

AMENDMENT APPLICATION PROCESS

INTSOMI AMENDMENT: LIVESTOCK FACILITY

Proposed Amendment of the Amended Environmental Authorisation for Intsomi Citrus on Farm 661 for a change in activity from citrus establishment to livestock breeding.

Project Applicant: JN Venter Family Trust
DEDEAT Reference No: EC06/C/LN2/M/61-2013



BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT: September 2020

INTRODUCTION

An Environmental Authorisation was issued to San Miguel Fruits SA (Pty) Ltd (dated 3 October 2016) by the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Sarah Baartman Region, for the establishment of 168ha of citrus orchards and 32ha of associated infrastructure for a total development area of 200 hectares on the farms collectively known as Intsomi, in the Sundays River Valley Municipality. Intsomi Farm consists of 10 individual land portions with a total extent of 1754 hectares. A condition of the environmental authorisation is that at least 1050 hectares be set aside for formal conservation. The 200-hectare development area has been authorised over the following five properties on the eastern portion of Intsomi:

- The Farm Kremlin No. 661
- Remainder of the Farm Swanepoelskraal No. 104
- Remainder of the Farm Kremlin No. 100
- The Farm Mountain View No. 101
- The Farm Doornkloof No. 103

The original environmental authorisation was amended by Amendment Notice #1 (dated 25 July 2017). Subsequently, the project proponent has purchased the Intsomi Farm from San Miguel Fruits SA (Pty) Ltd and the establishment of the 200-hectare authorised development area has commenced. An amendment application has been submitted to DEDEAT for the transfer of the Environmental Authorisation from San Miguel Fruits SA (Pty) Ltd to the JN Venter Family Trust.

This Amendment Application Process relates to the proposed **change in activity** on a portion of the area that was originally proposed to be developed as citrus orchards on **Farm 661 only**. The applicant proposes to fence in a portion of approximately 20ha for the breeding, birthing and rearing of goats (up to 4 months of age).

The proposed amendment is deemed substantive in terms of Regulation 31 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended) and therefore, an Amendment Report (AR) must be prepared to describe the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed change, assess the impacts thereof, both positive and negative, and provide mitigation to enhance potential positive impacts and mitigation to manage or avoid potential negative impacts. The AR must be subjected to a public participation process in order to bring the proposed change to the attention of potential and registered Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), juristic/affected Organs of State and State Departments as well as the competent authority.

The project proponent, JN Venter Family Trust, has appointed Public Process Consultants as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioners to undertake the Amendment Application Process.

PROJECT LOCALITY

The area under assessment can be accessed directly off the gravel road to the south (DR02006) via an existing minor provincial road (MN50605) which provides access to the farm known as Intsomi. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is ~720m north of the boundary of the Intsomi farm. See the attached locality map.

WHAT DOES THIS DOCUMENT TELL YOU?

As a registered I&AP on the database for the project, this document provides you with the following:

- Reference to the Environmental Authorisation issued for the proposed establishment of citrus and associated infrastructure on Intsomi, recent developments on the site and subsequent amendments to the authorisation.
- An overview of the Amendment Application Procedure and specialist studies to be undertaken, as well as an overview of the Public Participation Process for the Amendment Application Process.
- An overview of the proposed project amendments.

The sharing of information forms an important component of the Public Participation Process and provides you with the opportunity to become actively involved in the Amendment Application Process from the outset. This document indicates how you can become involved in the project, receive information, and raise issues that may interest and/ or concern you. Public Participation is an important component of the Amendment Application process and together with scientific investigations, assists the competent authority, in this instance the Department of Economic Development Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Sarah Baartman Region, with their decision-making.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THIS AMENDMENT APPLICATION PROCESS?

In terms of regulation 42(b) of Government Notice R326, Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) are to request in writing that their names be placed on the register of I&APs. To register as an I&AP, complete the comment and registration form included with this correspondence or submit your contact details (via fax or email), stating your full name, address and contact numbers, to the consultant indicated in this documentation. In terms of regulation 43(1), a registered I&AP is entitled to comment in writing on all reports and plans submitted as part of the public participation process, as well as raise any issues which may be of significance to the consideration of the application. Additionally, I&APs are required to disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which they may have in the approval or refusal of the application. By registering on the project database, you will be notified as and when information on the project is available for I&AP review and comment.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The **existing** amended Environmental Authorisation allows for the establishment of 168ha of citrus orchards and 32ha of associated infrastructure on the south-eastern portion of the farm known as Intsomi. Farm 661 is one of the portions on which transformation for citrus production has been authorised.

The project proponent is currently proposing to utilise the area of approximately 20ha, that was authorised for citrus production on Farm 661, to accommodate a livestock facility for the breeding and rearing of goats, consisting of the following:

- 14 separately fenced in pens measuring 50 meters x 50 meters each (2500m²)
 - Total of 35 000 m² or 3,5ha of cleared vegetation
- A communal grazing camp with an irrigation pivot measuring 300 meters in diameter
 - Total ~16.5 ha

The 14 pens will be separately fenced in and some areas partially enclosed to provide shelter during the birthing season and hand nursing of kids. Clearing of vegetation will be required to fence the individual 14 pens (3.5ha). Vegetation is not proposed to be cleared from the communal grazing camp as this will provide a source of feed and will be irrigated by means of a pivot (300m diameter) to facilitate and ensure growth of the existing vegetation.

During mating season, each of the 14 pens will have 30 females and 1 male, totaling 440 goats for a period of ~36 days. After mating has been successful, all the goats are removed from the pens, and placed in the surrounding environment (on Farm 661) for a period of approximately 150 days. Prior to giving birth, the females are returned to the 14 pens. The females are allowed in and out of the pens into the communal grazing camp while nursing their young. Approximately 21 days after being born, the kids are released from the 14 pens into the communal grazing camp for a period of ~4 months, after which the kids are sold. One goat produces approximately 1.8 kids. Thus, the total enclosed facility (14 pens and communal grazing camp) will hold no more than 1176 goats at any point in time. There are approximately 4 breeding cycles annually, during which the above process is repeated.

The attached locality map provides an overview of the area proposed to be fenced in on Farm 661 for the goat breeding facility, in relation to the proposed orchard layout that was approved in terms of the Environmental Authorisation.

Please Note: *The irrigation water pipeline that is required to provide water to the proposed irrigation pivot is subject to a separate Basic Assessment Process.*

AMENDMENT APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The following Amendment Application Process and associated Public Participation Process was submitted to the competent authority, DEDEAT, by the EAP and has subsequently been approved.

The assessment process being implemented can be divided into three phases namely:

- **Pre-Application Phase**
 - Public Participation Plan for approval by DEDEAT
 - Notification to DEDEAT of intention to commence the amendment application process
 - Project announcement and registration of I&APs (30 days) (**We Are Here**)
 - Specialist studies
- **Amendment Application and Report Phase**
 - Amendment Application Form prepared and submitted to DEDEAT
 - Draft Amendment Report for I&AP review (30 days)
 - Final Amendment Report submitted to DEDEAT
- **Decision Making and Appeal Period**

Phase 1: Pre-Application Phase (Current Stage)

- **Project Announcement and Registration of I&APs (30 days)**

In line with the Directions Regarding Measures to Address, Prevent and Combat the Spread of COVID-19, published in Government Notice No. 650 on 5 June 2020 in Government Gazette No. 43412 a Public Participation Plan (PPP) was prepared and submitted to the competent authority for approval, prior to commencement with the Amendment Application process. Approval of the PPP was received from DEDEAT, Sarah Baartman Region on 23 July 2020.

The Amendment Application process is initiated by means of sending notification to the DEDEAT, as well as I&APs, of the intention to proceed with the Amendment Application Process. Identified I&APs are provided with a Background Information Document (BID) on the project, a locality map and a comment form. An advertisement will be placed in a local newspaper and a site notice board will be erected at the site. During this stage I&APs are provided with a 30-day period to register their interest on the project database so as to receive further project information and raise any issues for inclusion in the Draft Amendment Report (DAR).

In parallel with the project announcement and registration period, the following specialist studies are proposed to be undertaken in order to review and assess the impacts associated with the proposed changes to the project activities. The following specialist studies are proposed to form part of the amendment process:

- Vegetation Assessment
- Aquatic Assessment
- Palaeontological Assessment
- Archaeological Assessment
- Traffic Assessment

Phase 2: Amendment Application and Report Phase

- **Application Form and Draft Amendment Report (DAR) (30 days)**

In parallel to the compilation and submission of the Amendment Application Form, the Draft Amendment Report (DAR) will be compiled which will include a Comments and Responses Trail – indicating the issues and concerns raised by I&APs during the 30-day project announcement period (Phase 1: Pre-application phase).

Subsequent to the submission of the Application Form to the competent authority, the DAR will be released for a minimum, legislated 30-day I&AP comment period. All registered I&APs will be notified in writing of the opportunity to comment. In order to assist I&APs with their understanding of the project and to facilitate the identification of issues for inclusion in the Final Amendment Report (FAR), I&APs will be emailed an executive summary of the DAR, a comment form and a link to the project website. All juristic/affected Organs of State / State Departments will be provided with a copy of the DAR in the preferred format as agreed to with the respective authorities. Copies of the report will also be made available on the website www.publicprocess.co.za.

- **Final Amendment Report Submission (FAR)**

The Final Amendment Report (FAR), including the Comments and Responses Trail will be compiled for submission to the competent authority (DEDEAT) for their consideration. The FAR, including specialist studies, which has been subjected to a 30-day Public Participation Process must be submitted to the competent authority within 90 days of receipt of the Application Form by the competent authority. All I&APs on the project database will be notified in writing, via email of the submission of the FAR.

Phase 3: Decision Making and Appeal Period

The competent authority must, within 107 days of receipt of the Amendment Report, reach a decision on the Application and notify the applicant. The applicant must, within 14 days of the date of the decision, notify all registered I&APs of the decision and provide them with access to the decision and reasons for the decision, as well as indicate the manner of appeal.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS AN INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY (I&AP)?

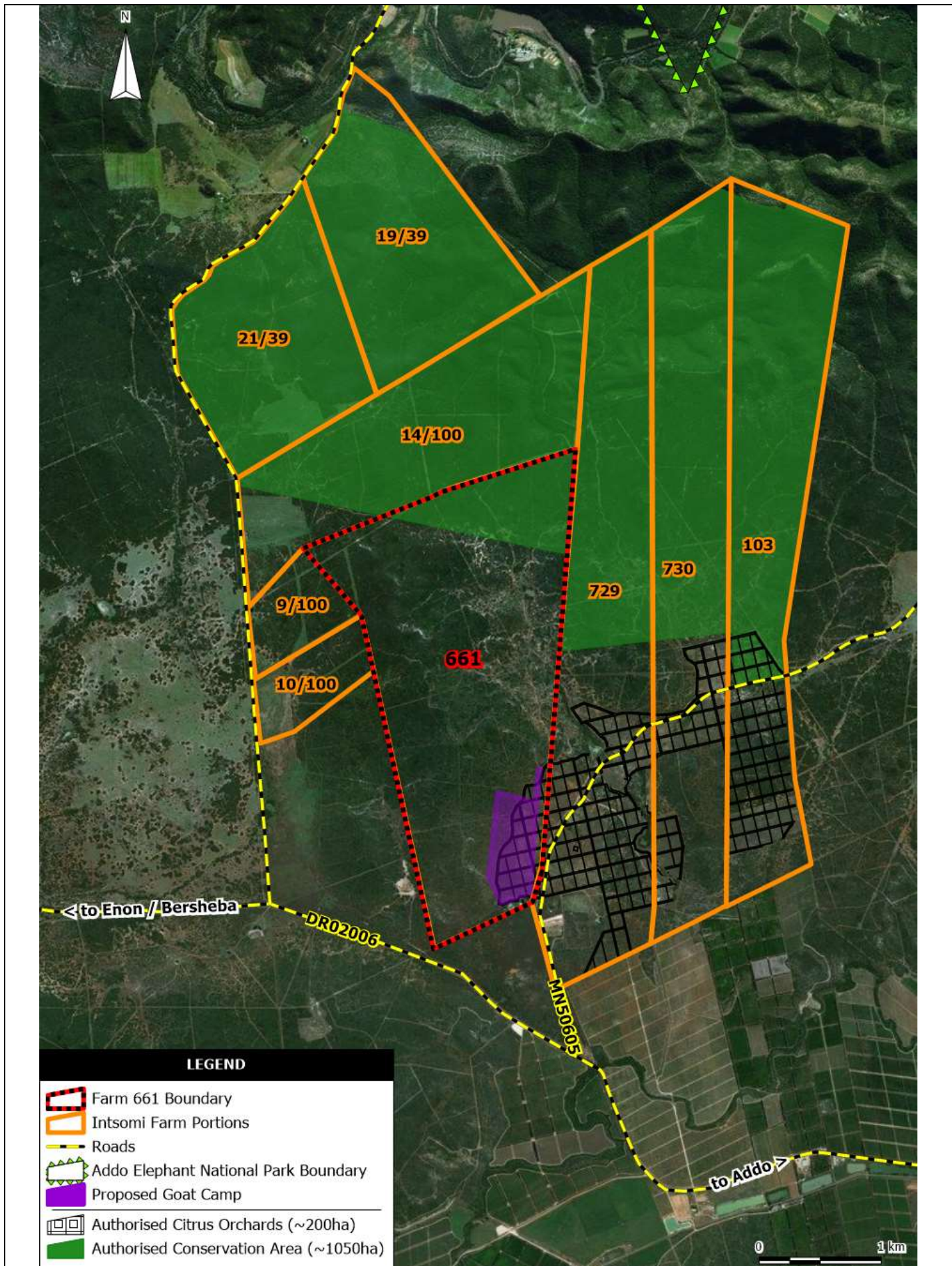
1. Should you wish to register your interest in the project or raise issues of concern you are required to respond to the letters of notification and/ or newspaper advertisements:
 - By emailing or faxing a comment form to the public participation consultant indicated below.
 - By registering your interest in the project, you will be kept informed of the process and will be notified of any opportunities to comment.
2. I&APs are required to state their area of interest and/ or concern in the matter.
 - By emailing or faxing a comment form to the public participation consultant indicated below.
3. By telephonically contacting the public participation consultant if you have a query, comment, or require further project information.
4. By reviewing the Draft Amendment Report and submitting any comments/ issues within the specified comment period.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?

Sandy Wren,
Public Process Consultants
PO Box 27688
Greenacres
6057
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Email : sandy@publicprocess.co.za

Information on the project can be downloaded from the following website:

www.publicprocess.co.za



Locality Map: The portion of Farm 661 which is proposed to accommodate a goat breeding facility in relation to the proposed orchard layout that was approved in terms of the Environmental Authorisation.