

Annual Report 2025

Independent Biodiversity and Livelihoods Advisory Committee

IBLAC

For:

The Tilenga Project operated by TotalEnergies EP Uganda
(TEPU) in the Albertine Graben

The East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) From Kabaale,
Hoima District in Uganda to Tanga Port in Tanzania

The Kingfisher Project operated by the Chinese National
Offshore Oil Company in Western Uganda



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1. Introduction

The 2025 edition of the annual report of the Independent Biodiversity and Livelihoods Committee (IBLAC) for the Tilenga, Kingfisher, and EACOP Projects in Uganda and Tanzania highlights the Committee's observations and recommendations regarding the biodiversity and social components of the Projects during the year. In both Tanzania and Uganda, the Projects' areas of influence overlap with critical habitat that contains important biodiversity and where many established communities depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. According to regulatory and lender requirements, impacts on critical habitat necessitate that biodiversity programmes deliver a net gain in biodiversity; social programmes also must result in enhanced livelihoods.

Achieving positive biodiversity outcomes involves engaging with local communities and addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss while sustainable livelihood enhancement requires considering existing biodiversity and the carrying capacity of the natural environment. Therefore, company biodiversity and livelihood programmes should be related and preferably integrated, and focus on both specific conservation actions and social investments to achieve net-gain results.

Several factors drive the efforts to achieve net gain in biodiversity. In Uganda, the Environmental Law requires that all companies operating in critical habitat achieve a net gain in biodiversity and ensure that net gain investments are maintained for at least as long as the Projects impacts exist, or preferably in perpetuity. Lender requirements for financing EACOP also include stipulations for net gain in critical habitat (IFC Performance Standard 6). The Standard applies to EACOP as well as Tilenga and Kingfisher, as associated facilities. Finally, TotalEnergies, through its Biodiversity Charter, has committed to biodiversity net gain. Net gain is achieved when the positive biodiversity outcomes exceed the level of residual impacts, those impacts remaining after avoidance, minimisation, and on-site restoration. Net gain is particularly important given that the TotalEnergies has directly impacted a National Park and will continue operating in the protected area over the life of the project. EACOP activities also will have impacts on critical habitat and will need to abide by the net gain requirements of both Ugandan legislation and IFC standards. CNOOC also faces similar circumstances and will need to address their direct and indirect impacts on critical habitat.

2. IBLAC Mandate

The Independent Biodiversity and Livelihoods Committee (IBLAC) was formed in 2013 by TotalEnergies EP Uganda (TEPU) to ensure that the Tilenga Project is carried out in accordance

with best practice and applicable environmental standards, and particularly the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Environmental and Social Performance Standards. Later, with the aim of harmonising environmental standards among the Projects, the role of IBLAC was expanded to include the Kingfisher Project in 2015, operated by the Chinese National Offshore Oil Company Uganda (CNOOC), and then in 2017, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline Project (EACOP) operating in both Uganda and Tanzania.

IBLAC comprises seven members, including a mix of international and national-level experts. Table 1 lists the various members, their affiliations, and their relevant expertise. Three members have served on IBLAC since its inception.

Table 1. Current IBLAC Members

IBLAC Members	Affiliations	Year Joined	Expertise
Ray Victurine (Chair) USA	Wildlife Conservation Society	2013	Resource Economist and Conservation Finance Specialist. Mitigation and Biodiversity Offsets. Community Conservation and Economic Development
Ward Hagemeyer (Vice Chair) Netherlands	Hagemeyer Conservation & Sustainability	2013	Wetland and Biodiversity specialist. Ornithologist.
Ana Maria Esteves	Community Insights Group University of Strathclyde Australian National University	2017	Social Performance, Human Rights and Livelihoods specialist.
Sebastien LeBel France	CIRAD (French agricultural research and cooperation organisation)	2013	Veterinarian, Wildlife Specialist, Human Wildlife Conflict

Alex Muhweezi Uganda	Future Dialogues International	2017	Ecology (environment, wildlife, water, climate change), Policy and institutional analysis and policy reforms. Environment and Social assessment, Stakeholder engagement, Strategic Planning, monitoring and evaluation, conflict mediation.
Yunus Mgya Tanzania	University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania / Aquatic BioSolutions Tanzania	2022	Marine Biodiversity. Fisheries Biology and Management. Aquaculture. Environmental Impact Assessment. Strategic Planning.
Charles Meshack Tanzania	Tanzania Forest Conservation Group	2018	Forest Biodiversity, community conservation and Stakeholders engagement expert.

A revised terms of reference for IBLAC was prepared in late 2021 and became effective on January 1, 2022 and was valid for four years (until December 31, 2025) with an extension to be agreed between IBLAC and the Parties; this will need to occur in 2026. According to the agreed Terms of Reference, the objective of IBLAC is to advise the Parties on how best to conserve and enhance biodiversity and related aspects of community livelihoods within their areas of operation as well as the Projects' wider area of influence within the landscape, before, during, and after the Projects. IBLAC provides support and guidance on implementing impact mitigation activities and offsetting measures that are in accordance with no net loss and net gain commitments. IBLAC's advisory role is focused on the following three key areas:

- Providing the parties with an independent transparent assessment/perspective on biodiversity and community livelihood aspects of the Projects.
- Communicating with the Parties openly and transparently about concerns or issues arising with stakeholders, such as civil society, local and national authorities, and other parties, regarding the Projects;
- Providing the Parties with potential options and solutions toward achieving net gain that are aligned with the biodiversity conservation programmes of Uganda and Tanzania and consistent with lender and regulatory compliance requirements.

IBLAC works to meet its objectives through the following mechanisms.

- **In-country visitation.** An in-country visit to both Uganda and Tanzania that brings together all IBLAC members to assess the on-the-ground programmes and produce a report of its findings.
- **Annual Paris meeting.** A meeting in Paris to meet with a broad representation of TotalEnergies Headquarters staff to provide them with a briefing on the state of biodiversity and livelihood actions and present issues of importance for the success of the Projects, including those that may create risk in terms of meeting net gain objectives.
- **Virtual meetings.** Virtual meetings among IBLAC members and between IBLAC and the Joint Partners take place on a regular basis and allow IBLAC to receive and respond to Project updates, obtain information on issues that may need IBLAC attention, and plan for specific activities.
- **Technical support and representation.** In-country support from IBLAC members based in both Uganda and Tanzania. The local IBLAC team members, attend workshops and meetings, meet with Project staff, and provide direct support to activities. In country-members also represent IBLAC at specific events and engage with stakeholders to better understand needs and issues. This level of engagement helps to keep IBLAC abreast of issues and activities in the country.
- **Ad-hoc projects.** From time to time the Parties call upon IBLAC members to provide targeted technical assistance in support of specific Projects. These may require travel to the field or might only involve desk-top exercises.

3. IBLAC 2025 Activities

3.1. In-Country Visit

In 2025, the in-country visit took place from August 28th until September 13th. The IBLAC team visited Project sites and met with programme implementors, regulators and authorities, civil society and communities to review programme progress. The full IBLAC team visited the Tilenga, Kingfisher, and EACOP Projects in Uganda and EACOP activities in Tanzania. The team met also with government officials and local stakeholders to provide them with updates of the team's findings and learn about their issues or concerns. Three members, Ray Victurine, Ward Hagemeyer and Alex Muhweezi, participated in meetings in Kampala on 28th and 29th August before the arrival of the rest of the team. During these days, meetings were held with TEPU, some implementing partners, and the civil society organisation CSCO, and allowed the time to review

and update the recommendations register. The visit ended in Dar es Salaam, with a debriefing for the parties held on the morning of September 13th. Members departed for home later that evening. The programme followed by IBLAC, including the observations and recommendations is provided in the 2025 Trip Report, which is included as part of this report (Annex 2).

3.2. Virtual Meetings

During the year IBLAC carried out virtual meetings to keep abreast of Project activities. IBLAC met with the companies four times to review Project progress and update the recommendations register to better understand and document the uptake of IBLAC recommendations over the years. As demonstrated in Section 3.5 the review indicated that of the 80% of the recommendations considered still relevant the majority have either been completed or are demonstrating significant progress.

3.3. Special Projects

Each year the companies will call upon IBLAC to provide support for specific activities. In 2025 IBLAC was engaged in the following activities:

- *NARCAP Governance and Finance* – IBLAC provided advice and input on NARCAP’s governance systems with the goal of ensuring effective management and long-term funding for chimpanzee conservation in the Albertine Rift. That work continues and a final structure with identified funding needs is expected by the end of 2026.
- *Long-term funding mechanisms*: IBLAC prepared documents on long-term financing including options for working with both local conservation trust funds, as well as offshore foundations to ensure the availability and accessibility of funds over the long-term to meet.
- *Briefing on the progress of the Theory of Change*, which provided an opportunity for IBLAC to contribute ideas. The new Theory of Change successfully integrates livelihoods into the net gain programme. Biodiversity actions integrate key livelihood issues such as human wildlife conflict, use of resources and ecosystem services and land use. The Theory of Change consultants are also engaging with the external consultant focused on the development of net gain targets.
- *Tanga Waders Project*: The Tanga Waders Projects in 2023 and 2024 have generated significant data and understanding about the importance of the Tanga Seascape for waders, amongst which the Greater Sandplover *Charadrius leschenaultia*, a critical habitat

triggering species. By tracking waders with GPS tracking devices knowledge about local habitat use in the Tanga Seascape was generated, available to inform management of the Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park. Also, information about the migration of the waders was obtained, for the first time ever in the West Asian-East African Flyway and it was the first time that information was available for species as light as 50 grams. In October 2025 the results of these studies were presented to the scientific community at the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) meeting in Mombasa. This presentation was one of several presentations of studies resulting from activities of the EACOP Marine Programme. (See Annex 2 for a further description of the Tanga Waders project).

- *Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) Strategy for Murchison Falls Conservation Area* – IBLAC reviewed the results of the study and provided input.
- *Cumulative Impact Strategy* – IBLAC provided a review and initial inputs into the strategic approach.

3.4. Paris Meeting

The Paris meeting with TotalEnergies headquarters staff was originally scheduled for December 2025 but was postponed due to the unavailability of key Paris staff. The meeting was rescheduled for March 18, 2026. The list of participants at that meeting is provided in Annex 1.

The IBLAC team took advantage of that meeting to share information, review observations and recommendations, and discuss key issues related to the net gain programme as described in this report. In those discussions participants stressed the importance of finalising the new indicators and monitoring plan for determining progress toward net gain.

3.5. Register of Recommendations

IBLAC has kept a register of recommendations since 2013. The register identifies the specific IBLAC recommendation and the actions taken by the company, along with implementation progress. In reviewing the register from 2013 to 2024, IBLAC found that both Tilenga and EACOP have made significant progress in responding to the team's recommendations on livelihoods and biodiversity. Also, there was significant progress in linking biodiversity and livelihoods, with programmes addressing both the impacts of livelihoods on biodiversity, and how biodiversity programmes can affect livelihoods. Less information on responses to recommendations was available from CNOOC.

Table 1. outlines the status of recommendations for the periods 2013-2002 and from 2023-2024. Recommendations from 2025 will be added to the register prior to the 2026 field trip.

As the table demonstrates, many of the recommendations have either been closed, or else have shown significant progress. Significant progress for many of the recommendations indicates that dedicated efforts are underway, but that completion is expected to require more time, given the nature of the work involved. As can be seen, over two-thirds of IBLAC recommendations have either been completed or else are showing significant progress. If we take into consideration those recommendations that are no longer relevant that percentage increases to 80%.

Table 1. The Status of IBLAC Recommendations

IBLAC Recommendations and Completion Status							
Year		Completed	Significant Progress	Moderate Progress	Not Started	No Longer Relevant	Total
2023-2024	Number	35	19	11	0	4	69
	Percentage	51%	28%	16%	0%	6%	100%
2013-2022	Number	34	35	14	5	34	122
	Percentage	28%	29%	11%	4%	28%	100%
	Total Number	69	54	25	5	38	191
	Total Percentage	36%	28%	13%	3%	20%	100%

IBLAC reviewed the recommendations from 2013 through 2022 to assess the status of the Partners' responses and the extent to which they have been addressed or captured in the findings and recommendations from 2023 to the present. The review resulted in the following conclusions.

- Many of the recommendations have either been addressed or else continue to be relevant and form part of current IBLAC recommendations. Many of the still relevant recommendations are likely to be addressed through:

- The development and planning of activities resulting from the Theory of Change programme that is expected to be completed in 2026. The Theory of Change is expected to outline and suggest actions needed to support net gain ambitions. These actions should create a strong link between investments in biodiversity conservation and social development, with planned social investments demonstrating how they are supporting the theory of change. Actions would also address the demand for natural resources as well as specific resource uses and pressures (e.g. fisheries, pastoralists, etc.).
 - The finalisation of the M&E programme that is underway will establish updated net gain indicators and demonstrate the success of implementing the mitigation hierarchy. The M&E programme will also be linked to the theory of change work and measuring progress toward identified outcomes. These would need to focus not only on the biodiversity framework that is developed but also on the social.
 - Establishment of effective financial mechanisms that will support net gain activities (social and biodiversity) into the future. Over the past three years IBLAC has highlighted the need to ensure that appropriate funding mechanisms are in place to ensure that funds will be available to support net gain activities.
 - IBLAC review of the work/inputs of committees established by TEPU and EACOP to support their work on cumulative impacts. Companies have initiated programmes in both Uganda (Albertine Rift) and Tanzania (Tanga/Chongoleani Peninsula) to address cumulative impacts, engaging with key governmental and civil society actors. The IBLAC role would aim to ensure the protection of critical nature areas and support for the livelihoods of people affected by the development.
- Some of the recommendations that are no longer relevant included some not addressed in a timely manner, resulting in the time frame for addressing them having passed. Other recommendations regarding potential offset sites for EACOP, for example, were abandoned in favour of other, more appropriate sites, rendering those recommendations moot. For example, recommendations for early action to reduce the project impacts prior to construction activities taking place were not implemented. Another example involved recommendations to ensure Uganda National Road Authorities' (UNRA ...presently Works Department Ministry of Works and Transport), compliance with mitigation commitments on the road built through Murchison, and through Budongo. Despite concerns voiced by IBLAC, those measures were either not implemented by the road contractor or were inadequate, and the companies were not able to influence appropriate actions. However,

some efforts are underway to address the impacts of the road through Murchison and Budongo Forest and those recommendations remain open.

- Some issues, identified early on, need to be revisited by IBLAC to determine their final status. Updates on these issues are recommended and would form part of the next in-country visit. These include:
 - An update on waste management and how those systems are operating
 - Any unresolved issues related to stormwater runoff and drainage
 - Review of the oil spill response plan
 - Status of agreement on data sharing ensuring access to information collected as part of studies

As a result of the review, earlier recommendations have been either closed or incorporated into later recommendations to create a consolidated Register of Recommendations covering recommendations for the years 2023-2025.

4. Overview of IBLAC's Observations in 2025

In 2025, IBLAC continued to observe significant improvements in the operation of the Projects in terms of addressing biodiversity and social issues. The integration of biodiversity and social programmes represents an important achievement for the Projects, especially given the importance of people's engagement in the landscape for achieving the desired biodiversity and social outcomes. Various programs are now underway aimed at to address both biodiversity and social issues affecting people in the landscape.

Supporting development that does not harm biodiversity; addressing human wildlife conflict and exploring economic opportunities from ecosystem services, including tourism, will all need to figure prominently in the activities supported as part of the net gain programme and the Projects have made important strides in these areas.

Programs to address biodiversity impacts are underway, including those that will be necessary to achieve net gain. Activities are also underway to reduce the impacts of the construction activities in Murchison Falls National Park. There, Tilenga has launched successful restoration activities along the feeder lines to mitigate those impacts and return the land to a vegetative state. This work builds on the successful restoration of the well pads created to undertake exploration in the early years of the project. In addition, work continues to reduce the visual effects of the various well pads located in the Park by constructing vegetated bunds, which should ameliorate any negative impacts on tourists' wildlife experiences.

Success of the net gain programme will require identifying programmes and actions that create incentives and economic opportunities for communities, landowners, and investors to derive income and livelihood benefits from conservation actions. Exploring examples from other countries and building on experiences from programmes already operating in Uganda and Tanzania will inform potential opportunities that can be pursued. In addition, the finalization of a Theory of Change analysis for Tilenga should provide important insights into the pressures facing the landscape and identified areas of opportunity for action toward achieving net gain. The Theory of Change analysis will not only serve the Projects needs in terms of program design but will inform both government and non-government stakeholders on the complexity of meeting conservation and social outcomes in this dynamic landscape.

Implementation of the net gain programme tested some new mechanisms in 2025. In both Uganda and Tanzania, the companies have signed funding agreements with both the Uganda Biodiversity Fund and Chakwetu, respectively. Those agreements permit the flow of funds to implementation partners, with the companies playing an oversight role on steering committees. These initial funding agreements will allow the companies to test and improve on this project funding modality and assess its feasibility for the future.

Success in achieving net gain will require the participation of all Partners in the programme and depend on effective coordination. Already there is good coordination between Tilenga and EACOP in the broader Murchison Falls landscape in Uganda. Securing CNOOC participation should be a priority for 2026 and into the future. With CNOOC's completion of biodiversity and critical habitat studies for the Kingfisher area, securing this coordination may be easier.

The net gain programme is ambitious and complex, requiring dedicated staff and sufficient resources. Moreover, the implementation of the net gain programme is not a straight-line function. Implementation will need to be adapted over time to address changing conditions. The systems developed for implementation need to anticipate this. The design of the CMP for Pillars 1 and 2 anticipates those needs. Building similarly effective implementation and funding systems will be required for the remaining two pillars, for Kingfisher, and for EACOP, both in Tanzania and Uganda.

IBLAC looks forward to continuing to work with the companies regarding the funding and implementation of net gain activities. The next section provides a summary of our key recommendations as at the end of 2025.

5. IBLAC's Key Recommendations Based on 2025 Activities

5.1. Long-Term Funding, Guaranteed Funding Mechanisms for Net Gain are Essential

An important issue identified by IBLAC and presented at the Paris meeting concerns ensuring that funding will be available over the long-term, throughout the life of the Projects, to finance net gain commitments. Achieving net gain will take significant time and resources and one of the challenges is either a lack of, or insufficient funding over time. With no funding guarantees in place, there is a potential risk that the ambitious net gain objectives would not be met and that the Projects could be out of legal and lender compliance. Given the importance of the issue, IBLAC prepared various documents and presentations on long-term funding opportunities for the companies' consideration, including the creation of either an endowment or a sinking fund.¹

The focus on funding is especially important when companies are required by law and/or through lender requirements to achieve net gain. However, despite these requirements there is a long history of companies failing to meet those commitments. Those failures result from a variety of reasons including: changing priorities or economic conditions during the project operations, which tend to span long periods; sale or transfer of the asset to another operator with no requirement to transfer the liability; loss of interest in continued support for biodiversity programs. Without a firm commitment or guarantee of funding, the risk that net gain programs will be underfunded and outcomes unrealized increases and with it the loss of nature. Unless governments hold the companies responsible for meeting the requirements of the law, where such laws exist, companies may not have the incentive to finance conservation program throughout the life of the project. This does not mean that Tilenga or EACOP would not provide the funding over the life of the project, but the risk exists. IBLAC has seen various examples of this occurring over the past decade and its recommendations around funding commitments reflect those concerns and the potential negative impact on biodiversity and livelihoods.

The exact amount of funding needed is uncertain at this time and needs to be finalised as soon as possible to ensure effective financial planning for net gain program implementation. Some of the most important long-term funding requirements will be for the protection and management of Murchison Falls National Park. Current plans propose the creation of a Collaborative

¹ An endowment fund is a large fund established to last in perpetuity. Funds are invested and only the interest earned finances activities; capital is preserved. An endowment must be large enough to generate sufficient funding to ensure adequate program funds. A sinking fund is a fund that is established to last for a specific, finite amount of time (e.g. 20 years) and be spent down over that time until all the funds are exhausted.

Management Partnership (CMP) that would operate throughout the period of operations, estimated to be twenty years. Part of the funding for the proposed CMP could include creation of an endowment that would result in permanent funding for Murchison. Other key funding would support implementation of a portion of the Northern Albertine Rift Chimpanzee Action Plan (NARCAP). The funding would provide long-term support for activities that address both direct and indirect impacts on Chimpanzees and their habitat. Already the Parties have begun funding some discreet programs aimed at addressing impacts on Chimpanzees. All the Parties, Tilenga, CNOOC, and EACOP will have some level of impact on the species which will need to be compensated. Again, the funding for the conservation activities would need to be long-term in nature, requiring establishment of appropriate mechanisms that guarantee such funding. Establishment of an effective governance and financing system for the NARCAP is a priority and is currently under consideration IBLAC recommends that it be completed as soon as possible, and hopefully by the end of 2026.

Additional financing plans will be required for other net gain activities both in Uganda and Tanzania. Tilenga has identified four pillars of action including 1) Murchison Falls Protected Area (MFPA), (2) savanna habitats in and around Bugungu WR, (3) wetlands and riparian vegetation, and (4) forests. Some of the commitments could be fulfilled through various funding scenarios such as the proposed CMP and the NARCAP. Others will require additional funding programs that will need to be designed and funded over time. EACOP has identified a variety of additional net gain activities in both Uganda and Tanzania that will require long-term funding plans if net gain will be achieved. CNOOC should also be preparing its financing plans. Opportunities exist to provide funding through existing conservation funding organizations in both countries. Other mechanisms would need to be explored as well.

The current funding approach in existence around net gain is focused on annual budget allocations; no funding guarantees are in place. Consequently, IBLAC recommends a two-pronged approach that would involve securing an initial five-year allocation for the various programmes to put in place the systems that will be needed to ensure success for net gain. The PAU indicate that it has the authority to approve five-year budgets, even though disbursements take place annually. This approach is recommended as a first step to facilitate program implementation. It provides an opportunity to plan for and designate medium-term funding and provide a level of commitment that will be needed by project implementing organizations, given that many of the programs will be long-term in nature. EACOP does not face such time-delineated funding constraints and could consider longer-term options. However, at a minimum a five-year budgeting and funding cycle through the end of 2030 should be considered.

During this funding period, the Companies can analyse options for long-term funding, including finalising the actual amounts needed to fund the commitments. That would allow the companies to understand better the level of capital needed to create either a long-term funding mechanisms, such as a sinking or an endowment fund that would secure the long-term net gain needs or develop some other mechanism that provides a guarantee into the future that adequate resources will be in place for net gain commitments. These long-term funding mechanisms or guarantees could be designed to be established by the end of that five-year period when there is clarity regarding the costs, the mechanisms required for implementation and understanding of effective governance systems, and when resources from the production of oil are available and can contribute to both biodiversity and social objectives.

5.2. Finalising the Collaborative Management Partnership (CMP) for Conservation in Murchison Falls (Pillars 1 and 2) represents a high priority for the net gain program

IBLAC recognises the importance of putting in place the CMP to support the ambitious conservation programme in Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP) by reducing human pressure on the protected area and protecting the savannah ecosystem. In addition, some wetlands related work would need to be included to address the Ramsar site and the Nile Delta (part of Pillar 3). The CMP design has been in place since 2023, but final agreement and approval to move forward has been delayed. The company has been working to resolve the impasse.

IBLAC recommends that Tilenga continue efforts to finalise this agreement, in the hope that the CMP would be in place by the end of calendar year 2026. If for some reason the CMP does not move forward, consideration of other options to meet the conservation objectives for MFNP would need to be developed (Plan B), along with funding mechanisms that provide adequate assurances that programs are designed and implemented to achieve net gain targets.

5.3. Meeting Net Gain Commitments through Conservation of Endangered Chimpanzees (Pillar 4) is a priority

The Projects in the Northern Albertine Rift are likely to have indirect impacts on highly endangered chimpanzees from Project activities and associated facilities. These impacts are exacerbated by more direct cumulative impacts from regional development that contributes to increased levels of deforestation and land use pressure, thereby reducing chimpanzee habitat, including corridors through which these apes move. Both EACOP and Tilenga have been

supporting the development of the Northern Albertine Rift Conservation Action Plan (NARCAP). This plan offers the partners (Tilenga, EACOP and Kingfisher) an opportunity to lead on implementation of actions toward chimpanzee protection. Moreover, PS6 requires a statement from the IUCN Primate Specialist Group's ARCC Task Force regarding the companies' efforts to address the impacts on chimpanzees.

IBLAC recommends that the companies support the completion of the NARCAP, including the governance mechanisms that will be required to ensure effective implementation of the plan. This governance plan should also include the identification of the funding that will be required to meet the part of the plan that is the companies' responsibility. By supporting the establishment of the governance system and providing the seed money necessary for programme implementation, the companies will lay the foundation for additional funders interested in chimpanzee conservation to contribute to NARCAP implementation.

5.4. CNOOC contribution is essential for net gain in the landscape

IBLAC visited the Kingfisher site in September 2025 to review social and environmental programmes the company was undertaking. The observations and recommendations appear in the trip report. Although CNOOC has welcomed IBLAC input, the company has yet to sign the IBLAC ToR to work officially with IBLAC. Moreover, there is some uncertainty about whether the company will contribute to proposed long-term net gain activities (e.g. chimpanzee conservation). IBLAC understands that CNOOC has completed a critical habitat assessment and a biodiversity action plan, which should guide the company's activities toward net gain. IBLAC hopes to review these documents and explore how the company can contribute to net gain in the landscape.

Given the importance of CNOOC's operations and that it is an associated facility in terms of meeting lender financing requirements related to compliance with PS6, IBLAC recommends greater participation by CNOOC in a coordinated net gain programme. There is potential to raise this concern with PAU so that funds are approved for the required net gain activities and then used on programmes by the company.

In addition, the review and update of the IBLAC terms of reference offers an opportunity to engage with CNOOC to gain its input into the revised document.

5.5. Support for Community Enterprises linked to conservation forms part of the net gain programme

The success of the net gain programme requires that communities in the same landscape are supportive of the programme and, where possible, benefit from conservation activities. This will involve finding opportunities for communities and landowners to benefit from conservation, including creating incentives for people to manage their land and resources to deliver conservation outcomes. Growing interest among funders and investors in community-based enterprises, along with opportunities to expand payments for ecosystem services, provides avenues to create a livelihoods and conservation nexus. Some programmes do exist in Uganda and Tanzania, and these could be adapted and scaled to provide both biodiversity and livelihood benefits.

IBLAC recommends identifying incentive programmes and conservation enterprises linked to conservation that can be put in place as part of net gain activities. IBLAC expects that some ideas around this topic will emerge from the final Theory of Change report that is expected in 2026. These ideas will contribute to the financial planning work that will need to take place as part of the net gain program implementation.

5.6. Complexity of net gain programmes requires strong internal capacity

Implementing net gain programmes is complex and requires a long-term commitment. A presentation by EACOP at the meetings in Paris illustrated the breadth of activities that need to be delivered. Ensuring adequate expertise to establish the foundations for effective implementation and monitoring/evaluation is critical for success, particularly during the first five years of operations. Staff changes are inevitable, but the companies need to ensure that high level of technical expertise is maintained and that the staff have the appropriate authority to ensure effective programme implementation as well as an ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

5.7. Compliance with lender requirements and existing regulations requires an evidence base

By the end of 2026 IBLAC expects to be able to review a final Theory of Change programme that includes net gain targets, identification of actions and associated costs to achieve them, and a monitoring system to demonstrate the progress toward meeting objectives. This will be particularly important as the Project moves from the construction phase to production. Ensuring these targets and monitoring systems are in place will be important to demonstrate a pathway to

compliance with lender requirements and will also be able to demonstrate compliance with existing Ugandan regulations. These Projects, if successful in meeting net gain, will be one of the first large-scale projects to comply with the new regulation and provide a model for meeting the legal requirements for no net loss/net gain.

Annex 1. List of Participants Paris Meeting March 18, 2026

Name	Affiliation	Position
In-Person Attendees		
Ray VICTURINE	IBLAC	Chair
Alex Bataamba MUHWEEZI	IBLAC	Member
Ana-Maria ESTEVES	IBLAC	Member
Charles Kezilahabi MESHACK	IBLAC	Member
Sebastien LE BEL	IBLAC	Member
Ward HAGEMEIJER	IBLAC	Member
Yunus, Daud MGAYA	IBLAC	Member
Lodewijk WERRE	EACOP	Environmental and Resettlement Advisor
Elizabeth PION	TotalEnergies, HSE/EP/SOC	Head of HSE/EP Social Performance
Claude-Henri CHAÎNEAU	TotalEnergies, HSE/EP/ENV	Head of HSE/EP Environment
Celine DUHERON	TotalEnergies, DG/STS/HSE/EP	Director HSE/EP
David OCHANDA	TotalEnergies, EP/AF/UG-TEP/BIO/RGL	Biodiversity Manager
Lolita TROÏLO	TotalEnergies, DG/STS/HSE/ES/SOC	Social Performance Advisor
Mike SANGSTER	TotalEnergies, EP/AF	Africa Director
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Annex 2. IBLAC 2025 Trip Report

Trip Report of the Independent Biodiversity and Livelihoods Advisory Committee (IBLAC) visit to Tilenga, Kingfisher and EACOP Projects in Uganda and Tanzania

August 28th to September 13, 2025



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Acronyms

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AIS	Alien Invasive Species
ARRC Task Force	IUCN Primate Specialist Group: Avoid, Reduce, Restore and Conservation Task Force
B&L	Biodiversity & Livelihoods
CAP	Chimpanzee Action Plan
CFR	Central Forest Reserve
CMP	Collaborative Management Partnership
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
CSCO	Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (Uganda)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTF	Conservation Trust Fund
CUL	Chinese National Offshore Oil Corporation Uganda Limited
EACOP	East African Crude Oil Pipeline
EAMCEF	Eastern Arc Mountain Conservation Endowment Fund
ECO	Ecological Christian Association
ECOTRUST	Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda
FR	Forest Reserve
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IBLAC	Independent Biodiversity and Livelihoods Advisory Committee
JV	Joint Venture
LRP	Livelihood Restoration Plan
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
ICF	International Crane Foundation
JV	Joint Venture
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFNP	Murchison Falls National Park
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NEMC	National Environment Management Council
NFA	National Forestry Authority (Uganda)
NARCAP	Northern Albertine Rift Chimpanzee Action Plan
NARCG	Northern Albertine Rift Conservation Group
PAU	Petroleum Authority of Uganda
RCIMS	Regional Cumulative Impact Management Strategy
RIS	Ramsar Information Sheet
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
ROW	Right of Way
SoW	Scope of Work

SSC	Species Survival Commission
TEPU	Total Energies Exploration Production Uganda BV
TEST/Chakwetu	Tanzania Environmental Sustainability Trust (named Chakwetu)
TOC	Theory of Change
UBF	Uganda Biodiversity Fund
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WI	Wetlands International

1. Introduction

The Independent Biodiversity and Livelihoods Advisory Committee (IBLAC) was established in 2013 to advise the Tilenga (operated by TotalEnergies Exploration Production Uganda (TEPU)), Kingfisher (operated by China National Offshore Oil Corporation Uganda Limited (CUL)) and East African Crude Oil Pipeline (operated by EACOP) Projects. IBLAC advice is aimed at supporting the Projects to achieve biodiversity net gain and enhanced livelihoods in landscapes and communities affected by their Projects.

The IBLAC remit calls for an annual field visit to the activities in both countries², as well as offsite advice and support provided both online and face-to-face. This includes meetings at TotalEnergies Headquarters in Paris once a year, during which IBLAC presents its findings and recommendations to company leadership. In addition, IBLAC convenes an Annual General Meeting with the leadership of all Parties to review the findings from the Annual Report and plan activities for the coming year. IBLAC also reviews and provides input into project documentation. The field visits are especially important as they allow IBLAC members to engage with communities, Ugandan and Tanzanian government institutions, civil society, relevant third-party institutions, such as the IUCN SSC Primate Specialist Group ARRC Task Force, the Northern Albertine Rift Conservation Group (NARCG), the Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (CSCO) in Uganda, and other stakeholders. This engagement allows for observing and learning about conditions on the ground and for IBLAC to make informed recommendations.



This report presents the findings and recommendations from the IBLAC 2025 visit to both Uganda and Tanzania, which took place from August 28th to September 13th 2025. The IBLAC team included Ray Victurine (Chair), Ward Hagemeyer

² As per the IBLAC TOR dd 1 January 2022

(Vice Chair), Ana Maria Esteves, Sébastien Le Bel, Alex Muhweezi, Charles Meshack and Professor Yunus Mgaya, all of whom visited the Tilenga, Kingfisher, and EACOP projects in Uganda; all members also visited EACOP activities in Tanzania. Three members, Ray Victurine, Ward Hagemeyer and Alex Muhweezi, participated in meetings in Kampala on 28th and 29th August before the arrival of the rest of the team. During these days, meetings were held with TEPU, some implementing partners, and the civil society organization CSCO, and allowed the time to review and update the recommendations register. The visit ended in Dar es Salaam, with a debriefing for the parties held on the morning of September 13th. Members departed for home later that evening.

This report and its findings will form part of the Annual Report that will be published early in 2026. After a short Introduction (Section 1), the report highlights some of the positive progress achieved since the last IBLAC visit in mid-2024 (Section 2). It provides a series of observations and recommendations to address cross-cutting issues (Section 3), the various activities in Uganda (Section 4) and EACOP programs in Tanzania (Section 5). Findings for EACOP appear under both Sections 4 and 5. Country chapters follow the same outline: landscape wide issues, supporting conditions, constraints, biodiversity findings, livelihood findings, and project-specific recommendations.

2. Positive progress achieved since IBLAC's last visit in mid-2024

IBLAC observed promising progress in both countries across biodiversity and livelihoods initiatives. IBLAC continued to see positive responses to its recommendations. Additionally, the team noted that institutional and technical capacity in the field has improved, demonstrated by effective programmes and positive outcomes. Some highlights are mentioned here and will be further elaborated upon in the respective country sections that follow.

This year both companies launched programs to address cumulative impacts focused on activities in the Albertine Rift in Uganda and the areas around Tanga in Tanzania. This work is important given the significant increase in human population in the landscapes and the lack of governance planning and coordination amongst projects in the area, with growing investments and land use changes. Proper planning and coordination will be required to ensure that landscape changes do not put pressure on or threaten the achievement of the net gain objectives established by the companies.

Last year IBLAC recommended that the Theory of Change, TOC, work needed to include greater integration of livelihood issues into the overall framework. This year Conservation Alpha, the TOC consultant, provided a demonstration on how that integration has been

addressed. This led to significant improvements in the model, which will be refined further based on comments and input provided by IBLAC during the visit.

IBLAC noted some positive advances in stakeholder relationships. The meeting with the Ugandan Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (CSCO) was very positive. It provided IBLAC with an opportunity to share some of the findings and recommendations provided in its 2024 report. This was appreciated by CSCO, and post presentation discussions outlined ways to improve the overall relationship and communication between the parties.

IBLAC also had the chance to meet with the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) for the first time in several years. PAU expressed its appreciation for IBLAC's work and the recommendations the team has provided over the years. PAU also expressed a desire to engage more with IBLAC in the future.



Giraffes in MFNP a few meters from the restored ROW

The work on the Tilenga project in Murchison Falls National Park continues, with significant progress made on restoring the pipeline right of way and around the well pads. UWA has installed electric fencing at sections of the perimeter of the National Park to help reduce human wildlife conflict between the Park and Park-boundary residents. TEPU is contributing material support to cover 10 kms of fencing for a currently unfenced section on the Southern boundary of park, which

is greatly appreciated by UWA. The team also was able to observe the construction of a replacement-bridge (Kituna Bridge) over a very wet area of the Kituna River on the Albert track, which is facilitating tourism visits along the Albert Nile to the Delta area in MFNP.

In Buliisa, south of the park, there has been progress in both biodiversity and livelihoods. Visits to farmers and demonstration gardens show improved yields and a high level of satisfaction among the beneficiaries. The main concerns relate to accessing markets beyond supplying construction workforces.

At Kingfisher, the CNOOC team presented to IBLAC, reviewing progress against the recommendations made in 2024. The CNOOC team also reiterated its desire for continued engagement with IBLAC, although CNOOC has yet to sign the IBLAC ToR to formalise it officially.

In both Tanzania and Uganda, progress has been made in facilitating project financing in the field. Financing agreements have been signed between the Uganda Biodiversity Fund (UBF) and both TEPU and EACOP. EACOP has also signed a financing agreement with Chakwetu, and it is expected that project funding through the CTFs could begin as early as October of 2025.

3. Cross Cutting Issues and Recommendations Across the Projects

During the visit, we noted nine cross-cutting themes related to Tilenga, Kingfisher and EACOP programs that require attention and further action. Where we have not named a specific Project, it should be inferred that the issue and/or recommendation applies to all Projects.

3.1 Continue the work to finalise the Theory of Change for TEPU, incorporating the livelihoods components and aligning net gain objectives and targets.

Observations:

There has been measurable progress on developing an integrated Theory of Change (ToC) for the Tilenga project, which ties biodiversity net gain to enhanced local livelihoods. The ToC now serves as a central planning tool, guiding strategic decisions and clarifying links between project actions and intended outcomes across the Albertine Rift landscape. The initial ToC, primarily focused on conservation; it is now evolving to integrate more explicit social and livelihood targets. Stakeholders now recognise the importance of balancing ecological restoration with socioeconomic well-being, moving towards a model in which biodiversity conservation and community income generation depend on and support each other. The ToC must include alternative livelihoods beyond tourism and conservation income, reflecting the diversity of local economic realities.



Elephant electric proof fence at the edge of MFNP: a solution to mitigate HWC but with potential impacts on wildlife connectivity

The ToC is connected to strategic planning at scale, ranging from site to landscape level, and will eventually guide net gain target-setting, restoration priorities, funding mechanisms, and monitoring programmes. The monitoring and evaluation systems are becoming more robust, integrating adaptive management, household welfare tracking, and linking outcome-based indicators to programme learning. However, these systems are more advanced in some sectors than others, and there is a need to ensure that the process can respond to changes over time and the need to monitor the longer-term impacts of restoration.

Recommendations:

IBLAC recommends that the contractor, Conservation Alpha, continue integrating social and livelihood components into the ToC. Future versions should clearly define

and prioritise alternative livelihoods—such as agroforestry, honey production, eco-friendly agriculture, and business development—to improve alignment with community needs. Suggestions for improvement also include consideration of ecological relationships between species (e.g. in target setting), better mapping of connectivity and the explicit inclusion of climate vulnerability, law enforcement, as well as wetlands and water resources outside protected areas, in future ToC updates.

Once completed, it will be important to widely share the ToC or summaries of its strategic framework with civil society and relevant government agencies—including the Regional Cumulative Impact Management Strategy (RCIMS) working group.

Applying a ToC approach to Kingfisher and the Tanga region should be considered to understand better and support the effective integration of activities toward meeting net gain.

3.2 Complete Development of Net Gain Targets and Indicators

Observations:

There is a positive on-going effort to review the net gain targets specifying measurable targets for key habitats (forests, wetlands, grasslands) and wildlife populations; updating targets to reflect changing conditions in the landscape that should be followed and supported by robust monitoring of results. There is also recognition of the importance of connecting net gain targets with broader strategies and management plans, such as the National Chimpanzee Conservation Strategy.

The net gain target of a 25% increase in the elephant populations over the life of the project must be carefully considered given the conditions in the landscape and the potential cascading effects such as habitat modification, impact on other herbivore populations and the social impact arising from an increase in HWC. The targets need to be verified and assessed as part of a strong and robust monitoring system. This information can then be used for modelling purposes to better estimate elephant populations in the future.

Gaps in wildlife monitoring remain, especially in relation to nocturnal species and systematic recording of sightings. These gaps may limit the ability to assess whether biodiversity net gain is being achieved. Furthermore, current datasets often lack sufficient supporting information (metadata) describing data collection methods, timing, and location, which reduces their usefulness for decision-making and long-term evaluation.

In meetings with CSCO the civil society representatives raised concerns about the varying levels of understanding of net gain principles among the different organizations. As a result, they have a limited understanding and appreciation of targets, programs, and progress by JV partners towards the net gain pathway.

Recommendations:

In terms of reviewing and updating targets and indicators, IBLAC recommends net gain targets that incorporate relative indices, quality metrics, and abundance trends—this should address wildlife species relationships, habitat integrity, and landscape connectivity. There is also a need to regularly update land cover and connectivity maps using the latest literature, monitoring data, and input from collared animal studies; use these to guide adaptive management and revise targets as needed.

IBLAC recommends employing scenario modelling for anticipated wildlife population changes—especially elephants—to prepare management for cascading ecosystem and social impacts, drawing on examples from other protected areas with



Explanation of restoration activities along the pipeline in Murchison Falls National Park

similar population growth.

While cameras are currently used to monitor wildlife interactions in the immediate vicinity of oil and gas infrastructure, there remains a need to regularly update land cover and connectivity maps and to establish a broader wildlife monitoring system

capable of measuring population trends and movement patterns across the wider landscape. Feasibility studies to expand monitoring capacity—such as deploying additional camera traps beyond facility boundaries and in key habitats

and corridors (e.g. one camera per 2 km²) —should be considered, including coverage of nocturnal species and indirect project impacts.

Since the contractor responsible for reviewing TEPU's net gain targets has access to the full range of biodiversity data sets, he could be asked to produce and share robust metadata. Restoration and population data should be made publicly accessible through accessible dashboards.

There is a need to enhance the understanding of net gain principles by Civil Society to enlist their support broadly. Organising a workshop with civil society to share the ToC analysis and supporting net gain targets is recommended.

3.3 Continue exploring long-term funding mechanisms to support net gain programs.

Observations:

IBLAC held a meeting with the TEPU General Manager, Philippe Groueix, to discuss the issue of long-term funding. The discussion was in part precipitated by a letter from IUCN ARRC Taskforce requesting the establishment of an endowment fund to support chimpanzee conservation under the Northern Albertine Rift Chimpanzee Action Plan (NARCAP). The GM confirmed and stressed the company's commitment to long-term investment in biodiversity and sustainable development toward net gain but prefers annual disbursements rather than putting money up front. Discussion with PAU indicated that their funding plans align with the TEPU disbursement practice of approving annual budgets. However, there is recognition both that multiple year budget approvals (e.g. five years) would be effective for program planning and that longer-term funding mechanisms will be required to meet net gain commitments.

Development of long-term funding mechanisms is particularly important for several reasons. Uganda's Environmental Act of 2019 (Section 115 (6) states that "the biodiversity or other offsets or compensation mechanism referred to in subsection (4) shall be designed and funded by the developer as long as the impacts exist or preferably in perpetuity".

Moreover, net gain targets and outcomes will require relatively long-term uninterrupted financing to ensure their success. Establishing long-term funding mechanisms, especially those providing funding over 25-30 years or even in perpetuity, implies either a long-term sinking fund or an endowment that ensures a flow of funds to support activities after the end of the 25-year operating life of the project.

In 2013, when the IBLAC was launched, an initial, indicative cost forecast was prepared to support the biodiversity and livelihood components for Murchison Falls and the surrounding landscape. That forecast suggested an endowment valued at \$100 million would cover the expected costs to achieve a net gain in perpetuity. This did not include funds anticipated for financing the relevant parts of the NARCAP to address the need to support chimpanzee conservation or other activities in the landscape toward meeting net gain targets. Given the various programs that are anticipated to deliver net gain, and the fact that these earlier figures may no longer reflect reality, it is recommended that the Parties undertake the necessary financial modelling to determine the cost of delivering net gain across the various programs so that appropriate decisions around funding mechanisms and governance structures can be made. This implies identifying a long-term funding horizon. In Uganda, the Project will need to balance the requirement for annual disbursements with the need to guarantee biodiversity and social investment for at least 20 years.

A concern about reliance on annual disbursements during the project's operational phase is one of the driving forces behind consideration of long-term funding. Stakeholders are concerned that funding levels could decrease over time due to changing financial conditions or shifting priorities, thereby negatively impacting biodiversity and livelihood targets. These concerns are informed by past experiences in other countries, whereby commitments by extractive companies were reduced over time and sometimes halted altogether, due to changes in priorities, transfer of ownership, or shifting priorities. Ring-fencing and guaranteeing funding for the future, prior to the end of construction, would assuage those concerns and allow the establishment of an institutionalised mechanism to ensure future funding.

Recommendations:

IBLAC recommends working the PAU to obtain approval for five-year budgets for the various net gain programs

IBLAC recommends that both TotalEnergies and EACOP develop the financial plans to identify the resources needed to ensure long term financing for biodiversity and social programs aimed at achieving net gain.

The Parties should explore the options of establishing a long-term fund (e.g. endowment or sinking fund), or development of mechanisms to guarantee funding (e.g performance bond) to ensure continued funding throughout the life of the Project and beyond. Options could include establishing endowments or long-term sinking funds (25 to 30 years) with existing national level CTFs, or else creating a dedicated

fund in Europe that would direct funding to net gain programs through local implementing organizations. Exploration of the various options is recommended as the Project transition from construction to operations.

Other options could include building on the model developed for the CMP by creating a Special Purpose Vehicle with long-term funding to manage and support the implementation of the net gain program in the Albertine landscape. In addition, there could be options to create some kind of performance bond or other guarantee that would ensure adequate levels of funding into the future and thereby address the concerns regarding the risk of annual funding.

As part of the discussion on long-term funding, IBLAC recommends continued Company-level discussions to explore the most appropriate approach and governance systems that provide companies with the assurance of meeting net gain targets, while also managing the constraints imposed by PAU. Among feasible approaches consistent with Ugandan government funding policies could be the preparation of multi-year financing commitments, derived from established biodiversity frameworks (e.g., RCIMS), as well as livelihood enhancement strategies, to guide annual disbursements against projected multi-year investments. It will be important to clearly articulate the financing plans needed to achieve the net gain targets and the role of the companies and national institutions toward meeting them over the long-term. The financing strategies will need to consider different funding sources, including both recoverable and potentially non-recoverable costs, to meet both the companies' net gain obligations and ambitions.

IBLAC recommends consideration of complementary small grant funds that would be managed by local Conservation Trust Funds to channel money directly to local communities to support their livelihoods and biodiversity initiatives.

3.4 Commence project funding through engagement with the CTFs in Uganda and Tanzania.

Observations:

Although the funding agreements have been signed between Chakwetu and the Uganda Biodiversity Fund, the projects have not yet received funding. These delays have occurred for various reasons, most of which have been resolved. Both CTFs are still learning how the process works in terms of soliciting and reviewing proposals through the existing Steering Committees.

Recommendations:

IBLAC recommends that the CTFs continue receiving technical assistance to enhance their capacity for supporting the implementation of the net gain programme.

Additionally, the Steering Committees need to adopt a more active role in supporting the solicitation and review of proposals.

IBLAC also recommends that UBF and Chakwetu engage in learning exchanges to share experiences and explore common approaches. At some point, both funds might benefit from some exchange with more mature funds. This could be arranged in coordination with the AFD-funded Bridge Project, which links Latin American CTFs with those in Africa.

3.5 Finalise structure and funding mechanisms for the Projects' components of the NARCAP

Observations:

NARCAP represents a regional strategy and an important program involving all the JV partners who will need to contribute to its success. The NARCAP presents wide ranging strategies and actions that should attract investment from other actors, beyond the JVs. The program potentially represents a model for both securing long-term funding to support the conservation of key species and an approach that can also mobilise funds from other entities to support the implementation and complement the funding coming from the JV partners.

Recommendations:

IBLAC recommends that the JV partners prioritise investments that support their net gain objectives and obligations, secure stakeholder buy-in and finalise the funding and governance structure for the implementation of the JV share of the NARCAP. As part of that effort, a mechanism to secure long-term funding for implementing JV priorities needs to be considered. This could be in the form of an endowment or sinking fund, as described in 3.3 above, but with a funding window within that structured dedicated to the projects specific to the areas of importance to the JV partners. Such a funding window has the potential to attract other donors/actors, given the importance of chimpanzee conservation in the country and the extent of the conservation strategy that extends beyond the area of influence of the JV partners.

3.6 Harmonise approaches for managing the infrastructure right-of-way

Observations:

Efforts to manage the right-of-way (ROW) for pipeline and infrastructure projects vary notably between JV partners and locations. EACOP has developed lease agreements enabling communities to use the ROW, demonstrating positive collaboration with the potential to support food production and income opportunities while allowing for local management oversight of these areas. In contrast, CNOOC has prohibited community use of its ROW, raising concerns about access conflicts and the inability to access the pipeline in the future without having to compensate for crop losses. While both companies are focused on restoration along the ROW, the scope of community involvement and the selected restoration strategies are inconsistent across the project sites.

Recommendations:



A few months after the topsoil was put back, *Lantana camara* has partially invaded the ROW

IBLAC recommends that EACOP share its leasing agreement with CNOOC to demonstrate options that could involve support for livelihoods along the pipeline. The approach could also explore how community groups might be engaged to monitor and participate in the maintenance of the ROW.

Any restoration programs along the ROW should consider the potential for

invasive species, recognising that some may be introduced from farms and may be difficult to control. For example, the ability of *Lantana camara* to rapidly colonise disturbed areas, such as the ROW, is a major concern for the restoration process and its objectives. It is further recommended to develop and apply an invasive control and management strategy. The Strategy could provide for community involvement in preventing the introduction and/or proliferation of invasive species.

3.7 Formalise CNOOC engagement with IBLAC

Observations:

CNOOC states that it values the role and contribution of IBLAC. However, CNOOC has yet to sign the IBLAC terms of reference and has indicated that part of the reason is its desire to be represented on IBLAC by an expert of Chinese nationality of its choice.

IBLAC was requested to provide CNOOC with a description of the qualifications of a person who would best contribute to the skill mix of the IBLAC team, for their consideration.

Recommendations:

IBLAC agreed to provide CNOOC with the qualifications and position description for a candidate who can fill a role that can best support IBLAC's work. The team decided that the best candidate would be someone with skills in community development related to biodiversity conservation. IBLAC members identified a Chinese national with suitable qualifications and forwarded that person's resume for consideration by the company. IBLAC recommends that CNOOC consider that person and/or other candidates who meet the qualifications so that a new IBLAC member can join the team in 2026.

IBLAC recommends continued engagement with CNOOC as a JV partner toward securing its signature on the ToRs.

3.8 Continue the work to improve livelihood programs

Observations:

IBLAC observed continued positive progress in the design and delivery of livelihood restoration and enhancement programs across key sites in Uganda and Tanzania. Communities increasingly benefit from a mix of interventions: conservation agriculture, livestock training, beekeeping, demonstration gardens, vocational education, and micro-finance support. These approaches have produced tangible increases in income, food security, and participation among women and youth, especially in the demonstration gardens in the Buliisa area. With the school gardens, student numbers have increased as students now enjoy meals at school. The programs

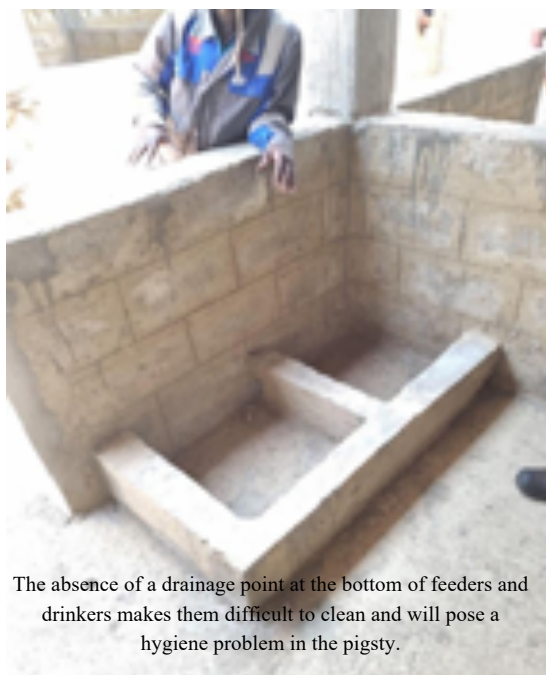
are also designed to integrate access to clean water for sanitation, as well as water supply for small scale irrigation.

Community enterprise activities—such as cassava and honey processing—have also been successful, though sellers face challenges accessing markets. Presently, people and associations have access to project-related or construction-phase markets (e.g. camps), but plans would need to be prepared to address demand once workers are demobilised. In addition, some of the designs for the livelihood infrastructure and the choice of inputs are inappropriate and should be redesigned or replanned (e.g., goat sheds and piggery— see below). Access to extension services by local government extension workers remains low/poor.

Across both Uganda and Tanzania, the uptake of new practices is strongest where intensive support has been sustained over multiple years and where programs are designed with community input. IBLAC was informed of the increasing adoption of agricultural technologies by non-project affected people. Monitoring and evaluation systems in livelihood projects have increasingly tracked household-level outcomes and appear to be effective.

Another finding is a lack of clarity regarding the demobilisation of community workers and their preparation for life after the project ends. TEPU reports that a demobilisation strategy is under development with support from an IFC sustainability specialist. Progress on this issue will be assessed during the 2026 IBLAC visit.

Recommendations: IBLAC recommends that the Parties build on positive investments by developing diversified market access strategies for the various crops



The absence of a drainage point at the bottom of feeders and drinkers makes them difficult to clean and will pose a hygiene problem in the pigsty.

to reduce dependency on a market that depends on the demand from the construction camps. The program needs to consider additional financial training to support the scale up of businesses.

The Projects should consider some modifications to the designs. For example, the floors of the goat sheds could be replaced with slats with spacing for droppings to fall through, rather than the current pole design. CNOOC should review the design of the piggery to ensure both improved ventilation and the cleaning of feeders and water troughs. Improved or better yielding pig breeds

like Taihu or Meishan should be considered over the current planned breed, which may not be of high yielding value.

IBLAC also recommends connecting beneficiaries to skills and enterprise development under Social Investment programs.

The projects should consider the Graduation Approach for at-risk households, whereby they are first provided a safety net, receive livelihood support and then develop social and economic systems that allow them to thrive.

3.9 Review and update the recommendations register to allow for the reporting of results.

Observations: Since 2013, IBLAC has been preparing recommendations to support the companies' efforts to achieve net gain. Those recommendations have been captured in a register. During the IBLAC visit, the team agreed that quantifying the status of the response to the recommendations would be a beneficial exercise, providing an assessment of the contribution of IBLAC to the program over time, while demonstrating the response of the companies. To that end, IBLAC did a preliminary review of the recommendations, dividing them into two periods: 2013-2022 and 2023-2024 (taking into account that there has been insufficient time to address and complete many of the recent recommendations) and assessing whether actions on the recommendations have been completed, have made significant progress, moderate progress, or have not yet been started. There were also categories for recommendations that are no longer relevant and for which there is no information. The latter category is expected to be removed after consultation with the Parties.

Stakeholders including CSCO and PAU expressed interest in seeing the results from IBLAC advice and recommendations.

The preliminary results have been tabulated in Table 1.

Recommendations:

IBLAC recommends that the companies review the recommendations register and provide updates on the recommendations, including those identified as having no information. Furthermore, moving forward, the register should be reviewed and kept up to date on an annual basis (at least).

Table 1. Preliminary Data from Review of the Recommendations Register

IBLAC recommendations and their status								
Year		Status						Total
		Completed	Significant Progress	Moderate Progress	Not Started	No Longer Relevant	No information	
2013-2022	number	35	45	14	8	6		108
	percentage	32%	42%	13%	7%	6%	0%	100%
2023-2024	number	2	20	24	8	2	12	68
	percentage	3%	29%	35%	12%	3%	18%	100%
Overall	number	37	65	38	16	8	12	176
	percentage	21%	37%	22%	9%	5%	7%	100%

IBLAC recommendations 2013-2024, excluding 'no longer relevant' and 'no information'							
Total	number	37	65	38	16		156
	percentage	24%	42%	24%	10%		100%

Once the registers are updated, IBLAC recommends preparing a report that can be shared with key stakeholders in the countries. This would include a detailed overview of the recommendations taken up by the companies and an analysis of the impact of the IBLAC committee over the last decade.

Such an annual summary of recommendation implementation would make a useful standard component of the IBLAC annual reports.

4. Uganda

The Uganda portion of the IBLAC field trip in 2025 took place from August 28th through September 6th. Four days of meetings in Kampala and Entebbe were followed by visits to the Tilenga and Kingfisher development projects and biodiversity and livelihood programs in Buliisa, Masindi, Hoima and Murchison Falls National Park.

4.1 Meeting with the Regional Cumulative Impact Management Strategy (RCIMS) Working Group

Observations:

The Albertine Rift is considered a special planning area, and as a result, various relevant planning documents have been prepared by the Government, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Physical Development Plan for the period 2014-2040. However, the status of the implementation of these plans is unknown, and it is uncertain whether they have been able to successfully anticipate the extent of the changes occurring in the landscape.

The JV partners led by TEPU are supporting a multi-stakeholder Working Group that is championing the preparation of RCIMS that seeks to also address pressures on land and resources and support the ability of developments in the landscape to achieve their net gain outcomes. The RCIMS process is led by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to ensure recognition and ownership by the government and other stakeholders.

Recommendations:

IBLAC recommends that the RCIMS should focus initially on the areas impacted both directly and indirectly by the oil program. A first important step would be to conduct a spatial analysis to map the impacts in the region over time. Land use change/impacts could be assessed over time using a baseline year of 2020 or prior and comparing to conditions on the ground today. That spatial information, along with the analysis available through the theory of change process and identified net gain targets, would form the basis for the working group to move forward with a strategy and plan for development in the region, building on this new work as well as existing plans.

In addition, IBLAC recommends that the RCIMS Working Group establish clear roles and responsibilities for the various actors involved in the process. The Working

Group, headed by the appropriate government entity, would take the strategic lead and would be supported by an administrator and funding grant manager. Technical partners should be recruited to support the Working Group by carrying out specific studies and analyses. In addition, the Working Group will need to develop an effective communication strategy that would mobilise stakeholders' appreciation of its objective and process and eventually, generate its recognition and ownership.

4.2 Meeting with Stakeholders - Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (CSCO) and Uganda Biodiversity Fund (UBF)

Observations:

CSCO members indicated they were happy to continue engaging IBLAC. However, there were reservations expressed to the effect that the IBLAC mandate is pursued as a “neutral player”. CSCO members felt that members of IBLAC would have trouble maintaining a neutral position because they are compensated for their time.

They raised concerns about late or no access to IBLAC reports and information, and therefore, were unable to fully appreciate the value of IBLAC and the outcomes of IBLAC recommendations. For example, CSCO members did not have the IBLAC Annual Report for 2024 until just a day before the meeting. This lack of access to the report was unintended and IBLAC was led to believe the report already was available on the website for stakeholder access.

Additionally, CSCO members were positive about their engagement with TEPU and EACOP, including field visits to the project areas as well as actions by TEPU and EACOP to respond to some of their previous concerns on biodiversity and livelihoods. CSCO members also expressed a desire to have a forum to raise technical issues with IBLAC.

It was apparent from discussions that a significant part of the CSCO members do not have a clear idea of the objectives of the Net gain programme and targets, application of IFC standards, etc.

A short, separate meeting was held with UBF to discuss pending project funding as well as the process for soliciting and reviewing proposals.

Recommendations:

TEPU and EACOP should ensure that CSCO has timely access to IBLAC reports. IBLAC also recommends that the Parties provide some orientation (possibly a

workshop) on net gain and net gain programmes and targets, as well as the application of IFC standards. Sharing the Theory of Change work as part of this process could be helpful in demonstrating both the objectives and the complexity of reaching them.

IBLAC recommends clarifying its mandate, ToRs and operational procedures and stressing its “neutrality” and independence.

IBLAC recommends synthesising and sharing information on the impact/outcomes of IBLAC recommendations, also for external communication.

Finally, IBLAC recommends instituting channels of communication so that CSCO can raise issues or pose questions to IBLAC through TEPU or directly to the IBLAC chair.

IBLAC recommends continued engagement of the projects with UBF through the Steering Committee as well as through technical assistance to improve UBF operations and processes, including the development of an efficient mechanism for soliciting proposals for review by the Steering Committee.

4.3 Petroleum Authority of Uganda

Observations:

The IBLAC team met with the PAU at their office in Entebbe. This was the first meeting held with PAU for several years.

The meeting was very positive, with PAU expressing its appreciation of IBLAC’s role and its desire to have greater engagement with IBLAC. PAU indicated an interest in seeing the results of the analysis of



IBLAC meeting with PAU in Entebbe

recommendations that is underway by IBLAC and the companies. There was also interest on PAU’s part in organising more interactions, including a briefing on the findings from the field visits. PAU requested IBLAC advice on sustainable financing of Net gain programmes and on how to handle CSO-led negative publicity about the

Oil programme. IBLAC explained that as an independent body, it could not advocate for the project or directly respond to such publicity; IBLAC reports would need to suffice.

IBLAC raised the topic of the importance of approving multi-year programs so that budgets are approved over a certain number of years, even though PAU can only disburse on an annual basis.

The meeting with PAU offered a contrast to other agencies, as both UWA and NEMA cancelled meetings with IBLAC at the last minute.

Recommendations:

Support PAU's request for greater interaction, including the sharing of reports and the analysis of the recommendations once they are completed. This would include any recommendations for longer term budget approvals (e.g. five years) as well as any advice on sustainable financing of Net gain programmes based on IBLAC experience from other countries.

Organise (virtual and physical) meetings with PAU with JV partners participating. Continue efforts to organise meetings with NEMA and UWA during subsequent IBLAC visits.

4.4 Tilenga in Murchison Falls National Park

Observations: Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP) continues to be a focal point for biodiversity conservation, environmental management, and social investment in park boundary communities. A critical step now is the finalisation of the Collaborative Management Partnership (CMP).

CMP: The positive news is that PAU has in principle approved the program proposal, but a formal approval from PAU and a final decision by the country's Cabinet is awaited to clear the partnership. A formal letter documenting the approval has been pending since July, 2025 with no progress despite continued follow-up by TEPU. Adding to this uncertainty is a recent decision by the Ugandan President against establishing a donor funded collaborative management partnership in Kidepo National Park. Whether this decision will affect approval of the Murchison CMP needs to be determined.



Vegetated bunds around well pads. The exterior fence will be removed.

Restoration and well pad fencing:

Notable advances were observed in ecological restoration, especially along the feeder line routes. The well-pad bunds appear to be doing well; they are well-vegetated, and erosion does not appear to be a problem. One concern is the fencing around the oil pads within the bund. The current fence is made of wire mesh that is inappropriate for wildlife management purposes. There is also a concern that without proper vegetation management around the fence, animals might not see it, enhancing the risk of collision.

Roads:

Road safety has improved somewhat, especially after the northern Karuma road re-opened. However, UWA has raised the speed limit in all Protected Areas (PAs) to 60 KpH from 40 KpH, although TEPU has maintained the 40 KpH speed limit for all its operations in Murchison Falls Protected Area. It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of the UWA's control over the road. Road kills are still occurring on the public roads including those roads passing through protected areas.

Human Wildlife Conflict: UWA has been addressing the human wildlife conflict by installing electric fencing in those areas of particular concern for wildlife and human interaction. Tilenga will be contributing materials for extending 10 kms of fencing to this effort. The placement of electric fences for controlling elephant incursions may block traditional animal migration paths, risking the displacement of human-wildlife conflict to new locations. Even though the fencing aims to protect communities from crop raiding and potentially dangerous interactions, it is important to understand the impacts on migration routes and whether mitigation actions may be feasible.

Community Benefit Sharing: In addition to addressing HWC issues, livelihood issues around the Park must be addressed if conservation efforts are to be successful. Some past UWA efforts have not been very successful, nor have adequate resources been provided. Development of effective and sustainable approaches need to be part and parcel of the management plan for the Park. This work is included in the planned CMP program and will be integral to ensuring the long-term conservation status of

MFNP. The topic of community tourism arose as a possible income generating program, but UWA presented no ideas beyond having communities prepare handicrafts for sale.

Ramsar site management: A lack of clarity persists over institutional roles in managing the Ramsar wetland site and ensuring a coordinated approach to sustainable use. This is attributed to the fact that the boundaries of the Ramsar site and MFNP do not exactly coincide, and the Ramsar area lies both within and partly also outside the national park. As such, the management responsibilities of UWA (for the portion lying within the national parks) and the Central government (Ministry of Water and Environment) over the portion outside the park are unclear.



Restoration along the feeder pipeline in MFNP

Recommendations:

CMP: IBLAC recommends expeditious approval of the CMP and its operationalisation. If there are continued delays and limited progress, an alternative strategy will need to be developed, and a deadline established for putting that plan in place.

Human Wildlife Conflict: IBLAC recommends that planning for the installation of the electric fencing and monitoring of its impacts consider social and ecological considerations such as community access to resources within the park, wildlife dispersal and movement corridors, the potential displacement of HWC to new locations, among others.

Community Benefit Sharing: Ensure that community benefit sharing and livelihood programs address market access, income generation, savings and investment. Determine the feasibility of additional tourism facilities in and around the Park and explore opportunities for community participation in ownership and management.

With timely action on these recommendations, MFNP can achieve stronger alignment between biodiversity conservation and community welfare, adaptive management, and ecological resilience in the years ahead.

Restoration and well pad fencing: IBLAC suggests that the current wire mesh to be replaced by a Bonnox fence known for its long lifespan and suitability for managing wildlife. Its varying spacings help to control different types of game. Key features include high tensile strength, a unique tension curve in the horizontal wires to accommodate temperature changes and terrain, and a full galvanization for enhanced durability. Regular slashing of the regrowth vegetation between the fence and earth bank is requested to allow the animal who might have climbed on the bank to visualize the fence. This could be reinforced with metallic reflectors attached on the top of the fence every 10 meters. Ideally a multiple electrified wires should be installed outside the existing fence, with the lowest wire at the animal's nose height (around 30-50 cm off the ground), higher wires at 1 meter to prevent climbing, and a wire on the outside at 1.8 meter to discourage pushing.”

Ramsar site management. Enhance collaboration between MFNP and wetland authorities to clarify Ramsar site boundaries, undertake hydrological assessments, and integrate sustainable use and net gain objectives within management plans. This recommendation could be addressed during the ongoing TEPU supported process of updating the management plan for the Ramsar site.

Research and adaptive management: Advance research, monitoring, and data-sharing agreements to support adaptive management and future decision-making, especially in relation to wildlife populations, traffic impacts, and long-term landscape changes.

4.5 Tilenga in Buliisa

Observations:

Both the project-affected and broader communities are responding positively to and benefiting from the livelihood restoration and community development support. IBLAC visited a demonstration garden with a school in the town of Avogera, which is showing higher yields, good soil management, active community participation, and increased student numbers due to the availability of school meals. An irrigation system will be added to this demonstration garden, tapping water from a nearby water supply borehole. Successful production at the garden requires irrigation, which may not be available on individual farms.

Some concerns arose among people who benefited from vocational training but were unable to secure work with the projects and did not receive feedback after unsuccessful job interviews. Also, IBLAC noticed that the goat pens that people are using for their goat rearing projects may need redesigned floors to avoid injury to goats.

IBLAC visited successful crop value addition investments supported by TEPU, including a plant that produces cassava flour and honey production. Producers indicated a challenge in finding markets for their produce and asked for assistance to access markets. Currently, producers can sell to construction camps and workers. However, at the end of construction, some of those markets may either disappear or retract radically, thereby putting more pressure on market access.

IBLAC visited the water abstraction site at the lake shore south of Buliisa. There is a lot of fishing and wetland-product harvesting on both sides (north and south) of the site.

Recommendations:

IBLAC recommends that the projects implement a feedback system for unsuccessful job applicants who are beneficiaries of the livelihood/vocational training programs.

The projects should also work with farmers to ensure on-farm techniques are appropriate and can be adopted. This would include the use of organic manure, on-farm irrigation, and improved structures (e.g. goat pens with improved floors).

Around the water abstraction site, during future construction activities, the passage for fishermen and other local community boats should not be blocked. An open passage close to shore should always be maintained.

4.6 Nature Uganda's review of the management plan for the Murchison Falls-Albert Delta Wetland System Ramsar site

Observations:

From the presentation to IBLAC by Nature Uganda, it did not come out clearly what the impacts of Tilenga on the Ramsar site are or might be. Also, the impacts of encroachment were unclear – the status of permanent living structures, agriculture, and water use. Under Ramsar, these activities are not necessarily prohibited, but should follow the 'wise use' principle, meaning they should not negatively impact the

ecological character of the site. This ecological character is (should have been) described in the Ramsar Information System (RIS) when nominating the site back in 2005, including the specific values that triggered this. Ramsar uses specific criteria for this. It would be advisable to assess the current situation against these criteria.

However, there seems to be unclear appreciation of the boundary for the Ramsar site vis-a-vis the national park boundary and the resultant overlap in institutional mandates for the management of the Ramsar site.

Whilst the ongoing net gain activity has a focus on the Victorian Nile Delta part of the Ramsar site, it would be strategic to extend the support to wetland conservation action to cover entire Nile delta and river up to the Murchison Falls thereby securing the papyrus swamp habitat, both riparian and on islands in the river, which are important for several species including flagship species like Shoebill and Grey Crowned Crane, important sandy riparian nesting beaches for crocodiles and significant areas for Hippo habitat. These wetlands are potentially of high biodiversity value as well, both in terms of fish nursery, flagship breeding birds, migratory waterbirds and passerines and other biodiversity. Also, they provide important fishing and harvesting grounds for local communities. This riverine part of the Ramsar site between the falls and the delta, and even on to the Albert Nile have a value for tourism, which should be reflected in the management plan, with potential for providing nature guide-jobs for community members (after appropriate training).

The delta with its shallow areas and (temporary) banks provides an important habitat for waterbirds. It is likely that the riparian and riverine swamp habitats provide important habitat for migratory passerine birds, which have never been really studied.

There was mention of the disappearance in the delta of papyrus islands, and it was stated that it was not clear what the cause of this was. In general, there appears to be an inadequate understanding of the ecological function of the Ramsar site. It would be necessary to assess the social, hydrological and other ecological changes and drivers of change and provide management responses to address the impact of these on the wetland resources.

Another overarching issue is the lasting high-water level, causing flooding on a significant scale, over a period of several years now, of the whole Lake Victoria-Nile-Lake Albert system. It is expected that an ecological-hydrological assessment of this condition would provide a valuable reference for developing management responses that also support net gain goals and targets.

Recommendations:

As part of TEPU supported work, including through the Nature Uganda work on the Ramsar site management plan, there is a need for generation of more knowledge on

the various biodiversity components that have so far not been a focus of the work in the wetland pillar. This would include a focus on under-researched species and habitats, including migratory passerines (ringing study) and riverine swamp ecosystems (e.g. acoustic monitoring) and on ecosystem functioning, especially hydrological /ecological influences on habitat changes in this area.

It is important to clearly define and assess how Tilenga activities might affect, or have affected Albertine riparian and lacustrine fringe wetlands, including the entire Ramsar site, which house important biodiversity and contribute to community livelihoods.

This includes an understanding of encroachment issues, investigating how permanent structures, agriculture, and water collection are affecting the ecological character of the site, ensuring activities adhere to the ‘wise use’ principle. It also involves differentiating between impacts related to Tilenga activities and those which came before or those that are external to Tilenga.

When developing management plans, it will be important to include invasive species, given their interactions with hydrology and native flora. In addition, the management plan could also consider the gazettement of critical wetlands as a conservation solution.

All the above will provide important information to answer the following questions, which should be addressed in the management plan:

- What should be conserved and what restored?
- To what target levels?
- What are the proposed intervention strategies?
- What defines success?

4.7 Tilenga Forest Restoration in Hoima District

Observations:

The TEPU supported Ecotrust forest restoration project in Hoima District demonstrates how targeted ecological interventions can revitalise degraded landscapes while also supporting local community development. This landscape-scale effort focuses on restoring critical wildlife corridors between the Bugoma and Budongo Forest Reserves, which are essential for biodiversity, climate resilience, and peoples’ livelihoods.

In the village visited by IBLAC, plantings occur along riparian areas that are theoretically protected but have been severely degraded. Over 140,000 native tree

seedlings have been established with active local participation. Community-based organisations report increasing evidence of ecological recovery—such as the return of Chimpanzees and other flagship species, along with new opportunities for eco-tourism and environmentally friendly enterprises like apiculture and sustainable firewood harvesting. The IBLAC observed Chimp nests in the locations visited.

Communities actively plant species that will provide food for Chimpanzees. The initiative’s approach focuses on building long-term payment-for-ecosystem services models, which hopefully will establish a sustainable source of income for the community. Community education campaigns have helped shift attitudes towards indigenous over exotic species.



Presentation of landscape visioning and community mapping by local community member during IBLAC visit

Despite its successes, challenges endure—especially continued illegal encroachment, poor coordination among institutional actors, and gaps in funding for long-term offset and corridor management. Tree survival rates are sometimes threatened by localised drought and pest infestations, requiring ongoing adaptive management and the introduction of hardier native species

Recommendations:

Expand community-led restoration activities, ensuring that indigenous species remain the priority and that reforestation extends to additional critical riparian sites important for connectivity.

Work with communities should continue to strengthen land tenure arrangements, especially given the growing pressure from landless people and the expansion of sugarcane production. As part of this effort, institutionalise the long-term payment incentive programs through payments for ecosystem services, allowing communities to benefit from ongoing conservation outcomes directly.

Improve institutional collaboration among NGOs, district governments, and conservation authorities to harmonise land management, enforcement, and extension services.

Scale up biodiversity monitoring and eco-enterprise development, facilitating livelihoods tied to forest health, such as apiculture, eco-tourism, and sustainable woodlot management.

The potential impact of plant protection products promoted in sugar cane cultivation on the health of chimpanzees should also be explored. Bags containing glyphosate ammonium residues (WeedMaster 75.7 XL) raise the issue of pollution risks to which chimpanzees could be exposed, with long-term health impacts (endocrine and reproductive disorders and possible carcinogenic effects).

In addition, the program should continue capacity building programs to ensure the success of the initiative.



Community members and NGO staff from the project at restoration site standing by a Cordia tree that will provide fruit for Chimps once it is mature

4.8 Kingfisher

4.8.1 Buhuka /CPF development area

Observations:

Biodiversity:

The IBLAC team received a positive reception from the CNOOC technical team, which presented information on the project's status and an update on responses to IBLAC 2024 recommendations. The CNOOC team also expressed continued interest in signing the ToR and engaging more formally with IBLAC but emphasised the importance of recruiting a Chinese national to serve as a member of IBLAC.

IBLAC was informed that CNOOC has developed/is developing a Chimpanzee Action Plan, an oil spill contingency plan and is committed to participating in the development of RCIMS. It was also noted that CNOOC has a functioning water quality monitoring and analysis lab and a waste treatment facility. These facilities present an opportunity to share Lake Albert water monitoring data with TEPU. IBLAC was also informed of CNOOC's plan to transition from fossil fuels to grid hydropower for the energy consumption of the Bahuka flat installations.

In Buhuka, IBLAC observed (via telescope) dangerous practices and working conditions along the pipeline trench going up the escarpment. The escarpment, and therefore the pipeline trajectory, is very steep, posing risky working conditions. Also, erosion remains a serious problem given the steepness of the slope.

Erosion is also a problem along the lake shoreline. The sheet piles and gabions that have been placed around the oil installations could potentially be contributing to erosion along the lakeside community land. The issue warrants assessment.



Demonstration garden at Klingfisher

Livelihoods:

The IBLAC team visited several sites related to the CNOOC livelihoods program, which has been initiated. We noted that the communities appear to have limited agency in the livelihood support offered. The demonstration garden showed very good yields, but some of the production may not be appropriate for the local communities. Plans are underway to extend agriculture improvement and pig-rearing beyond the affected persons.

The gravity water system in Buhuka has made a significant positive contribution to the community. The system is managed by a local community person who has been

receiving training in water engineering. At present, the water system design is under capacity to provide water continuously to the users.



Gravity water system in Buhuka – CNOOC project

Also, the system is totally managed by CNOOC, with limited responsibility for management by the communities themselves. In addition, the feasibility of tapping the fall of water for hydropower was studied. IBLAC did not have the results of that study but questioned whether such a system could be feasible and provide power to the community.

Hydropower from the national energy grid is now available in Buhuka, making this consideration moot.

The piggery has some design issues, including inadequate ventilation and drainage to remove waste. Minor changes to the construction would greatly improve the operation of the piggery. The choice of pig breed may not be appropriate for the climate and should be reconsidered.

A fish breeding assessment is planned for the near term, but IBLAC did not have access to the scope of work/ToR of that study.

Recommendations

Biodiversity:

IBLAC will prepare the requirements/description of a new IBLAC member to serve on the Committee, who can be recruited from China. The information, along with the name of a candidate already identified by the IBLAC team, will be provided.

IBLAC recommends adopting improved safety measures to manage erosion along the pipeline on the escarpment. Assessment of feasible options (e.g. terraces) to control erosion at that site should be explored.

An assessment is recommended as to whether the sheet piles and gabion structures are contributing to bank erosion along the lake in community areas. If it is determined

that the structures are contributing to that erosion, explore options to buffer the effects and provide protection to the communities (i.e. are there appropriate nature-based solutions, as recommended earlier by IBLAC?)

Livelihoods:

IBLAC recommends linking the demonstration garden to the school, including the development of a school feeding program from the produce harvested from the gardens. The program should also ensure that the crops produced in the garden are appropriate for local farming conditions and can be replicated. At the demonstration site, the use of recycled fish nets to cover the crops and protect them from birds could be explored.

For the gravity flow water system IBLAC recommends that CNOOC facilitate establishment of community governance of a gravity water scheme. For example, water committees could be established for standpipes and be responsible for oversight and maintenance. Consideration could also be given to the storage capacity of the water system so that there are no interruptions in supply after peak demand times. Installation of a larger capacity storage tank from which water could be pumped as needed to the existing storage tank should be explored – pumping could be automatic through the installation of a float valve, for instance.

We recommend determining the feasibility of providing electricity through the installation of a turbine at the water source to take advantage of the cascade of water from the escarpment.

Livestock programs should be extended beyond pigs, allowing people to select options such as goats and chickens, with chickens included to empower women economically. In developing a program, it will be important to respect any religious restrictions and replace the input donation model with an affordable credit system in which people buy inputs.

The piggery program should be redesigned to improve infrastructure (greater ventilation, better drainage, improved waste management to manage odours, etc.). This includes exploring the introduction of high value breeds of pigs (e.g., Taihu or Meishan) rather than the current plan of using large whites, which are not adapted to the hot climate found at this site.

4.8.2 Feeder pipeline

IBLAC observed ongoing efforts to manage the RoW, including the deployment of personnel. CNOOC has prohibited community use of its ROW, raising concerns about access conflicts and the inability to access the pipeline in the future without having to compensate for crop losses. CNOOC has focused on ROW restoration, but community involvement is limited.

Recommendation: Develop/institute measures for protecting the right of way from illegal use, securing social protection of the oil pipeline installations, etc

5. Tanzania

The IBLAC team arrived in Tanzania on September 6th and commenced its program on the 7th with visits and discussions in Arusha. The team then visited various biodiversity and livelihood programs between Arusha and Tanga. In Tanga, the team split up, with one team visiting biodiversity activities and another visiting livelihood programs in the area around the Chongoleani Peninsula. The visit to Tanga culminated on September 12th with a meeting of agencies to discuss developing a cumulative impact strategy for the Tanga region. Final project meetings and an IBLAC debriefing took place in Dar on September 13th, the same day that IBLAC members departed.

5.2 EACOP Biodiversity Programs

Observations

The IBLAC team engaged with groups that are either carrying out specific biodiversity activities or poised to begin once the funding issues with Chakwetu have been resolved.

Southern Patas Monkey: The team received a briefing from Dr. Tom Butynski of Wild Solutions at the TANAPA offices on the research that he has been conducting on the Southern Patas Monkey. Surveys in the Serengeti area confirm the presence of Southern Patas monkeys, but population numbers are quite low, raising concerns about potential species extinction. Now that this species is confirmed in the area through these EACOP supported studies, having it go extinct could be associated with and reflect poorly on the project. Wild Solutions needs to collaborate with TANAPA

to come up with a plan that can contribute to the protection and the ultimate increase in population and conservation of this species.

Burigi-Chato

National Park: The Team received a briefing from Tim Davenport of ReWild. ReWild will be collaborating with TANAPA on the development of the management plan for Burigi-Chato National Park.



IBLAC meeting at TANAPA: Southern Patas monkey presentation

TANAPA is quite excited to have that work begin. Funding should be available sometime in October or soon thereafter through Chakwetu, now that some of the management constraints it has faced are resolved. TANAPA also indicated its satisfaction with the work of EACOP, especially in the company's efforts to minimize the project's footprint in the Burigi-Chato National Park.

Carbon Tanzania: IBLAC received a presentation from Carbon Tanzania on the development of their REDD+ projects in-country. Carbon Tanzania appears to have developed a very successful model that delivers climate, biodiversity, and social benefits to communities. Communities receive 55% of the revenue derived from the sale of carbon credits. Carbon Tanzania could provide credits to EACOP, helping it to reduce its emissions.

Pancake Tortoise: IBLAC visited Jenjeluse, the site where the endangered pancake tortoise was relocated because of pipeline impacts to ensure its protection. The above-mentioned area supporting the pancake tortoise is now under the management of the local community and there is a plan for EACOP to support the establishment of a community conservation area to ensure protection of the species as part of its net gain efforts. The local community sees the economic potential for tourism.

Korogwe Forest Reserve: IBLAC paid a short visit to Korogwe Forest Reserve. The Reserve has been encroached in large part because of a lack of management but is in relatively good condition compared to some other forest reserves near the route of the pipeline. An opportunity exists to undertake restoration and provide improved

management. This is a good opportunity for EACOP to support a forest reserve, working with the Tanzania Forest Service (TFS).

Amboni Caves: EACOP has a plan to provide support to Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority in the management of Amboni Caves to address some key threats. The Tanzanian coastal forests at Amboni Caves are valuable for biodiversity and cultural heritage but remain vulnerable to multiple anthropogenic and environmental pressures, requiring integrated conservation and community engagement to sustain them. Some of the key threats to biodiversity include:

- Stone quarries adjacent to the caves and forest
- Blasting of rocks that could affect bats
- Degradation of the forest through grazing tree/wood harvesting
- Floods affecting the caves
- Proliferation of invasive plants
- Illegal rubbish dumping



Illegal dumping at Amboni Caves

Tanga Marine Biodiversity Program: IBLAC visited Fish Eagle Point, where the team observed coral restoration approaches and results, including the use of corals of opportunity at the coral reef nursery, implemented by Mwambao, and where the WCS marine team presented its work on Humpback Whale tagging. Both strands of work are producing encouraging results. Together with the work on Seagrass, Mangroves, Waders, and Humpback Dolphins, the Marine Program addressed important biodiversity components in the Tanga Seascape, with the potential to make tangible contributions to their conservation and management.

Recommendations:

Southern Patas Monkey: IBLAC recommends continued research on the Southern Patas monkey but also urges immediate conservation actions to address the threat of extinction of the species. IBLAC recommends that ReWild and Wild Solutions come together to develop a proposal for an in-situ captive breeding program, to be approved by TANAPA and presented to EACOP for support.

Burigi-Chato National Park: IBLAC recommends that plans move forward as soon as feasible to develop the management plan for this National Park. It is expected that a

funding agreement would be signed between ReWild and Chakwetu by the end of October 2025.

Carbon Tanzania: EACOP should explore the potential for offsetting its carbon emission through the purchase of available credits from Carbon Tanzania. Offsetting emissions through the Carbon Tanzania REDD+ program is consistent with the company's overall efforts to contribute to improved livelihoods and the protection of biodiversity in the country, in addition to achieving net zero emissions.

Pancake Tortoise: IBLAC recommends that EACOP proceed with plans to develop a management plan for a community conservation area for the pancake tortoise, including a financial sustainability plan to ensure the Jenjeluse community has sufficient resources to support the operations.

Korogwe Forest Reserve: In the past, IBLAC recommended that EACOP consider supporting the conservation and management of a forest reserve along the pipeline route. Korogwe Forest Reserve may be a good candidate. It is recommended that EACOP support TFS to put in place a management plan with engagement with local communities and work with TFS to ensure implementation of the planned management/protection and restoration activities.

Amboni Caves: IBLAC recommends support to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority to complete the management plan to develop strategies that can ensure the protection of this important and fragile area. As part of the plan, there should be a realistic assessment of the viability of nature tourism to enhance the aesthetic and economic value of the caves and forests. Given the proximity to Tanga, tourism could be a realistic option that helps generate much needed revenue for the operation of this area.

Tanga Seascape Marine Program: IBLAC recommends looking into the opportunity of integrating the findings of the various components of the Marine Programme to provide management recommendations for competent authorities. For example, work on Humpback Dolphins and on Waders both identify the area around Mwarongo as a very important conservation area. The Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park would benefit from concrete recommendations from these combined strands of work in terms of identification of hotspots and associated management options.

Opportunities for Tanzanian students to work on the rich data resources that have emerged from this work should be explored.

5.3 EACOP Livelihoods Programs

Observations:

General: IBLAC noted some very positive progress. Welfare monitoring to track struggling households seems to be effective: 71 at-risk people identified across the pipeline. IBLAC supports the planned community agreements to maintain



Beehives located in a baobab tree near Swagaswaga Game Reserve. Hives are in baobab to protect from honey badgers

reinstatements along the ROW for managing

and protecting biodiversity. IBLAC was also pleased to see that the ecosystem services study had been completed.

IBLAC noted that there is some level of uncertainty regarding the

implementation of programs beyond July and August of 2026. The program on marine livelihood issues needs a long-term implementation horizon to achieve success. Another point noted was that two regions are not receiving vocational training and support.

Kondoa: IBLAC noted that in the Kondoa district, reduced water availability is affecting livelihood restoration with negative effects on agriculture, livestock production and beekeeping. The lack of water was one of the major issues raised by communities in the area. IBLAC understands that efforts are underway to work with the Tanzania Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (RUWASA) to develop plans and prioritisation for water delivery in the district.

The complaints about water issues extended to FPIC leaders, who felt there had been little progress in implementing water projects. In addition, local leaders are concerned that some of the projects have gone forward without adequate consultation with them, preventing them from prioritising initiatives.

IBLAC noted that the dispensary built with the Aike and Masaai community compensation money is operating, has staff and medicines. However, there is no



IBLAC meeting with Aike and Masaai communities

water or power for the facility, which makes it difficult to clean and provide the level of service needed.

Finally, IBLAC learned that vocational training had not yet arrived in Korogwe.

Tanga: IBLAC

noted some very positive outcomes in the Tanga region. Agricultural crop yields are higher than the national average, and farmers were very happy with the programs provided through EACOP. In addition, people appreciated the enterprise development training and discussed plans to apply what they had learned.

One caveat noted in Putini is that the participatory planning meetings on value addition for honey and seaweed, as well as the post-harvest fish loss programs, were perceived by people as training, and they were starting to implement these programs prematurely and incorrectly.

IBLAC found that there are people attending enterprise development training who want to develop a new activity to diversify their income and need training in, for example, agriculture and livestock

IBLAC visited the site where the project has acquired 39 acres of replacement land to be able to provide 0.5 acres parcels to 64 families.

Finally, in discussions with gleaners, IBLAC learned that promised safety equipment is still pending for affected fishers and gleaners (life jackets for fishers; boots, caps, gloves for gleaners).

Recommendations:

General: IBLAC recommends that the EACOP program develop a clear transition plan beyond the anticipated end of the construction phase in July/August 2026 to ensure that livelihood programs end only when livelihoods are restored.

IBLAC would like to see how CSR plans are designed to support biodiversity & livelihoods, based on a) ecosystem services study, b) PIIM study findings, and c)

Chongoleani Multi-Stakeholder Platform pillar of Community Socio-Economic Development.

IBLAC also recommends that EACOP extend community agreements to monitor and maintain ROW beyond the biodiversity target area to cover a broader section of the pipeline.

Other general recommendations include considering the use of the Graduation Approach for affected households at risk, as recommended for Uganda. IBLAC also believes that EACOP could benefit from Tilenga's livelihoods close-out evaluation methodology.

As part of its livelihood's work, IBLAC recommends extending vocational training to all regions.

Kondoa: IBLAC recommends that EACOP deliver additional season of seed and inputs in drought-affected areas in a timely manner.

Vocational training should be extended to the area to support opportunities for the communities.

We also recommend working with the affected communities to co-design how water projects will be implemented. This would involve engaging with RUWASA and the communities to prioritise projects for the district. One of the priorities for water, along with power, is the dispensary. This could be financed through CSR funds.

Tanga: IBLAC recommends that the program link people attending enterprise



IBLAC meeting with gleaners in Putini

development training who want to develop a new activity to diversify their income to other programs, which will benefit them, e.g. agriculture and livestock training, even though not participating in these programs directly. Also, Mwambao should try to reduce the time between participatory planning and implementation or intensify engagement in between to prevent premature or incorrect application of approaches.

The program should deliver promised safety equipment to program participants.

Efforts to secure the land tenure for the replacement land should be completed. Further, exploring the maintenance of some tree cover and medicinal plants should be considered here. Engaging new owners in participatory planning prior to land clearing could determine the best approach to clearing to maximise existing ecosystem services and benefits for the people who will move there.

5.4 Cumulative Impact Assessment in Tanga

Observations:

EACOP organised a meeting of government agencies operating in the Tanga region to discuss cumulative impacts and outline the opportunity to create a cumulative impacts assessment and management plan to address social and biodiversity impacts. This was an introductory meeting to gain support for the initiative. The initiative received a positive reception, and the next steps will involve creating an effective working group, including civil society, to move this forward.

Recommendations:

As in Uganda, the effort needs to be led by the government and institutionalised. It will be important to find a champion within government to move this forward and to integrate it into the government planning and decision-making process. A central government level institution with relevant mandate is recommended.

When formulating the final list of working group participants, EACOP should consider including IBLAC as a member. Inclusion of a Tanzanian IBLAC member with marine experience will provide valuable technical input and an opportunity for IBLAC to engage throughout the process. The recommended marine spatial planning efforts, including support for a master plan/spatial plan, should be linked to zoning aligned with the plan and led by the Vice President's office. Also, the participation of NGO stakeholders should be considered.

6. IBLAC Administrative Issues

Observations:

IBLAC appreciated the effort of the companies to organise a very informative trip to both countries. The schedule was ambitious and included field visits to various project development/activity sites, farmers and community associations so that the team could get

a clear understanding of the workings of both the social and biodiversity programs. It also included meetings with government agencies and other stakeholders in the capitals and in the field, as well as Consultants supporting TEPU and EACOP. That was very positive.

Unfortunately, the time required at each site was generally much more than anticipated and as such, IBLAC engagement with targeted audiences (farmers, community groups, etc) were time constrained. The result was the IBLAC team arriving late to planned meetings with communities. By the time the team arrived many of the people already had waited a long time and most had departed. This kind of situation should be avoided if possible.

The travel from Arusha to Tanga by car resulted in long days and many hours in vehicles. The team was able to see and learn a lot, but it meant that there was no time for the team to meet to discuss findings. Much of the debriefing was prepared while traveling in vehicles to try to take advantage of the available time; this is not an ideal approach.

The IBLAC team was able to observe the ROW but were prevented from visiting and assessing the restoration work due to a lack of personal protective equipment. This was seen as a lost opportunity. There is a need for a briefing before site/community visits to prepare members for appreciating more field activities and stakeholder engagements.

Recommendations:

When planning for future visits, it will be important to consider that most meetings with stakeholders are likely to go longer than anticipated. Generally, discussions are fruitful, and there are many questions. Either the number of sites visited will need to be reduced, or else more time will need to be added to schedules. To the extent possible, the IBLAC team needs to arrive for planned meetings at or near the time agreed with the stakeholders.

Given the various safety rules, it may be beneficial to have PPE available for the team to allow for visits to sites along the pipeline.

With little time in Tanga, the team split into two groups, with one visiting the biodiversity projects and the other the livelihoods. This allowed us to cover issues in the region, which was positive. At the same time, splitting the team reduces the overall impact of IBLAC input, especially on issues that integrate biodiversity and livelihoods.

Hold a briefing before site/community visits to prepare members for appreciating more field activities and stakeholder engagements. Part of this can possibly be done in a preparatory online meeting ahead of the in-country visit, where some information on sites to be visited can already be presented by the EACOP team.

Finally, we recommend that the schedule include at least one-half day for IBLAC business while in-country. This will allow the team to engage in discussions around findings and recommendations and prepare more effective debriefings.

Annex 1. Schedule of Meetings and Visits

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	(EXTERNAL) STAKEHOLDERS
August 27th	Arrive in Uganda	Entebbe International Airport	Ray Victorine and Ward Hagemeijer arrive in country	
August 28th	Meetings and presentations	Kampala	• Meeting with TEPU – project update • Meeting with the Regional Cumulative Impact Strategy Working Group • Meeting with the General Manager, Philippe • Presentation by TEPU on Human Wildlife Conflict around Murchison (WCS report on Human Wildlife Conflict Interventions in MFNP)	MED, NEMA, UBF,
August 29th	Meetings and presentations	Kampala	• Presentation Nature Uganda on Wetlands Planning (Ramsar site) • Project discussion with UBF • Meeting with CSCO	UBF, CSCO, Nature Uganda

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	(EXTERNAL) STAKEHOLDERS
August 30th	RV and WH meetings and discussions on Recommendations	Kampala	Review of recommendations register and development of scoring criteria to assess progress and impact of IBLAC role	
September 1st	Meetings and Presentation	Kampala	• Arrival Charles Meshack, Yunus Mgaya, Sebastien LeBel • and Ana Maria Esteves • Presentation by Regis Vellaud - useful visuals summarising safety features • Project program update (operations, agriculture, social) • Preparation for PAU meeting scheduled for September 2nd	
September 2nd	Presentations and Meetings	Kampala	• Social program update • Theory of Change presentation and update • Presentation on the update of net gain targets • IBLAC presentation and discussions with PAU	Conservation Alpha Consultant: Leon Bennum PAU Team

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	(EXTERNAL) STAKEHOLDERS
September 3rd	Site Visits	Buliisa	• Livelihood visits to farmers and community associations • Honey production, agricultural and livestock production (goats) • School demonstration gardens, and cassava mill	Individual farmers Producer associations (honey and cassava) School headmaster, parents, and agriculture contractor
September 4th	Park Visit Construction works	Murchison Falls CPF Water abstraction site	• View restoration activities • Well pad and HDD site visits • Meeting at UWA • Visit to CPF • Visit to water abstraction site	UWA staff
September 5th	Kingfisher site visit	Buhuka Flats Pipeline ROW	• Visit to CNOOC Livelihood and Biodiversity projects in • Visit to pipeline shutdown station and Pipeline ROW	
September 6th	Site Visit	Hoima	Reforestation programs in Hoima area (Ecotrust project)	ECOTRUST field team Community members participating in reforestation program

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	(EXTERNAL) STAKEHOLDERS
September 7th	Travel Day	Travel from Kampala to Arusha	Travel Dinner meeting with Patas researcher	Tom Butynski (researcher with Wild Solutions)
September 8th	Meetings	Arusha	• Meeting with TANAPA to provide IBLAC update • Presentation on Patas monkeys • Afternoon meetings with ReWild, Tom Butynski and Carbon Tanzania	ReWild, Tom Butynski, and Carbon Tanzania
September 9th	Site Visits	Kondoa	• Site visit to Pancake Tortoise community conservation area • Visit to beekeeper near Swagaswaga Game Reserve	Community members Beekeeper and community leaders
September 10	Site Visits	Korogwe	• Visit to Masaai/Aike Community – community meeting and dispensary visit • Korogwe Forest Reserve	Community members TFS
September 11th	Site Visits (IBLAC members split into 2 groups)	Tanga	• Visit to Amboni Caves • Visit to Fish Eagle Resort • Putini to visit gleaner and divers; visit to Replacement land • Muhende visit with farmers	Ngorongoro Conservation Association WCS (Tim Collins) Fish Eagle team

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	(EXTERNAL) STAKEHOLDERS
September 12th	Meetings then travel to Dar es Salaam	Tanga in the morning	Meeting with agencies to present plans for the Cumulative Impact Assessment	Farmers, divers, gleaners. Various agencies (e.g. Tanzanian Port Authority, Tanga City Council, NEMC, LNG Project, etc)
		Evening Dar es Salaam	Arrive Dar in evening.	
September 13th	Debrief in Dar es Salaam IBLAC team departure	EACOP	Presentation update on EACOP project	Consultant, Stephen McCormick.
			IBLAC Debrief	
			Meeting with consultant working with Chakwetu	
			Evening departure	

Annex 2. List of Attendees at Institutional Meetings in Uganda

ATTENDANCE LIST FOR INDEPENDENT BIODIVERSITY LIVELIHOODS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (IBLAC) MEETING WITH KEY REGIONAL CUMULATIVE IMPACTS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Date: August 28th , 2025. Location: GOLDEN TULIP HOTEL

SN	NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANIZATION
4.	Barbara Nakayenze	PIIM and Human Rights Manager (Uganda and Tanzania)	EACOP
7.	Gene Rose Atwongyeire	Senior Environment Inspector (Oil and Gas)	NEMA
10.	Paulo Kernanac'h	HSE Manager	EACOP
15.	Robert Atuhura Kasozi	Biodiversity Manager (Forests and Wetlands)	TEP Uganda

ATTENDANCE LIST FOR INDEPENDENT BIODIVERSITY LIVELIHOODS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (IBLAC) MEETING WITH COALITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS ON OIL AND GAS (CSCO) MEMBERS

Date: Friday August 29th , 2025. Location: GOLDEN TULIP HOTEL

2

1.	oysius Kittengo	Programme Coordinator	SEATINI Financing for Development Uganda
4.	ibat Kasozi	Biodiversity Manager (F&W)	TEP Uganda
9.	dfrey Lukwago	Stakeholder Engagement Manager	TEP Uganda
12.	resigye Bashir	CSCO Chair	CRED

REGISTER OF ATTENDEES			
ATTENDANCE LIST FOR MEETING BETWEEN PETROLEUM AUTHORITY OF UGANDA (PAU), INDEPENDENT BIODIVERSITY LIVELIHOODS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (IBLAC), TOTALENERGIES EP UGANDA AND EACOP.			
	Date: 2 nd September 2025		Location: PAU OFFICES ENTEBBE
SN	NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANIZATION & CONTACTS
1.	Ray Victurine	IBLAC Chair	Organization: IBLAC Tel: +1 206 7796722 Email: rvicturine@gmail.com
2.	Joseph Kobusheshe	Director Environment Health and Safety	Organization: PAU Tel: Email: dehs@pau.go.ug
3.	Rodgers Otuta	Social Affairs Officer	Organization: PAU Tel: Email: socialaffairs@pau.go.ug
4.	Jane Mbabazi	Manager Environment and Social Affairs	Organization: PAU Tel: Email: environment@pau.go.ug
5.	Samson Okot	Environment Officer/Biodiversity	Organization: PAU Tel: Email: environment@pau.go.ug
6.	Ward Hagemeijer	IBLAC Vice chair	Organization: IBLAC Tel: +316 46206629 Email: ward@hagemeijerconsulting.nl
7.	Nebat AtuhuraKasozi	Biodiversity	Organization: TEP Uganda Tel: 0762650091 Email:

8.	Chatneau Claude-Henri	STS/HSE/EP/ENV	Organization: Total Energies
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9.	Elizabeth Pion	HQ/HSE/EP/SOC	Organization: TotalEnergies HQ
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10.	Lodewijk Werre	Biodiversity Director	Organization: EACOP
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13.	Anna Maria Esteves	IBLAC Member	Organization: IBLAC
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			Email: anaesteres@gmail.com
14.	Yunus Mgaya	IBLAC Member	Organization: IBLAC
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			Email: yunusmgaya@gmail.com
15.	Joy Muballe	Social Performance & Biodiversity Director	Organization: TEP Uganda
			Tel: 0760888848
			Email: joy.muballe@totalenergies.com
16.	Alex Muhweezi	IBLAC Member	Organization: IBLAC
			Tel: 0772221499
			Email: alebamwe@gmail.com

17.	David Ochanda	Biodiversity Manager	Organization: TEP Uganda
			Tel:
			Email:
18.	Lilian Twanza	Biodiversity Coordinator	Organization: EACOP
			Tel: 0760888063
			Email: lilian.twanza@gmail.com

Annex 3. Tanga Waders 2

The coastal landscape and seascape of Tanga – extending from Fish Eagle Point in the north to the southern border of the Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park, near Kigombe, in the south – are rich in biodiversity with ecosystems that provide significant benefits to local communities. Composed of coral-beds and mudflats, with mangrove-lined sandy islands interspersed with deeper sea channels both onshore and seaward, as well as habitats like tidal mangrove creeks and extensively managed and often tide driven salt farming complexes near the shoreline, the area is abundant in waders. These mostly migratory birds find ample food resources on the mudflats and mud-covered coral beds, where they forage during low tide, and can find safe roosting places on sandbanks and in the salt pans, during high tide.

The numbers of waders in the coastal area around the village of Mwarongo, south of Tanga, are significant and exceed 1% of global population levels for Greater Sand Plover *Charadrius leschenaultii* and Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola* and therefore make the area of international importance for these species and trigger critical habitat. The conservation of the habitats of these species and other waders as one of the major and more visible components of the biodiversity richness of the Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park, is a priority. There are important information needs regarding the ecological functioning of the area to be able to answer some key questions: How do the waders utilise the habitats? Where are the ‘hotspots? When are these areas most important for these waders?

The Tanzanian coast is part of the West Asian – East African flyway, which extends from South Africa to Arctic Russia along the East Coast of Africa, and includes the Middle East, the Caspian region and stretches north into western Central Asia and northern Russia. Within this flyway the waders breed in the far north or high in the mountains of Central Asia during the months of June and July. They then migrate south towards the Middle East and East Africa in August and September arriving in the areas where they spend the Boreal Winter from October to April – including the Tanga Seascape. In April and May they migrate north again, completing their annual cycle.

For seven months of the year, coastal landscapes of Tanga are crucial for the waders in this flyway. However, very little is known about the interactions between the birds and their habitats during these seven months of Boreal winter. The daily cycle of the birds is mainly driven by the tidal regime, which includes a short-term cycle of roughly six-hour intervals between low and high tide as well as variations in high tide elevations throughout the lunar cycle. This regime features spring tides around the new moon and differences in the absolute high tide levels across the months. During all stages of tide cycles, the birds must find safe havens for feeding and roosting. Effective management of these areas and the Marine Park is essential to ensure that these habitats remain

available in the context of development activities – including the development of the EACOP Project. This requires comprehensive management information and a thorough understanding of area's ecology. Tracking local movements of birds is one powerful way to contribute to such information and knowledge: the birds and their movements tell the story of how the landscape supports their ecology.

Safeguarding the populations of the waders cannot be achieved by securing the habitats during the Boreal winter alone. For the rest of the year, the waders need to find healthy ecosystems to stop over, feed, rest and breed, along the whole of the West Asian-East African Flyway. Mapping the flyway, identifying these critical stop-over sites, and raising awareness for the need to safeguard these areas all along the flyway are important initial steps in enhancing the conservation of the flyway and its populations of waders.

The Tanga Waders project is contributing to exactly that. By catching waders, marking them and tagging them with GPS trackers, the project allows them to tell their stories about how they move within the Tanga Seascape and how they use and depend upon these habitats and when they leave for migration. In this way, the waders, tell us how they perform their amazing migration journeys to their breeding areas and then come back next Autumn. The gathering of the tracking information and the re-sightings of the colour rings they carry allow scientists to reconstruct their survival and daily movement patterns and translate that into information for effective management of the sites they need.

With EACOP support, a successful Tanga Waders project was implemented in January 2023, which for the first time documented the daily movements of waders in the coastal areas of East Africa and described their amazing migration journeys in this flyway. Eighteen months later, EACOP supported a second Tanga Waders project, in the late Autumn of 2024, using the colour-ringed population that was established in 2023 to learn about survival and site fidelity and to further tag additional wader species to learn more about local habitat use and their migration strategies.

The first project clearly demonstrated the huge importance of the inshore mudflats for feeding and the onshore saltpans for roosting during the higher tides of the Boreal winter period. The Tanga Waders 2 project acquired a huge number of re-sightings of birds that were colour-ringed nearly two years earlier, putting the Tanga Seascape on the map as an important bird area with high numbers of waders and terns returning every year. This help to refine the understanding of local habitat use, which provides very useful management information for the area.

The tracking results of the Tanga Waders 1 project were groundbreaking: for the first time globally, waders of the size of Curlew Sandpipers (as light as 50 grams) were successfully tracked during their complete 26,000 km long migration. Four complete tracks of these birds were obtained, which is a huge success. In addition, two Grey Plovers and one Tibetan Sandplover came back to Mwarongo and shared their complete migration routes.

Building on this, between 25 November and 6 December 2024, a team of Tanzanian, Kenyan and Dutch experts captured 713 birds, mostly waders, 649 of which were newly ringed and 49 were re-traps from 2023 (previously ringed in the Tanga Waders 1 project). Additionally, 280 waders were colour-ringed and 65 were tagged.

The fieldwork for the Tanga Waders 2 project was completed in early December 2025. Since then, most of the tagged birds have been providing valuable information on local movement and habitat use, which will be analysed to inform the management and conservation of the Tanga Seascape. Information from both Tanga Waders projects is making significant contributions to the conservation of wader populations in the Tanga Seascape and throughout the entire West Asian–East African Flyway.

