

8.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

The public participation process is designed to provide information to and receive feedback from interested and affected parties (I&AP) for use throughout the EIA process, thus providing organisations and individuals with an opportunity to raise concerns and make comments and suggestions regarding the proposed project. By being part of the assessment process, stakeholders have the opportunity to influence the Project layout and design, and provide input into mitigation measures, technical solutions, and the Plan of Study for the EIA.

The main objectives of public participation are:

- i. to ensure that adequate, accessible and timely information is provided to those potentially affected by the Project;
- ii. to provide these groups with sufficient opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns;
- iii. to ensure that comments are received in a timely manner; and
- iv. to demonstrate that comments received are responded to and taken into account in Project decisions.

8.2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Public participation with regards to EIAs in South Africa is determined by the principles of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act 107 of 1998, as amended) and elaborated upon in 'GN 657: Guideline 4: Public Participation' (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 19 May 2006), which states that: "Public participation process means a process in which potential interested and affected parties (I&APs) are given an opportunity to comment on, or raise issues relevant to, specific matters."

Public participation is required for an environmental authorisation process in terms of the EIA Regulations GN R.982 (December 2014).

Chapter 6 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2014, describes the Public Participation Process to be followed when undertaking an EIA process.

Section 40 of Chapter 6 of the NEMA EIA Regulation 2014 states that:

(2) The public participation process contemplated in this regulation must provide access to all information that reasonably has or may have the potential to influence any decision with regard to an application unless access to that information is protected by law and must include consultation with-

- (a) the competent authority;*
- (b) every State department that administers a law relating to a matter affecting the environment relevant to an application for an environmental authorisation;*
- (c) all organs of state which have jurisdiction in respect of the activity to which the application relates; and*
- (d) all potential, or, where relevant, registered interested and affected parties.*

(3) Potential or registered interested and affected parties, including the competent authority, may be provided with an opportunity to comment on reports and plans contemplated in sub-regulation (1) prior to submission of an application but must be provided an opportunity to comment on such reports once an application has been submitted to the competent authority.

Taking the abovementioned requirements into account, ERM have undertaken the activities described in the following sections as part of the Public Participation Process.

8.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

The Sections below detail the public participation that has taken place to date, as well as that which is still to take place throughout the EIA Process.

8.3.1 Stakeholder database

- ERM was provided with a stakeholder database by Gold Fields. This was further developed by contacting each stakeholder and obtaining, where possible, email and postal addresses.
- ERM met with the Rand West Stakeholder Forum representatives on the 17th May and added their details to the database.
- ERM met with the adjacent landowners as well as the representative from the committee representing the employees grazing cattle on the land associated with the preferred alternative. This meeting was on 27 June 2017. The attendees' details were included onto the stakeholder database.
- Email correspondence was received from various stakeholders requesting to be listed as an I&AP. The stakeholder database was updated accordingly.

8.3.2 Background information document

A Background Information Document (BID) was developed which provides an introduction to the Project and the EIA process. This document is included in Annex C. BIDs were distributed via email and post to all I&APs on the stakeholder database. See Annex C. The BID provides an introduction to the Project and the EIA process.

8.3.3 *Scoping Phase Public Participation*

ERM undertook the following Public Participation activities during the Scoping Phase:

- Placed adverts in local print media;
- Erected site notices;
- Established a project website where the BID and DSR were uploaded for public comment;
- Notified Stakeholders through post, email and telephone of the availability of the DSR;
- Delivered copies of the Draft Scoping Report to the following local public libraries;
 - Westonaria Library;
 - Carletonville Library; and
 - Fochville Library.
- Facilitated an Open House Meeting on 7 June 2017.

These are discussed in further detail below.

Print advertisements

Newspaper advertisements were placed in 2 local newspapers:

- Carletonville Herald (26 May 2017); and
- Randfontein Herald (30 May 2017).

See Annex C.

Site Notices

Site notices were erected in accordance with the regulations on 19 May 2017 at the following locations:

- South Deep Training Centre;
- South Shaft Security Gate;
- Twin Shaft Security Gate;
- Westonaria Library;
- Carletonville Library; and
- Fochville Library.

See Annex C.

Establishment of Project Website

ERM established a project website under the following URL: www.erm.com/southdeepsolar. The Background Information Document and the Draft Scoping Report were Uploaded to this website and made available to the public for download.

Notification of Stakeholders

The Project BID and an announcement letter was emailed 85 stakeholders, and sent via registered post to a further 3 stakeholders. The announcement letter contained the following information:

- The nature of the proposed project;
- The details of the proponent;
- The legal requirements and Competent Authority;
- Announcement of the commencement of the EIA process;
- Notification that the Draft Scoping Report is available for comment and the locations where it may be accessed;
- Invitation to register as an Interested and Affected Party;
- Invitation to the Open House Meeting scheduled for 7 June 2017 from 12:00 – 16:00 at the Westonaria Community Hall.

These documents were available to the public for a 30 day comment period from 22 May 2017 to 27 June 2017. See Annex C

Public libraries

The Draft Scoping Reports were delivered to the following local public libraries:

- Westonaria Public Library;
- Carletonville Public Library; and
- Foschville Public Library.

The Draft Scoping Report was available at the libraries for the duration of the commenting period from 22 May 2017 – 27 June 2017.

Key Stakeholder Meetings

- Meeting with DMR to confirm the competent authority, provide project details and to define the process to be followed (8 March 2017)
- Rand West Stakeholders Forum (17 May 2017)
- Adjacent Land Owners (27 June 2017)
- Representative from the committee representing the employees grazing cattle on the land associated with the preferred alternative (27 June 2017).

See Annex C.

Open House Meeting

ERM held an Open House Meeting on the 7 June 2017 from 12:00 – 16:00 at the Westonaria Community Hall. Accordingly the following activities took place:

- On 5 June ERM conducted follow-up phone calls to key stakeholders to confirm they had received the notification material and enquire whether they would attend.
- A total of 16 key stakeholders confirmed they intended to attend the Open House Meeting.

On 07 June 2017, ERM held an Open House Meeting at the Westonaria Community Hall. The Meeting took the following format:

- Posters were erected to illustrate the following topics:
 - How a solar PV works;
 - The EIA process;
 - Construction of a Solar PV;
 - An Operational Solar PV; and
 - The Project Location.
- A presentation was displayed on a continuous loop outlining the following summary information from the Draft Scoping Report:
 - Objectives of the Open House Meeting;
 - Introduction to the Project Developer;
 - Introduction to ERM;
 - Project Need and Desirability;
 - Project Location;
 - Project Description;
 - Motivation for Project Site;
 - Project Alternatives; and
 - EIA Process.

One-on-one discussion sessions were held whereby stakeholders were given the opportunity to engage with the Environmental Assessment Practitioner from ERM and technical staff from EGP and Gold Fields South Deep Mine. Questions, issues, and concerns highlighted by stakeholders were recorded on an issues register.

The Open House Meeting was attended by 11 stakeholders from the following organisations:

- Rand West City Local Municipality;
- Bambanani Programme of Development;
- Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries;
- Rand West chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- Militha Concepts; and
- MKMVA Rand West City

See Annex C.

All comments received from Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) during the Scoping consultation period were recorded into a Comments and Response Report (CRR). EGP, Gold Fields South Deep Mine and ERM, in a

collaborative effort, provided responses to the comments and Issues raised by the I&APs. These can be seen below.

Table 8.1 below illustrates the comments and questions raised by the stakeholders who attended the Open House Meeting.

Table 8.1 Summary of Key Comments Raised during the DSR Consultation

Topic	Issue
Impacts on soils	Stakeholders wanted to know how the topsoil is planned to be managed. They were also concerned about what measures would be put in place to prevent soil erosion on site.
Socio-economic Impacts	Stakeholders wanted to know what kind of employment opportunities would be available to locals, and how many employment positions would be available for skilled and unskilled labour. They further suggested that the farm owners are considered for employment during the construction and operation of the power plant. In addition to this, they wanted to know whether there would be training programmes and what they would entail.
Livelihoods	The project site is currently being used as grazing land for the local cattle owners. There was great concern that should the cattle be stopped from grazing at the current location, they would resort to using one of the adjacent farm owner's land for grazing instead. The stakeholders wanted to know how this would be managed.
Project Equipment	There was great concern regarding the security at the project site. Copper cables, solar panels and other project equipment are bound to attract criminal activity. The stakeholders wanted to know how security would be managed throughout the life of the project. In addition, stakeholders were concerned about the possibility of sunlight reflecting off of the PV panels towards the homesteads where farmers live. A question was raised regarding the maintenance of the solar panels during the operation phase. Stakeholders wanted to know whether detergent would be used to clean the PV panels, and if so, how the contaminated runoff would be prevented from flowing into nearby watercourses.
Project Schedule	The general enquiry was with regards to the project schedule. Stakeholders wanted to know when the construction would begin and how long this phase would last.

Submission of Final Scoping Report (FSR)

The FSR was submitted to the DMR and various other authorities on 6 July 2017:

- 2 x hard copies to the DMR;
- 1 x hard copy to the DAFF;
- 1 x hard copy to the DWS;
- 1 x hard copy to the GDARD; and
- 1 x hard copy to the WRDM.

Authority Communication

- Correspondence in the form of an email was received from Muhammad Essop of the DEA stating that the competent authority for

the Project in question is the DMR. This email was received on 28 February 2017;

- Letter of acknowledgement of the EA was received from the DMR on 30 May 2017;
- Correspondence in the form of an email was received from Neil Scharnick of the GDARD stating that the competent authority for the project in question is in fact the DMR. This letter was received on 21 August 2017;
- Letter of acceptance of FSR was received from the DMR on 15 July 2017; and
- A letter was received from the Rand West City (RWC) Local Municipality to the effect that no rezoning is required since the Project site has already been zoned for mining, and the project will be supporting mining activities exclusively. This letter was received on 21 August 2017.

See Annex C.

8.3.4 EIA Phase Public Participation

Table 8.2 details the tasks which were undertaken as part of the EIA PP process.

Table 8.2 Tasks undertaken as part of the EIA PP Process

Activity	Description and Purpose
Release of draft EIR and EMP for Public Comment	The draft EIR and EMP document was made available for a 30-day comment period (28 August 2017 - 27 September 2017) to stakeholders and the relevant authorities. A notification letter was sent to all registered I&APs on the project database. This letter served to invite I&APs to comment on the draft EIR and invite them to the public meeting. Bulk SMSs were also sent to all the stakeholders listed in the stakeholder database as a reminder of the public meeting. The report was also made available online on the project website and at the Westonaria Public Library, Carletonville Public Library; and Foschville Public Library. All comments received were recorded in a Comment and Response Report which is included in Annex C of this report.
Public Meeting and Presentation	A public meeting was held inviting the I&APs to raise comments pertaining to the project. Date: 13 September 2017 Time: 17h30 to 19h30 Venue: Westonaria Community Hall

Activity	Description and Purpose
DMR Meeting	ERM, Gold Fields and EGP went to the DMR offices to present the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment to the DMR on 02 October 2017. This meeting also aimed to present a platform for the DMR to ask questions about the project. The minutes of this meeting and the presentation are included in Annex C of this report

Table 8.3 Summary of Key Comments Raised during the EIA Consultation

Topic	Issue
Employment Opportunities	Stakeholders wanted to know what kind of employment opportunities would be available to locals, and how many employment positions would be available for skilled and unskilled labour. They also raised the issue of the high unemployment rate for women in the WRDM. They wanted to know whether the proponent will make it a priority to employ women during the course of the project. Stakeholders also enquired about any skills transfer or training programmes which may have been done prior to enable locals to be involved in the project.
Community Development	Stakeholders wanted to know whether the Developer and Proponent were planning on contributing the 30% local beneficiation. Many were also interested in knowing whether it would be possible for the proposed solar PV power plant to supply the community with power. In addition, stakeholders were curious to know how the project had planned to empower local SMME's. A question was raised about using local suppliers during the course of the project. The stakeholders were curious to know whether the Developer would be using the same suppliers on the Mine's database, or if they would find their own – preferably local suppliers. The general concern here was around empowering local businesses and uplifting the community.
Communication	The general comment was with regards to the Developer keeping the communication channel open regarding the project. The community said that they are happy with the level of communication received about the progress of the project thus far, and they encouraged the Developer to keep it that way.
Livelihoods	The concern here was with regards to the grazing land. Stakeholders wanted to know how the project would account for the potential negative impacts associated with changing the grazing land for the cattle grazers.

8.3.5 Environmental Authorisation (Pending)

Once the final report has been submitted to the DMR and a decision issued registered I&APs will be notified of the decision and the statutory appeal period.