



Media Statement

MMSEZ FINAL EIA APPLICATION REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Polokwane 2 February 2021 - The Musina Makhado Special Economic Zone (MMSEZ) SOC has submitted the final Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Application Report on the 1st of February 2021 to the legally designated competent authority, the Limpopo Economic Development, Environment and Tourism. “The journey of the MMSEZ EIA application started in 2018 with a detailed Environmental Screening Study and followed by a scoping report in 2019. The Scoping Report identified a myriad of specialist studies to be conducted and we are pleased that in our endeavour to comply with the law, protect the environment and positively respond to the concerns raised by the public, we commissioned even more studies beyond the scope demanded by the competent authority.

“We are also pleased that throughout the EIA application process consultations with relevant communities, affected and interested parties has been the hallmark of the exercise. Our consultation with communities and other stakeholders was not just an act of compliance with the law but a reflection our values and principles as a public entity embedded in people driven and people centered governance. It is for this reason that a record of over 3000 comments were received. We are delighted that this process has created an opportunity to identify potential blind spots and missing links for the success of the project and the realization of sustainable development.” MMSEZ CEO Lehlohonolo Masoga explains.

Section 24 of the South African Constitution states that *“everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being and to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures, that prevents pollution and ecological degradation; promotes conservation; and secures ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.”*



Furthermore, National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) Principles states that *“environmental management must place people and their needs at the forefront of its concern, and serve their physical, psychological, developmental, cultural and social interests equitably and that development must be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable.”*

“As a public entity we are committed to sustainable development which is an integral part of our values and policy framework. Although fairly new, we are proud to be one among public entities that have adopted internal policies on the Environment, Social and Governance Policy.” Masoga explains.

Similarly the SOC is not only sensitive to the reality of the water situation confronting the county and in particular Limpopo Province, but also that the fact that there are water shortages to support mega industrial initiatives like the envisaged SEZ. Accordingly the MMSEZ as a catalytic initiative, has created a massive opportunity for the Limpopo government to provide a sustainable long-term solution to the water problem bedeviling the province.

It is for this reason that investigations are underway for the development of a new Musina Dam on the confluence of the Limpopo and Sand rivers. Preliminary outcomes indicate that the initiative is technically sound and commercially viable. To this effect, the MMSEZ has consummated a partnership with Infrastructure South Africa which is located in The Presidency of the Republic and the Development Bank of Southern Africa in order to bring the ambitious water project into fruition.

Masoga says “Ultimately the goal of this pioneering project is the provision of a sustainable water supply not only for the MMSEZ, but for the multitudes of the residents of Limpopo.”

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Issued by MMSEZ SOC

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