



European Investment Bank (EIB)

Luxembourg, 4 October 2022

## Environmental and Social Completion Sheet (ESCS)

### Overview

Project Name:	AFFORESTATION AND EROSION CONTROL III
Project Number:	2015-0022
Country:	Türkiye
Project Description:	Supporting forest rehabilitation, afforestation and erosion control activities in Türkiye during the period 2017-2018 through the Ministry of Forestry and Water Works

### Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment at Completion

#### EIB notes the following key Environmental and Social outcomes at Project Completion

The Project contributed to the protection and improvement of forests and biodiversity, and the sequestration and storage of carbon through afforestation, forest rehabilitation and implementation of sustainable forest management. The investments made by the General Directorate of Forestry (GDF) in afforestation and soil conservation activities, provide positive and long-term contributions to the environment that cannot be measured in financial terms (e.g. forest ecosystem health, carbon sequestration, soil protection measures). More than 250 000 hectares have been afforested for erosion control and soil protection purposes, and over 70 000 hectares of forests and 32 000 hectares of rangelands were rehabilitated.

The project contributed to both EU and Turkish environmental policy objectives in the fields of climate change (mitigation and adaptation), biodiversity<sup>1</sup> and soil management. Growing forests sequester and store carbon (forest ecosystems are important carbon stocks), so the project's measures to promote new afforestation and improve the management of existing forests make an important contribution to climate mitigation. Through afforestation of degraded lands and erosion prone areas, the soils were fixed and stabilized by trees' rooting systems, reducing the risk of erosion (climate adaptation).

Public sector forestry and erosion control activities are exempt from an EIA in Türkiye. These activities are subject to detailed decrees, which comply with the requirements of the Ministry of Environment and the Directorate General of Environmental Impact Assessment. Türkiye's forests are managed according to Forest Management Plans (FMP), and the projects included in the programme have been implemented within the framework of these FMPs. Project undertakings ensured that funds were allocated to schemes that did not require an EIA according to EU and/or national law. An Implementation Plan is also systematically carried out for afforestation projects in Türkiye. This covers environmental suitability, species selection, plantation density, soil, vegetation, topography, slope and other considerations relating to technical feasibility and site suitability. Approval of local land users is a criterion for site selection and no significant opposition has been noted during the consultation process. Completion of forest cadastral surveys and settlement of forest landownership disputes are priority objectives for the authorities. The project supported feasibility studies and surveys for over 850 000 hectares of forestland.

About 25 % of the Turkish population lives either within or in the immediate vicinity of forests. These people tend to be of a lower income level than the remaining 75 % of the population.

<sup>1</sup> Contribution to EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 targets No.2 (maintain and restore ecosystems and their services) and No.3 (increase the contribution of agriculture and forestry to biodiversity)



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Many depend on the forest for fuelwood, grazing and other traditional uses. In conducting new afforestation, rehabilitation and erosion control works, the interests of local people and forest villagers were taken into account and no significant conflicts emerged. The project supported over 9 300 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in rural areas during its implementation period and is expected to require at least 1 300 FTE during the operation phase for seasonal maintenance and silvicultural works in the newly established forests.

No significant environmental and social issues have been noted.

### **EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise**

The overall annual sequestration of the project at completion in a standard year is estimated to be approximately 315 kT CO<sub>2</sub>-e. This breaks down as 155 kT CO<sub>2</sub>-eq on over 70 000 ha of rehabilitated forest and about 160 kT CO<sub>2</sub>-eq on the 250 000 ha of newly planted forest. For the annual accounting purposes of the EIB Carbon Footprint, the project emissions are prorated based on the EIB lending amount signed in that year, as a proportion of project cost.

### **Summary opinion of Environmental and Social aspects at completion:**

EIB is of the opinion based on reports and information received from the promoter and site visits by the EIB team during the implementation stage that the Project has been implemented in line with EIB Environmental and Social Standards, applicable at the time of appraisal.