



PyroNam

Submitted to: Wronin Business Trust
Attention: Martin Horenburg
Farm Wronin No. 1013
Omaheke Region
Namibia

REPORT:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT FOR THE PROPOSED BUSH THINNING ACTIVITIES AND BIOCHAR PRODUCTION ON FARM WRONIN 1013

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Background Information Document.....	4
1.1	Purpose of this document	4
1.2	Description of the proposed project	4
1.3	operational phase	6
1.4	Consideration of Alternatives.....	6
2	EIA process for bush thinning projects	7
2.1	Screening.....	8
2.1.1	Draft Generic environmental management plan	9
3	The Way Forward.....	10

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1- Listed activities triggered by the proposed project.....	8
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Location of Farm Wronin 1013 in the Omaheke Region, Namibia.....	5
Figure 2 - Flowchart of the bush thinning activities EIA process	8

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
BID	background information document
DEA	Directorate of Environmental Affairs
ECC	Environmental Compliance Consultancy
EIA	environmental impact assessment
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GEMP	generic environmental management plan
ha	hectares
I&APs	interested and affected parties
km	kilometres
MEFT	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism
RoD	Record of Decision

1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Wronin Business Trust, collaborating with PyroNam (collectively referred to as the Proponent), has engaged the services of Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC) to perform an environmental impact assessment. Additionally, ECC is tasked with creating a generic environmental management plan (GEMP) to guide the planned bush thinning operations and biochar production at Wronin No. 1013 farm, situated in the Omaheke Region, Namibia. These actions align with the provisions of the Environmental Management Act, No. 7 of 2007, and its corresponding regulations from 2012. Consequently, an application for an environmental clearance certificate will be lodged with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) to receive a Record of Decision (RoD).

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Proponent plans to utilize encroacher bush species from Farm Wronin No. 1013 for biochar production, leveraging the existing processing facilities located on the farm.

The farm is located approximately 190 km from Windhoek, approximately 100 km on the B6, and 90 km on the C29 as seen in Figure 1 in the Omaheke Region, Namibia. The farm covers an area of 8812.8 hectares in extent, is cattle-fenced and used as a game farm with livestock. The productivity of the farm is compromised by infestations of encroacher bush such as Kalahari Acacia (*Vachellia luederitzi*), Candle-pod acacia (*Vachellia hebeclada*), Blackthorn (*Senegalia mellifera detinens*) and Silver cluster-leaf (*Termenalia sericea*). Due to the bush encroachment on farm Wronin No. 1013, the Proponent proposes bush control activities to restore the rangeland productivity on the farm. Proposed activities include manual and semi-mechanised harvesting techniques. Harvested wood will be used for biochar production and subject to economic feasibility will be distributed by PyroNam throughout Namibia and potential used as a soil supplement for irrigations purposes.

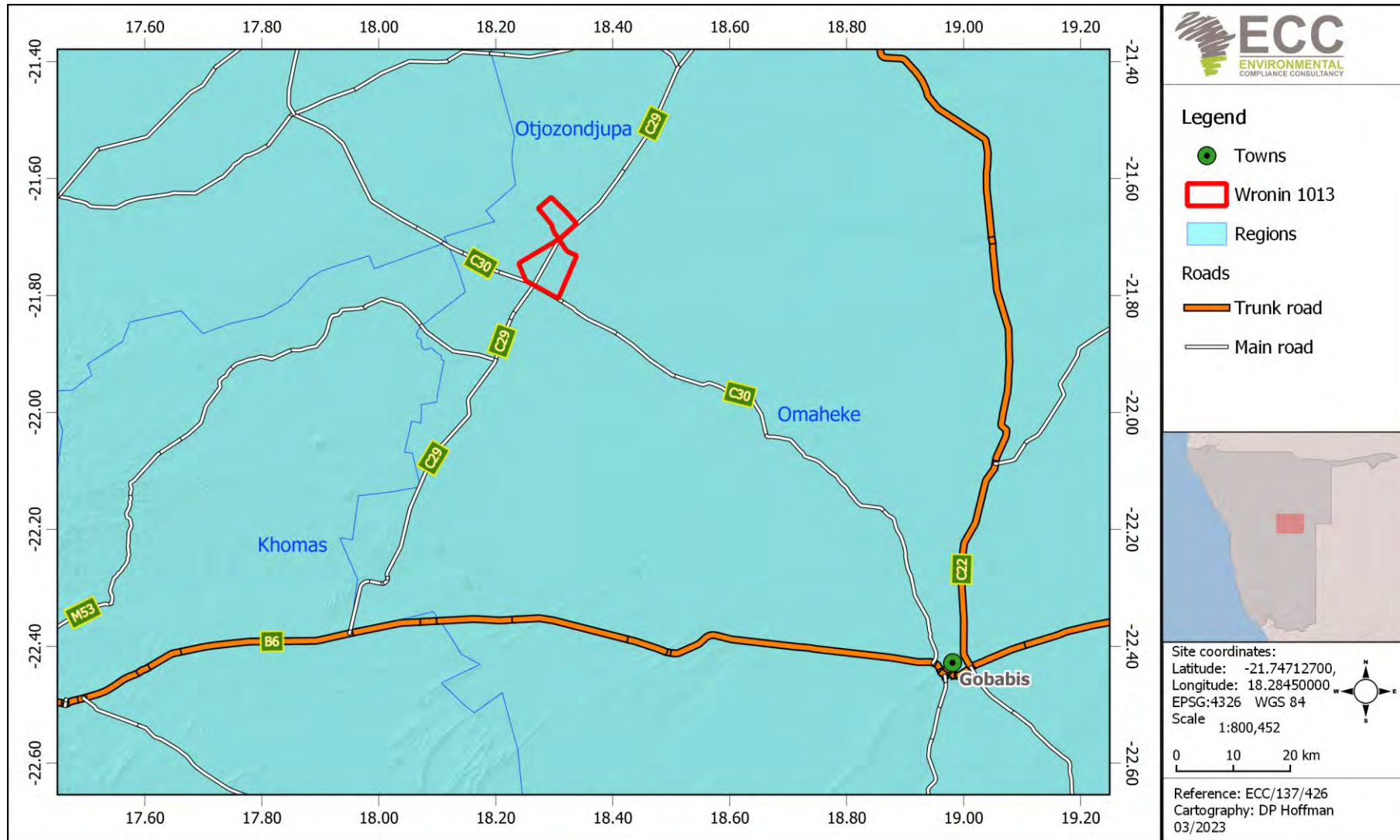


Figure 1 - Location of Farm Wronin 1013 in the Omaheke Region, Namibia

1.3 OPERATIONAL PHASE

The following are envisioned during the proposed Project:

- Manual thinning (harvesting) of encroacher bush species on farm Wronin No. 1013;
- Contractors used to conduct the harvesting shall be accommodated on the farm in accordance with Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards and
- The production of biochar and associated by-products at the existing plant on the farm.

1.4 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

During the assessment, alternatives will be considered in terms of optimisation and using eco-friendly solutions to reduce potential impacts.

2 EIA PROCESS FOR BUSH THINNING PROJECTS

In 2017 MEFT released a publication to streamline and simplify the legal process authorising people to combat bush encroachment in Namibia. This is based on the *Strategic environmental assessment of large-scale bush thinning and value-addition activities in Namibia* (SAIEA, 2015) which distinguishes three categories of thresholds for the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process on bush control activities (Figure 2).

Accordingly:

- No environmental clearance is required for areas smaller than 150 hectares where bush control activities are being conducted;
- A generic environmental management plan (GEMP) is required for an area larger than 150 hectares, but smaller than 5,000 hectares where bush control activities are being conducted; and
- A full EIA and environmental management plan (EMP) are required for an area larger than 5,000 hectares where bush control activities are being conducted.

The total area covered by Farm Wronin is 8,812 ha and bush control activities are expected to stay within an area of 5,800 ha. However, such total area is subdivided into smaller camps, with sizes from 34.6 ha to 641 ha and an average size of 251.27 ha. Rotational planning of selected camps will be performed, only manual and semi-mechanised harvesting practices will be used, therefore the impact of bush control measures is expected to be of low intensity. According to this, the farm will then be classified as a medium-sized bush harvesting operation (150 – 5,000 ha), which thus requires a GEMP to be granted an environmental clearance certificate.

An EMP aims to meet the requirements as legislated in Section 8 (j) of the regulations of the Environmental Management Act, No. 7 of 2007 and includes information about the identified environmental impacts, the management, mitigation, protection or remedial measures to be undertaken to address the impacts associated with the proposed operations. The GEMP may be amended as new information is made available.

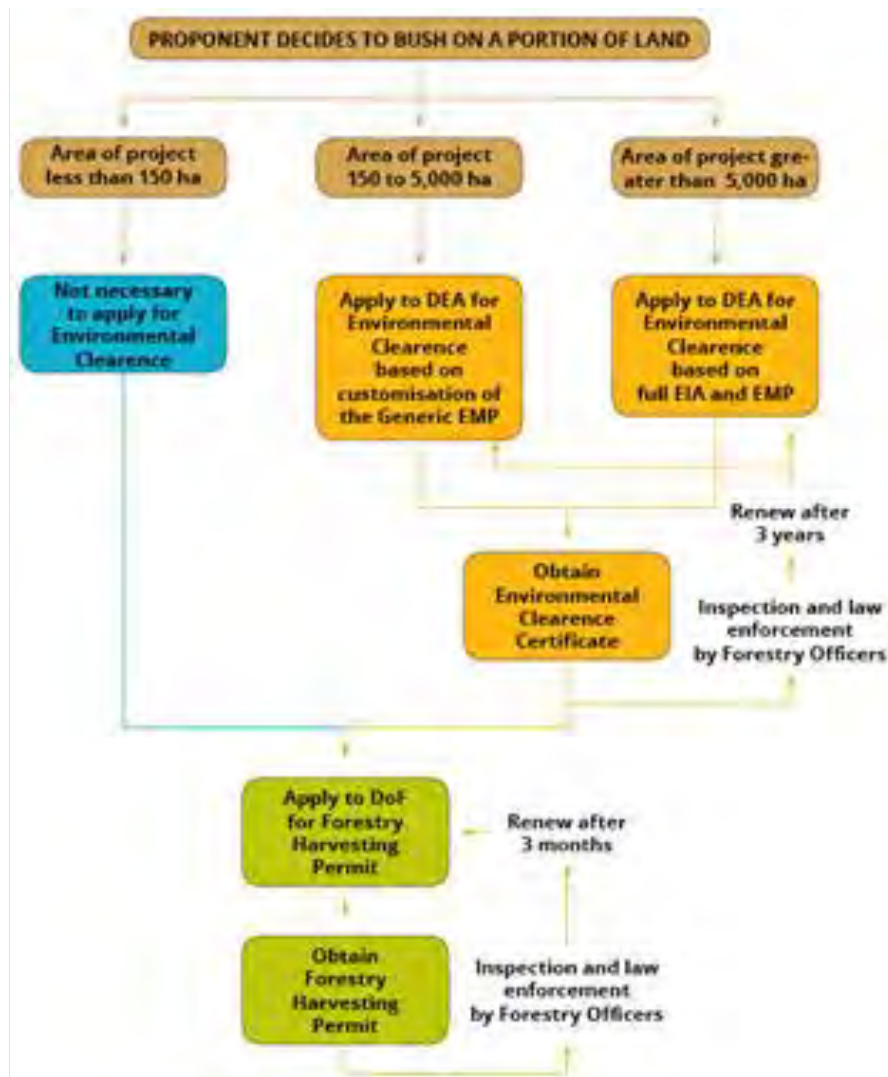


Figure 2 - Flowchart of the bush thinning activities EIA process

2.1 SCREENING

The listed activities triggered by the proposed project are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1- Listed activities triggered by the proposed project

LISTED ACTIVITY	EIA SCREENING FINDING
FORESTRY ACTIVITIES (4) The clearance of forest areas, deforestation, afforestation, timber harvesting or any other related activity that requires authorisation in terms of the Forest Act, 2001 (Act No. 12 of 2001) or any other law.	- Cutting (harvesting) of encroacher tree species. Bush control activities will stay within the boundaries of the farm which will be divided into smaller camps with an average size of 251 ha.

2.1.1 DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

A generic environmental management plan (GEMP) will be crafted for the proposed project, detailing auditable actions to ensure that the project's activities are managed sustainably and with due care for the local environment and community. Upon its approval and the subsequent issuance of the environmental clearance certificate, the GEMP becomes a legally binding commitment. These environmental clearance certificates have a validity period of three years. Renewal is contingent on compliance with the terms and stipulations outlined in the environmental clearance certificate.

3 THE WAY FORWARD

At this phase ECC will perform the following:

- Prepare and submit the application for the environmental clearance certificate in the prescribed manner.
- Identify neighbours of the farm and inform them of the project.
- Add the project to ECCs website to enable I&APs to download the BID (this document).
- Submit the final GEMP to the Environmental Commissioner of MEFT 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/>

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