

Luxembourg, 6th November 2019

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	Publiacqua Water Infrastructure Upgrade	
Project Number:	2019-0405	
Country:	Italy	
Project Description:	Financing of water and wastewater infrastructure in the Provinces of Arezzo, Firenze, Pistoia and Prato in the Tuscany Region	
EIA required:	yes	
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no	

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project concerns the 2019-2022 water and wastewater investment programme of Publiacqua, a utility providing Integrated Water Services (i.e. IWS) in the service area known as Ambito Territoriale Ottimale n.3 Medio Valdarno (ATO 3), covering the Provinces of Arezzo, Firenze, Pistoia and Prato in the Tuscany Region. The Promoter is the main operator of IWS in ATO 3, serving ca. 1.3 M persons in 46 municipalities under the framework of a concession awarded in 2001. The Promoter is well known to the Bank from a previous operation during which it demonstrated its capacity to implement a project successfully.

The project consists of numerous small to medium size investments aimed at expanding and upgrading the existing water supply, wastewater collection and treatment systems. The purpose of the planned investments is twofold: (i) improving the efficiency of the potable water supply system while increasing its resilience to droughts and possible impacts of climate change, and (ii) eliminating the current situation of non-compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (Infringement procedure 2014/2059) by upgrading and extending the wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure. The project also comprises investments in wastewater infrastructure for municipalities that do not fall under the infringement procedure. The 30-year master plan of the ATO (Piano d'Ambito Toscano– PdA) is the planning framework of the proposed operation. The PdA was revised in 2016 and subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive 2014/52/EC (Delibera AIT n.7/2016).

The project will deliver substantial environmental quality improvements in the form of a higher ecological quality of surface and underground water resources and a more rational use of water resources that outweigh the negative impacts, which occur mainly during construction (e.g. noise, dust, traffic). None of the works will be implemented inside or near Natura 2000 or other protected sites.

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

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Some schemes might fall under Annex II of the Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. Therefore, the decision whether an EIA is required is left to the Competent Authority namely the Environmental and Energy Department of the Region of Tuscany, on the basis of the criteria defined in Annex III of the EIA Directive.

Finally, the project will contribute to Climate Adaptation and Mitigation by supporting investments that increase resilience to climate related risks and reduced GHG emissions.

Social Assessment, where applicable

By increasing the quality and reliability of water and wastewater collection and treatment services, the project is expected to bring substantial health advantages and environmental quality improvements to the affected population, thereby increasing the quality of life in the project area. Social negative impacts are only temporary (.e.g. occupation of public and private space, safety hazards during construction, traffic, noise) and will be addressed as part of the planning for the implementation of each scheme.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Promoter will be requested to ensure compliance with national and European environmental legislation, notably to facilitate public access to environmental information and guarantee public consultation during the environmental decision process, where relevant, in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

During the project's due diligence, the Promoter has demonstrated sound practice with respect to environmental, health and safety management. In addition to procedures to meet regulatory requirements, the Promoter has a comprehensive environmental management system which is applied to new projects and monitors ongoing operations. The Promoter has the following certifications: ISO 9001 (Quality Certification), ISO 14001 (Environmental Certification), and OSHAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project is driven by the requirement to ensure compliance with relevant EU environmental directives and it will also contribute towards improved climate resilience and emissions reductions. All schemes under the project will be subject to the Promoter's compliance with the following requirements:

1. The Promoter undertakes not to allocate Bank funds to project schemes 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 EIA is available, the promoter will provide the Bank with an electronic copy of its Non-Technical Summary (NTS) and full copy of the EIA, for publication on the EIB website.
2. The Promoter shall not commit any EIB funds against any scheme that impacts nature conservation sites, without receiving from the relevant competent authorities 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 decision and subsequent justification that screen out project schemes from the requirement of a full EIA as well as the decisions issued by the competent authorities regarding the Habitats and Birds Directives.

Under these conditions the operation is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.