

02 December 2024

Dear Interested and/or Affected Party,

RE: NOTIFICATION OF THE ISSUING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION AND THE APPEAL PROCEDURE FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE BIESJESVLEI BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) 1 PROJECT, AND VARIOUS ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, NEAR SMITHFIELD, WITHIN THE MOHOKARE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, XHARIEP DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, FREE STATE (DFFE REFERENCE NUMBER: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2527)

As communicated previously, Scatec Africa (Pty) Ltd (the Project Owner) with support from Veroniva (Pty) Ltd, are proposing to develop three Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Facilities (Projects 1 to 3) (each with a capacity of up to 350 Megawatt direct current (MW DC), three Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Facilities (Projects 4 to 6), and associated Electricity Grid Infrastructure (EGI) (Projects 7 to 9), as well as an independent 400/132 kV Main Transmission Substation (MTS) and a 400 kV Loop-In-Loop-Out (LILO) power line (Project 10), near Smithfield in the Free State Province (Table 1). The proposed projects, referred to as the “Biesjesvlei” Solar PV, BESS and EGI development, are located within the Mohokare Local Municipality, which falls within the Xhariep District Municipality. Each project will have a specific Project Applicant, as detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: List of the proposed projects and respective Project Applicants

Project No.	Projects	Project Applicant
1	PROJECTS 1 TO 3: The proposed development of three Solar PV Facilities and associated infrastructure (i.e., Biesjesvlei PV1 to Biesjesvlei PV3).	Biesjesvlei 1 (Pty) Ltd
2		Biesjesvlei 2 (Pty) Ltd
3		Biesjesvlei 3 (Pty) Ltd
4	PROJECTS 4 TO 6: The proposed development of three BESS and associated infrastructure for Biesjesvlei PV1 to Biesjesvlei PV3 (i.e., Biesjesvlei BESS 1 to Biesjesvlei BESS 3).	Biesjesvlei 4 (Pty) Ltd
5		Biesjesvlei 4 (Pty) Ltd
6		Biesjesvlei 4 (Pty) Ltd
7	PROJECTS 7 TO 9: The proposed development of three 132 kV Overhead Power Lines from the Biesjesvlei PV Facilities to the proposed MTS, and associated infrastructure (i.e., Biesjesvlei EGI 1 to Biesjesvlei EGI 3).	Biesjesvlei 1 (Pty) Ltd
8		Biesjesvlei 2 (Pty) Ltd
9		Biesjesvlei 3 (Pty) Ltd
10	PROJECT 10: The proposed development of an independent 400/132 kV MTS and a 400 kV LILO from the MTS to the existing Eskom power line, as well as associated infrastructure.	Biesjesvlei 1 (Pty) Ltd

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998, as amended) (NEMA) and the 2014 NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (as amended), the proposed projects were subjected to full Scoping and EIA Processes. The National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) serves as the Competent Authority for Projects 1 to 9. An agreement, in terms of Section 24C(3)(b) of NEMA, was reached between the DFFE and the Free State Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA) to agree that the DFFE serves as the Competent Authority for Project 10.

An integrated Public Participation Process (PPP) was undertaken for the proposed projects. The Draft Scoping Reports for the proposed projects were made available to all Interested and/or Affected Parties (I&APs), Organs of State and relevant stakeholders for a 30-day comment period in March 2024. The Final Scoping Reports were submitted to the DFFE for consideration on 22 April 2024 and were accepted in May – June 2024. The Draft EIA Reports were then made available to all I&APs, Organs of State and relevant stakeholders for a 30-day comment period, which extended from 02 August 2024 to 02 September 2024 (excluding public holidays). The Final EIA Reports were then compiled, taking into consideration the comments raised during the 30-day comment period on the Draft EIA Reports. Comments and issues raised as part of the review period on the Draft EIA Reports were captured and responded to in the detailed Comments and Responses Reports (CRRs) and addressed, where relevant and applicable, in the Final EIA Reports. In line with Regulation 23 (1) (a) of the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations (as amended), the Final EIA Reports for the proposed projects were submitted to the DFFE for decision-making on 12 September 2024. The DFFE acknowledged receipt of the Final EIA Reports via email on 17 September 2024.

As a registered I&AP on the projects, in terms of Regulation 4 (2) of the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations (as amended), you are hereby notified that the DFFE has granted the Environmental Authorisation (EA) for the proposed Biesjesvlei BESS 1 project (DFFE Reference Number: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2527). The EA is dated 26 November 2024. The reasons for the decision are detailed in Annexure 1 of the EA, which is attached to this correspondence.

The EA, including the reasons for the decision, and this correspondence can be accessed on the following links:

- https://bit.ly/Biesjesvlei_PV_BEES_EGI_Projects
- <https://www.csir.co.za/environmental-impact-assessment>

Copies of the EA will also be furnished on request by contacting the undersigned at **ems@csir.co.za**

Your attention is drawn to Chapter 2 of the National Appeal Regulations published in Government Notice (GN) R993 on 8 December 2014, and as amended in GN R205 on 12 March 2015, which prescribes the appeal procedure to be followed. These regulations have been attached to this correspondence. Should you wish to lodge an appeal against the EA (DFFE Reference Number: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2527), the appeal must be submitted to the DFFE Appeal Administrator by the Appellant, and a copy thereof must be submitted to the Applicant, Environmental Assessment Practitioner (**ems@csir.co.za**), any registered I&AP and any Organ of State that has interest in the matter, within twenty (20) days from the date that the notification (i.e. this correspondence) of the decision was sent to registered I&APs. Based on this, you are hereby informed that the appeal period extends from **02 December 2024 to 13 January 2025** (excluding the regulated shutdown period).

The appeal must be submitted in writing in the prescribed form (obtainable from the Appeal Administrator or DFFE website) to:

Attention:	The Director: Appeals and Legal Review of the National DFFE, at the below mentioned addresses:
By Email:	appeals@dffe.gov.za
By Hand:	Environment House, 473 Steve Biko Road, Arcadia, Pretoria, 0083
By Post:	Private Bag X447, Pretoria, 0001

Please visit the DFFE's website at <https://www.dffe.gov.za/forms> to obtain the prescribed appeal form and for guidance on the submission of appeals or request a copy of the documents by sending an e-mail to: **appeals@dffe.gov.za**. The guidance document has also been attached to this correspondence.

Thank you very much for your inputs to these Scoping and EIA Processes. Should you have any queries or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned using the contact details provided below:

- Attention: Paul Lochner / Rohaida Abed
- Email: ems@csir.co.za
- Postal address: Postnet Suite 367, Private Bag x10, Musgrave Road, 4062
- Tel: 031 242 2300

In accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (Act No. 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) and the 2014 National Appeal 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, including for purposes of potential appeal processes whereby such information may be made available to an appellant in the case of an appeal to satisfy the requirements of Regulation 4 of the 2014 National Appeal Regulations (as amended) (<https://www.csir.co.za/csir-privacy-notice>). If you would like to opt out of communications on these projects, please do so by responding to this correspondence via email.

Sincerely,



Paul Lochner *Registered EAP*
Project Leader and EAP
CSIR Environmental Management Services



Rohaida Abed *Pr. Sci. Nat.; Registered EAP*
Project Manager and EAP
CSIR Environmental Management Services