

Submitted to: InnoSun Energy Holding
(Pty) Ltd

Attention: Mr Pol Jestin
2 Schutzen Street,
Central Windhoek,
P.O. Box 27527,
Windhoek, Namibia

REPORT:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT FOR OSONA II – 36 MW SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER PLANT NEAR OKAHANDJA, OTJOZONDJUPA REGION, NAMIBIA.

PROJECT NUMBER: ECC-43-418-BID-04-D

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Client Company Name: InnoSun Energy Holding (Pty) Ltd

Client Name: Mr Pol Jestin

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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 (ECC) has been contracted by InnoSun Energy Holding (Pty) Ltd to conduct an environmental assessment and develop an environmental management plan (EMP), for the proposed construction and operation of Osona II – 36 MW solar photovoltaic power plant near Okahandja, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia. Consistent with the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations, an environmental clearance certificate application will be submitted to the competent authority being the 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 Proponent intends to construct and operate a 36 megawatts (MW) solar photovoltaic (PV) power plant on farm Osona Commonage No. 65 portion 82 (Figure 1), which will be linked to a nearby NamPower substation. The solar plant and associated infrastructure will cover an area of approximately 120 ha.

The proposed Project is located within the Okahandja District, in the Otjozondjupa Region. The 120-ha leased area is located to the southwest of Okahandja and is accessible via the D1972 district road leading off the B1 highway as set out in Figure 1.

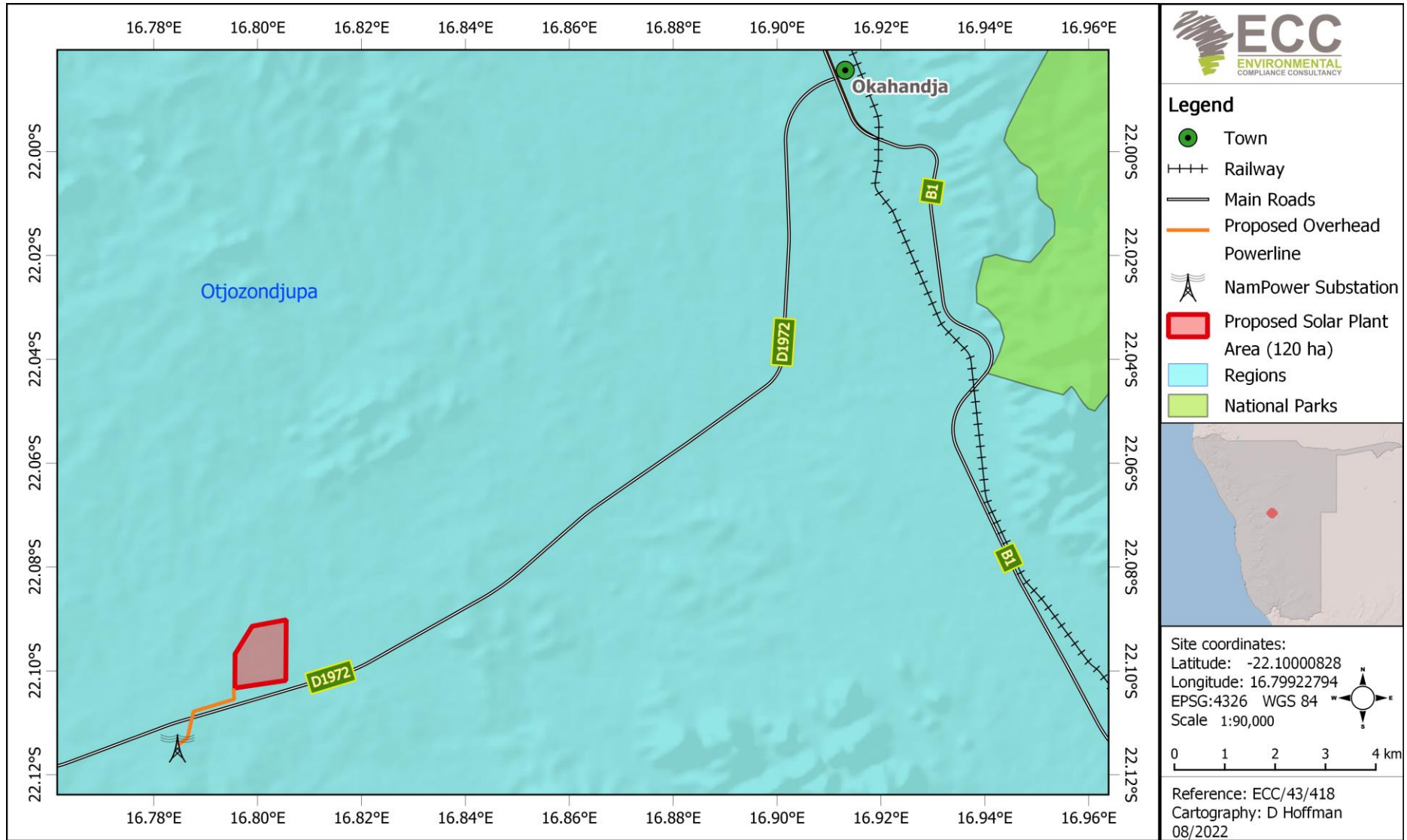


Figure 1 – Site locality map

1.3 NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Namibia is a country with very few overcast days throughout the year, thus being ideal for renewable energy sources like solar power. The proposed solar PV plant will supply renewable energy and contribute to the growth in the renewable energy sector of Namibia. The proponent aims to supply renewable, sustainable, and affordable power.

1.4 CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL PHASES

The following are envisioned during the proposed Project:

- Tracking System with RC Foundations;
- PV Solar arrays connected to inverters;
- Cable trenches;
- Building;
- Small warehouse;
- Fencing;
- Medium Voltage power lines;
- Low Voltage power lines; and
- Transformers.

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 proponent already leases this part of the farm, and it is ideally located next to (western side) their existing 5 MW solar PV plant.

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 **Error! Reference source not found..**

ECC has been contracted by InnoSun Energy Holding (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.

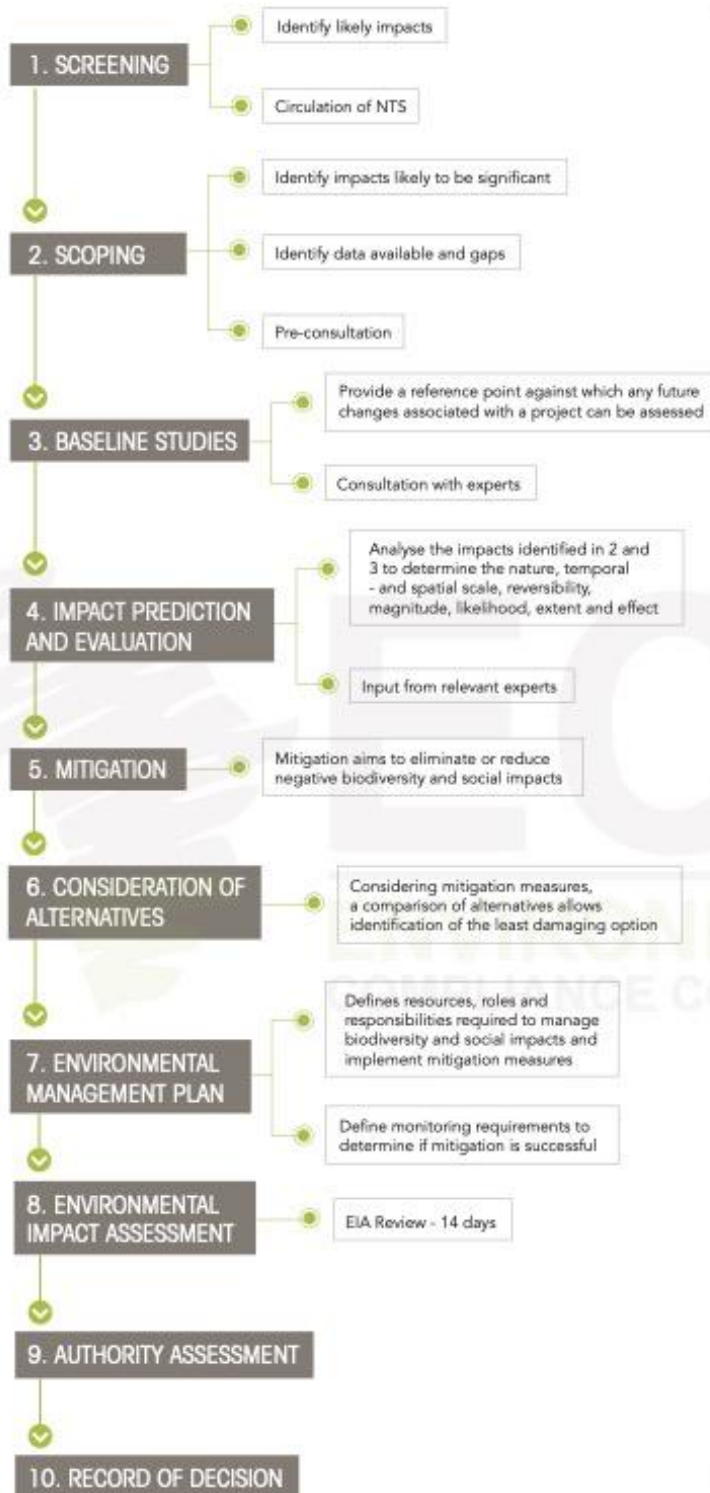
A final decision relating to the above-mentioned application will be made by Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT): Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA).

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.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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
<p>ENERGY GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND STORAGE ACTIVITIES (1.a) The construction of facilities for the generation of electricity; (1.b) The construction of facilities for the transmission and supply of electricity;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A solar PV power plant and associated infrastructure will be constructed and installed on-site and cater for a peak demand of 36 MW. • A 66kV overhead powerline (1.8 km in length) will be installed to a nearby substation.
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small septic tank will be installed on-site (operational phase) and portable chemical toilets will be used during the construction phase. • Waste generated during the construction phase will be removed by a skip and will be disposed of at the nearest landfill site (Okahandja).
<p>FORESTRY ACTIVITIES (4.) The clearance of forest areas, deforestation, a-forestation, timber harvesting or any other related activity that requires authorisation in term of the Forest Act, 2001 (Act No. 12 of 2001) or any other law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation will be cleared for the construction and installation of the solar PV power plant and ablution facilities (Toilet), which will include approximately 120 hectares.
<p>HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE TREATMENT, HANDLING AND STORAGE (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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small septic tank will be installed for the permanent ablutions that will be constructed

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 and specialist studies 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 its location within the broader ecological, commercial and

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

- Jobs will be created as a result of the project;
- Potential to unearth, damage or destroy undiscovered heritage remains;
- Occupational health and safety;
- Potential visual disturbances to nearby landowners;
- Minor disruption to the residents of neighbouring farms, including some potential increase in dust and noise levels during the construction phase;
- Disturbance of soil during the construction phase;
- Potential soil erosion within cleared areas;
- Potential groundwater and soil contamination from chemicals or hydrocarbons spilt during construction and maintenance;
- Potential sewage or chemical spills from the septic tank and portable chemical toilets;
- Vegetation clearing with regards to the proposed construction on a 120 ha area;
- Potential avifauna collision risk with the reflective surfaces and overhead powerlines;
- Potential impacts on biodiversity and ecology through habitat fragmentation or habitat loss;
- Potential disturbance or displacement of protected or vulnerable species; and
- Waste management.

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 you, 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 Osona II Project (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: TBC.

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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