

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(IN ENGLISH AND AFRIKAANS)

to the

DRAFT MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

and Rehabilitation Plan for Paddavlei Wetland,
including the associated hillslope seep areas and
ecological corridor upstream and downstream of the
vlei in Hawston, Overstrand Local Municipality,
Western Cape Province

Available for public comment:

Friday, 31 July to Tuesday, 29 September 2020

JULY 2020



Applicant:

Overstrand Local Municipality

Prepared by:



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brief Project Description

The Overstrand Local Municipality has initiated a process to compile a rehabilitation and a maintenance management plan for Paddavlei Wetland, situated in Hawston, near Hermanus, in the Western Cape Province (see Figure a: Locality Map). Paddavlei Wetland is an open body of water within a wider wetland area that drains into the Skilpadsvlei and from there to the Bot River Estuary.

In order to execute the rehabilitation plan a Maintenance Management Plan (MMP) is compiled that will allow for regular maintenance activities to be undertaken within the Paddavlei.

The wetland, ecological corridor, hillslope seeps and infrastructure associated with these aquatic features will potentially require periodic maintenance, which is addressed by the MMP.

BlueScience (Pty) Ltd. has been appointed to compile the rehabilitation plan and the MMP. Cornerstone Environmental Consultant (Pty) Ltd. (hereafter "Cornerstone") is assisting BlueScience with the public participation activities that are required as part of this MMP process.

Paddavlei Wetland forms part of an aquatic ecological corridor that is formed between the Onrus Mountain to the east and a coastal dune system to the west. The corridor arises within the Hoek van die Berg Nature Reserve and provides connectivity to the Bot River Lagoon and estuary to the north. Historically, Paddavlei was a seasonal open water pan but in more recent years it has become increasingly overgrown with bulrushes and its ecological condition has degraded. Due to concerns raised by the surrounding Hawston community, the Overstrand Municipality has initiated a process to rehabilitate the wetland. The wetland, ecological corridor, hillslope seeps and infrastructure associated with these aquatic features will potentially require periodic maintenance, which are addressed by the MMP.

The maintenance and management activities to be undertaken have been categorised into the following three main activity categories (Section 6 of the MMP provides method

What is a MMP?

A MMP is a document, which have been preapproved by the authorities, that describes maintenance activities that need to take place within a watercourse and/or which entails the removal of indigenous vegetation.

The MMP specifically relates to Activities 19 and 27, as listed in the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended (NEMA) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations Listing Notice 1 of 2014 (GN R. 327), as amended. In line with the MMP, infilling or removal of more than 10m³ material within a watercourse, and/or the clearance of 1 ha or more of indigenous vegetation, are allowed only if the works are undertaken for maintenance purposes AND forms part of the MMP when approved by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP).

What are maintenance activities?

"Maintenance", as defined in terms of the NEMA, refers to "activities performed to keep a structure or system functioning or in service on the same location, capacity and footprint." It is therefore "like for like" activities.

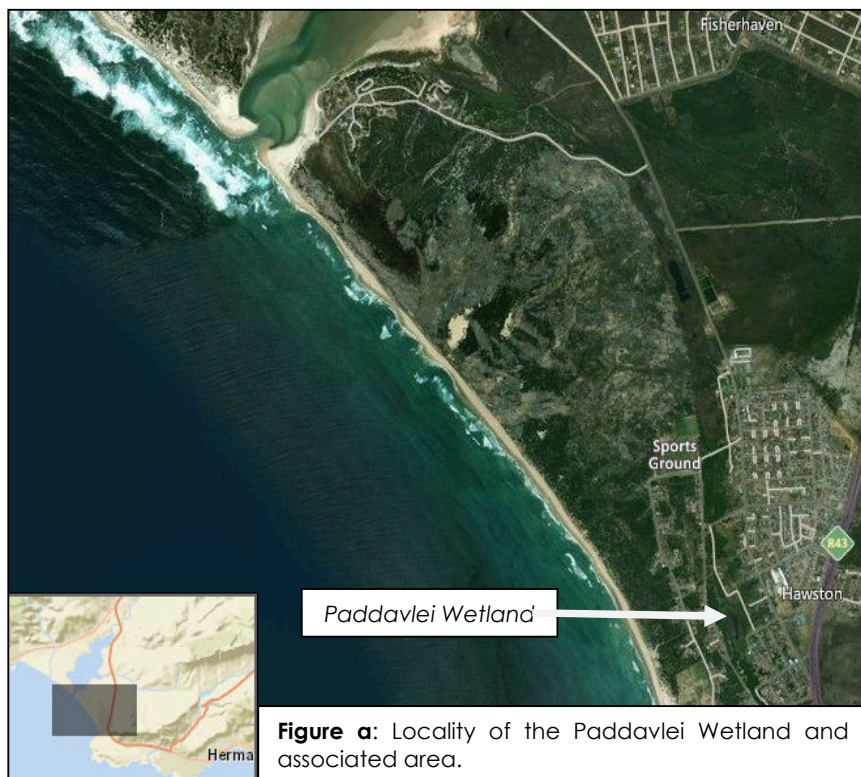


Figure a: Locality of the Paddavlei Wetland and associated area.

statements, which include mitigation measures, to be implemented for each of the activities):

Activity 1a: Clearing of invasive alien vegetation;

Activity 1b: Clearing of indigenous *Phragmites* reeds;

Activity 2: Repairs to- or replacement of damaged formal river crossings, and water level management; and

Activity 3: Removal of material (debris, rock and sediment) at infrastructure.

Overview of the Aquatic Features

Paddavlei Wetland consists of a much-reduced open water area, surrounded by a bulrush (*Typha capensis*) dominated reed bed. The upper extent of the vlei starts at the houses along Bush Street. The vlei then widens at Vlei Street, extending up to Long Street. Where Long Street turns to the west and then north again, the wetland narrows. At this point pipe a culvert and embankment has been placed within the wetland that allows access over the vlei. The wetland then continues northward in a narrow band to Chapel Street (refer to the Figure on the cover page of the MMP/ this Executive Summary).

Biodiversity Conservation Importance

The aquatic ecological corridor in which Paddavlei is located is linked to the following formally protected areas:

1. The Bot-Kleinmond Estuarine System, into which the aquatic ecological corridor drains, is a designated Ramsar wetland and recognised as one of the ten most significant wetlands for water birds in South Africa during the dry summer months and is an nursery area for fish; and
2. Hoek van die Berg Private Nature Reserve to the south-east of Paddavlei, with the associated aquatic ecological corridor arising within the reserve.

The entire aquatic ecological corridor, including Paddavlei, has been mapped as a natural Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Area (FEPA) Wetland (Channelled valley-bottom wetland within the South Strandveld Bioregion) by the National FEPA and National Wetland Mapping projects. The larger Bot River catchment is not mapped as a FEPA River sub-quaternary catchment.

Only the downstream Middelvlei / Skilpadvlei and Bot Lagoon are mapped as aquatic Critical Biodiversity Areas (wetlands and estuary) that are required to meet biodiversity objectives and should be maintained to prevent any further loss of aquatic habitat. The coastal dune field to the west of the vlei is also mapped as an aquatic Ecological Support Area. Paddavlei and the remainder of its associated wetland corridor is mapped as an aquatic (wetland and watercourse) Ecological Support Area that should be restored. These areas are not deemed essential for meeting biodiversity targets but play an important role in supporting the functioning of Protected Areas or Critical Biodiversity Areas and are often vital for delivering ecosystem services. **The management objective is to restore and/or manage these areas to minimize impact on ecological processes and ecological infrastructure functioning, especially soil and water-related services, and to allow for faunal movement. The improvement of Paddavlei, as a community asset, is essential and is a primary objective of the proposed rehabilitation actions.**

The aquatic ecological corridor also provides an important ecological connectivity between the Bot Lagoon, the wetlands within the corridor, *Juncus cf. kraussii* wetlands at Hoek van die Berg and the Vermont Pan to the east of Hawston.

Potential Impacts

The impacts associated with the three proposed activity categories included in the MMP (as listed above) were assessed considering the ecologic condition and sensitivity of the aquatic features on the site. The outcome of the impact assessment is that the significance of the potential impacts associated with Activities 1 and 3 (listed above) will be low to very low negative to medium positive with implementation of the recommenced management and mitigation measures. The significance of the impacts associated with Activity 2 (listed above) will be very low negative with implementation of the recommenced maintenance and mitigation measures.

Public Participation Process

A key part of this project is the undertaking of a public participation process with all Paddavlei affiliated interest groups, the local community and the relevant organs of state/organisations. The key focus of this public participation process is to:

1. Obtain historical information on the function/purpose of the wetland;
2. Determine the existing use of wetland;
3. Determine the vision and needs of the local community as well as the desired state of the wetland;
and
4. Obtain comment on the Draft MMP for the Paddavlei Wetland.

The public participation process for this project was therefore designed around the specific objectives of the MMP process and involved various interest groups, individuals and organs of state/organisations (hereafter collectively referred to as 'interested and affected parties', i.e. I&APs) to enable the preparation of a comprehensive rehabilitation plan (Annexure B1 to the Draft MMP document) and MMP that incorporates the inputs from I&APs and which complies with the relevant regulatory requirements.

The Draft MMP, as well as the rehabilitation plan (Annexure B1 to the Draft MMP document), is available for comment from I&APs from Friday, 31 July to Tuesday, 29 September 2020. A 60-day comment period is provided due to the current COVID-19 lockdown situation; this extension is in line with section 4.4 of GN No. 650 of 5 June 2020.

The availability of the Draft MMP and the rehabilitation plan for comment was **advertised** in the Village News and the Hermanus Times on 29 and 30 July 2020 respectively. **Notices** were also fixed at publicly accessible places, such as shops in the Hawston area. The advert and notices will inform people of the MMP process, invite them to comment on the document, and invite them to attend the public open day.

A **public open day** will take place on **18 August 2020**, at the **Thusong Centre, Vlei Street, Hawston**. I&APs are welcome to visit the open day venue any time **between 15:00 and 18:00** on the day. Communication during the open day will be in both English and Afrikaans. The public open day will provide opportunity for residents to ask questions and to provide input on an individual basis, and to obtain direct feedback from the project team members. The public open day is scheduled early in the 60-day commenting period to ensure that adequate time is available after the open day for people to submit further written comments. The necessary COVID-19 safety protocols will be implemented during the public open day.

Letters, which will include the Executive Summary (in English and Afrikaans) of the rehabilitation plan and Draft MMP document, will be hand-delivered/dropped-off to the landowners/occupiers of properties that are directly adjacent to the site, and adjacent properties 1000m downstream of the application area.

The Draft MMP, the rehabilitation plan (as Annexure B1 to the Draft MMP document), as well as the Executive Summary (in English and Afrikaans) as a separate downloadable document, can be **downloaded** from the following link: <https://www.overstrand.gov.za/en/documents/strategic-documents/environmental-management-services>.

Hard copies of the Draft MMP and the rehabilitation plan (as Annexure B1 to the Draft MMP document), as well as the Executive Summary (in English and Afrikaans), will be made available to members of the public during the public open day (to take home).

Electronic or hard copy formats of the document can also be sent to the I&AP / organs of state upon request.

A Comments and Responses Report will be prepared to document all the comments received during the above-mentioned comment period. The Comments and Responses Report will be included in the Final MMP when submitted to the DEA&DP for their approval.

MMP Implementation

The Overstrand Municipality will be responsible for implementation of the management and mitigation measures contained in the rehabilitation plan and MMP, as well as to oversee the monitoring of the maintenance and management activities. Records of implementation of the maintenance activities should be kept by the Municipality.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the proposed rehabilitation and subsequent maintenance and management activities will not result in significant negative impacts but will result in positive impacts on the environment if the prescribed maintenance and mitigation measures are implemented successfully.

UITVOERENDE OPSOMMING

Kort Projekbeskrywing

Die Overstrand Plaaslike Munisipaliteit het 'n proses begin om 'n rehabilitasie- en instandhoudingsbestuursplan vir Paddavlei-vleiland in Hawston, naby Hermanus, in die Wes-Kaap, op te stel (sien Figuur a: Liggingskaart). Paddavlei-vleiland is 'n oop watermassa binne 'n breër vleilandgebied wat in die Skilpadsvlei dreineer en van daar na die Botstrandmeer dreineer.

Ten einde die rehabilitasieplan uit te voer, is 'n Onderhoudsbestuursplan (OBP) opgestel wat voorsiening maak vir gereelde instandhoudingsaktiwiteite binne die Paddavlei.

Die Paddavlei-vleiland, en die gepaartgaande ekologiese korridor, heuwelvleilandareas en die infrastruktuur wat hiermee verband hou, sal van tyd tot tyd onderhoud benodig. Hierdie onderhoud sal deur die OBP aangespreek word.

BlueScience (Edms) Bpk. (hierna BlueScience) is aangestel om die rehabilitasieplan en die OBP op te stel. Cornerstone Environmental Consultant (Edms) Bpk. (hierna "Cornerstone") help BlueScience met die openbare deelname aktiwiteite wat benodig word as deel van hierdie OBP-proses.

Paddavlei-vleiland vorm deel van 'n akwatiese ekologiese korridor tussen die Onrusberge in die ooste en 'n kusduinstelsel in die weste. Die korridor begin binne die Hoek van die Berg-natuurreservaat en verbind die natuurreservaat met die Botstrandmeer en die riviermonding in die noorde. Paddavlei was histories 'n seisoenale oopwaterpan, maar in meer onlangse jare het dit al meer toegegroeï met biesies, en die ekologiese toestand daarvan het agteruitgegaan. As gevolg van kommer wat deur die Hawstongemeenskap uitgespreek is, het die Overstrand Munisipaliteit 'n proses begin om die vleiland te rehabiliteer.

Die voorgestelde instandhoudings- en bestuursaktiwiteite is in die volgende drie aktiwiteits-kategorieë ingedeel (Afdeling 6 van die OBP bevat metodestellings, wat versagtingsmaatreëls insluit, wat vir elk van die aktiwiteite geïmplementeer moet word):

Aktiwiteit 1a: Opruiming van indringerplante;

Aktiwiteit 1b: Opruiming van inheemse Phragmites-riete;

Wat is 'n MMP?

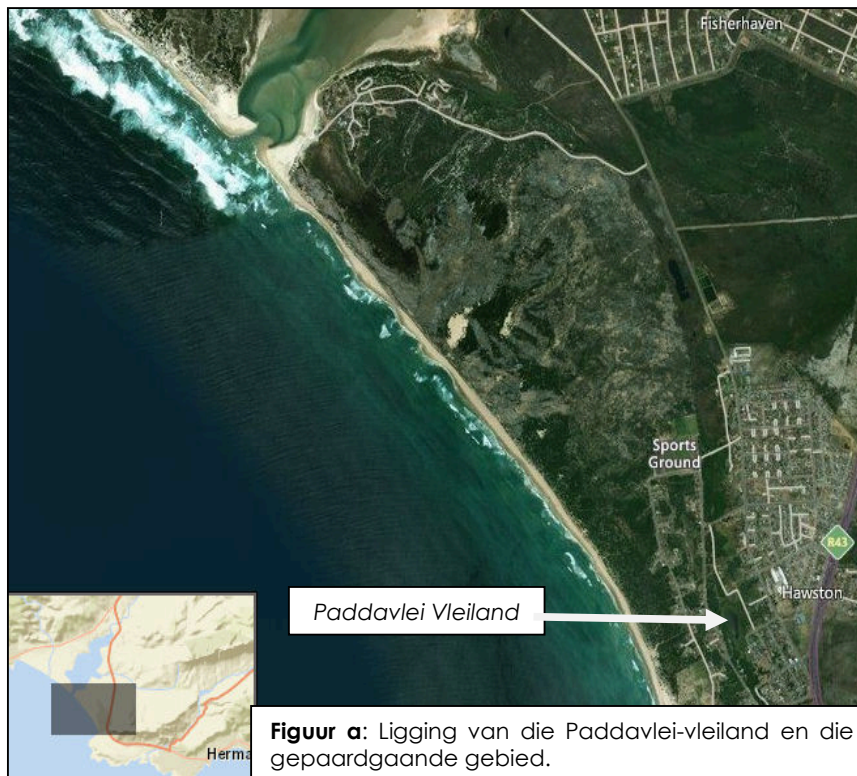
'n MMP is 'n dokument wat deur die owerhede vooraf goedgekeur is, wat onderhoudsaktiwiteite beskryf wat binne 'n waterloop moet plaasvind en / of die verwydering van inheemse plantegroei behels.

Die MMP hou spesifiek verband met aktiwiteite 19 en 27, soos gelys in die Wet op Nasionale Omgewingsbestuur, 1998 (Wet Nr. 107 van 1998), soos gewysig (NEMA) Omgewingsimpakstudie (OIE)-regulasies Kennisgewing 1 van 2014 (GN R.) 327), soos gewysig. In ooreenstemming met die MMP, word die invulling of verwydering van meer as 10m³ materiaal binne 'n waterloop en / of die vrystelling van 1 ha of meer inheemse plantegroei slegs toegelaat indien die werke vir onderhoudsdoeleindes onderneem word en deel vorm van die MMP wanneer goedgekeur deur die Departement van Omgewingsake en Ontwikkelingsbeplanning.

Wat is instandhoudingsaktiwiteite?

'Onderhoud', soos omskryf in terme van die NEMA, verwys na 'aktiwiteite wat uitgevoer word om 'n struktuur of stelsel te laat funksioneer of op dieselfde plek, kapasiteit en voetspoor te kan funksioneer.' Dit is dus aktiwiteite soos "like for like".

Paddavlei was histories 'n seisoenale oopwaterpan, maar in meer



Figuur a: Ligging van die Paddavlei-vleiland en die gepaartgaande gebied.

Aktiwiteit 2: Herstelwerk aan of vervanging van beskadigde formele rivieroorgange en bestuur van die watervlak; en

Aktiwiteit 3: Verwydering van materiaal (puin, rots en sediment) by infrastruktuur.

Oorsig van die akwatiese kenmerke

Paddavlei-vleiland bestaan uit 'n verkleinde oopwatergebied, omring deur 'n bieise (*Typha capensis*) oorheersde rietbedding. Die boonste gedeelte van die vlei begin by die huise langs Bushstraat. Vandaar verbreed die vlei in Vleistraat en strek tot by Langstraat. Die vleiland vernou waar Langstraat weswaarts draai en dan weer noordwaarts. Op hierdie punt is 'n duikweg en wal in die vleiland, wat toegang oor die vlei moontlik maak. Die vleiland gaan dan noordwaarts voort in 'n nou band na Chapelstraat (verwys na die Figuur op die voorblad van die OBP / hierdie Uitvoerende Opsomming).

Die belangrikheid van die bewaring van biodiversiteit in die area

Die akwatiese ekologiese korridor waarin Paddavlei geleë is, is verbind aan die volgende formeel beskermde gebiede:

1. Die Bot-Kleinmond Strandmeer-stelsel, waarin die akwatiese ekologiese korridor dreineer, is aangewys as 'n Ramsar-vleiland en word erken as een van die tien belangrikste vleilande vir watervoëls in Suid-Afrika gedurende die droë somermaande, en is 'n broeiarea vir visse; en
2. Hoek van die Berg Privaat Natuurreservaat suid-oos van Paddavlei, met die gepaardgaande akwatiese ekologiese korridor wat in die reservaat ontstaan.

Die hele akwatiese ekologiese korridor, insluitend Paddavlei, is gekarteer as 'n natuurlike varswater-ekosistemprioriteitsgebied.

Slegs die stroomaf Middelvlei / Skilpadvlei en die Botstrandmeer areas word aangedui as akwatiese kritiese biodiversiteitsgebiede (vleilande en riviermonding). Hierdie areas is dus belangrik om die biodiversiteitsdoelwitte vir die gebied te bereik, en moet in stand gehou word om verdere verlies aan akwatiese habitat te voorkom. Die kusduinveld wes van die vlei word as 'n akwatiese ekologiese ondersteuningsgebied gekarteer. Paddavlei en die res van die geassosieerde vleilandkorridor word gekarteer as 'n akwatiese (vleiland en waterloop) ekologiese ondersteuningsarea wat herstel moet word. Hierdie gebiede word nie noodsaaklik geag vir die bereiking van biodiversiteitsdoelwitte nie, maar speel 'n belangrike rol in die ondersteuning van die funksionering van beskermde gebiede of kritiese biodiversiteitsgebiede en is dikwels noodsaaklik vir die lewering van ekostelseldienste. **Die bestuursdoelwit is om hierdie gebiede te herstel en / of te bestuur om die impak op ekologiese prosesse en ekologiese infrastruktuur-funksionering, veral grond- en waterverwante dienste, te minimaliseer en om die beweging van die diere moontlik te maak. Die verbetering van Paddavlei-vleiland, as 'n gemeenskaplike bate, is noodsaaklik en is 'n primêre doelwit van die voorgestelde rehabilitasie-aksies.**

Die akwatiese ekologiese korridor bied ook 'n belangrike ekologiese verbinding tussen die Botstrandmeer, die vleilande in die korridor, vleilande by Hoek van die Berg en die Vermont Pan oos van Hawston.

Moontlike impakte

Die impak wat geassosieer word met die drie voorgestelde aktiwiteitskategorieë wat by die OBP ingesluit is (soos hierbo gelys), is geëvalueer met inagneming van die ekologiese toestand en sensitiwiteit van die akwatiese eienskappe op die terrein. Die uitkoms van die impakstudie dui dat die potensiele impakte wat verband hou met Aktiwiteite 1 en 3 (hierbo gelys) laag tot baie laag negatief tot medium positief sal wees met die implementering van die aanbevole bestuurs- en versagtingsmaatreëls. Die impak wat verband hou met Aktiwiteit 2 (hierbo gelys), sal baie laag negatief wees met die implementering van die instandhoudings- en versagtingsmaatreëls.

Publieke deelnameproses

'n Belangrike deel van hierdie projek is die onderneem van 'n publieke deelnameproses met alle belangegroepes wat verband hou met Paddavlei, die plaaslike gemeenskap en die betrokke staatsorgane / organisasies. Die sleutelfokus van hierdie openbare deelnameproses is om:

1. Historiese inligting te verkry oor die funksie / doel van die vleiland;
2. Die bestaande gebruik van die vleiland te bepaal;
3. Die visie en behoeftes van die plaaslike gemeenskap sowel as die gewenste toestand van die vleiland te bepaal; en

4. Kommentaar te verkry op die Konsep-OBP vir die Paddavei-vleiland.

Die publieke deelnameproses vir hierdie projek is dus ontwerp rondom die spesifieke doelstellings van die OBP-proses en verskillende belangegroepes, individue en staatdepartemente / organisasies (hierna gesamentlik "belanghebbende en geaffekteerde partye" genoem, dit wil sê B&GP'e) betrek ten einde 'n omvattende rehabilitasieplan (Aanhangsel B1 tot die Konsep OBP-dokument) en OBP op te stel wat die insette van B&GP'e insluit en wat aan die toepaslike regulatoriese vereistes voldoen.

Die Konsep-OBP asook die rehabilitasieplan (as Aanhangsel B1 tot die Konsep OBP-dokument) is beskikbaar vir kommentaar deur B&GP'e vanaf Vrydag, 31 Julie tot Dinsdag, 29 September 2020. 'n Kommentaarperiode van 60 dae word voorsien as gevolg van die huidige COVID-19-inperkingsituasie.

Die beskikbaarheid van die Konsep-OBP en die rehabilitasieplan vir kommentaar is op onderskeidelik 29 en 30 Julie 2020 in die *Village News* en die *Hermanus Times* **geadverteer**. **Kennisgewings** is ook by openbare plekke aangebring, soos winkels in die Hawston-omgewing. Die advertensie en kennisgewings sal mense inlig oor die OBP-proses, hulle uitnooi om kommentaar op die dokument te lewer en hulle uitnooi om die publieke opedag by te woon.

'n **Publieke opedag** vind op 18 Augustus 2020 in die **Thusong-sentrum, Vleistraat, Hawston**, plaas. Lede van die publiek is welkom om die opedag lokaal tussen **tussen 15:00 en 18:00** op die dag te besoek. Kommunikasie gedurende die opedag sal in beide Engels en Afrikaans plaasvind. Die opedag sal inwoners die geleentheid bied om vrae te stel en insette op individuele basisse te lewer, en om direkte terugvoer van die projekspanlede te kry. Die opedag word vroeg in die 60-dae kommentaarperiode geskeduleer om te verseker dat voldoende tyd beskikbaar is na die opedag vir verdere skriftelike of telefoniese kommentaar. Die nodige COVID-19 veiligheidsprotokolle sal tydens die opedag geïmplementeer word.

Briewe, wat die uitvoerende opsomming (in Engels en Afrikaans) van die rehabilitasieplan en die OBP-dokument insluit, sal afgelewer word by die grondeienaars / inwoners van eiendomme direk aangrensend tot die vleiland, en aangrensende eiendomme 1000m stroomaf van die terrein.

Die Konsep-OBP asook die rehabilitasieplan (as Aanhangsel B1 tot die Konsep-OBP dokument), asook die Uitvoerende Opsomming (Afrikaans en Engels) as 'n afsonderlike aflaaibare dokument, kan **elektronies afgelaai** word by: <https://www.overstrand.gov.za/en/documents/strategic-documents/environmental-management-services>.

Harde kopieë van die Konsep-OBP asook die rehabilitasieplan (as Aanhangsel B1 tot die Konsep-OBP dokument), asook die Uitvoerende Opsomming (in Engels en Afrikaans), sal gedurende die publieke opedag beskikbaar gestel word aan lede van die publiek.

Elektroniese of harde kopie formate van die dokument kan ook na die B&GP'e / staatsdepartemente gestuur word, op versoek, indien nodig.

'n Kommentaar- en antwoordverslag sal opgestel word om al die kommentaar wat gedurende die bogenoemde kommentaarperiode ontvang word, te dokumenteer. Die kommentaar en antwoordeverslag sal by die Finale OBP ingesluit word wanneer dit aan die Departement van Omgewingsake en Ontwikkelingsbeplanning gestuur word vir goedkeuring.

OBP Implementering

Die Overstrand Plaaslike Munisipaliteit sal verantwoordelik wees vir die implementering van die bestuurs- en versagtingsmaatreëls vervat in die rehabilitasieplan en die OBP, asook om toesig te hou oor die instandhouding en bestuursaktiwiteite. Die Munisipaliteit moet rekords hou van die implementering van die instandhoudingsaktiwiteite.

Ter Afsluiting

Die uitkoms van die Konsep-OBP en die rehabilitasieplan is dat die voorgestelde rehabilitasie en instandhoudings- en bestuursaktiwiteite nie 'n beduidende negatiewe impak op die Paddavei stelsel sal hê nie, maar 'n positiewe impak op die omgewing word verwag indien die voorgeskrewe instandhoudings- en versagtingsmaatreëls suksesvol geïmplementeer word.