

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	CLIMATE ACTION AUSTRIA UNICREDIT (FL)
Project Number:	2021-0203
Country:	Austria
Project Description:	Framework Loan with Unicredit Bank Austria for the intermediated financing of small and medium-sized Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency projects in Austria.
EIA required:	Some projects may require an EIA under the relevant legislation.
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no
(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")	

Environmental and Social Assessment

The proposed operation consists of a Framework Loan (FL) that will support, through the Financial Intermediary (FI) Unicredit Bank Austria, small and medium-scale renewable energy projects (wind onshore and solar PV plants) in Austria. The FI may also finance energy efficiency projects (buildings, and other technologies to be decided on a case-by-case basis) and – although unlikely – finance projects in other EU countries. The operation presents an opportunity to support Austria in the energy transition to a decarbonised economy, as it has a 100% climate action component.

The operation will contribute to EU energy objectives by supporting investments in new renewable energy generation capacity and energy efficiency measures, which will be Paris aligned. The investments will generate environmental benefits in terms of reduction of air pollutants and GHG emissions, ultimately helping to mitigate climate change.

Environmental Assessment

Most of the projects under the FL are expected to fall under Annex II of Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU, requiring the competent authorities to determine whether an EIA is required or not. For projects that require an EIA, the FI shall undertake to deliver to the Bank a copy of the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) and EIA study, or provide a website link to the location where the EIA is published. If a project is screened out, then, according to the EIA Directive, this should also be made public, stating the reasons for not requiring such an assessment.

For each project that may have an impact on a nature conservation site, written confirmation from the competent nature conservation authority, or an equivalent confirmation satisfactory to the Bank stating that the mentioned project does not have a significant negative impact on

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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any site of nature conservation importance should be presented, as a condition of disbursement. Projects with significant negative impacts on areas with high biodiversity value, nature conservation areas, including bird migration routes, shall not be eligible.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

Intermediated lending through Framework Loans is not currently included in the carbon footprint exercise.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The FI is well known to the Bank through previous operations of similar characteristics and is familiar with the Bank's Environmental and Social requirements. Additionally, it has substantial previous experience in non-recourse financing of sustainable energy projects. The Bank has reviewed the FI's due diligence capabilities, finding them adequate. On the basis of its E&S principles, the FI has an E&S system in place, environmental experts, guidelines and procedures for assessing its clients and transactions. The FI is also signatory to the Equator Principles.

All projects under this operation undergo due diligence by the FI, including environmental and social appraisal. The promoters of the underlying projects will be required to have an HSE policy in place and to comply with the relevant laws.

The FI will be contractually obliged to ensure that all investments comply with the relevant EU Environmental Directives (e.g. EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU, Habitats 92/43/EEC, and Birds Directive 2009/147/EC amending 79/409/EEC) and the EIB's Environmental and Social Standards (where applicable).

Under the allocation procedures, all underlying projects will be reviewed by the EIB, either ex-post or ex-ante, depending on the investment cost. Only projects that receive environmental authorisations (where applicable), including an opinion from the Competent Authority of no negative impact on any Natura 2000 site, as well as licences (including building permits), and which are in compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and EIB E&S Standards (where applicable), are eligible for EIB financing.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the above, the Bank will require the following environmental and social disbursement conditions and undertakings in the respective finance contract:

- For each project, the Financial Intermediary shall provide a copy of either screening decisions or Environmental Impact Studies (EISs, including Non-Technical Summaries), of the related authorisations (EIA).
- For each project that may have an impact on a nature conservation site, the Financial Intermediary shall obtain confirmation from the competent nature conservation authority, or an equivalent assessment satisfactory to the Bank, that the project does not have a significant negative impact on any site of nature conservation importance.

The Bank has reviewed both the project selection processes and the project due diligence processes of the FI, and, in view of these findings and conditions proposed, the operation is considered satisfactory from an environmental and social compliance perspective.