



Luxembourg, 4th July 2022

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	<i>PRETUL II</i>
Project Number:	<i>2021-0695</i>
Country:	<i>Austria</i>
Project Description:	<i>Construction and operation of 4 wind turbines with a total capacity of 16.78 MW in the state of Styria, Austria. The project is an extension to an existing wind farm (Pretul)</i>
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project comprises the implementation and operation of four wind turbines with a total capacity of 16.78 MW in Styria (Austria). The project is an extension to an existing wind farm (Pretul), with an installed capacity of 42 MW and makes use of its existing 30 kV grid connection infrastructure. Wind farm Pretul is in operation since 2017 and also co-financed by the Bank: WINDPARK PRETUL (2015-0519).

The project is located in alpine environment, about 1500 m above sea level, adjacent to nature conservation site "Schwarzriegelmoos" (a moor) but far distant to any other nature conservation site. The closest Natura-2000-site is ca. 6 km distant to the project: SPA "Teile des Steirischen Jogl- und Wechsellandes", AT2229000.

The project is located adjacent to, but outside, a wind power development zone identified by the Styrian Wind Development Plan („Entwicklungsprogramm für den Sachbereich Windenergie - SAPRO"). That is why project-specific amendments of the applicable spatial development plans were required. Based upon a strategic environmental assessment study, and following public consultation, municipal authorities approved the corresponding amendments to spatial plans. An assessment of impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites was screened out during this process, stating that no impacts are expected.

Wind farms fall under Annex II of Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. It is therefore up to the Member State's competent authority to judge whether an

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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individual wind farm requires an EIA or not, based on criteria defined in Annex III of the EIA Directive. In line with national legislation (UVP Act, 2000), the project was screened-in.

The promoter's Environmental Impact Study (EIS) addresses all relevant risks (biodiversity, noise, shadow flickering, soil, ice fall, visual impacts) through expert studies. The studies base upon site-specific monitoring campaigns (soil, ornithology, bats) and consider cumulated impacts with existing and planned wind farms. The EIS proposes mitigation measures and concludes that the project does not have significant negative residual environmental impacts.

During public consultation, third party concerns were raised. They related in particular to visual impacts and impacts on local grouse species (Auerwild, Birkwild).

In June 2019, the competent authority (federal administration of Styria) issued the project's permit. The permit is conditional to mitigation measures and monitoring campaigns. These include, but are not limited to:

- Measures to protect and increase the nature conservation site "Schwarzriegelmoos";
- Limitation of project-related deforestation activities in terms of size (1.5 ha) and season, afforestation and forest enhancement measures;
- Measures to protect species (grouse, bats, young birds, amphibians, reptile, ground beetles) during project construction and operation, measures to enhance their habitats in the project area, impact monitoring;
- Measures to protect tourists from ice fall.

In 2019, the promoter applied for a first amendment to this permit, covering an increase of the project's total installed capacity by 4 MW without any modification to consented turbine dimensions and location. Based upon documentation submitted by the promoter, and following consultation with authorised experts, the federal administration of Styria approved this first amendment in December 2019.

At the time of appraisal, there was a second amendment process concerning the EIA permit ongoing, with the federal administration of Styria being in charge. This second amendment process was initiated by the promoter in 2021, to allow for larger rotor dimensions of all turbines and adjusted micro-siting for two turbines, but no changes to maximum turbine height and installed capacity. The promoter provided supplementary EIS documentation to the competent authority. The studies conclude that the modified project does not have any significant negative impacts. Additional mitigation and monitoring measures are proposed. The documentation was subject to public consultation. On 14 April 2022, the competent authority issued its consent to this modification. This consent supplements the original permit and comprises adjusted permit conditions. The decision was published and it entered into force on 19 May 2022, as no admissible objection had been raised .

The amended permit relates to - amongst others - the use of turbine model E-138 EP3 E2. However the turbine supplier will only supply turbine model E-138 EP3 E3. This is deemed a non-substantial modification when compared to the consented project description. The promoter will seek formal approval of this modification at project completion ('UVP Kollaudierungsverfahren').

The project is not included in the Bank's Carbon Footprint Exercise because its absolute and relative GHG emissions are below the Bank's threshold. The project's direct CO₂ equivalent emissions are negligible. In accordance with the Bank's current Carbon Footprint methodology it is calculated that based on the avoidance of electricity generation from a combination of existing and new power plants in Austria (combined margin for intermittent electricity



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generation), the project's total relative effect is a net reduction in CO₂ equivalent emissions by 7 kt CO₂e/yr.

The project is fully aligned to the goals and principles of the Paris Agreement as set out in the Bank's Climate Bank Roadmap and the Energy Lending Policy.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The promoter is a publicly owned company that manages the natural resources on behalf of the Republic of Austria. The entity is known to the Bank from operation WINDPARK PRETUL (2015-0519).

The promoter's environmental and social management capability is deemed very high. Its core business is the sustainable management of forests in Austria. It has a comprehensive sustainability policy in place and maintains close relationships with the stakeholders and citizens in its areas of activity. In line with Styrian law, construction activities will be observed by independent experts in order to ensure full compliance with permit conditions.

At the time of appraisal, an investigation was launched into permitting practices at the project-relevant competent authority due to suspect of prohibited conduct by individual civil servants. It is understood that the permitting process of the project, including its ongoing amendment process, may be subject to enhanced scrutiny in this context.

EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework

The counterparty is in scope and screened out of the PATH framework, because it is not considered high emitting.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based upon the information available and subject to the below loan condition, the project is acceptable for Bank financing under environmental and social aspects:

Evidence is provided, satisfactory to the Bank, that the competent authority is aware of and not objecting the promoter's intention to seek approval for turbine model E-138 EP3 E3 post completion ('Kollaudierungsverfahren').