

Introduction

SANParks, Kruger National Park (KNP), has identified the need to upgrade the conference facility in Skukuza to a commercially-operated Conference Facility in the Skukuza Rest Camp.

SANParks has appointed SiVEST as independent Environmental Consultants to undertake the environmental studies to assess all potential environmental impacts, negative as well as positive, associated with the proposed project.

SiVEST have thus submitted an application to undertake a Basic Assessment Study to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) for this proposed project. Comments on the proposed development are requested.

Need and Demand for the Project

The auditorium in Skukuza Rest Camp is currently utilized to host conferences. SANParks have identified that due to the recent increase in popularity of Skukuza as a conference venue, the current auditorium facilities no longer meet the requirements of conference groups.

A need has therefore been identified for the upgrade or relocation of the conferencing facilities in Skukuza.

Technical Information

The proposed development is planned to be located in the existing Skukuza Rest Camp (see map included for orientation). A number of location alternatives for the proposed development have been identified and will be assessed as part of the Basic Assessment study.

The proposed conference facilities will consist of a main conference hall with seating for approximately 252 attendees, as well as four breakaway rooms, each seating 50 people. A kitchen, storage room and conference administration offices will also be included in the facilities. Parking bays will be included as part of the footprint of the conference centre. The surface area to be taken up by the proposed activity and associated infrastructure (i.e. physical footprint), including the Conference Centre and parking is approximately 3950 m².

Basic Assessment Process

The Basic Assessment process is an effective planning and decision-making tool. It allows the environmental consequences of a proposed project to be identified, whether positive or negative, and these identified consequences to be managed through the environmental planning process.

On 21st April 2006, the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) promulgated the new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. Authorisation for the proposed project is being sought through the undertaking of a Basic Assessment Study in accordance with Regulation 56 in terms of the EIA Regulations published in **Government Notice (GN) R385** of 21st April 2006, in terms of Chapter 5 of Section 24(5) of the **National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998)**.

In terms of Sections 24 and 24(D) of NEMA, as read with GN R 385 (Regulations 22 – 26) and GN R386, a Basic Assessment is required to be undertaken for the following:

- Activity 1 (d) for the construction of facilities or infrastructure, including associated structures or infrastructure, for resorts, lodges, hotels or other tourism and hospitality facilities in a protected area contemplated in the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003),
and
- Activity 15 for the construction of a road that is wider than 4 metres or that has a reserve wider than 6 metres, excluding roads that fall within the ambit of another listed activity or which are access roads of less than 30 metres long.

Public Participation

Find out more regarding this application by:

1. Responding to advertisement (by phone, fax or e-mail).
2. Mailing, faxing or e-mailing the Registration and Comment form that is included in the BID.
3. Telephonically contacting us if you have a query, comment or require further project information.
4. Reviewing and providing written comments on the draft Basic Assessment Report within the 30-day public review period. The availability will be advertised and as a registered I&AP, you will be notified by e-mail or fax.

How to Participate

By completing and submitting the accompanying Registration and Comment form, you automatically register yourself as an I&AP for this proposed project, and it will ensure that your comments and/or concerns raised regarding the proposed project will be noted and recorded. We look forward to your contributions. Please also feel free to suggest other stakeholders whom you feel should be consulted

Your Responsibilities

You, as an I&AP, have a right to participate in this process by requesting further information or by informing the consultant of your concerns regarding the environment and the proposed construction of the water pipeline. To exercise this right, you must register with the SiVEST public participation team by registering yourself, or through someone who speaks for you or your community (e.g. Ward Councillor). You also have a responsibility to inform others whom you think may be interested and/or affected by the proposed development and encourage them to register. You can register at any stage of the study, but it is important to register as early as possible.

Our Responsibilities

We can be contacted by telephone, fax, email, registration form or post using the contact details provided in this BID. The following actions will be taken upon receiving any comments/queries/issues:

- The contact details provided by you will be entered into the project database and you will be sent all further information releases.
- Should you send us queries or comments, we will respond in writing; the comments will be considered in the Basic Assessment Report.
- Should you call us, we will record your details and queries / comments.
- Should we not be able to answer your question immediately, we will respond as soon as possible.

Who and How to Contact Us



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Contact Nicolene Venter or Themba Skonje

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Environmental Division



BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

BASIC ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF CONFERENCE FACILITIES AT THE SKUKUZA REST CAMP IN THE KRUGER NATIONAL PARK

Document Principle

This document provides you, as an interested and/or affected party (I&AP), with an overview of:

- The various aspects of the environmental process and studies that form part of the proposed project.
- The context of the project including its location.
- An overview of the proposed development planned by SANParks.
- A description of the key activities which form part of the Basic Assessment Study.