



ECC-36-246-NTS-02-B

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

CONSTRUCTION OF THE B2GOLD NAMIBIA (Pty) Ltd 220 kV POWER LINE, OTJOZONDJUPA REGION, NAMIBIA

PREPARED FOR

B2GOLD NAMIBIA (Pty) Ltd



DECEMBER 2019

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE B2GOLD NAMIBIA (Pty) Ltd 220 kV POWER LINE

1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Non-Technical Summary (NTS) 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 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. The project involves construction of the planned 220 kV overhead transmission power line. Through registering, all I&APs will be kept informed throughout the EIA process, and a platform for participation will be provided to submit comments/recommendations pertaining to the project.

This NTS includes the following information:

- What is the proposed project and where is the project located?
- Why is the project deemed necessary, and what benefits, or adverse impacts are anticipated?
- What alternatives to the project have been considered and assessed?
- How does the EIA process work?
- The public participation process and how to become involved, and
- Next steps and the way forward.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC) has been engaged by B2Gold Namibia (Pty) Ltd (the proponent) to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) in terms of the Environmental Management Act No 7 of 2007 and its Regulations. An application for an environmental clearance certificate will be submitted to the relevant competent authorities - the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), as part of the decision-making process.

2.2 LOCATION

The proposed 220 kV overhead transmission power line will be located about 70 km north-east of Otjiwarongo, north central Namibia (FIGURE 1).

2.3 WHAT IS PROPOSED

B2Gold Namibia (Pty) Ltd is a world-class gold producer, a 90% owned subsidiary of B2Gold Corp. In Namibia, B2Gold owns the Otjikoto Gold Mine as well as extensive base metal concessions. B2Gold Namibia (Pty) Ltd has identified the need to upgrade their power supply in order to meet the energy demands resulting from the expanding mining infrastructure. As such, B2Gold Namibia (Pty) Ltd, on behalf of NamPower (Pty) Ltd, proposes to build a 220 kV overhead transmission power line.

2.4 OPERATION PHASE

The proposed 220 kV overhead transmission power line 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
- Vegetation clearing for the creation of a servitude
- Connection to the existing substation
- Installation of prefabricated standard substation components
- Ground preparation (trenches and levelling) for the guyed towers and stay anchors.

2.5 WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED

Currently, B2Gold operations are energy-intensive and the power demand comes from a solar plant, heavy fuel oil generator and from NamPower. The current energy requirement does not meet the expected energy demand due to the new and/or expanding mining infrastructures. As such, B2Gold Namibia (Pty) Ltd has identified the need to upgrade their power supply in order to meet the energy demands and enable the mine to operate efficiently.

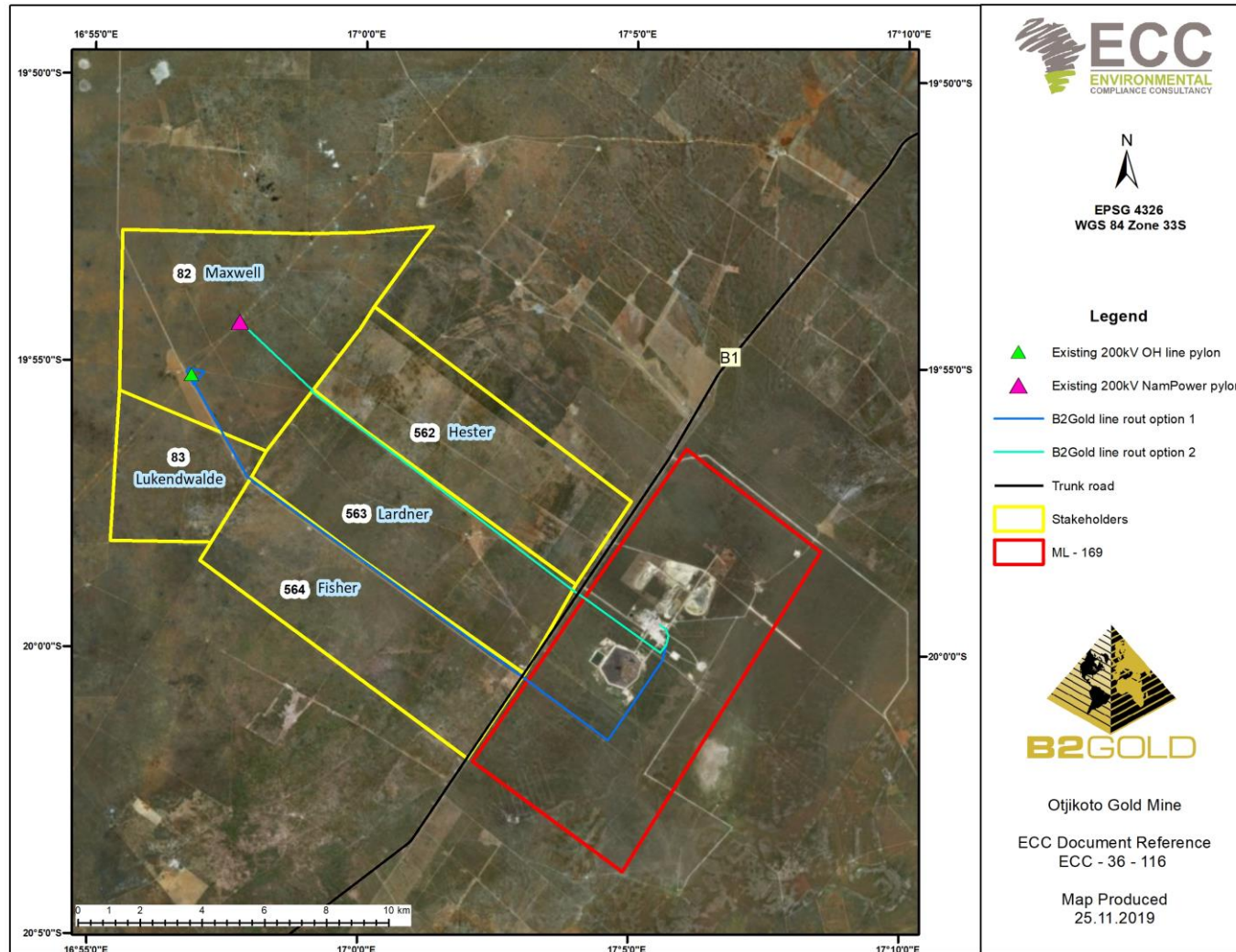


FIGURE 1 – LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED B2GOLD NAMIBIA (Pty) Ltd 220 kV POWER LINE

2.6 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

2.6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC

The potential social impacts are anticipated to be of low significance, and those that may transpire shall be confined within the power line servitude, these potential impacts may include the following:

- Faunal habitat destruction/modification and physical disturbance during the construction of the power line, especially avifauna species;
- Possible conflict, grievance or complains from the landowners;
- Compensation to the landowners for leasing their land;
- Creation of new employment opportunities to the local community, and
- Avifauna collision and electrocution by streamers on power line structures.

3 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The best practice environmental assessment methodology calls for consideration and assessment of alternatives to a proposed project. Alternatives were examined throughout the EIA process to determine the best power line route option. Power line Route Option 1 is located along the D2886 district road between Farm Lardner and Farm Fisher, whereas, power line Route Option 2 is located between the farm boundaries of Farm Hester and Farm Lardner (Figure 1).

4 THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

This EIA, conducted by ECC, is undertaken in terms of the Environmental Management Act, No. 7 of 2007 and its regulations. The process followed in this EIA is set out in the flowchart in FIGURE 2.

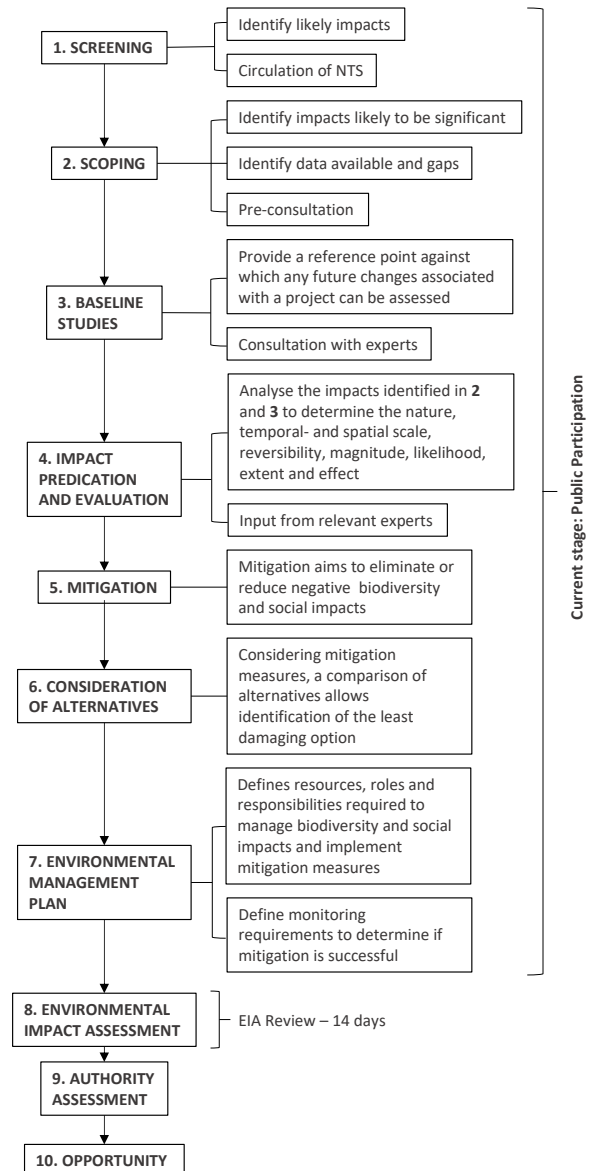


FIGURE 2 – FLOWCHART OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4.1 SCREENING

A review of the proposed project screening findings against the listed activities was conducted; the findings of which are summarised below.

ENERGY GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND STORAGE ACTIVITIES

1. The construction of facilities for
 - (a) The generation of electricity
 - (b) The transmission and supply of electricity

FORESTRY ACTIVITIES

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

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- 5.1. The rezoning of land from
 - (a) Residential use to industrial or commercial use;
 - (b) Light industrial use to heavy industrial use;
 - (c) Agricultural use to industrial use; and
 - (d) Use for nature conservation or zoned open space to any other land use.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- 10.1. The construction of:
 - (f) Cableways
 - (g) Communication networks including towers, telecommunication, and marine telecommunication lines and cables.

The potential environmental and social effects are anticipated to be of minor significance, and those that may occur shall be contained on the proposed site.

4.2 SCOPING

Due to the nature and magnitude of the proposed project, and the implementation of best practice mitigation measures during the construction phase, the effects on the environment and society are expected to be minimal and localised.

4.3 BASELINE STUDIES

For the proposed project, baseline information will be obtained through a desk-based study and site verification processes 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.

4.4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Impacts will be assessed using the ECC EIA methodology. The EIA will be conducted in terms of the Environmental Management Act, No.7 of 2007 and its Regulations. ECC's methodology for impact assessments was developed using (International Finance Corporation (IFC) standards in particular Performance Standard 1 'Assessment and management of environmental and social risks and impacts' and Namibian Draft Procedures and Guidance for EIA and EMP, including international and national best practice with over 25 years of combined EIA experience.

4.5 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

4.6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ADVERTISING

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 process.

This project is currently at the scoping phase and the public participation phase.

At this phase ECC will perform the following:

- Identify key stakeholders, neighbours, authorities, environmental groups and interested or affected members of the public, hereafter referred to as I&APs
- Distribute the NTS for the proposed project (this document)
- Advertise the environmental application in two national newspapers
- Place notices on-site at or near the 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:

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC)

info@eccenvironmental.com

Tel: +264 816 697 608

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