



Luxembourg, 24.11.2022

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ASTER ROOFTOP SOLAR
Project Number:	2021-0660
Country:	Belgium
Project Description:	Construction and operations of PV installations on rooftops of social housing across Flanders
EIA required:	No
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	Yes

Environmental and Social Assessment

The proposed operation concerns a loan for the implementation of about 52 500 small-size (on average 3 kWp) solar photovoltaic (PV) plants, located on the rooftops of social housing buildings in Flanders, Belgium.

The Promoter is a cooperative company in which more than 65 Flemish social housing associations participate, as well as their umbrella organisation VVH of the Flemish government (Vereniging van Vlaamse Huisvestingsmaatschappijen, the Flemish social housing association). The Promoter company was established in 2020 in Belgium with the purpose of implementing the Project.

Environmental Assessment

The solar PV plants will be installed on roofs of social housing buildings in urban areas and therefore are not subject to any environmental and social impact assessment process as per the EIA-Directive 2014/52/EU amending 2011/92/EU. No specific environmental permitting is expected to be required.

In terms of safety, a certificate from the AREI (Algemeen Reglement op de Elektrische Installaties) security inspection for each dwelling before and after the installation of PV panels is required.

The operation is expected to generate positive environmental benefits through its contribution to the development of renewable energy projects, reducing CO₂ emissions and increasing the share of renewable energy in the Belgian energy mix.

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.



Luxembourg, 24.11.2022

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

The operation will support an estimated 157 MWp of new renewable energy capacity with an annual production of around 150 GWh and avoided CO₂ emissions of 34.1 ktCO₂-eq. For the annual accounting purposes of the EIB Carbon Footprint, the project emissions will be prorated according to the EIB lending amount signed in that year, as a proportion of project cost.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The final beneficiaries of the Project are the tenants of the social housing buildings. It is expected that they will benefit from the Project through lower prices for the electricity generated through the solar PV plants.

The Project needs to comply with the Bank's E&S Standards, including applicable provisions of the relevant labour standard of the Bank. Recent reports are pointing out the possibility of use of forced labour in the supply chain of solar PV panels. The Promoter will be required to undertake reasonable efforts in case of concern to mitigate against the risk of forced labour in the solar PV supply chain. This will include enhanced due diligence where practically achievable, and ensuring that relevant obligations are passed on in supplier contracts. The Promoter has already included these relevant obligations in the Project public tender in order to mitigate this risk.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Promoter has informed the Bank that the social tenants have been informed about the Project by the dedicated communication team. The contractor will ensure the communication with the tenants regarding the installation and operation of the panels.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter, supported by its advisors, and the contractor, subject to the public tender requirements, are expected to have the capacity to ensure that the Bank's requirements with regard to environmental, social, health and safety matters will be respected. As part of the ongoing build-up of the Promoter's organisational structure and the elaboration of E&S procedures, the Promoter shall appoint a dedicated E&S specialist responsible for the Project. In addition, the Promoter shall develop a commensurate Environmental Social Management System (ESMS) where the proper implementation of the Project E&S Policy and Procedures will be included and the EIB standards and requirements integrated.

Conclusions and Recommendations

During appraisal, it has been verified that the Promoter has fully understood the Bank's E&S requirements and is willing and capable to fully implement them. The Promoter shall appoint a dedicated E&S specialist responsible for the Project, and develop a commensurate Environmental Social Management System (ESMS) where the proper implementation of the Project E&S Policy and Procedures will be included and the EIB standards and requirements integrated.

The Promoter will undertake reasonable efforts in case of concern to mitigate against the risk of forced labour in the solar PV supply chain. This will include enhanced due diligence where practically achievable, and ensuring that relevant obligations are passed on in supplier contracts, in line with the requirements already included in the Project public tender.

In view of the above findings and conditions, the operation is deemed satisfactory from an environmental and social compliance perspective.