



ECC-36-268-NTS-03-D

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

PROPOSED OTJIKOTO AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, OTJOZONDJUPA REGION, NAMIBIA

PREPARED FOR

B2GOLD NAMIBIA PROPERTY (PTY) LTD



FEBRUARY 2020

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

PROPOSED OTJIKOTO AGRICULTURAL PROJECT ON FARM ERHARDSHOF 575

1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Non-Technical Summary (NTS) is to provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) a background to the proposed project and to invite I&APs to register as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. The proposed project is the Otjikoto Agricultural Project. Through registering, all I&APs will be kept informed throughout the EIA process, and a platform for participation will be provided to submit comments/recommendations pertaining to the project.

This NTS includes the following information:

- What is the proposed project and where is the project located?
- Why is the project deemed necessary, and what benefits, or adverse impacts are anticipated?
- What alternatives to the project have been considered and assessed?
- How does the EIA process work?
- The public participation process and how to become involved, and
- Next steps and the way forward.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC) has been engaged by B2Gold Namibia Property (Pty) Ltd (the proponent) to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) in terms of the Environmental Management Act No. 7 of 2007 and its Regulations. An application for an environmental clearance certificate will be submitted to the relevant competent authorities - the Ministry of Water, Agriculture and Forestry (MAWF) and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), as part of the decision-making process.

2.2 LOCATION

The proposed Otjikoto agricultural project will be located on Farm Erhardshof 575. The total project size at the end of the final phase will be 270 hectares. The

intention is to initially plant fodder for cattle such as *Rhodes Katambora* grass as well as rotational crops such as maize and wheat. Should the trial be successful additional crops could be considered.

The proposed project will be developed in phases subject to feasibility as described below,

- The first phase, year 1 - a trail of 60 ha
- The second phase, year 2 - 90ha; and
- The third phase, year 3 - 120 ha.

2.3 WHAT IS PROPOSED

B2Gold Namibia Property (Pty) Ltd is a world-class gold producer, a 90% owned subsidiary of B2Gold Corp. In Namibia, B2Gold owns the Otjikoto Gold Mine and extensive base metal concessions. The proposed agricultural project was initiated due to effects of drought in the country. The project aims to create a fodder bank to feed and sustain healthy herds of cattle during drought seasons.

2.4 OPERATION PHASE

The proposed agricultural project activities are low-impact and non-intrusive. The following are envisaged during the proposed project:

- Ground preparation including minor earthworks and levelling
- Construction of agricultural infrastructure e.g. fences, irrigation system, storage and preparation areas
- Vegetation clearing of the area that is to be used for agriculture. Agricultural area shall be restricted within the boundaries of Farm Erhardshof 575
- Pivot area will be debushed and ripped, and
- Construction of an overnight storage dam for water supply to pivots, and
- Construction of powerline and transmission of power.

2.5 WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED

The purpose of the project is to utilize the resources available i.e. land, water and labour. This would increase the farm's financial turnover and create employment opportunities for the local community.

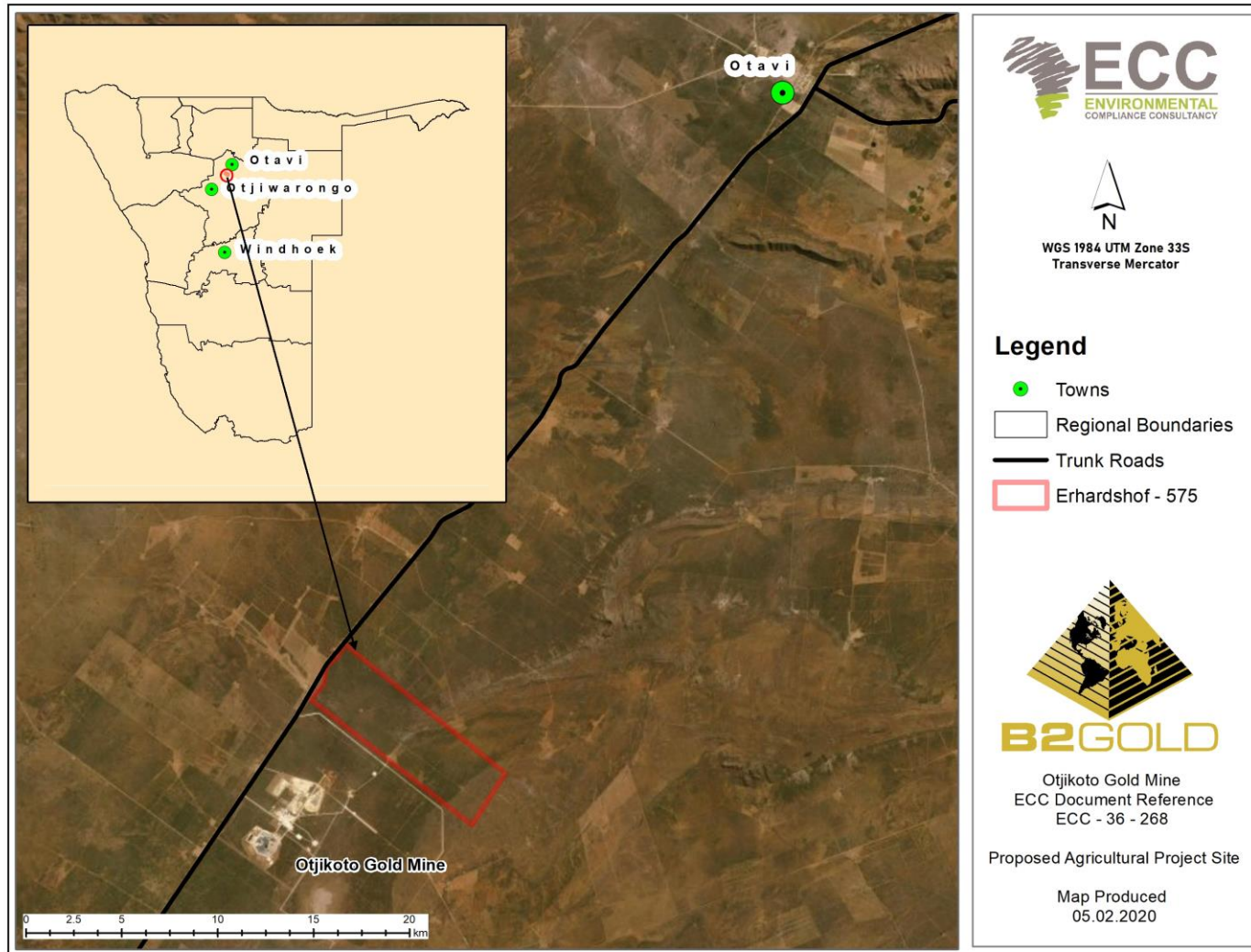


FIGURE 1 – A SATELLITE IMAGE INDICATING THE LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED OTJIKOTO AGRICULTURAL PROJECT SITE

2.6 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

2.6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Thus far the impacts of the proposed agricultural project are confined within the boundaries of the farm. Below is a list of possible impacts identified thus far:

- Drilling and abstraction of underground water for irrigation
- Possible water contamination of groundwater through the use of fertilizers and pesticides
- Conversion of virgin soil to agricultural soil, permanently removing flora for the affected area
- Creation of new employment opportunities to the local community

3 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The best practice environmental assessment methodology calls for consideration and assessment of alternatives to a proposed project. No alternatives were examined throughout the EIA process.

4 THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

This EIA, conducted by ECC, is undertaken in terms of the Environmental Management Act, No. 7 of 2007 and its regulations. The process followed in this EIA is set out in the flowchart in FIGURE 2.

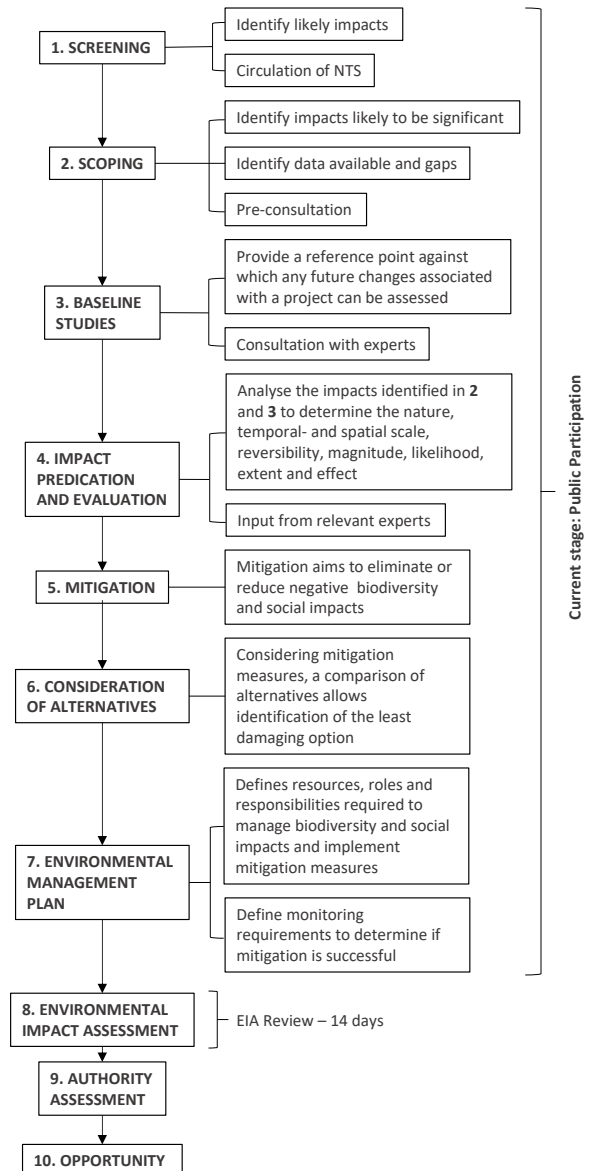


FIGURE 2 – FLOWCHART OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4.1 SCREENING

A review of the proposed project screening findings against the listed activities was conducted; the findings of which are summarised below.

ENERGY GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND STORAGE ACTIVITIES

1b. The transmission and supply of electricity

- The proposed project will construct a 11Kv powerline.

FORESTRY ACTIVITIES

4. The clearance of forest areas, deforestation, afforestation, timber harvesting or any other related activity that requires authorisation in term of the Forest Act No. 12 of 2001 or any other law.

- Minor vegetation clearing will occur at the proposed site.

WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENTS

8.1 Abstraction of ground or surface water for industrial or commercial purposes.

- The proposed project will require drilling of boreholes and abstraction of groundwater for irrigation.

8.5 Construction of dams, reservoirs, levees and weirs.

- A 50mx50mx2m storage dam will be constructed.

8.7 Irrigation schemes for agriculture excluding domestic irrigation.

- The proposed project is an irrigation scheme for agriculture.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES TREATMENT, HANDLING AND STORAGE

9.4 The manufacturing, storage, handling or processing of hazardous substances defined in the Hazardous substances Ordinance, 1974.

- The proposed project will store approximately 5000litres of diesel fuel on-site.

The potential environmental and social effects are anticipated to be of minor significance, and those that may occur shall be contained on the proposed site.

4.2 SCOPING

Due to the nature and magnitude of the proposed project, and the implementation of best practice mitigation measures during the development phase, the effects on the environment and society are expected to be minimal and localised.

4.3 BASELINE STUDIES

For the proposed project, baseline information will be obtained through a desk-based study by focusing on the environmental receptors that could be affected by the proposed project. ECC will also engage with stakeholders, I&APs and the proponent to seek input into the assessment.

4.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Impacts will be assessed using the ECC EIA methodology. The EIA will be conducted in terms of the Environmental Management Act, No.7 of 2007 and its Regulations. ECC's methodology for impact assessments was developed using (International Finance Corporation (IFC) standards in particular Performance Standard 1 'Assessment and management of environmental and social risks and impacts' and Namibian Draft Procedures and Guidance for EIA and EMP, including international and national best practice with over 25 years of combined EIA experience.

4.5 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

An EMP shall be developed for the proposed project setting out auditable management actions for B2Gold Namibia Property (Pty) Ltd to ensure careful and sustainable management measures are implemented for their activities with respect to the surrounding environment and community.

4.6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ADVERTISING

Public participation is an important part of the EIA process; it allows the public and other stakeholders to raise concerns or provide valuable local environmental knowledge that can benefit the assessment, in addition, it can aid the design process.

This project is currently at the scoping phase and the public participation phase.

At this phase ECC will perform the following:

- Identify key stakeholders, neighbours, authorities, environmental groups and interested or affected

members of the public, hereafter referred to as I&APs

- Distribute the NTS for the proposed project (this document)
- Advertise the environmental application in two national newspapers
- Place notices on-site at or near the boundary
- If required host a public meeting to encourage stakeholder participation and engagement, and provide details of issues identified by the environmental practitioner, stakeholders, and I&APs
- Record all comments of I&APs and present such comments, as well as responses provided by ECC, in the comments and responses report, which will be included in the scoping report that shall be submitted with the application, and
- Circulate I&AP comments to the project team for consideration of project design.

Comments must be submitted in writing and can be emailed using the details in the contact us section below.

CONTACT US

We welcome any enquiries regarding this document and its content. Please contact:

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