



CYMBIAN

ENVIRO-SOCIAL CONSULTING SERVICES

Date : 10th October 2007

Job No : ESC 146

Dear Authority / Stakeholder;

Minutes of the Authorities Focus Group Meeting: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Mooi-Mgeni River Transfer Scheme Phase 2 (MMTS2)

This document records the proceedings of the Authorities Focus Group Meeting for the Mooi-Mgeni River Transfer Scheme Phase 2 (MMTS2). The meeting was held at the uMgungundlovu District Municipality Offices on the 4th June 2007.

Cymbian would like to thank all who attended and participated and request that these participants ensure that their comments and inputs contributed at the meeting are accurately captured in this document.

Please direct comments to Mrs Paula Tolksdorff at

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Yours Sincerely

Paula Tolksdorff

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DEPARTMENT: WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





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MOOI-MGENI RIVER TRANSFER SCHEME PHASE 2 (MMTS-2) AUTHORITIES FOCUS GROUP MEETING – MINUTES

Venue: uMgungundlovu District Municipality Offices
Date: 4 June 2007
Time: 10:30-12:00

Present:

Members of the Project Team:

P. Teurlings	BKS (Pty) Ltd
P. Tolkdorff	Cymbian Enviro-Social Consulting
S. Holt	Cymbian Enviro-Social Consulting

Interested and Affected Parties:

Debra Msimanga	Umgeni Municipality
Siyabonga Zondi	Umgeni Municipality
Malindi Chauke	Umgungundlovu Municipality
D.L Fowler	Mpofana Municipality
M Khomo	Umgungundlovu Municipality
J Mkhize	Mpofana Municipality
M Dlungwana	Umgungundlovu Municipality
Bongi Dube	WSA uMgungundlovu Municipality

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

Abbreviation	Description
BID	Background Information Document
B&B	Bed and Breakfast
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
I&APs	Interested and Affected Parties
MMTS-2	Mooi-Mgeni River Transfer Scheme Phase 2
PP	Public Participation
PPP	Public Participation Process
RoD	Record of Decision
TCTA	Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority
WSA	Water Services Authority

1.	WELCOME AND OPENING
1.1	P Tolksdorff opened the meeting and welcomed all present.
2.	PURPOSE OF THE MEETING
2.1	<p>P Tolksdorff explained that the purpose of the focus group meeting is to note down issues regarding the proposed Mooi-Mgeni Transfer Scheme Phase 2 (MMTS-2).</p> <p>These issues will then be forwarded to the technical team for them to provide answers at a later stage.</p> <p>P Tolksdorff said this meeting hoped to provide structure and promote transparency.</p>
3.	INTRODUCTION OF THE PROJECT TEAM
3.1	P Tolksdorff indicated that a video prepared by BKS will be shown to provide background information about the project. The video will provide information as to how the water will be stored and transferred from one catchment to another.
3.2	P Tolksdorff indicated that everyone will be given a chance to raise issues and concerns.
4.	VIDEO - OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT
4.1	The background video was shown.
5.	STAKEHOLDERS ISSUES
5.1	P Tolksdorff indicated that she would like everyone with an issue to state their name, municipality or district that they are from and their position. She added that members of the project team present will answer questions that they are able to. If they are unable to answer a question they will forward the question/s to the relevant specialists to be answered at a later date.
5.1.1	P Tolksdorff indicated that the background information document (BID) distributed to the meeting has also been forwarded to all stakeholders. The BID includes information about the project, which companies are employed to do the EIA and specialist studies. The BID also includes information how stakeholders can participate within the process. She added that the BID also has a registration form attached.
5.2	MANDISA KHOMO –UMNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY – TOWN PLANNING
5.2.1	She indicated that she has no questions.
5.3	SIYABONGA ZONDI – MGENI MUNICIPALITY – ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OFFICER
5.3.1	He indicated that from the previous public meeting he took some notes and discussed them with other members of the municipality. The municipality has agreed that they are not opposed to the project and believe that the Dam will provide people with their water requirements.
5.3.2	<p>He mentioned that the Mgeni municipality have concerns with potential negative impacts of the dam on social dynamics e.g. relocation of people who are staying at farms that might be expropriated. He added that the Mgeni municipality believe that some people's lives depend on the farmers and if the farms are expropriated they may not have any skills or other means to sustain themselves.</p> <p>He asked if it will be possible for the Government to set up some funds for those people or devise a strategy in order to help those people in the future should their lives be disrupted.</p>
5.3.3	He added that the council felt it was essential that the expropriation process for the farmers should be properly conducted. Compensation must also be justly calculated. The Mgeni municipality believe that some of the farmers will be able to start over again from the compensation they will receive. However, the

	Mgeni Municipality are concerned about the impacts that the proposed dam will have on farm dwellers, since most of the affected farms are in the Mgeni Municipality.
5.3.4	He indicated that the Mgeni Municipality feel that those farm dwellers affected by the proposed dam need to be provided with new skills or be retrained.
5.3.5	He reiterated that they are not opposed to the dam and he is aware that the proposed development corridor project from Durban is on its way. He thinks that the proposed dam will be useful in the future.
5.3.6	<p>He indicated that they want to get assurance from the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) that the needs of the people in the Mgeni Municipality won't be compromised for the needs of people downstream.</p> <p>He reiterated that they are satisfied with the proposed dam as it will cater for some of the water needs of the surrounding municipalities. He added that they are currently facing a problem with the supply of water in the Nottingham Road area, and that the groundwater resource currently used is unreliable.</p> <p>He added that there are many proposed developments (e.g. proposed housing), which will create the need for water meters for each household.</p>
5.3.7	<p>He mentioned that the Mgeni Municipality have looked at all environmental aspects i.e. social, biophysical and economic and that as far as they know there is no evidence that building the dam will have a negative impact on the environment.</p> <p>He mentioned that they are however concerned about the issue regarding the inundation of the Inchbrakie falls and the impact on fauna and flora. They need assurance from DWAF that species that are known to exist there will be lifted and transferred to a suitable environment.</p>
5.3.8	S Zondi raised a concern that the prevalence of HIV / AIDS will be increased by the importation of ~500 construction workers for the project.
5.4	DEBORAH MSIMANG – MGENI MUNICIPALITY – WARD COUNCILLOR
5.4.1	D Msimang mentioned that she thought it is interesting that there will be a dam in their area, if in fact the development of the proposed dam proceeds.
5.5	JABULANI MKHIZE – MPOFANA MUNICIPALITY (TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNER)
5.5.1	He indicated that he hasn't been involved in the process much, and asked for clarification of the boundary between Mgeni municipality Mpofana and Mgeni districts. P Teurlings showed J Mkhize the boundary on an available map.
5.5.2	<p>J Mkhize asked if there would be any benefits of the proposed dam to the Mpofana district, as most of the dam falls within the Mgeni district. He went on to ask which of the two districts would be in charge of the dam.</p> <p><i>P Teurlings replied that the implementing agent will probably be the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority and the operating agent will probably be Umgeni Water, but the decision will come from DWAF.</i></p>
5.5.3	<p>J Mkhize asked how the dam will affect property values in Mpofana. He also asked if the dam will attract tourists.</p> <p><i>P Tolksdorff replied that the dam will probably increase the property values as there will be an increase in tourism. She added that the water will provide recreational activities and it will draw more people to the area. She did however add that that is not part of the technical team's scope.</i></p> <p>D Fowler said that when the Mearns dam was built, information about water resources management such as recreational usage, was only decided on after completion of the dam.</p> <p><i>P Teurlings indicated that a Water Resources Management Plan has been drafted and will be included in the Environmental Management Plan (EMP). He added that there are many bed and breakfast (B&Bs) in</i></p>

	<i>the Vaalekop area and Umgeni Water may build a pipeline to supply them with potable water.</i>
5.5.4	<p>P Teurlings indicated that Dr K Brugge has studied the impact on property values and it is likely that property values will increase. He also added that properties may be further subdivided at the discretion of the authorities concerned.</p> <p><i>P Tolksdorff asked J Mkhize if he had additional issues. He answered that he had no further issues.</i></p> <p>P Tolksdorff stated that additional issues could be sent via email.</p>
5.6	DUNCAN FOWLER – MPOFANA MUNICIPALITY – HEAD OF WATER AND SANITATION
5.6.1	He indicated that he has been involved with the project since the start, including the pre-feasibility study.
5.6.2	He asked what the minimum flow through the dam will be. He indicated that he currently extracts water from a weir some 200m downstream of where the proposed dam will be constructed. The weir has recently been repaired to hold back some of the river flow for extraction purposes. He added that it is on old weir dating back to the old Blue Ribbon Mill which was active in the area.
5.6.3	He added that they are supplying about 90 households from water extracted at the weir. They are currently limited to available water sources, and “chaos” erupts when breakdowns occur.
5.6.4.	<p>P Tolksdorff asked how much water is approximately consumed on a monthly basis by these 90 households.</p> <p><i>D Fowler replied that he did not know. He did, however, propose to find out and would let P Tolksdorff know. He added that it is not a large amount. He also mentioned his water purification plant that pumps water up to the top of the hill, 3 or 4 km from where the proposed dam wall is going to be. He added that many new houses are being built in Rosetta, and he has a concern that the whole of Rosetta is using French Drains. He said that it is a sensitive area with the spring grove stream running through all the houses. He stated that the municipality is currently busy with low cost housing which is still at the project management stage and water will be needed for that area; his existing plant will not be able to supply water for that area. He added that when tourists arrive in the holiday season they battle with water and that the residents are fed up with water supply issues.</i></p>
5.6.5	D Fowler added that money is set aside from the IDP to upgrade water supply and one of the suggestions was to have a water purification plant put up at one of the dams - Mearns or Spring grove.
5.6.6	He asked if the Mpozana Municipality will be allowed to have a tap off point on the transfer pipeline to use should they have problems in the short term.
5.6.7	D Fowler raised a concern with regard to the source of borrow material and environmental impacts associated with the construction of the new roads. He added that he does not think that the existing roads can be used unless they are upgraded.
5.6.8	<p>P Teurlings indicated that the reserve determination must take the Mpozana water works into account. P Teurlings also added that it may not be possible to draw off the pipeline as it will be pumped under pressure. D Fowler said it is possible, but perhaps they could have a pipeline coming directly from the dam. P Teurlings said a flow gauging weir and pump station will also be built downstream. D Fowler asked if they were aware of his weir. P Tolksdorff said that perhaps the two weirs could be combined. D Fowler said he would like to show the project team where the weir is located. P Teurlings said he would like to look at it that afternoon. [Postscript: P Teurlings met with D Fowler at 15:00 that same afternoon and took digital photographs of the weir.]</p> <p><i>P Teurlings also answered that the roads engineer had visited the site and indicated that the traffic impact will be minimal. The primary focus of traffic impact has shifted to the type of vehicle that can be accommodated by a given road. P Teurlings mentioned the R103 can accommodate the construction traffic at the expected 50 trucks a day. He added that the proposed location of the quarry is included in the EIA and is on Mr Berning’s farm. He indicated that the quarry material will be transported either by road or</i></p>

	<i>by conveyer belt. As it stands the current D146 leading to the proposed dam wall needs to be upgraded.</i>
5.6.9	<p>P Tolksdorff mentioned that many letters have been received regarding the D146 road. The road is also frequently traversed by school children. The letters have also mentioned potential dust and noise pollution.</p> <p><i>D Fowler indicated that there are people who grew up in Rosetta and don't want to see the town growing, and suggested that their issues should be taken into account.</i></p>
5.6.10	<p>P Teurlings mentioned that one of the important things, in terms of the road infrastructure, is to make sure that the provincial authority does not upgrade the road until construction is finished.</p> <p><i>D Fowler added the section from Nottingham Road to Balgowan is currently being resurfaced</i></p> <p>P Teurlings added that there are insufficient flag men.</p>
5.6.11	<p>P Teurlings mentioned that in terms of the quarry it will be up to the contractor to decide if he will use the quarry or if he will take the material from a commercial source. P Teurlings added that they are investigating the quarry and are compiling an environmental management programme report for the quarry. He added that the necessary applications for the quarry will take place.</p>
5.7	MALINDI CHAUKE – SANITATION OFFICER – WATER SERVICES AUTHORITY
5.7.1	<p>M Chauke indicated that since there will be a greater need for water as a result of the new developments that are currently taking place, the Water Services Authority (WSA) appreciate the progress on the proposed dam. She added that Cymbian Enviro-Social Consulting Services has received some of the comments from the WSA manager before the meeting started. M Chauke said her colleague Bonggi could be contacted should Cymbian Enviro-Social Consulting Services require more documents.</p>
5.7.2	<p>She indicated that at present the WSA don not have issues concerning the dam. The Sanitation Office of the WSA is currently focusing on rural sanitation issues, such as farm sanitation.</p> <p><i>P Teurlings asked if a sewage works was planned for the area. M Chauke replied that only basic sanitation is planned.</i></p>
6	GENERAL DISCUSSION
6.1	<p>S Zondi suggested that in the future matters should be consulted first with national government, provincial government, and District municipality. S Zondi said the district and local government should be consulted before the public.</p>
6.2	<p>P Tolksdorff indicated that they have contacted all the municipal managers throughout the process and asked for the contact details of other people who should be involved.</p>
6.3	<p>M Chauke said that the meeting was communicated well but it clashed with other important work in the district. She added that the important people – town planning and water services are in the meeting and she does not foresee any problems.</p>
7	CLOSING
7.1.	<p>P Tolksdorff indicated that everyone in the meeting will be registered as stakeholders for the project and will be contacted for progress of the project. She notified all present of the 2nd meeting and open day on the 25th of June.</p>