

Luxembourg, 07 October 2024

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ACA PESCARA WATER INVESTMENTS
Project Number:	2023-0688
Country:	Italy
Project Description:	Financing of 2024-2026 investments in integrated water services
EIA required:	no
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹:	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The Project concerns the 2024-2026 water and wastewater investment programme of ACA (Azienda Comprensoriale Acquedottistica S.p.A), a utility providing Integrated Water Services (i.e. IWS) in the service area known as Ambito Territoriale Ottimale Pescara (ATO Pescara), covering the Province of Pescara in the Abruzzo Region. The Promoter is the main operator of IWS in ATO Pescara, serving ca. 450,000 residents in 61 municipalities and up to 280,000 tourists.

The Project consists of numerous small to medium size investments aimed at expanding and upgrading the existing water supply, wastewater collection and treatment systems. The purpose of the planned investments is twofold: (i) improving the efficiency of the potable water supply system while increasing its resilience to droughts and other impacts of climate change, and ensure compliance with European and regional environmental requirements notably the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC and Directive (EU) 2020/2184 on the quality of water intended for human consumption (recast), (ii) closing the last remaining situation of non-compliance with the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) by upgrading and extending the wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure. The Project also comprises investments in wastewater infrastructure for municipalities that do not fall under the infringement procedure. The 30-year master plan of the ATO (Piano d'Ambito– PdA) is the planning framework of the proposed operation. The PdA has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive 2014/52/EC (Delibera AIT n.7/2016).

The Project will deliver substantial environmental quality improvements in the form of a higher ecological quality of surface and underground water resources and a more rational use of water resources that outweigh the negative impacts, which occur mainly during construction (e.g. noise, dust, traffic). None of the works will be implemented inside or near Natura 2000 or other protected sites. At this stage, all schemes should fall under Annex II of the Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. Therefore, the decision whether an EIA is required is left to the Competent Authority, namely the Environmental and Energy Department of the Region of Abruzzo on the basis of the criteria defined in Annex III of the EIA Directive.

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.



Luxembourg, 07 October 2024

The Abruzzo region is increasingly suffering from longer and more intense drought periods (in 2017 and 2020, the region had declared a drought emergency), and this situation generates additional pressure onto already scarce water resources. The Project is expected to contribute to increasing resilience to the effects of climate change, and to generate energy savings through increased efficiency of the water supply and wastewater systems as well as improved efficiency of the Promoter in managing the systems.

EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework

The counterparty ACA is in scope and screened out of the PATH framework, because it does not operate in high emitting sectors and its vulnerability to physical risks is not High.

Social Assessment

By increasing the quality and reliability of water and wastewater collection and treatment services, the conclusion of the assessment is that the Project will bring substantial health advantages and environmental quality improvements to the affected population, thereby increasing the quality of life in the Project area. Negative social impacts would be only temporary (e.g. occupation of public and private space, safety hazards during construction, traffic, noise) and will be addressed as part of the planning for the implementation of each scheme. The Project will have positive impacts on job creation during the works.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

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, where relevant, in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

During the Project's due diligence, the Promoter has demonstrated sound practices with respect to environmental, health and safety management. In addition to procedures to meet regulatory requirements, the Promoter has a comprehensive environmental management system which is applied to new Projects and monitors ongoing operations. The Promoter has the following certifications: ISO 9001 (Quality Management) and ISO 14001 (Environmental Management).



Luxembourg, 07 October 2024

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Project is driven by the requirement to ensure compliance with the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC and Directive (EU) 2020/2184 on the quality of water intended for human consumption (recast) and the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) and it will also contribute towards improved climate resilience and emissions reductions. All schemes under the Project will be subject to the Promoter's compliance with the following requirements:

1. The Promoter undertakes not to allocate Bank funds to programme 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.
2. The Promoter shall not commit any EIB funds against any scheme that impacts nature conservation sites, without receiving from the relevant competent authorities the declaration under Art. 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that there are no significant effects and informing the Bank of such declaration having been obtained.
3. The Promoter undertakes to provide to the Bank, if requested, any decision and subsequent justification that screen out Project components from the requirement of a full EIA as well as the decisions issued by the competent authorities regarding the Habitats and Birds Directives.

Under these conditions, the operation is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.