

- Environmental Clearance -

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

**Proposed Recreational facility with conference facilities –
Dune 7, Walvis Bay, Erongo Region, Namibia**

Client: Sandwich Dune Tours & Safari CC

1. By way of an Introduction

the objective of this Background Information Document (BID) is to furnish interested and affected parties (I&APs) with a comprehensive overview of the proposed Recreational facility with conference facilities at Dune 7, Walvis Bay, Erongo Region, Namibia. It also serves as an invitation for I&APs to engage in the Scoping process of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). By registering, I&APs will receive ongoing updates throughout the scoping/EIA and will have the opportunity to provide feedback and comments regarding the project.

The BID encompasses the following components:

- **Project Introduction:** Setting the context and purpose of the document.
- **Scope of the EIA process:** Outlining how the Environmental Impact Assessment process operates.
- **Public participation process and involvement:** Detailing the ways in which individuals can participate and contribute to the assessment.
- **Description of the proposed project and its location:** Providing information on the nature and specific location of the proposed Recreational facility with conference facilities.
- **Impacts of the proposed development:** Presenting the reasons for undertaking the project and discussing the expected positive and negative consequences.
- **Consideration of alternative options (if any):** Exploring alternative approaches or courses of action that are being evaluated.
- **Subsequent steps and future plans:** Outlining the upcoming stages of the project and indicating the way forward.

In summary, this BID aims to inform stakeholders about the proposed project, encourage their involvement in the EIA process, and provide a platform for them to contribute their perspectives and comments.

2. Project Introduction

Sandwich Dune Tours & Safari CC, the party seeking approval, aims to establish a Recreational facility with conference facilities on a parcel of land known as Dune 7 Concessions in Walvis Bay, Namibia. The project's primary objective is to create a recreational facility that includes conference amenities, small retail outlets, and accommodations. Moreover, the development will offer a diverse range of activities such as hot air balloon rides, fat biking, camel rides, sandboarding, star gazing, and hiking.

To comply with environmental regulations, the applicant has engaged KPM Environmental Consultants, an independent environmental consulting firm, to conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA) inclusive of public consultation for the proposed development. This process will involve gathering feedback and concerns from interested and affected parties (I&APs), as well as identifying potential environmental issues during the Scoping exercise. The findings, along with the draft Environmental Management Plan (EMP), will be incorporated into the final Environmental Scoping Report. Subsequently, these documents will be submitted as part of an application for an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) to the Environmental Commissioner.

In summary, Sandwich Dune Tours & Safari CC intends to establish a Recreational facility with conference facilities at Dune 7 Concessions, Walvis Bay, Namibia. They have enlisted the services of Erongo Consulting Group to conduct the necessary environmental assessments and facilitate public consultation to ensure compliance with environmental regulations. The findings and proposed Environmental Management Plan will be submitted for review and consideration in the application for an Environmental Clearance Certificate.

3. Scope of the Environmental Assessment:

The Environmental Assessment for the proposed project will adhere to the requirements outlined in the Environmental Management Act 7 of 2007. This Act stipulates that certain activities cannot be undertaken without obtaining an Environmental Clearance Certificate. The list of activities subject to this requirement was established through a consultative process as mandated by section 44 of the Act, and it was published as Government Notice No. 29 of 2012 under section 27 of the Act. In the absence of any other designated authority, the Minister of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism is the competent authority responsible for granting authorization for the activities listed in the notice, unless otherwise determined under section 30(3) of the Act.

The Environmental Assessment will consider a range of factors in accordance with the Environmental Management Act and its regulations. These factors include:

- **Environmental Effects:** The assessment will examine the direct and indirect environmental effects of the project, including potential accidents or malfunctions associated with the project and the cumulative effects when combined with other past or future activities. This includes considering the effects on species at risk.
- **Significance of Environmental Effects:** The significance of the identified environmental effects will be evaluated to determine their potential impacts on the environment and any associated risks.
- **Public Comments:** Input and comments from the public will be taken into account during the assessment process to ensure that diverse perspectives and concerns are considered.
- **Mitigation Measures:** Technically and economically feasible mitigation measures will be developed to address any significant adverse environmental effects identified in the assessment.
- **Follow-up Program:** The assessment will consider the requirements for a follow-up program to monitor and manage the environmental impacts of the project if it proceeds.
- **Purpose of the Project:** The assessment will take into account the purpose and objectives of the proposed project.
- **Alternative Means:** Feasible alternative means of carrying out the project will be explored, considering their technical and economic viability, as well as their potential environmental effects.
- **Project Changes:** Any changes to the project that may arise due to environmental factors will be evaluated and considered.

In summary, the Environmental Assessment will comprehensively evaluate the environmental effects, significance, public comments, mitigation measures, follow-up program requirements, purpose of the project, alternative means, and project changes in accordance with the Environmental Management Act and its regulations.

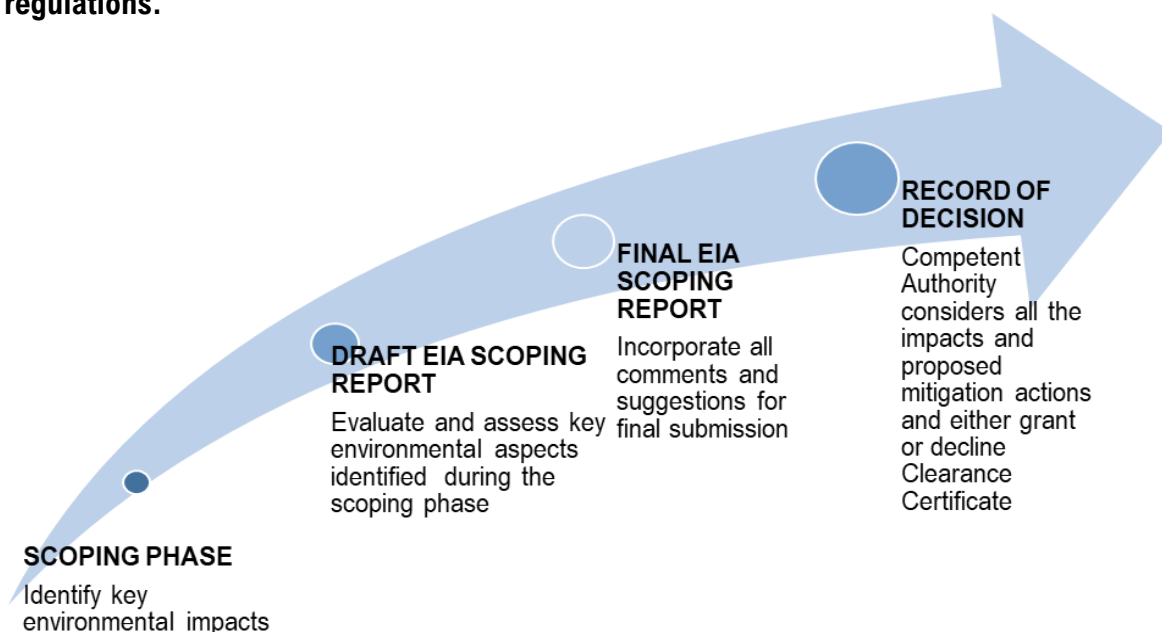


Figure 1: The EIA process as per the Environmental Management Act, 2007 (Government of the Republic of Namibia)

4. Project Activities

here are some project activities for the proposed recreational facility with conference facilities at Dune 7, Walvis Bay, Erongo Region, Namibia:

Construction of Recreational Facilities:

- Development of conference facilities, including meeting rooms, audiovisual equipment, and seating arrangements.
- Construction of accommodation facilities, such as lodges or cottages, with amenities for guests.
- Creation of recreational amenities, including swimming pools, sports facilities, and outdoor relaxation areas.

Retail and Dining Facilities:

- Establishment of small retail outlets offering local crafts, souvenirs, and other merchandise.
- Provision of restaurants or cafes serving local and international cuisine to cater to visitors' dining needs.

Activity Offerings:

- Organization of hot air balloon rides, providing visitors with aerial views of the surrounding area.
- Introduction of fat biking trails, allowing visitors to explore the dunes and surrounding landscapes on bicycles with wide tires.
- Implementation of camel rides, offering a unique experience of traversing the dunes on camelback.
- Provision of sandboarding facilities, enabling visitors to engage in this popular desert sport.
- Arrangement of stargazing activities, providing opportunities to observe the night sky and learn about astronomy.
- Development of hiking trails, allowing visitors to explore the natural beauty and biodiversity of the area.

Environmental Considerations:

- Incorporation of environmentally friendly practices in construction and operation, such as energy-efficient buildings, waste management systems, and water conservation measures.
- Preservation of the natural landscape and indigenous vegetation during construction and landscaping processes.
- Implementation of educational programs on the local ecosystem, biodiversity, and sustainable practices to promote environmental awareness among visitors.

Conference and Event Hosting:

- Provision of state-of-the-art conference facilities equipped with audiovisual equipment, internet connectivity, and seating arrangements suitable for various event sizes.
- Organization of conferences, seminars, workshops, and corporate events, attracting local and international participants.

- Offering event planning and coordination services to facilitate smooth and successful gatherings.

Employment and Local Community Engagement:

- Creation of job opportunities for local residents, providing training and skills development programs where necessary.
- Collaboration with local communities and organizations to incorporate cultural elements, traditional knowledge, and local products into the facility's offerings.
- Support of community development initiatives through partnerships, sponsorships, or donations.

Infrastructure and Services:

- Construction of necessary infrastructure, such as access roads, parking facilities, and utilities (water, electricity, etc.).
- Provision of transportation services, either directly or through partnerships with local tour operators, to facilitate visitor access to the facility.

Visitor Services and Amenities:

- Implementation of visitor information centres to provide guidance, maps, and educational materials about the facility and the surrounding area.
- Provision of amenities like restrooms, picnic areas, and designated viewing points to enhance visitor experience and comfort.

It's important to note that the suggested activities may need to be further developed and refined during the environmental impact assessment and planning stages, taking into consideration the specific requirements, regulations, and environmental sensitivities of the project site.

5. Environmental Impacts of The Proposed Development

While the specific environmental impacts of the proposed recreational facility with conference facilities at Dune 7, Walvis Bay, Erongo Region, Namibia would be assessed during the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, here are some potential envisioned environmental impacts that could be considered:

Habitat and Biodiversity:

- Disturbance or fragmentation of natural habitats during the construction phase, potentially affecting local flora and fauna.
- Alteration of local ecosystems and potential displacement of wildlife due to human activities and increased human presence.
- Introduction of non-native species or potential invasive species through landscaping or horticultural practices.

Water Resources:

- Increased water demand for facility operations, including landscaping, pools, and guest amenities, potentially impacting local water sources.
- Potential contamination of water resources through inadequate waste management practices or accidental spills.

Waste Management:

- Generation of solid waste, including packaging materials, food waste, and other consumables, which may require proper management and disposal to prevent littering or pollution.
- Proper management of hazardous waste, if applicable, to prevent any adverse impacts on the environment.

Energy and Resource Consumption:

- Increased energy consumption for facility operations, including electricity, heating, and cooling systems.
- Use of natural resources, such as water and building materials, during the construction phase.

Landscape and Visual Impact:

- Alteration of the natural landscape through construction activities, infrastructure development, and landscaping.
- Potential changes to the visual character of the area, including views from surrounding areas or viewpoints.

Noise and Air Quality:

- Generation of noise during construction, operation, and recreational activities, potentially affecting local wildlife and nearby communities.
- Potential air pollution from increased vehicular traffic, dust generation, or emissions from on-site equipment or facilities.

Cultural and Social Impacts:

- Potential changes to the cultural and social fabric of local communities due to increased tourism, visitor influx, or changes in local employment patterns.
- Balancing the preservation of cultural heritage and traditional practices with the development of the recreational facility.

It's important to note that these envisioned impacts are generic examples and the specific impacts would be determined through a comprehensive environmental impact assessment process, which involves detailed studies, data collection, and consultation with stakeholders. The EIA process aims to identify, assess, and mitigate potential environmental impacts to ensure sustainable development and the protection of the natural and cultural environment.

Moving Forward...

6. Public Participation

HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

Public participation is an important part of the EIA process, as it allows the public to obtain information about the proposed project.

Public participation occurs at various stages throughout a project lifecycle including:

- Advertising in newspapers
- Distributing this BID to identified stakeholders
- Providing access to draft scoping reports
- Registered I&APS will also be informed of the availability of the draft scoping report for a 14-day comment period, during which the period public will have the opportunity to review the draft document and raise any issues or concerns
- Advertising the decision received from MEFT and affording an opportunity to I&APS to appeal the decision

7. I&APS Next Steps

1. Register as I&AP on our website.
 - <https://www.erongoconsultinggroup.co.za>
2. Follow ECC on Facebook and social media to keep up to date
3. Comments must be submitted in writing and can be emailed to the following address:
 - info@erongoconsultinggroup.co.za
 - Tel: +264 81 878 6676
 - Please note the EIA review period will be 14 days from the date that I&APs have been notified.

Contact Us:

Erongo Consulting Group

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

- **info@erongoconsultinggroup.co.za**
- **Tel: +264 81 878 6676**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

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COMMENTS AND RESPONSE FORM

Deadline for commenting: 30th June, 2023

+264 (0) 81 878 6676

Email: info@erpongoconsultinggroup.co.za

TITLE		FIRST NAME	
INITIALS		SURNAME	
ORGANISATION			
ADDRESS			
		POSTAL CODE	
TEL NO.		FAX NO.	
E-MAIL		CELL NO.	
PROJECT CORRESPONDENCE			
I would like to continue to receive project information (please circle the appropriate block)			
By mail (Hardcopy)	YES	NO	
By mail (CD, in PDF)	YES	NO	
By email (in PDF, Zipped)	YES	NO	
PLEASE IDENTIFY YOUR INTEREST, COMMENTS OR CONCERN IN THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY			
PLEASE WRITE YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS HERE			