

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THESE GUIDELINES**

### *Assessment*

The process of collecting, organizing, analyzing, interpreting and communicating data that are relevant to some decision.

### *Competent Authority*

The Ministry, Regional or Local Authority, Chief, Traditional Authority or Communal Land Board or any other statutory body administratively responsible for a proposal or project, or under whose jurisdiction a proposal or project falls.

### *Decommissioning*

The process that begins after partial or total closure of the infrastructure, and ends with closure. It will deal primarily with residual impacts which could not be dealt with by the concurrent mitigation measures described in the environmental management plan.

### *Environmental assessment*

The process of examining the environmental effects of development.

### *Environmental clearance*

A certificate issued by the Environmental Commissioner in terms of section 22(1) of the draft Environmental Management Act, or by the Sustainable Development Commission in terms of section 25(1) of the draft Environmental Management Act, which indicates that the Environmental Commissioner or the Sustainable Development Commission, as the case may be, has determined that an environmental assessment is not required or has approved the Environmental Assessment Report, as the case may be, and is satisfied that the implementation of the project will not have an unduly negative significant effect on the environment, provided that the project is implemented in accordance with the mitigatory measures contained in the Environmental Assessment Report and such conditions as may be recommended by the Environmental Commissioner or the Sustainable Development Commission, if any, as the case may be.

### *Environmental impact*

An *environmental impact* is any change, positive or negative, which takes place in the environment [human and natural environment] as a result of some input, output or other aspect of a project's activities, products or services.

*Environmental issue*

A concern felt by one or more parties about some existing, potential or perceived environmental impact.

*Environmental Management Plan*

Comprises at least three elements: an impact management matrix, which indicates the likely significant biophysical, social and economic impacts of the project, and what mitigatory measures should be implemented and maintained to obviate or lessen those impacts; a plan to monitor the success of the mitigatory measures according to pre-determined indicators, and a preliminary decommissioning/closure plan.

*Environmental Management System*

That part of the overall management system that includes organisational structure, planning activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining the environmental policy. It includes an environmental policy, strategies for the implementation of the policy, targets and objectives, an impact management programme, a monitoring programme, an audit programme and a management review of environmental performance. An Environmental Management System may also include health and safety concerns.

*Evaluation*

The process of weighing information, the act of making value judgements or ascribing values to data in order to reach a decision.

*Interested and affected parties*

Individuals or groups concerned with or affected by an activity, product or service, and its consequences. These include the authorities, local communities, investors, work force, customers and consumers, environmental interest groups and the general public.

*Land use*

The activities, products or services that take place within a given area or space.

*Scoping*

The process of identifying the significant issues, alternatives and decision points which should be addressed in the project application/assessment report.

*Significant impact*

An impact that by its magnitude, duration or intensity alters an important aspect of the environment.