



SHAMETU
RIVER LODGE

Submitted to: Shometu River Lodge
Attention: Mr Liam Smit
PO Box 5049
Divundu, Namibia

REPORT: **BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT FOR** **THE EXISTING SHAMETU RIVER LODGE, KAVANGO** **EAST REGION, NAMIBIA.**

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Client Company Name: Shametu River Lodge

Client Name: Mr Liam Smit

Authors: Diaan Hoffman

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ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CONSULTANCY CONTACT DETAILS:

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



Environmental Compliance Consultancy
PO Box 91193, Klein Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: +264 81 669 7608
Email: info@eccenvironmental.com

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1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (Pty) Ltd (ECC) has been contracted by Azalea Investments Five CC (trading as Shametu River Lodge) to develop an environmental management plan (EMP), for the tourism-related activities at existing and operational Shametu River Lodge situated on townlands portion No. 1362 in the local authority area of Divundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia. Consistent with the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations. An environmental clearance certificate application will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) for the Project, which is the relevant authority to make a Record of Decision (RoD) with regards to the Project.

For this project, ECC proposes to only develop a comprehensive environmental management plan (EMP) for the following reason. Shametu River Lodge is situated in the Divundu townlands and is on a portion of land which is only 4.7 hectares in size. Small lodges by nature have limited environmental footprints and low potential for significant adverse impacts on their surroundings. Thus, subjecting them to a full environmental impact assessment (EIA) could be excessively resource-intensive, furthermore this is a pre-established lodge.

The purpose of this background information document (BID) is to provide MEFT and the interested and affected parties (I&APs) a background to the Project and to invite I&APs to register as part of the environmental assessment process.

All those who register as an I&AP will be kept informed throughout the process. Registration provides a platform for participants to submit comments, concerns, or recommendations regarding the Project. This BID includes the following information:

- The project and location
- Infrastructure on site
- How the application process works
- Next steps and the way forward

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Shametu River Lodge has been fully built and is currently in operation. Its construction took place since the start of January 2015, culminating in the opening of the lodge to tourism in April 2015. Situated adjacent to the C48/D3403 district road situated on townlands portion No. 1362 in the local authority area of Divundu, Kavango East Region, Namibia. Shametu River Lodge is strategically positioned, next to the Okavango River near the Bwabwata National Park as depicted in Figure 1.

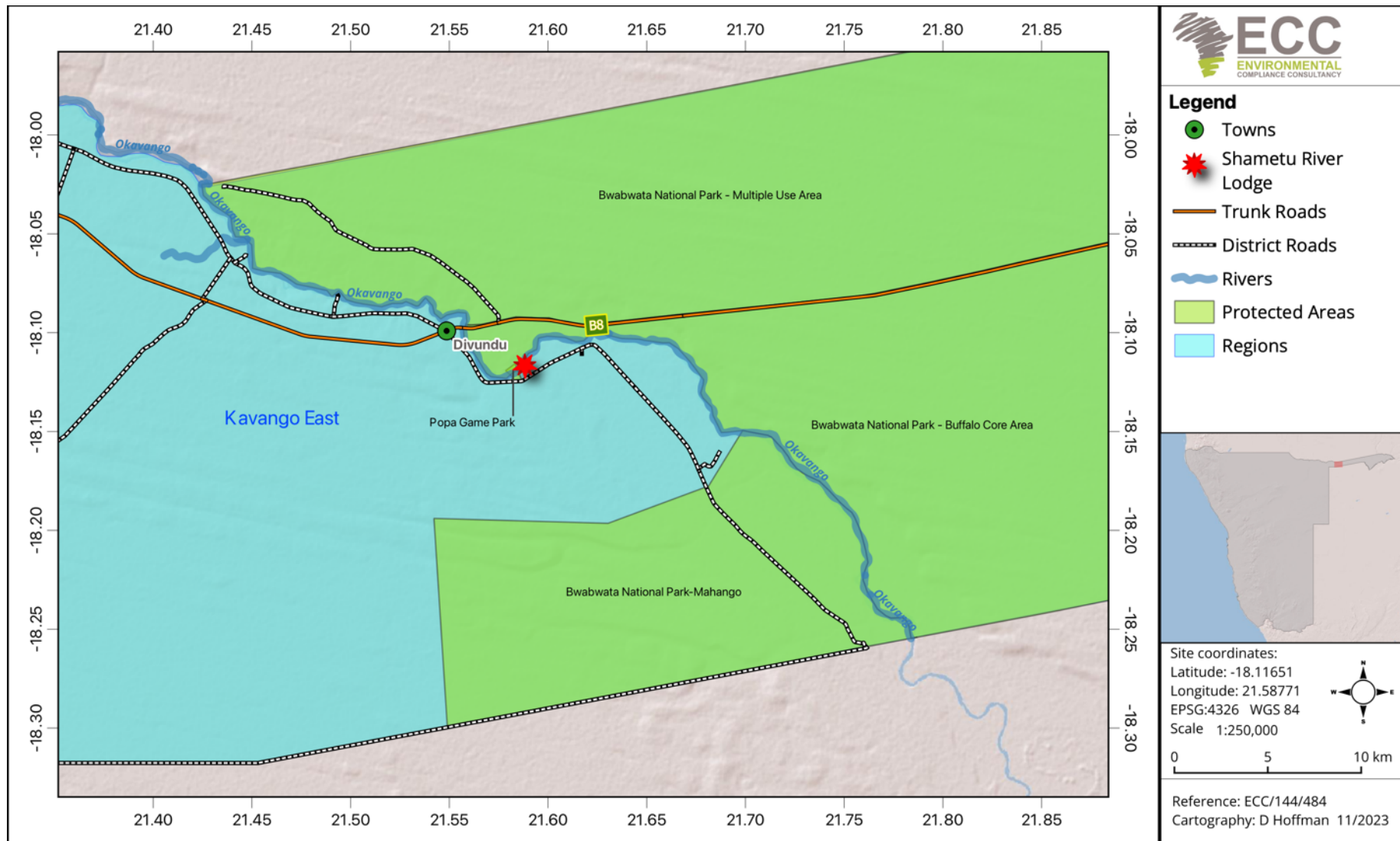


Figure 1 – Shametu River Lodge Locality Map

In terms of Section 32 (1) of the Environmental Management Act, No. 7 of 2007, ECC has determined that MEFT is the competent authority for the Project. The tourism-related activities trigger the listed activities as per the Environmental Management Act Regulations. The relevant activities list is provided later in the BID.

1.3 NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Namibia is a tourism destination for people around the world due to its various unique and popular geological features, wildlife attractions and popular sites across the country. The tourism industry is a major contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Namibia and plays an important part in socio-economic sustainability and wildlife conservation within the country.

The strategic placement of Shametu River Lodge adjacent to the Okavango River in Namibia, in proximity to the Bwabwata National Park with its renowned Buffalo and Mahango Core Areas, fulfils a need for travellers and wildlife enthusiasts. This pristine location not only provides a unique experience for visitors, but also serves as a crucial base for exploring the remarkable biodiversity of the region. With the lodge acting as a gateway to these ecologically significant areas, guests have the opportunity to witness the rich diversity of flora and fauna that thrive in this area.

1.4 OPERATIONAL PHASE

All infrastructure falls within the boundaries of portion No. 1362 in the local authority area of Divundu, which is 4.7 ha in size. The lodge has the capacity to house around 50 to 100 guests per day. The following infrastructure is currently on site:

- 2 swimming pools,
- Restaurant,
- Bar,
- Spa,
- 20 double rooms,
- 3 family rooms,
- 3 guide rooms,
- 4 management/owner houses,
- 1 self-catering house,
- 7 campsites, and
- 1 long-term rental house.

1.5 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Best practice environmental assessment methodology calls for consideration and assessment of alternatives to a proposed project. In a project such as this one, it is not possible to identify an alternative site due to the lodge already being constructed and in operation since April 2015.

During the project, alternatives will take the form of consideration of optimisation and using eco-friendly solutions to reduce potential impacts. This will be addressed in the EMP for the Project.

2 THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The EIA for the Project is being conducted by ECC and will be undertaken in terms of the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations. The process followed for this ESIA is set out in the flowchart in Figure 2.

A final decision relating to the above-mentioned application will be made by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA).

For this Project, ECC proposes to only develop a comprehensive EMP, which will cover the following:

1. Screening phase (completed)
2. Evaluation of potential impacts and the drafting of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and submission to the appropriate competent authority.

The main objectives of the EMP will be to:

- a) Provide information describing the Project and associated activities; and
- b) Develop management and mitigation measures associated with any identified potential impacts where necessary.



Figure 2 - Flowchart of the environmental and social assessment process

2.1 SCREENING

A review of the Project was undertaken and the screening findings against the listed activities were identified, the findings of which are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1- Listed activities triggered by the project

Listed activity	EIA screening finding
<p>WASTE MANAGEMENT, TREATMENT, HANDLING AND DISPOSAL ACTIVITIES (2.3) The import, processing, use and recycling, temporary storage, transit or export of waste.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This Project involves the temporary storage of general waste. The lodge has 4x bins for glass, paper, plastic and cans (metal). The plastic and Paper are burned on-site. The glass is disposed of at the municipal dumping site. The cans are sold to the staff or dumped with the glass at the municipal dumping site.
<p>TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES (6.) The construction of resorts, lodges, hotels or other tourism and hospitality facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The following infrastructure has been constructed on site: 2 swimming pools, restaurant, bar, spa, 16 double rooms, 3 family rooms, 3 guide rooms, 4 management/owner houses, 1 self-catering house, 7 campsites, and 1 long-term rental house.
<p>WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENTS (8.1) The abstraction of ground or surface water for industrial or commercial purposes. (8.3) Any water abstraction from a river that forms an international boundary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water is abstracted from the Kavango River. The daily usage of the lodge is approximately 6 m³ to 10 m³.
<p>HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE TREATMENT, HANDLING AND STORAGE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Septic tank, French drain and grey water recycling systems have been installed on-site. - The following fuel is used on site: 6 x 20 L petrol jerricans for boats and 7 x 25 L plastic cans for diesel for generator use.

Listed activity	EIA screening finding
<p>(9.1) The manufacturing, storage, handling or processing of a hazardous substance defined in the Hazardous Substances Ordinance, 1974.</p> <p>(9.2) Any process or activity which requires a permit, licence or other form of authorisation, or the modification of or changes to existing facilities for any process or activity which requires an amendment of an existing permit, licence or authorisation or which requires a new permit, licence or authorisation in terms of a law governing the generation or release of emissions, pollution, effluent or waste.</p>	
<p>OTHER ACTIVITIES</p> <p>(11.2) Construction of cemeteries, camping, leisure and recreation sites.</p>	<p>- The lodge does have campsites and provides leisure and recreation activities, like Boat Cruises, Fishing trips and Spa treatments.</p>

2.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The neighbouring lodges and Divundu Village Council will receive a letter notifying them of the intent to apply for an environmental clearance certificate and receive invitations to register as I&APs. a Period of time for input will be granted for the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to receive any additional concerns or comments from registered I&AP's.

2.3 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

An EMP shall be developed for the Project setting out auditable management actions for the Project to ensure careful and sustainable management measures are implemented for their activities in respect of the surrounding environment and community. The EMP becomes the legally binding commitment upon approval of the EMP and issuing of the environmental clearance certificate. Environmental clearance certificates are issued for a period of 3 years and renewal is subject to compliance with the provisions and conditions of the environmental clearance certificate.

3 THE WAY FORWARD – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is an important part of the ESIA process. It allows you, the public and stakeholders to raise concerns or provide valuable local environmental knowledge that can benefit the assessment process. At this phase, ECC will perform the following:

- Prepare and submit the application for the environmental clearance certificate in the prescribed manner
- Identify relevant key stakeholders, authorities, and municipalities hereafter referred to as I&APs
- Submit the EMP to the competent authority and Environmental Commissioner for a record of decision

Your request for registration as an I&AP as well as any comments on the BID or Project must be submitted in writing and can be emailed using the details in the contact us section below. Registration as an I&AP for the Project can be completed online on ECCs website on the Projects page.

Registration as an I&AP should be submitted on or before **31 January 2023**.

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

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC)

info@eccenvironmental.com

Tel: +264 816 697 608

www.eccenvironmental.com

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