



20 August 2021

Dear Interested and Affected Party,

RE: NOTIFICATION OF THE RELEASE OF A BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT FOR A 30-DAY COMMENT PERIOD FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF SIX SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) FACILITIES (I.E. AARDVARK SOLAR FACILITIES), AND VARIOUS ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, NEAR COPPERTON, IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE (DFFE REFERENCE NUMBER: To be assigned)

Notice is hereby given that the Project Developer, ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd¹ (hereinafter referred to as ABO Wind), is proposing to develop six Solar Photovoltaic (PV) power generation facilities and associated Electrical Grid Infrastructure (EGI), north-east of the town of Copperton and south-west of the town of Prieska, in the Siyathemba Local Municipality and Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality, in the Northern Cape Province. Each project will have a specific Project Applicant, as described below. The generation capacity of each PV Facility will range from 200 Megawatts alternating current (MWac) to 250 MWac. The developable area (i.e. project footprint) for each PV Facility and associated infrastructure will range from approximately 283 to 491 hectares.

Each solar PV facility will have a range of infrastructure, such as, but not limited to, a solar field; building infrastructure; on-site substation complexes; Lithium Ion or Redox Flow Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS); temporary construction laydown areas; internal roads; upgrading of existing access roads; fencing; storm water channels; panel maintenance and cleaning areas; underground low voltage cables or cable trays; and internal underground power lines. The proposed Solar PV facilities will connect to the national grid at the existing Eskom Kronos Substation. The power lines will have a capacity of 132 kV and will be routed within a 300 m wide corridor that will be assessed. Table 1 indicates the 11 projects being proposed, as well as the respective Project Applicants.

Table 1: Project and Applicant Details

Project	Project Applicant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 1 to Project 6: Aardvark Solar Facilities 1 to 6 and associated infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aardvark Solar Facility 1 (Pty) Ltd Aardvark Solar Facility 2 (Pty) Ltd Aardvark Solar Facility 3 (Pty) Ltd Aardvark Solar Facility 4 (Pty) Ltd Aardvark Solar Facility 5 (Pty) Ltd Aardvark Solar Facility 6 (Pty) Ltd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 7: Collector Station and incoming 132 kV Overhead Power Lines from each on-site substation complex at the Solar PV Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 8: 132 kV Overhead Power Line (i.e. Aardvark – Kronos West) from the Aardvark Solar Facilities to the Eskom Kronos Substation, including an upgrade and expansion of Electrical Infrastructure at the Eskom Kronos Substation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 9: 132 kV Overhead Power Line (i.e. Aardvark – Kronos East) from the Aardvark Solar Facilities to the Eskom Kronos Substation, including an upgrade and expansion of Electrical Infrastructure at the Eskom Kronos Substation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 10: 132 kV Overhead Power Line from the Aardvark Solar Facilities to the Cuprum Substation, via the Copperton Wind Energy Facility (WEF) (including extensions thereto); upgrades of the existing 132 kV Overhead Power Line from the Copperton WEF to the Cuprum Substation; and proposed development or upgrades of an existing 132 kV Overhead Power Line from the Cuprum Substation to the Eskom Kronos Substation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 11: 132 kV Overhead Power Line from the Aardvark Solar Facilities to the Cuprum Substation, via the Garob WEF (including extensions thereto); upgrades of the existing 132 kV Overhead Power Line from the Garob WEF to the Cuprum Substation; and proposed development or upgrades of an existing 132 kV Overhead Power Line from the Cuprum Substation to the Eskom Kronos Substation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd

¹ ABO Wind renewable energies (Pty) Ltd is the holding company. Various subsidiary companies will serve as the Project Applicants. Details of the subsidiary companies are indicated above.

The proposed Solar PV facilities, associated infrastructure and EGI (i.e. Projects 1 to 11) could potentially be constructed on the following farm portions. Note that for **Projects 7 to 11**, the affected farm portions apply to **both the power lines and the EGI corridor**, **unless** is it depicted by the following symbol (#), which indicates that the farm portion is affected by the EGI Corridor only:

Farm Portions Affected	Projects
Portion 9 of Farm Nelspoortjie 103	Project 1 Project 2 Project 7 Project 8 Project 9
Portion 8 of Farm Nelspoortjie 103	Project 1 Project 2 Project 7 Project 8 Project 9 Project 10 Project 11
Portion 7 of Farm Nelspoortjie 103	Project 8 Project 9 Project 10 Project 11
Portion 5 of Farm Nelspoortjie 103	Project 8# Project 9# Project 11
Portion 4 of Farm Nelspoortjie 103	Project 8# Project 10#
Remainder of Farm Blaauwbosch Poortjie 66	Project 3 Project 4 Project 5 Project 6 Project 7 Project 8#
Portion 3 of Farm Blaauwbosch Poortjie 66	Project 7#
Portion 2 of Farm Blaauwbosch Poortjie 66	Project 8#

Farm Portions Affected	Projects
Portion 1 of Farm Vogelstruisbult 104	Project 8 Project 9 Project 10 Project 11
Portion 5 of Farm Vogelstruisbult 104	Project 10 Project 11
Portion 10 of Farm Vogelstruisbult 104	Project 8 Project 9# Project 10 Project 11
Portion 25 of Farm Vogelstruisbult 104	Project 10# Project 11#
Portion 6 of Farm Vogelstruisbult 104	Project 10# Project 11#
Remainder of Farm Humansrus 147	Project 8# Project 9
Remainder of Farm Hoekplaas 146	Project 8 Project 9 Project 10# Project 11#
Portion 4 of Farm Klipgats Pan 117	Project 8 Project 9 Project 10 Project 11
Portion 7 of Farm Klipgats Pan 117	Project 8 Project 9 Project 10 Project 11

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998, as amended) (NEMA) and the 2014 NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations promulgated on 8 December 2014 and as amended on 7 April 2017 in Government Notice (GN) R326, R327, R325 and R324, and further amended on 11 June 2021 in GN 517, the proposed projects require an Environmental Assessment process. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has been appointed as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake the required Environmental Assessment. Projects 1 to 6 will each require a full Scoping and EIA Process. The remaining projects, i.e. Projects 7 to 11, will each require a Basic Assessment (BA) Process.

Approval has been granted by the Competent Authority, i.e. the National Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DFFE) to submit combined Applications for Environmental Authorisation (EA) in terms of Regulation 11 (4) of the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations (as amended), and the issuing of multiple EAs (should they be granted) in terms of Regulation 25 (1) and (2) of the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations (as amended). Therefore, **one** combined Scoping Report and **one** combined EIA Report will be compiled for **Projects 1 to 6**, as well as **one** combined BA Report for **Project 7**, **one** combined BA Report for **Projects 8 and 9**, and **one** combined BA Report for **Projects 10 and 11**, as indicated in Table 2 below. It is proposed that 17 separate EAs will be issued for each PV Facility and associated infrastructure (should they be granted).

Table 2: Summary of the Reporting Structure

Project Number	No. of Applications for EA	No. of BA/EIA Reports	No. of EAs
Projects 1 to 6	1 Combined Application for EA	1 Combined Scoping Report 1 Combined EIA Report	6 EAs
Project 7	1 Combined Application for EA	1 Combined BA Report	7 EAs
Projects 8 to 9	1 Combined Application for EA	1 Combined BA Report	2 EAs
Projects 10 to 11	1 Combined Application for EA	1 Combined BA Report	2 EAs

An integrated Public Participation Process (PPP) is being undertaken for the Scoping, EIA and BA Processes due to the proximity of the sites (i.e. the proposed projects will take place within the same geographical area) and similar project activities. In addition, the PPP will be undertaken in compliance with the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations (as amended), as well as the Public Participation Plan which was approved by the DFFE in June 2021.

In line with the above, as a registered stakeholder and Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) on the pre-determined project database, you are hereby notified of the release of the Background Information Document (BID) for the proposed projects for a 30-day comment period, which extends from **20 August 2021 to 20 September 2021** (excluding public holidays).

The BID can be accessed on the project website (<https://www.csir.co.za/environmental-impact-assessment>). As a supplementary mechanism, the BID can also be downloaded from the following link on Google Drive: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1xUGiNThTw3hqHn1bh1xHMdivmgtgSrE8?usp=sharing>

Should you wish to register as an I&AP and/or to provide comments on these proposed projects, you are kindly requested to e-mail, fax or mail your name, contact details and project-related comments to the EAP at the contact details provided below by **20 September 2021**:

- Attention: Kelly Stroebel
- Email: ems@csir.co.za
- P. O. Box 320, Stellenbosch, 7599
- Tel: 021 888 2400
- Fax: 021 888 2693

I&APs will be notified of the availability of and opportunity to comment on the following documents in due course (in order of availability):

- Draft Scoping Report for Projects 1 to 6;
- Draft EIA Report for Projects 1 to 6;
- Draft BA Report for Project 7;
- Draft BA Report for Projects 8 and 9; and
- Draft BA Report for Projects 10 and 11.

It is proposed to release the Draft EIA Report and Draft BA Reports in parallel, once the EIA Phase for Projects 1 to 6 has commenced (i.e. after decision-making on the Final Scoping Report for Projects 1 to 6). Additional details on when information will become available, as well as alternative ways to access information, will be shared once available.

In accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (Act 4 of 2013), CSIR will conduct itself responsibly when collecting, processing, storing and sharing any personal information collected for the purposes of PPP in terms of the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations (as amended).

By registering as an I&AP and / or submitting information and comments, you consent to the collection, collation, processing, and storing of such information and the use and disclosure of such information for the aforementioned purpose (<https://www.csir.co.za/csir-privacy-notice>).

We thank you in advance for your participation in these Scoping, EIA and BA Processes. Should you have any queries or require additional information please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned using the contact details provided above.



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