

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) STUDY

The Proposed Exploration Activities on Exclusive Prospecting Licenses (EPLs) No. 9885 & 9985 near Arandis Town in the Erongo Region - Application for Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC)



Proponent:

Tarah Hainana

Prepared by:

Serja Hydrogeo-Environmental Consultants CC

January 2025

1 BACKGROUND

Tarah Hainana (hereinafter referred to as the *Proponent*) applied to the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) for the exploration rights on two Exclusive Prospecting Licences (EPLs), i.e., EPL-9885 and EPL-9985 on the 20th of December 2023 and 3rd of April 2024, respectively. However, the approval of the EPLs is subject to an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) as per the status of the EPL application on the Namibia Mines and Energy Cadastre Map Portal <https://portals.landfolio.com/namibia/> "*pending ECC*". The two EPLs have a potential for nuclear fuel minerals (uranium). Thus, upon granting the EPL rights by the MME, the Proponent intends to prospect and explore within the boundaries of the EPLs. EPL-9885 covers an area of 23,073.1506 hectares (Ha) whereas EPL-9985 covers an area of 19,978.5782Ha (totalling a combined area of 43,051.7288Ha). EPL-9985 is about 20km northeast of Arandis and EPL-9885 is about 40km further northeast of Arandis and stretches towards Grootspitskop (Spitzkoppe) in the Erongo Region - Figure 1. Both EPLs are within the #Gaingu Conservancy as shown on the map in Figure 2.

1.1 Need for an EIA Study

Prospecting, exploration, and mining-related activities are among the listed activities that may not be undertaken without an ECC under the Environmental Management Act (EMA) (2007) and its 2012 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations.

The relevant listed activities as per EIA regulations are:

- *3.1 The construction of facilities for any process or activities that require a license, right, or other forms of authorization, and the renewal of a license, right, or other form of authorization, in terms of the Minerals (Prospecting and Mining Act, 1992).*

- *3.2 Other forms of mining or extraction of any natural resources whether regulated by law or not.*
- *3.3 Resource extraction, manipulation, conservation, and related activities.*

Subsequently, to comply with the EMA and its Regulations and ensure environmental management and sustainability, Tarah Hainana appointed Serja Hydrogeo-Environmental Consultants CC (Serja Consultants), Independent Environmental Consultants to apply for the ECC and conduct the required Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

The EIA process will entail a baseline assessment of the biophysical & social environment and public consultation. The findings of the EIA process are then incorporated into an EIA Report and a draft Environmental Management Plan (EMP) will also be developed for the proposed project activities. The ECC application is submitted to and registered with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT) as the environmental regulatory authority.

Once the ECC is issued by the Environmental Commissioner, the Proponent will submit the ECC to the Mining Commissioner at the MME for consideration of exploration rights of the areas (EPL certificates). The prospecting and exploration activities will then be planned for and commence thereafter.

1.2 The Purpose of this Document

It should be noted that this Background Information Document (BID) is not an EIA / Scoping Assessment Report, but a non-technical summary of the EIA process. The BID is aimed at sharing first-hand summarized information of the proposed project activities. It also provides public guidance and a basis for their participation from the beginning of the EIA process and registers as interested and affected parties (I&APs) raise issues concerning the proposed activities.

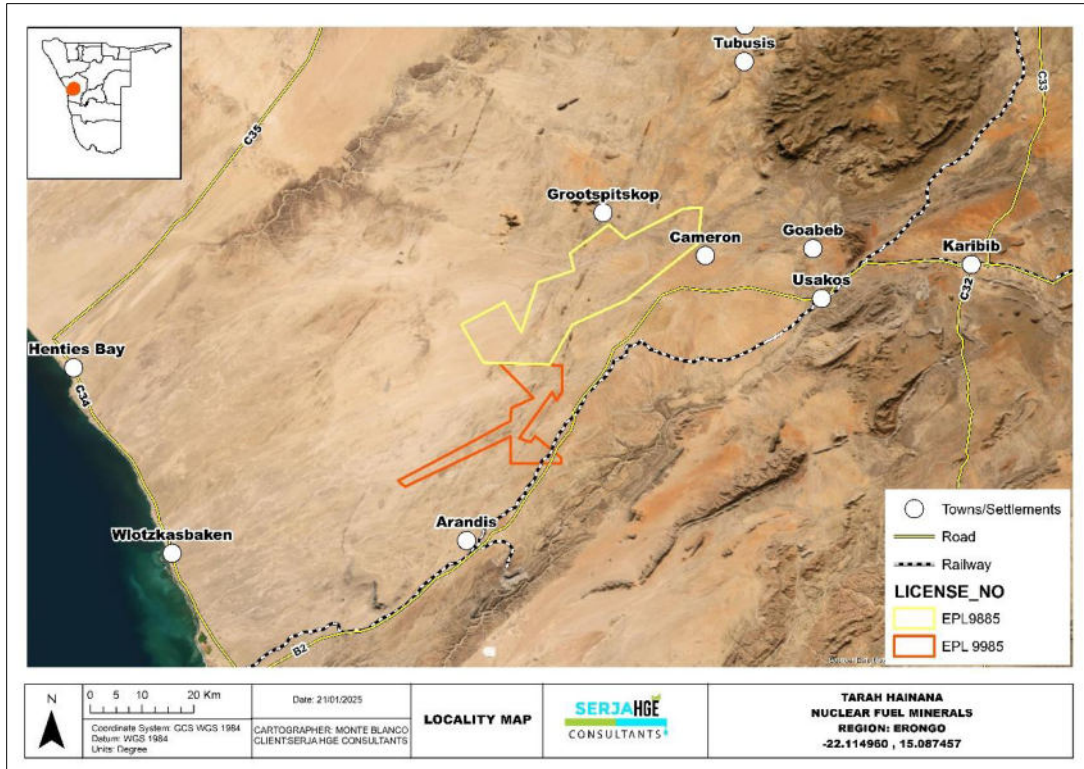


Figure 1: Locality map of the EPL-9885 & 9985 near Grootspitskop (Spitzkoppe) and Arandis, respectively in the Erongo Region

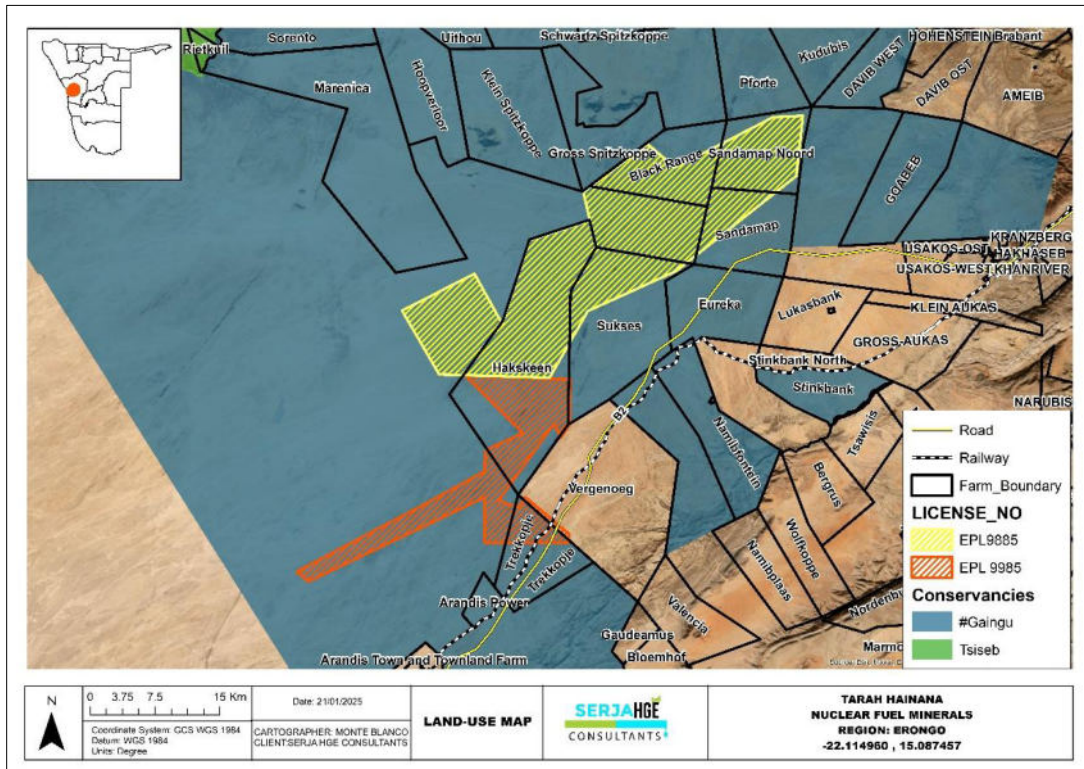


Figure 2: Locality map with the significant land use overlain by EPL-9885 & 9985

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

It should be noted that this EIA Study is for exploration activities ONLY and not mining because mining cannot be done on EPLs. This means, that if exploration yields economically feasible results, mining licenses would be applied for after exploration, of which different EIA Studies would be conducted to apply for mining licenses, i.e., to convert EPLs into mining licenses at a later stage.

2.1 Proposed Prospecting and Exploration Methods

Before undertaking the proposed activities on the EPLs, the Proponent must obtain consent and sign land use agreements with the Oe-Gan Traditional Authority and the Gaingu Conservancy.

The anticipated duration of the proposed prospecting and exploration activities (to be carried out in phases) is between one year and three years or more, depending on the duration of each exploration stage.

The Proponent intends to adopt a systematic prospecting and exploration approach of the following:

- Desktop Study (Non-invasive method): Geological mapping (Non-invasive Technique): The exploration program will commence with a review of geological maps and historical drilling and/or exploration data for the area, if any.
- Geophysical surveys (Non-invasive): This will entail data collection of the substrata. Ground geophysical surveys shall be conducted, where necessary using vehicle-mounted sensors.
- Lithology geochemical surveys (Invasive): Rock and soil sampling from small pits/trenches.
- Detailed Exploration Drilling (Invasive): Should analyses of soil/rock samples by an analytical laboratory be positive, holes are drilled, and drill samples collected for further study. No explosives will be used onsite.

2.2 Required Resources and Services Infrastructure

The following services and infrastructure as provided below will be required for the project activities:

Human resources and accommodation: The exploration crew will consist of a minimum of seven people, comprising one to two skilled, two to three semi-skilled, and four casual workers. However, this number may vary depending on the stages of the activities on-site, for instance, fewer people would be required for soil sampling and trenching compared to drilling workforce requirements.

Accommodation: Exploration (mainly drilling) workers will be housed in Arandis and surrounding communities – hence, it is recommended to hire as many locals as possible for the work they can do. This is to minimize the number of outsiders who may need accommodation. Out-of-area workers such as specialized skills for exploration would be accommodated in the nearest local accommodation facilities in Arandis and Usakos through rentals.

Water supply: The required water will be used for actual detailed exploration activities such as cooling down and washing drilling equipment, and domestic use (ablution, drinking, and cooking).

The water will be supplied from reliable sources around the EPLs such as purchasing from the Arandis or Usakos Town Council (through a water supply agreement with the Council).

Fuel supply: (for personnel use to cook): The Proponent will provide firewood or fuel to be used for food preparation by the site workers. No firewood will be collected onsite or on neighboring land.

Fuel Supply (machinery and equipment): Diesel will be used for machinery and equipment and fuel generators. A trailer-mounted and bunded fuel tank of about 10,000 liters will be onsite to ensure an interrupted fuel supply to the project.

Accessibility (roads): the two EPLs can be accessed from the B2 road via local area access roads. If needed, further tracks that may be required to access certain areas for exploration will be created, upon approval and in consultation with the local authority/land custodian and Conservancy as well as the landowner before creating new tracks.

Waste management: the different waste will be handled as follows:

-Sewage: Two portable ablution facilities with septic tanks will be provided on-site and emptied according to manufacturers' instructions.

-General and domestic waste: Solid waste containers will be made available at both exploration sites and accommodation facilities for waste storage, sorting, and later disposal at the nearest designated waste sites.

-Hazardous waste: All vehicles, machinery, and fuel-consuming equipment will be provided drip trays to capture potential fuel spills and waste oils.

The waste fuel/oils will be carefully stored in a standardized container to be disposed of at the nearest approved hazardous waste management facility in Windhoek.

Health and Safety: Adequate and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided to all project personnel while on and working at the site, including site visitors. Two fully equipped first aid kits will be readily available onsite.

Potential Accidental Fire Outbreaks: well-serviced fire extinguishers will be readily available in every exploration vehicle, at working sites on the EPLs and project accommodation facility.

3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Positive:

-Local socio-economic development through temporary employment creation for locals

-Payment of land use fees to the land custodians to uplift the local communities, where possible

-Procurement of local goods and services by local/regional businesses to generate income.

Preliminary identified potential negative impacts:

-Physical soil disturbance resulting in compaction and erosion

-Impact on local biodiversity (fauna and flora) and habitat disturbance

-The potential impact of illegal hunting/poaching of wildlife in the area is within a Conservancy

-Potential impact on water resources and soils (pollution)

-Air quality (compromise the surrounding air quality)

-Visual impacts due to unrehabilitated disturbed site areas as a result of trenching and drilling activities

-Potential occupational health and safety risks to the locals (open and unattended trenches and drill holes may pose a risk to people) and animals (wildlife)

-Noise associated with exploration drilling and movement of heavy trucks to the site

-Vehicular traffic safety & impact on local roads

-Environmental pollution (littering) through improper handling, storage and disposal of waste

-Impact on archaeological and cultural heritage resources.

3.1 Management and Mitigation of Potential Environmental Impacts

The above-listed potential impacts and new issues that may arise from I&APs' comments via emails and or to be noted from the consultation meeting will be described/assessed, and addressed in the EIA Report. The management and mitigation measures will be provided in the Draft EMP developed for implementation onsite.

It is important to note that an EMP is a legally binding document that will be developed as part of the EIA Study. It must be implemented by the Proponent and monitored accordingly onsite during their operations. The EMP implementation is monitored every 6 months as the Environmental Commissioner requires. Thus, all proponents are obligated to have their project activities audited by an independent environmental consultant or control officer and submit Bi-Annual Environmental Monitoring reports to the Environmental Commissioner at MEFT to display compliance and commitment to environmental management.

4 THE EIA PROCESS STEPS

The following steps are followed for this EIA Study:

- Step 1: Project initiation - ECC application and registration at the DEAF, development of stakeholders list, and compilation of Background Information Document (BID).
- Step 2: Baseline assessment - Literature and legal review of applicable data sources.
- Step 3: Ongoing Public Consultation and facilitation (throughout the EIA process)

The EIA notifications will be placed in newspapers in January 2025.

Step 4: Information sharing - Circulation of the BID to pre-identified I&APs and the public who request EIA registration.

- Step 5: Public consultation meeting, site visit and assessment. Consultation meetings with key stakeholders will be held in the area.
- Step 6: Compilation of the Draft EIA Scoping Report and Environmental Management Plan (EMP), and Review of documents.
- Step 7: Final Reporting and Submission of the EIA Scoping Report and EMP to the Environmental Commissioner at MEFT for evaluation and consideration of the ECC.
- Stage 8: Follow-up with MEFT on the status of the evaluation of the submitted EIA documents and decision on the ECC.

All the inputs, concerns, issues, and/or comments should be put **in writing (email, SMS, or written letters)** so that they can be considered in the Environmental Assessment Report as well as in the Draft EMP. The contact details of the Lead Environmental Assessment Practitioner are:

Ms. Fredrika Shagama

Email: eias.public@serjaconsultants.com

Tel. No.: +264 81 749 9223 (via WhatsApp or SMS)

4.1 Deadline for Registration and Comments

The last date for registration as I&APs and or submitting comments, concerns, and issues is **Friday, 21 February 2025.**