



Luxembourg, 04/10/2022

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	<i>TENNET OSTBAYERNRING GRID EXPANSION</i>
Project Number:	<i>2022-0070</i>
Country:	<i>Germany</i>
Project Description:	<i>380/110kV grid connection from Redwitz to Schwandorf</i>
EIA required:	yes
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 project comprises the construction of a 185 km-long electricity transmission corridor connecting Redwitz to Schwandorf (Ostbayernring), in the southeast of Germany. It includes a new 380kV line from the Redwitz to the Schwandorf substation as well as the upgrade/reinforcement of the four existing 380kV substations at Redwitz, Mechlenreuth, Etzenricht and Schwandorf along the route and smaller replacements at an 110kV substation in Münchberg. The transmission line comprises two 380 kV circuits and mainly the Danube type high-voltage pylon arrangement. The new lines will be combined with an 110kV line for approx. 80km of the route. The new double circuit 380kV transmission line will replace the existing 380/220/110kV lines, which will be dismantled after the new circuits have been put in operation. The project is part of the federal grid expansion plan. For permitting purposes, the project is separated into four sections which are described below.

Line section C

The 51 km-long new line will broadly follow the path of the existing 380/220kV line connecting Redwitz and Mechlenreuth substations, crossing the districts of Lichtenfels, Kronach, Kulmbach and Hof. The line will mainly cross agricultural land and forested areas, while avoiding densely populated areas.

Line section A

The 43 km-long new line will broadly follow the path of the existing 380/220kV line connecting Etzenricht and Schwandorf substations, crossing the city of Weiden in Oberpfalz and the districts of Neustadt and der Waldnaab, Amberg-Sulzbach and Schwandorf. The line will cross flat, agricultural land, grassland and forested areas, while avoiding densely populated areas. In Schwandorf the line will cross the valley of the river Naab.

Line section B-north

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 37 km-long new line will broadly follow the path of the existing 380/220kV line from the Mechlenreuth substation to the administrative regional borders of Oberfranken and Oberpfalz, crossing the districts of Hof and Wunsiedel i. Fichtelgebirge. The new construction crosses the main natural area Thüringisches-Fränkisches Mittelgebirge. The line will cross flat, agricultural land, grassland and forested areas and through numerous streams and small rivers, while avoiding densely populated areas.

Line section B-south

The 52 km-long new line will broadly follow the path of the existing 380/220kV line from the administrative regional borders of Oberfranken and Oberpfalz to the Etzenricht substation, crossing the districts of Tirschenreuth, Neustadt a.d. Waldnaab and Kresifreie Stadt Weiden i.d. Oberpfalz. The new construction crosses the main natural area Thüringisches-Fränkisches Mittelgebirge, the Naab-Wondreb-Senke and the Oberpfälzisch-Obermainische Hügelland. The line will cross flat, agricultural land, grassland and forested areas, while avoiding densely populated areas.

Environmental Assessment

The construction of the 185 km-long, 380kV transmission lines falls under Annex I of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, thus requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). As a result, Environmental Studies were prepared for the project in accordance with the German Environmental Impact Assessment Act (UVPG). The provisions of the Habitats and Birds Directives and the BNatSchG are the legal bases for assessing the effects on conservation features in the NATURA 2000 sites. The screening / Natura 2000 assessment were an integral part of the Environmental Studies.

The spatial planning permit was granted for the project as a whole in 2016. For permitting purposes, the project is separated into four sections. The Environmental reports have been prepared and public consultation thereof has been carried out for all four sections. The planning permit and environmental legal approval from consenting authorities for line section C has been granted in November 2021 and for line section A in July 2022. For the remaining two permits (B-north and B-south), the permit application is submitted and accepted as complete by the relevant authority. According to the promoter, likely date of permit decision is in 2023. The project crosses both special areas of conservation and Natura 2000 sites and was subject to Appropriate Assessment according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

For the substations, permits according to the Federal Emission Control Act (Bundes-Immissionsschutzgesetz) are required and the substations were not subject to an EIA. The permits have been granted for all four substations.

The EIAs for different sections assessed the likely environmental impact and resulted in a series of prevention, mitigation and compensation measures to reduce it to low residual impact. The new line is broadly routed along the existing line corridor, although smaller variations with respect to the existing route corridor will be implemented in order to avoid sensitive areas and to increase distance to populated areas.

The main environmental impacts identified during construction are loss/impairment of vegetation and animal habitat at construction site, impact/degradation of soil, modification/change of quality of ground- and surface water, change in climate function of the forest through loss of forest land, impact on birds (displacement of breeding habitat and collision), noise, pollution and dust. Environmental impacts during operation are electromagnetic fields (EMF) and nuisance during operation.



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Appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to minimise impacts according to the findings of the EIA reports and the conditions expressed in the EIA consents. The promoter has the capacity and is committed to implement the necessary mitigating measures at both design and construction stages. These typically include construction procedures to minimize damages and disturbance, soil restoration, traffic management measures, reduction in wood intrusion and appropriate waste collection procedures. Furthermore, they include the installation of flight diverters and nesting platforms on sensitive corridors to prevent birds' electrocution and impacts on birds' and bats' breeding period and the prevention of adverse effect of other species (e.g. reptiles, hazelnut mice, amphibians). Where necessary, the installation of noise-blocking walls/panels to reduce noise levels and proper containment in substations to avoid oil leakage from transformers are installed. The Environmental Studies further include measures to protect animals and plant species that are subject to provision on species protection in the area, such as the field lark, hole-nesting birds and bats.

The project passes numerous streams and small rivers. The opinion on the compatibility of the project with the Water Framework Directive (WFD) states that the planned project is compatible with the management objectives of the WFD. A separate Water Licence will/is obtained as part of the final permit.

The project has the potential to interact with 31 Natura 2000 sites. The Appropriate Assessment screening ruled out significant effects on 22 sites but likely significant effects could not be ruled out for 9 sites. The project was therefore subject to Appropriate Assessment in line with Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive. The AAs concluded that provided the implementation of defined mitigation measures the project will not have any significant adverse effects on any of the Natura 2000 sites.

The project will have indirect positive impact, as it will contribute to the enabling of renewable energy generation in the northern area of Germany. Amongst the objectives of the project is the avoidance of congestion that will occur on the transmission network and the accommodation of power flows created by the electricity interconnection with other countries. The project has been assessed for its Paris alignment and it is considered to be aligned against low carbon goals in line with the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap and with the EIB's Energy Lending Policy.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Several public consultation events have taken place for all line sections as part of the permitting process. This include initial public consultation to inform the scoping of the EIA as well as consultation on the EIA report. According to information provided in the EIA reporting and by the promoter, complaints have been addressed as regards some sections of the project. The Environmental Studies were consequently amended and submitted to the competent authority in May 2022.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The promoter has in place an Environmental and Social Management System and manages the implementation of large projects via a dedicated project steering committee. With relation to asset management, the promoter is ISO 9001:2015, ISO 55001:2014 and NTA 8120:2014 certified. The promoter is active in stakeholder engagement and dissemination of information related to projects, via their website and via a dedicated mobile-phone application that allows for the monitoring of the works by stakeholders.

Considering the aforementioned information and based on previous operations financed by the EIB, the environmental and social capacity of the promoter is deemed good.



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Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the review of the EIA reports and the other assessments prepared by the promoter, the Bank identified no significant residual environmental and social impacts associated with the project.

At this stage however, formal response from competent authorities are still outstanding for two out of four of the primary permit applications and the associated assessments under the EIA, Habitats and Water Framework Directives. The Bank will complete its environmental and social due diligence based on the feedback and the formal response received in due course.

Based on the information available, with the planned mitigation, compensation and monitoring in place and appropriate conditions, the project is expected to be acceptable in environmental and social terms for the Bank's financing:

Line sections B-north and B-south – Disbursements will be made subject to the submission of the final project permit approval including EIA consent granted by the competent authority for nature and environment. The promoter undertakes to take into account and implement conditions expressed in any such EIA consent