

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name: *TENNET EEMSHAVEN-VIERVERLATEN 380kV*  
Project Number: *2021-0059*  
Country: *Netherlands*  
Project Description: The project comprises the construction of a ca 41-km long overhead electricity transmission corridor from Eemshaven to Vierverlaten, in the north of Netherlands. It includes a new 380kV line from Eemshaven to Vierverlaten, combined with a 110kV line for part of the route, and a new 380/220kV substation in Vierverlaten.

EIA required: yes

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise<sup>1</sup>: no

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

### Environmental and Social Assessment

The project comprises the construction of a 41km-long overhead transmission corridor, connecting Eemshaven-Oudeschip to Vierverlaten and of a new 380/220kV substation at Vierverlaten. The transmission line comprises four 380 kV circuits and is designed with a special type of high-voltage pylon arrangement, known as Wintrack II. The new lines will be combined for ca 8.5km of the route with an existing 110kV line running between Brillerij and Vierverlaten. The project will replace the existing 220kV lines from Eemshaven to Vierverlaten – these lines will be dismantled once the project is in operation.

#### Environmental Assessment

The construction of the 41km-long, 380kV transmission lines falls under Annex I of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, thus requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). As a result, an EIA was carried out for the project, including the associated substation at Vierverlaten. The competent authorities have issued all the necessary permits for the project and the construction works have commenced. The implementation of the project is expected to be completed in Q4-2023.

The new line will broadly follow the path of the existing 220kV line connecting Eemshaven to Vierverlaten, crossing the (former) municipalities of Eemsmond, Delfzijl, Loppersum, Bedum, Winsum, Zuidhorn and Groningen. The line will cross flat, agricultural land, forested areas as well as highways that intersect with its path, while avoiding densely populated areas.

The line does not cross any Natura 2000 designated sites, but it is located in proximity to the Natura 2000 'Wadden Sea' site (site code: NL1000001) and it crosses several NNN areas (Natural Network Netherlands) and pasture habitats. Based on the initial biodiversity

<sup>1</sup> 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 CO<sub>2</sub>e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

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screening conducted, an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats and Birds Directives was not deemed necessary, as it was concluded that the project would not have significant impact on Natura 2000 sites. According to the assessment, the bird species identified in the Wadden Sea site do not cross the line route apart from one species (the brown harrier), on which it was concluded that significant effects can be excluded. The biodiversity assessment on the impact on the NNN sites and pasture habitats concluded that both temporary and permanent impacts will occur – temporary during the construction of the project and during the period when the old and new lines will co-exist. The permanent effect consists of (a) the net increase of affected areas in NNN sites due to the new line (compared to the areas currently affected by the existing lines) and (b) the respective decrease of the affected area for pasture habitats. For the pasture habitats, no mitigation of the permanent impact was deemed necessary, due to the decrease of the surface affected by the project. To address the permanent impacts identified in NNN areas, warning markers will be installed along the line to prevent collision with birds and new areas will be designated for the preservation of meadow birds, in line with the relevant nature compensation plan.

Other mitigation measures will be implemented to minimize the impacts of the project during construction and operation, in accordance with the environmental consents. Particular attention will be paid to restrict the effects of noise, vibration and traffic disruption during the construction works, as well as to the construction of the towers' foundation –to avoid saltwater intrusion-, to avoid soil contamination and to minimise –where possible- the change in soil composition. With regards to Electromagnetic Fields ('EMF') and the use of land, the Wintrack II pylon arrangement, due to its design, will reduce the intensity of the magnetic field and the magnetic field zone compared to standard lattice towers and will enable the optimum use of the available space around high-voltage lines.

The project will have indirect positive impact, as it will contribute to the integration of renewable energy generation in the area of Eemshaven. Amongst the objectives of the project is the avoidance of congestion that will occur on the transmission network following the construction of new offshore wind farms in Eemshaven and the accommodation of power flows created by the electricity interconnection with other countries. The project has been assessed for its Paris alignment and it is considered to be aligned against low carbon goals in line with the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap and with the EIB's Energy Lending Policy.

## **Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement**

Several public consultation events were organised as part of the permitting process, which commenced in 2009. As part of the permitting process (Inpassingsplan), the draft decision concerning the route of the project (draft National Integration Plan) was made public in the summer of 2017 and was then followed by a period allowed for appeals. The appeals submitted for the project derived from concerns mainly relating to the selection of overhead lines instead of underground cables, landscape and nature impacts, and impact on land/private property. The Council of State rejected the majority of the appeals. The main appeal upheld resulted in adjustments to the landscape plan produced for the project, mainly pertaining to better identifying the roles and the responsibilities of the parties involved in the implementation of the plan and to the measures identified therein. The implementation of the aforementioned landscape plan is expected to be concluded by 2028.

The Council of State provisionally announced its ruling on the appeals evaluated in October 2019 and the decision concerning the route of the project became final in June 2020. Following this decision, the permits are considered final.

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### **Other Environmental and Social Aspects**

The promoter has in place an Environmental and Social Management System and manages the implementation of large projects via a dedicated project steering committee. With relation to asset management, the promoter is ISO 9001:2015, ISO 55001:2014 and NTA 8120:2014 certified. The promoter is active in stakeholder engagement and dissemination of information related to projects, via their website and via a dedicated mobile-phone application that allows for the monitoring of the works by stakeholders.

Considering the aforementioned information and based on previous operations financed by the EIB, the environmental and social capacity of the promoter is deemed good.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the information available, with the planned mitigation, compensation and monitoring in place, the project is expected to be acceptable in environmental and social terms for the Bank's financing.