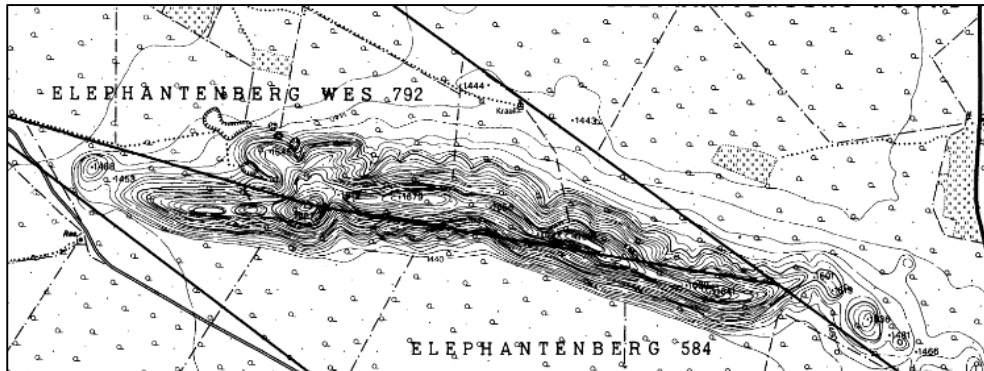


**ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING ASSESSMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR IRRIGATION-BASED AGRICULTURAL
ACTIVITIES ON PORTION 10 OF THE FARM ELPHATENBERG,
OTJOZONDJUPA REGION**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT



Prepared by:

Prepared for:



Edible Sunflow Oils CC

June 2024

1 INTRODUCTION

Geo Pollution Technologies (Pty) Ltd was appointed by Edible Sunflow Oils CC (the Proponent) to undertake an environmental assessment for irrigation-based agriculture activities on Portion 10 of the farm Elephantenberg in the Otjozondjupa Region (Figure 1-1). The Proponent plans to cultivate 170 ha of which 20 ha will be irrigated and 150 ha is planned to be used for dry land crop cultivation. Irrigation will be from boreholes with centre pivot systems. Pending of an environmental assessment, the total water abstraction per year, may be increased. The main crops to be cultivated are brazgrass, ryegrass, rhodes grass, and sorghum.

An environmental clearance certificate (ECC) for the development and operations of the farms 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 and will also include water abstraction and additional farming related activities such as bush clearing

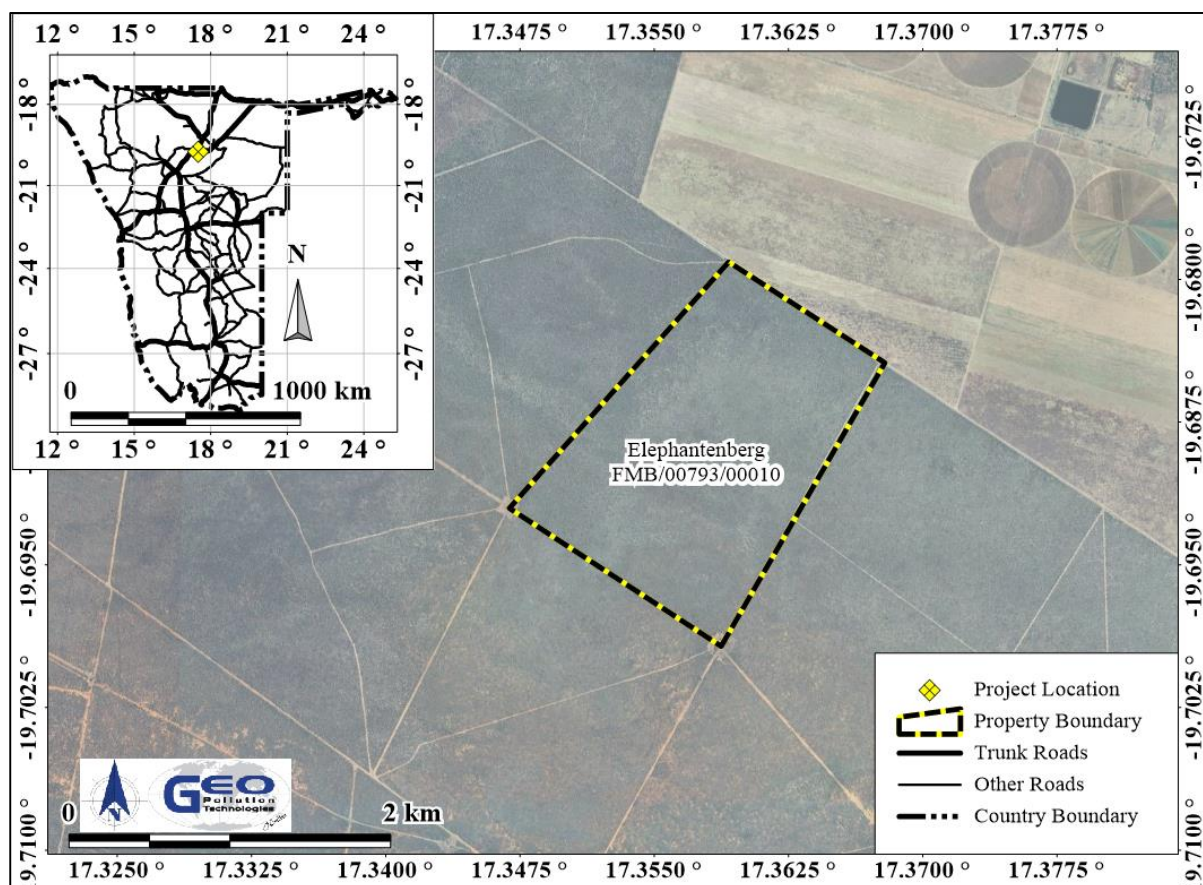


Figure 1-1 Project location

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 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

The Proponent owns the farm however all infrastructure required for the cultivation of crops, will be procured when the project receives approval. Activities associated with the project have been divided into the following phases: planning, 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 OPERATIONAL PHASE

The main operational activities will pertain to land clearing and preparation, planting, management of the crops during the growing period, the application of pesticides to the crops, harvesting of the crops and water abstraction. Groundwater is abstracted from production boreholes for irrigation purposes via centre pivot irrigation systems. General operations also include activities such as electricity supply, waste handling and sewage disposal.

3.3 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.

3.4 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:

- ◆ Socio-economic contributions
- ◆ Health and safety risks
- ◆ Ecosystem and biodiversity impacts
- ◆ Soil and groundwater pollution
- ◆ Groundwater over-abstraction
- ◆ Fire risks
- ◆ Waste and effluent generation and disposal
- ◆ Traffic
- ◆ Noise
- ◆ Visual Impact

4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

GPT 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 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.