



European Investment Bank (EIB)

Luxembourg, 23 December 2022

Environmental and Social Completion Sheet (ESCS)

Overview

Project Name:	EDF GAVET HYDROPOWER
Project Number:	2013-0567
Country:	France
Project Description:	The Project comprises the construction of a new 92 MW run-of-river hydropower plant (Romanche-Gavet) replacing a cascade of six existing facilities in the Isère Department (south-eastern France).

Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment at Completion

EIB notes the following Environmental and Social performance and key outcomes at Project Completion.

The new run-of-the-river Romanche-Gavet hydropower plant (Gavet HPP) is located on the right bank of the middle section of the Romanche River in the Isère Department (south-eastern France).

Adequate environmental mitigation measures were implemented by the Promoter and residual impacts were considered acceptable.

- During construction noise and visual impacts were held at the minimum possible.
- Best construction site practices were in place, including wastewater treatment at the concrete batching plant. Surface water quality was monitored in coordination with the national competent authority (DDASS), and no pollution, increase of turbidity or increase of suspended matter were identified.
- Areas temporarily impacted by the construction activities kept as small as possible and were restored and reforested following the completion of the works.
- The hydropower plant includes a small reservoir with a storage capacity of 180 000 m³. As the barrage presents a barrier to aquatic animals and organisms a fish ladder was built to mitigate the impact.
- The environmental flow was increased from 1 m³/s to 3.8 m³/s. This has a positive impact on water quality and invertebrate and fish population. In particular this provides optimal conditions for adult trout and enhances the productivity of benthic invertebrates due to an increase of the wetted perimeter.
- The Natura 2000 sites in the vicinity of the Project were continuously monitored and no adverse impact on flora and fauna was identified.

The Project bypasses six smaller run-of-the-river facilities which were taken into operation between 1905 and 1924. These plants were now decommissioned and the former barrages were removed. Thereby the continuity of the river flow was substantially improved, benefiting fish movements and aquatic biodiversity, sediment transport and water quality:



European Investment Bank (EIB)

Luxembourg, 23 December 2022

The decommissioned hydropower plants featured above-ground channels, pipes and powerhouses, which are being removed, apart of some building which are considered cultural/ industrial heritage. Also these areas are being reinstated.

For the new power plant most structures, such as water conveyance system and the powerhouse, were built underground. Only the intake structure and the tailrace (where the water is released back into the river) are seen from the ground or from above. This minimises the visual impact and, more importantly, the tunnel does not create a physical barrier in the landscape for animals or humans.

For the next decades EDF will benefit from the improved safety and reliability of the hydropower operation, generate employment, boost the local economy and improve access to fishing and other leisure activities in the valley.

EIB notes the following key Environmental and Social aspects to be monitored during operations:

- none

Summary opinion of Environmental and Social aspects at completion:

EIB is of the opinion based on reports from the Promoter that the Project has been implemented in line with EIB Environmental and Social Standards, applicable at the time of appraisal.