



25 August 2007

**Notes from the Public Meeting held on 24 August 2007
on the UraMin Desalination Plant and Permanent Water Pipeline**

Swakopmund Auditorium, MFMR, Strand Street

1. Attendees

The list of attendees is attached as Appendix 1.

2. Welcome

Mr Alex du Plessis, Chairman of Turgis Consulting, welcomed everyone to the meeting, as did Mr Bert Leathley, General Manager of UraMin Namibia. Mr du Plessis then introduced those members of the EIA team present namely Mr Johan Oberholzer (Turgis), Mr Fritz Jeske (Bicon Namibia), Dr Daniel Limpitlaw (Turgis), Mr Adrian Viljoen (Turgis), Mr Andre van Tonder (WSP Coastal) and Mrs Julie Stacey (Turgis).

Issues sheets were distributed for people to complete if they so wished, for submission to the EIA team. The attendance register was also circulated.

3. Presentation

A presentation was made outlining the project to date, including the studies undertaken and the results to date, as well as the future work.

4. Discussion

The following issues were raised in the discussion that followed the presentation.



Issues/ questions/comments	Person	Response	Person
Who is doing the Marine Biology Study and are MFMR doing any of the studies?	A Kreiner, MFMR	Dr Andréa Pulfrich, of Pisces Consulting in Cape Town, on the recommendation of the CSIR. Dr Pulfrich has extensive experience along the Namibian coast. MFMR have not been asked to do the study as they are one of the government departments that has to sign off on the EIA, and this would result in a conflict of interest.	Julie Stacey
The Lichen fields were heavily impacted by the storm of 2003/4. Two photographs were displayed on request showing the "before" and "after" situation, and what remains must be strongly protected.	E. Erb, Museum Swakopmund	The lichen fields are probably the main issue of concern, and that the EIA team is in contact with Professor Norbert Jürgens from Hamburg in Germany, who has a global lichen monitoring station in the Lichen fields to discuss the issues, and the possible mitigation measures.	Alex du Plessis
The transparency of the process is really appreciated, but the more work that gets done, the less room there is left to manoeuvre in this EIA, and I&APs should have been spoken to earlier. We have to look at 50 years hence and look at the change in sense of place north of Wlotzkasbaken, as the desalination plant will set a precedent for industrial development along the rare and valuable coastline. Although the Wlotzkasbakeners have been asked to enter the area as a World Heritage site, it is probably not worth it because it is so small, but we still have to look at what sort of legacy we are leaving. A better site would be further north above the Lichen fields as this is a flat and uninteresting piece of land. We should not legitimise the road development that is in fact illegal just because it is there.	Kerry McNamara, K McNamara Architects	The UraMin desalination plant is being built to accommodate significant expansions, which will be within the footprint that is currently designed. Namwater has indicated that the 45Mm ³ capacity should be enough to serve the other domestic and industrial users forecast in the future. No-one wants a plethora of desalination plants to be erected in future. Namwater is already paying for half of the plant. A site that far north was not looked at in detail although Mile 30 was investigated when desalination was first mooted. The trade off opening a brand new corridor of development across the WCRA, versus using an already disturbed area. We will look at the environment north of the lichen fields. This EIA is certainly trying to take into account cumulative impacts. This plant is well situated to make use of the existing Omdel servitude. By making use of this, water can be reticulated to Swakopmund	Alex du Plessis Johan Botha
There is concern about how far down the line this EIA has progressed already. At the June focus group meeting the need for a strategic assessment of power and water was stressed. If you look at the other Uranium deposits, a lot of the demand is south of Trekkopje, so is the current placement of the desalination plant logical? We called for a strategic assessment and we haven't got it. Namwater and Nampower need to be giving developers guidelines on what location would be optimal	John Pallett	Trekkopje is in fact near the centre of future water demand due to the large water demand of the proposed mine. Furthermore, it is difficult to take possible future operations into account as the viability of Uranium does not only depend on where they are but the payable ore and product price. Future mining plans are highly speculative because of this.	Daniel Limpitlaw and Alex du Plessis



Issues/ questions/comments	Person	Response	Person
for the desalination plant, as its current location is too far north.			
The MME is not listed on the list of engagement and neither is the Chamber of Mines, which is to have been expected as they could facilitate this strategic assessment of mining needs.	K Mhopjeni, MME	That is an error on the slide; MME and Chamber have been extensively involved specifically with the mining application, although not with the desalination plant.	Julie Stacey
The desalination plant should be moved further inland, as it is messing up the coastline. Can we not make use of the land that has already been messed up by Rössing, and why do we need so many pipelines crossing the landscape – can we not just have a single main pipeline from which a the network then extends?	S Stumfe, landowner	There are technical limitations to moving the desalination plant further inland, but this will be noted and looked into.	Alex du Plessis
Can Namwater paint a strategic picture of the situation in 10 years?	John Pallett	Namwater is currently investigating the ability of the existing pipeline network to manage the predicted water demand. The study is looking at the existing pipeline from Swakopmund to RUL and Valencia, to see if they can be served by the existing pipeline, as well as the growth expected in Arandis. To date the studies show that only minor adjustments will be needed and that the current pipeline can service the future demand. Water will have to be brought to Swakopmund from Wlotzkasbaken, and Namwater is currently replacing 6 km of the Omdel line. A new large pipeline will have to be built from the desalination plant to Swakopmund, and we plan to build a reservoir to mix the Omdel and Wlotzkasbaken water to get improved water quality to Swakopmund (the desalinated water will be of higher quality than the water from the Omdel Scheme).	Johan Botha
RUL's consumption is also expected to increase. Does the siting of this plant take this into account? What about exploration companies?	John Pallett	Figures from mining companies are generally robust while estimates of future use from exploration juniors are less so. Mining companies have been extensively consulted in the development of this project.	Alex du Plessis
The State must look at the wider picture, not only at this development. Rössing showed foresight in building a pipeline larger than was immediately necessary.	K McNamara	We need a certain level of certainty before we can commit to pipeline construction.	Johan Botha
Namwater and Nampower need to take the lead on this issue	John Pallett	Yes, this is happening, especially on the water side.	Alex du Plessis
The water requirements for this project are almost double what the entire region uses. Where is the energy coming from for this project?	Alan Jenneker, Enviro Solutions	Nampower has assured Uramin that the Mwh needed for the project are within their capacity to provide.	Alex du Plessis
A strategic assessment of all mining requirements is needed, in terms of all resources, not just water and power, and with respect to the possibility of compromising tourism, not only in	Rod Braby, NACOMA	We agree. The comments will be noted.	Alex du Plessis



Issues/ questions/comments	Person	Response	Person
this region but perhaps in the others as well. Don't know who is responsible for this – maybe the mines could get together and do this themselves, or perhaps MME should do it? The transparency of this process is most appreciated.			
Is the temporary pipeline going ahead, and is there an EIA process around this? What will happen to the pipeline afterwards?	Guido van Langenhove, MAWF	Water is needed for the test work on the mine to prove that the resource is viable, so yes, the temporary pipeline is to be built, and yes an EIA process is underway. The temporary pipeline is simply being put on the ground – there are no structures involved, and once it is no longer needed it will be removed completely and the service track will be rehabilitated.	Daniel Limpitlaw
The Chamber of Mines has just opened an office in Swakopmund to coordinate the strategic mine planning, and has launched a committee to deal with this. A lot of what has been talked about here is already happening. There is a lot of talk, but only a few real players and we must concentrate on the facts.	Wotan Swiegers, Chamber of Mines		
Has the contract for the construction of the desalination plant at Wlotzkasbaken and the pipeline been awarded? If so we are wasting our time here. Can the desalination plant be moved or has it already been decided to locate it north of Wlotzkasbaken? Are these proceedings being minuted; if so they must reflect the fact that the desalination plant can be moved otherwise this meeting is useless	K McNamara	The contracts have been awarded, but only for the construction, with no locations implied. It will be built by Keyplan wherever the EIA process gains approval for. Yes, if the EIA process indicates the need for it, the desalination plant can be moved. And yes, the proceedings are being minuted. UraMin has committed an enormous amount of money to the feasibility studies for this project, and they recognise the risk in running these in parallel with the EIA process.	Alex du Plessis
The promise by Nampower to provide energy might be empty. What does the greater demand in the Erongo region mean for the rest of the country and what are the wider implications? Namwater and Nampower need to take this process public.	J Pallett		
What are the social impacts of this project? How many people will be involved in the construction and operation and from where will they be employed?	A. Horn	All social issues are being addressed in the EIA. Approximately 30 people will be employed during the operational phase of the desalination plant.	Alex du Plessis and Julie Stacey
Are there other EIAs for desalination plants on which this EIA can draw, and what impacts do these show?	D Pineo, Rössing	Yes there are other EIAs for desalination plants in other parts of the world. The results of these EIAs show that the desalination process is less impacting than for example, disposal from a sewage works or nuclear plant. As with all EIAs for the real impacts to be determined, this EIA must be done for the proposed site so that site-specific impacts can be identified and built into the management plan. Acceptable water quality will be reached within 20m of the outfall.	Julie Stacey and Alex du Plessis



Issues/ questions/comments	Person	Response	Person
There is one problem with burying the pipeline in sections for animal overpasses, as this will allow quad bikes and vehicles over these sections.	J Pallett	That is one of the reasons that declaring the road a private road would assist in restricting vehicular access. It may mean that the road could be boomed. The proposed route is being driven primarily by environmental considerations.	Julie Stacey and Alex du Plessis
It may be possible to use the security people for the desalination plant to police access to the road	Mike Scott, Private		
The transparency of this process has been excellent. Given That the desalination plant is modular, will the possible expansion be in the same place or in a new place? Will the picture change for the add-ons?	R Schneeweiss, Rössing	No, the picture will not change. The current design allows for additional units within the structures shown on the slide.	Adrian Viljoen
What is the sub-station going to look like and where will it be located?	Rod Braby, NACOMA	We don't know yet but it will be no bigger than the desalination plant. We will request Nampower to fit in with the design criteria that have been used for the desalination plant. We do not want a green monster like the Tamarisk Substation next to our low visual impact plant.	Johan Oberholzer
What will happen to the waste from the desalination plant and can it not be used to feed a salt works?	K Mhopjeni, MME	That is essentially the brine that has been discussed, and MAWF supports marine disposal rather than on-land disposal of the brine.	Julie Stacey and Alex du Plessis



5. Issues Raised on the Issues Sheets

The following issues were captured on the issues sheets that were handed out during the meeting.

Issues/ questions/comments	Person
What are the impacts of light at night from the desalination plant, on fauna and flora, and the aesthetic affects on people?	Anonymous
Will public access to the pipeline road be restricted? It should be if possible and should be a private road.	Anonymous
Does the above ground pipeline change the wind pattern or fog pattern and does that affect the lichen?	Anonymous
The marine impact needs to be carefully studies especially as the pipe will be in a rocky area (a unique ecosystem). There will be a 40m impact (20m either side of the pipe).	Anonymous
Is the temperature change of the brine and surrounding water really only <1°C? What with the East wind? Colour of pipe?	Anonymous
Will a rehab plan be part of this SEIA?	Anonymous
How will the removal of only one organism impact the ecology further up?	Anonymous
Spin-offs on employment opportunities e.g. health, accommodation, education, transport.	Anonymous
The road from Wlotzkasbaken to UraMin will have to be constructed properly (+400 trucks for the pipe and other daily construction vehicles). The road will have to be gravelled and watered. The Roads Authority estimated N\$800,000 per km – new gravel pits? Is gravel in the vicinity available?	Uli Trumper, Roads Authority
Construction roads into desert as feeder roads etc? Please consider this impact as well.	Uli Trumper, Roads Authority
In the coastal area, +-10km, the brine could be used for road construction process (see salt road).	



APPENDIX 1

Attendance Register Public Meeting 24 August 2007, Swakopmund Auditorium, MFMR, Strand Street
UraMin Desalination Plant and Permanent Water Pipeline EIA

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