

SCOPING REPORT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND ROUTE
EVALUATION
PROPOSED 132 kV POWER LINE
FROM KOKERBOOM TO NAMIB SUBSTATION

Prepared for:



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APPENDICES:

- A: Background information document
- B: List of Windhoek Stakeholders invited to comment
- C: List of Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop stakeholders
- D: Copies of press notices
- E: Minutes of public meetings



1 Introduction

Enviro Dynamics (Pty) Ltd has been appointed to conduct a Route Evaluation and Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed new 132 kV power transmission line to run from the Kokerboom Substation at Keetmanshoop to the Namib Substation near Lüderitz.

The first step of this assignment has been to identify community and scientific concerns that need to be investigated during the study. This document reports on this scoping exercise undertaken during March 2004.

2 Methodology

The steps undertaken during scoping have been the following:

- 2.1 A technical clarification meeting was held with NamPower staff on 6 February 2004 during which the rationale for the project was explained, and the various alternatives, which NamPower considered, were explained.
- 2.2 A site visit was undertaken to the Aus Substation near Windhoek where similar pylons and conductors could be viewed and photographed. Mr Cronje Loftie-Eaton explained the components that need to be added to the existing two substations near Keetmanshoop and Lüderitz.
- 2.3 Documents of similar studies (Route Selection and EIA of 220kV power line from Van Eck to Walvis Bay, and Kokerboom-Obib 400kV power line EMP, (by Walmsley Environmental Consultants for NamPower) World Bank Guidelines and SAPP Guidelines were studied. Issues emanating from these reports and guidelines were incorporated.
- 2.4 All relevant stakeholders were identified. This was done in collaboration with NamPower, SAIEA, the regional and local councils, MET, Farmers Union, and tourism organisations. All representing organisations forwarded the information to their members.
- 2.5 The list of directly affected farmers was drawn from the GIS database compiled for the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation in 2003. This database is being updated as new information comes to light.
- 2.6 A Background document was compiled in collaboration with NamPower, which was distributed during the consultation process (See Appendix A).
- 2.6 Windhoek stakeholders were invited, mostly via e-mail to comment on the proposed project (See Appendix B).
- 2.7 The Directorate of Environmental Affairs, a key authority who would review the reports, was visited on Thursday 8 April 2004, to ensure that they are updated on the process followed, and can express their issues and concerns individually.
- 2.8 Two public meetings were organised, one in Keetmanshoop and the other in Lüderitz on 16 March 2004.
- 2.9 Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop stakeholders were invited to the meetings via telephone, fax and e-mail as appropriate (see the invitees in Appendix C).
- 2.10 Farm owners were telephonically invited to the meetings. Some two or three owners could not be reached.



- 2.11 Press notices were placed in the Republikein, Namibian and the Observer (see Appendix D).
- 2.12 The NBC, and local newspapers including the Suiderstem, and Lüderitz Buchter were sent the information and invited to the meetings. Articles, subsequently appeared in the press, and the project was reported on the NBC.
- 2.13 Local well-visited offices, such as Agra, and the town councils, were requested to place the information on their notice boards.
- 2.14 NamPower placed the background document on their website. Updated information will be posted there as the study progresses.
- 2.15 Since there was no representation of the MET office at the Keetmanshoop public meeting, Mr Patrick Lane of that office was phoned to discuss issues. These have been incorporated into the list of identified issues.
- 2.16 Only a few farmers attended the meetings held in Keetmanshoop and Lüderitz. It was therefore not known if the inputs from attending farmers were representative of the farming community. To ensure that all issues are covered, this report was delayed until the sociologist returned from his field visit to the farmers in order to augment the list of issues that emanated from the scoping meetings. These have been worked into the issues covered in this report. A full account of the methodology followed during the social assessment will be included in the main EIA report.

3 Key issues

Key issues emanated from the scoping exercise, on which the study should be focussing, are discussed below.

3.1 Priority issues

Feedback from stakeholders, including the minutes of the two public meetings, is attached as Appendix E. The following list is put forward as priority issues needing focussed attention during the study. After mention of each issue, a list is provided of recommended actions needed to address each during the remainder of the investigation.

3.1.1 Use of local knowledge

The Lüderitz meeting strongly voted for the use of local knowledge during the study. The local MET office is specifically regarded as a key resource in this regard.

Actions needed:

- The specialists will be tasked to make contact with the local MET office during their field investigations for advice and guidance.



3.1.2 Reliability of supply

The Lüderitz meeting felt that if the new power line is to address reliability of supply to the town, then NamPower should create a ring network by extending the new line from the Namib Substation to Lüderitz.

Actions needed:

- NamPower should have a discussion on the proposal to extend the new line as requested, and report to the Consultant accordingly.

3.1.3 Respect for farmers during construction and maintenance

Most farmers experienced the actual construction of a transmission line across their farms and have a very good idea of the problems they can expect with the construction of the new line. The general perception held is that the contractors/subcontractors and consequently NamPower have no respect for the farmers or their rights but are always ready to ask permission to use their land when needed. Although most farmers do not object to the construction of yet another line, hostility exists towards NamPower amongst some of the farm owners. In two cases, very strong feelings exist against the construction of the line and dedicated negotiations will have to enter into with these farmers.

All the farmers consulted wish to set certain conditions, mainly related to operational procedures, control and monitoring of constructions teams, before they will fully support the project. These procedures should relate to issues such as access to farms, respect for privacy, respect for farm infrastructure and livestock, procedures to be followed during construction and maintenance, measures to avoid degradation on farms and control and monitoring of construction teams to ensure that they stick to the rules.

Most farmers feel it is unfair to have to accommodate two or three parallel power lines on their farms without access to power on that farm.

Actions needed:

- Farm owners request that operational procedures be introduced to address all these types of issues. In order to protect biophysical elements, stakeholders concerned with fauna and flora (specifically the MET office) also requested sound operational procedures that focus on protection of biodiversity.
- Practical operational procedures in the EMP, protecting landowners' rights and valuable natural resources, taken seriously during implementation of the project will be crucial.

3.1.4 Important habitats and biodiversity hotspots

The Lüderitz meeting voted for special protection at Tsuachaib and Garub as hosting important plant species.

Although mentioned but of lower priority during the meetings, potential bird strikes and impacts on the feral horses also deserve attention. Mr Patrick Lane, (of the Keetmanshoop MET office), mentioned during a telephonic conversation that all riverbeds, particularly the Fish and Konkieb Rivers should



be regarded as important habitats for birds and plants, and should be protected. Mitigation to prevent bird strikes such as bird flappers should be considered where the power line crosses riverbeds.

Action needed:

- All specialists shall visit the mentioned sites and assess their importance. They shall be in contact with the MET office for further guidance as regards sensitive areas in the study area.
- The aim will be to first avoid these areas altogether. If this fails, then valuable plants will have to be relocated before construction, and stringent mitigation measures will be needed during construction and operation.

3.1.5 Alternatives to the project

Despite the presentations given at the meetings to explain why NamPower has decided to opt for this alternative method of power supply, there was still a strong request that thorough homework needs to be done on potential alternatives, particularly wind power. See the comments of the Renewable Energy Bureau in this regard (Appendix E).

Actions needed:

- It is recommended that further contact be made with the members of the Renewable Energy Bureau to discuss their ideas and obtain further information with regard to wind power as an alternative to this project.

3.1.6 Job Creation

Stakeholders such as the Council representatives and the Legal Assistance Centre emphasised the need for optimum job creation during implementation and operation of the project. It was explained that this project would not be a labour intensive one, since specialised skills are required to install the equipment. The labour component of the project is less than 1%. Labour-intensive tasks such as digging of foundations are minimal. This issue still scored high despite the explanation.

At the Lüderitz meeting, attendants were concerned about the impacts related to the expectation of local employment creation by the project. Stakeholders observe that people move to the region when expectations are created of potential job opportunities. The meeting expected that this project would also contribute to this phenomenon. Since the meeting felt that there is nothing significant to be done to prevent this from happening, the issue would only be recorded as a point of concern.

Action needed:

- The project team needs to consider potential tasks of the project where local people can be appointed, including bush clearing, digging for foundations, relocation of plants under the supervision of NBRI and MET, etc.
- Potential indirect employment creation through sourcing of materials from local suppliers should also be considered.



- The applicable requirements need to be included in the construction contracts.

3.2 Other issues

The following issues were not perceived as being a priority at the public meetings, i.e. they received the lowest score when priorities were selected. Nevertheless, they should also receive attention during the investigation.

3.2.1 Integration with regional development planning

Power supply to projects planned in the region needs to be considered. This would reduce the perceived ad hoc nature of the project (reactive response to the needs of one client). Power supply to future development at towns and villages in the area, and the planned Neckartal dam were mentioned. Co-ordination with the rehabilitation of the existing railway line and its plans should be ensured. Generally, NamPower should be aware of forthcoming developments in the region and see whether power could be supplied via this line.

Meeting participants noted that the project should in general be geared towards spurring on and supporting economic development in the region.

Action required:

- Investigate the plans concerning the Neckartal Dam, and discuss with NamPower as needed.
- Confirm the locations of facilities needed for the railway line and confirm compatibility with this project.
- Study the Karas Regional Plan and list potential projects that could be considered for power supply through this project.

3.2.2 Visual impact

At the Lüderitz meeting the issue of protecting visual resources especially at Tsaukeib and before Namib substation was raised.

Action needed:

- Potential visual impacts should be considered during route evaluation, especially at scenic areas such as the ones suggested.
- Mitigation measures, particularly the colour of pylons near Lüderitz should be considered.

3.2.3 Cost recovery

Some stakeholders at both the public meetings were of the opinion that, since NamPower is providing power to one Client, only that Client should be recovering the costs of the project.

Action needed:

- A discussion with NamPower is needed to determine its policy with regard to cost recovery and specifically the approach for this project.



3.2.4 Corrosion

Potential corrosion, and its prevention should be considered.

Action needed:

- NamPower needs to confirm the intended measures against corrosion on this project.

3.2.5 Avoid crossings

It was agreed at the meeting that the power line should avoid crossing the main road as little as possible.

Action needed:

- Since the route has been designed to approximately follow the existing power line corridor, crossings will be limited to existing crossing points. This issue nevertheless needs to be considered during the route evaluation stage.

3.2.6 Archaeological sites

Although not listed during public consultation as an issue, the team is aware that there is potentially valuable archaeological material in the study area. Therefore, the existence of and potential damage to such sites shall be investigated.

4 The way forward

- Once specialists return from their field investigations, it is proposed to hold an interactive workshop during which the criteria for the route evaluation on GIS are thrashed out. This includes identification of and rating of sensitive areas.
- At the same meeting, the team can discuss a mitigation strategy for the project.
- This will be followed by the GIS analysis, and final identification of the route.
- The EIA will follow on the specifically agreed route.





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