Luxembourg, 25th November 2021

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	*OASEN SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY (2021-0532)*
Project Number:	*2021-0532*
Country:	*THE NETHERLANDS*
Project Description:	The project concerns the 2022-2026 investment programme in the production and distribution facilities of OASEN, one of the Netherlands' smallest water supply companies. The programme consists mainly of renewal and extension of water treatment plants, distribution and supplementary pumping stations and distribution networks.
EIA required:	No. This is an investment programme made up of multiple schemes. All the schemes under the investment programme, have been screened out ie not requiring a full EIA study under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EC amending Directive 2011/92/EC

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise[1]: no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

This is the second operation with the promoter, *Oasen water company*. The programme is developed by an experienced promoter and takes into consideration environmental and social aspects as required by European and National requirements. The Dutch legislation complies with the relevant EU Directives (Drinking Water Directive 2020/2184, SEA Directive 2001/42/EC, EIA Directive 2014/52/EU, Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC, Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC). The Promoter is well aware of these requirements and acts accordingly.

The project will co-finance investment schemes that form part of the promoter's investment programme for 2022-2026. The main categories of the investment programme are the upgrading and renewal of groundwater abstraction and treatment facilities (mainly pumping stations for abstraction, water treatment and softening plants), the rehabilitation and extension of distribution mains, and ICT items throughout its service area.

The programme is mainly geared toward improving security and quality of drinking water supply within a climate vulnerable service area and has positive environmental impacts through the sustainable management of environmentally sensitive areas around the ground water abstraction zones.

[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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The use of advanced water treatment technologies will allow further compliance with the Drinking Water Directive (EU) 2020/2184[2] and the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). Softening of water after aeration has the benefit of increasing the lifespan of water mains by reducing the accumulation of calcium and magnesium deposits that clog the water pipes.

The investment programme aims as well at increasing the water supply network resilience towards land subsidence, which is an acute issue in the operator area. The programme includes schemes that consist of replacing old leaking PVC pipes reaching their end of life with steel pipes. This will reduce water losses and thus have a positive impact on the usage of raw water resources.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedure

Most of the key investments such as replacement and/or rehabilitation of distribution lines and water treatment facilities fall within higher level strategic frameworks, such as the National Water Plan, Provincial Water Plans and local Spatial Plans. These plans have all undergone Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) as per the Directive 2001/42/EC.

Oasen's activities are fully compliant with the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC. In the spirit of this regulation, Oasen is an active player in the monitoring of water quality and fully compliant with the principles of the Water Framework Directive.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure

The investments under the programme will generally have net positive effects for the environment as they contribute to the protection of groundwater bodies and ensure a more efficient and sustainable use of water resources. Schemes under the suggested investment programme have been screened out ie not requiring a full EIA study under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EC amending Directive 2011/92/EC. The schemes are not expected to have any negative impact on Natura 2000 sites. Nevertheless, given that annual revisions may result in slight changes of the investment programme (in terms of the type and location of each scheme), some schemes under the programme may require a full EIA according to Directive 2011/92/EC as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU or affect protected areas. The EIAs (if required) will be published on the EIB website.

Creation of nature protection areas around the groundwater abstraction sites

Some proposed investments are meant to combine environmental benefits with the process of drinking water production. Oasen is committed to the maintenance of a number of natural reserves for the protection of the groundwater extraction sites and nature development in the area. For example, Oasen aims to support the national government to fulfil their goals on habitat and birds directives (In Dutch: "Vogel en habitat richtlijn") with the ecological management of the new nature reserve "The Kikkerpoel" around the Water Treatment Plant De Put in Nieuw-Lekkerland. The Kikkerpoel is an area of 1.3ha that consists of grasslands, water features, pollard trees and swamp forest, and offers amphibians a habitat and foraging area. The goal is to develop habitat and foraging area for amphibians, bats and birds so as to combine water extraction with nature. This is achieved by implementing nature-friendly banks (this means gradually transition from open water to hay land), pools and ditches, hay land, pollard trees and swamp forest.

Environmental impacts

[2] Revised DW directive has been released in Jan 2021 but there is a transitional phase of two years and this project complies with the outdated directive

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Due to the nature of the works to be implemented it is anticipated that the negative environmental impacts will be only associated with the period of construction and will be mainly localised and temporary and reversible such as (i) minor disturbance due to pipe replacement techniques and (ii) temporary increase of traffic around the construction sites. These negative impacts will be mitigated with appropriate measures (e.g. faster pipe replacement techniques, stakeholder information, public consultation and participation).
The main long-term positive environmental impacts of the operation can be summarised as follows:

- The protection of groundwater bodies and a more efficient and sustainable use of water resources.
- The creation of nature protection areas around the abstraction wells will foster biodiversity and ensure the non-disturbance of bird areas and habitats of vulnerable species.

Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

The Project is expected to positively contribute towards climate change mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation will be achieved by a number of performance improvement measures, including but not limited to: ICT investments, energy efficiency measures in buildings and lighting, renewable energy production, reduction of water losses and leakages through large - scale replacement of old transport mains and distribution lines and the installation of District Metered Areas (DMAs).

These will contribute towards the overall reduction of energy requirements and thus will result in a reduction of GHG emissions. The company is putting constant efforts in reducing its carbon footprint, and it currently updates its Sustainable Energy Strategic Plan. By implementing the suggested investment programme, the Promoter estimates that a significant reduction in energy consumption over the whole supply system will be achieved, including the increased use of renewable energy from their own production.

The main company's strategy to mitigate identified climate change risks, such as increased salinity content and anthropogenic pollutants in the river Lek, is to gradually retrofit existing production capacity with new treatment processes adapted to higher salinity content and micro pollutants. The measures are aligned with the regional climate adaptation strategy 'Weerkrachtig Zuid-Holland'.

The Project has been assessed for Paris Alignment and is considered to be aligned both against low carbon and resilience goals against the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap (CBR).

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

Estimated annual emissions of the project in a standard year of operation: 5.24 kt CO2/year absolute (gross) and -0.95 kt CO2/year relative (net). These emissions consider the total energy consumption over the whole system (abstraction, production and distribution) estimated by the Promoter and the total Water volume abstracted, produced and distributed. The baseline adopted is the total water volume produced at project completion with the energy consumption of today.

Social Assessment

The proposed investments will improve access to safe drinking water and sustain high water quality to almost 800,000 inhabitants and will result in a more climate resilient and reliable water supply system. This will yield lasting positive social benefits, including improving the

living conditions of the inhabitants within Oasen's service area and thus be beneficial for the public health. The works will also contribute to local employment creation during construction.

The negative social impact of the project is only temporary as it includes the possible disruption of water services and traffic, noise and temporary occupation of public and private space, safety hazards, common for this type of projects in urban environments, and will be addressed as part of the planning permission for the relevant schemes.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Where relevant, the promoter will be required to ensure compliance with national and European environmental legislation, notably to facilitate public access to environmental information and guarantee public consultation during the environmental decision process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

By rehabilitating, upgrading and increasing the capacity of the water treatment facilities, and improving the performance of existing and new drinking water supply system, the project is expected to generate a positive impact on the environment and will contribute to the improvement of living conditions of the inhabitants within Oasen's service area.

All project components covered by the programme will be subject to the Promoter complying with the following requirements:

- The Promoter will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including the EIA (2014/52/EC) amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EC, Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives and Drinking Water Directive.
- The promoter will be required not to allocate Bank funds to project components that require a full EIA until the EIA and/or the necessary nature assessment have been finalized and approved by the relevant competent authority. Once any EIA is available, the promoter will provide the Bank with an electronic copy of the EIA, for publication on the EIB website.
- The Promoter undertakes to provide to the Bank, if requested, any decisions issued by the competent authority that screen out project components and the main reasons for not requiring EIA with the reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III of the EIA Directive.

Considered the above, the Project is acceptable for EIB financing from an environmental and social point of view.