

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING ASSESSMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR
IRRIGATION BASED AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES ON FARMS BOMBAY AND
BRISBANE NOORD, OSHIKOTO REGION
BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT**



Prepared by:



Prepared for:

Grünheim Farming cc

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1 INTRODUCTION

Geo Pollution Technologies (Pty) Ltd was appointed by Grünheim Farming CC (the Proponent) to undertake an environmental assessment for irrigation activities on the adjoining farms Bombay FMB/670 and Portion 1 of Brisbane Noord FMB/01342 in the Oshikoto Region (Figure 1-1). Currently the Proponent irrigates a combined area of 256 ha from production boreholes on the two farms. Pending the outcome of an environmental assessment, the total water abstraction per year, may be increased. Crop cultivation will focus on vegetable and citrus production which will mainly be irrigated by means of centre pivot, drip and micro sprayer systems.

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. The environmental assessment will include all operational activities associated with the agricultural activities of the Proponent.

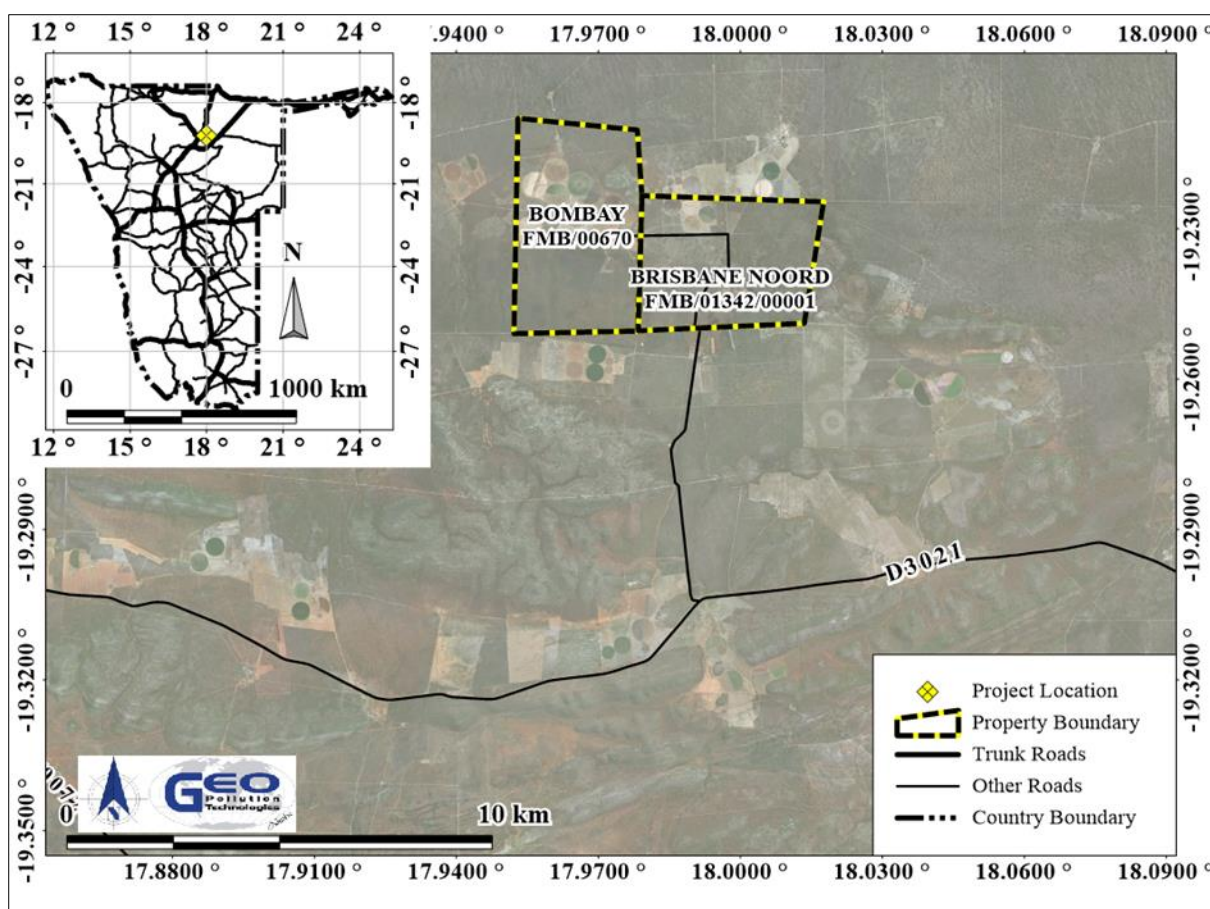


Figure 1-1 Project location

2 PURPOSE OF THE BID

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. All 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 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 farms, 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 Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform.
- ◆ Make provisions to have a health, safety and environmental coordinator to implement the EMP.
- ◆ Ensure provisions for a fund to cater for environmental incidents (e.g. pollution) and ecological restoration are made.
- ◆ Ensure all appointed contractors and employees enter into agreements which include the EMP.
- ◆ Establish and/or maintain a reporting system to report on aspects of construction activities, operations and decommissioning as outlined in the EMP.

3.2 CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE PHASE

Some construction activities will form part of the development of the farms. Maintenance continues on a daily basis and may also include some construction activities. Maintenance include minor repairs to infrastructure, general upkeep of buildings, servicing of vehicles, etc.

3.3 OPERATIONAL PHASE

The main operational activities pertains to land clearing and preparation, planting, water abstraction and irrigation, pest control and harvesting. High value crops are produced in the form of vegetables, maize and citrus. Historically, areas of both farms were cleared for a combination of dryland and irrigation-based crop cultivation. However, current areas being irrigated, by means of centre pivot systems, amount to approximately 200 ha on Farm Bombay and 65 ha on Farm Brisbane Noord. Both farms have the potential to increase production areas. Historically cleared areas for crop cultivation across both farms, excluding the existing and potential irrigation areas, amount to approximately 380 ha. Active rangeland improvement was and is continually conducted over portions of the farm. All areas which have undergone rangeland improvement (through bush-thinning) amount to approximately 28 ha. Water for irrigation is abstracted from two registered, production boreholes located on the farm Brisbane Noord and from three registered, production boreholes on farm Bombay. Operations also include activities typical of farming, inclusive of management of support services such as electricity supply, waste handling and domestic effluent disposal.

3.4 DECOMMISSIONING PHASE

Decommissioning is not foreseen during the validity of the ECC. Decommissioning will however be assessed. 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. Pollution present on the site, if any, must then be remediated.

3.5 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 risks
- ◆ Waste and effluent generation and disposal
- ◆ Traffic
- ◆ Noise
- ◆ Visual impact
- ◆ Ecosystem and biodiversity impacts
- ◆ Socio-economic contributions

4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

GPT 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.

The project team may be contacted on the contact details below



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.