

Birds of Prey Programme **Endangered Wildlife Trust**

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To Annah Motalane (motalaa@eskom.co.za)
Environmental manager
ESKOM Holdings SOC Ltd

Cc Paul Scherzer (paul@edcs.co.za) E&D Consulting Services

Dear Madam

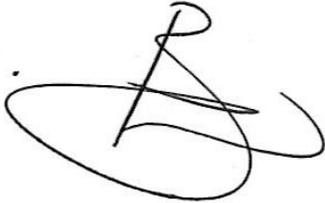
Potential impacts of the proposed Isundu 765/400 KV sub-Station and turn-in Transmission lines (DEA EIA Ref: 14/12/16/3/3/2/745; 12/12/20/1397/AM2) on the implementation of the Biodiversity Management Plan of the Bearded Vulture

As the manager of the Birds of Prey Programme of the Endangered Wildlife Trust, I hereby express my concern regarding the impacts on raptors of the proposed sub-station as detailed above. In particular, I am concerned about the impact on the proposed captive breeding programme of the Bearded Vulture. The Bearded Vulture Task Force is a sub-programme of the Birds of Bird Programme which was established to implement the Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) of the Bearded Vulture, gazette by the South African Government in May 2014.

The Bearded Vulture is a Critically Endangered species with only around 100 breeding pairs in the wild. The population is small and isolated and has low genetic diversity. One of the objectives of the BMP to address the low number and low diversity, is to implement a captive breeding programme. The task force have chosen the African Birds of Prey Sanctuary as the preferred institution for the implementation of the breeding programme based on their expertise and location in the province. The Sanctuary has the only captive Bearded Vulture in Southern Africa. To this end, a large amount of resources have already been invested to initiate this programme, such as the construction of breeding cages. This long term programme will be jeopardized by the size and proximity of the proposed development in terms of the impacts on the health and well-being of breeding adults and chick development. Birds are known to be highly sensitive to electro-magnetic fields, therefore the proposed sub-station proposed a substantial risk.

I have serious concerns about the location of the proposed development and the impact it will have on the conservation of (endangered and critically endangered) raptors in KwaZulu-Natal. This includes the impact on education and outreach programmes that engage 10 000 to 12 000 children on raptor and other environmental conservation issues each year.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Botha', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Mr. André Botha

**Manager: Birds of Prey Programme
Endangered Wildlife Trust**