South African Photovoltaic Industry Association

SAPVIA- Environmental WG Meeting

Date: 11 December 2024
Time: 12:30-13:30
Chairperson: Andrea Siebritz

Facilitator	Andrea Siebritz (AS)	***Attendees:***
Note taker	Thabang Molai (TM)	Elana Mostert (EM) Espee Hattingh (EP) Jaime Gutierrez (JG) Sinethemba Mguni (SM)

Minutes

1.	**Opening and welcome** The Chairperson opened the meeting and expressed gratitude to all participants for taking the time to attend. **Apologies** No apologies noted.	**Chairperson**
2.	**Agenda** The agenda was adopted with no amendments.	**All**
3.	**Focus Areas 1:** **Environmental permitting and licenses** • AS noted that the last discussion centered around the norms and procedures for registering a project. • It was proposed that the working group schedule a meeting with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE). • The purpose of the meeting will be to collectively raise questions and clarify the process for environmental permitting and licenses. • AS highlighted a presentation delivered on 10th June 2024 by IAIAsa, which included participation from EAPs, CTS Heritage specialists, Botanical specialists, SAHRA and DFFE representatives. • The presentation addressed several questions related to environmental permitting and AS will share the minutes from this session with the broader working	**Andrea Siebritz- Lead** **Elana Mostert** **Pamela Gama** **Joanne Dean** **Ndileka Makaluza** **Zimbini Nontyi** **Stephan Jacobs** **Kakale Munamati** **Monique Daniels**

	group to identify if any existing concerns have already been addressed. • It was noted that the South African Wind Energy Association (SAWEA) holds quarterly meetings with DFFE. • The working group will explore the possibility of attending these quarterly meetings to ensure environmental concerns are regularly addressed. • AS highlighted that the EOSS is proposing a single application portal for all development permits. • The proposed system is planned to launch in two phases: • Phase 1: Scheduled to go live in June 2025, covering national-level permits. • Phase 2: Planned for Q4 of 2025, expanding to include provincial and local authorities. • The system will allow applicants to apply for permits, submit their applications for review and receive follow-up communications through the portal. • AS noted that the Gauteng province has launched a new Conservation Plan. • The plan should be utilized when screening new projects to identify Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBA). • AS volunteered to share the copy of the conservation plan with the group after the meeting.	
4.	**Any Other Items** **4.1 South African Defence Force Permits** • AS identified the long timeline for obtaining permits from the South African Defence Force (SADF) as a critical challenge. • Current timeline takes about 18 months to 2 years for issuing the required letter when taking a project to FC. • A developer has already engaged with SADF, submitted a letter outlining project development timelines, and proposed a six-month timeline for permit issuance. • AS has a copy of this letter and suggested that SAPVIA should engage with SADF directly, proposing an in-person meeting to formalize a more reasonable timeline.	**All**

	• AS proposed that in the next meeting (in the new year), the group discusses inputs for the letter to SADF and develops a formal approach. **4.2 Compliance Department** • EM suggested discussing the experiences of participants with Compliance departments for projects in construction or development phases. • The goal is to gauge interest in sharing feedback and experiences on this topic during the next year.	
5.	**Closure** With a vote of thanks, the chairperson closed the meeting. ***Next Meeting: 31 March 2025***	**Chairperson**

Action Items:

No:	Actions	By whom
1.	Schedule a Q&A follow-up meeting with the DFFE**.**	**ZB**
2.	Share the IAIAsa minutes from the 10th June presentation session.	**AS**
3.	Share the Gauteng Conservation Plan with the group.	**AS**
4.	Share the letter submitted by the developer to SADF with the working group members. The members to provide inputs on the discussion points and letter to be submitted to the SADF.	**AS** **ALL**
5.	Arrange a meeting with the SADF to discuss the permit timeline.	**SAPVIA/SM**