Luxembourg, 31.08.2022

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	AQUANET WATER AND WASTEWATER III
Project Number:	2021-0030
Country:	Poland
Project Description:	The project covers various investments related to the development and modernisation of the water, wastewater and storm water infrastructure in the City of Poznan and surrounding settlements within the period of 2022-2028.
EIA required:	Yes. This is an investment programme made up of multiple schemes. Some of them may require an EIA under Annex II of the EIA directive 2011/92/EC as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise[1]: yes

Environmental and Social Assessment

The Promoter of this project is Aquanet SA, the water services company of the city of Poznan. Aquanet is a public entity and owned by the city of Poznan, which is the majority owner (77.4% of the shares), and 9 surrounding municipalities.

It concerns the promoter's 2022-2028 Investment Plan which includes the rehabilitation and upgrading of drinking water abstraction and treatment facilities, additional storage capacity on the storm water network, as well as rehabilitation and upgrade of wastewater collection and treatment system. The investments are geared towards improving the performance of the existing water supply and wastewater infrastructure, as well as taking into account identified climate change risks.

The project will contribute to continued compliance with the EU Drinking Water Directive 2020/2184[2] and EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive 91/271/EEC by rehabilitating and upgrading the existing water supply and wastewater systems, and extending to currently un-serviced municipalities within the vicinity of Poznan. This will ensure safe provision of drinking water and sanitation services to the concerned population.

[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.

[2] The revised Drinking Water directive was released in Jan 2021 but there is a transitional phase of two years.

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Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) procedure

The project is consistent with the Programme of Measures of the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the River Odra (as approved on 18 October 2016), as required by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC. Hence the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the Odra River was subject to a SEA procedure. The SEA competent authority is the Ministry of Climate and Environment. Prior to the approval of the RMBP the SEA procedure had been concluded in the course of 2013-2014 pursuant to art 46 of the Polish EIA Act and following a public consultation pursuant to Art 39 and 55 of the same Act. Its results had been incorporated into the RBMP.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure

The EIA Directive 2011/92/EU amended by the 2014/52/EU, is fully transposed in Poland according to the Act on Providing Information on the Environment and Environmental Protection, Public Participation in Environmental Protection and on Environmental Impact Assessment of 3 October 2008 (the EIA Act).

Depending on the location of each project component, either the concerned municipalities or the Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection of the Ministry of Climate and Environment will be the EIA Competent Authority.

Works are foreseen to take place within boundaries of existing water and wastewater treatment plant sites and primarily within the service area of the promoter, which is located within urban environments, using the existing routes of water mains and sewers.

The project components are likely to fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. For the latter case, this means that the decision as to whether an EIA is required is left with the competent authority based on the criteria defined in Annex III of the Directive. To date, 24 components out of the approximately 600 have been reviewed and screened out by the competent authorities and no component within or near Natura 2000 areas has so far been subjected to an Appropriate Assessment as per the Habitats Directive requirements. Nevertheless, in case some components under the programme 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.

Environmental impacts

The project is expected to bring significant long lasting environmental benefits, such as reducing sewer infiltration, water losses, pollution to groundwater aquifer and combined sewer overflow incidents. The project will also have significant long term positive environmental impact on surface waters, by providing appropriate treatment to European Standards of wastewater collected from small municipalities near Poznan city (with pollution loads between 2,000 to 10,000 PE[3]) before its discharge into surface water bodies. Hence, the Project will contribute significantly to bridge the country's gap to compliance with EU environmental legislation, in particular the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive 91/271/EEC.

[3] PE: population equivalent, unit to measure pollution load of wastewater

Investment in wastewater treatment will also contribute towards the compliance with HELCOM[4] recommendations for wastewater treatment plants effluent (recommendation 28E/5, HELCOM).

Negative impacts to the environment are assessed only as temporary. During construction, temporary impacts to the environment such as noise and dust may occur. The prevention and mitigation of any impacts associated with the construction phase, will be done through adoption of the recommendations of Environmental and Management practices to be implemented by Contractors.

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 more efficient use of resources, reduction of water losses and sewer infiltration, energy efficiency interventions, improved sludge digestion, connecting currently un-serviced customers to centralized wastewater collection and treatment. These will contribute towards the overall reduction of energy requirements and will result in reduction of GHG emissions.

Adaptation to identified physical risks, such as increased frequency and magnitude of droughts and extreme rainfall events will be addressed by implementing measures such as increasing storm water storage capacity, modernising water production/treatment facilities in order to maintain reserve capacity and maintaining water losses at low level (<10%).

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: 163 kT CO_2/year absolute (gross) and -9 kT CO_2/year relative (net). This corresponds to an annual estimated emissions savings of 9,000 tons of CO_2 equivalent. These emissions consider the operation of the water supply as well as the wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure. The adopted baseline considers a scenario without the planned energy efficiency improvements and the connection of currently unserved inhabitants to centralized wastewater treatment.

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

The proposed investments will improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and will result in more resilient and reliable water services at affordable prices. This will yield lasting positive social benefits, including improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of Poznan and neighbouring areas and thus they will be beneficial for the public health.

[4] HELCOM – Helsinki Convention, which regulates the protection of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution, specifically for Phosphorous (0.5 mg/l) and Nitrogen Removal (10 mg/l)

The works will also contribute to employment creation during construction. No additional permanent employment is foreseen after project completion.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Where relevant, the promoter will be requested 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. Consultations with affected communities and interested parties take place in line with the requirements of the Directives.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Project will not produce any Transboundary impact.

Conclusions and Recommendations

By rehabilitating and upgrading the water treatment and sewage treatment facilities, and improving the performance of existing drinking water supply, wastewater collection and storm water management systems, the project is expected to generate a positive impact on the environment and will contribute to the improvement of living conditions of the inhabitants of the broader area of Poznan.

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 finalised 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.