

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ROUTE 6 ROAD PROJECT - KIJEVERE TO PEJA
Project Number:	20140231
Country:	Kosovo*
Project Description:	Construction of a 30 km motorway on SEETO Route 6B between Kijevë and Pejë in the west of Kosovo*.
EIA required:	Yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

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

Environmental and Social Assessment

The project concerns the construction, on a new alignment, of 30 km of 2 x 2 motorway. The alignment starts 38 km west of Prishtinë north of the village of Kijevë and ends at the village of Zahaq, 7 km east of the town of Pejë. The project would complete the improvement of the national road corridor between Prishtinë and Pejë. The corridor lies on the indicative extension of TEN-T comprehensive network.

The project is situated in terrain with gentle slopes crossed by many short gullies with small catchment areas. It runs through the so called Dukagjini plain region which is formed by the valleys of the rivers Drini I Bardhe and Bistrica e Pejës. The Drini I Bardhe River is to be crossed by a new bridge near Klinë. The Bistrica e Pejës river runs in parallel with the alignment.

No formal strategic environmental assessment has been undertaken for the road investment program in Kosovo*. In 2015, however, a Sectoral Strategy for Multimodal Transport 2015-2025 and related 5 year Action Plan was prepared and approved. Amongst other things, this gave some consideration to the strategic environmental issues related to planned sector investments. Moreover, the project is consistent with the country's current Spatial Plan which also considered environmental matters. These high level exercises may be considered as broadly consistent with the philosophy of the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.

If the project was located in a Member State it would fall within Annex I of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended. Hence, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure would be required. A regulatory EIA is also required under applicable national law with is becoming aligned with the EU Acquis. The Promoter has commenced a full EIA procedure, commissioning an ESIA report for which the draft was completed in December 2016. The ESIA has been disclosed on the EIB's website. The ESIA report is to be subject to a final round of disclosure and public consultation prior to approval by the relevant Environmental

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.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

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Authority, expected by the end of 2017. The Authority's final approval will be a condition for disbursement for the works.

Various alignment alternatives were explored during the most recent project planning process in 2015 and 2016, including on line improvement and three off line options. The options were assessed on a multi criteria basis (economic, environmental, social, cultural and technical). The preferred alignment, selected for detailed design in mid 2016, inter alia, offers reduced social and environmental impacts overall.

There are no protected or designated areas located within the project corridor. However, there are a number of sensitive habitats which will require careful management during construction. The ESIA report concludes that the project is unlikely to have a significant negative impact on sensitive or protected areas or species. This opinion is to be confirmed by the Competent Authority for Nature Conservation prior to disbursement (Form A/B equivalent).

The main residual negative impacts of the projects are: (i) conversion of about 124 ha of mostly agricultural land; (ii) visual intrusion, especially due to some required high cuts which will be visible from some distance on the Kijevo-Klině section; (iii) an increase in noise and vibration levels for a limited number of receptors; and (iv) economic displacement of farmers.

Various mitigation measures such as drainage and primary treatment of runoff, landscaping and the installation of noise barriers have been recommended in the ESIA and are expected to be prescribed as part of the final Environmental Decision and then included in the final design being prepared by the Promoter. A draft Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP) has been prepared and a final version will form part of the works specifications to be implemented by contractors.

The Promoter will be required to ensure that the findings of a road safety audit, with content and prepared in a manner consistent with the principles of the Road Safety Directive 2008/96/EC, have been duly incorporated into the final design of the works.

The project is expected to have positive environmental impacts for the 20 communities living alongside the existing N9 highway, whose residents currently suffer high levels of noise, vibration, severance, local pollution and accident risk from the long distance traffic passing through. The project is expected to remove a significant portion of this traffic from these settlements and thereby improve their local environment.

Social Assessment

The main adverse social impact is related to involuntary resettlement. The project entails the permanent acquisition of about 124 ha of land and some additional land on a temporary basis during construction. The majority of the land is either agricultural or forest. A complete assessment of land acquisition and resettlement will be known once the detailed design is complete in early 2018. All attempts have and will be made during preparation to minimize land acquisition, resettlement and adverse impacts on people in the project area through careful localised engineering design.

The Promoter has prepared a Resettlement Policy Framework, in this case called a Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework (LARF) - specifying the principles, entitlements and implementation mechanisms - and consistent with national law and EIB requirements. The LARF is to be subject to public consultation and approval by the relevant authorities by the end of 2017. A draft LARF has been made public on the website of the Promoter and EIB. After approval by the relevant authorities, the final version will also be published on the website of the Promoter and EIB.

Before disbursement for works, the Promoter will prepare a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) consistent with the LARF that will include a census of all the project-affected people (PAP) and will ensure all PAPs will improve or, at least, have restored their pre-project level livelihood. The RAP will be prepared concurrently with detailed designs and implemented in a

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manner consistent with the handover of site to works contractors. Loan disbursement for works will be conditioned on implementation of the RAP to a schedule agreed with the Bank.

The RAP is expected to be developed in consultation with all PAPs to ensure acceptance of the proposed mitigation measures and facilitate the involuntary resettlement process.

To avoid any disproportionate negative livelihood impacts on vulnerable groups, identified vulnerable households will receive additional livelihood restoration measures.

There are four cultural assets – two archaeological sites and two religious sites – that lie in the vicinity of the corridor of impact. The sites are not directly affected, lying several hundred metres from the alignment. Good construction management should avoid any negative impact.

In accordance with national law on labour standards and ILO obligations ratified by Kosovo*, the works contracts will comply with ILO core labour standards. Contractors shall ensure occupational and community health and safety as part of their obligations under their works contracts.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Public consultation has been undertaken during the scoping and assessment phases of the regulatory ESIA procedure which commenced in October 2016. All the main findings, concerns and recommendations provided by the various stakeholders during the scoping meetings were taken into consideration in the scoping assessment. A further round of consultation, including formal public hearings, is required to meet national law and IFI requirements prior to the Environmental Consent being issued by the Competent Authority.

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been prepared and published on the EIB website.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

An independent supervising engineer, with adequate environmental and social staff, will supervise the implementation of the ESMP and RAP, support the delivery of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan as well as perform an audit of the results of the RAP after it has been implemented.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As the regulatory procedure is yet to be concluded, a number of requirements are to be met prior to any disbursement of the EIB loan for works, namely: (i) the Competent Authority for the Environment has issued his positive decision; (ii) the Competent Authority for Nature Conservation has issued his opinion (Form A/B equivalent); (iii) finalization of the RAP; (iv) implementation of the RAP agreed with the Bank, in accordance with its respective schedule; and (v) establishment of the supervising engineer's team with staff and terms of reference agreed with the Bank.

The Promoter will also be required to implement the project in accordance with an agreed Environmental and Social Management Plan as well as the agreed Resettlement Action Plan.

Given the conditions and assurances to be put in place outlined above, the project is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.