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Over 6 000 registrations for phosphate jobs

Thousands of people have applied for jobs at an envisaged seabed mine that has not received environmental greenlight yet.

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ELLANIE SMIT

WINDHOEK

Namibian Marine Phosphate closed its job registration drive at the end of November with over 6 000 registrants in expectation of the jobs to Sandpiper marine phosphate mining project.

The company announced this yesterday in a statement, outlining the next steps for registrants.

The project has however not yet been granted an environmental clearance certificate.

NMP is also waiting for the outcome of a High Court application by the Confederation of Namibian Fisheries Associations and three other ap to stop marine mining on environmental grounds. The application was heard in the High Court on 7 July.

According to NMP a total of 6 058 people registered for jobs, of whom 40% are female and 60% are male.

NMP says it will employ 600 Namibians directly and indirectly for construction and operations in Walvis Bay and create opportunities for SME economic sectors.

The company says it will start with a series of informative workshops to provide registrants with details about the Sandpiper project's technic and development aspects along with related job opportunities.

All registrants will be contacted directly by NMP in due course with invitations to the workshops next year, subject to coronavirus restrictions anticipated to start in March next year.

Optimistic

NMP further said it is anticipating a favourable judgement from the current legal hearing to be delivered in March next year and have thereof proactive step to move forward in preparation of the Sandpiper Project development.

NMP said it remains fully committed to the responsible commercial, social, sustainable and environmental development of the Sandpiper Project for the benefit of all stakeholders.

It stressed that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) concluded that the Sandpiper Project will have no significant impact on the marine commercial fishing industry. In accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Management Act the EIA is available at the environment on the NMP website.

To date, shareholders claim they have invested more than N\$780 million in NMP and the Sandpiper Project.

"The Sandpiper Project could be the first building block for developing a phosphate-based industry in Namibia, which could result in over 50 company added.

NMP is majority-owned by Omani billionaire Mohammed Al Barwani, who has an 85% stake through his company Mawarid Mining LLC, while middleman Knowledge Katti owns 15% through Havana Investment.

The Sandpiper project is located about 120 kilometres southwest of Walvis Bay. Following widespread controversy, the environmental clearance project was set aside in 2018 by the environment ministry.

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