



Luxembourg, MC decision 20.07.2022

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	CLIMATE ACTION AUSTRIA RLBNW (FL)
Project Number:	2021-0649
Country:	Austria
Project Description:	Intermediated Framework Loan with RLBNW for the financing of small and medium-sized renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in Austria.
EIA required:	Some of the underlying schemes may require an EIA
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>1</sup> :	no (details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

### Environmental and Social Assessment

The operation concerns a Framework Loan to Raiffeisen Landesbank Niederösterreich-Wien ("RLBNW" or the "Financial Intermediary" – "FI") in Austria. The loan is for an amount of up to EUR 100m for renewable energy ("RE") projects in Austria, covering on-shore wind, solar PV and other renewable energy technologies, as well as on an opportunistic basis energy efficiency ("EE"), with investment costs of the individual projects of up to EUR 50m.

#### Environmental Assessment

The FI, which is known to the EIB from previous operations, will be required to ensure compliance of all schemes with relevant EU Directives as transposed into national legislation. Due to their technical characteristics, most of the investments are expected to fall under Annex II of Directive 2014/52/EU amending EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, leaving it to the national competent authority to determine according to Annex III of the said Directive whether an environmental impact assessment is required.

Most of the individual schemes to be financed are likely to have limited negative environmental impacts and are expected to be mitigated appropriately. In all cases, for projects that require an EIA, the FI shall undertake to provide the EIB with a website link to the location where the EIA study is published. If a project is screened out, then, according to the EIA Directive, this should also be made public, stating the reasons for not requiring such an assessment.

The FI will be required to verify that none of the schemes has a significant adverse impact on any site forming part of the EU Natura 2000 network (falling under Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC or Birds Directive 2009/147/EC). For each sub-scheme that may have an impact on a nature conservation site, written confirmation from the competent nature conservation authority, or an equivalent confirmation satisfactory to the Bank that the mentioned scheme does not have a significant negative impact on any site of nature conservation importance should be presented,

<sup>1</sup> 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 CO<sub>2</sub>e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.



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as a condition of disbursement. Schemes with significant negative impacts on areas with high biodiversity value, nature conservation areas, including bird migration routes, shall not be eligible.

### **EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise**

Intermediated lending through Framework Loans is not currently included in the carbon footprint exercise.

### **Other Environmental and Social Aspects**

The FI has significant experience in financing renewable energy projects in Austria (in particular onshore wind) and other Member States (especially onshore wind, solar PV and bioenergy), and is deemed to have adequate capacity to ensure compliance with the Bank's environmental and social requirements. The FI has in place a management system to identify, assess, manage and monitor environmental, climate and social risks and impacts. Internal staff with relevant experience and qualifications manage the management system, which includes acceptable procedures supported by external consultants. Overall, this management system is considered adequate to ensure that schemes financed by the FL comply with the Bank's environmental and social requirements.

The FI 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.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The FI's E&S policies and management capacity to comply with the EIB requirements have been assessed and found to be adequate and commensurate with the E&S risk of the underlying projects.

The investments targeted by the operation are contributing to climate change mitigation and are expected to have limited residual social and environmental impacts.

The Bank will assess EIAs and all permitting documentation when reviewing the documentation for the allocations, including the compliance with the Bank's requirements and applicable EU Directives.

For each scheme that may have an impact on a nature conservation site, the Financial Intermediary shall obtain confirmation from the competent nature conservation authority, or an equivalent assessment satisfactory to the Bank, that the scheme does not have a significant negative impact on any site of nature conservation importance.

For solar PV projects, the Financial Intermediary shall 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.

Under these conditions, the operation is acceptable in E&S terms.