

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	<i>Plovdiv – Burgas Rail</i>
Project Number:	<i>20110529</i>
Country:	<i>Bulgaria</i>
Project Description:	Rehabilitation of railway infrastructure along the Plovdiv-Burgas Railway Line located on the TEN-T network and co-financed with the EU Cohesion Fund.
EIA required:	NO
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	NO
(Details are provided in section: “Carbon Footprint”)	

Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment, including key issues and overall conclusion and recommendation

The project is part of the SOP-T which was subject to a strategic environmental assessment following Bulgarian legislation in accordance with SEA Directive 2001/42/EC. The Environmental report was approved in February 21st, 2007.

The project falls under Annex II 13 of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU and has been screened out from the need to prepare a full Environmental Impact Assessment. The determination was made by the competent authority (Ministry of Environment and Water - MOEW) in consultation with other authorities with responsibilities on environmental sector, based on the criteria listed in Annex III of the EIA Directive. The Ministry of Environment and Waters, the Authority Responsible of Monitoring the Natura 2000 sites, declared on December 3rd 2010 that the project has no significant effects on the neighbouring Natura 2000 sites.

The project is expected to have a net positive environmental impact principally by (i) improvement of the modal split in favour to electrified rail transport and thus reducing harmful emissions (ii) reducing noise levels and vibrations resulting from the replacement of ageing tracks, (iii) connecting previously fragmented habitats and safe movement of species within the protected areas of Kermen Heights and River Tundzha-1 by provision of passages for small animals, and (iv) safety improvement and reduction of accidents level due to the refurbishment of the level crossings, improved signalling and telecommunications systems and removal of potentially dangerous landslides and weak spots along the line.

The present investment minimizes the main residual negative impacts of the existing railway line: (i) it abates the noise levels due the use of electric traction and continuous welded tracks and (ii) provides new passages for small animals.

The project is therefore acceptable for Bank financing from an environmental point of view.

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Pilot Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: above 100,000 tons CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Luxembourg, 18 December 2012

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project is part of the SOP-T which was subject to a strategic environmental assessment following Bulgarian legislation in accordance with SEA Directive 2001/42/EC. The Environmental report was approved in February 21st, 2007.

The project relates to modernisation and upgrade of an existing railway and falls within Annex II 13 of the EIA Directive *'any change or extension of projects listed in Annex I or Annex II, already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed, which may have significant adverse effects on the environment'*, for which the EIA is subject of assessment in terms of the likelihood of the project having significant effects on the environment (screening stage).

The project layout passes through three Natura 2000 sites (two SCIs and one SPA) and the railway line adjoins the north border of another SCI/SPA but during the screening stage it was decided that no further assessment was required in relation to potential impact on Ecological Protected Areas, including Natura 2000 sites. The Ministry of Environment and Waters, the Authority Responsible of Monitoring the Natura 2000 sites, declared on December 3rd 2010 that the project has no significant effects on the neighbouring Natura 2000 sites.

The competent authority for this project is the Ministry of Environment and Water (MOEW). A negative Screening Opinion structured also in line with criteria provided in Annex III of the EIA Directive was issued by the MOEW on 26.09.09 (Decision Number 27-IIP/2009)

Development Consent in the form of a Construction Permit (Decision PC-36/29 of 06.11.2009) was issued by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works for all specific works, section by section along the line of route. The Decision was published in the State Gazette (Annex V of the AF).

The negative Screening decision applied the following conditions to the project:

- Construction materials to be stored and disposed within the railway boundary
- Recovered aggregates and other materials to be deposited outside protected areas to prevent any damage to natural habitats.
- At least two passages for small animals to be constructed at every 1 km within the boundaries of the protected areas.
- The ditches in front of the passages to be covered at 2.5 m on both sides of the railway.
- The number and location of the passages to be agreed with Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The project is essentially within the existing railway footprint and does not require any resettlement of persons.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, where required

When preparing the relevant EIA decision, The Ministry of Environment and Waters consulted the municipalities and communities situated along the railway line and the general public was informed by announcements in regional newspapers. There have been no objections against the investment.



Luxembourg, 18 December 2012

The public was informed regarding the content of the negative screening decision through announces made by MOEW and project promoter. No comments from the public were received.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

Overall, the project is expected to generate environmental benefits during its operation. These include: (i) noise and vibration reduction, (ii) connection of previously fragmented habitats, and (iii) improved safety due to the refurbishment of the level crossings.

Some negative environmental impacts could potentially arise during construction period, such as (i) spills and (ii) uncontrolled construction materials deposits

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