



Seychelles Ports Authority
Port Victoria Rehabilitation & Extension Project
Public Relations and Communications: Content for Publication

Event: ESIA Scoping Meeting for Dredging Component held on Tuesday 22nd April 2022

PRESS RELEASE

ESIA Scoping Meeting for the Dredging Component of Port Victoria Rehabilitation & Extension Project (PVREP) Unveils Stakeholder Concerns

A Scoping Meeting for the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for the dredging component of the Port Victoria Rehabilitation & Extension Project was held on Tuesday 26th April 2022 at the Seychelles Institute for Education (SITE) auditorium to kick start the stakeholder engagement component of this consultancy. The appointed consultant is a consortium made up of local environmental consultancy firm, Eco-Sol Consulting, South African environmental specialists, DJEC, New Zealander, eCoast, who will be undertaking the numerical modelling of the dispersal of sediments and Australian dredging experts WGA. Eco-Sol will be supported for the marine survey component by subcontracted local marine experts led by experienced marine biologist, Dr. Jude Bijoux.

The meeting led by Nimhan Senaratne from Eco Sol Consulting, forms part of the scoping process, which's aim is to determine the range of issues that the ESIA should cover. In this particular consultation, different stakeholders from Government, Civil Society as well Private Sector players and port users, were given the opportunity to share their envisioned outcome of this consultancy. Organised as a hybrid meeting, with the overseas consultants participating over Zoom, the meeting saw a good representation from all three sectors. It kicked off with a brief by Ms Philippa Samson, Project Manager of PVREP, about the project in general and how the dredging component fitted in the scheme of PVREP, stressing on the importance of the project for the economic growth of the country over the long term.

The members of the consortium then had the opportunity to explain how they will execute the component of the ESIA consultancy that they are responsible for, such as the social impact assessment, marine surveys, hydrodynamic modelling and, dredge and spoil disposal management. They highlighted some of the risks already foreseen that will have to be further explored through this consultancy.

At the end of the presentations participants were given the opportunity to voice their concerns and provide suggestions on how the risks may be dealt with. To note, the areas to be dredged in the outer channel to provide the required navigational depth for the bigger vessels, are close to the Sainte Anne Marine Park, which is not only an ecologically sensitive area, with turtle nesting grounds and coral nurseries, but is also of high importance for the livelihood of many small businesses. SPA is very cognisant

of this and endeavours to manage the environmental and social impacts of this project as mandated by the Environmental and Social Management Plan resulting from this ESIA consultancy.

SPA and the ESIA consultant will be embarking on a wider awareness program to inform the general public about the project and giving private individuals the opportunity to bring forth their views and concerns through the public consultations that will be taking place over the coming months.
