

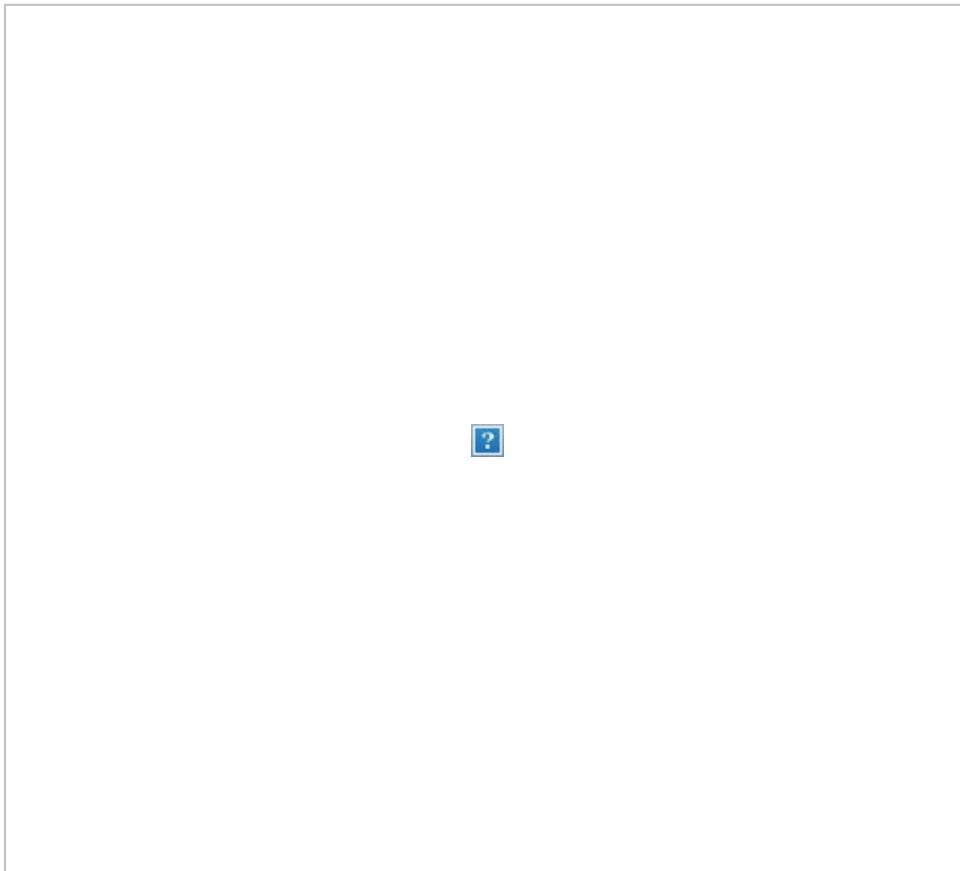
From: [Louise-Mari van Zyl](#)
To: [DEADP-EIAAdmin George](#); [Danie Swanepoel](#); [Ieptieshaam Bekko](#); [Megan Simons](#); [Colin Fordham](#); [BCAdmin@environment.gov.za](#); [RMagodi@dfpe.gov.za](#); [tleballo@dfpe.gov.za](#); "Maretha Alant"; [Mercia J Liddle](#); [Owen Govender](#); [Megan Taplin](#)
Subject: Draft MMP Bigai Wetland Maintenance Management Plan for COMMENT
Date: Tuesday, 26 September 2023 13:44:00
Attachments: [Bigai SW MMP Aquatic Specialist updated.pdf](#)
[image001.jpg](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)

Good Afternoon,

RE: REQUEST FOR COMMENT ON THE BIGAI WETLAND MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN, KNYSNA MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

Your attention is drawn to the attached MMP for the Bigain Wetland in Knysna.

The Bigai Wetland runs through a portion of Knysna, bordering and including the Knysna Municipal Golf Club. It is a small catchment area. Historical and continued development along this catchment has resulted in (A) an increase in hardened surfaces which equates to an increase in stormwater runoff volumes and (B) there has been substantial erosion in this catchment area resulting in siltation and sediment blocking existing culverts and stormwater channels in the wetland. The system feeds into the Knysna Estuary and it is important that its function of providing freshwater to the Estuary is maintained (currently the blockages are compromising this function).



As a result, culverts and stormwater channels in the wetland are blocked (either by vegetation growth or sediment), resulting in chronic flooding which has increased over time. Some of the

streets within this study area is permanently inundated with water resulting in tremendous challenges to residents and municipal workers alike who has to traverse these streets on a daily basis. **This MMP is ONLY for the clearing of culverts/existing stormwater channels in the wetland.** The majority of work will be done by hand with some areas requiring minimal machinery to excavate material.

The recommended maintenance work does **not involve the development of any new infrastructure or structures.** In summary, Table 9 of the draft MMP stipulates each of the areas (culverts) that must be cleaned out, along with their coordinates (these are also all mapped) and the necessary work methods and mitigation measures.

This document is in draft format and has been compiled by Confluent Consulting on behalf of the Knysna Municipality (as the landowner and Applicant). Confluent Consulting in turn requested that Cape EAPrac assist with the stakeholder engagement process prior to submission of the Final MMP to the National Department of Fisheries, Forestry & Environmental Affairs (DFFE) for decision-making.

During consultation with the DFFE, the Case Officer requested that the draft MMP be distributed to Key Stakeholders (Authorities) ahead of the official 30-day commenting period to allow some additional time for Authorities to review and submit comment on this draft document.

The DFFE has highlighted the importance, to them, of having your comment (if applicable) to inform their decision-making process.

You will also be receiving the official (30-day) commenting period day notice, which will contain the last day (date) for submission of comments. In the interim however please do take some time to consider this MMP and should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Considering the recent flooding over the weekend, the Municipality urgently needs to conduct the maintenance work as stipulated in this MMP. Your input is therefore requested at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards / Met Vriendelike Groete,



From: [Louise-Mari van Zyl](mailto:Louise-Mari.van.Zyl@knysna.gov.za)
To: pbester@knysna.gov.za; ssabbagh@knysna.gov.za
Subject: Bigai Wetland system Maintenance Management Plan_opportunity to comment
Date: Thursday, 12 October 2023 14:13:00
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[Bigai SW MMP Aquatic Specialist updated.pdf](#)

Good Afternoon,

RE: OPPORTUNITY FOR STAKEHOLDERS TO GIVE INPUT TO THE MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN PROPOSED FOR THE BIGAI WETLAND SYSTEM, KNYSNA

Mrs Pamela Booth from Knysna Municipality provided our office with your contact details for the purposes of the mandatory stakeholder engagement component of the Maintenance Management Plan (MMP) that must be formally adopted by the National Department of Environmental Affairs (DFFE) to allow the Municipality to do important maintenance on culverts and stormwater channels in the lower Bigai wetland system to address the flooding experienced in this area. Work (excavations / infilling / removal of vegetation) within a watercourse does require *prior* Environmental Authorisation (EA), which is why it is important for the Municipality to obtain approval from the DFFE before work commences (otherwise it will be deemed unlawful).

The MMP has been compiled by Dr Jackie Dabrowski who is an aquatic specialist, with input from Bianke Fouche (a botanist) to ensure that the maintenance recommendations will be within acceptable (environmental) limits and that the necessary precautionary measures are put in place so that the appointed Contractor will know what and how the work must be done to limit environmental impacts. The report has been presented to the DFFE and has been distributed to key Authorities for review.

The General Authorisation (GA) in terms of the National Water Act (work is to be done in the Bigai wetland deemed a watercourse and sensitive) is due shortly as well.

The DFFE requires that the MMP be subjected to general public and stakeholders (residents / councillors / members of the public) review and comment as well. The availability of the document has been advertised (*Knysna Plett Herald*, 12 October 2023) and site notices will be placed at the areas where work is required to draw the attention of members of the public to their right to submit comment on the proposal.

It is noted that the DFFE also issued an emergency Directive on Tuesday, 10 October 2023 for urgent repairs/maintenance in some of the lower lying areas of the Bigai System which is also covered in the MMP (which will then allow similar maintenance to be implemented for the next five years without prior approval from the DFFE).

As Councillors, you have access to residents and stakeholders alike who may have an interest in, or would like to review and comment on the MMP and you are most welcome to distribute this document as widely as you see fit.

The commenting period is a minimum of 30-days (in addition to the Authority commenting period that has already commenced) and all submission must please be addressed to myself, in writing, no later than 13 November 2023.

The document is also available on our website (www.cape-eaprac.co.za under Active Projects listed as Bigai Wetland MMP) and can be downloaded for the duration of the commenting period.

Should there be any questions about the MMP, or the process that is being followed to enable the Municipality to undertake the work, stakeholders are more than welcome to contact me directly.

Please Note: When registering as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) for any of our environmental projects, or submitting comment on the same, you automatically consent to the lawful processing, publishing and distribution of your personal information, as provided by yourself via submissions, for the purpose specific intent of participating in an environmental process, as described by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act no. 4 of 2013).

Kindly view our [Privacy Statement](#) for more information (www.cape-eaprac.co.za).

Kind regards / Met Vriendelike Groete,



From: [Louise-Mari van Zyl](mailto:Louise-Mari.van.Zyl)
To: gm@knysnagolfclub.com
Cc: [Malcolm Stevens](#); [Andre Gerber](#)
Subject: Bigai Wetland System Maintenance Management Plan
Date: Thursday, 12 October 2023 14:28:00
Attachments: [Bigai SW MMP Aquatic Specialist updated.pdf](#)
[image001.jpg](#)
[image002.png](#)

Good Afternoon Mr du Toit,

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RE: OPPORTUNITY FOR STAKEHOLDERS TO GIVE INPUT TO THE MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN PROPOSED FOR THE BIGAI WETLAND SYSTEM, KNYSNA

Considering the work that must be undertaken on the golf course, the Knysna Golf Club is considered a key stakeholder in the environmental process that must be undertaken to allow the Municipality to undertake important maintenance work to alleviate flooding in the lower lying Bigai wetland system.

The Maintenance Management Plan (MMP) must be formally adopted by the National Department of Environmental Affairs (DFFE) to allow the Municipality to do maintenance on culverts and stormwater channels in the lower Bigai wetland system to address the flooding experienced in this area. Work (excavations / infilling / removal of vegetation) within a watercourse does require *prior* Environmental Authorisation (EA), which is why it is important for the Municipality to obtain approval from the DFFE before work commences (otherwise it will be deemed unlawful).

The MMP has been compiled by Dr Jackie Dabrowski who is an aquatic specialist, with input from Bianke Fouche (a botanist) to ensure that the maintenance recommendations will be within acceptable (environmental) limits and that the necessary precautionary measures are put in place so that the appointed Contractor will know what and how the work must be done to limit environmental impacts. The report has been presented to the DFFE and has been distributed to key Authorities for review.

The General Authorisation (GA) in terms of the National Water Act (work is to be done in the Bigai wetland deemed a watercourse and sensitive) was received earlier today giving permission in terms of the Water Act as well.

The DFFE requires that the MMP be subjected to general public and stakeholders (residents / councillors / members of the public) review and comment as well. The availability of the document has been advertised (*Knysna Plett Herald*, 12 October 2023) and site notices will be placed at the areas where work is required to draw the attention of members of the public to their right to submit comment on the proposal.

It is noted that the DFFE issued an emergency Directive on Tuesday, 10 October 2023 for urgent repairs/maintenance in some of the lower lying areas of the Bigai System which is also covered in the MMP (which will then allow similar maintenance to be implemented for the next five years without prior approval from the DFFE).

You are most welcome to distribute this document as widely as you see fit.

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Should there be any questions about the MMP, or the process that is being followed to enable the Municipality to undertake the work, stakeholders are more than welcome to contact me directly.

Please Note: When registering as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) for any of our environmental projects, or submitting comment on the same, you automatically consent to the lawful processing, publishing and distribution of your personal information, as provided by yourself via submissions, for the purpose specific intent of participating in an environmental process, as described by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act no. 4 of 2013).

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Kind regards / Met Vriendelike Groete,

