



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 10/11/2019 | Report No: ESRSC00852



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Europe and Central Asia	EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	P172563	
Project Name	Operationalizing the South-East European Multi-Hazard Early Warning Advisory System (SEE-MHEWS-A)		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
«PRACTICEAREA»	Investment Project Financing		10/31/2019
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF)	European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF)		

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To improve weather and flood forecasting capacities in the participating South-East European countries by setting up a pilot operational hydrometeorological modelling system for selected river catchment(s).

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	0.32

B. Is the project being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

Recognizing the need to improve regional severe weather and flood forecasting to improve national early warning, participating countries have agreed to develop the South-East European Multi-Hazard Early Warning Advisory System (SEE-MHEWS-A). With most of the analytical and design work completed, this project will operationalize the regional system including data exchange, multiple numerical weather prediction models, and flood forecasting models for select river catchment(s). The system will be established in the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather



Forecasts’ (ECMWF) high-performance computing environment, facilitating access to cutting-edge hydrometeorological approaches and technologies, while leveraging the quality, trust and sustainability of a well-established European regional intergovernmental institution.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Project location(s) and salient characteristics relevant to the ES assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

The project aims to support improved weather and flood forecasting capacities in the participating South-East European countries by setting up a pilot operational hydrometeorological modelling system for selected river catchment(s). The actual activities of the project will be implemented at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts’ (ECMWF) and their existing facilities in the United Kingdom, while the countries included in the forecasting are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine.

There are no actual works on the ground or physical interventions related to this project, and as such there are no identified environmental impacts that could affect any of the involved countries. However, all of the countries identified are prone to flood risks and the positive impacts of better weather and flood forecasting for the entire region encompassed by the project will be highly beneficial to all.

WOULD WANT TO ADD INFORMATION ON HOW THE COUNTRIES WERE SELECTED, PARTS OF WHAT RIVERSHED ETC.

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

ECWMF has been identified as the only appropriate host for SEE-MHEWS-A. The European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF) is a well-established and respected intergovernmental center that produces operational meteorological and hydrological forecasting products to serve its Member and Cooperating States, and beyond. It employs the latest hydrometeorological technology and approaches and is a WMO-designated Regional Specialized Meteorological Center (RSMC) and World Meteorological Center (WMC). The ECMWF Council, made up of 22 Member States, has agreed that ECWMF should engage in SEE-MHEWS-A.

In addition to being a leading forecast center, ECWMF provides sustainability and trust. While SEE-MHEWS-A will employ a data sharing policy and agreement to be signed by all participating countries, the issue of sharing hydrometeorological data will always remain sensitive. The involved countries, many of whom are either ECWMF Member or Cooperating States, trust ECWMF not only with regards to data security and access, but also in terms of the quality of services. In addition, ECMWF benefits from long-term budgeting reliability due to commitments from its Member States as well as several EU contracts. This will insure SEE-MHEWS-A will continue to operate and deliver benefits once Bank/GFDRR support is closed.

The implementing agency has no appointed environmental specialist, which for the purposes of this activity and its associated low environmental risk has no implications to the implementation of the activity itself.

II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Low

Environmental Risk Rating

Low

Public Disclosure



The activity has no physical activities or activities that would directly or indirectly cause environmental impacts or risks thereof. The purpose of the activity is to improve weather forecasting in particular in the context of flood prediction that would lead to an improved preparatory response on the ground. All of the activity support will be channelled through organizational support and virtual modelling system. The implementing agency has no appointed environmental specialist, but taking into account the lack of environmentally risky activities, this is acceptable. The only outcome from this activity is better response to potential floods and could only result in positive indirect environmental impacts.

Social Risk Rating

Low

The project will have positive impact by providing forecasting and flood prediction. Populations will have access to early warnings by which to make necessary precautions. All of the proposed activities and two components are virtual. They will utilize the existing facilities and computational establishment of the ECWMF and there are no works envisaged for supporting the activities such as setting up server rooms or separate computing facilities. As such, there are no associated negative social impacts or risks.

B. Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered

B.1. General Assessment

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

The proposed activity is made up of two components. The first component will focus on installation and customization of a pilot version of the virtual centralized observational database (CODB) at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF) as a tool to support the envisaged suite of the coupled meteorological, hydrological and marine/oceanographic models, their verification, calibration of hydrological models and further post-processing. In parallel, setting up the limited area weather prediction models and selected catchment hydrologic model(s) in ECMWF’s high-performance computing environment and performing cascading forecasts with multiple numerical weather prediction models at global, regional (and local) scales.

The second component is focused on strengthening short-range (0-48 hours) forecasting of high impact weather through the well-tested INCA software (Integrated Nowcasting through Comprehensive Analysis) that will be integrated in the SEE-MHEWS-A system at ECWMF and set-up for pilot basin(s).

All of the proposed activities and two components are virtual. They will utilize the existing facilities and computational establishment of the ECWMF and there are no works envisaged for supporting the activities such as setting up server rooms or separate computing facilities. As such, there are no associated environmental impacts or risks.

Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:

The borrower framework is not being considered.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Public Disclosure



Stakeholder engagement will be key once the system is operational. It will then be necessary to ensure stakeholders are aware information is available, and provided means by which to access information. Stakeholder engagement will include: determining ways in which beneficiaries are most likely to access information. This can feed into ensuring access to information once system is operational. A separate SEP will not be required as ensuring stakeholder access will be an aspect of project activities in which information is made available.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

A brief description of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts relevant to the Project.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

All of the proposed activities and two components are virtual. They will utilize the existing facilities and computational establishment of the ECWMF and there are no works envisaged for supporting the activities such as setting up server rooms or separate computing facilities. As such, there are no associated environmental impacts or risks.

An assessment will be made of existing facilities to ensure working conditions meet WB labor standards and local laws. As the institutions engaged in the project are already operationalized agencies, it has established acceptable labor conditions and therefore an LMP is not needed at time of project preparation.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

There are no implications of the proposed activities to this standard. Although better weather and floods forecasting can help improve on the ground response and assist in preventing pollution or damage to facilities that could release pollution, this is a very far fetched indirect impact of the project, and has no relevance to the actual activities and this standard.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

ECWMF has been identified as the only appropriate host for SEE-MHEWS-A. The European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF) is a well-established and respected intergovernmental center that produces operational meteorological and hydrological forecasting products to serve its Member and Cooperating States, and beyond.

All of the proposed activities and two components are virtual. They will utilize the existing facilities and computational establishment of the ECWMF and there are no works envisaged for supporting the activities such as setting up server rooms or separate computing facilities. As such, there are no associated negative environmental or social impacts or risks.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

All of the proposed activities and two components are virtual. They will utilize the existing facilities and computational establishment of the ECWMF and there are no works envisaged for supporting the activities such as setting up server rooms or separate computing facilities. There will be no negative impacts on, or loss of, private lands or assets.



ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

There are no implications of the proposed activities to this standard. Although better weather and floods forecasting can help improve on the ground response and assist in better management of floods in protected areas and habitats, this is not a direct result of the project activities and bears no relevance to this standard at the moment.

ESS7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

Not relevant.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

There are no implications of the proposed activities to this standard. Although better weather and floods forecasting can help improve on the ground response and assist in better protection of cultural heritage sites, this is not a direct result of the project activities and bears no relevance to this standard at the moment.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

There are no implications of the proposed activities to this standard.

B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks

There are no other relevant project risks.

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas No

III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

A. Is a common approach being considered? No

Financing Partners

None.

B. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing (Borrower’s commitments)

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

Establish Stakeholder Engagement by which to provide information to coverage area.



Possible issues to be addressed in the Borrower Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP):

Establish system by which Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine will have access to information once system operationalized.

C. Timing

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage ESRS

06-Jan-2020

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF)

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECWMF)

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Daniel Werner Kull
Practice Manager (ENR/Social)	Kevin A Tomlinson Recommended on 11-Oct-2019 at 11:49:45 EDT

Public Disclosure