

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

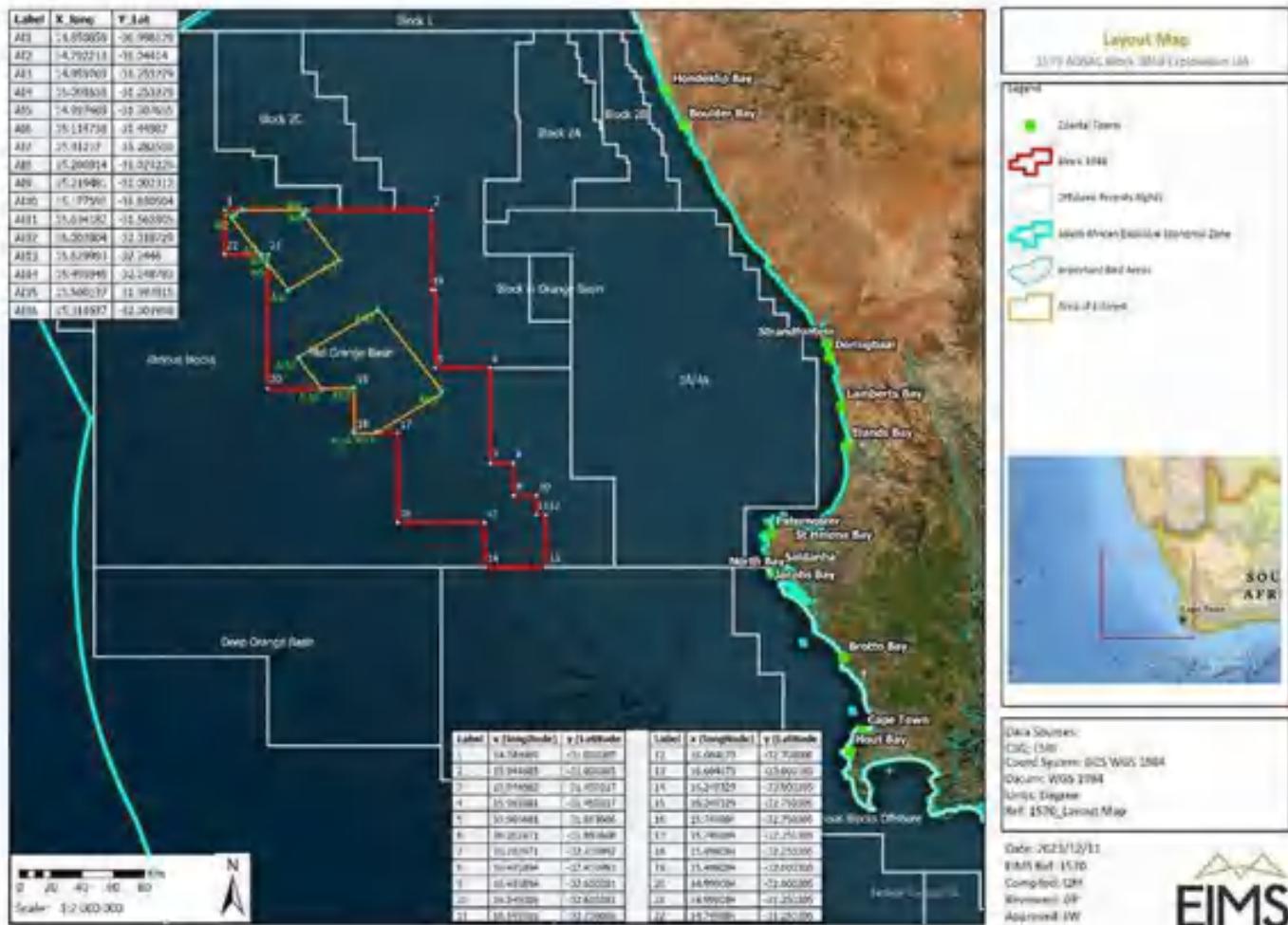
## Africa Oil South Africa Corp (AOSAC) on the West Coast of South Africa

**Block 3B/4B EIA Report available for comment**

Developed by Natural Justice in January 2024

AFRICA OIL SA CORP, RICOCURE (PTY) LTD AND AZINAM LIMITED (JOINT VENTURE (JV) PARTNERS) HOLD AN EXPLORATION RIGHT (ER) FOR BLOCK 3B/4B. THE ER WAS GRANTED IN 2019 AND GIVES THE JV PARTNERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLORE FOR OIL AND GAS IN THIS BLOCK OFF THE WEST COAST OF SOUTH AFRICA.

## AREA OF INTEREST

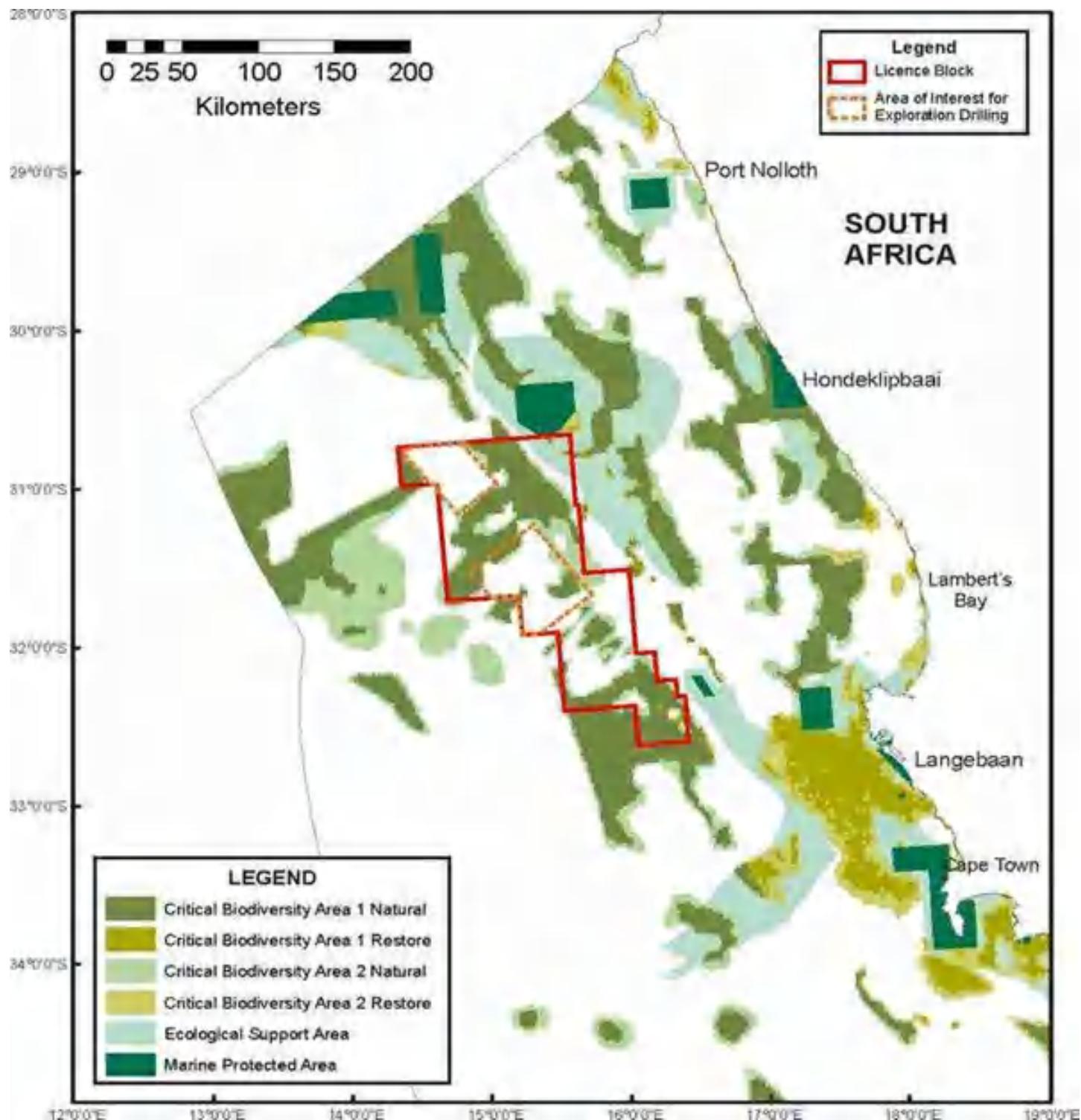


## Exploration activities

THE JV PARTNERS INTEND TO DRILL UP TO 5 EXPLORATION WELLS WITHIN A DESIGNATED AREA OF INTEREST (AOI) WITHIN BLOCK 3B/4B. THE ESTIMATED TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETING THE PHYSICAL DRILLING AND TESTING OF EACH WELL, IS EXPECTED TO BE APPROXIMATELY THREE TO FOUR MONTHS. FUTURE DRILLING OPERATIONS WILL TAKE PLACE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, WITHOUT BEING RESTRICTED TO A SPECIFIC SEASONAL WINDOW PERIOD.

BLOCK 3B/4B IS AN AREA OF APPROXIMATELY 17 581 KM<sup>2</sup> AND IS SITUATED OFF THE WEST COAST OF SOUTH AFRICA. THE BLOCK IS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 120KM WEST OF ST HELENA BAY AND APPROXIMATELY 145KM SOUTH-WEST OF HONDEKLIP BAY. DRILLING IS PROPOSED TO TAKE PLACE IN THE NORTH AND CENTRAL AREA OF THE BLOCK (SEEN IN YELLOW ABOVE).





THIS IMAGE SHOWS THE PROXIMITY OF BLOCK 3B/4B TO CRITICAL BIODIVERSITY AREAS, ECOLOGICAL SUPPORT AREAS AND MARINE PROTECTED AREAS.

# THE TIMELINE OF EVENTS

## EXPLORATION RIGHT

This is obtained from the DMRE, once an Environmental Authorisation has been granted. For this Block, a previous EA was obtained for data reprocessing when the ER was granted.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA):

This assessment aims to predict the environmental and social impacts of the project. This is placed in a report and based on this, the DMRE may grant or refuse Environmental Authorisation.

Environmental Impact Management Services (EIMS) is the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) in this instance, and they are compiling the EIA.

The draft EIA report is now available on EIMS' website  
(<https://eims.datafree.co/2023/06/08/1570-block-3b4b-exploration-right-eia/>)

## PUBLIC COMMENTS:

All Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) are provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft EIA.

**We are here**

## FINAL EIA REPORT PUBLISHED:

This incorporates all comments received on the draft EIA Report. This is submitted to the Petroleum Agency of South Africa (PASA) for consideration and review.

## PASA RECOMMENDATION:

After its review, PASA will provide a recommendation to the DMRE on whether to grant or refuse Environmental Authorisation.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION:

This is granted by an official from the DMRE and, if given, will allow the JV Partners to go ahead with their exploration.

## WHAT NEXT?

After the Department issues its decision, all I&APs registered on the project database will be notified of the outcome of the application and the reasons for the decision within 14 days of the date of the decision.

If anyone disagrees with the decision made by the Department, an appeal against the decision may be submitted to the Department of Forestry Fisheries and Environment (DFFE) within 20 days from the date the decision is communicated to I&APs.

# DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN

\*This is a summary of the activities that appear in the EIA report, but does not include all the activities.

## PRE-DRILLING SURVEYS

Before drilling can take place, pre-drilling surveys may be done to assess baseline conditions, identifying potential seabed and sub-seabed hazards. Surveys include sonar, sediment and water sampling, and remote-operated vehicle activities.



## DRILLING UNIT OPTIONS

A semi-submersible drilling unit or a drill-ship will be used to drill the wells, which are equipped for challenging deep-water marine environments.



## SUPPORT VESSELS

The drilling unit will be supported by up to three vessels used for the transfer of equipment, materials and waste between the unit and the onshore base. A standby supply vessel aids in firefighting, oil containment, and emergency rescue, and can provide additional equipment and medical evacuations or crew transfers when required.



## HELICOPTERS

Helicopters will transport personnel to and from the drilling unit via Springbok Airport and Cape Town. It is anticipated that there will be up to 4 round-trip flights each week between the drilling unit and the helicopter support base, totalling around 68 trips per well for the 17 weeks of operation (approximately 120 days)



## ON-SHORE LOGISTICS BASE

The primary onshore logistics base, at either the Port of Cape Town or the Port of Saldanha, will store materials, consumables and equipment for transportation to and from the drilling unit. The base will also have offices, waste management facilities, bunkering vessels, and offer stevedoring/customs clearance services.



# POTENTIAL CONCERNING IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

\*These impacts have been highlighted in specialist reports that are part of the draft Environment Impact Assessment Report. This is a summary and therefore not all the impacts.

## IMPACTS ON FISH AND MARINE SPECIES

The predominant fish species in the region are migratory large pelagic species like tunas, billfish, and pelagic sharks. Seabird populations in the region are characterised by pelagic species such as albatross, petrels, and shearwaters, while migrating turtles include the leatherback and loggerhead species. Offshore, diverse marine mammals are anticipated, featuring baleen whales like humpbacks, Antarctic minke, fin, and sei whales. Toothed whales, such as sperm and killer whales, along with various beaked whales and dolphins, are also expected.

Notably, the license area intersects with the Childs Bank Marine Protected Area (MPA) and the Childs Bank and Shelf Edge Ecologically or Biologically Significant Area (EBSA). Childs Bank is situated approximately 50km east of the Area of Interest and will be highly sensitive to the drilling activities. The area supports vulnerable, long-lived benthic invertebrate species, as well as various endangered pelagic shark species, leatherback turtles, year-round sperm whales, and migrating humpback and fin whales. The Orange Shelf Edge Marine Protected Area (MPA) and the Orange Seamount and Canyon Complex Ecologically or Biologically Significant Area (EBSA) are also areas of high sensitivity to the proposed drilling. In addition to the MPA's, the area of interest is surrounded by other blocks where companies hold rights for exploration and/or production of oil and gas.

During exploration, there are different phases such as the mobilisation phase, pre-drilling surveys, operation phase and demobilisation phase. Each of these phases risks impacting fish and other marine species. Some of the impacts are: disturbing the behaviour and physiology of marine fauna, disorientation and death, masking or interfering with biologically important sounds, respiratory damage and avoidance of key breeding areas.



## IMPACTS ON LIVELIHOODS

Communities and other stakeholders rely on the ocean and coastline for their livelihoods. There are fishers and tourism operators for example, in Cape Town, Saldanha Bay and St Helena Bay. Some communities conduct a range of cultural practices within the sea and on the coastline. Any impact that negatively alters the marine ecosystem and marine life could negatively impact the livelihoods of these stakeholders.

Although the EIA report identifies positive livelihood impacts, it also indicates that compensation of employees in basic sectors such as fishing and logistics may be temporarily disrupted, potentially leading to a temporary burden on the community in terms of access to services and amenities. The exploration activity could also result in the temporary loss of around R184.1 million in employee compensation from the national economy and more than R362 million from household incomes because of the temporary disruption to commercial fishing operations and commercial maritime logistics operations.

## NOISE EMISSIONS

The primary sources of noise from project activities conducted in the offshore and onshore environment will be from pre-drilling sonar surveys, drilling, propeller and positioning thrusters, machinery, well logging and testing, and helicopter noise. The extent of project-related noise above the background noise level may vary considerably depending on the specific vessels used and the number of supply vessels operating. Noise from drilling activities is expected to have the greatest noise impacts from with the Project.

The noise generated by drilling, machinery operation, and vessel traffic can disrupt the feeding and migration patterns of marine species, particularly those that rely on sound for communication and navigation, and cause direct physical injury to hearing or other organs.

## INCREASE IN CLIMATE CHANGE

Investing in more fossil fuels worsens the climate crisis. Once it is exploited, oil and gas will increase the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which contributes to climate change. Some of the effects of climate change on coastal areas includes increased carbon dioxide levels in the water and ocean acidification, variations in air and water temperatures, alterations in rain patterns, the rate of sea level rise, changes in storm intensity, and shifts in wave patterns.

According to a study conducted by Oceana in 2022 (<https://oceana.org/press-releases/stopping-the-expansion-of-offshore-drilling-can-help-prevent-the-worst-impacts-of-the-climate-crisis-new-analysis-finds/>), stopping new offshore oil and gas drilling while gradually reducing current production could contribute to achieving nearly 13% of the necessary emissions reductions to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius and avert the most severe consequences of the climate crisis. Climate change will affect everyone, especially low-income communities. It can lead to food insecurity, loss of livelihoods, displacement of people, and ill health.

## IMPACTS ON CULTURE AND HERITAGE

One of the specialist studies, an intangible cultural heritage study (ICH) study of coastal communities in South Africa, particularly in the Northern Cape and Western Cape, found that there is a profound connection of small-scale fishers (SSF) to the ocean, who perceive it as a living entity and integral to a complex ecological system, valued for fish spawning, subsistence, and ancestral ties, and who rely on it for fishing, which is a part of their way of life. The activities of fishing involve working in a socially meaningful way, being part of a social group of fishers, having social boundaries and cultural processes of adaptation within this group. Negative impacts caused by the Project could disrupt this way of life.

Indigenous communities are also undergoing a cultural revival, emphasizing the cultural sensitivity of coastal ecosystems, while maintaining a holistic perspective on the sea as both a cultural and economic resource. The ocean holds significance as a resting place for ancestors, with rituals playing a vital role in spiritual well-being. Specific cultural practices of Indigenous and customary communities, drawing on fynbos and the sea for healing and ancestral connection, were highlighted in the ICH report.

## EIMS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING POSITIVE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

**\*This is a summary of the positive impacts identified by EIMs in the draft EIA and does not include all of the positive impacts.**

### JOB OPPORTUNITIES

EIMS has stated that the exploration activity is expected to stimulate formal and informal employment opportunities. It is estimated in the EIA report that 1 411 formal skilled jobs, 1 743 formal semi-skilled jobs, 1 042 formal low-skilled jobs and 763 informal jobs will be created. No further information on the projected jobs is provided.

### ECONOMIC GROWTH

The positive impacts identified by EIMS in the economic impact assessment indicates that the exploration activity could generate additional economic value, stimulate various sectors, and contribute to overall economic growth. The mobilisation phase of the project which focuses on establishing an onshore logistics base, is expected to generate positive economic benefits such as additional business transactions throughout the exploration industry's value chain, additional employment, and increased taxes. Further, the operational phase is expected to stimulate demand for goods, services, and employment throughout the value chain, leading to business growth and additional tax revenue.

The EIA Report states that it is, however, important to note that the exploration activity offers short-term economic benefits (i.e., operational period of between 20 and 24 months) and therefore would only create additional value for a short period of time.

# GET INVOLVED



## Why should I get involved?

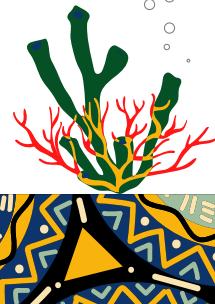
The proposed project may impact communities residing close to the project area and communities relying on the ocean. It is, therefore, important to share your views of the proposed project. However, even if you do not live close to the area of interest, you can get involved.

## How to get involved

1. Gather as much information about the project as possible. All project documents can be accessed online here

<https://eims.datafree.co/2023/06/08/1570-block-3b4b-exploration-right-eia/>  
or physically at the following locations

Description of event:	Availability of Scoping Report (SR) for Public Review and Comment
Where	<p>The Hout Bay Public Library (Meldhout Crescent, Hout Bay, Cape Town)</p> <p>The Sea Point Public Library (Civic Centre, Cir Thrice Anchor Bay and Main Roads, Sea Point, Cape Town)</p> <p>Yzerfontein Tourism Office (50 Main Road, Yzerfontein)</p> <p>The Vredenburg Public Library (2 Academy Street (closest to West Coast Mall), Vredenburg)</p> <p>St. Helena Bay Library (2 Albertros Street, St Helena Bay)</p> <p>Fandisa's Public Library (Main Road, Fandisa)</p> <p>The Lamberts Bay Public Library (Milner Street, Lamberts Bay)</p> <p>Kamdeberg Local Municipality in Houteklip Bay (Wag Way street)</p> <p>A. J. Bester Library (Robson Street, Port Nolloth, Richtersveld)</p>



2. Attend public meetings online or in person at the following locations to learn more about the project and to make verbal comments.

Public Open Days are scheduled during the review period of the DEIAIR as follows:

Town	Venue	Date and Time
Port Nolloth	Port Nolloth Drop-in Centre, Olsen Street	Monday, 22 January 2024, 08:00-12:00
Hondeklip Bay	Eric Baker Hall	Monday, 22 January 2024, 15:00-19:00
Coastvlei	Miriam Dwyer Community Hall, Howe Road	Tuesday, 23 January 2024, 10:00-14:00
Ehenkayes	Ehenkayes Community Hall	Tuesday, 23 January 2024, 15:00-19:00
Camdeboo Bay	Lamberts Bay Hotel, 12 Voortrekkerstraat	Wednesday, 24 January 2024, 08:00-12:00
St. Helena Bay	Blends Bay Hotel, 1 Hunter Street	Wednesday, 24 January 2024, 15:00-19:00
St. Helena Bay	Wandy Point Hotel, 2 Albion Street	Thursday, 25 January 2024, 09:00-13:00
Swartland Bay	Hoedjies Bay Hotel Conference Hall, Main Road	Thursday, 25 January 2024, 08:00-12:00
Yzerfontein	Yzerfontein Community Hall, 25 Dolphin Street	Friday, 26 January 2024, 08:00-12:00
Cape Town	Hellenic Club, 24 Bay Street, Sea Point	Friday, 26 January 2024, 13:00-19:00
Port Elizabeth (Nelson Mandela Bay)	Hawthorne Sports and Recreation Centre, Karbonkel Road	Saturday, 27 January 2024, 08:00-12:00
Virtual Meeting	Microsoft Teams ( <a href="#">register here</a> )	Thursday, 1 February 2024, 09:00-12:00

ReaPs will be able to attend physical open days sessions at any time that suits them during the duration of the open days. Depending on attendance, a guided tour of the project will be conducted at the start and halfway point of each session. For example, a session commencing at 08:00 will start with a tour at 08:00 and have another tour at 10:00.

To comment on the report, members of the public must register as I&APs and can do so via email: [block3b4b@eims.co.za](mailto:block3b4b@eims.co.za) or telephonically: 011 789 7170

Any comments which members of the public make must be submitted by 8 February 2024. Comments or queries can be submitted via post: P.O. Box 2083, Pinegowrie, 2123; fax: 086 571 9047; phone call: 011 789 7170; whatsapp: 076 281 3326 or email: [block3b4b@eims.co.za](mailto:block3b4b@eims.co.za)

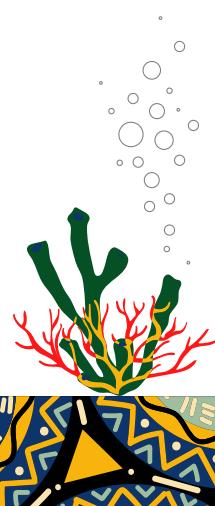
Please include the project reference number 1570 in all correspondence.

# WHAT SHOULD YOU BE THINKING ABOUT?



Exploration and production projects have direct and indirect effects on communities, and it is important to think about what these effects could be. The questions below will help you identify and think about the influence of the project on your community.

- **How will this project impact my livelihood?**
- **Will I be able to access the beach and ocean as I have before?**
- **Will the project activity affect how fish and bird species move in the area and will this impact our livelihoods?**
- **Do I normally fish in the project area or travel through the project area to access my usual fishing grounds?**
- **What effect would an oil/gas spill have on our community?**
- **Will the project provide our community with employment, what kinds of skills are required to be employed and will it be long-term employment?**
- **Once the project is complete, what benefits will the community enjoy?**
- **If you work in the aquaculture sector, will the project impact the businesses and jobs in this sector?**
- **If you are from the tourism sector, will the project have a positive or negative impact on tourism?**
- **How will this project impact my cultural and spiritual practices?**



# HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR COMMENT



There are no templates or requirements of how you need to structure your comment. Below is an example of how you can structure your comment.

**1. List your main concerns with the project and speak about whether these concerns were addressed or dealt with at the public consultations.**

**2. State how you believe this Project will affect your livelihood and the livelihood of your community?**

**3. State how you believe the Project will impact your access to and use of the ocean, and how it will impact the movement of animal species (birds, fish, etc.).**

**4. State whether you think the Project will benefit you or your community, and what those benefits will be.**

**5. State whether the positive and negative impacts of the Project were discussed with you prior to or at the public consultations.**

**6. State how you believe the Project will impact your cultural and spiritual heritage if it goes ahead.**

**7. State whether the public consultations were done in a language you understand and whether it helped you understand what the project was about.**

**8. Any other comments**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Community/Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

