

Luxembourg, 28 October 2025

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	CLIMATE ADAPTATION & FLOOD SAFETY EMSCHER-LIPPE
Project Number:	2024-0422
Country:	Germany
Project Description:	The Project concerns the financing of part of EGLV's 2025-2029 investment programme for its two branches Emschergenossenschaft (EG) and Lippeverband (LV) and mainly includes flood protection and restoration measures in the Rivers Emscher and Lippe, as well as improvements in the sewage and storm water collection and treatment infrastructure.
E&S Risk categorisation:	Medium
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no
(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")	

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

This is the fifth EIB operation in support of the Emscher programme since 2011. The overall programme concerns the restructuring of the regional wastewater system servicing a population of 2.2m inhabitants in the northern part of the Ruhr territory, in the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia, as well as enhancing flood protection.

The Promoter – Emschergenossenschaft-Lippeverband (EGLV) - decided in 1991 to invest into (i) an underground wastewater transport infrastructure conveying the effluent to wastewater treatment plants and (ii) the Emscher river restoration to satisfy the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC) and to improve water quality in the river.

The Emscher programme's main target was to make River Emscher free from wastewater, which was achieved in 2021. The Promoter's present operation targets further increasing flood protection (taking into account lessons learned from the heavy rain event in July 2021) and improving water quality of the River Lippe (also a tributary to River Rhine), the second river in the Promoter's service area.

The programme has been developed by an experienced promoter and takes into consideration environmental and social aspects as required by European and national environmental requirements.

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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The Emscher programme was included in Rhine River Basin Management Plan (RBMP), which was approved by the government of the Federal State of North Rhine Westphalia on the 1st of December 2021² according to the requirements of the WFD. Consequently, under the RBMP, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) further to Directive 2001/42/EC has been conducted and approved for the programme.

This is an investment programme made up of multiple schemes. According to the Promoter, at the time of appraisal, none of the investments under the programme will require an EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) report under the EIA directive 2011/92/EC as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, which was fully transposed in Germany. The Environmental Impact Assessment including impact on nature conservation sites is an integral part of the project approval cycle according to the national legislation, and thus it is validated through a “Planfeststellungsbeschluss” (PFB) i.e. EIA approval. The PFB is issued by the competent authority on district level (“Bezirksregierung”), in line with § 170 LWG NRW (North Rhine Westphalia water law). EIB received all relevant PFBs and published them on the Bank’s website.

According to the Promoter, the modernisation works in the small wastewater treatment plants do neither require an EIA nor an appropriate assessment because they all concern works on existing plants and within the current premises.

The main positive long-term environmental impacts can be summarised as follows:

- Dyke enhancement, upgrading of pumping stations and storm water sewers, and the extension of flood retention areas will help reduce the threat of flooding caused by heavy storms and river floods, especially in the area located below the water levels of River Emscher or Lippe which amounts to 842km².
- The continued river restoration will allow the re-establishing of biodiversity along the Rivers Emscher and Lippe.
- The modernisation works in the small wastewater treatment plants will contribute to enhancing energy efficiency and/or treatment performance and therefore contribute to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and/or the level of pollutants contained in the treated effluent.

EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework

The counterparty EGLV is in scope and screened out of the PATH framework, because it is not considered high emitting and/or high vulnerability.

Climate Assessment

The project contributes significantly to climate adaptation through the following components:

- Refurbishing and extending the storm water collection network increases the conveyance and storage capacity of the system and contributes to protect cities from flooding caused by heavy rain.
- Strengthening the existing dykes and enhancing and securing existing pumping stations protects the population against flooding.
- Reprofiling and widening riverbeds increases retention volumes and helps reducing the risk of flooding.

² Bewirtschaftungsplan 2022-2027 für die nordrhein-westfälischen Anteile von Rhein, Weser, Ems und Maas



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Social Assessment

The Project's appraisal has identified a number of positive long-term social impacts. The most important one is the improved quality of life thanks to cleaner surface waters, new recreational areas, reduced nuisance from odour and visual impact of open sewer channels, as well as reduced risk of urban flooding. Another positive impact is the continued provision of wastewater services of highest standard at affordable prices. Besides, the works, supplies and services required to implement the Project will temporarily create employment in the area and beyond. Finally, it can be expected that the Project will contribute to make the whole region more attractive for its inhabitants and economic development, and potentially also for tourism.

Temporary adverse social impacts may include the following: disruption of services and traffic, noise, temporary occupation of public and private space, and health and safety hazards during construction. Such impacts are common for this type of project, and the mitigation of expected adverse social impacts will be addressed as part of the planning for each scheme.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Promoter must ensure compliance with national and European environmental legislation and facilitate public access to environmentally relevant information. Since 2001, EGLV has engaged into a close dialogue with civil society and the main stakeholders of the Project and has been implementing a comprehensive communication programme. EGLV's internet portal presents a collection of publications related to environmental and social aspects.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter has monitored biodiversity in the Rivers Emscher and Lippe for several decades. According to the latest published report³ (2022), the number of species in the River Emscher has been multiplied by three between 1990 and 2020 to reach over 500, of which 450 invertebrates, 20 fish and 72 aquatic plants. In the River Lippe, the number of insect species has increased from around 13 during the monitoring period 1970-1975 to 150 for the period 2015-2020.

³ [20220205-Broschuere-Biodiversitaet_Freigabe.pdf](#)

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Conclusions and Recommendations

By upgrading the wastewater and stormwater facilities, the Project is expected to generate a positive impact on the environment. Both the reduced pollution of surface water and the enhanced flood protection will contribute to the improvement of living conditions of the inhabitants of the Emscher and Lippe region.

All components covered by the Project 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, EIA Directive (2011/92/EC) amended by the EIA Directive (2014/52/EC), Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives.
- The Promoter will be required not to allocate Bank funds to project components that require a full EIA report, as part or not of a “Planfeststellungsbeschluss”, and/or appropriate assessment until these have been finalised and approved by the relevant competent authority. Once any EIA report or appropriate assessment is available, the Promoter will provide the Bank with an electronic copy of the documentation, for publication on the EIB website.
- The Promoter will be required to provide to the Bank, any decisions issued by the competent authority that screen out project components and the main reasons for not requiring an EIA study with the reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III of the EIA Directive (if relevant).
- The Promoter will be required to include measures to mitigate impacts, associated with the construction phase, in the Environmental Management Plans of the work contracts to be implemented by the Contractors during construction.

Based on the information available and with appropriate conditions and monitoring, the Project is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms