

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	GAS NETWORK UPGRADE IN SLOVAKIA
Project Number:	2014-0238
Country:	Slovakia
Project Description:	The project is part of the promoter's investment programme to upgrade the gas distribution networks in Slovakia for the period 2014-2018. The investments envisaged by the Distribution System Operator (DSO) include mainly the replacement of old pipelines of various operating pressures, the reconstruction of regulation stations, as well as the upgrade of key information technology systems and metering equipment. The investment schemes are located in various parts of the country.
EIA required:	none expected
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	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

This is a typical gas distribution project in the EU applying proven technologies. The project's main activities are to replace existing low and medium pressure metallic pipelines by polyethylene pipes, and to substitute high pressure metallic pipeline sections with new ones. Replacements follow an assessment methodology based on existing leakages, type, age and condition of the pipelines among other criteria. The programme aims at improving safety, reducing leaks and extending the useful life of the system. The main environmental impacts occur during construction are temporary in nature, and are mitigated according to established practices in the sector.

Given the characteristics of the submitted project schemes and the thresholds established under national EIA legislation and the criteria under Annex 3 of the EU EIA Directive, none of the schemes are expected to require a full EIA and none are planned to be carried out close or in a site of nature conservation importance. The following has been included in the contract:

- The promoter undertakes not to allocate the EIB's funds to programme components that require a full EIA until the EIA and/or the necessary social, biodiversity assessments as well as stakeholder engagement plans have been finalised and approved or endorsed by the relevant competent authorities. Once the EIA is made available to the public, an electronic copy of all E&S documents must be placed on the website of the promoter and maintained until completion of reporting as required by the EIB, or made accessible to interested parties via a web-link on the EIB website.

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 promoter shall store and keep up to date all documents relevant for the programme supporting the compliance with the provisions of EU environmental legislation, including Habitats and Birds Directives, permits and environmental and social approvals and, where required, social studies, and shall promptly upon request deliver such documents to the EIB.

Based on the environmental information provided by the promoter and the fact that the promoter has demonstrated it has the necessary experience and capacity to appropriately manage the environmental aspects of the programme, the programme is acceptable for EIB financing.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The majority of the activities involve the replacement of old metallic pipes with polyethylene ones. The disturbances are therefore minimal and temporary, given that significant trenching is not needed.

Appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to minimise impacts during construction. In densely populated areas, particular attention will be paid to contain the effect of noise, vibrations and traffic disruption during the construction works.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, where required

The promoter and its contractors put significant efforts into good customer engagement and feedback prior to, during and after construction activities, which was observed during appraisal site visits.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The promoter has provided evidence of sound practice with respect to environmental management and confirmed that all new projects are assessed for environmental impact including the impact on sensitive areas which include nature conservation sites.

The promoter has developed an environmental management plan and has established an action plan to follow up its implementation by means of a set of indicators to achieve year on year continuous improvement. The promoter's quality, health, safety and environmental plans are following OSHAS 18001 recommendations and are compatible with ISO 9001:2008 and 14001:2004. However, the promoter is not certified under any of these management systems.

A site visit demonstrated strong engagement with contractors regarding health, safety, security and environmental compliance.

The operation will provide environmental benefits through the reduction of methane leaks. The project comprises the replacement of 878 km of gas distribution pipelines from steel to polyethylene (PE), for which an average of .26 and 0.03 leakage per kilometre has been estimated empirically by the promoter. As the average volume of leaked gas per leakage is 6 424 m³ on this network, the total avoided CO₂ emissions is 18.52 kt CO₂eq, using an equivalent of 14.28 tCO₂eq per 1 000 m³ of methane.