

6 SKORPION ZINC PROJECT, NAMIBIA

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Report Overview

In this case study, we reflect on public participation in the environmental assessment for the Skorpion Zinc Project in south western Namibia. The environmental assessment process was undertaken by an independent professional team led by Walmsley Environmental Consultants working together with South African and Namibian specialists. The public participation was interesting in that it involved a broad spectrum of stakeholders from Namibia and continued after the completion of the environmental assessment exercise into the implementation and construction phase of the project.

This case study is based on a review of project literature as well as interviews with a cross section of stakeholders involved in the process. It provides a description of the project and overview of its policy and legislative context, a description of the environmental assessment and public participation process and an analysis of key aspects of the public participation process. Details of the references consulted and interviews are included in the final references section.

6.1.2 Project Description

The Skorpion Zinc Project involved the development of a greenfield zinc mine and refinery. At Skorpion, oxidised zinc ore is mined from an open pit and refined into special high grade zinc ingots on site.

The project was initiated by Reunion Mining Namibia (Pty) Ltd and a feasibility study, including an Environmental Assessment, was undertaken followed by the construction of the project. Anglo-American Base Metals subsequently bought the project from Reunion Mining following completion of the environmental impact assessment.

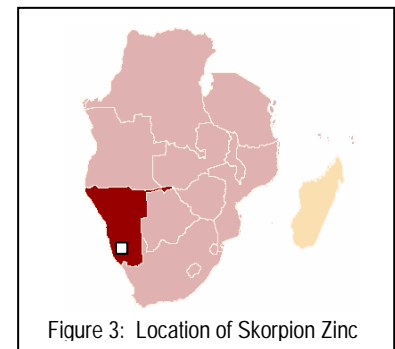


Figure 3: Location of Skorpion Zinc

The Skorpion Zinc mine is located in south western Namibia, approximately 25km north west of the small town of Rosh Pinah. The climate is extremely arid (<100mm annual rainfall) and the ecosystem is driven by wind. At the time of the environmental impact assessment the project site was located within the Sperrgebiet (Diamond Area No 1)¹. As access to the Sperrgebiet had been prohibited for many years, the area is largely pristine. Many rare and endemic species are located in the area. The area in the vicinity of Skorpion is highly sensitive and has many specialised habitats associated with rocky outcrops that trap moisture and fog. Vegetation is sparse, largely comprising annual grasses and succulents.

The nearest settlement is Rosh Pinah, a mining town originally set up by Rosh Pinah Zinc Corporation² (originally Iscor, now owned by Kumba Resources) which operates a zinc and lead

¹ Later excised from the Sperrgebiet as part of the establishment of the mine.

² At the commencement of the environmental impact assessment, the company was known as Imcor Tin.

mine in the town. At the time of the environmental impact assessment, Rosh Pinah was an unproclaimed mining village located on government land and managed by Rosh Pinah Zinc Corporation (RPZC) as part of its mining grant. RPZC provided all formal housing, services and other amenities in the town. At the time, approximately 640 people lived in the formal part of Rosh Pinah, with an additional 500 to 900 people living in an informal settlement adjacent to the mine.

Outside of Rosh Pinah, farming occurs in the surrounding areas to the east of the Sperrgebiet and the diamond company Namdeb controls interests in the Sperrgebiet. Farms are large and the area is very sparsely settled due to its arid nature. Access to both the mines and Rosh Pinah is along a gravel road from Aus, approximately 165km north of Rosh Pinah. The community in the area is thus relatively isolated and farmers often travel long distances to access services in nearby towns of Aus and Rosh Pinah.

The economy of the area is largely based on mining and farming, with a small contribution from tourism. Prior to the Skorpion Zinc project, the economy of Rosh Pinah was almost entirely dependent on the RPZC mine.

Certain Rosh Pinah residents are relatively conservative and resistant to change. To some extent this could be seen as a function of the relatively isolated nature of the settlements in the area. The community of Rosh Pinah is also not well integrated, with a distinct divide between the informal settlement and residents in the more formal parts of Rosh Pinah. RPZC, as the owners of all accommodation and facilities, are in a position to exercise a fair degree of 'control' over activities taking place in the town.

The Skorpion Zinc Project included development of an open pit mine and associated infrastructure, construction of a refinery, construction of housing and infrastructure in Rosh Pinah and the construction of a new pipeline and power line. The environmental assessment discussed in this case study addressed the establishment of the actual mine and refinery and associated impacts. Separate environmental assessments were undertaken for the pipeline by NamWater and the power line by NamPower. These two assessments were undertaken by the same consultants as the main environmental assessment, namely Walmsley Environmental Consultants and its Namibian subsidiary, Eco.plan (Pty) Ltd.

The issues associated with the project included potential biophysical impacts on the area as well as potentially significant negative and positive social impacts on the residents of the area. Possible economic benefits were also significant.

6.1.3 Process and Procedural Context

The Environmental Assessment undertaken for the Skorpion Zinc Project was undertaken in the context of the following legislative and administrative requirements:

- The Minerals Act 33 of 1992;
- The Namibian Environmental Assessment Policy; and,
- International financial institution requirements utilising the World Bank guidelines on the Environment, in particular Operational Directive 4.01 on Environmental Assessment.

In addition, the Constitution of Namibia (1990) provides a guide to Government policy in implementing legislation and approving proposed developments. This states that the "State

*shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting policies aimed at..... the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity of Namibia and utilisation of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefits of all Namibians, both present and future”.*³

a) Minerals Act

In terms of the Minerals Act, Reunion Mining had to submit the following information as part of its mining license application:

- The condition of the existing environment;
- An estimate of impacts and proposed mitigation measures; and,
- Details of pollution control, waste management, rehabilitation and minimisation of impacts on surrounding areas.

There are no specific requirements for public participation in the Minerals Act.

b) Namibia’s Environmental Assessment Policy

A detailed Environmental Assessment was submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) for review as required in terms of the Environmental Policy of Namibia.

Broadly, the objectives of the process prescribed by the policy are to:

- Inform decision makers and promote accountability for decisions;
- Enable a broad range of options and alternatives to be considered;
- Ensure a high degree of public participation and involvement by all sectors of the Namibian public; and,
- Promote sustainable development, ensure that costs and benefits are taken into account and that internationally recognised standards are promoted. In addition negative, secondary and cumulative impacts must be minimised and benefits enhanced.

The policy also provides for monitoring and the implementation of an Environmental Management Plan following approval of a project proposal.

c) Financial Institution Requirements

The environmental assessment was also undertaken to meet the requirements of the World Bank’s Operational Directive 4.01 on Environmental Assessment as the project had to meet the requirements of international financial institutions.

The World Bank Directive requirements with respect to public participation include consultation with project affected groups, non-governmental organisations and institutions at an early stage in the project and throughout the environmental assessment in order to ensure that their views are taken into account and issues that affect them are addressed.

³ Constitution of the Republic of Namibia – Article 95 (1)

6.2 Environmental Assessment and Public Participation Process

6.2.1 Environmental Assessment Process

The objectives of the Environmental Assessment process for the Skorpion Zinc Project were to:

- Minimise the negative environmental impacts of the mine and its supporting infrastructure;
- Maximise the socio-economic benefits of the mine;
- Establish a comprehensive data base so that a high level of confidence can be placed on the predictions of environmental impact and the mitigation measures required;
- Consult with stakeholders to ensure that their needs and concerns are considered;
- Work with the mine planning and design project team on an interactive basis; and,
- Comply with Namibia's Environmental Assessment Policy.

The Environmental Assessment process initially comprised three phases, namely:

- Scoping Study;
- Baseline information gathering; and,
- Environmental Assessment.

Public participation activities were undertaken during the Scoping Study and during the Environmental Assessment phase.

Following completion of the environmental assessment, an addendum to the environmental assessment was produced that covered additional studies and changes in the mine design. These documents were reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for construction was also produced and implemented. Communication with stakeholders continued after completion of the main environmental assessment, in the form of project communications with stakeholders. Communication with, and involvement of, stakeholders also formed part of the construction phase of the project.

The environmental assessment investigated a broad range of issues, impacts and benefits in detail. Numerous specialist studies were undertaken including, amongst others, social and economic assessments, flora and fauna assessments, an air quality investigation including dust and a hydrogeological assessment.

6.2.2 The Public Participation Process

The objectives of the public participation were to:

- Provide information to stakeholders on the project;
- Discuss alternatives and identify issues and constraints;
- Identify the scope of the environmental assessment and discuss the methodology and approach;
- Identify additional interested and affected parties;
- Obtain relevant data; and,
- Provide feedback on the findings of the assessment and solicit comment.

Stakeholder groups involved in the process comprised a broad cross section of society, notwithstanding the isolated nature of the mine site. Groups included:

- Regional government officials based in Lüderitz and Keetmanshoop;
- National government;
- The Rosh Pinah community;
- Farmers from the surrounding areas;
- Rosh Pinah Zinc corporation;
- Other businesses and mining concerns from the area, e.g., Namdeb, the Namibian Ports Authority, TransNamib Rail; and,
- Civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations and scientists.

The following techniques were used:

- Dissemination of communication material such as information documents, minutes, summaries and newsletters;
- Individual / personal meetings;
- Meetings and workshops with government officials
- Public meetings;
- Public Open Days; and,
- Establishment of a forum of key stakeholders.

The public participation process comprised a number of activities set out below:

- During initial scoping, issues were solicited from stakeholders through a series of meetings, questionnaires and interviews. A broad spectrum of government officials and other stakeholders such as Rosh Pinah Zinc Corporation (RPZC) management and labour unions were consulted through individual meetings. Two initial meetings were held in Lüderitz and Windhoek in July 1997. Invitations were sent to identified stakeholders and the meetings were advertised in local newspapers. Minutes of the meetings were distributed to attendees. Consultants initially contacted over 100 people from at least 45 organisations.
- This first round of consultation was followed by a series of information meetings with Rosh Pinah residents through the auspices of the RPZC in February 1998. A series of individual meetings were also held with farmers in the area. Information on the environmental assessment process, the project and the preliminary findings was presented and issues solicited from residents. Residents were notified of the meeting through an RPZC local newsletter delivered to all houses in the village and through flyers in English and Afrikaans distributed in the town. The meetings were largely conducted in English, although translation into Afrikaans was undertaken as required.
- Following completion of baseline studies and the environmental assessment, a further round of public meetings was held in August 1998 with key authorities and stakeholders to provide feedback on the findings of the assessment. Meetings were held in Windhoek, Keetmanshoop and Rosh Pinah. Identified stakeholders were invited to the meetings and advertisements were placed in local newspapers and radio announcements were made.
- On completion of the environmental impact assessment stakeholders were kept informed through the release of Project Information Circulars. During the construction phase, a focus was placed on environmental communication. A newsletter, the 'Skorpion's Tale' was developed, which provided information on project progress. The newsletter was distributed

to stakeholders, government officials, and through the Rosh Pinah Zinc Corporation as well as shops in Rosh Pinah.

- A environmental forum, the Rosh Pinah Environmental Forum (RPEF), was established during construction, to address the cumulative impacts and issues associated with the various construction activities in the area. These included the construction of the power line, pipeline, roads, as well as other exploration programmes. The forum included Skorpion Zinc and Rosh Pinah Zinc Corporation representatives, two officials from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, farmers, and residents of Rosh Pinah. Other stakeholders such as diamond company Namdeb, were included on a mailing list. The RPEF provided a forum in which issues raised by stakeholder could be addressed. Not only were local construction issues raised, but also issues concerning recreational activities along the Orange River, the Transfrontier Conservation Park, and the Sperrgebiet Land Use Plan amongst others.

6.3 Case Analysis

6.3.1 Overall

The environmental assessment was one of the first undertaken after the adoption and approval of Namibia's Environmental Policy. The process was characterised by openness and transparency on the part of the Skorpion Zinc Project and the consultants, who demonstrated a willingness to listen to issues raised by stakeholders. There was a commitment to the environmental assessment and to effectively implementing the outcomes of the process. A former MET official commented that the Skorpion Zinc Project followed the policy of its own free will, was committed to the process and was not interested in 'window dressing'. In addition, another official commented that the overall project manager saw the environmental aspects as a priority and was focussed on fostering good relationships with key stakeholders.

This commitment contributed in large part to a successful environmental assessment and public participation process.

The public participation process contributed to the success of the project, as discussed below. Stakeholders could participate effectively in the project, which led to an improvement in the project outcome, as issues were identified and prioritised which may not have emerged without the public process. This included labour concerns and issues associated with the access road. It should be noted, however, that it is difficult to directly pinpoint the precise contribution of the public process to the identification of issues.

The successes of the participation process are discussed below, followed by a discussion of some of its problems. These problems were mainly associated with the involvement of the original residents of Rosh Pinah and related social impacts during and after construction. These issues are discussed separately below and the manner in which the public participation potentially could have assisted is highlighted.

6.3.2 Stakeholders

A diverse range of stakeholders were involved in the process. Activities were not confined to the immediate stakeholders surrounding the site, but included a range of stakeholders from the surrounding region and Namibia as a whole. This was important given the significance of the

project to the national economy, as well as the importance of the sensitive ecosystem in area in which the project was proposed.

A comprehensive database of stakeholders was set up and maintained through out the process. Key to the identification of the appropriate stakeholders was the knowledge and experience of consultants who had worked in Namibia before.

A good working relationship was fostered with government officials, in particular those in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). Formal and informal meetings were held and officials of the MET commented that these sessions, in particular some of the more informal meetings provided an effective means to engage with the consultants on the issues associated with the project.

Farmers in the area were successfully involved in the process, through an intensive round of individual meetings and through correspondence. Many farmers who would experience impacts as a result of the project, e.g., dust along the access road from Aus, were located far from the project site at Rosh Pinah and could not attend public meetings due to the travelling distances involved. The individual meetings provided an effective means of engaging these stakeholders and identifying their issues. One farmer commented that despite not being in the area at the time of the environmental assessment, he had contact with the environmental assessment team who were happy to correspond by email and answer questions.

Involvement of the broader community in Rosh Pinah appeared to pose some challenges in the process. Contact with residents of Rosh Pinah was often through the auspices of RPZC. As noted by one of the environmental assessment consultants, RPZC owned the town, including all the accommodation and consultants had to rely upon the company for accommodation and food in the early stages of the project. Contact was initially limited to RPZC Mine Management and discussions with trade unions⁴. Open meetings were only held in the town approximately six months after the initial Scoping Meetings for the project had been held in Windhoek and Lüderitz. Given that Rosh Pinah residents were one of the stakeholder groups most likely to be impacted upon by the new mine, this is not regarded as ideal.

Many residents of Rosh Pinah, however, did not become involved in the process either through choice or due to other factors. This is discussed further below in Section 6.3.5.

One of the environmental assessment consultants also noted that although an effort was made to involve the poorer informal settlement community in Rosh Pinah through the Rosh Pinah Environmental Forum during the construction stage of the process, there was apparent resistance to their involvement although many of these people did manage to attend the open meetings in Rosh Pinah. The source of the resistance was unclear.

⁴ A meeting with the unions was only noted in the minutes of a meeting in Windhoek and was not documented in the main report.

6.3.3 Methodologies

a) Communication

Ongoing communication was a key aspect of the process. Efforts were initially made to contact and inform as many people as possible about the proposed project. Stakeholders were kept informed throughout the environmental assessment process and during the implementation process. They were notified of meetings and minutes of meetings were sent to attendees. Documentation was relatively accessible and was produced in Afrikaans, the main language of the area, as well as English.

As the project progressed, communication with stakeholders increased and continued after the environmental assessment was completed. For example, during the feedback phase, radio was utilised as a medium in addition to newspaper advertisements and invitations to registered stakeholders. Communication was not limited to registered stakeholders and included distribution of information in Rosh Pinah through mail box drops and fliers that were made available at local stores. This, coupled with the small nature of the town, meant that residents of the town were fully informed throughout the process, even those who chose not to participate. The newsletter, the 'Skorpion's Tale' initiated during the construction phase of the project, also provided an effective means of communicating project developments to stakeholders throughout Namibia and to interested parties in South Africa and overseas..

Communication also played a crucial role in assisting with the implementation of the outcome of the environmental assessment, prior to, and during, construction. There was a significant effort to educate contractors and Skorpion Zinc employees on the implementation of the EMP, which was largely successful. A stakeholder commented that compliance by contractors during construction was good and impacts were minimised.

b) Public meetings

The project manager noted that the public meetings enabled the project team to establish a good rapport with stakeholders as an open approach was taken to discussions and there was a joint approach to solving problems. Open communication with authorities and other stakeholders and a willingness to listen meant that issues raised by stakeholders could be discussed and possible solutions could be generated with stakeholders.

c) Rosh Pinah Environmental Forum

An environmental forum was set up during the construction phase that provided a channel through which the various cumulative impacts associated with the numerous construction activities in the area could be collectively addressed. It also provided stakeholders with a mechanism through which they could raise issues and concerns associated with construction activities. A Rosh Pinah resident noted that it was effective in dealing with complaints such as the impact of traffic and dust in the town during construction. A government official noted that the forum was also very effective in providing space for dialogue between government agencies and contractors and assisted the Environmental Control Officer, as contractors realised that the government supported the EMP.

Another stakeholder noted, however, that in assisting with the implementation of the EMP, the forum tended to dictate to people and did not discuss issues if there was disagreement with the conditions.

6.3.4 Incorporation of Issues

Issues raised by stakeholders were noted and very well dealt with during the environmental assessment process. Some of the issues raised by stakeholders included, amongst others:

- Labour and recruitment policies, and potential impacts of an influx of workers;
- Social impacts of the expansion of the town;
- Infrastructure provision;
- Water supply issues and abstraction from the Orange River;
- Impacts on the Sperrgebiet, access control and fencing; and,
- Dust impacts from the mine and access road.

The environmental assessment report is structured such that stakeholder issues associated with each aspect of the environment or mine are documented followed by a discussion of the potential impacts and benefits. The consultants were active in following up issues raised by stakeholders, answering questions and attending to complaints. A stakeholder commented that two reported violations of the EMP were actively followed up and corrected.

The active attention of the consultants and the company to stakeholder issues meant that many possible problems associated with the project could be mitigated effectively or effective mitigation measures recommended. Examples include the labour issue discussed below and the access road. Dust and safety issues associated with the access road were identified early in the environmental assessment process, which resulted in strong recommendations from the environmental assessment consultants to tar the access road, which, is currently being undertaken.

Many stakeholders noted that they felt satisfied with the process as they could see where and how their issues had been noted and addressed.

a) Labour Issues

A key possible impact associated with the project was the possible influx of work seekers to an area that had little infrastructure to support them and no long term work opportunities beyond that of the project. This issue also had the potential to reduce the effectiveness of the public process as it could have dominated discussion at public events.

Concerns regarding the possible influx of work seekers were initially raised at public meetings based on certain stakeholders' experience of large scale projects at other locations in Namibia. Suggestions were made that a central labour bureau be set up at a location remote from Rosh Pinah where people could apply for work on the Skorpion Zinc Project. Skorpion subsequently committed to the principle and took a policy decision that casual labour 'off the street' would not be employed by project contractors. A Project Labour Agreement was negotiated with prominent labour unions and a labour bureau was set up in Keetmanshoop. All contractors were required to employ people through this bureau. The process of applying for work on the Skorpion Zinc Project was then extensively advertised and communicated across Namibia. The environmental assessment consultant and project manager are of the opinion that this:

- Assisted the public participation process in the later stages of the environmental assessment, particularly in Rosh Pinah, as the focus moved from queries regarding work to other issues; and,
- Limited the influx of work seekers to Rosh Pinah thereby reducing socio-economic impacts, although not wholly implemented by all contractors working in the area.

b) Town Planning

The town planning for Rosh Pinah was undertaken as a separate exercise to the environmental assessment process by an independent town planner from Windhoek. The environmental assessment consultant noted that although the environmental assessment process focused on potential impacts associated with the establishment of the mine and looked at socio-economic impacts on the town, it did not consider impacts associated with the physical increase in the size of the town.

The town planning process undertaken by the town planner does not appear to have been that participative. Accordingly certain issues that may have been identified in a more open public process such as that undertaken for the mine were not identified. For example, the extensions to Rosh Pinah were partly sited in a stream bed that floods irregularly, a point that long time residents of the town could have informed the planners of. A government official also noted that the town planning process for Rosh Pinah was not inclusive and did not effectively involve the residents of the town or other stakeholders.

6.3.5 Rosh Pinah

The establishment of the Skorpion Zinc mine and refinery resulted in significant changes in Rosh Pinah. In the short term there was a large influx of contractors into the town. Many stakeholders commented that people in the town felt 'invaded'. In the longer term, the establishment of the Skorpion Zinc mine and refinery has resulted in a larger community, as well as better infrastructure and services. A divide has developed in the community between the 'old' Rosh Pinah residents and Skorpion Zinc employees.

Although other stakeholders groups were successfully involved in the environmental assessment process, as noted above, many Rosh Pinah residents were not extensively involved in the process. This is despite the dissemination of information through RPZC's internal newsletter delivered to each household and the opportunities provided through public meetings and open house events. This lack of participation appears to be due to a combination of factors including:

- Culture. Many interviewees noted the insular nature of the Rosh Pinah community and that the community was resistant to change. A Rosh Pinah resident noted that although many opportunities were provided for stakeholders to participate, many chose not to attend meetings. Some of the women interviewed noted that their husbands would attend meetings and that they would not.
- Accessibility. A local businessman noted that many residents did not trust the consultants and did not understand the relevance of an 'environmental' assessment to their lives. He also noted that language may have been a factor as portions of the meetings were conducted in English. Many residents were Afrikaans speaking, people could not engage and were too inhibited to ask questions at the meetings.

The lack of involvement of many of the Rosh Pinah residents, whether by choice or through inadequate public participation, meant that opportunities to actively involve these stakeholders in discussing potential social impacts and identifying means of mitigating them were, in part, lost. A Skorpion employee noted that the socio-economic impacts associated with the establishment of the mine and refinery were not as effectively addressed as the biophysical impacts. Given the nature of the Rosh Pinah stakeholders, a more effective participation technique may have been the use of individual and group meetings with smaller groups of stakeholders.

Information on the possible impact of Skorpion Zinc on the town was not adequately conveyed to residents and neither were the possible benefits. This is evidenced in the fact that many 'old' Rosh Pinah residents noted that they were not prepared for the scale of the project. It should be noted, however, that one of the environmental assessment consultants made the observation that she did not think anyone on the project team, with the exception perhaps of the project manager, really appreciated the scale of the project. This highlights the need for the environmental assessment consultant to be fully versed in all the possible aspects and impacts associated with a project in order to adequately convey information to stakeholders.

The social assessment made a number of recommendations on ways to integrate and involve this community. The environmental assessment consultant noted, however, that these were not initially carried through by the Skorpion Zinc Project and RPZC. The reasons for this are unclear. Employees of Skorpion Zinc noted that recently efforts were being made to bridge divides in the community and generate a greater sense of community in the town. This process may possibly have been eased had residents of the town been more actively involved in the environmental assessment process. Despite the initial difficulties associated with the establishment of the Skorpion mine, many Rosh Pinah residents did note the benefits of the project, e.g., improved infrastructure and the potential for property ownership.

6.4 Conclusion and Lessons Learnt

The public process for the Skorpion Zinc project contributed to the success of the project as issues were identified early in the project during the public process and could effectively be investigated during the environmental assessment. These included, for example, labour issues, dust and socio-economic issues related to impacts on the town of Rosh Pinah. However, the lack of involvement of the Rosh Pinah residents in the process, compromised the sustainability of the project in that measures to effectively mitigate social impacts of the project were not identified in conjunction with residents.

6.4.1 Benefits to Stakeholder Groups

The public process resulted in a number of benefits to stakeholder groups including:

- A relationship was built between government officials and the company, which provided a measure of confidence to government that mitigation measures would be implemented;
- Open communication lines were established between Skorpion Zinc and stakeholder groups such as farmers and residents; and,
- The process was a learning process for many of the stakeholder groups in Namibia as it was one of the first processes undertaken in terms of Namibia's Environmental Policy. Capacity was built in various stakeholder groups to participate in similar environmental assessment processes.

6.4.2 Lessons about Techniques Used

Lessons learnt about public process 'techniques' that contributed to the success of the process and are also highlighted by problems experienced in the process include:

- Organise events and communication around the needs of stakeholders and use a diversity of events such as individual meetings and formal meetings which are appropriate to the context. Formal meetings were more effective in Windhoek, while individual meetings were more effective in interacting with farmers. Public meetings were not perhaps the best technique to interact with Rosh Pinah residents, due to their more insular nature and potential language problems and individual meetings may have been more effective;
- Use a diverse range of communication methods and media to enhance awareness of the process. The process made use of pamphlets, the RPZC newsletter, radio and word of mouth;
- Use of stakeholder forums can build relationships and provide an effective means of addressing issues. The RPEF provided an effective means of addressing concerns related to the construction phase of the project.

6.4.3 General Lessons

More general lessons learnt from the Skorpion Zinc project that contributed to its success and are also highlighted by problems experienced in the process include:

- Involve the full spectrum of stakeholders and appropriate 'level' of stakeholders, such as local and national stakeholders. The Skorpion Zinc project involved stakeholders from national government down to local farmers which was appropriate given the national nature of the project and the very local nature of certain impacts;
- Communicate with stakeholders throughout the project. Stakeholders received information updates throughout the environmental assessment process and during the construction phases, which assisted with managing expectations, building trust and credibility and effectively implementing the outcomes of the environmental assessment process;
- Actively follow up on and address stakeholder issues and concerns. It builds trust and credibility and ensures stakeholder concerns are integrated into project outcomes, thus contributing to the sustainability of the project;
- Consider conducting parallel negotiation processes on issues, which are related to, but should not form part of the EA process directly. The Skorpion Zinc Project addressed labour issues in a separate process of negotiation with government and unions;
- Participation of marginalised communities may be limited by a range of factors including 'gate keepers', language and culture;
- Government officials can make significant positive contributions to the EA. MET officials were actively involved in the RPEF and contributed to the success of the EMP; and,
- Commitment to the integrity of the EA process by the development proponent contributes significantly to the success of the process. Skorpion Zinc was committed to the process which resulted in serious attempts to address issues raised by the public and environmental process. This contributed to the overall sustainability of the project.

6.5 List of Interviewees

(in alphabetical order with an indication of their capacity or position at the time of the environmental assessment)

Boting, Gerald
Mine Manager - Skorpion Zinc
Namibia
19 July 2004

Brown, Chris
National office Ministry of Environmental
Affairs and Tourism
Namibia
22 July 2004

Coleman, Sarika
Skorpion Zinc – former assistant to RPZC
mine manager
Namibia
19 July 2004

Coleman, Ronnie
Businessman
Rosh Pinah, Namibia
20 July 2004

Green, Norman
Overall Project Manager – Skorpion Zinc
5 August 2004

Kamfer, Johann
Local farmer and engineer
Rosh Pinah, Namibia
20 July 2004

Kilbourn Louw, Michele
Environmental Assessment Consultant
Johannesburg, South Africa
26 July 2004

Kotze, Nick
Neighbouring farm owner
10 August 2004

Lane, Patrick
Regional Office - Ministry of Environmental
Affairs and Tourism
Keetmanshoop, Namibia
21 July 2004

le Roux, Kallie
Local farmer and engineer
Rosh Pinah, Namibia
20 July 2004

Mannheimer, Collen
National Botanical Institute
Windhoek, Namibia
22 July 2004

Steenkamp, Yolanda
Teacher and school principal
Rosh Pinah, Namibia
20 July 2004

Strauss, Marty
School secretary
Rosh Pinah, Namibia
20 July 2004
Van Zyl, Hennie
Valmar Farms
Nelspruit, South Africa
19 August 2004

Wood, Mark
Environmental Impact Assessment Co-
ordinating Consultant
Johannesburg, South Africa
5 August 2004

Zimba, Mateus
Sasol Natural Gas Project
Maputo, Mozambique
12 August 2004

