

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Upgrading of Tourist Roads to Low-Volume Seal Roads in Etosha East National Park (Starting from Okaukuejo to King Nehale Entrance Gate)

Background Information Document

September 2023

INTRODUCTION:

The Ministry of Environment Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) would like to upgrade the tourist roads within Etosha National Park, to low-volume seal roads and has appointed Tulipamwe Engineering Consultants (TCE, for short) to attend to the required road engineering designs and subsequent supervision of construction work.

In terms of the Environmental Management Act (EMA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Regulations, provision of infrastructure (*section 10.1 (b) – construction of public roads*) is a listed activity which may not be undertaken without an EIA having been undertaken and an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) obtained from the Environmental Commissioner (EC).

In this regard, Ekwao Consulting has been appointed by TCE to attend to the ECC authorisation process for the upgrading and all aspects related to environmental compliance monitoring during the construction phase.

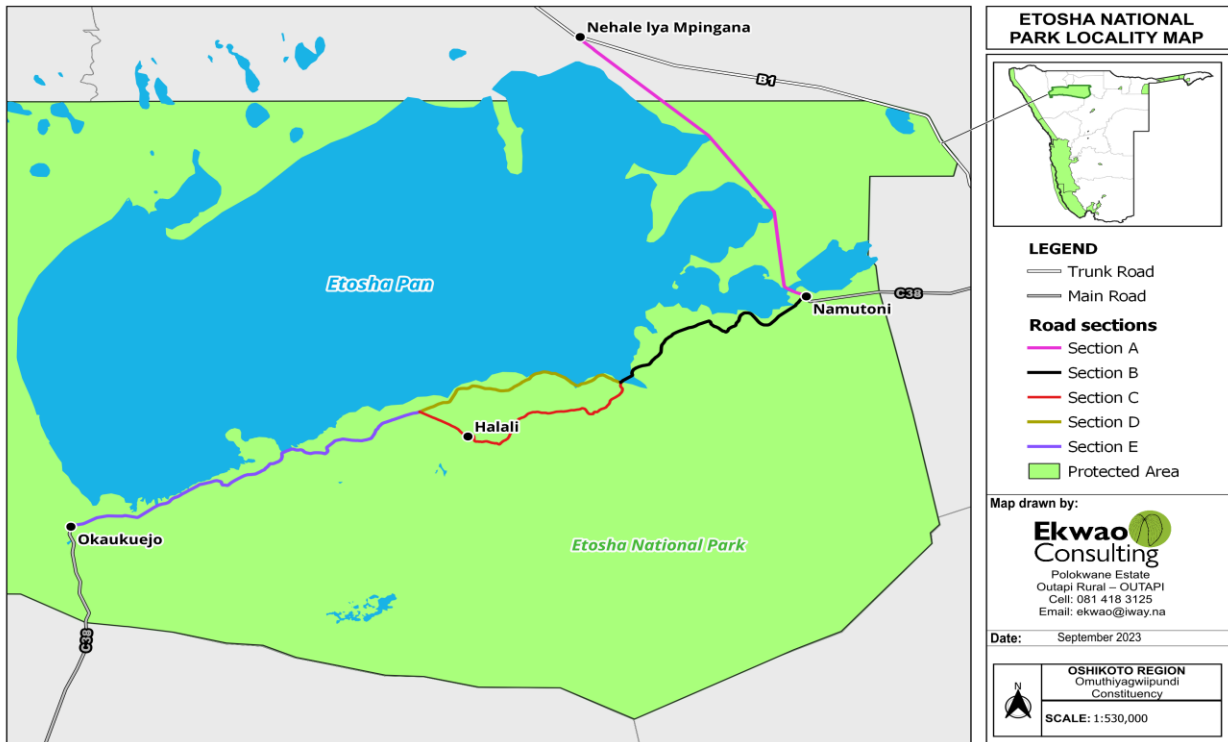


Figure 1: Project Location

SCOPE OF WORK:

The tourists roads to be upgraded to low-volume seal roads have a total length of about 214 km and starts from Okaukuejo to King Nehale entrance gate

including the detours to the resorts of Halali and Namutoni as more or less depicted in **Fig. 1**. The road sections, lengths and project duration, etc. are as presented in **Table 1**, below:

Table 1: Sections of the Roads to be Upgraded

Road Section	Length (km)	Duration	Remarks
Section A	42.2	60 months	Upgrading will start from Okaukwejo and proceed in a northern easterly direction towards King Nehale Gate
Section B	38.0		
Section C	39.5		
Section D	34.3		
Section E	60.6		
Total	214.5		

EIA OBJECTIVE

The objective of the EIA is to identify potential positive and negative social, economic and biophysical impacts associated with the proposed activities and to provide management measures on how significant negative impacts may be eliminated, avoided or minimised to acceptable levels. Special attention will be paid to borrow pits from where road construction materials are sourced. The EIA will be conducted in full compliance of the provisions of EMA and EIA regulations as gazetted.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Etosha National Park covers a geographical area of 22 270 km² and is one of the largest parks in Africa. Prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, international tourists who visited the park were averaging 300 000 per year with nationals from Europe and United States making up over 90% of visitors to the park. The park has a road network in excess of 2 000 km providing access to areas of interests within the park, i.e. resorts/camps and numerous water points where wildlife congregates to quench their thirsty. It is at these water points where tourists see and observe the wildlife up close in their natural environment.

All roads within the park are gravel roads which require millions of Namibia Dollars in ongoing repairs and maintenance annually. Given government's competing

national priorities combined with limited resources, the conditions of some roads have deteriorated and became heavily corrugated making travelling on such roads very unpleasant and a safety hazard. Several complainants have been lodged with the MEFT over the poor road conditions in the part. The long term solution to this challenge is to upgrade such roads to low-volume seal roads in a phased in approach. The project is therefore needed and vital to the long term sustainability of the tourism economic sector in Namibia.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This BID is intended to provide information related to the upgrading of tourist roads to all Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) and, in the same vein, to extend an invitation to IAPs to register and to participate in the EIA process. Since the tourist roads planned for upgrading to low-volume seal roads are situated within the national park, it is not intended to hold any public meetings. Therefore, IAPs are required to make their comments, inputs, concerns and or contributions to the EIA Consultant in writing, using the contact details provided below.

The ECC

The EIA process in order to obtain an ECC for the proposed project is presented in **Fig. 2**.

CONTACT DETAILS OF THE EIA CONSULTANT:

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Closing date for inputs, comments and or contributions:
22 September 2023

The EIA Process

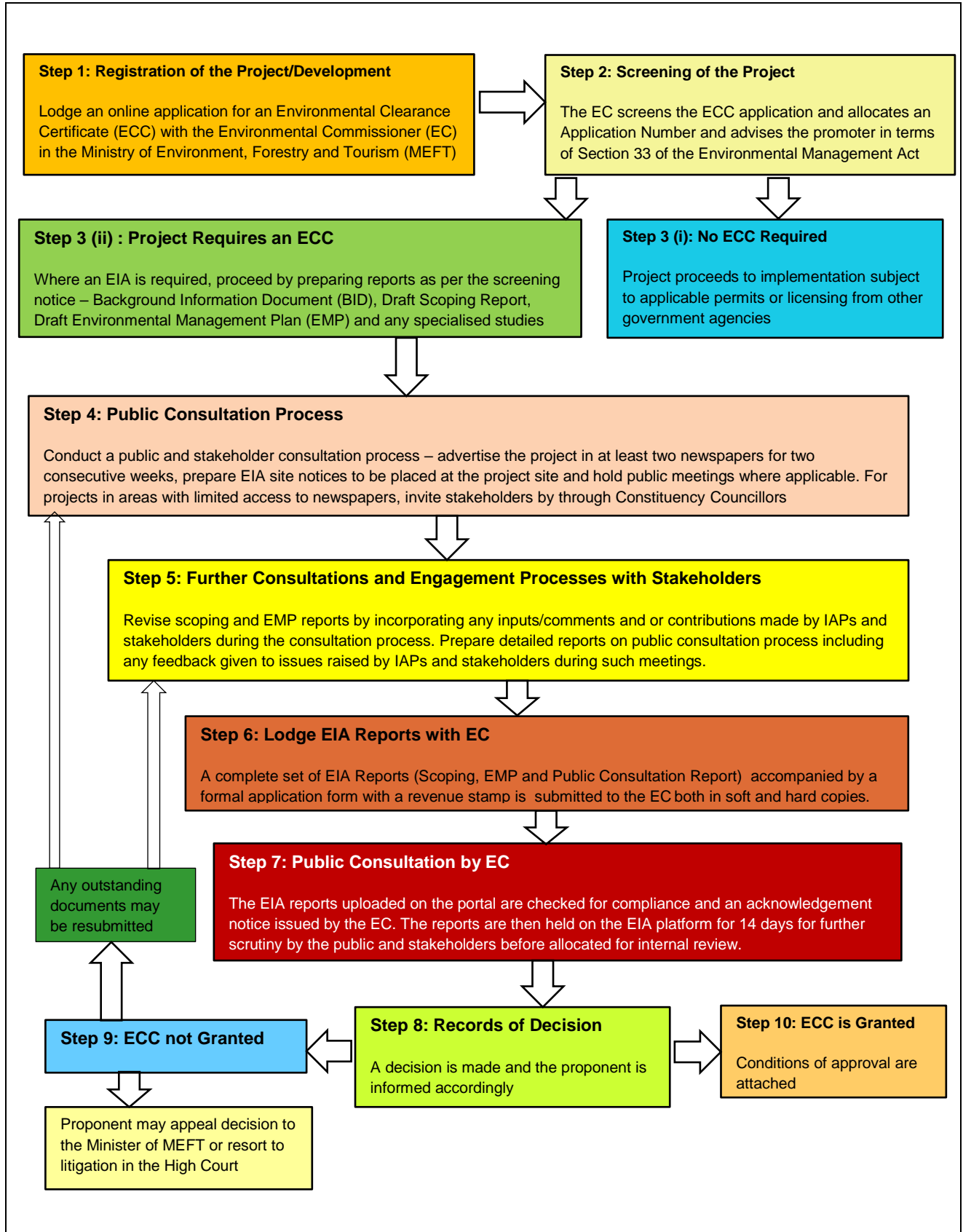


Figure 2: A Schematic Diagram of the EIA Process