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**Agricultural Compliance Statement
for the Grid Connection for the Paulputs South Wind Energy Facility,
Northern Cape**

Paulputs WEF (RF) (Pty) Ltd, received environmental authorisation for the Paulputs Wind Energy Facility (WEF) on 11 December 2019, DEA Reference No. 14/12/16/3/3/2/1160. This included authorisation for one on-site substation and overhead power line. The environmental assessment process included the assessment of other grid connection options and substation location options.

A separate amendment application is being made to split the authorised WEF, which was located both north and south of the N14, into two separate WEFs, one located north of the N14, and the other south.

The Applicant - Paulputs Wind Energy Facility South (RF) (Pty) Ltd - therefore requires environmental authorisation for its own on-site substation and overhead power line, which will be located at one of the options already assessed in the environmental impact assessment that received environmental authorisation.

There are no agricultural impacts related to this grid connection component that have not already been identified and assessed in the original agricultural impact assessment for the authorised WEF. All impacts identified in this were of low impact. The authorisation for the Paulputs South WEF grid connection does not require any changes or additions to the mitigation measures for agricultural impacts that were recommended for the authorised WEF, and there are therefore no required changes to the EMPr.

Agricultural Compliance Statement

The grid connection site is identified on the national web-based environmental screening tool as being predominantly of low, but including some medium sensitivity land for agricultural resources. This is shown in Figure 1. The identified sensitivity is confirmed by this assessment.

Because of the low sensitivity of the site and the negligible agricultural impact of grid

infrastructure in this agricultural environment, the proposed grid connection does not have an unacceptable negative impact on the agricultural production capability of the site. For the same reasons, micro-siting will have no influence on agricultural impacts in this environment and it is therefore confirmed that all reasonable measures have been taken through micro-siting to avoid or minimise fragmentation and disturbance of agricultural activities. From an agricultural impact point of view, it is recommended that the development be approved.



Figure 1. Map of the proposed development footprint overlaid on the agricultural sensitivity, as identified by the screening tool (green = low sensitivity; yellow = medium sensitivity).

This statement is not subject to any conditions. In completing this statement, no assumptions have been made and there are no uncertainties or gaps in knowledge or data that are relevant to it.

Johann Lanz (Pri. Sci. Nat.)

21 August 2020

**Site sensitivity verification
for the Paulputs Wind Energy Facilities
and electrical grid connections**

The Protocol for the specialist assessment and minimum report content requirements of environmental impacts on agricultural resources, gazetted on 20 March 2020, states that:

prior to commencing with a specialist assessment, the current use of the land and the environmental sensitivity of the site under consideration, identified by the screening tool, must be confirmed by undertaking a site sensitivity verification that confirms or disputes the current use of the land and the environmental sensitivity as identified by the screening tool.

In terms of the gazetted agricultural protocol, a site sensitivity verification must be submitted that:

- 1. confirms or disputes the current use of the land and the environmental sensitivity as identified by the screening tool, such as new developments or infrastructure, the change in vegetation cover or status etc;*
- 2. contains a motivation and evidence (e.g. photographs) of either the verified or different use of the land and environmental sensitivity.*

Agricultural sensitivity, in terms of environmental impact, and as used in the national web-based environmental screening tool, is a direct function of the capability of the land for agricultural production. The screening tool classifies agricultural sensitivity according to two criteria - the cultivation status and the land capability.

The proposed site is identified on the national web based environmental screening tool as being of predominantly low sensitivity for agricultural resources, with some areas of medium. This is because the site's land capability evaluation values classify it predominantly within the low sensitivity class (values of 1 to 5), with some areas within the medium sensitivity class (values of 6 to 8). A map of the proposed site overlaid on the screening tool sensitivity is given in Figure 1.

The agricultural sensitivity, as identified by the screening tool, is confirmed by this assessment. The motivation and evidence for confirming the sensitivity is that the low land capability of the area is predominantly a function of the arid climate. The aridity of the climate is entirely beyond dispute, and there is no particular evidence needed to show this. The differences between medium and low sensitivity on this site are largely insignificant and are more a result of the way the land capability data is generated per pixel, than any practical, on the ground differences in agricultural potential.



Figure 1. The proposed site (black outline) overlaid on agricultural sensitivity as identified by the screening tool (green = low; yellow = medium).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Lanz'. The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left from the top of the first letter.

J. Lanz (Pri. Sci.Nat.)
21 August 2020