

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**FOR 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)**

PROCEEDINGS OF KEY STAKEHOLDER MEETING

11 June 2015

AFRICA BIRD OF PREY SANCTUARY

1. ATTENDANCE

Attendance was as follows:

Name	Organisation
Ben Hoffman	Raptor Rescue
Shannon Hoffman	African Bird of Prey Sanctuary/African Raptor Trust
Madinare Mukhuba	Eskom
Paul Scherzer	ACER (Africa) Environmental Consultants

2. INTRODUCTION

Mr Paul Scherzer, ACER (Africa) Environmental Consultants, introduced Ms Mukhuba, the Eskom Negotiator, and clarified that her role was to negotiate with landowners after the EIA process, once the impacts upon a specific landowner had been investigated and confirmed.

3. DISCUSSION

The Hoffman's outlined for Ms Mukhuba their key concerns regarding the proximity of the Sanctuary to the proposed sub-station and the future viability of the Sanctuary should the proposed sub-station proceed. They outlined the advantages of the current location in terms of its proximity to Durban and Pietermaritzburg, specialist veterinary skills, food sources for the birds and a number of other less obvious aspects such as the tarred access road to the Sanctuary.

The Hoffman's stated that they had a 99-year lease with the Mayibuye Trust and also had a reasonable rent which they paid to the Trust. Their site is 60 ha and is game fenced. Their funding has come from various sources including the Lotto.

Ms Mukhuba asked the Hoffman's what their suggested outcome would be if the sub-station were to proceed. Ms Hoffman said that she would like Eskom to recreate the Sanctuary somewhere else and turn a potentially negative impact into a positive one.

Ms Mukhuba stated that it is too early to commence negotiations but outlined Eskom's negotiation and compensation process. The process of negotiating with landowners starts once environmental authorisation has been obtained and she is instructed to negotiate with those affected. Thereafter, Eskom appoints an independent private evaluator to evaluate, as instructed, whatever property, business or other rights and activities are affected. The evaluator produces a report and Eskom negotiates with the landowner based on the evaluator's findings. The landowner has the right to object to the evaluation and/or appoint an independent evaluator of their own for a second opinion.

Ms Mukhuba stated that Eskom did not project manage or appoint contractors to relocate affected infrastructure. However, based on the impacts that needed to be addressed, the evaluation report would include all relevant costs, such as relocation and rebuilding costs, moving costs etc. As their land was leased, compensation would not include any payments for loss of land but costs such as terminating their land-rental agreement and obtaining new premises would be included.

Ms Mukhuba reiterated that it is too early to commence negotiations and any negotiations would depend on the impacts that needed to be mitigated. Mr Scherzer clarified that potential impacts would be identified by the specialists in the impact assessment, taking cognizance of all stakeholders' concerns and comments raised. This report would then be submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) who would make a decision. Any environmental authorization issued by DEA would have conditions to which Eskom would need to comply. Stakeholders will also have the right to appeal the authorization.

Ms Hoffman asked about the timing of this process as they were planning the Bearded Vulture Breeding Programme and would need more cages by 2016. Also, they have funds from Bird Life South Africa which they wished to spend at the Sanctuary but were now not sure if they should spend this money.

Mr Scherzer confirmed that although a decision from DEA was only likely in early 2016, the Hoffman's would have a good idea of what the likely impacts and mitigation measures recommended for the Sanctuary will be by late August/September 2015 when the draft Environmental Impact Report will be available for public review. This would assist in their planning for 2016.

Ms Mukhuba confirmed that they should not put any of their plans on hold but should continue with their plans and activities at the Sanctuary, i.e. use the funds from Bird Life South Africa etc. until such time as Eskom approaches them to negotiate. They would not be wasting these donated funds as these costs would be incorporated into the evaluation report if the end result is that the Sanctuary needs to relocate.

4. CLOSURE

Mr Scherzer thanked all present for their input and participation, and trusted that the discussions had addressed the Hoffman's current concerns with regard to their short-term planning requirements and how Eskom negotiations are handled.