



ECC
ENVIRONMENTAL
COMPLIANCE CONSULTANCY



ECC-132-382-BID-05-A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

THE PROPOSED EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES ON EPL 8408 FOR BASE AND RARE METALS, INDUSTRIAL MINERALS, AND PRECIOUS METALS WITHIN THE OTJOZONDJUPA REGION, NAMIBIA.



PREPARED FOR

B2GOLD NAMIBIA MINERALS (PTY) LTD

JANUARY 2022

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1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) background to the proposed project and to invite I&APs to register as part of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process.

The proponent, B2Gold Namibia Minerals (Pty) Ltd proposes the exploration of base and rare metals, industrial metals and precious metals on EPL 8408.

Through registering for the project, all I&APs will be kept informed throughout the ESIA process, and a platform for participation will be provided to submit comments/recommendations pertaining to the project.

This BID includes the following information:

- The proposed project and location;
- The necessity of the project, potential benefits or adverse impacts anticipated;
- The alternatives to the project that have been considered and assessed;
- How the ESIA process works;
- The public participation process and how to become involved; and
- The way forward.

2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC) has been engaged by the proponent to undertake an ESIA and develop an Environmental Management Plan (EMP)

consistent with the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations. An environmental clearance 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 proposed project.

2.2 LOCATION

The EPL is located 8 km north of Otjiwarongo and lies over the Kuiseb and Karibib formation of the Damara Belt. Existing roads will be used to access the site

The EPL can be accessed by driving along the B1 road for approximately 3.6 km from Otjiwarongo (en route to the Otavi) and turning north onto the D2430 road or by turning north onto a smaller gravel road approximately 9 km from Otjiwarongo.

The location is shown in Figure 1.

2.3 WHAT IS PROPOSED

The proponent proposes to carry out exploration activities for rare, base, precious and industrial metals on EPL 8408 in the Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia.

The proponent will conduct low impact ground-truthing and mapping, followed by soil, termite mound and rock chip sampling and 100 RAB and/or 10 Diamond drill holes will be drilled.

2.4 WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED

B2Gold Namibia Minerals intends to pursue exploration opportunities in Namibia with the aim of identifying new mining prospects. Namibia is rich with natural resources and the minerals sector is a key contributor to the nations GDP in Namibia. Exploration could lead to mining activities, which would contribute to the national and local economy.

2.5 CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL PHASES

The following are envisioned during the proposed project:

- low impact ground-truthing and mapping, followed by soil, termite mound and rock chip sampling
- RAB drilling and/or diamond drilling

2.6 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

2.6.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC

The potential social impacts are anticipated to be of low significance, and those that may transpire shall be confined within the allocated EPL boundary that falls over Farm Cleveland No. 17, these potential impacts may include the following:

- Jobs will be created as a result of the proposed exploration activities.
- Potential to unearth, damage or destroy undiscovered heritage remains;
- Occupational health and safety; and
- Minor disruptions to residents of neighbouring farms, due to potential noise and dust generation as a result of the proposed exploration activities.

2.6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL

Some of the potential environmental impacts are anticipated to be of minor significance, and those that may occur shall be contained within the EPL boundaries, these potential minor impacts may include the following:

- Disturbance of soil during the exploration phase;
- Potential soil erosion within cleared areas;
- Potential groundwater and soil contamination from chemicals or hydrocarbons spilt/leaked from exploration activities/vehicles.; and
- Potential sewage or chemical spills from portable chemical toilets.

There may also be impacts of a more significant nature that may require further investigation during the ESIA process. The impacts proposed at this stage include, but are not limited to:

- Vegetation clearing due to exploration activities;
- Potential damage/harm/kill to slow moving animals, the nests/eggs of groundbreeding birds or vegetation; and
- Potential disturbance or displacement of protected or vulnerable species.

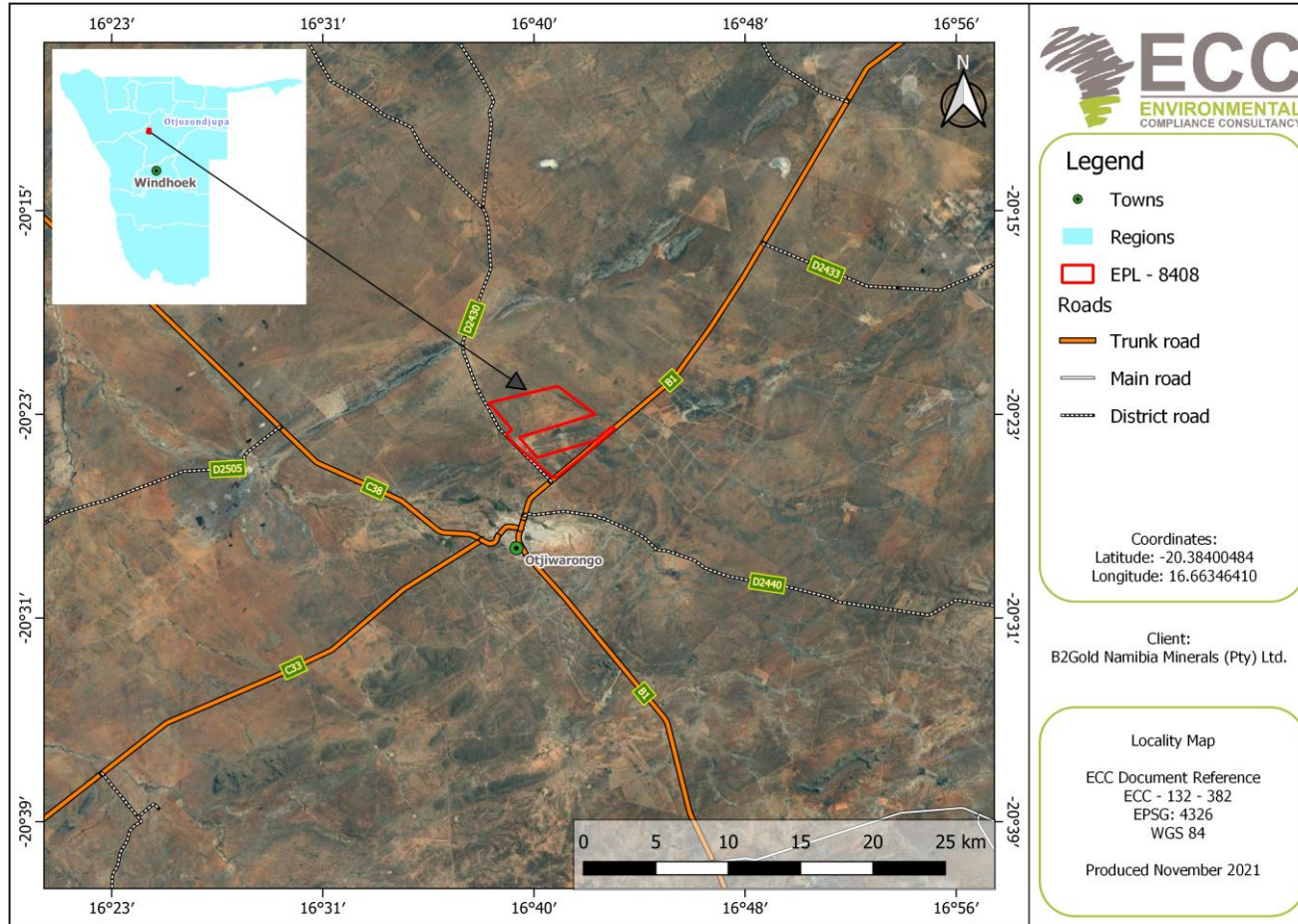


FIGURE 1 – LOCATION MAP OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

3 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 shall be specific to the EPL 8408, which was granted by the MME to B2Gold Namibia Minerals. During the ESIA assessment, alternatives will take the form of consideration of optimisation and using eco-friendly solutions to reduce potential impacts.

4 THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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

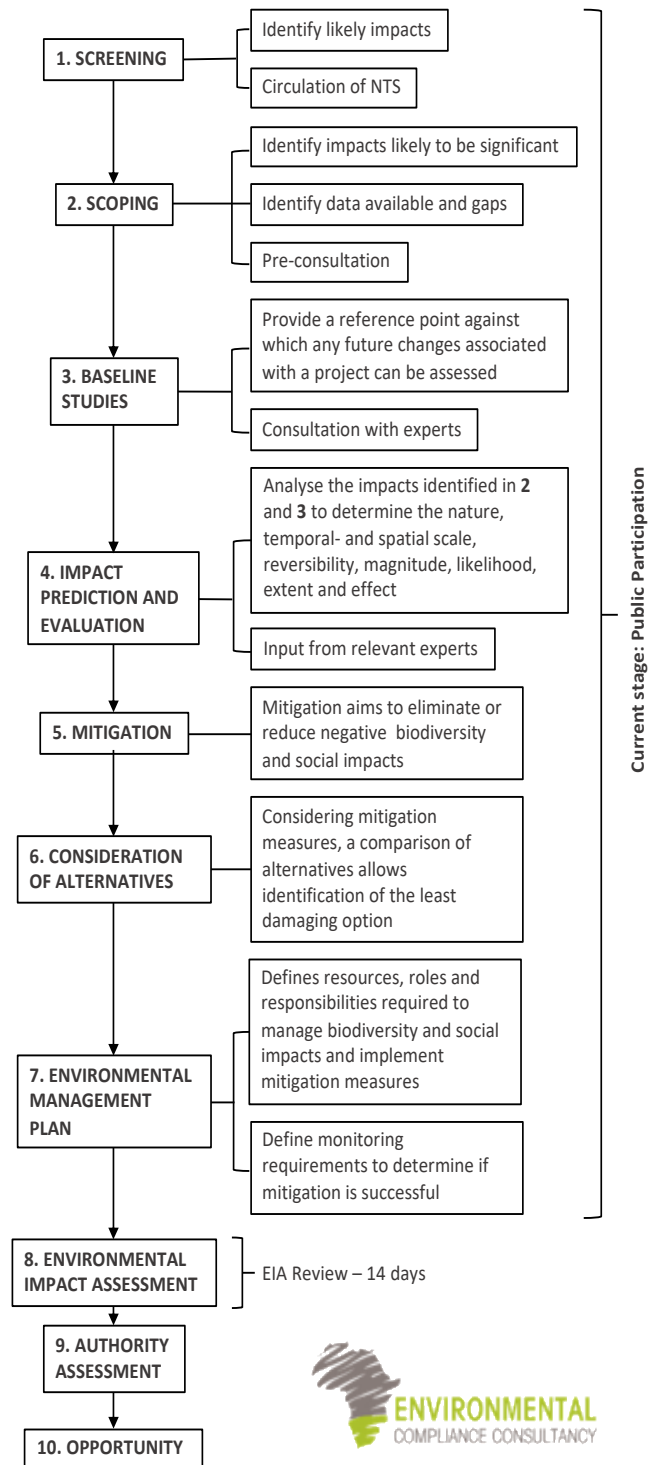


FIGURE 2 - FLOWCHART OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4.1 SCREENING

A review of the proposed project's screening findings against the listed activities was conducted; the findings of which are summarised below. Applications, permits, and clearance is required for any activities outside the scope of this BID and early-stage to regular exploration, such as but not limited to:

MINING AND QUARRYING ACTIVITIES

((3.1) The construction of facilities for any process or activities which requires a license, right or another form of authorization, and the renewal of a license, right or another form of authorization, in terms of the Minerals (Prospecting and Mining Act), 1992.

(3.2) Other forms of mining or extraction of any natural resources whether regulated by law or not.

(3.3) Resource extraction, manipulation, conservation, and related activities

- The proposed project has obtained an EPL from MME; now requires an environmental clearance from DEA/MEFT for the search of base and rare metals, industrial minerals and precious metals.
- The proponent will be undertaking exploration activities on EPL 8408, which will include low impact ground-truthing and mapping, followed by soil, termite mound and rock chip sampling. RAB and diamond drilling will also take place in the second year.

WASTE MANAGEMENT, TREATMENT, HANDLING AND DISPOSAL ACTIVITIES

(2.1) The construction of facilities for waste sites, treatment of waste and disposal of waste.

(2.3) The import, processing, use and recycling, temporary storage, transit or export of waste.

- If needed, A septic tank will be installed on-site (operational phase), otherwise chemical toilets will be used during initial set up and operations.
- Waste generated which will be mainly solid waste and general waste during the exploration phase will be removed by a skip and will be disposed of at the nearest landfill site.
- Waste will be recycled to the extent possible.

FORESTRY ACTIVITIES

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

- The Proponent will use existing access and tracks, but will likely clear vegetation for some exploration activities (i.e., access to planned drilling areas and areas around the drill site as protection to prevent veld fired).

WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENTS

(8.1) The abstraction of ground or surface water for industrial or commercial purposes.

- For the drilling of exploration boreholes, ground water may need to be abstracted, or water will be sourced.
- The diamond drill crew will require access to a clean water source to

support drilling, probably 25m³ per day.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE TREATMENT, HANDLING AND STORAGE

(9.2) Any process or activity which requires a permit, licence or other forms 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.

- If needed, a septic tank will be installed for the ablutions that may be constructed.
- Chemical toilets can be used during the project

4.2 SCOPING

Due to the nature of the proposed project, and the implementation of industry best practice mitigation measures during the proposed exploration activities, the effects on the environment and society are expected to be negligible to minor and will be limited within the EPL boundaries.

4.3 BASELINE STUDIES

For the proposed project, baseline information was 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 proponents to seek input into the assessment, and should it be required specialist studies will be initiated.

4.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Impacts will be assessed using the ECC ESIA methodology. The ESIA will be conducted consistent with the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations. ECC's methodology for impact assessments was developed using IFC standards in particular Performance Standard 1 'Assessment and management of environmental and social risks and impacts' (IFC 2012, 2017) and Namibian Draft Procedures and Guidance for ESIA and EMP (GRN, 2008) including international and national best practice with over 25 years of combined ESIA experience.

4.5 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

An EMP shall be developed for the proposed project setting out auditable management actions for B2Gold Namibia Minerals (Pty) Ltd to ensure effective and sustainable management measures are implemented for its activities in respect of the surrounding environment and community.

4.6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ADVERTISING

Public participation is an important part of the ESIA 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 project design process. This project is currently at the scoping and public participation phase.

At this phase ECC will perform the following:

- Identify key stakeholders, authorities, municipalities, environmental groups and interested or affected members of the public, hereafter referred to as I&APs
- Distribute and post the BID for the proposed project (this document)

- Advertise the environmental application in two national newspapers
- Place notices on-site at or near the EPL 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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