



THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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COMMENT: NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: AIR QUALITY ACT, ACT 39 OF 2004 **SECTION 21 PROPOSED LIST OF ACTIVITIES REQUIRING AN ATMOSPHERIC EMISSIONS LICENCE**

1. We refer to the above and hereby submit comments on the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, Act 39 of 2004 Section 21 Proposed List of Activities Requiring an Atmospheric Emissions Licence.

GENERAL AND TECHNICAL COMMENTS

2. Subcategory 5.2: Drying

- 2.1 This is a new listing under Category 5. A similar listing was accommodated under Sub Category 4.2 with no special arrangements allowing the industry time to comply, i.e. 5-10 years for existing plants to comply. The special concession is not understood, nor required.
- 2.2 The merits for this special concession with regards to compliance timeframes are not supported.

3. Subcategory 5.3: Clamp Kilns for brick production

- 3.1 The listing of this activity is supported; however, a further division is recommended in terms of differentiating between producers who can be characterised as large commercial operations versus subsistence operations.
- 3.2 It is further recommended that subsistence operations be exempted from complying with air quality monitoring requirements, but that provision is made for such operations to apply and adhere to best practice production and house-keeping techniques.
- 3.3 It is also recommended that provision be made to accommodate the abovementioned proposed distinction in relation to the atmospheric emissions licensing fee, with special scoring criteria for subsistence operations versus commercial operations. This would ensure that all producers pay an atmospheric emissions licensing fee that is commensurate with their brick production levels.

4. Category 8: Thermal treatment of hazardous and general waste

- 4.1 It is recommended that this Category be renamed as "**Category 8: Thermal and non-thermal treatment of hazardous and general waste**" and that an additional Subcategory, viz. "**Subcategory 8.3: Non-thermal treatment of hazardous and general waste**", be included.
- 4.2 Emissions from wastewater treatment works and ponds are not addressed in the Listed Activities. Emissions from such facilities have been the cause of many complaints throughout the country.
- 4.3 It is recommended that an additional Subcategory that includes emissions from wastewater treatment works and ponds (e.g. tanneries) be included.
- 4.4 It is further recommended that minimum emission standards for the various pollutants, particularly hydrogen sulphide (H₂S) from such facilities, are set. This would ensure a consistent approach at such facilities throughout the country.
- 4.5 It is also recommended that the monitoring requirements and approaches followed are similar to those specified in Subcategory 5.3, but for the pollutants of concern (i.e. H₂S etc.) and using the appropriate monitoring methods as related to such facilities.

5. Subcategory 8.1 Thermal treatment of hazardous and general waste

- 5.1 Clarity needs to be provided as to whether this Subcategory includes thermal treatment in engineered installations / apparatus such as an incinerator or the open burning of hazardous materials (e.g. expired explosives and ammunitions). It is recommended that special attention be afforded to listing these practices, as well as specifying the conditions under which such activities can be undertaken.
- 5.2 It is further recommended that the burning of crop land and other agricultural waste after harvesting also be regulated in this Subcategory. Such agricultural practices are not advocated and should be avoided, particularly if more environmentally friendly options are available. It is therefore recommended that agricultural burning be explicitly listed as an offence and be allowed only under very special conditions, e.g. disease control.

6. Category 9: Pulp and paper manufacturing activities, including by-products recovery

- 6.1 This category does not explicitly address "saw mill activities". Dust generation and the treatment of wood using copper chrome arsenate are characteristic of such activities.
- 6.2 It is recommended that an additional Subcategory be included to address such activities.

7. Category 10: Animal Matter Processing

- 7.1 The animal matter processing sector has been the cause of many complaints. Integral to this, is that minimum emissions standards are not set for this sector. Research undertaken in this regard has provided a more comprehensive understanding of how emissions from this sector can be controlled and / or reduced to acceptable levels.
- 7.2 It is recommended that minimum emission standards for the various pollutants, particularly hydrogen sulphide (H₂S) from such processes, are set. This would ensure a consistent approach to such processes throughout the country.

8. Category 6: Organic Chemicals Industry

- 8.1 The Total Volatile Organic Compounds (non thermal) has a "New" and "Existing" limit of 40 000 mg/Nm³. This is listed as 40 mg/Nm³ in the current List of Activities.
- 8.2 It is recommended that the amended limit for Total Volatile Organic Compounds (non thermal) be verified for accuracy.



MR PIET VAN ZYL

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

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