



environment & tourism



INTERIM CERTIFICATION BOARD FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PRACTITIONERS OF SOUTH AFRICA

CONSULTATIVE PROCESS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Process Update - January 2007

Introduction

In November 2005, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) and the Interim Certification Board for Environmental Assessment Practitioners of South Africa (the ICB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding that has enabled a broad consultative process on the establishment of a registration authority for environmental assessment practitioners that would meet the legal requirements set out in section 24H of the National Environmental Management Amendment Act 8 of 2004 (NEMA).

The process and the Working Group mandated by the National Conference held in March 2006, have highlighted critical issues that must be addressed to enable effective quality assurance in environmental assessment practice: the development of SAQA (South African Qualifications Authority) approved qualifications standards for environmental assessment practice, and the establishment of the enabling legal mechanism that would make registration compulsory for EAPs (i.e. amendment of the NEMA Regulations). ICB and DEAT are currently revising the MoU on the basis of a proposed process and work plan redesigned to address these issues. The summary of the proposed process is presented in Figure 1 and outlined below in the way forward.

The key challenges and proposed revised process and work plan have been reported to Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk during November 2006. A meeting has been arranged for January 2007 between the Minister and representatives of the ICB and the consultative process to discuss these challenges and the way forward.

The consultative process

The *purpose of the consultative process*, which has focused on professionals active in the field of environmental assessment (EA), is to strive for broad agreement on the structure of a proposed future registration authority, its constitution, the certification/registration criteria and process, and the sanction processes that may be needed. The intention is for the structure emerging from the consultative process to submit a *Proposal* to the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to be recognised as a registration body for environmental assessment practitioners in South Africa.

A series of *provincial meetings* were advertised and hosted in partnership with relevant EA authorities during February and March 2006. Issues raised in these meetings informed a draft text of the *Proposal* for the establishment of a registration authority. This *Draft Proposal* and other key issues formed the basis of the content for a national conference of representatives of relevant organisations, held on 28 & 29 March 2006.

The *national conference* was attended by 60 representatives of professional bodies represented on the ICB with additional professional bodies identified through the process, as well as provincial and national government. The conference had set out to discuss and reach as much agreement as possible on a draft single text of the *Proposal* to the Minister for the establishment of a registration authority for EA practitioners in South Africa. While there was significant ground covered and there was agreement in principle that it is desirable to have one registering authority, there was not sufficient discussion and agreement on the details of the *Proposal*. It was also recognised that the South African Qualifications Authority needed to play a key role in developing the required *competencies and qualifications* for EA practitioners.

The following individuals were nominated to a *working group* that would be responsible for compiling a revised *Draft Proposal* to the Minister: Mondo Komane (SAIEP), Amanda Britz (DEAT), William Mngoma (DAEA, KZN), Carmen du Toit (SABTACO), Andrew Duthie (IAIAsa), Barry Gasson (SAPI) and Sibonelo Mbanjwa (DTEC, N Cape).

The Working Group's progress

The *Working Group* (WG) that was mandated by the national conference (28 & 29 March 06) to revise the draft *Proposal* held a working session on 14 & 15 September 2006 at which proposals to amend the draft proposal were discussed. A further WG working session will be held on 25 & 26 January 2007 to conclude the revisions to the *Proposal*. This revised *Proposal* will be the basis for a further round of stakeholder consultation (proposed at organisational, provincial and national levels).

The way forward

The following overall outcomes must be achieved in order to establish a registration authority that can play a meaningful quality assurance role for EA practice in South Africa:

- Sufficient agreement of all relevant stakeholders on the content of the *Proposal* to be revised by the Working Group and submitted to the Minister (by end September 2007).
- Establishment and recognition by the Minister of the registration body by appointing a Board, Registration Committee and securing an operational budget on the basis of a business plan (by end June 2008).
- Registration of Environmental Assessment Practice Unit Standards with SAQA in terms of the National Qualifications Framework (by May 2008).
- Completing enabling regulatory instruments with the Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism, specifically the amendment of the NEMA Regulations to make registration compulsory for practising EAPs (by end of June 2008).

In order to achieve these outcomes revised work plan of the MoU is being finalised between DEAT and the ICB. This work plan is divided into the following sub-phases and proposed milestones:

Sub-phase I	Working Group Proposal Revision DRAFT 1 of the revised Proposal <i>October 2006 to February 2007</i>
Sub-phase II	Business Planning, Development of Unit Standards and Examination/s & Working Group Proposal Revision DRAFT 2 of Proposal and advertised draft of Unit Standards <i>February 2007 to June 2007</i>
Sub-phase III	Proposal Submission to Minister and establishment of the Registration Authority <i>June 2007 to November 2007</i>
Sub-phase IV	Launch and operationalisation of Registration Authority and publication of Gazette notices <i>December 2007 to June 2008</i>

Documentation available from this process

The following documents that record the history and debates in this consultative process are available on the EAPSA website: www.eapsa.co.za

"Towards the establishment of a registration authority for environmental assessment practitioners in South Africa, consultative process with key stakeholders

- *Press release, 27 January 2006*
- *Background Information Document, January 2006*
- *Record of Provincial Workshops, Comments and Responses Document, March 2006*
- *Record of Provincial Workshops and Input from Stakeholders, March 2006*
- *Single Text document for National Conference, March 2006*

- *Draft Constitution of the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Board of South Africa*
- *Programme, National Stakeholder Conference, 28th & 29th March 2006, Airport Grand Hotel, Johannesburg*
- *Record of National Stakeholder Conference, 28th & 29th March 2006, Airport Grand Hotel, Johannesburg*
- *Summary Report on the Outcome of the Conference, 28 & 29th March and Status quo of the Process*
- *Draft Record of Working Group Meeting One, 14 & 15 September 2006*
- *Letter and Report to Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk, Minister of Environmental Affairs & Tourism, November 2006”*

For more information, please contact: Glaudin Kruger, PO Box 599, Onrusrivier, 7201,
Tel 028 316 2905, Fax 088 028 316 2905, Email kruger@kruger-associates.com

Figure 1: Summary of Process of establishing a Registration Authority for Environmental Assessment Practitioners in South Africa

