PROPOSED EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES ON EPL6627 AND EPL6628 FOR BASE, RARE AND PRECIOUS METALS, AND INDUSTRIAL MINERALS

CLIENT: B2GOLD ECC-36-147-BID-07-A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide interested and affected parties (I&APS) with a background of the proposed exploration works that are to be undertaken by B2Gold Namibia (Pty) Ltd on EPL6627 and EPL6628.

Furthermore, it's aim is to invite I&APS to register in the **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping process**. Through registering, I&APs will be kept informed about the proposed project and will be offered the opportunity to submit comments pertaining to the project, allowing for their input to be considered in the assessment and development processes.

This BID includes the following:

- Proposed Project: What is proposed and where
- Why the project is deemed necessary and what benefits or adverse impacts are anticipated
- What alternatives to the project have been considered
- How the EIA process works
- The public participation and how to become involved
- Next steps and way forward

PROPOSED PROJECT

B2Gold was founded in 2007 and is the owner and operator of Otjikoto Gold Mine near Otjiwarongo, which employs over 700 people. To extend operations in Namibia, B2Gold propose to undertake exploration activities on EPL6627 and EPL6628 for base, rare and precious metals, and industrial minerals in the Kunene and Otjozondjupa Region.

This proposed activity triggers the Environmental Management Act of 2007 (Act No. 7 of 2007) due to it meeting the thresholds of the following Listed Activity:

MINING AND QUARRYING ACTIVITIES:

(3.1) The construction of facilities for any process or activities which requires a licence, right or other form of authorisation, and the renewal of a licence, right or other form of authorisation, 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

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC) has been engaged by B2Gold to undertake an independent environmental assessment in compliance with Namibian law in terms of the Environmental Management Act of 2007 and associated Regulations.

Two applications for Environmental Clearance shall be submitted to the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). An EIA Scoping Report and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) will be part of the submission to adequately assess the project and determine if environmental clearance should be issued.

SCOPING

A SCOPING PROCESS IS A SHORTER PROCESS THAN A 'FULL' EIA BUT APPLIES THE SAME PRINCIPALS AND ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY.

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

WHY IS AN INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS IMPORTANT?

NAMIBIAN LAW AND INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE CALL FOR THE PROFESSIONALS CARRYING OUT AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS TO BE INDEPENDENT (I.E. HAVE NO CONNECTION TO THE PROJECT PROPONENT OR INTEREST IN THE PROJECT'S OUTCOME) TO ENSURE PROCESS INTEGRITY.

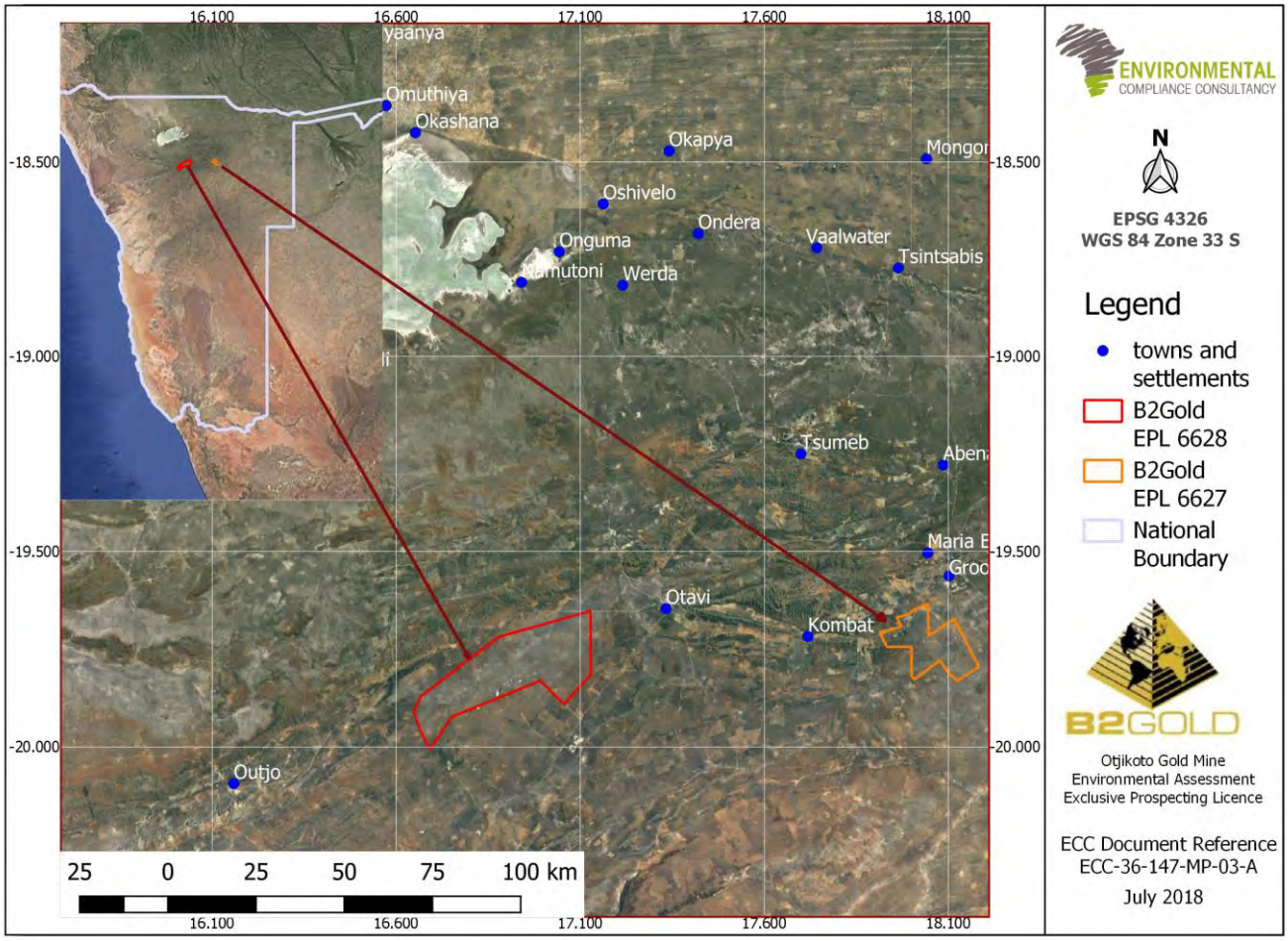
APPLICANT: B2GOLD NAMIBIA (PTY) LTD

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER: ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CONSULTANCY

COMPETENT AUTHORITY:

MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY (MME)

SITE LOCATION



SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

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

- Potential creation of access tracks, where existing tracks cannot be utilised;
- Limited vegetation clearing for the creation of tracks;
- Creation of exploration boreholes;
- Exploration methods may include aerial or remote sensing, electromagnetic surveys, drilling, mineral sampling; and
- Storage of exploration mineral samples.

The potential environmental and social effects are anticipated to be of minor significance, and those that may occur shall be contained on the EPL sites, these potential impacts may include the following:

- Minor disruption to the residents of the farms within the EPLs, including some increase in noise levels and dust arising from drilling and vehicle use;
- Some potential vegetation loss due to possible track creation;
- Potential to unearth, damage or destroy undiscovered heritage remains;
- Potential use of resources, including surface and groundwater; and
- Minor risk of loss of contaminant of hydrocarbon, chemical or drill fluids from exploration activities potentially leading to localised ground contamination.

ECC will prepare one scoping report that presents the assessment findings as well as stakeholder and I&AP concerns. An EMP shall also be developed for the proposed project setting out auditable management actions for B2Gold to ensure careful and sustainable management measures to their activities in respect of the surrounding environment and community.

NEED FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT

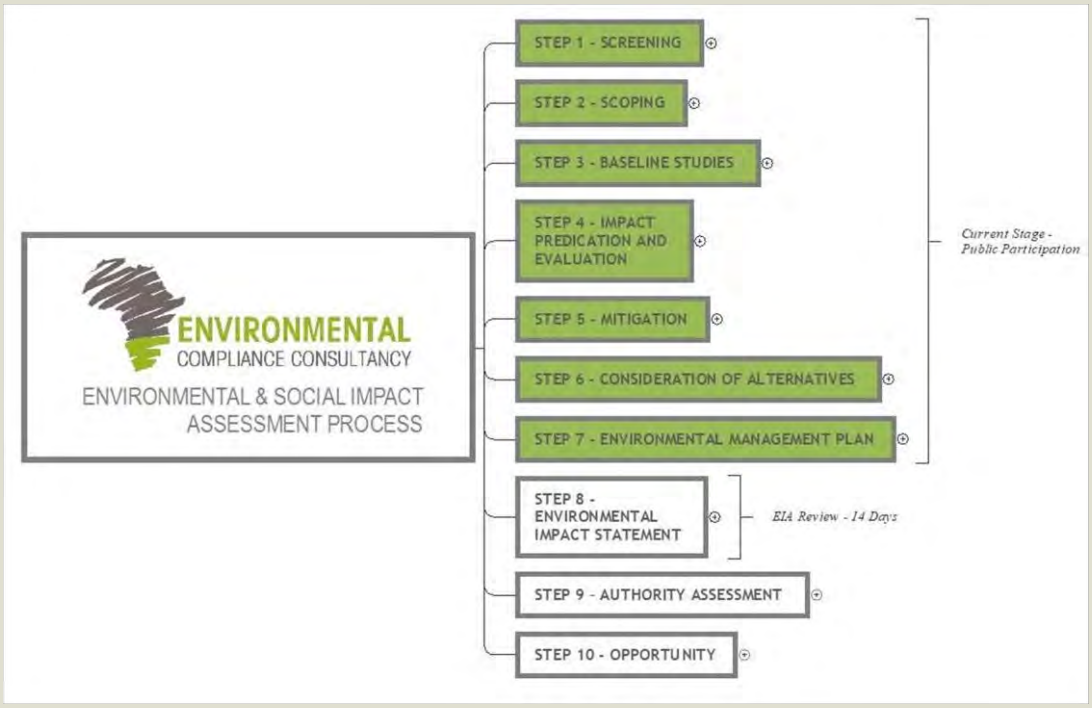
B2Gold intends to pursue exploration opportunities with the aim of identifying new mining prospects. Namibia is rich with natural resources and the mining industry is the largest income earner in Namibia. Exploration could lead to mining activities which would contribute to the national and local earnings of the country.

WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE BEING CONSIDERED?

Best practice environmental assessment methodology calls for consideration of different alternatives to a project being developed. 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 which were granted by the MME on the 26th February 2018. During the assessment, alternatives will take the form of a consideration of optimisation and efficiency interventions to reduce potential effects e.g. different types of technology or operations.

THE EIA PROCESS

The EIA process that shall be followed is in accordance with Environmental Management Act 2007. ECC shall conduct the environmental application process and manage the public participation process. Following the EIA process flowchart below, this project is currently at the Scoping phase and the public participation process is being conducted.



ECC will perform the following:

- Identify key stakeholders, authorities and municipalities, environmental groups and interested or affected members of the public, hereafter referred to as I&APs;
- Compile a BID for the proposed development (this document);
- Advertise the environmental application in two national newspapers;
- Place on-site notices at conspicuous places at/ near the proposed development 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 submitted to MME and the MET; and
- Circulate the I&AP comments to the project team.

MOVING FORWARD...

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & HOW TO GET INVOLVED

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 evolution process.

The commenting period for the project for all I&APs will be 14 days from notification (newspaper adverts). The Draft Scoping Report will be made available to all relevant stakeholders and I&APs for further comment, before the final submission to the MME and the MET.

I&APs are encouraged to register in this Scoping Process using our website.

http://eccenvironmental.com/project/b2gold-environmental-clearance-certificate-for-exploration-activities-on-epl6627-and-epl6628/

Comments must be submitted in writing and can be emailed to the following address:

info@eccenvironmental.com

Tel: +264 81 626 7278

Please note the EIA review period will be 14 days from the date that I&AP have been notified.

CONTACT US

Environmental Compliance Consultancy Contact Details

We welcome any enquiries regarding this document and its content, please contact:

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