



RECORD OF MEETING/DISCUSSION/ACTION LIST

Date: 11/04/2023 Location: Webmeeting File No: 01/04/42/142A/01
Time: 11:00 – 12:00

Note: The minutes are not intended as a verbatim transcript of the meeting, but rather a summary of the salient discussions which took place during the meeting.

Subject	: MOKOLO AND CROCODILE RIVER (WEST) WATER AUGMENTATION PROJECT (PHASE 2A) (MCWAP-2A): RIVER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RMS) PRE-APPLICATION MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT (DFFE)	
Present	:	Sindiswa Dlomo (SD) DFFE
		Thulisile Nyalunga (TN) DFFE
		Donavan Henning (DH) GBN-JV
		Deon Esterhuizen (DE) GBN-JV
		Minenhle Luthuli (ML) GBN-JV
Apologies	:	Sophia Tlale (ST) TCTA
		Shaun Davis (SD ¹) TCTA
		Jabulani Maluleke (JM) DWS
Distribution	:	All present and apologies

Description:	By	Action
1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION		
<p>DE welcomed and acknowledged all present and requested introductions around the virtual table. TN advised that she is the allocated Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) case officers.</p> <p>DE presented the proposed Agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Introduction • Project Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Project Background ii) River Management System • Previous Discussion with DFFE • RMS identified Gauging Weirs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Phase 1: Screening Stage ii) Location of gauging weirs and expected work Legal Requirements iii) Public Participation Process iv) Environmental Authorisation Application Programme • Close of meeting <p>The proposed Agenda was adopted for the Pre-Application Meeting.</p>	ALL	

<p>2. PROJECT OVERVIEW</p>		
<p>a. DE presented the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mokolo Crocodile River (West) Water Augmentation Project (MCWAP) (Phase 1): Augment the supply from Mokolo Dam. Phase 1 operational (June 2015). • Mokolo Crocodile River (West) Water Augmentation Project (Phase 2A) and its River Management System (RMS) component • Project Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DFFE Environmental Authorisations for MCWAP 2A first issued on 18 March 2019 and second issue on the 29 July 2022 (DFFE Ref No. 14/12/16/3/3/2/1100). ○ DMRE Environmental Authorisation for a total of thirty (30) borrow pits. Seven (7) Borrow Pit issued on the 05 September 2022 (DMRE Ref No. LP30/5/1/3/3/2/1 (003111,312,314,315,316 & 317 BP) EM and Twenty-three (23) Borrow Pits issued on 06 January 2022 the DMRE Ref No. LP30/5/1/3/3/2/1 (00257) EM. <p>b. The components of the River Management System consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Four (4) existing DWS dams, e.g. Hartbeespoort Dam ○ Thirteen (13) existing river flow gauging stations ○ Smart metering of direct abstraction ○ Smart metering of indirect abstraction (boreholes) ○ An Integrated Operational Centre ○ As part of the Environmental Authorisation, three (3) river flow gauging stations (Paul Hugo flow gauging weir, Sand River flow gauging weir and Bierspruit flow gauging weir) were approved DFFE Ref No. 14/12/16/3/3/2/1100. ○ A Data Communication Network 		
<p>3. PREVIOUS DISCUSSION WITH DFFE WITH REGARDS TO RMS</p>		
<p>DE advised that in the meeting held on the 21 April 2021, the Applicant and DFFE discussed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RMS itself does not trigger a Listed Activity. • Possible triggers could be new river outlets, maintenance work at existing flow gauging weirs, conveyance capacity (river bank manipulation) in the Crocodile River (West) (and Data Communication Network). • The extent of these activities were not defined at that stage. • In order to have a functional RMS planned RMS management and maintenance activities must be incorporated into the Consolidated Construction Environmental Management Programme (CEMP_r) for approval. 		

4. RMS IDENTIFIED GAUGING WEIRS		
<p>DE advised that a site visit on the 6-7 December 2022 was held where thirteen (13) river flow gauging weirs were investigated. From this site visit the team determined that three (3) gauging weirs will require expansion / upgrade intervention. These activities were identified as triggering Listed Activities as defined in terms of Sections 24(2) and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998). Three of the flow gauging weirs required for the RMS only require recalibration and some maintenance work, which do not trigger listed activities.</p> <p>DE defined the activities for each flow gauging weirs, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Beestekraal Weir on the Crocodile River (West) <p>There is re-growth of vegetation and silting on the gauging weir. Desilting and removal of the vegetation is required.</p> <p>Erosion protection is required at this specific site. The gauging weir structure to be demolished and reconstructed, without changing the existing footprint.</p> ii. Atlanta Weir on the Crocodile River (West). <p>The riverbanks require erosion protection. Further, the construction of a gabion structure within the river reach will direct the flow over the flow gauging weir to ensure accurate flow measurement.</p> <p>Access roads on the two (2) banks, will be required.</p> iii. Paul Hugo Weir on the Crocodile River (West) <p>The MCWAP2 Environmental Authorisation included the construction of a flow gauging weir downstream of the existing Paul Hugo irrigation dam. This approval only defined the location (coordinates) for this site. The weir footprint as well as construction footprint were not available at the time of drafting the environmental impact report.</p> <p>Downstream of the Paul Hugo irrigation dam is an existing low flow section which is not useful and is to be closed off.</p> <p>There will be access roads on the two (2) parallel banks. What was also not defined during the initial environmental impact assessment process was the construction lay down areas.</p> <p>The other three (3) gauging weirs that are also existing weirs are to be recalibrated and maintained to ensure accurate flow measurement.</p> <p>TN asked if the application for basic assessment process and maintenance of the flow gauging weir will be combined. She advised that the applicant should consider including the maintenance management plans as part of the Basic Assessment Report (BAR). SD agreed with TN and added that if possible, and if time allows the applicant should provide a maintenance management plan for all the identified thirteen (13) gauging weirs. SD advised that it is to be noted that there is also a Public Participation Process element to the maintenance management plan.</p> 		

<p>5. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS</p>		
<p>a. DE highlighted that DFFE Screening Report results for agricultural theme was high at all three (3) flow gauging weirs and argued that there is no direct impact on the existing agricultural fields as illustrated on the presentation. DE added that there may be no need to appoint an agricultural specialist. The CEMPr has landscaping and rehabilitation specific requirements and can bring the site back to probably a better condition than it was previously.</p> <p>DE indicated that the paleontology theme is very high on the Atlantic flow gauging weir and the work required is within the river bed itself. DE added that Guidelines of Section 38 (1) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999) highlights what activities require investigation, and the proposed activities are not defined. Therefore, it may not be necessary to appoint a paleontologist. Additionally, what can be done is to engage with SAHRA, through a pre-application engagement.</p> <p>SD advised that protocol for the specialist assessment is very clear in terms of what must happen. DFFE will still require a compliance statement if the outcome screening report for agricultural theme and paleontology themes are high/ very high.</p> <p>SD added that DFFE has rejected Basic Assessments Reports (BAR) due to Assessment Practitioners (EAPs) not confirming screening tool by undertaking a site sensitivity verification. The main mistake that EAPs are making is assuming that because the sensitivity theme is medium or low it means they don't have to confirm these sensitivities. SD highlighted that even though there are themes that are low sensitivity and medium sensitivity, DFFE still requires at least a compliance report either by an EAP or specialist.</p> <p>b. SD advised that the final BAR should be submitted with a letter confirming the Strategic Integrated Projects (SIP) status of the MCWAP 2A. The confirmation letter should be from the relevant committee (TCTA and DWS to provide guidance), so that the time frames in terms of decision making are reduced. But if the signed letter is not part of the final submission, then the decision will follow normal time frames.</p> <p>DE indicated that engaging with the committee for signatures might take long, but Section 8(1)(a) read with Section 7(1) of the Infrastructure Development Act, as amended, 2014 (Act no. 23 of 2014) designates all the SIP projects. Phase 2A of the MCWAP: Limpopo has been included under SIP No. 19: Water and Sanitation. SD advised that this document can be attached and highlight the MCWAP 2A section. DE confirmed that he will share the above-mentioned document with the DFFE via e-mail.</p>	<p>GBN-JV</p>	<p>Closed</p>
<p>6. CLOSURE AND WAY FORWARD</p>		
<p>SD advised that the minutes should be shared with DFFE for approval.</p>		
<p>7. APPROVAL OF PRE-APPLICATION MEETING MINUTES</p>		
<p>Minutes Compiled for: Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)</p> <p>Approved By:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>_____</p> <p>(Thulisile Nyalunga)</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>_____</p> <p>Date</p> </div> </div>		