Legislative requirements; and
- Relevant EIMS contact person for the project.

Please refer to Appendix 4 for proof of adverts placed.

4.1.4 GAZETTE NOTICE

Notice (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) describing the proposed project and EIA process was placed in the Province of the Western Cape: Provincial Gazette on the 16th of February 2024. The Gazette Notice included the following information:

- Project name;
- Applicant name;
- Project location;
- Nature of the activity;
- Legislative requirements; and
- Relevant EIMS contact person for the project.

Please refer to Appendix 5 for proof of Gazette Notice placed.

4.2 NOTIFICATION OF SCOPING REPORT AVAILABILITY

Notification (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) regarding the availability of the Scoping Report for public review and comment will be provided to pre-identified and registered I&APs. The notifications will be distributed through either email, fax, registered mail, and/or SMS, where contact details are available.

Contact details will be provided to I&APs should they require assistance accessing the information or require copies of the reports.

Hard copies of the draft Scoping Report will be made available for public review and comment for a period of 30 days at the Blanco Public Library and the George Public Library.



4.3 SUMMARY OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

The table below provides a summary of the opportunities provided to I&APs for participation in the public participation process to date.

Table 1: Opportunities Provided for Public Participation

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PHASE			
ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PUBLICATION/PLACE	DATE
Initial Call to Register	Notification of landowners, occupiers, and other key I&APs.	Affected landowners and key I&APs were notified via email, fax, and/or registered letters.	16 February 2024
	Placement of site notices.	Thirty (30) A1 site notices and four (4) A3 posters (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) around the study area (34 placement locations).	15 February 2024
	Newspaper advertisement	Notice (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) was placed in the George Herald newspaper and the Oudtshoorn Courant newspaper.	15 February 2024
	Gazette Notice	Notice (in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa) was placed in the Province of the Western Cape: Provincial Gazette.	16 February 2024

5 RECORD OF ISSUES RAISED

Comments on the proposed project were solicited from pre-identified and registered I&APs and key stakeholders. To date the following comments have been received:

- Requests from pre-identified I&APs to be deregistered from the I&AP database.
- I&AP registrations.
- Acknowledgement from the Department of Water and Sanitation of receipt of the initial notification.
- Confirmation that the proposed project does not affect Transnet Pipelines.
- Request from CapeNature for shapefiles once the Scoping report is published for public review and comment.
- Request from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning to be registered as a commenting authority and to be notified of the draft scoping report availability.
- An I&AP provided a concept proposal that had been submitted to the George Municipality and Garden Route District Municipality. The I&AP requested recognition that locating the site on prominent areas will increase visual intrusion and detract from the landscape resources.
- Request from the South African Civil Aviation Authority for a formal obstacle assessment and to create an application.



- DFFE Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation allocation of Case Officers, requests for shapefiles to be sent to the allocated Case Officers, and for Public Participation Process documents to be provided.

Please refer to Appendix 6 and Appendix 7 for comments or issues received.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

The comments received during the initial call to register period to date were used to inform the compilation of this PPR. This report has been updated for submission to the competent authority, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries & the Environment (DFFE), following the 30-day public participation period.



APPENDIX 1

INTERSTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES DATABASE

Please note that in an effort to protect the personal information of the Registered I&AP's the contact information of the I&APs will not be made publicly available. Should you require access to this document for the purposes of fulfilling your obligations under the NEMA EIA Regulations or other lawful right, please feel free to contact the EIMS Information officer at 011 789 7170 or popia@eims.co.za



APPENDIX 2

INITIAL NOTIFICATION LETTER

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APPENDIX 3

SITE NOTICE PLACEMENT



APPENDIX 4

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT



APPENDIX 5
GAZETTE NOTICE



APPENDIX 6

TABLE OF CORRESPONDENCE



APPENDIX 7

CORRESPONDENCE DOCUMENT

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