



European Investment Bank (EIB)

Luxembourg, 10/09/2021

## Environmental and Social Completion Sheet (ESCS)<sup>1</sup>

### Overview

Project Name:	Braunkohlesanierung Lausitz
Project Number:	2010-0308
Country:	Germany
Project Description:	The project concerns rehabilitation, stabilisation and remediation of the former lignite mining sites in the Federal State of Brandenburg during 2013-2018 and their return to economic use including as recreational lakeland.

### Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment at Completion

**EIB notes the following Environmental and Social performance and key outcomes at Project Completion.**

The operation covered the rehabilitation of former open-cast lignite mine areas in the German Federal State of Brandenburg which were taken out of production upon German Reunification. The project comprised three main activities: (a) basic rehabilitation and stabilization; (b) flooding of former pits and works related to groundwater level management; and (c) reclamation and additional development to return areas to economic use and productivity. Works were implemented by the Federal State-owned agency ('Lausitzer und Mitteldeutsche Bergbau-Verwaltungsgesellschaft (LMBV)'), responsible for handling the phasing out, restructuring and rehabilitation of lignite mining areas in Brandenburg and 3 other East German Federal States. The operation covered LMBV's 5-year programming period 2013-2017 and the first year of the programming period 2018-2022.

The project was fully in line with the EU the directive 2006/21/EC on the "management of waste from extractive industries" which defines general principles and legal obligations for mine rehabilitation in member states as well as the relevant EIB E&S standards.

In Europe mine closure processes are highly regulated, mainly on the national level and/or through various government issued permits. For this operation focusing on the rehabilitation of areas formerly impacted by lignite mining, the German Federal Mining Act ("Bundesberggesetz") and its associated ordinances provided the legal basis. Besides, the legally-binding rehabilitation plan of the federal state of Brandenburg which was jointly developed by municipalities, districts authorities, associations and LMBV was strictly adhered to.

The project's key results, in regard to the redevelopment and recultivation of former mining landscapes in Brandenburg, include:

- the rehabilitation of 25 residual mining holes, 523 ha of former mining land and 180 km of embankments/lakesides
- the tending of 2751 ha after planting
- the improvement of 41 million m<sup>3</sup> of water, and supply of 285 million m<sup>3</sup> of water for restoration of the groundwater table.
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<sup>1</sup> The template is for ILs and FLs



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- Development of 240 ha of recultivated land into real estate. An additional 80,000 overnight stays by tourists visiting the rehabilitated post-mining landscape and lakes were reported over the 6 year project period. The project generated 845 person-years of employment so far, and a further 714 person-years are expected during the entire project life.

Apart from the positive environmental externalities in terms of creation of new landscapes and scenic attractions for recreational use, biodiversity conservation, renaturation, replenishment of groundwater aquifers, improved water quality in new mining lakes, and reduced pollution, the operation contributed to greenhouse gas mitigation by enabling the establishment of new forests, which sequester carbon. It contributed to climate adaptation by opening-up new areas for water retention capacity, reducing the risk of flooding downstream. During high-risk periods, floodwater can be directed towards the mine lakes, using their water retention capacity to avert flood damage downstream, as was successfully demonstrated during the large flood event in May 2013. The project also reduced vulnerability to landslides in the sites concerned, a risk which is exacerbated by the increased frequency of intense precipitation events which are a feature of climate change.

The ESDS identified two (potential) undertakings. Firstly, some specific activities for the reclamation for future use may fall under Annex II of the EIA directive and might require consent from the Competent Authority. This was not the case, as no activity was requested to undergo a full EIA by the Competent Authority. Secondly, the Intermediary (ILB) shall verify the compliance of the Final Beneficiary (LMBV) with the relevant and applicable rules of EU legislation, in particular in the fields of environment and public procurement. The Intermediary confirmed that the relevant rules of EU and the German Government in terms of EIA, Habitat and Birds directives, and public procurement were followed.

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

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