Eco.plan (Pty) Ltd

PO Box 90093
Windhoek, Namibia

Tel: 061 232 861
Fax: 061 234 285
Email:
eco-plan@iafrica.com.na

Gerus – Mururani Gate Power Line
Environmental Impact Assessment

Minutes of the Otjiwarongo Public Meeting
18 May 2006, 10:00 at the Otjibamba Lodge

Preface to the Minutes

NamPower proposes to construct a new powerline from Gerus Substation (north of Otjiwarongo) to Mururani Gate. Eco.plan is undertaking an Environmental Assessment for this project. This document contains the minutes of the public meeting held in Otjiwarongo. Information about the project was presented by Eco.plan.

1. Attendance

An attendance list for the meeting is attached.

2. Purpose of the meeting

The purpose of the meeting is as follows: -

a) Introduce the project and background,
b) Present the technical aspects of the powerline,
c) Explain the route selection and Environmental Assessment Process (incl. Public Participation),
d) Discuss Environmental Aspects associated with the proposed powerline, and
e) Hear & record public concerns.

3. The Public Participation Process (PPP)

The public participation process is undertaken in terms of the EA Policy of Namibia to ensure that the issues and concerns of Interested & Affected Parties (I&APs) are taken into account in the project planning. The PPP involves the following steps and opportunities for public input. The issues raised help to define the scope of the environmental study.

- Public meetings (Windhoek, Otjiwarongo, Otavi and Grootfontein),
- Opportunity for written submissions to Eco.plan (by email, fax or post),
- Circulation of minutes of meetings,
- Registration of Interested & Affected Parties to facilitate further communication,

- Distribution of a Scoping Report for comment (when the preferred alignment has been finalised),
- All concerns expressed will be recorded in the Scoping Report, and
- The Environmental Assessment Report will be made available in public libraries, and by e-mail (on request).

There is therefore plenty of opportunity for public input in a process that is fully transparent.

4. The Environmental Assessment (EA)

The environmental assessment considers the environment in both the bio-physical and socio-economic environments.

The EA process will include the following: -

- Three phases:
    - Phase 1: Route Evaluation/Scoping to find the best route corridor and to map the environmental aspects at a scale of 1:250 000. There will be consultations with the public and the authorities and a Scoping Report will be produced
    - Phase 2: Environmental Assessment of the preferred route and mapping at a scale of 1: 50 000. The final EA report will be produced
    - Phase 3: An Environmental Management Plan for construction and operation will be drawn up and include Environmental Specifications that will be set out in contractual documents,
- Input from the public participation programme will help to define the scope of the investigations for EA,
- Various specialist studies include ecological (flora) - Ben Strohbach, ornithological - Mr. Chris van Rooyen and archaeological - Dr. John Kinahan,
- The impacts identified will be assessed in terms of the geographical extent, duration, intensity, probability of occurrence, and the significance of the impact to a decision on whether to approve the project,
- Ways to mitigate potential impacts will be investigated and discussed with the technical team, and
- An EA Report will be compiled and submitted to MET (Ministry of Environment & Tourism) for approval.

5. Questions, Issues & Concerns

The proposed power line route was discussed and the following comment was made by Mr. Pedro Maritz:

- I thought that this meeting was pertaining to the Auas-Gerus Line, I now however see that it is not and have no further comments as the Gerus-Mururani Gate Line does not affect me.

Mr. Maritz was thanked for his attendance.

6. Way Forward & Closure

Due to the low attendance of the public meetings two focus group meeting will be held on the 19th of June 2006 in Otavi at the Khorab Safari Lodge and in on the 20th June 2006 in Grootfontein at the Courtyard Guest House. All farm owners along the proposed power line route will be invited to the focus group meetings in order to discuss the proposed power line in greater detail and to hear and record any issues or concerns the farmers may have with the proposed power line.