

Environmental Impact Assessment for Mining of Pocket Beaches

Issue 2

NEWSLETTER

April 2002

What has happened since the last newsletter?

Project planning for the pocket areas mining project continued according to schedule. Mining methods and infrastructure planning are on-going and environmental guidelines are incorporated where feasible.

Since potential impacts on the marine environment and associated fishing sector are a major concern, two meetings focussing on this issue were held:

1. Marine workshop with representatives of the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, marine specialists as well as Namdeb and De Beers Marine representatives was held in Windhoek in January 2002.
2. Meeting with representatives of the lobster association took place in Lüderitz in April 2002.

A marine monitoring programme will be implemented should the project go ahead.

NamPower is presently investigating the feasibility of a powerline from Obib substation to Chameis, crossing the Diamond Area, to feed the pocket beach project. An environmental scoping study has been undertaken by WSP Walmsley as part of this exercise. A trade-off study regarding Obib versus Oranjemund power supply is currently undertaken by Namdeb. This study will incorporate strategic, economic, environmental and technical criteria.

Lastly the environmental consultants undertook their second site visit in April, accompanied by Namdeb personnel, Mr T. Cooper of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the co-ordinator of the Namib Desert Brown Hyena project (Ms I. Wiesel). The main emphasis of this site visit was on infrastructure.

What's new on the technical side?

These are the most important technical details available at present. In this newsletter we can only provide the important points. Should you desire more information, please contact the environmental project co-ordinator (Antje Burke).

GENERAL	
Project Proponent	▪ Namdeb (PTY) LTD
Environmental Consultant	▪ EnviroScience and African Environmental Solutions
Locality	▪ Southern Namib coast: Chameis, Baker's Bay and Bogenfels (Figure 1)
Process of public participation for this EIA	▪ Public participation via three newsletters: 1. update on project 2. upon completion of field survey and specialist input (April) (this newsletter) 3. upon completion of draft EIA (July) – copy of EIA Summary

PROPOSED PROJECT	
Extent of proposed mining area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Four beach deposits with an approximate maximum of 150 ha each
Project time frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4-5 years
Mining methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Site 2: bucket wheel excavator, dry mining ▪ Site 3/4: bucket wheel excavator, dry mining ▪ Site 11 and 12 (near Bogenfels): bucket wheel excavator, fluidiser disposer and conventional dry mining <p>All mining methods require the construction of a seawall. At site 11/12 overburden will be fluidised and pumped onto the beach.</p>
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accommodation, likely at Baker's Bay, but other alternatives are considered ▪ Waste disposal: likely in Oranjemund or on site (with appropriate management) ▪ Sewage disposal: French drains and "Lilliput" (microbial based) system and combinations thereof are under investigation.
Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All access roads and tracks will be upgraded to gravel on existing alignments, although some sharp corners will be straightened. ▪ Transport route of bucket wheel excavator from Mining area 1 to new mining sites needs to be upgraded. This will follow the main road (Lüderitz-Oranjemund) and existing access roads; relocation first to 11/12 and then to site 3/4.
Power supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ From Oranjemund or Obib substation (north-west of Rosh Pinah) ▪ Reticulation within study area along existing tracks
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fibre optic cable largely using existing servitude and following existing tracks; ▪ 2 new microwave towers are required: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. near Baker's Bay near existing water reservoir 2. at production site, on top of one of the maintenance buildings.

Environmental matters...

The environmental assessment will include all potentially significant aspects that could negatively and positively impact on the project area. Impacts which are uncertain and cannot be assessed at present will be monitored during the life of the project. This includes impacts on the marine environment, and likely on Brown hyena in the Baker's Bay area.

What next?

This is the last newsletter before finalisation of the EIA. Thus any major aspects need to be brought to our attention **now**, so these can be incorporated in the EIA. A summary of the draft EIA is scheduled to be released 26 July 2002, comments to the draft EIA need to be received within 3 weeks (by 16 August 2002).

We also invite you to submit comments now. Please e-mail, fax or write to Dr Antje Burke at (note contacts have changed since the last newsletter):

The next newsletter in form of the summary of the EIA will be distributed in July.

EnviroScience

Environmental Research Services

e-mail: antje.burke@enviro-science.info

P.O.Box 90230
Klein Windhoek, Namibia

FAX: +264-61-227906
TEL: +264-61-223739

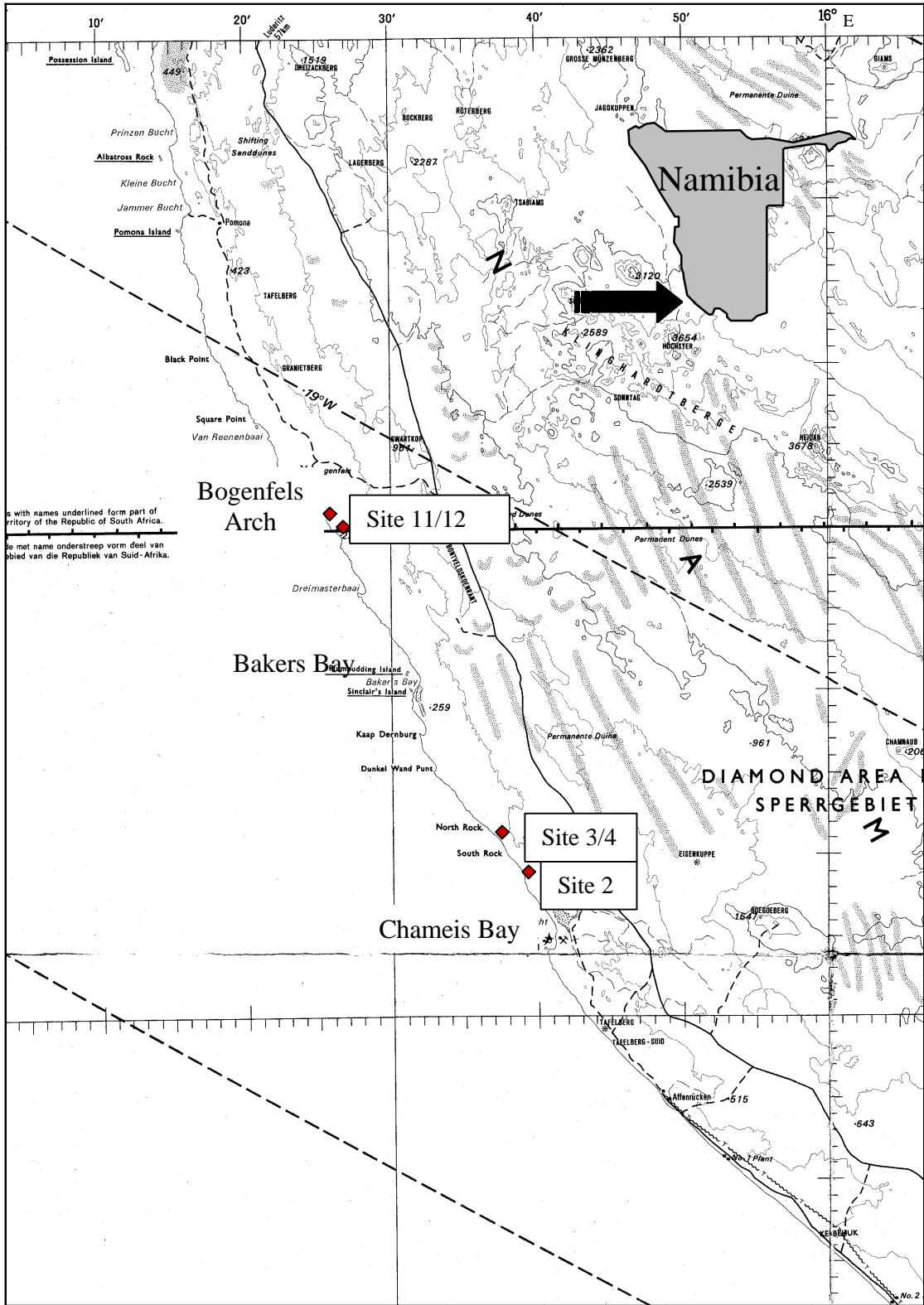


Figure 1. Approximate positions of proposed mine sites in southern Namibia.