

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: *WATERSCHAP RIVIERENLAND*
 Project Number: *2015-0398*
 Country: *The Netherlands*
 Project Description: *The project concerns the 2015-2020 investment programme of Waterschap Rivierenland. The investment programme will focus on flood protection and water management infrastructure in its area of responsibility between the river Rhine/Lek and the Meuse.*

EIA required: *yes*

This is a programme made up of multiple schemes. Ten schemes will require an EIA. The Promoter shall provide the link to the website where the NTSs are published or send copies to the Bank.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: *no*

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The proposed programme involves flood protection works - mainly dike strengthening (reinforcement, upgrade, etc) and dike relocation along the selected sections of the 555 km of dikes under the promoter's area of responsibility between the river Rhine/Lek and the river Meuse that stretches from the German border up to Kinderdijk near Dordrecht, and stretches across the Provinces of Gelderland and Noord Brabant in the Netherlands. Increased flood protection for an area of 2,000 km² will benefit some 950,000 inhabitants.

The relevant EU environmental Directives as transposed into the Dutch legislation require that the works and plans are assessed both at programme level (SEA Directive 2001/42/EC) and at project level (EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, Birds Directive 2009/147/EC and Habitats Directive 92/43/EC). The Promoter is well aware of these requirements and acts accordingly.

The programme implements the local components of the "high water protection programme (Hoogwaterbeschermingsprogramma) 2015-2020", which is in line with the Delta Programme called the "Deltaprogramma 2015" and the National Water Plans 2009-2015 and 2016-2021. The National Water Plan includes the relevant plans and programmes required under the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC). These programmes and plans are subject to SEA's at each significant update. Specific schemes within the investment programme are also subjected to SEA's as are the local spatial plans.

Ten of the schemes within the programme will also require EIA's and some will also require the appropriate assessment for potential impacts on the Natura 2000 areas of which there are 11 in the Rivierenland area.

The main impacts of the dike related earthworks affect species such as migrating birds, amphibians such as the great crested newt (salamander), moor frogs that hibernate in the dike "body", mammals such as water shrews (mice) and various bat species as well as the great (mud) fish that can be found in the drain ditches at the foot of the dykes. Negative effects on species, fauna and landscape during construction and thereafter will be alleviated

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Pilot Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: above 100,000 tons CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

by implementing effective mitigation measures as required by the competent authority. These include for example working only in designated months or lowering water levels in the ditches that are to be backfilled and catching the fish with nets for relocation before the backfilling. The programme will furthermore favour ecologically based restoration activities in order to improve degraded waterways over hard engineering solutions. Creation of 15 hectares of additional room for the river will also favour increased biodiversity.

The programme is therefore expected to have net positive environmental impacts in the long term.

The dikes are designed in accordance with the Delta Plan which takes into account advice from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on the effects of climate change, namely sea levels rising between 0.65 to 1.3 m by 2100 and increasing winter discharges in the Rhine (from 16,000 today to 18,000 m³/s by 2100) and the Meuse (from 3,800 today to 4,600 m³/s by 2100) rivers. The programme meets the three critical tests for labelling as "Adaptation to Climate Change", namely: (i) the context of vulnerability is clearly spelled out; the statement of intent is explicitly stated upfront on all documentation and (iii) there is a clear and direct link between the climate vulnerability context and the specific project activities. The project contribution to the Bank's Climate Action objective is however not the only driver and is therefore quantified at just 50%.

Social Assessment, where applicable

In case of dike breach or overtopping, large proportions of the area would be flooded as the land is flat and all below the river level during high flow situations. Improving and raising the dikes therefore reduces the risk of flooding and the related (significant) impact. The eventual impact is however also reduced due to the improvement works on the internal "diefdijk" which compartmentalises the area.

Minor nuisances are possible during construction for residents adjacent to work sites, and to the owners of buildings that have (long) been earmarked for removal. Appropriate stakeholder information, consultation, mitigation and compensation procedures are followed.

The works will also contribute to employment creation during construction. Overall the works will have net positive environmental and social outcomes.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

All projects and related reports and progress details can be followed on the promoter website. Consultations with affected communities and interested parties take place in line with the requirements of the Directives.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Protection of the water quality and quantities is one of the promoter's core mandates and its capacity is deemed high in this area, having a good track-record on environmental and social management.

Although net long term environmental and social impacts will be positive, some works will require a full EIA according to Directive 2011/92/EC or affect protected areas. The Bank will apply the following usual undertakings:

1. The promoter undertakes not to allocate Bank funds to programme components that require a full EIA until the EIA and/or the necessary nature assessment have been finalised and approved by the relevant competent authority. Once any EIS is available, the promoter will provide the Bank with an electronic copy of its Non-Technical Summary (NTS) for publication on the EIB website.

2. The promoter shall not commit any EIB funds towards any scheme that impacts nature conservation sites, without receiving from the relevant competent authority the declaration under Art. 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that there are no significant effects and informing the Bank of such declaration having been obtained.

3. The promoter undertakes to provide to the Bank, if requested, any decisions and subsequent justification that screen out project components from the requirement of a full EIA as well as the decisions issued by the competent Authority regarding the Habitats and Birds Directives.

The project is acceptable for EIB financing in Environmental and Social terms.

PJ/ECSO 15.10.15