



Luxembourg, 10 December 2024

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	SATELLITE CONNECTION FOR RURAL CENTRAL ASIA
Project Number:	2023-0037
Country:	Regional Central Asia
Project Description:	The project relates to investments in a satellite communications system composed of satellite terminal antennas in around 1 663 underserved villages in remote rural areas of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirgizstan and Tajikistan) that will connect to the promoter's middle earth orbit constellation. The objective of this system is to enable the local telecom operators to provide broadband internet services to the local populations, by establishing high speed data links between each covered village and its country's backbone network.
EIA required:	no

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project includes the installation and commissioning of satellite terminals in villages of Central Asia. The terminals' footprint is around 10 sqm, consisting of two dish antennas of a maximum of 1.3 m of diameter. The terminals will usually be installed on suitable roofs of existing buildings or in mobile network sites, requiring just minor adaptation works for accommodating the new equipment.

If the project were in the EU, the installation of terminal equipment of these characteristics would not be explicitly covered by Annexes I or II of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by the 2014/52/EU Directive, and therefore it would not be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure. Similarly, the environmental legislation of the targeted countries (Environmental Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 2 January 2021, Law on Environmental Expertise of Uzbekistan further refined by Cabinet of Ministers Resolution No. 541 of September 7, 2020, Regulations on procedure for evaluating the impact on the environment in Kyrgyzstan of 13 February 2015 and Law 1448 of Tajikistan on Environmental Impact Assessment of 18 July 2017) would not require EIAs for this kind of low impact activities.

Digitalisation and ICT infrastructure play an important role in the transition of several sectors to a low carbon and climate resilient economy. The project is fully aligned with the Paris Agreement on climate change according to the Bank's definition (Annex 2 Table H of EIB's climate bank roadmap - CBR).

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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EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework

The counterparty, SES, is in scope and screened out of the PATH framework, because it is not considered a high emitting nor a highly vulnerable entity.

Social Assessment

The increased availability of broadband connectivity enabled by the project is expected to generate wide-ranging socio-economic benefits for the populations currently living in the remote areas that the project will target.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The promoter has created an Environmental, Health and Safety Charter that describes its systematic approach to identifying, evaluating, and managing environmental, health, and safety risks. SES' supplier code of conduct requires the promoter's contractors to align with the Charter as well support the internally recognised human rights and fundamental freedom conventions. SES is also a signatory of the UN Global Compact since April 2021 supporting the ten principles under human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption areas and produces annual sustainability reporting according to the Global Reporting Initiative standards.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project relates to installation of satellite terminals in villages in Central Asia. The terminals will have a small footprint and will usually be installed on the roof of existing buildings or mobile network sites, so the project implementation is not expected to have significant environmental or social impacts. On the other hand, the project is expected to ensure that people living in the remote areas targeted are not excluded from the digital transformation and the significant socio-economic benefits that it entails.

Based on these conclusions and recommendations, the project is acceptable for EIB financing in E&S terms.