



TMG AQUIFER FEASIBILITY STUDY AND PILOT PROJECT: EXPLORATORY PHASE EIA PROCESS

MINUTES OF FIRST PUBLIC MEETING Hottentots Holland High School, Somerset West, 28 April 2004

ATTENDANCE:

Attendees:

M Wuite (Techpros)
J de Wet (JK de Wet)
Mr Hely-Hutchison (Breede River)
P Fourie (Friends of the Helderberg)
F Baard (Ingwe Wines, SLP farmers & b'holders)
M Nieuwmeyer (Chamber of Commerce and Industry)

Study Team:

Proponent

Mike Killick (City of Cape Town: Bulkwater) MK

TMG Aquifer Alliance

Doreen Februarie (Nosipho Consultancy)	DF
Duma Mningiswa (Nosipho Consultancy)	DM
Karen Shippey (Ninham Shand)	KS
Charl de Villiers (Ninham Shand)	CDV
Penelope Jones (Ninham Shand)	PLJ
Chris Hartnady (Umvoto)	CH
John Weaver (CSIR)	JW

Apologies: none

1 Welcome and Introduction

DF welcomed everyone and outlined the process to be followed during the course of the meeting. She indicated that she would facilitate the meeting and briefly introduced the study team.

DF presented the proposed agenda for the meeting as follows:

- Welcome & Introduction
- Background to the Study (MK)
- Introduction to Hydrogeology and TMG Aquifer (CH)
- The EIA Process (CDV)
- General Discussion
- The Way Forward
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DF then outlined the rules of the meeting and gave an overview of the facilitator's role and the participants' role in the public meeting.



2 Presentation on Background to the Study ~ Mike Killick

MK provided a background to the TMG Aquifer study, including water demand management options currently being implemented and other schemes being investigated (Appendix A).

- 2.1 Jaco de Wet queried whether the water abstracted might be utilised for agriculture.

MK responded that the study has a regional benefit and the knowledge gained from the study would not be restricted to a specific area or sector. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry are the licensing authority and should the resource prove to be viable, the agricultural sector could also apply for licenses to make use of the water. Water is a scarce resource and ultimately the City will have to consider desalination, although currently this is very expensive. The TMG aquifer is considered to be a potential future source, so it is preferable to investigate the aquifer now while we have the time for forward planning.

- 2.2 Terblanche Lombard queried the graph used in the presentation and why agricultural water was shown in it.

MK responded that the graph in the presentation showed the combined use of water in the region, including agricultural use. This water is currently obtained from the Theewaterskloof, Voëlvelei and Steenbras dams, and the Palmiet River.

3 Presentation on Hydrogeology and TMG Aquifer ~ Chris Hartnady

CH provided an introduction to hydrogeology and the TMG aquifer (Appendix B).

- 3.1 Mr Hely-Hutchison raised the concern that if groundwater is abstracted, water that would normally accumulate and emerge at the springs would be depleted. Thus by abstracting the groundwater from the fractures, the existing water supply from the springs would be decreased.

CH responded that generally water would be abstracted from the deep confined layers of the aquifer. Abstraction may impact on hot or cold springs, but the radius of impact due to abstraction is not yet known. Quantitative data is therefore needed so that modelling can be undertaken. The predictions would then be tested during the Pilot Phase.

- 3.2 Mr Hely-Hutchison asked whether the intention was to drill down to the Peninsula Formation. He queried whether there was any economic advantage to drawing water up from the aquifer rather than allowing it to naturally flow out at the springs. He queried whether this would be considered 'mining' of water i.e. the water would not be replaced, and whether some of the water would normally flow to the ocean.

CH responded that water would not be 'mined'. Rather, abstraction would affect the water balance and the intention would be to increase the amount of recharge able to penetrate the ground. If abstraction (resulting in draw down) occurs at critical times, recharge into the whole system could be enhanced. CH explained that some of the recharge water is 'rejected' early in the process of infiltration, without sinking deeply into the aquifer. This water flows out to the surface. Some water also flows directly into the ocean.

Mr Hely-Hutchison queried whether the aquifer was effectively being used as a storage dam. CH responded that the aquifer served as a natural storage dam rather than using above ground storage. He estimated that 500 million m³ could be utilised, but there may be thousands of million m³ in storage.

- 3.3 Jaco de Wet queried how one knows where to site a borehole and who has the equipment to drill so deep.

CH responded that the geology on the surface provides clues as to where the large fracture systems area, but that the subsurface structure can only be finally confirmed by the drilled rock cores.

4 Presentation on the EIA Process ~ Charl de Villiers

CDV provided an overview of the EIA Process (a copy of the presentation is attached).

- 4.1 Hans Nieuwmeyer stated his view that the project seemed to be going very well so far and commended the team for the work done thus far.

5 General Discussion

- 5.1 Mr Hely-Hutchison noted that he is a representative from the Breede River Catchment and that his impression is that the committees of the various studies being undertaken by the City are ruled mainly by Cape Town local government. There should be a more concerted effort to involve more people from the Breede River catchment.

DF responded that the database for the TMG project is very extensive and includes a very broad number of catchment forums, irrigation boards and environmental organisations. KS added that over 2000 letters had been sent out to identified Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and over 200 responses had been received. Should there be other organisations that have not been identified, the team will gladly send them further information.

6 Way Forward and Closure

DF thanked the attendees for attending the public meeting and for the comments and questions raised. She then briefly presented the way forward, indicating that the next step was the compilation and lodging of a Draft Scoping Report. She stated that all registered I&APs would be notified of the lodging of the report and that minutes of the public meeting would be circulated to all attendees.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was closed at approximately 20h00.