

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	<i>PLT RENEWABLES GREEN ENERGY LOAN</i>
Project Number:	<i>20200062</i>
Country:	<i>Italy</i>
Project Description:	<i>Construction and operation of four small to medium-sized onshore wind farms (total nominal capacity 112 MW), geographically dispersed in south-eastern regions of Italy</i>
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	yes

Environmental and Social Assessment

The project, which is part of a wider project finance operation by the promoter for existing and new assets, comprises the design, construction and operation of four new, small to medium-scale wind farms in Italy, with a total nominal capacity of up to ~112 MW. Each wind farm will be established as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). In total the project comprises 27 turbines of three different unit size. Depending on its location, each wind farm will be connected to either the high (HV) or medium voltage (MV) network. Electrical equipment for such network connections, the internal turbine array cabling and civil works (foundations, access and internal roads) are part of the project scope.

Environmental Assessment

Windfarms falls under Annex II of Directive 2011/92/EU (as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU) according to which the Member States shall determine whether the project shall be made subject to an environmental impact assessment based on defined criteria. According to national environmental legislation wind farms with a nominal capacity exceeding 1 MW are subject to a mandatory environmental screening, based on which the competent authority decides for the need of a mandatory EIA. Following the promoter's requests for screenings in 2006/7, which comprised comprehensive environmental documentation, all wind farms were screened out from a mandatory EIA according to the decree.

Furthermore, investments involving renewable energy sources are according to the national energy legislation regulating electricity production from renewable energy sources subject to the national single administrative authorisation ("Autorizzazione Unica" (AU)), which amongst others certifies compliance with national legislation on environmental matters including public consultation. An EIA including public consultation is hence a mandatory sub-procedure of this AU. EIAs based on revised and updated environmental studies were undertaken for all wind farms, and the competent authorities have granted approval at various dates from 2013 to 2018. Some variations of the configurations as a result of micro-siting are now introduced by the promoter, for which the endorsement by the competent authorities is requested.

The approvals are subject to conditions, such as restoration of the vegetation eliminated during the construction phase, turbine colouring to mitigate visual impact, environmental monitoring, and mitigation measures related to potential impacts from noise and bird collision.

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.

Luxembourg, 11/11/2020

Residual impacts on biotopes, avifauna and loss of habitats were classified of small magnitude and low significance.

Cumulative impacts as impacts that result from incremental changes caused by other past, present or reasonably foreseeable actions together with the project are part of the environmental impact assessment procedures according to national legislation (Legislative Decree no. 152/2006, as amended). For two wind farms of the project, the environmental assessment concluded, based on the underlying studies, that there are no other windfarms under development and/or in operation close to these wind farm sites, which could cause cumulative impacts. For one wind farm of this project, the assessment of cumulative impacts resulted in that these are negligible; and for another wind farm, cumulative impacts are still being assessed as part of the ongoing authorisation process, whilst the environmental studies suggest that these are to be found negligible.

The environmental documentation provided by the promoter indicates that none of the wind farms has significant effects on Natura 2000 sites located in the vicinity of the wind farms. No appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive, according to national legislation (Presidential Decree no. 357/1997, amended by Presidential Decree no. 120 of 12 March 2003, the so-called "VINCA Procedure") was carried out.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

The direct CO₂ emissions from a wind farm are deemed negligible. In accordance with the Bank's current Carbon Footprint methodology, it is calculated that based on the avoidance of electricity generation from a combination of existing and new power plants in Italy, the total relative effect of the project is a net reduction in CO₂ equivalent emissions by approximately 80 kt/year. For the annual accounting purposes of the EIB Carbon Footprint, the project emissions will be prorated according to the EIB lending amount signed in that year, as a proportion of project cost.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the information made available by the promoter it is concluded that this project has been found environmentally acceptable and compliant with the relevant EU and national environmental legislative framework by the national competent authorities.