

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCOPING REPORT

FOR

OSHIVELO AGRICULTURAL PROJECT AT OSHIVELO VILLAGE, OSHIVELO DISTRICT, OSHIKOTO REGION, NAMIBIA



Triangle 1

Point 1: -18.5963177°, 17.1505527°

Point 2: -18.6069208°, 17.1553684°

Point 3: -18.6127878°, 17.1412381°

Triangle 2

Point 1: -18.5963177°, 17.1505527°

Point 4: -18.595722°, 17.151870°

Point 5: -18.594958°, 17.151309°

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Project Document

Project:	ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR OSHIVELO AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, OSHIVELO, OSHIKOTO REGION, NAMIBIA	
Report Date	November 2023	
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GPS Coordinates		
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PROJECT BACKGROUND

The corporate social responsibility portfolio of Kekaritz Fishing (Pty) Ltd intends to establish a commercial agricultural project on a 105-ha land located at Uukwanambwa village of the Ondonga Traditional Authority (OTA). The project land, consisting of 2 adjacent plots in a triangle, is located 3.3 kilometres away from the Oshivelo border post on the B1 highway leading to Omuthiya in Oshikoto region. The land is allocated for a renewable 5-year land use lease to produce a variety of agricultural products aimed at alleviating insecurity of food and animal fodder facing the local communities of households, livestock farmers, business enterprises and beyond.

The project land is sandwiched between the Operet Aerodrome Facility and the eastern fence of Etosha National Park where roaming wildlife from Etosha National Park (ENP), especially elephants, would be attracted to agricultural produce at the project site, as well as interfere with operational safety of aircrafts at Operet Aerodrome Facility. Furthermore, the project land is heavily encroached by bush species. Project implementation would therefore require permission for sustainable removal of existing bush species for delivery of a clear productive land, while maintaining existing ecosystems.

The main object of this scoping analysis is two-fold, namely:

- a) To identify existing environmental concerns, including human-wildlife conflicts (HWCs), and propose sustainable mitigating measures for managing any identified concerns;
- b) To apply for and acquire the environmental clearance certificate from the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in order to facilitate issuance of the harvesting permit by the Department of Forestry (DOF).

SCOPING ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

The investigation team adopted the following approaches in conducting the:

- 2.1 Inspection of the integrity of Etosha National Park (ENP)'s existing electrical fence to determine potential loopholes in the HWC system;
- 2.2 Inspection of the integrity of Airport's existing razor wire fence (*established and maintained by Ministry of Works*) to determine soundness of this infrastructure as a potential mitigating measure;
- 2.3 Consultation with neighbouring farming enterprises involved in similarly intended agricultural production (*commercial crop/vegetable production*) to learn about any additional measures employed to minimize the occurrence of HWC incidents at their production sites;
- 2.4 Consultation with ENP's competent authorities to obtain their experienced knowledge, expertise and methods on the best practices for managing HWCs in the area, as well as obtain from them a letter of consent;
- 2.5 Consultation with competent authorities in charge of Oshivelo Aerodrome facility (*Operet*) to obtain from them a letter of consent;
- 2.6 Consultation with resident members of Oshivelo settlement on their proven experiences regarding HWCs in the area.

FINDINGS OF THE BASELINE STUDY

Integrity of ENP Electrical Fence

The Kakaritz plots are sandwiched between the ENP electrical fence on the west and the razor-wire fence of Operet Aerodrome facility which covers the northern, eastern and southern borders of the plots. Although the fence exists and generally holds, its conditional integrity where it borders with the plots appears challenged and compromised in places. One place of particular concern extends about 50 metres, and is in need of repair. If repairs are carried out at identified places, a sufficient level of risk mitigation would be enhanced

to prevent wildlife from leaving their reserve easily. Upon approval of the project, Kekaritz Fishing will consult with ENP management on the best collaborative way to have the necessary repairs carried out.

Integrity of Airport (Razor Wire) Fence

It appears that this fence was constructed lately and its integrity is generally sound. Notwithstanding the general soundness, the fence is cut or forced down at 4 different places in varied measures ranging from 30 to 40 metres. This act was reportedly committed by local farmers who sought to access livestock pasture normally available in this well-secured domain. Once the damaged parts of the fence are renovated, the integrity of this fence would be restored to serve as one of the sufficient mitigating measures against invasion by local livestock and wildlife.

PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES AGAINST WILDLIFE INVASION INTO PROJECT LAND

Establishment of a Buffer Zone

The Kekaritz plots are located about 10 metres away from the ENP western electrical fence. Upon approval, the project will create a buffer zone – measuring about 10 metres wide and 2.1 km long – between the ENP fence and Kekaritz plots – to constitute an additional risk mitigating measure.

Construction of an Electrical Fence for Kekaritz Plots

Kekaritz Fishing will utilize about 97% of allocated land for the production of agricultural produce which, naturally, would attract wildlife. Therefore, in addition to the buffer zone, Kekaritz will construct their own electrical fence so that the two respective fences would sandwich the buffer zone. The Kekaritz electrical fence – constructed of metal poles planted in cemented holes in the ground – would have standard power capacity to deter/mitigate invasion by wildlife (*both elephants and lions*) into agricultural production sites. The fence would be further supported by attached mesh wire – installed about 1-metre-deep underground and rising above ground by about 1.3 metre – to deter/mitigate invasion by smaller wildlife species that normally burrow below the fences to gain access to green produce.

Honey Bees as Deterrents

It is an established fact that elephants and bees do not smoke the same pipe, or sit around one fire. Bees love entering into elephants' nostrils to obtain moisture. However, while there, they also carry out actions they can do best – biting the inside of elephants' nostrils. Given this unpleasant experience, elephants can smell bees' presence up to 600 metres away.

As an additional mitigating measure against elephant invasion, the project would raise honey bees in specially-manufactured wooden cages/boxes of about 50cm x 40cm which are readily available on the local market. Such boxes, lockable and with a hole only large enough for bees to enter and exit, will be erected on poles inside Kekaritz fence – about 10m away from the fence. Being 50m apart from each other, about 40 boxes would be planted along the 2.1-km Kekaritz fence bordering the ENP fence. Water, which the bees would need to produce honey inside the boxes, would be provided along the fence at strategic places closer to the boxes. Further, flowered bush species closer to the electrical fence and honey boxes would be left intact to attract bees in their search for nectar.

Chili Bombs, Whistles and Interchangeable Lights as Deterrents

The investigation team observed that green producers also utilize chili as a deterrent against elephants by burning it along the fences. Also, interchangeable lights, such as disco lights, are reported to have potential ability to drive away roaming elephants. Another practice is the use of whistles consistently blown on arrival of elephants.

CONSULTATIONS WITH NEIGHBOURING STAKEHOLDERS DURING BASELINE STUDY

Intensive and extensive consultations were held with relevant stakeholders. These are presented as follows:

Head Office – Department of Wildlife Management and National Parks (WMNP):

An intensive meeting was held with the Substantive Director, Mr Kahuure, and Ms N lipinge, Deputy Director of Etosha National Park, to introduce the project, obtain advisory assistance and support and discuss details of legal requirements that would aid successful implementation of the project. The assessment team was advised to hold further consultation with the

management team at Etosha National Park. The copy of the minutes of the meeting are attached to this submission.

Etosha National Park

An intensive meeting was held with Okaukweyo's Senior Manager, Mr V Mwilima, and Mr I Simon – the warden responsible for inspections. The ENP representatives stressed that wildlife – especially elephants – would be attracted to the project site by agricultural produce and water resources, and that appropriate fence infrastructure around the project land would be a basic requirement to serve as one of the sustainable mitigating measures against human-wildlife conflicts (HWCs). The meeting proceedings were minuted as per attachment hereto.

Uukwanambwa/Nehale lyaMpingana Traditional Community

The project land resorts under the local jurisdiction of Uukwanambwa village/community at Oshivelo area (*of the larger Ondonga Traditional Authority – OTA*) which – for a considerable period to date – has been seeking to realize in their area the nature and magnitude of an agricultural project as the one now being proposed by Kekaritz Fishing. The meeting was, therefore, held with the headman of Uukwanambwa community, Mr Erwin Nashikaku, and community technical advisor, Mr Fillemon Kushinja Hailonga. In supporting this project, the headman provided the assessment team with a copy of the letter in which they petitioned the OTA for permission to establish an agricultural hub for residents of Oshivelo and neighbouring areas. The copies of both the minutes of the meeting and the petition letter are attached to this submission.

Oshivelo Fresh Produce at Portion of Farm Onguma

The meeting was held with the project manager who rather preferred anonymity due to the fact that the proposed project would be in competition with their own. This being considered as *a given*, the assessment team concentrated on obtaining information on their experiences regarding frequency of HWCs and applicable mitigating measures that they considered to be sustainable. The copy of the minutes of the meeting constitute part of the attachments hereto.

Shali Fresh Produce

This small-scale/micro project has drilled their own borehole. The meeting was held with the project manager – largely limited to obtaining information on the availability of underground water resources at Oshivelo area. For similar reasons as those cited by Oshivelo Fresh Produce, this project manager also preferred anonymity.

PROJECTED INVESTMENT CAPITAL

The initial investment capital is tentatively projected at N\$4.5 – N\$5 million, clearly earmarked to finance the following project activities:

- ✓ Bush clearing activities;
- ✓ Construction of a standard electrical fence – more or less equivalent to the ENP fencing standards;
- ✓ Land preparation for sustainable/profitable production;
- ✓ Procurement and installation of appropriate irrigation infrastructure (*preferably dripping systems*), and associate production equipment.

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS SUBMISSION

The following supportive documents are attached to this submission:

- 2.7 Google Earth photo showing location of project land;
- 2.8 Copy of Supportive Letter by Namibia Civil Aviation Authority (*NCCA*);
- 2.9 Copy of Letter of Consent by Ministry of Works and Transport (*MWT*)
- 2.10 Copy of Supportive Letter by headman of Oshivelo community;
- 2.11 Copies of Minutes of Meetings held with neighbouring stakeholders;
- 2.12 Copy of proposed mitigating measures in photos – electrical fence, etc.