



ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES

26 March 2021

Department of Environment, Fisheries and Forestry (DEFF)

Attention: Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations

Environment House

473 Steve Biko Road

Arcadia

Dear Sir/Madam,

APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION FOR THE PROPOSED 15KM DEVIATION FOR THE ESKOM JUNO GROMIS 400kV TRANSMISSION LINE, MATZIKAMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, WESTERN CAPE

A site sensitivity verification process has been undertaken in order to confirm the current land use and environmental sensitivity of the proposed 15km deviation corridor ('project area') for the Eskom Juno Gromis 400kV transmission line as identified by the National Web-Based Environmental Screening Tool (Screening Tool). A site visit was conducted by the EAP on the 24 - 26 November 2020 to verify site conditions.

The table below provides CES's motivation for inclusion/not including the specialist studies as recommended by the DEFF Screening Tool Report, based on the outcomes of the site visit (refer to photos below) and site sensitivity verification process.

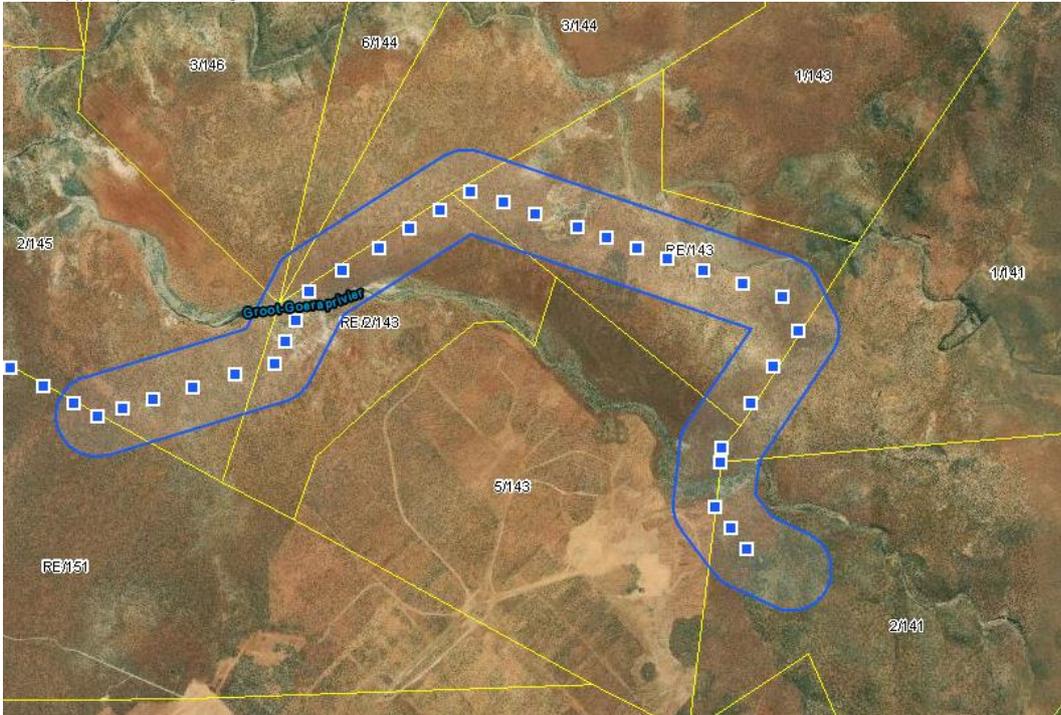
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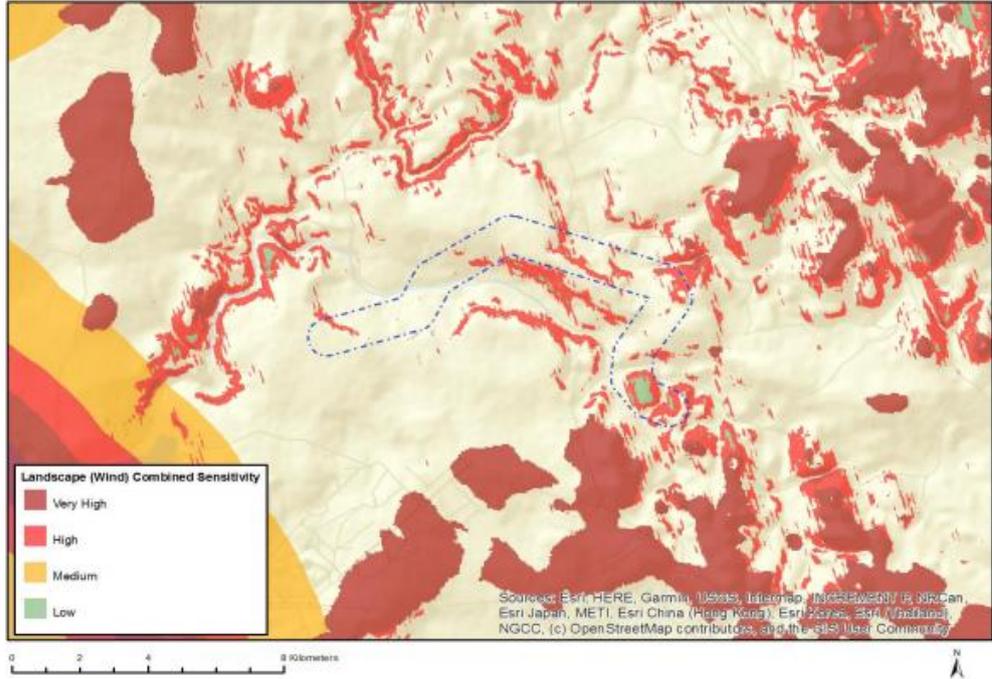
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DEFF Specialist Recommendation	CES response
<p>Agricultural Impact Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DEFF screening report rates the sites as largely ‘Low’ sensitivity. According to DAFF Land Capability (2016), the project area has a very low to low land capability rating and a grazing capacity of 45 Ha/Large Stock Unit, which is poor. 26 of the 32 proposed pylon structures fall on land zoned as ‘mining’ owned by Tronox Mineral Sands Pty Ltd. The other 6 pylons fall on neighbouring farm portions 2/145 and 2/141. As the footprint of the pylon structures are small, and grazing can continue beneath powerlines, it is the EAP’s opinion that an Agricultural Impact Assessment is not necessary, due to the limited impact it will have and due to the low land capability and grazing capacity of the project area. Any potential impact can be addressed within the BA Report itself (impact assessment), and appropriate mitigation measures will be included. 
<p>Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed 15km line deviation of the authorised 400kV Juno Gromis transmission line largely falls on land zoned as ‘mining’, owned by Tronox Mineral Sands Pty Ltd. The surrounding farm portions are used for small stock livestock grazing. As Landscape sensitivity is only generated under the ‘Renewable Energy’ and Wind category, the image below was generated through the national screening tool to provide the landscape sensitivity of the 15km line deviation project area. The project area is largely not sensitive, with small patches of high sensitivity due to having a slope ratio of between 1:4 and 1:10 gradient. The project area is remote, with the immediate visual receptor being that of the landowner, Tronox Mineral Sands Pty Ltd. As shown in the image below, the national screening tool confirmed that the project area is not close to any cultural heritage site, national route/freeway, main road, game farm, or mountain pass.

- It is, therefore, the EAP’s opinion that a Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment is not required.



Very High sensitivity	High sensitivity	Medium sensitivity	Low sensitivity
X			

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
High	Slope between 1:4 and 1:10
Low	Slope less than 1:10
Very High	Mountain tops and high ridges
Very High	Slope more than 1:4

Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment

- Toni Belcher (Aquatic and wetland specialists) has undertaken an Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment, due to the “Very High” sensitivity rating which was confirmed during the site visit undertaken by CES, due to the presence of aquatic CBA’s and the Groot and Klein Goerap rivers which traverse the project area.
- The findings of the Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment have been included in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) and attached within Appendix C of the Draft BAR.

Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

- Refer to the attached Heritage, Archaeological and Paleontological Impact Assessment undertaken by CTS Heritage Pty Ltd.



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Palaeontology Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the attached Heritage, Archaeological and Paleontological Impact Assessment undertaken by CTS Heritage Pty Ltd.
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A site visit was undertaken on the 24 November 2020 by the CES Ecologists (Ms Tarryn Martin and Ms Amber Johnson from CES: Botanical and Faunal Specialists) to confirm site sensitivities. A Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment, including an Animal and Plant species assessment, has been conducted (based on the relevant protocols), as the “Very High” sensitivity ratings of the national screening tool report for both terrestrial biodiversity and plant species, was confirmed during the site visit undertaken by CES, due to the presence of CBA’s including the Groot and Klein Goerap rivers which traverse the project area, as well as protected plant species within the project area. The findings and recommendations of the specialist assessment has been included in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) and attached within Appendix C of the BAR.
Animal Species Assessment	
Plant Species Assessment	
Avifaunal Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Jon Smallie of Wild Skies Pty Ltd has undertaken an Avifaunal Impact Assessment (refer to Appendix C) due to the nature of the proposed project.
Geotechnical Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Geotechnical Assessment will not be undertaken as part of the BA Process as this will be undertaken during the detailed design phase once final pylon positions are known (and authorised). Furthermore, this will be a recommendation within the BA Report.
RFI Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radio Frequency Interference (RFI) Assessment will not be undertaken as part of the BA Process, as the aspect of RFI falls within the mandate of the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology in terms of the Astronomy Geographic Advantage Act. The relevant competent authority will be notified of the proposed project during all public participation correspondence and invited to provide any comments.
Civil Aviation Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project area is not located near any airfields, as confirmed by the ‘Low Sensitivity’ rating of the national screening tool report. The Civil Aviation Authority will be notified of the proposed project during all public participation correspondence and invited to provide any comments.

Photographic evidence of study area:

Refer to the Draft Basic Assessment Report and specialist reports for photographic evidence of the project area.

Should you have any queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Caryn Clarke

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