ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING ASSESSMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CAPITAL AND MAINTENANCE DREDGING AT THE NAVAL BASE IN THE PORT OF WALVIS BAY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Prepared by:

Prepared for:

February 2024

1 INTODUCTION

Geo Pollution Technologies (Pty) Ltd (GPT) was appointed by the Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs of Namibia (the Proponent) to undertake an environmental assessment for the proposed dredging operations at the naval base located in the Port of Walvis Bay (Figure 1-1). Dredging is the mechanical removal of sediment in order to either deepen the water, generally referred to as capital dredging, or to maintain the water depth (referred to as maintenance dredging). Normal port operations and the action of waves caused sedimentation in the naval basin, which could lead to the grounding of naval ships. The Namibian navy requires dredging of the navy basin to secure safe operations inside the port.

The Proponent requires an application for an environmental clearance certificate (ECC) for the proposed dredging operations of the naval basin. The ECC application will be made in terms of the Environmental Management Act, Act No. 7 of 2007 (EMA). A scoping environmental impact assessment (EIA) report and an environmental management plan (EMP) are proposed to be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism's Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in support of an application for an ECC.

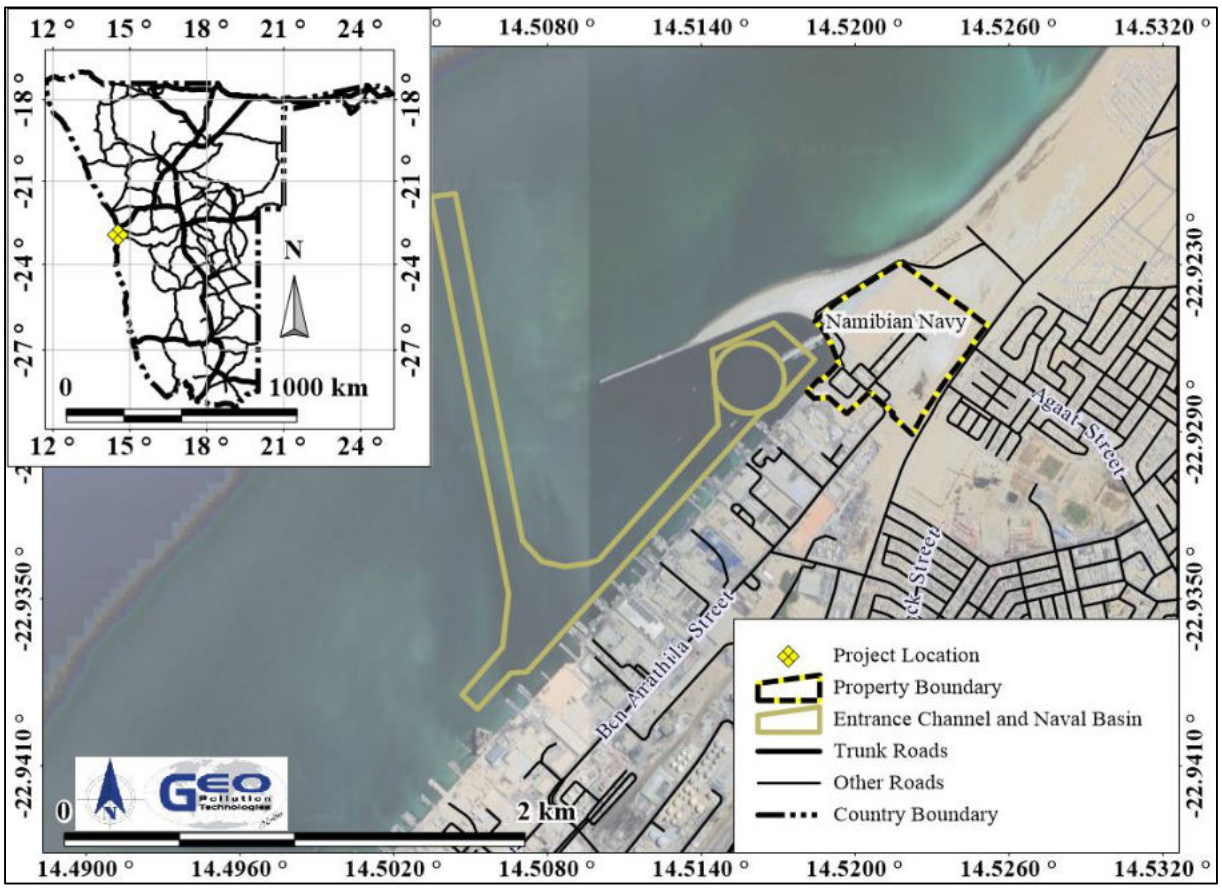

Figure 1-1. Project location

2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

With this background information document (BID), GPT aims to provide information to, and interact with, authorities and interested and affected parties (IAPs) regarding the project and the environmental assessment process. IAPs are therefore invited to register with GPT to:

- Be officially included in the list of registered IAPs for the project.
- Request additional information and clarifications.

- Provide information relevant to the proposed project which should be taken into account in the assessment of impacts.
- Share any comments, issues or concerns related to the project.
- Review and comment on the EIA, EMP and any other related submissions made to the DEA.

3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 Dredge Locations

It is envisioned that both capital and maintenance dredging will be performed at the naval basin. Capital dredging will be performed at the berthing areas along the two main quays in order to obtain a water depth of 9 m at low tide. Maintenance dredging will be performed to remove the sediment build up towards the northern shore of the naval basin and slip way. See Figure 3-1 for the various components within the naval basin.

3.2 Dredged Sediment Disposal Site

During dredging, the sediment removed from the seabed needs to be disposed of. The Proponent intends to make beneficial use of the sediment by using it for landfilling purposes. Certain areas of their property earmarked for future development requires landfilling to create a level surface. Utilising the sediment for this purpose not only reduces the costs involved with sourcing landfilling material from elsewhere, but also the cost involved with transporting dredged sediments to the official offshore disposal site north of Pelican Point. The sediment will be disposed of on land at an identified site located at the naval base.

3.3 Dredging

Dredging equipment can be classified into three main types: (1) mechanical; (2) hydraulic; and (3) hydro-dynamic. Each of these employs different techniques and equipment and has its own set of advantages and disadvantages for different conditions. A dredger typically collects the dredged sediment inside a hopper which transports the sediment to a disposal site, or it delivers the sediment to a disposal site via a pipeline. Hoppers can either be a separate barge or it can be part of the actual dredging vessel.

The dredger to be used at the naval basin is a hydraulic suction dredger. An alluvial suction pump on a floating pump platform will be moved into position. A slurry of sediment and water will be sucked up by the alluvial pump and with the aid of three booster pumps it will be pumped to shore via a 600 m floating pipeline. Onshore, water will be allowed to seep back into the ocean and the remaining sediment will be levelled in the desired areas using earthmoving equipment.

Figure 3-1 Components related to dredging

4 PRELIMARY IDENTIFIED IMPACTS

During the preparation of the EIA and EMP, all components of the environment will be considered. However, only those components which are, or may be, significantly impacted, or are deemed to be sensitive, will be assessed. These include the following:

- Health and safety impacts: This impact relates to dredge operators (crew) and ship traffic.
- Fire and explosion impact: This impact relates to combustible and/or highly flammable materials that may be present on dredge vessels.
- Noise and vibration: Noise and vibration are generated on dredge vessels during operations.
- Air quality impact: Release of noxious gases such as hydrogen sulphide from dredged sediments.
- Water quality impact: Mobilization of toxic or harmful substances that may be present in sediments.
- Water quality impact: Increased turbidity (suspended sediments) reducing water quality and affecting ecology.
- Biodiversity impact: Local destruction of habitat in dredging areas and increased turbidity.
- Heritage impact: Discovery of artefacts of heritage of archaeological value on the seafloor.
- Dust generation from landfill area.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Geo Pollution Technologies invites all IAPs to provide in writing, any issues and suggestions regarding the project. This correspondence must include:

- Name and surname
- Organization represented or private interest
- Position in the organization
- Contact details
- Any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which you may have in the approval or refusal of the application

All contributions by IAPs become public knowledge and will be circulated along with the reports as per the EMA requirements. The comments, inputs and suggestions will also be submitted to the DEA along with how any issues have been addressed in the EIA.

A public meeting to share information regarding the project is scheduled as follows:

Venue: Immanuel Ruiters Primary School Hall, Kuisebmond
Date: 27 February 2024
Time: 18:00

All members of the public and IAPs are invited to attend the meeting.

The public participation process will remain ongoing during the environmental assessment. However, all comments and concerns should be provided timeously to ensure incorporation into the final report. The deadline for submission of comments will be communicated to all registered IAPs.

For any additional information the project team may be contacted at:

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Your Rights as an IAP according to the Environmental Management Act, No7 of 2007, Government Notice No 30 (Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations)

Section 23.

(1) A registered interested or affected party is entitled to comment in writing, on all written submissions made to the Environmental Commissioner by the applicant responsible for the application, and to bring to the attention of the Environmental Commissioner any issues which that party, believes may be of significance to the consideration of the application, as long as -

(a) comments are submitted within 7 days of notification of an application or receiving access to a scoping report or an assessment report;
(b) the interested and affected party discloses any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which that party may have in the approval or refusal of the application.

(2) Before the applicant submits a report compiled in terms of these regulations to the Environmental Commissioner, the applicant must give registered interested and affected parties access to, and an opportunity to comment in writing on the report.

(3) Reports referred to in sub regulation (2) include

(a) scoping reports;
(b) scoping reports amended and resubmitted;
(c) assessment reports; and
(d) assessment reports amended and resubmitted.

(4) Any written comments received by the applicant from a registered interested or affected party must accompany the report when the report is submitted to the Environmental Commissioner.

(5) A registered interested or affected party may comment on any final report that is submitted by a specialist reviewer for the purposes of these regulations where the report contains substantive information which has not previously been made available to a registered interested or affected party.

Section 24:

The applicant responsible for an application must ensure that the comments of interested and affected parties are recorded in reports submitted to the Environmental Commissioner in terms of these regulations, and comments by interested and affected parties on a report which is to be submitted to the Environmental Commissioner may be attached to the report without recording those comments in the report itself.