

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: *Emscher Renaturierung*
 Project Number: *2012 0632*
 Country: *Germany*
 Project Description: *2014 - 2016 Investment programme related to the restructuring of a regional wastewater system in North Rhine-Westphalia*

EIA required: yes

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

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

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

The Emscher Renaturierung project encompasses the river bed restoration of Emscher River close to its original status, back in the early 20th century. The Emscher River Master Plan, developed to this effect in the 1990's, evaluates options to recreate normal riverbed conditions, (meanders, flood areas, demolishing the concrete river bed lining) and options to transport the wastewater via a main underground canal of roughly 74 km to treatment plants. The project affects the entire river basin of the Emscher River, i.e. an area of 865 km². The Masterplan and its supporting documents (technical financial, environmental) were intensively explained to and discussed with civil society and all association members. Emschergenossenschaft's internet portal presents a collection of publications related to environmental and social aspects.

The river bed restoration project (i) is driven by the requirement to comply with requirements of the European environmental legislation (EU Directive 2000/60/EC), (ii) developed by an experienced promoter and (iii) takes into concern environmental and social aspects as required by European and national environmental and social policy. According to the German planning procedure, environmental impact assessments are an integral part of the project approval cycle. Emschergenossenschaft has already prepared and will prepare for each of the project components that require an EIA the relevant assessments. For the main project under this operation, the Abwasserkanal Emscher (AKE), the relevant documentations have been submitted to the Bezirksregierung Münster (approval administration for this canal) in line with § 170 LWGNWG (North Rhine Westphalia water law). The Bezirksregierung approved the project in 2008. The EIA planning consent is publicly available; also through the Bank's website.

No formal Planfeststellungsverfahren is needed for smaller tributary rivers of Emscher River. Those rivers are classified rivers of secondary order and receive project approvals according to § 58 LWGNWG from 3 approving administrations (Bezirksregierungen Arnsberg, Düsseldorf and Münster).

The entire project takes place in one of the most industrialised areas of Germany. Consequently there is no impact on Natura 2000 sites; in contrast the project will rather lead to the development of such areas.

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.

The project is therefore fully compliant with the requirements of Directive 2011/92/EU (EIA Directive) and the Natura 2000 framework. Taking into account that the project concept dates back to 1990 the SEA directive is not applicable. However, given the large area affected by the project and the amount of available environmental information a SEA according to actual standards would not have looked different from the EIA.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The Emscher Umbau (river bed restoration) project includes a number of river works and smaller and larger storm water and wastewater infrastructure investments. Given its scale with the wastewater disposal of 2.3 million inhabitants and industry, it has a major impact on the environment of the river basin. The project area covers half the territory of the Ruhrgebiet, the former mining centre of North Rhine Westphalia. In 1899, several towns and industrial companies created an association and handed over the responsibility of wastewater transport and treatment to it. This association, named Emschergenossenschaft developed the Emscher River as an open waste- and storm water canal.

With the Water Framework Directive (WFD) (EU Directive 2000/60/EC), the use of Emscher River as wastewater canal is no longer allowed. In order to satisfy the requirements of the Directive (to establish a good water quality in European rivers) and Emschergenossenschaft now invests into (i) an underground wastewater transport canalisation and (ii) the river bed restoration of the river itself, which, in future, will receive only stormwater in addition to its normal flow. The proposed Bank operation covers the co-funding of the underground canalisation, the river bed restoration and associated works.

The main positive environmental and social impacts can be summarised as follows:

- As the wastewater will be transported via an underground canalisation and not discharge into Emscher River, no odour problems will appear anymore and the housing and recreation areas along Emscher River will experience an increase in value.
- Tourism along the Emscher River will increase along newly developed cycle lanes and a project called Emscher Island.
- It is expected that the river bed restoration will allow in the long run re-establishing river biodiversity, its flora and fauna.
- Flood retention zones are developed to reduce threat of floods caused by heavy storms.

Negative environmental and social impacts are:

- Loss of farm land when constructing flood retention zones.
- Disturbance of populations living along the Emscher River and close to works locations due to construction activities.
- Timely increase of traffic towards and from construction sites.

Social Assessment, where applicable

N.a.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, where required

The EIA policy requires projet promoters to enter in a dialogue with public under a public consultation process. Following this requirement, Emschergenossenschaft, since 2001, has engaged into a close dialogue with civil society and main stakeholders of the project

and implements a complex communication strategy, composed of exhibitions, films, dialogue discussions, site visits, etc.; the programme until end of 2010 can be found on (<http://www.eglv.de/wasserportal/emscher-umbau/infos-und-termine.html>)

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

N.a.

PJ/ECSO