

The Dredging Component of the Port Victoria Rehabilitation & Extension Project Steps up a Gear

Port Victoria – The Port Victoria Rehabilitation & Extension Project being undertaken by the Seychelles Ports Authority (SPA) is composed of two major components: construction of the quay wall and cargo terminal, and the dredging of the harbour to accommodate vessels with drafts up to 14m. This Project, whose objective is to deliver a modern international multi-purpose Commercial Port at Mahe Quay, is being co-financed by SPA, the European Investment Bank, Agence Française de Développement and the European Union, secured by sovereign guarantees.

In May 2021, the Cabinet of Ministers approved for SPA to make some adjustments to the scope of the Project to maximise the available financing. As a result, SPA, under the approval of its Lenders, separated the civil works and dredging components of the Project, with the aim of undertaking the civil works as a client design contract and the dredging works as a design and build contract. The dredging component of the Project is now gaining momentum and will soon start affecting the activities happening in Port Victoria, particularly in the approach channel and turning basin of Mahe Quay.

Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

Changes to the scope of the dredging and reclamation works to now include the approach channel, which was previously excluded, necessitated a new Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), to supplement the one carried out in 2016 based on which the Project was granted approval to proceed, be undertaken to understand and mitigate the environmental and social impacts of the dredging component. A consortium led by local consultancy firm Eco-Sol Consulting (Pty) Ltd was appointed to carry out this assignment.

The ESIA consultancy which's aim is to avoid, reduce or mitigate potential negative impacts of the project on the environment, will feature among other activities, stakeholder consultations and marine surveys, to develop a well consulted and approved Environmental & Social Management Plan

On the schedule of activities for this 9-month assignment there is a scoping meeting planned for Tuesday 26th April 2022 where Government and private sector stakeholders directly impacted by the activities of the SPA will be introduced to the dredging component of the Project and will have the opportunity to air the concerns of their specific organisation about it. Public consultations are also planned and their dates will be announced in due course.

Marine surveys are planned in the port area and approach channel between 3rd and 6th May 2022.

Dredging and Reclamation Works

The procurement of the contractor to execute the design and build contract for the dredging and reclamation works has kicked off with the launch of the Request for Proposal (RFP) on 11th April 2022 to twelve dredging companies, who had previously expressed interest to participate in this procurement.

A site visit and pre-proposal conference are planned for Wednesday 27th April, where the representatives of these bidders will be briefed about this component of the Project and taken on a boat tour of the areas to be dredged and reclaimed.

The procurement process for this design and build contract is expected to be concluded in early June 2022 with the appointment of the best evaluated bidder and the signature of the contract. Thereafter,

the contractor will mobilise to conduct the necessary surveys of the areas to be dredged and reclaimed, on which to base the detailed design of the works.

The ESIA consultant and the dredging contractor's design team are expected to be in constant engagement to deliver the dredging component with minimal impact to the environment and stakeholders, while providing Port Victoria with the depth that it will require in the long term to create more opportunities for larger vessels to call alongside.

More information about the Project may be obtained by contacting Ms Julie Florentine on email address jflorentine@seyport.sc.

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