

PROPOSED OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION IN FREE STATE: ER377 & ER378



Rhino Oil & Gas Exploration South Africa (Pty) Ltd (Rhino Oil) is proposing natural gas exploration in the Free State Province, and have applied for two exploration rights: ER377 and ER378.

Rhino Oil is required by law to obtain an Environmental Authorisation (EA) before any activities may commence.

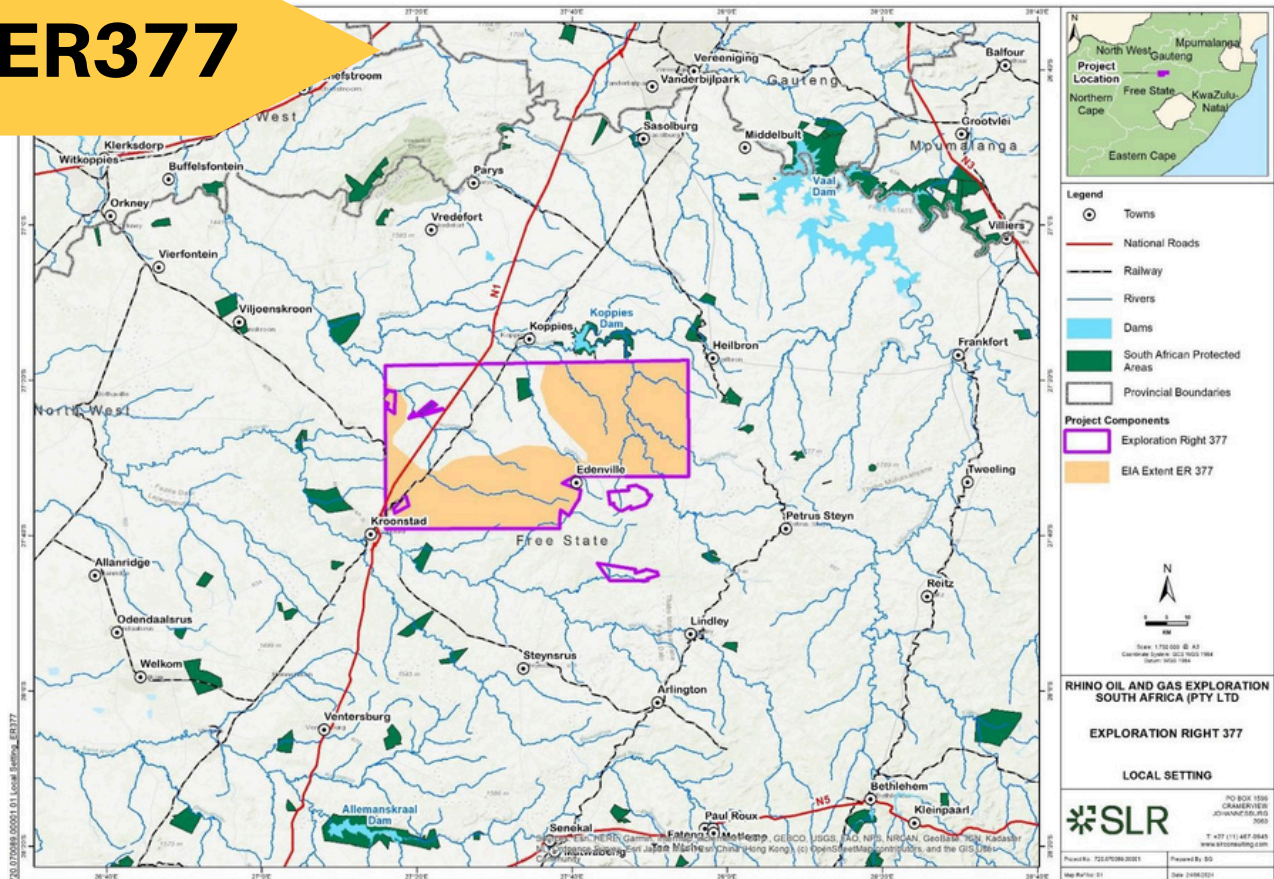
The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy will decide on whether an EA should be given or not. Before a decision can be made, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) needs to be conducted for the proposed activities. This process includes public participation whereby communities can get involved.

Who is Rhino Oil & Gas?

Rhino Oil & Gas Exploration South Africa (Pty) Ltd is a privately owned company focusing on onshore exploration of methane, helium, and hydrogen in Mpumalanga and Free State Provinces.

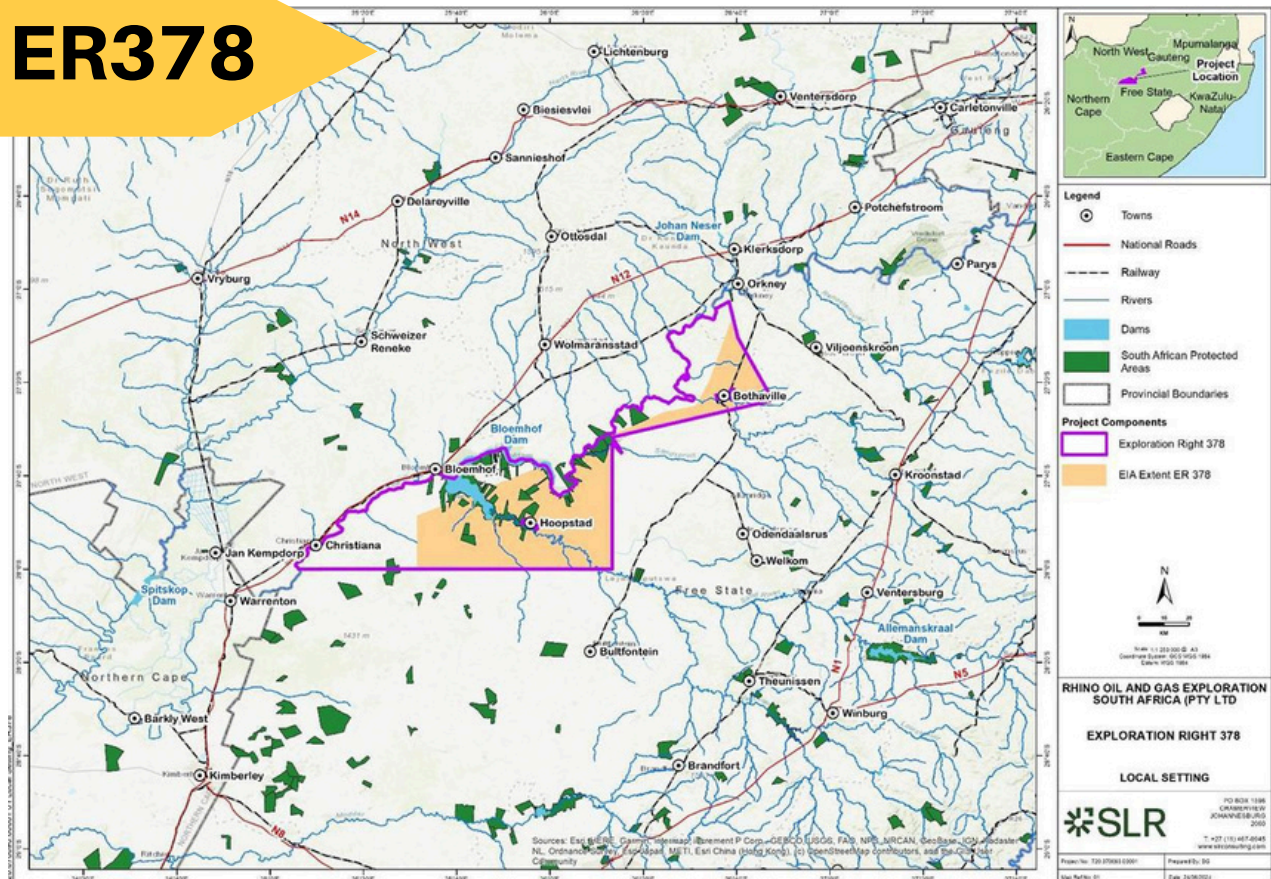
The proposed project area for ER377 extends for an area of about 221 018 hectares, located between the towns of Koppies, Heilbron, Edenville and Kroonstad in the Free State.

ER377



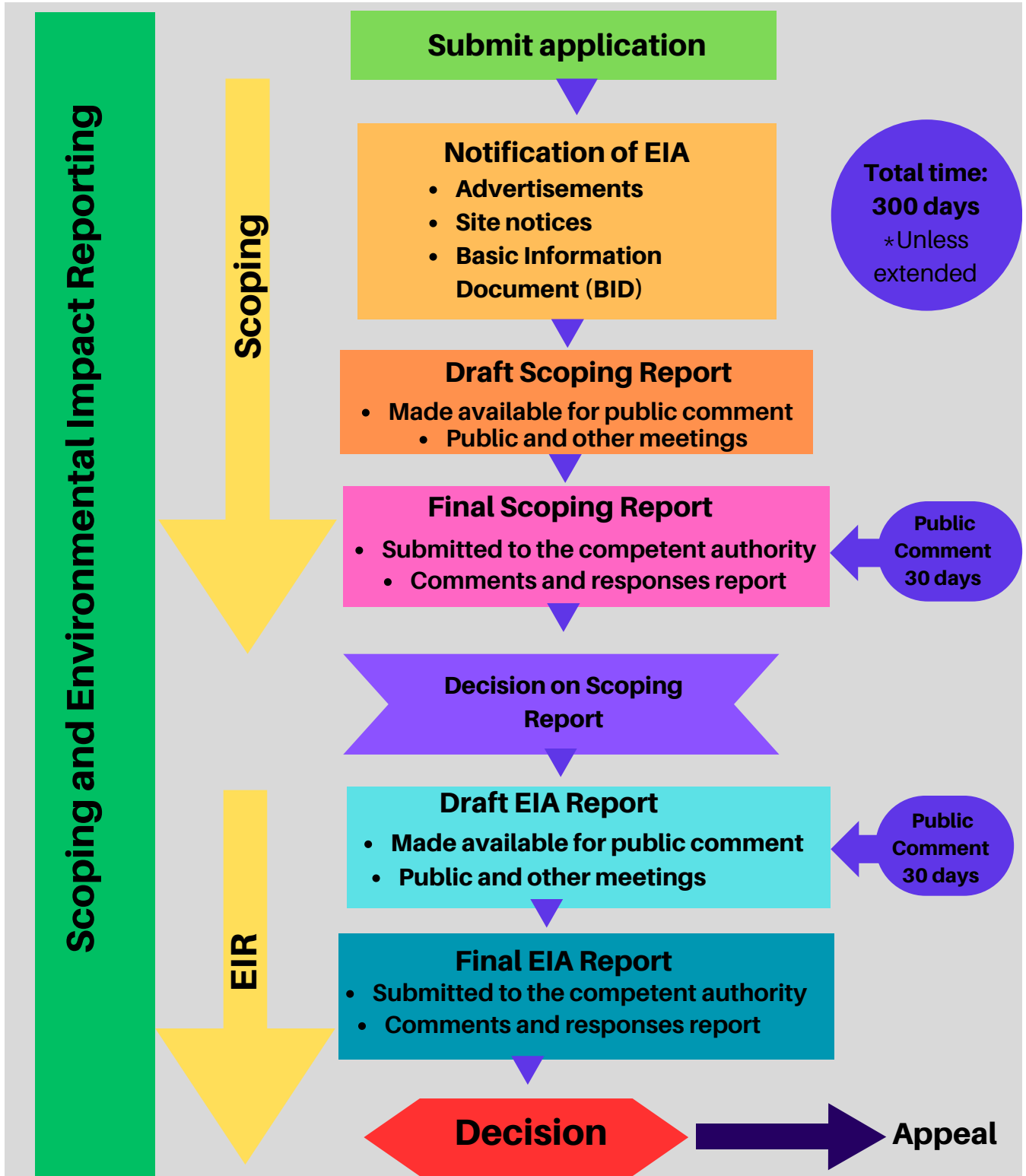
The proposed project area for ER378 extends for an area of about 49 000 hectares, located between the towns of Bothaville, Hoopstad and Wesselbron in the Free State.

ER378



The Environmental Impact Assessment

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process ensures that potential impacts of the project are thoroughly evaluated before any exploration begins. Below is an overview of the key steps involved



The EIA process includes these stages:

Screening:

Determines if a full EIA is required based on the project scope.

Scoping Phase:

- **Draft Scoping Report:** Outlines potential environmental impacts and areas needing further study, setting requirements for the EIA.
- **Public Participation:** The Draft Scoping Report is made available for public comment.
- **Final Scoping Report:** Comments received from the public are incorporated into the Report and submitted to the authority for approval.

Environmental Impact Assessment:

Detailed studies are conducted to assess potential environmental and social impacts, and suggests mitigation measures.

Public Review:

Shares findings for another round of public feedback.

Decision-Making:

The authority evaluates the complete EIA and decides on project approval, modification, or rejection.

Monitoring:

Ensures compliance with environmental standards during project execution.

The ER 377 & ER 378 projects have progressed to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) phase.

What will happen?

** This is a summary of activities that appear in the Draft EIA Report, but does not include all possible activities.*

Description of Activities:



Aeromagnetic Survey:

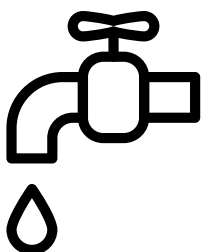
This involves flying over the area to map subsurface geological structures using magnetic sensors. It's a non-invasive way to gather data about the potential location of oil and gas reserves.

Exploratory Drilling:

Up to 20 wells will be drilled by an onshore drilling rig to assess the presence of oil and gas. Each well could take three to four weeks to complete. These wells are critical to determining whether to move forward with full production.



- **Drilling Support:** The drilling will require infrastructure such as roads, water supplies, and equipment storage areas. Heavy machinery and trucks will be used to transport materials and personnel.
- **Well Management:** Waste management, including disposal of chemicals and drilling by-products, will be crucial to minimize environmental impacts.



Water Usage:

Large amounts of water will be used during the drilling process, primarily sourced from local supplies. For ER377 alone, it is estimated that five boreholes will consume around 700,000 litres over five months.



Monitoring and Safety:

The project will monitor environmental impacts such as air quality, water levels, and biodiversity. Measures will be put in place to manage risks like well blowouts, chemical spills, and contamination.

Why should you be concerned?

If you live or work in the affected areas, this project could bring changes to your environment, livelihoods, and community. It's important to know how and when to get involved.

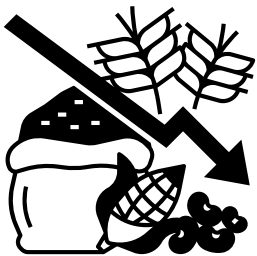
**This is a summary of the impacts highlighted in the Draft EIA Report, but does not include all possible impacts that occur from the activity.*

Potential environmental risks



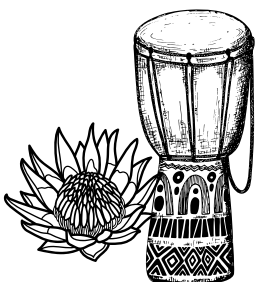
- Water Contamination: The project will use significant volumes of water for drilling, risking depletion and contamination of local water supplies.
- Soil Degradation: Spills, waste storage, and the drilling process could damage fertile soil, affecting agriculture and livestock grazing.
- Air Quality Issues: Flaring of gas and emissions from heavy machinery may release pollutants into the atmosphere, impacting health and farming.
- Noise levels/pollution: noise levels are expected to increase in/drilling sites.

Social and economic impacts



- Agricultural Disruptions: Farming operations, especially crop production and livestock grazing, could face interruptions from noise, dust, and land use conflicts.
- Temporary Jobs: The project may create some temporary jobs, but they will likely require specialized skills, and long-term benefits for local communities are unclear.
- Limited Local Benefits: Local businesses and workers may not receive the economic benefits they expect, as most jobs are specialized.

Heritage and cultural concerns



- Land Use Conflicts: Traditional lands and heritage sites could be disturbed by drilling and construction.
- Cultural Significance: The project may affect areas with cultural importance, threatening local practices and community identities.

Climate change concerns:

The Rhino Oil & Gas exploration project will extract natural gas, a fossil fuel that contributes to climate change. Methane emissions from gas extraction are a major driver of global warming, and this project could exacerbate climate-related risks in the Free State.

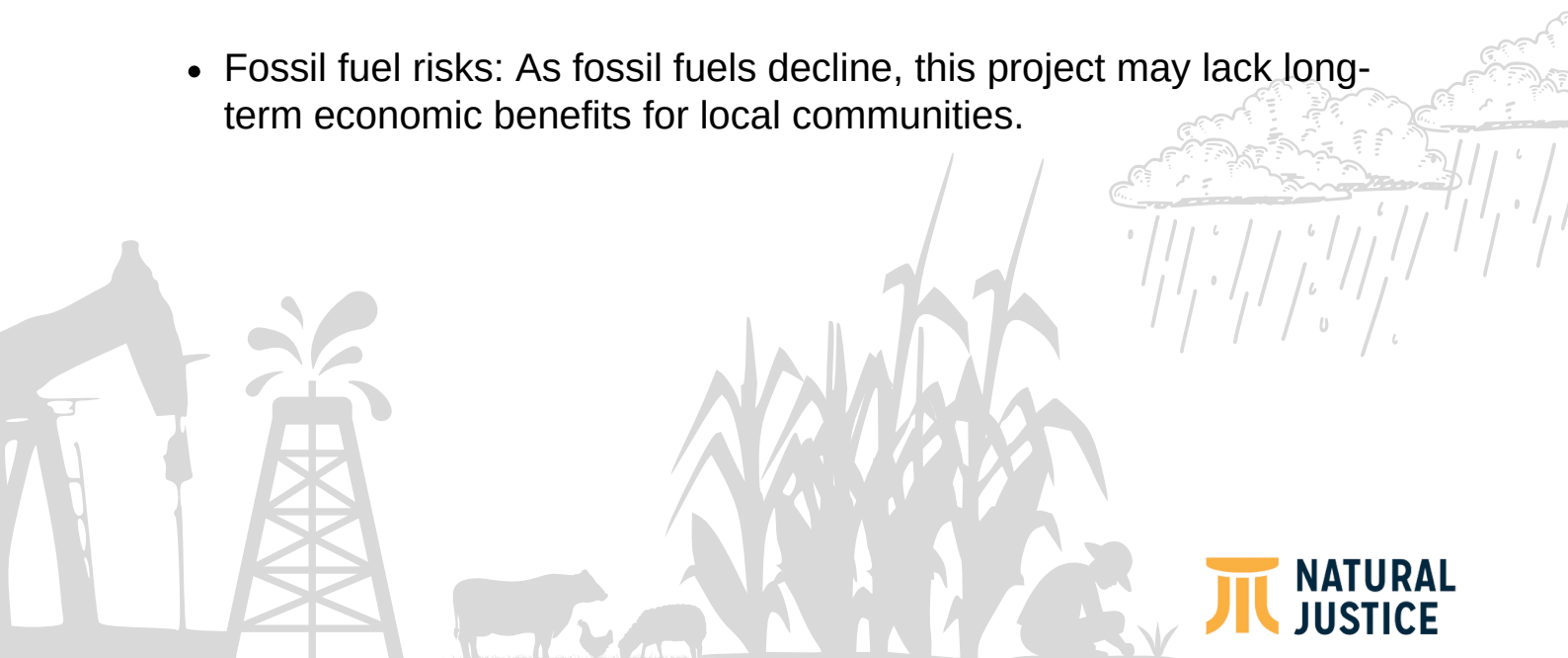
Climate risks of the project:

- Methane and carbon emissions: Increased fossil fuel use contradicts climate goals.
- Water stress: Declining rainfall and high water use (700 000 liters per well) may worsen shortages.
- Soil and biodiversity: climate-driven extreme weather accelerates land degradation.

Fossil fuel extraction and climate change pose lasting risks to communities and agriculture.

Key climate concerns for communities:

- Drought and water scarcity
- Soil and agricultural disruptions
- Fossil fuel risks: As fossil fuels decline, this project may lack long-term economic benefits for local communities.



What you can do to stay involved

Your participation is essential to ensuring the voices of local communities are heard. Here are ways you can make a difference:

Review and Comment on the EIA Report:

You can influence the decision-making process by registering as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP), reviewing the draft EIA Reports and submitting your comments by **6 March 2025**.



- Raise any concerns about how the project may affect your environment or livelihood. Don't hesitate to voice your concerns about the risks to water, soil, air and agriculture.

You can register as an I&AP and submit your comments on the draft EIA Reports via the details below:

For ER377

- Email: RhinoER377@slrconsulting.com
- Whatsapp: 076 687 0001
- Telephone: 011 467 0945
- Post: PO Box 1596 Cramerview, 2060

For ER378

- Email: RhinoER378@slrconsulting.com
- Whatsapp: 082 070 5897
- Telephone: 011 467 0945
- Post: PO Box 1596 Cramerview, 2060

Work with your community



- Form community groups to organise your responses to the project. A united voice is stronger when advocating for change or demanding action.
- Engage with local civil society organisations, environmental groups, or experts who can support you in understanding the impacts and responding to the project.

Monitor the project's progress



- Keep track of key project milestones, including drilling start dates, water usage, and any environmental changes. Stay informed about deadlines for submitting comments and attending public consultations.
- Registering as an I&AP will enable you to stay informed of the process.

Where to find the Draft EIA Report

The draft EIA Reports and specialist study reports for ER377 and ER378 are now available for public review.

The reports include findings on the potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed activities. Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) are encouraged to submit comments by **6 March 2025**.

The reports can be accessed online:

ER377: <https://www.slrconsulting.com/public-documents/rhino-oil-and-gas-eia-for-exploration-right-er-er-reference-377/>

ER378: <https://www.slrconsulting.com/public-documents/rhino-oil-and-gas-eia-for-exploration-right-er-er-reference-378/>

Data-free access:

ER377: <https://slrpublicdocs.datafree.co/public-documents/rhino-oil-and-gas-eia-for-exploration-right-er-er-reference-377/>

ER378: <https://slrpublicdocs.datafree.co/public-documents/rhino-oil-and-gas-eia-for-exploration-right-er-er-reference-378/>

Physical copies available at:

- **ER377:** Maokeng (Kroonstad) Public Library & Edenville Public Library.
- **ER378:** Bothaville Public Library, Hoopstad Public Library & Tikawana Public Library.

How to structure your comment

When commenting on the EIA Reports and specialist studies, be clear, detailed, and specific. Follow this structure:

- **Personal information**

Name, community, contact details, and submission date.

- **Key concerns**

Highlight specific issues (e.g., water use, air quality, biodiversity, health, livelihoods) and whether these were addressed in meetings or the report.

- **Impact on you/ your community**

Explain how the project affects your daily life, land, water, farming, or local economy.

- **Questions and recommendations**

Ask direct questions, suggest mitigation measures, or propose alternatives.

- **Consultation process**

State if meetings were in a language you understood and if the information was clear.

- **Additional comments**

Share further concerns and request to stay informed as an Interested and Affected Party.

Key questions to consider

- **How will this project affect our water supply and water quality?**
- **What will be done to prevent damage to soil and agricultural land?**
- **What safety measures will be in place to protect our environment?**
- **What are the long-term benefits for my community?**
- **How will local cultural and heritage sites be protected?**
- **Will Rhino Oil & Gas provide compensation if the project causes damage?**

Contact Information for Rhino Oil & Gas

For more information:

- Email: info@rhinoresourcesltd.com
- Website: www.rhinorsc.com
- Phone: 011 467 0945
- Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP):
Travis Smithard

You can also contact the EAP team directly:

Email: RhinoER377@slrconsulting.com

and

RhinoER378@slrconsulting.com



**Stay involved to
protect your rights
and the future of your
community!**