

**Summary of the ARRC Task Force's engagement with TOTAL Energies-EACOP  
for the period 2021-2023**

December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The ARRC Task Force first contacted TOTAL Energies on September 16<sup>th</sup> 2020 over concerns of its impacts and those of EACOP on the Endangered Eastern Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*) in the Northern Albertine Graben region of Uganda. TOTAL Energies responded quickly; however, the Memorandum of Understanding between the ARRC Task Force and TEPU/EACOP was only signed in February 2021, date at which the engagement officially started. Since that time, the ARRC Task force has participated in two workshops in Uganda (June 2022 and July 2023), and has provided comments on:

- Chimpanzee Monitoring & Survey: EACOP and TILENGA Pipelines (2020)
- Scope of work and proposal for chimpanzee surveys along R2 and R3 oil roads (2021)
- Chimpanzee survey in Wambabya and North Bugoma Forest Reserves: EACOP and TILENGA pipelines (2021)
- EACOP BAP (2022)
- EACOP's landscape Chimpanzee Action Plan (2022, 2023)
- Draft framework for North Albertine Rift Chimpanzee Action Plan (NARCAP) (2023)
- Scope of work for developing the NARCAP (2023)
- Scope of work for a non-invasive landscape chimpanzee genetic survey (genomics) (2023)

Initially there was some pushback on the extent of impacts from TEPU-EACOP on chimpanzees. While TEPU's direct footprint is outside of chimpanzees' range, EACOP's direct footprint encroaches on chimpanzee habitat. Where we have not yet reached an agreement is the extent of indirect impacts of these projects. The ARRC Task Force believes that the roads being upgraded by UNRA (Uganda National Roads Authority) are part of the projects' associated facilities, even if TEPU-EACOP have not contributed financially or asked the government of Uganda to upgrade these roads. Best practice, following the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards (PS), states that such associated facilities, even if not paid for, need to be accounted for when determining the area of influence of a project (IFC PS1). TEPU-EACOP is now in discussion with UNRA to improve the mitigation of these roads, and they have mandated chimpanzee surveys that are ongoing to inform mitigation. The roads remain a significant concern for their impacts they will, and already have had on chimpanzees. Indeed, our partners and colleagues working in the area have already noticed the impacts of the construction of the roads (e.g., quarries located in chimpanzee habitat in Budongo Forest Reserve, change in ranging behaviour of chimpanzees). During my site visit in 2023 I also observed waterways, close to the roads that were recently upgraded in the Bugdongo-Bugoma corridor, with riparian forest dying given that the water flow had been blocked by construction activities. It appears that few to no mitigation measures have been followed during the construction of the roads, and minimization measures are still lacking for chimpanzees. TEPU-EACOP have started discussion with UNRA, but this has not yet resulted in additional mitigation actions specific to the roads.

One point we still need to discuss, and agree on, is the extent and significance of indirect impacts on chimpanzees. TEPU-EACOP have made progress towards addressing their impacts on chimpanzees since the start of our engagement and have now taken a consolidated approach between all projects to address impacts at the landscape level (i.e., including Budongo and Bugoma Forest Reserves and the corridor) to coordinate their mitigation approach. This will be addressed in the NARCAP that is being developed. This plan will also include another partner of TEPU-EACOP, CNOOC, whose direct impacts have not yet been assessed by the ARRC Task Force. Without having yet seen the assessment of indirect impacts on chimpanzees conducted by these projects, it is difficult for us to evaluate and know if we will agree on the residual impact assessment and associated offset requirement. We advocated for the use of the number of chimpanzees impacted rather than a habitat proxy as this drastically underestimates impacts. Chimpanzees live in complex socio-ecological societies and impacts to a few hectares may appear as a small impact but could result in the loss of an entire chimpanzee community.

We encouraged TEPU-EACOP to work with NARCG to align the mitigation and conservation activities to be proposed in the NARCAP with the National Chimpanzee Action Plan and NARG's activities. We encouraged the use of the Uganda Biodiversity Trust Fund to ensure sustainable funding of these activities. Discussions are progressing between all parties.

The two workshops organized by TEPU-EACOP in Hoima have helped us progress the discussion between all stakeholders, and work towards the same vision, as well as helped us see some activities financed by the projects, including:

- Chimpanzee surveys along R2-R3 roads
- Education program in schools around Budongo Forest Reserve
- Reforestation initiatives in the Bugoma-Budongo corridor

The projects plan to scale up these initiatives, but without seeing the NARCAP, it is difficult to assess if these activities will be sufficient to compensate for the projects' residual impacts on chimpanzees. So far, the projects have focused mainly on their direct impacts and the Bugoma-Budongo corridor; however, without urgent increased protection of Bugoma and Budongo Forest Reserves, these efforts may render this whole exercise useless, as without these two main forest blocks, preserving the corridor is meaningless.

Our engagement is ongoing; however, as activities have been rather slow to progress while chimpanzees continue to be impacted, we would like to see a draft of the NARCAP in Q1 2024, as well as the start of the landscape chimpanzee genetic survey as soon as possible.

Best regards,



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