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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

### ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING ASSESSMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR IRRIGATION ACTIVITIES ON THE FARM CONELLAN, GOBABIS DISTRICT

#### 1. Introduction

Geo Pollution Technologies (Pty) Ltd was appointed by Mr. C Ackermann (the Proponent) to undertake an environmental assessment for irrigation activities on his farming unit in the Gobabis District. The farming unit consists of Portion 2 and the Remainder of Farm Conellan No. 247 (Figure 1). The Proponent is in the process of developing 200 ha for irrigation (100 ha on each portion of Conellan) and 100 ha for dryland cropping. The main produce cultivated will be maize, wheat and pecan nuts. Of these, a pecan nut orchard of 2,000 trees has already been established, while maize and wheat cultivation have not been initiated. Irrigation for maize and wheat will be from production boreholes by means of centre pivot, while drip irrigation systems are already employed for the pecan nut orchard. In addition to crop cultivation the Proponent also conducts cattle farming.

The environmental assessment will include all operational activities associated with the irrigation and agricultural activities of the Proponent. It includes handling and storage of pesticides and fuel, cultivation techniques and waste disposal.

An environmental clearance certificate (ECC) for the operations is required as per the Environmental Management Act No. 7 of 2007 (EMA). A scoping environmental assessment report (SR) 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.

#### 2. The purpose of this document

With this background information document (BID), GPT aims to provide interested and affected parties (IAPs) with information about the project and interact with them regarding it. IAPs are therefore invited to register with GPT for the project in order to:

- ♦ Provide GPT with additional information which should be taken into account in the assessment of impacts;
- ♦ Share any comments, issues or concerns related to the project; and
- ♦ Review and comment on the reports (SR and an EMP).

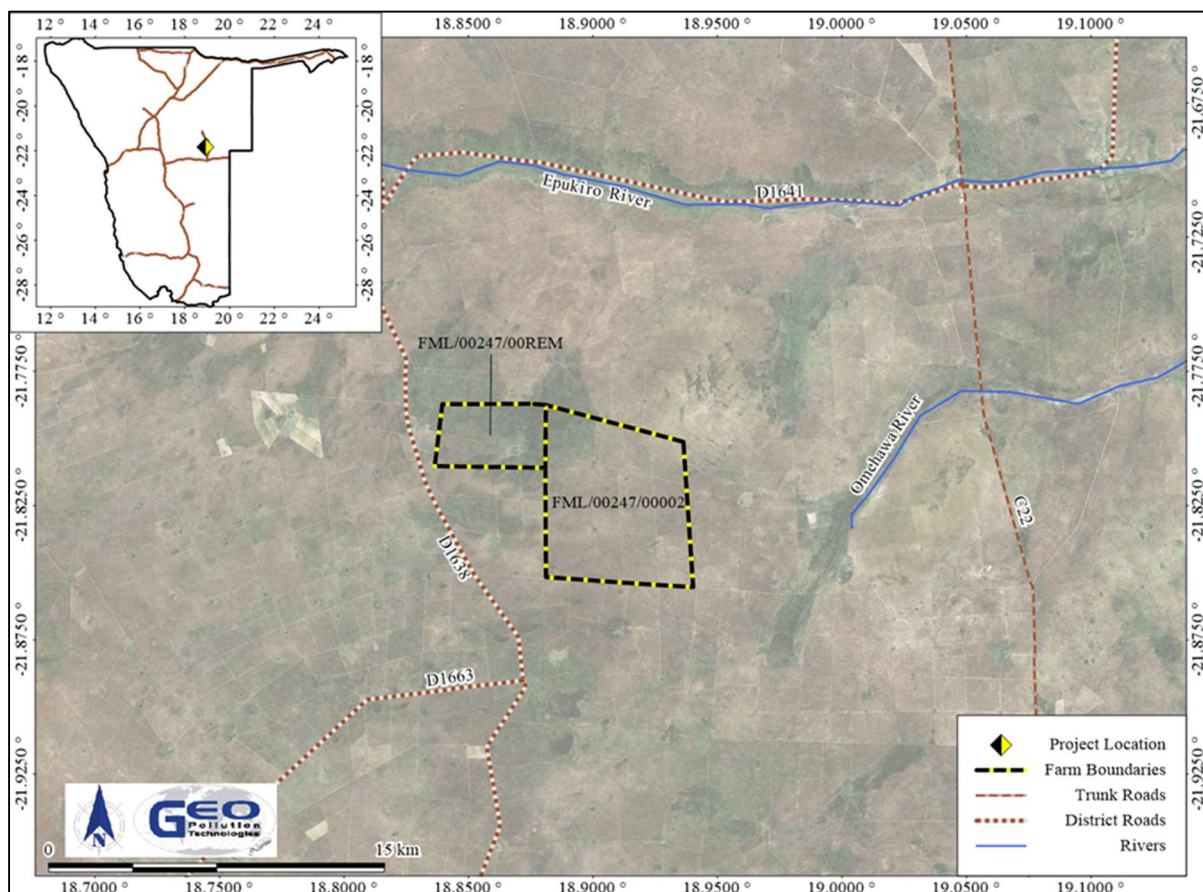
#### 3. Project Description

Activities associated with the project have been divided into the following phases: planning, maintenance/construction, operational and the decommissioning phase. A brief outline of expected activities for each phase is detailed below.

##### 3.1 Planning Phase

While planning for operations, construction / maintenance activities and decommissioning of the farm, it is the responsibility of the Proponent to ensure they are and remain compliant with all legal requirements. The Proponent must also ensure that all required management measures are in place prior to and during all phases, to ensure potential impacts and risks are minimised. Typical planning activities include:

- ♦ Obtain permits and approvals from local and national authorities including a water abstraction permit from the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform and a consumer fuel installation certificate from the Ministry of Mines and Energy.
- ♦ Make provisions to have a health, safety and environmental coordinator to implement the EMP.
- ♦ Ensure provisions for a fund to cater for environmental incidents risks/pollution and ecological restoration are made.
- ♦ Ensure all appointed contractors and employees enter into an agreement which includes the EMP.
- ♦ Establish and/or maintain a reporting system to report on aspects of construction activities, operations and decommissioning as outlined in the EMP.



**Figure 1: Project Location**

### 3.2 Maintenance / Construction Phase

Maintenance continues on a daily basis and may include some construction activities. Maintenance include minor repairs to infrastructure, general upkeep of buildings, servicing of vehicles and farm implements, etc.

### 3.3 Operational Phase

The main operational activities include: land clearing and preparation; planting; water abstraction and irrigation; pest control; harvesting and transport. Maize and wheat will be cultivated on a rotational basis. A consumer fuel installation of one 2.2 m<sup>3</sup> tank is present on site to supply diesel to tractors and other vehicles.

### 3.4 Decommissioning Phase

Decommissioning is not foreseen during the validity of the environmental clearance certificate. Should decommissioning occur at any stage, rehabilitation of the area may be required. Decommissioning will entail the complete removal of all infrastructure including buildings and underground infrastructure. Any pollution present on the site must be remediated.

## 4. Preliminary Identified Impacts

During the environmental assessment all components of the environment will be considered, however only those components which are being impacted on significantly or are deemed to be sensitive will be assessed. These include the following:

- ◆ Health and safety risks,
- ◆ Soil and groundwater pollution.
- ◆ Over abstraction of groundwater,
- ◆ Fire,
- ◆ Waste and effluent generation and disposal,
- ◆ Traffic,
- ◆ Noise,
- ◆ Visual impact,
- ◆ Ecosystem and biodiversity impacts,
- ◆ Socio-economic contributions.

## 5. Getting Involved

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

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

All contributions 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 SR.

The public participation process will remain ongoing during the environmental assessment. However, all comments and concerns should be provided to Geo Pollution Technologies by 30 November 2020 to ensure incorporation into the final report.

The project team may be contacted at:



**Geo Pollution Technologies (Pty) Ltd.**  
Telephone: (+264-61) 257411  
Fax: (+264) 88626368  
e-mail: [gpt@thenamib.com](mailto:gpt@thenamib.com)

### **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.*