



Submitted to: Burmeister & Partners (Pty)
Ltd

Attention: Mr Nic van Schalkwyk
P O Box 1496
Windhoek
Namibia

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF FIVE CONCRETE TRANSFORMER PLATFORMS AND THE UPGRADE OF AN EXISTING WASH AND SERVICE BAY AT BRAKWATER, KHOMAS REGION, NAMIBIA

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Client Company Name:	Burmeister & Partners (Pty) Ltd
Client Name:	Mr Nic van Schalkwyk
Ministry Reference:	APP- 00
Authors:	Kelly Ochs and Jessica Bezuidenhout
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ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CONSULTANCY CONTACT DETAILS:

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



Environmental Compliance Consultancy (Pty) Ltd

PO Box 91193, Klein Windhoek, Namibia

Tel: +264 81 669 7608

Email: info@eccenvironmental.com

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Background Information Document.....	5
1.1	Purpose of this document	5
1.2	Description of the proposed project.....	5
1.3	Need for the project	7
1.4	Construction and operational phases.....	7
1.5	Consideration of alternatives	7
2	The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Process	8
2.1	Screening.....	10
2.2	Scoping	11
2.3	Baseline studies.....	11
2.4	Stakeholder engagement.....	11
2.5	Scoping report	11
2.6	Environmental and social impact assessment phase.....	11
2.6.1	Potential impacts.....	11
2.6.2	Draft environmental and social management plan	12
3	The Way Forward – Public Participation	13

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1-	Listed activities triggered by the proposed project.....	10
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 –	Locality of the proposed project.....	6
Figure 2 -	Flowchart of the environmental and social assessment process	9

ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION
BID	Background Information Document
DEA	Directorate of Environmental Affairs
EAP	Environmental assessment practitioner
ECB	Electricity Control Board
ECC	Environmental Compliance Consultancy
ECC	Environmental clearance certificate
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMA	Environmental Management Act
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
HFO	Heavy fuel oil
km	Kilometer
kV	Kilovolts
MEFT	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism
ML	Mining License
MME	Ministry of Mines and Energy
RoD	Record of Decision

1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC) has been contracted by Burmeister and Partners (Pty) Ltd (Burmeister and Partners), the Proponent, to conduct an environmental and social impact assessment and develop an environmental management plan (EMP) on behalf of Namibia Power Corporation (NamPower) (Pty) Ltd, in terms of the Environmental Management Act, No. 7 of 2007 and its associated 2012 regulation. An environmental clearance certificate application will be submitted to the competent authority, Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) to make a Record of Decision (RoD) with regards to the proposed Project.

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) 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 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 proposed project. This BID includes the following information:

- The proposed project and location
- The necessity of the Project, benefits or adverse impacts anticipated
- The alternatives within the Project that will be considered and assessed
- How the assessment process works
- The public participation process and how to become involved
- Next steps and the way forward

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project is the construction of five concrete transformer platforms with a large catchment pit for the collection of spilled liquid, i.e oil. There will be an upgrade of an existing wash bay and service bay which includes an oil catchpit and oil separator for their service vehicles and trucks. The proposed Project is located in Brakwater, Khomas Region (Figure 1).

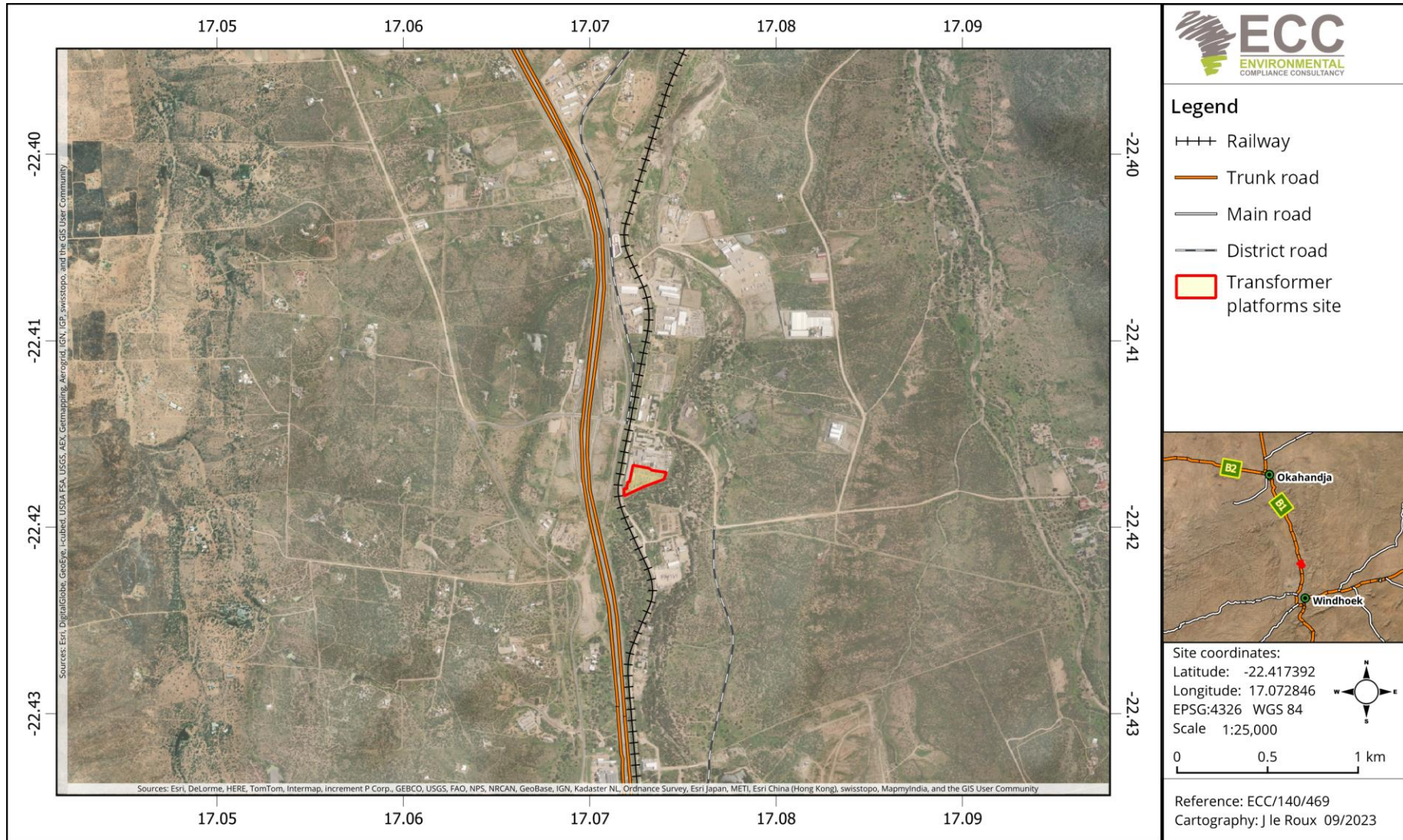


Figure 1 - Locality of the proposed project

1.3 NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Transformers is a device that is able to transfer electric energy from a alternating current (AC) electrical energy to one or more circuits, either increasing or decreasing the voltage. The function of Transformers are to provide power supply over a long distance to various locations from a single source (power plant). Fewer construction and operations of power plants are produced because of this which is both economically and environmentally beneficial. Transformers also ensure that power that reaches consumers are safe for light bulbs and outlets. The proposed location is far enough from nearby resident to prevent visual disturbance yet supplies power to various areas.

An oil-immersed transformer utilises oil as a cooling method to reduce the transformer temperature. As a precautionary measure, the concrete platforms prevent accidental spills of the insulating oil to have detrimental effects on the surrounding environment, groundwater and the intermittent river approximately 72 m from the proposed site.

1.4 CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL PHASES

The following are envisioned during the proposed Project:

- Design and construction of five concrete platforms
- Upgrade an existing wash bay for their service vehicles and truck
- Upgrade an existing service bay for their service vehicles and trucks
- Design and construct a catchpit for collection of possible spillage and oil separation

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 difficult to identify alternatives to satisfy the need of the proposed Project; the activities are specific to the site. During the assessment, alternatives will consider optimisation and using eco-friendly solutions to reduce potential impacts.

2 THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The assessment for the proposed 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 assessment is set out in the flowchart in Figure 2.

ECC has been contracted by Burmeister and Partners (Pty) Ltd as the independent environmental assessment practitioner (EPA) to facilitate the entire assessment process. Prior to the start of the proposed Project, an environmental clearance certificate is required in terms of the Environmental Management Act, 7 of 2007 and the associated EIA Regulations.

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

The related environmental process will include:

1. Screening phase (completed).
2. Scoping phase which includes baseline and specialist studies.
3. Assessment phase which includes impact prediction and evaluation of alternatives, assigning mitigation measures and developing monitoring and conceptual rehabilitation plans. This phase culminates in the drafting of the assessment report and draft environmental management plan (EMP) and submission to the appropriate competent authorities.

The main objectives of the assessment are to:

- a) Provide information describing the proposed construction and operational activities;
- b) Provide an independent environmental and social assessment of the activities associated with the proposed project; and
- c) 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 planned project was undertaken and the screening findings against the listed activities was conducted; the findings of which are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1- Listed activities triggered by the proposed project

Listed activity	EIA screening finding
Waste management, treatment, handling, and disposal activities (2.3) The import, processing, use and recycling, temporary storage, transit or export of waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wastewater effluents and other types of waste may pollute groundwater and the nearby intermittent river. Wastewater discharge permit may be required.
Forestry activities (4) The clearance of forest areas, deforestation, afforestation, timber harvesting or any other related activity that requires authorization in terms of the Forest Act, 2001 (Act No. 12 of 2001) or any other law.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During construction activities limited vegetating clearing will occur.
Hazardous substance treatment, handling and storage (9.1) The manufacturing, storage handling, or processing of a hazardous substance defined in the Hazardous Substances Ordinance, 1974. (9.2) Any process of 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. (9.4) The storage and handling of dangerous goods, including petrol, diesel, liquid petroleum gas or paraffin, in containers with a combined capacity of more than 30 cubic meters at any one location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design and construction of five concrete platforms includes a collection of oil spillage near a fluvial system. An upgrade of an existing wash bay An upgrade of an existing service bay for their service vehicles and trucks is required. Design and construct a catchpit for collection of possible spillage and oil separation.

2.2 SCOPING

The scoping phase is directed towards defining the range and nature of anticipated potential impacts that may have significance to the biophysical and social environments at the scale of the proposed operations. The appropriate available data and the literature are identified forming the starting point for the assessment of the required baseline and specialist studies that may be required for assessment of the Project impacts.

2.3 BASELINE STUDIES

The assessment will focus on the environmental receptors that could be affected by the proposed Project. ECC will also engage with stakeholders, I&APs and the Proponents to seek input into the assessment. The baseline studies chapter is broken into three sections, the baseline context, environmental (physical and biological), and social (including economic).

Desktop studies as well as all available field surveys from the Project area will be used to help define the baseline. These studies also give a further indication of whether any local or regional future developments could impact the Project or vice versa.

Lastly, the socio-economic section of the baseline studies helps to gain information on the governance, demographic profile, social stratification (employment, education, infectious disease), occupation and livelihood (economic activities, employment rates) and access to services.

2.4 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The public and key stakeholders receive invitations to register as I&APs. After the presentation of the proposed Project and assessment process through the defined public consultation process, 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. All feedback from the initial public consultation process will be incorporated into the scoping report.

2.5 SCOPING REPORT

The scoping report will be drafted and made available to the registered I&APs for comment before being submitted to the competent authority and MEFT. The scoping report will contain a description of the Project and the biophysical and socio-economic environments, the specialist and baseline studies, and a stakeholder engagement section.

2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PHASE

2.6.1 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The potential social and economic impacts should be considered with due regard to the nature and scale of the proposed operations and its location within the broader ecological, commercial

and social environments. The potential environmental and social impacts that have been anticipated may include the following:

- Biodiversity, topography and landscape impacts from minimal vegetation clearance
- Soil, surface water and biodiversity impacts due to the construction of the concrete platforms and an oil separation facility
- Air quality and noise generation from construction activities
- Avifauna, terrestrial ecology, groundwater, surface water and soil impacts as a result of effluent wastewater and other wastes
- Community health, safety and security off site, e.g. effluent wastewater, possible rainstorms and oil spillage events
- Economic and socio-economic impacts such as improved and more efficient power supply

2.6.2 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

An EMP shall be developed for the proposed 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 assessment process. It allows the public and stakeholders to raise concerns or provide valuable local environmental knowledge that can benefit the assessment process as well as aid the planning process for the scoping phase of the defined 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, municipalities, environmental groups and interested or affected members of the public, hereafter referred to as I&APs
- Carry out a public consultation process in accordance with Regulation 21 of the EMA 2007 including:
 - o Distribute the BID for the proposed construction of five concrete transformer platforms and the upgrade of an existing wash and service bay (this document).
 - o Advertise the environmental application and call for registration of I&APs in two national newspapers.
 - o Open the Project I&AP register and record all comments of I&APs and present both comments and responses provided by ECC, in the comments and responses report, which will be included in the scoping report and submitted with the application.
- Prepare a scoping report and provide it to registered I&APs for comment.
- Submit the scoping report and the I&AP comments 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, or by using this link: <https://eccenvironmental.com/projects/>

Registration as an I&AP should be submitted on or before 22 January 2024.

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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