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Bat Specialist Letter for the proposed development of a 400 kV Loop-In-Loop-Out (LILO) from the existing 400 kV Overhead Power Line to the proposed on-site Main Transmission Substation (MTS) for the Ujekamanzi Wind Energy Facility 1 and Ujekamanzi Wind Energy Facility 2, and EGI Projects, near Ermelo, Mpumalanga.

To facilitate the connection of the proposed wind energy projects (Ujekamanzi WEF 1 and Ujekamanzi WEF 2) to the national grid, it is proposed that the electrical grid connection will likely comprise of a new 400 kV Loop-In-Loop-Out (LILO) from the existing 400 kV Overhead Power Line to the proposed Main Transmission Substation (MTS), at each proposed wind farm, respectively. The proposed LILO at each WEF will be located at a point where the existing power line crosses the study area / project site (Figure 1).

This letter serves as confirmation that the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment (DFFE) Screening Tool Report for the proposed LILO Grid Connection does not identify bats as a sensitivity for further assessment. In addition, it is confirmed that the impacts of the proposed LILO Grid Connection will have a negligible impact to bats. As such, it is of the specialist's opinion that a full specialist impact assessment is not required and that the submission of this letter will be sufficient to inform the application process.

As the total development footprint associated with pylon bases is relatively small (in the context of the habitats available in the receiving environment), the main potential and direct impact of the proposed LILO Grid Connection to bats will be related to potential collision risk with power line conductors. These collisions will be limited to fruit bats, which do not echolocate and hence may not be able to see (or hear returning echoes from) the power line conductors and as such avoid them, resulting in potential mortality. Insectivorous bats, which do echolocate, are able to detect power line cables and avoid them, making mortality unlikely. No fruit bats were observed near the proposed LILO Grid Connection development areas at both WEF's when specialist site visits were conducted during the respective bat monitoring campaign (carried out by Arcus between 17 May 2022 to 27 January 2023). Moreover, no significant roosting potential for fruit bats were recorded. Based on knowledge of the area and after examining spatial data pertaining to known bat roosting locations, the proposed LILO Grid Connection does not overlap with any such known features.

Therefore, it is unlikely that there will be significant negative interactions between fruit bats and the proposed LILO Grid Connection, and as such, the risk of mortality to bats is unlikely.

Indirect impacts associated with the LILO Grid Connection include the alteration of habitat needed when the pylon towers are installed. This impact is considered low because the footprint of such pylon towers is limited. Provided that roosts are not disturbed or destroyed during the construction process (for example, from blasting), no mitigation measures are required. No known/active bat roosts were detected upon interrogation of existing spatial data, and as such, the risk of destroying roosts is considered low.

Furthermore, that the following location alternatives are being considered for the Ujekamanzi WEF 1 LILO:

- 400 kV LILO connecting the existing 400 kV Overhead Power Line to the proposed MTS 1

- 400 kV LILO connecting the existing 400 kV Overhead Power Line to the proposed MTS 2
- 400 kV LILO connecting the existing 400 kV Overhead Power Line to the proposed MTS 3
- 400 kV LILO connecting the existing 400 kV Overhead Power Line to the proposed MTS 4

All of the above mentioned location alternatives for WEF 1 are presently overlapping with bat sensitivity features/buffers. Nonetheless, in the opinion of the bat specialist, the impacts anticipated to occur, as a result of the construction of these LILO options, are considered to be negligible, due to the absence of roosting sites, absence of fruit bats and the relatively small infrastructure footprint. It is therefore unlikely that either of the four proposed LILO options will pose a significant threat to the local bat community on site, and all four options are considered acceptable for implementation. Nonetheless, the 400 kV LILO connecting the existing 400 kV Overhead Power Line to the proposed MTS 2 is considered the preferred option, due to it having a smaller development footprint. Thereafter, the proposed 400 kV LILO connecting to MTS 1 is preferred, followed by that connecting to MTS 4, with the least preferred being that connecting to MTS 3 (which is the longest of all four options).

For the Ujekamanzi WEF 2, only one LILO option is being explored. This option also overlaps with sensitive areas; however, impacts are also considered negligible, due to the absence of roosting site, absence of fruit bats and the relatively small infrastructure footprint. It is therefore unlikely that the LILO for WEF 2 will pose a significant threat to the local bat community on site.

The specialist is in agreement with the DFFE Screening Tool Report results, and the site is considered to have a low sensitivity for bats, considering the type of infrastructure being proposed, as well as the likely impacts expected to occur.

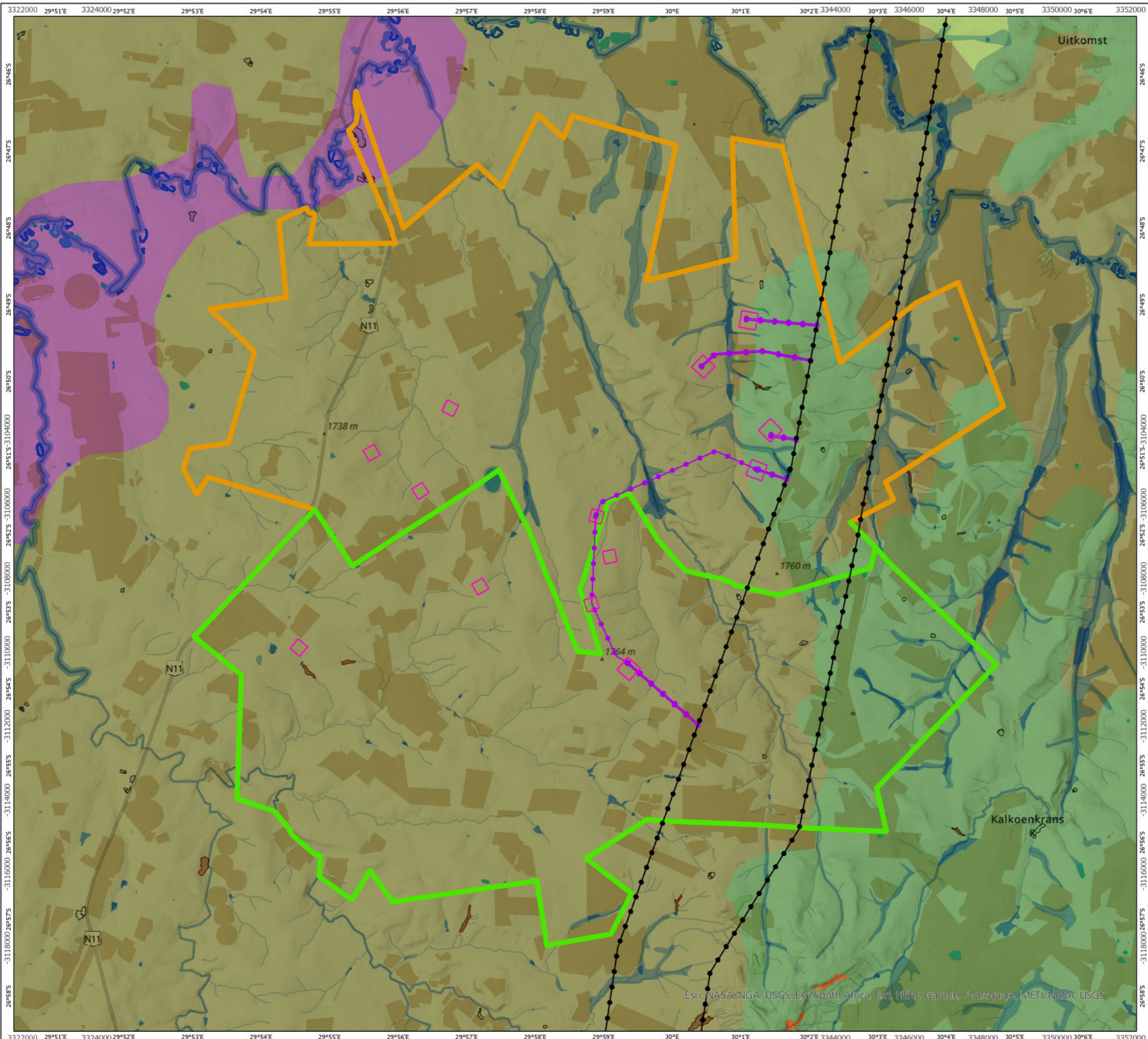
Based on the above, it is unlikely that any of the proposed LILO Grid Connection options for Ujekamanzi WEF 1 and Ujekamanzi WEF 2 will impact bats to a degree that will preclude its development. As such, all LILO Grid Connection options for the two proposed Ujekamanzi WEF's are therefore considered acceptable from a bat perspective.

Kind regards,



Michael Brits
Consultant

Signed by: Craig Campbell
Pr. Sci. Nat (SACNASP Reg. No. 119649)
Managing Technical Consultant



- Proposed Substation
- Proposed Grid Connection
- Existing Eskom 400 kV OHL
- Ujekamanzi 1 WEF Boundary
- Ujekamanzi 2 WEF Boundary

- Land Use**
- Cultivated Land
 - Orchard / Vineyard
 - Plantation
 - Drainage Areas

- Vegetation Types**
- Amersfoort Highveld Clay Grassland
 - Eastern Highveld Grassland
 - Northern Afrotemperate Forest
 - Soweto Highveld Grassland
 - Wakkerstroom Montane Grassland



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Project Location
Figure 1

Ujekamanzi
Bat Scoping Report

10.4 The Specialist

Note: Duplicate this section where there is more than one specialist.

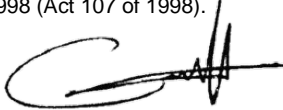
I, Craig Campbell, as the appointed specialist hereby declare/affirm the correctness of the information provided as part of the application, and that I:

- in terms of the general requirement to be independent (tick which is applicable):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	other than fair remuneration for work performed/to be performed in terms of this application, have no business, financial, personal or other interest in the activity or application and that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity; or
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<input type="checkbox"/>	am not independent, but another EAP that is independent and meets the general requirements set out in Regulation 13 has been appointed to review my work (Note: a declaration by the review specialist must be submitted);
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- have expertise in conducting specialist work as required, including knowledge of the Act, regulations and any guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity;
- will ensure compliance with the EIA Regulations 2014;
- will perform the work relating to the application in an objective manner, even if this results in views and findings that are not favourable to the application;
- will take into account, to the extent possible, the matters listed in regulation 18 of the regulations when preparing the application and any report, plan or document relating to the application;
- will disclose to the proponent or applicant, registered interested and affected parties and the competent authority all material information in my possession that reasonably has or may have the potential of influencing any decision to be taken with respect to the application by the competent authority or the objectivity of any report, plan or document to be prepared by myself for submission to the competent authority (unless access to that information is protected by law, in which case I will indicate that such protected information exists and is only provided to the competent authority);
- declare that all the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct;
- am aware that it is an offence in terms of Regulation 48 to provide incorrect or misleading information and that a person convicted of such an offence is liable to the penalties as contemplated in section 49B(2) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998).



Signature of the specialist

Arcus Consultancy Services South Africa (Pty) Ltd.

Name of company

30/05/2023

Date

