

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	UCB INFLEXIO NEW MANUFACTURING PLANT AND R&D
Project Number:	2020-0708
Country:	Belgium
Project Description:	The project concerns investments in R&D activities and in the construction of an advanced manufacturing plant that will be located in existing promoter facilities in Belgium.
EIA required:	no
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The Inflexio project concerns UCB's European investments for the development and manufacturing of two new "large molecule" drugs in the field of monoclonal antibodies, expressed in mammalian systems. The project includes: (i) the R&D investments in Europe to cover the development of these new drugs; and (ii) the construction of a new advanced multi-product manufacturing plant that will be dedicated to the production of the related new products.

The R&D component of the project is restricted to R&D investments in Europe that will be primarily managed by the promoter's central R&D organisation in Belgium. The R&D activities mainly concern clinical development that will not have any relevant environmental impact.

The new manufacturing plant will be built on the promoter's existing Seveso site in Braine l'Alleud (Walloon Brabant region – Belgium). The new plant has been classified under class 2 as a result of the instruction of the overall permit application file; subsequently, the competent authorities decided that a full EIA under directive EIA Directive 2014/52/EU was not necessary (EIA screening out decision dated 27/11/2018). A rather detailed environmental study was however prepared as part of the application file and the authorities concluded that the environmental impact of the project would be low and fully manageable.

The environmental study confirms that the construction and operation of the new plant will not have any impact on the Natura 2000 site (BE31001) that is located in the vicinity of the UCB site (a few hundred meters away).

The Inflexio plant is an advanced manufacturing facility based on optimised process integration, building arrangement and technical & clean utilities design, using innovative technologies; its performance as regards CO₂ emissions is outstanding (absolute emissions: 4562 tCO₂/year), estimated to be 28% lower compared to latest design for similar biotech

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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plants. The achievements in term of water optimal use and overall wastes minimisation are also excellent, setting best practice.

The UCB Biobank has been registered since 2018 to the Belgian Authority of Health (FAMHP) and to the ethics Committee of Erasme Hospital; a high standard of quality for UCB Biobank operations is maintained through the application of stringent Standard Operational Procedures and regular internal audits. The animal experimentation is in line with European Directive 2010/63/EU and the use of animal experiment is limited to the strict minimum.

The project has been assessed for Paris alignment and is considered aligned with both low carbon and resilience goals against the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap. UCB works with the Science Based Targets initiative to ensure that the company will meet its climate change goals of rendering its operations carbon-neutral by 2030 (additional details can be found in UCB's 2020 integrated annual report).

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The project is expected to lead to significant social benefits resulting from the market launch of new drugs, which target unmet medical needs with some indications for rare/orphan diseases.

The promoter has a clear corporate governance structure and practices corporate social responsibility, which is entrenched in the company structure. Braine l'Alleud site is ISO 14001 certified and appropriate procedures and systems are in place as regard operational health and safety.

As of 2020, UCB has committed to United Nations (UN) Global Compact to implement universal sustainability principles and to take steps to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Conclusions and Recommendations

A part of the project, the new manufacturing plant, falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU. However, competent authorities have decided to screen-out the full Environmental Impact assessment considering the limited environmental impact that will result from the integration of the new plant on the existing UCB manufacturing site in Braine l'Alleud.

The R&D activities of the project will not have any direct impact on the environment; however, they target the development of new drugs for unmet medical needs that will benefit the entire society.

The project is therefore acceptable for financing by the Bank in environmental and social terms.