

22 June 2023

PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEETING MINUTES:

ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING ASSESSMENT (ESA) FOR THE PROPOSED PROSPECTING & EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES ON EXCLUSIVE PROSPECTING LICENSE (EPL) 7977 LOCATED NEAR KLEIN AUB IN KHOMAS REGION AND HARDAP REGION, NAMIBIA.

Date: Thursday, 22 June 2023

Time: 10H30-11H36

Venue: Klein Aub Community Hall

The public consultation meeting was attended by 14 people, including an Environmental Consultant, a Geoscientist, and an Archaeologist from Excel Dynamic Solutions (Pty) Ltd (EDS) - **Please refer to the attached attendance register.**

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOMING REMARKS

Mr. Mandume Leonard (Environmental Consultant) opened the meeting and made a short introduction of the team, who they are, and the purpose as to why they are consulting affected parties of the proposed prospecting and exploration activities on EPL 7977. The meeting attendance register was then circulated for the attendees to write down their names, and contact details and sign so that they could be added to the list of interested and affected parties (I&APs) and receive further information on the ESA process.

2. MEETING AGENDA AND PRESENTATION

The agenda of the meeting included the following main points:

2.1 Brief Description of the Project

Mr. Mandume Leonard explained the Environmental Scoping Assessment (ESA) and the reason why the Proponent appointed Excel Dynamic Solutions (Pty) Ltd (EDS), an independent Environmental Consultant to carry out the ESA and apply for the Environmental Clearance certificate (ECC).

2.2 Explanation of what an ESA is, its Process, and the Public Role in the Process

Mr. Leonard explained to the attendees what the meeting was all about and why they were invited (with reference to the Environmental Management Act (EMA) No. 7 of 2007 and its 2012 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations on Public Consultation). Mr. Leonard further explained what an ESA is and that the proposed exploration activities are one of the listed activities in the 2012 EIA Regulations of the EMA that cannot be undertaken without an ECC from the Environmental Commissioner.

2.3 Presentation of Potential Project Impacts

To ensure transparency and that the attendees understand both sides of the proposed project activities, the Environmental Consultant also presented the potential pre-identified potential positive & negative environmental and social impacts.

2.4 Public Open Discussion (Interactive Session)

Mr. Leonard provided the meeting attendees the opportunity to raise their concerns/issues and or comment on the proposed project activities. The issues and comments recorded are presented in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Comments and issues raised during the public consultation meeting, 22nd June 2023.

Comment/ issue No.	Commenter name & issue/comment/question	Response and name of responder:
1.	<p>Commenter 1: I'm a farmer, as are most of the others in the area. We don't just do farming but also hunting, and tourism activities. Safety is a concern for anyone on my farm, due to hunting and I don't know where anybody is on my farm, that can result in a problem. Tourism activities on my farm will also be affected by exploration activities on my farm, even though I invested millions of dollars. Where will that leave me in the future? Exploration activities are a problem for tourism investments. What will happen to my investments such as wellness Spa services? Will there be compensation?</p>	<p>Mr. Nerson Tjelos (NT): We are taking note of those concerns. There are three to four offices and institutions and individuals that can respond. We may not be able to respond to all of them now. Some may be directed to the Proponent, some to us as professionals, some to the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME), as well as Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT), may need to respond. What we can promise you is that when the final report is out, next to your issue is an answer.</p> <p>Your case is similar to another case involving a landowner with farming and hunting activities. One thing the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) should state is the exploration time, i.e., Exploration activities do not take time after 17H00. The other thing is identification for everyone entering the farm and the specific spot where they must be at a point in time.</p>
2.	<p>Commenter 2: After exploration and the deposit is found, then the Concern arises about potential mining on the farm and the potential impact of mining on investments and activities in the farm.</p>	<p>Mr. NT: After Exploration, if the deposit is found, the key questions then start to be asked, such as how is the proponent going to extract, who is going to be affected, and what are you going to do about them? The landowners and the Proponent must reach an agreement to work harmoniously without damaging properties or disrupting investments.</p>

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3.	Commenter 2: It is expected that a deposit will be found after exploration. But what will happen to my million-dollar investment infrastructure on my farm?	Mr. NT: It is a fair question. It all depends on the outcome of the exploration phase.
4.	<p>Commenter 3: Why is the Ministry of Agriculture not part of this process? It only goes to MEFT and MME. If it was not for us, we would not have millions of dollars from the European Union. We employ a substantial size of workforce in a very big area. Farming, hunting, and tourism are our livelihoods. We have other problems that come with mining; poaching, hunting, and disturbing the environment, we are extremely low rainfall areas. Disturbances will take years to come right., erosion, etc.</p> <p>That is why we keep our farms as environmentally friendly as possible. There are archaeological sites such as rock engravings and rock paintings.</p> <p>There were prospectors in our area, with very extensive activities, and they didn't find anything worthy of mining.</p>	<p>Mr. NT: About the impacts associated with the Prospecting and Exploration activities, such as poaching and other disturbances to the Environment, all the identified negative impacts are incorporated in the EMP, with mitigation measures, to reduce the impacts as far as practical.</p> <p>Mr. Mandume explained that the purpose of this meeting is to raise comments, and issues and give inputs pertaining to the impacts of the project. It is not just a matter of "I am affected" but also about the next neighbor and how he/she is affected by the project.</p> <p>One challenge we have countrywide is to access landowners. Our key database is with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform and they only give us postal addresses. The issue with that is that even after the change in ownership, the postal addresses are not captured quickly. At times we go through one farmer to say they should reach out to others, and when we do that, in most cases, it also comes back to us; such that it appears as if we only reach out to one farmer. But we will reach out to as many farmers as possible.</p>

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	<p>Water is not also strong in the area.</p> <p>A lot of farm owners in the area do not have access to the internet, emails or computers, or phones. How are you going to engage these farmers?</p>	
5.	<p>Commenter 4: Based on what information do you conduct the environmental study? Do you visit the affected area?</p>	<p>Mr. Mandume Leonard (ML): Part of the email we send to affected farmers, is the request to access the respective farms for site visits to access the area so that we see what is on the ground. Even though it may not always be possible to survey the entire farm, it is for the purpose of this meeting to state the areas of significance and environmentally sensitive areas on farms. These are some of the things (such as endangered animal species) that need to be incorporated into the final report. We rely on the knowledge of the farmer to point these out.</p>
6.	<p>Commenter 5: As of now, your channel of communication is wrong because you didn't reach out to everyone. You must establish a channel of communication that is effective.</p>	<p>Mr. ML: Noted with thanks. Your input is valid. As Mr. Tjelos explained already, we have a challenge of reaching out to farmers. We only have farmers' postal addresses and most of them bounce back to us.</p> <p>Either because they got changed, or the landowner got changed and the Ministry of Agriculture did not update their records. We advertise these in the newspapers hoping that people may read the newspapers.</p> <p>We only managed to reach out to some farmers' where we managed to get their phone numbers and email addresses, we informed the settlement</p>

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		and the regional offices to reach out as well. We also go through the farmers' association in the area to contact the affected and interested farmers.
7.	Commenter 1: We want to raise our concerns, so address our concerns and then we can talk further. We cannot allow a mining company that will come destroy our million-dollar lodges and so on.	Mr. NT: Noted.
8.	<p>Commenter 3: We have previous people that did exploration works in the area years back, we had metal stakes stuck in the ground and that damaged the land. They had blue paint all over the roads and dug trenches which are still there.</p> <p>Should you get the EPL there must be a tight contract with some proof of assurance against all hazards highlighted.</p>	<p>Mr. NT: What you said is exactly the reason why the Environmental Management Act no. 7 of 2007, with It is Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation of 2012 came into force. Assessments and clearances aim to mitigate the potential impacts. Furthermore, when the Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) is issued, the Proponent need to report to MEFT every six (6) month on how he's performing; the same access to the ministry you have as a farmer. In fact, in your case, it is every day.</p> <p>You could raise any concern with the MEFT, and their inspectors come if the Proponent is working according to the EMP that is drafted. Unless due to human factors, things can happen otherwise, but controls should be in place.</p>
9.	Commenter 6: Everything on paper looks perfect and great, however practicality is an issue for insance Inspection, who does it and how often it happens?	Mr. NT: Noted. We mentioned that an EMP remains a living document, which means an impact discovered throughout the exploration phase, can be incorporated with it is mitigation measures. There is also another document called 'Chance Find' for Archeology findings; such that if one

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	We made discoveries of rock paintings on our farms from time to time. These are among the many concerns we have.	finds something of archeological significance; by law one must report it. But with all these issues, this is the reason why the EMP is produced. The EMP also speaks to who is responsible for what.
10.	Commenter 3: We have raised some concerns already through email.	Mr. ML: All concerns were raised through emails, and we noted them accordingly. These form part of the appendices in the final report to be submitted to the competent authorities. This includes other emails we are yet to receive; all will be attached to the final document Environmental Scoping Assessment Report (ESAR) as part of the stakeholder engagement and consultation process.
11.	Commenter 7: When you are done with your report, are all going to receive the report??	Mr. ML: Yes, before it is submitted to the relevant ministries. It must be shared with all the I&APs and other pre-identified stakeholders. When we are done compiling the Environmental Management Plan (EMP), and the minutes, as we have discussed here today will be shared with you. If there's something that you need to add, you can add, it and send it back to me and incorporate it in the ESA report. The minutes will form part of the appendices as well as the stakeholder engagement and consultations. I will send you the ESA report again and review it, in case there is anything you would like to add or comment on, so we incorporate it in the final report. Then I will submit the final report to the Ministry of Environment (MEFT) on the EIA Portal. After the submission, there are still 14 days that are given to the I&APs to be able to give your comments, issues, or anything directly to MEFT.

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12.	Commenter 8: What happens if you do not record the concerns? Do you continue with the process, despite the concerns and issues raised?	Mr. ML: Thank you for the question, as we are here my phone is recording audio and all the concerns raised here today will form part of the report as was said before.
13.	Commenter 8: We have a big issue of veld fire in our area, because of drought, and this is a big concern for us.	Mr. NT: Note all these concerns and issues will be addressed in the EMP, with proper mitigation measures.

FINAL REMARKS AND CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING

Mr. Mandume Leonard thanked the attendees for their crucial input through comments and raising their concerns. He indicated to the attendees that all their comments, concerns, and inputs have been noted down for consideration and addressing in the Environmental Scoping Assessment (ESA) Report as well as incorporating their recommendations into the draft EMP.

Furthermore, Mr. Mandume Leonard informed the attendees that the draft meeting minutes, Environmental Assessment Report, and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) will be shared with them for review and further comments. These documents will be made available through the emails provided on the attendance register.

Once the review of the draft ESA Report and EMP is done, the documents will be finalized and submitted to the Environmental Commissioner at the Department of Environmental Affairs and Forestry (DEAF) for evaluation and consideration of an ECC.

The meeting adjourned at 11h35.