

**PROPOSED WATER SUPPLY SCHEME IN NGQONDO VILLAGE, DR AB XUMA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY,
CHRIS HANI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE**

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) PROCESS

Background Information Document

INTRODUCTION

Indwe Environmental Consulting (Indwe) have been appointed by Sinakho Consulting Pty (Ltd) as the Professional Service Provider (PSP) to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act 107 of 1998) for the proposed Water Supply Scheme in the Ngqondo Village within the Eastern Cape.

The activities in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended to be undertaken include, at minimum:

- GN. R. 327 Activity 19
- GN. R. 324 Activity 12 & 14

An application to the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) for General Authorisation relating to section 21 (c) & (i) water uses is also anticipated to be required as part of the project and Indwe will undertake such on behalf of the Proponent.

***Descriptions to the activities are provided further on in the document.*

This document is intended to provide background information to stakeholders, authorities and other interested and affected parties and forms a key component of the public participation process being undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process as well as the Water Use application process.

PROJECT LOCATION

The location for the proposed Water Supply Scheme is situated in the Ngqondo Village, 40km northeast of Ngcobo (Figure 1). The exact coordinates of the village are -31.525166, 28.144599. The proposed pipeline will connect to the existing Water Treatment Works Facility, which is designed to pump water from the Mbashe River, and distribute water to the nearby homes. The pipeline will also connect to existing reservoirs that formed part of separate projects within the nearby villages and towns.

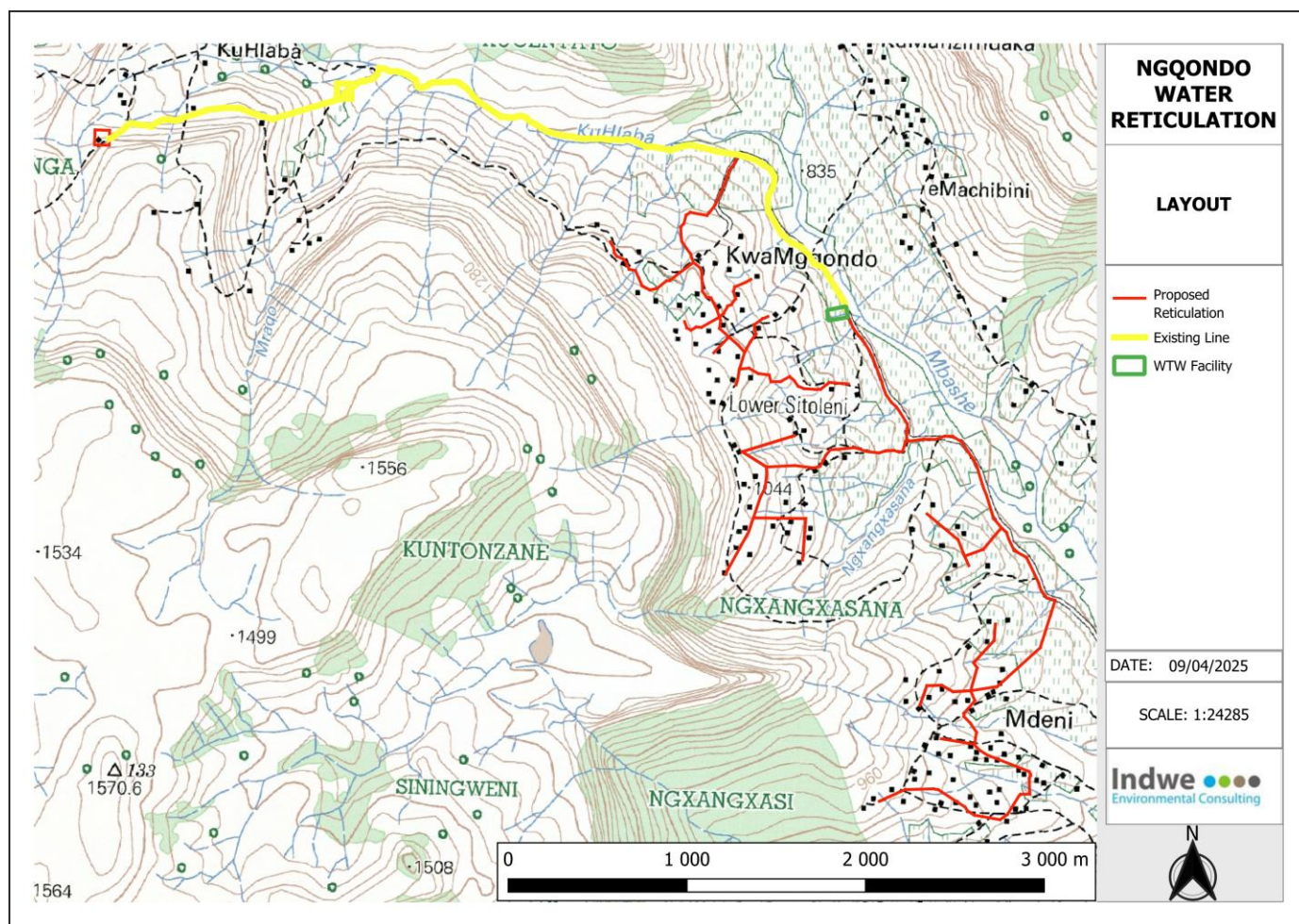


Figure 1: Topographical locality of the proposed Water Supply Scheme.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Chris Hani District Municipality have proposed the construction of the Water Supply Scheme with the following scope of works:

- Construction of approximately 1.2km of uPVC pipes of sizes ranging from 63mm diameter of various classes.
- Construction of approximately 5km of HDPE pipes of size 50mm diameter of various classes.
- Construction of approximately 4.5km of Klambon steel pipes of sizes ranging from 50mm diameter to 90mm diameter.
- Construction of stand taps, valve chambers, and all associated pipe fittings.
- Construction of new and reinstatement of existing stormwater along the reticulation mains.

Refer to figure 2 for the general layout of the project.

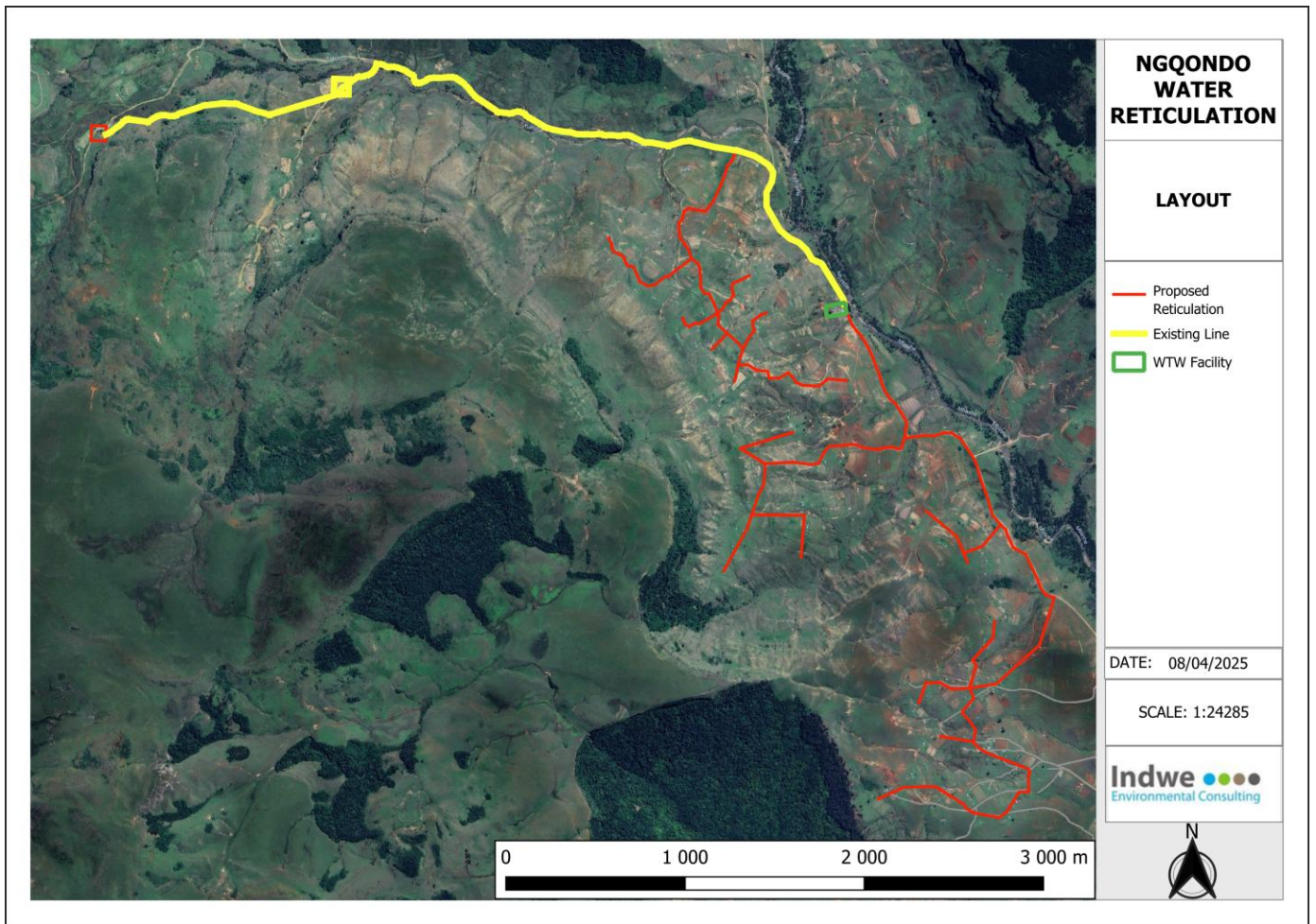


Figure 2: General layout of the project.

EIA REQUIREMENTS

The EIA Regulations promulgated in Gazette No 40772 of 7 April 2017- NEMA Section 24(5) stipulates that “listed activities” require environmental authorisation via a Basic Assessment process should the activities trigger Listing Notices 1 & 3. The following listed activities are assumed to be triggered in relation to this project:

Listing Notice and Activity No.	Project Activity
LN 1 Activity 19	<p>The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse;</p> <p><i>The pipeline is expected to cross or fall within proximity to several non-perennial watercourses, as well as the Mbashe River.</i></p>
LN 3 Activity 12	<p>The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation within the Eastern Cape on land that falls within an endangered ecosystem (Mthatha Moist Grassland) listed in terms of section 52 of NEMBA</p>
LN 3 Activity 14	<p>The development of—</p> <p>(ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more; where such development occurs—</p> <p>(a) within a watercourse;</p> <p>(b) in front of a development setback; or</p> <p>(c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse.</p> <p>a. Eastern Cape</p> <p>i. Outside urban areas:</p> <p>(aa) A protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA, excluding conservancies;</p> <p>(bb) National Protected Area Expansion Strategy Focus areas;</p> <p>(cc) World Heritage Sites;</p> <p>(dd) Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the competent authority;</p> <p>(ee) Sites or areas identified in terms of an international convention;</p> <p>(ff) Critical biodiversity areas or ecosystem service areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</p> <p><i>Sections of the pipeline fall within Terrestrial CBA 1 and 2 designated areas, as such it is expected this activity may be triggered.</i></p>

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Basic Assessment process will involve the following project phases:

1. **Pre-Application:** This phase includes consultation with Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), OR Tambo Region regarding the proposed development, potential triggers, outcome of the National Web Based Screening Tool Report for the site and the way forward in terms of the applicable EIA process.
2. **Application:** An **Application for Environmental Authorisation** form will be submitted to the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Chris Hani Region.
3. **Draft Basic Assessment Phase:** The Basic Assessment process is followed which includes the undertaking of a public participation process including consultation with key stakeholders, detailed site investigations, planning and reporting. Specialist input will be sought for this phase of the project. This phase will culminate in the production of a

Draft Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) which will be submitted to DEDEAT and then circulated to all registered Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and key stakeholders for a 30-day comment period.

4. **Final Basic Assessment Phase:** Following the receipt of comments, the Basic Assessment Report will be finalised and submitted to DEDEAT for their assessment and issuing of an authorisation decision.
5. **Appeal Period:** After receipt of the Environmental Authorisation all registered I&APs and key stakeholders will be notified of its availability and provided with the opportunity and details for submitting an appeal to the decision if required.

Specialist Studies to be conducted:

- Aquatic Impact Assessment, Wetland Delineation and Risk Assessment
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment
- Palaeontological and Archaeological Impact Assessment

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public participation process is defined under Regulation No 41 of the 2014 EIA Regulations, as amended in 2017.

- Advertising in the local newspaper (The Rep).
- Fixing a notice board at the site.
- Giving written notice to the occupiers of the site, the owner/ person in control of the site, adjacent landowners via BID drop, the municipal ward councillor and rate payers, the relevant municipality and any organ of state that has jurisdiction in respect of any aspect of the activity.
- Maintaining an Interested and Affected Party Register.
- Uploading pertinent documentation on the Indwe website.
- Collecting comment on the project, in particular the draft Basic Assessment Report.

Registered Interested and Affected Parties will be given the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Basic Assessment Report over a 30-day period. All comments raised by I&APs will be included and responded to in the final reports which will be submitted to the competent authority (DEDEAT) to enable them to make an informed decision with regard to the development proposal.

Once an Environmental Authorisation is received, it will be distributed to registered I&APs who may appeal to the Minister or MEC of Environmental Affairs in opposition to the decision.

This document and Public Participation Process aims to do the following:

- Present stakeholders and I&APs with an overview of the perceived biophysical and social impacts that have been identified up to date.
- To obtain issues and concerns from I&AP's regarding the General Authorisation application process and proposed activity, which will be addressed for the planning, establishment and operational phase of the proposed operations.
- To give all potential interested and affected parties the opportunity to register and be placed on the register of I&APs in order for them to voice their opinions and concerns.

Potential interested and affected parties include:

- Occupants of the site, and where the occupants are not the owners, also to the owners of the site, or the owner of any alternative site where the activity is to be undertaken.
- Owners, persons in control of land or occupants of adjacent properties
- Municipal councillor and municipality
- Any organ of state having jurisdiction in respect of the activity
- Any other party as required by the competent authority

KEY ISSUES AND TYPICAL IMPACTS

Key issues and typical environmental impacts associated with the project identified to date include:

- Impacts to the watercourses (loss of riparian habitat, increased turbidity, impact on aquatic biota).
- Erosion and sedimentation from construction activities.
- Damage to local infrastructure, i.e., roads and tracks.
- Potential employment opportunities during the construction phase.
- Temporary dust emissions and spoil material during the construction phase
- Potential employment opportunities during the operation phase
- Skills development for staff during the operation and construction phase
- Waste disposal and management during construction phase

WATER USE APPLICATION PROCESS

In terms of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) an application for a General Authorisation will be submitted to DWS for the following water uses: Section 21 (c) and (i) to develop and construct components of the proposed Ngqondo Water Supply Scheme **within the regulated area of a watercourse**.

The National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) in terms of Section 21 includes:

- Section 21(c) and (i) – Impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse / and altering the bed, banks or characteristics of a watercourse.

HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) 1999, Section 38 Subject to the provisions of subsections 7), 8) and 9), states that any person who intends to undertake a development categorized as –

- The construction of a road, wall, powerline, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300m in length;**
- The construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length;
- Any development or other activity which will change the character of a site –
 - Exceeding 5,000m² in extent; or
 - Involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof; or
 - Involving three or more erven or subdivisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years; or
 - The costs which will exceed a sum set in terms of regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority;
- The rezoning of a site exceeding 10,000m² in extent;
- Any other category of development provided for in regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority,

must at the very earliest stages of initiating such a development, notify the responsible heritage resources authority.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is mandated with the management of all South Africa's heritage resources, as described in and protected by the National Heritage Resources Act, Act No. 25 of 1999 (NHRA 1999). The **Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (ECPHRA)** is established in terms of the NHRA 1999, Section 23 and is responsible for the management of the heritage resources of the Eastern Cape Province. The ECPHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit manages the NHRA 1999, Section 38 heritage management process for planned developments located in (or aspects of developments located in) the province, either as consenting authority (where no environmental process is required), or as commenting agent to the consenting authority (where an environmental process is required).

Given that the project triggers Section 38(1)(a) Indwe Environmental Consulting will submit the required Notification of Intention to Develop form to ECPHRA for decision regarding whether or not the development is exempted from the Heritage Impact Assessment process or if it will be subject to a Heritage Impact Assessment Process.

Should the development proposal require a HIA process this would comprise of both an Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (AIA) and Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) process.

Indwe Environmental Consulting CC is a registered environmental consultancy that specialises in all facets of environmental management. Our focus is on project based environmental studies. Broadly the services offered are Basic Assessments, Full Environmental Impact Assessments, Rectification of Non-Compliance Activities and Applications, Strategic Environmental studies (State of the Environment Reporting, Strategic Environmental Assessments, Environmental Management Frameworks) and integrated waste management planning.

The Indwe Environmental Consulting team is headed up and overseen by Brendon Steytler and Megan Hugo. Together they have a vast amount of experience in the environmental consulting industry of South Africa. Brendon Steytler was the founding member of Indwe Environmental Consulting in 2010 and has been instrumental in growing the company into the trusted and quality driven organisation that it is today.

Responsible Environmental Assessment Practitioner

Megan Hugo

Megan started working as an environmental consultant in February 2015 following the completion of her Honours degree in Environmental Science at Rhodes University. Prior to this she completed a Bachelor of Science degree, also at Rhodes University, with Zoology and Environmental Science as her majors. Megan has completed accredited courses in environmental impact assessments and ISO 14001 courses.

Megan joined Indwe Environmental Consulting in September 2017 and was made a main member of the company in April 2018. Megan is a Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner with the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) (Reg. No 2019/1530). She is also registered with the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (Reg. No. 118810) and an active paid-up member of the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA) South Africa.

Megan is responsible for all company related operations and financial management as well as acquiring new projects at Indwe Environmental Consulting. Megan has gained experience in all aspects of Integrated Environmental Management (Full Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessments, Basic Assessments, Mining Permitting, Auditing, Strategic Environmental Planning), Ecological Reporting, Water Use related approvals through DWS, and General Project Management. Additionally, Megan is well versed in permitting requirements relating to ToPS, PNCO and NFA legislation.

Example of fields in which Megan was the project manager and lead report writer include large public infrastructure projects (e.g. Regional Water Supply Schemes, Overhead Powerlines, National Road upgrades), private commercial and residential developments, small and large agricultural projects, mixed use developments, renewable energy projects, large scale public and private in stream and off stream storage dams and rehabilitation of coastal and terrestrial related environments.

Megan's key skills include her knowledge and experience in South African policy and legislation relating to development, particularly in the Eastern Cape province. Her almost 10 year presence in the industry has provided much insight and experience into project, technical and financial management.

Project Team

Kevin Bickell

Kevin Bickell joined Indwe Environmental Consulting in April 2022 following the completion of his undergraduate degree in Environmental Management from the University of South Africa (UNISA). Kevin has since completed his Honours Degree in Environmental Management and is enrolled at UNISA currently to complete his Masters Degree. His post graduate studies have focused on research surrounding the extent of environmental degradation caused by illegal sand mining activities along the Wild Coast with particular focus on the Qora and Qolorha Mouth areas.

Kevin has strong GIS and technical skills and is responsible for collecting, sorting and analysing data to transfer into mapping, reporting and presentations. He has gained significant experience in the process of integrated environmental management and has been significantly involved in the EIA processes and projects the company is responsible for. Kevin is also responsible as

acting as an Environmental Control Officer on the current construction sites where Indwe is appointed to monitor compliance with the various environmental approvals relating to a project. Kevin has gained experience in projects relating to bulk infrastructure, residential developments, mixed use developments, renewable energy and rehabilitation related projects. Kevin is registered with EAPASA (Reg. No. 2022/5288) as a Candidate EAP, practicing under the Mentorship of Megan Hugo, and is also registered with SACNASP (Reg. No. 154317).

Michaela Manthe

Michaela completed her 6-month internship with Indwe Environmental Consulting in 2024 and has accepted a permanent position at the company as Junior Environmental Assessment Practitioner from September 2024. Michaela has completed her Honours degree in Life Sciences through UNISA in 2023. Prior to this she completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Life Sciences majoring in Zoology and Botany in 2022. Michaela is registered as a Candidate Natural Scientist with the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (Cand. Sci. Nat 161580) and as a Candidate EAP (Reg. No. 2022/5666) with EAPASA.

During her internship, she assisted and participated in various construction monitoring and EIA related activities. She has compiled various environmental audits for private commercial developments and has been responsible for internal project activities and specialist engagement.

Michaela's academic background has provided her with the skills to compile professional and scientific reports. Michaela has also been gaining experience in the DWS e-wulaas portal and is responsible for uploading water use application forms and engaging with DWS on select open water use applications.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO GET INVOLVED

Should you wish to express your views regarding this proposed development, please feel free to register as an I&AP by sending us your written comments. Please submit your name, contact information and written comments to the contact person below. A written comments form is supplied at the back end of this notice for your convenience.

Contact

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YOUR details:

Name	
Organisation	
Telephone Number	
Physical Address	
Postal Address	
Fax Number	
Email Address	

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for writing. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slightly aged appearance with some minor discoloration at the edges.

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