Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	E18 PPP HAMINA-VAALIMAA PRIORITY TEN-T
Project Number:	20130595
Country:	FINLAND
Project Description:	The project is 32 km greenfield 4-lane motorway leading to Russian border. It is part of the Nordic Triangle (Priority TEN-T) and an important route for Finnish and international cargo to Russia. The project is likely to be procured as a PPP.

EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise[1]:	no

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

The project falls under Annex I of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. The EIA was completed by the Finnish Road Administration (now the Finnish Transport Authority (FTA) and approved by the Competent Authority (now called – Kaakkois-Suomi Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment – formerly the Environmental Centre) in 2007-2008 for the section. Wide public consultation was undertaken which included workshops, field visits, and presentation events during the planning phase.

Compliance with the Birds (79/409/EEC) and Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) is required. Four options were examined and option 3(b) was selected which avoids contact with Natura 2000 areas the nearest being 1.5 km north of the future alignment. A number of protected species are endemic to the area viz. Flying squirrel, Otter, Bats, Brown Trout. Three flying squirrel habitats are located near to one (Lelu) intersection with one in conflict. As a result a special environmental permit is required for this area before the project can go ahead. A copy of the permit will be required as a condition for stage 2 disbursement. In addition with respect to the flying squirrels the Competent Authority has voluntarily provided a suitable compensation area located in the area of Miehikkälä some 11 kilometres from the Lelu intersection. The preservation area is a potential suitable habitat for flying squirrels and will have a total area of 10, 78 hectares.

The Promoter has undertaken several inventories of the protected species. Detailed environmental management and mitigation measures have been planned for the construction and operation periods. In addition environmental monitoring is a contractual obligation of the Service Provider during construction and operation, with long term monitoring being undertaken by the FTA. The Competent Authority for Nature Conservation has determined that the project is not likely to have a significant impact on the Natura 2000 sites. The formal declaration on the assessment carried out under Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive and duly signed is a condition for disbursement at stage 2.

The main residual impacts of the project include increased noise, groundwater contamination, heritage (military history), forest denuding, land use changes, severance (flora and fauna and community) and visual aspects. Mitigation measures include noise barriers, landscaping, three animal bridges, five waterway bridges, 30 crossings/access routes along the road, groundwater protection, a 250 m tunnel, 25 km of cycle paths, landscaping along with detailed

[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.

construction management measures. Although 370 Ha of land are being utilised only 2 houses (summer cottages) are to be demolished. Based on the above environmental and social assessment the project is satisfactory to the Bank.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The SEA Directive 2001/42/EC is not applicable to the Project as the project is not carried out as part of a wider plan or programme. However the master plan observing the statute of the Highway Act was approved in 2009 and 2011. Several major planning applications are still outstanding including i) Final approval of the Road Plan (which allows the FTA to acquire lands and construct the road); this is expected in 9/2014 ii) The Nature Conservation Act for the Lelu Flying squirrel habitat area from the Kaakkois-Suomi Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, and iii) Duly signed declaration on the undertaking of an appropriate assessment in line with articles 6.3/6.4for the project. These are to be sent to the Bank before Stage 2 is disbursed.

Four options plus the zero option were considered during the EIA procedure. Alternative 1 near the existing road, alternative 2, the southern motorway option, alternative 3: the northern alternative and option 4: a combination of 1 and 3. Alternative 1 runs through too many urban areas and impacts land use. Alternative 2 affects Saarasjarvi and Sikovuori areas high in biodiversity, and may also obstruct the flying squirrel's movement /paths. Alternative 3 goes around the urban centre of Virojoki in the North and passes close to a N2000 area and may also weaken the breeding sites, resting places and movement paths of the flying squirrel. Alternative 4 goes around the villages of Virojoki and Vaalima, crosses the Salpa (military heritage) line and may weaken the Saarasjarvi (biodiversity) area and could obstruct flying squirrel movements. The chosen alternative 3 was varied (3b) to be further away from the Natura 2000 area, avoids the built up areas, but causes severance for animals. Also the groundwater area of Haavisto (a large area running N-S with a large aquifer) is protected in all alternatives. Mitigating measures that are planned along the route include 3 animal crossings, 25 km of cycle paths along the old corridor, 7 km of noise barriers of which 4 km will be embankments. A 250 m long twin tunnel will also be constructed in Rasa-ahonmaki in Vaalimaa.

One of the main impacts of the project will be potential pollution to the ground water aquifer. A 1 km ground soil protection system will be put in place in the central area of the road and in the ditches in Haavisto area. The motorway crosses five narrow rivers. 32 other bridges will be built for the passage of pedestrians and animals and to reduce disturbance. In addition to the three animal bridges planned many small culverts are also planned to facilitate animal travel. Water filtration ponds will be used to collect runoff. The construction of the road will not take place close to Natura 2000 area.

Flying squirrel habitats have been taken into account in the planning of the motorway alignment and these have been avoided when possible. The motorway has been narrowed to improve the opportunities for flying squirrels to cross the road, reducing the drawbacks caused by breaks to the ecological corridor. There will be several feeding and resting areas close to the road and forests well suited for flying squirrels. The flying squirrel area at the Lelu intersection consists of three different forest patches, one of which will be situated under the planned road alignment. No solutions were found to reduce impacts in the general plan 2009 of the intersection. In the road plan it has been stated that the habitat of the flying squirrel will be disturbed, for this reason a special permit based on the Nature Conservation Act has to be applied. The act decrees that a special permit from the environmental authority will be required for the project. The permit will be finalized during 2014.

As the construction works at the Lelu intersection will have an impact on parts of the flying squirrel habitat it was seen as a preferable course of action to voluntarily compensate for the disruption to the flying squirrel habitat. The compensation measure has been selected as a piloting scheme to study the effects of compensation measures in connection to activities that have a harmful effect on the environment. A suitable compensation area was located in the

area of Miehikkälä some 11 kilometres from the Lelu intersection. The preservation area is a potential suitable habitat for flying squirrels and will have a total area of 10, 78 hectares.

The upgrading of this international road connection will result in economic benefits, including journey time savings and safety benefits from improved road design. Residents along and using the current single carriageway road have to endure long queues from HGVs along with traffic noise and heavy emissions. Green House emissions will decrease along the old route due to lower levels of traffic and speeds.

A preliminary Road Safety Audit of the designs for the motorway has been completed. A preliminary safety audit of the tunnel has also been prepared. The construction drawings and any amendments will also be audited as part of the approval process.

Social Assessment

The PPP Co (contractor) will be required to prepare safety plans including safety rules, site organisation plans, traffic arrangements, fire and rescue plans etc. They are also responsible to prepare safety procedures such as orientation and familiarization for employees and subcontractors and organise authorization/ passes for moving in the construction area.
Land acquisition will take place in the 4th Q 2014. The following numbers of persons are directly impacted by the project: motorway and truck parking area: 275 persons; highway: 55 persons; roads in central Virojoki 20 persons; private roads 200 persons.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The residents of the area as well as other interest groups have had the opportunity to participate in the planning and in the assessment of environmental impacts. The progress of the project has been communicated via press, the internet, e-mail, and letters.

At the early stage of the EIA procedure in March 2007, a seminar for the establishment of the goals and starting points for the project was held, in which representatives of the authorities related to the project and of other stakeholder groups participated. The first public event was organised in June 2007 during the assessment programme's period of display for public inspection. The second public event was organised in March 2008 during the assessment report's period of display for public inspection. The public events have been presentation and discussion events open to everyone.

In April and October 2007 two workshop events were organised for the stakeholder groups and the residents of the area. Representatives of the municipalities and of the organisations and businesses operating in the planning area were invited to the workshops. In addition, a walk in the terrain was organised for the residents and the stakeholder groups in September 2007, during which the different alternative alignments were examined on the site.
There have been consultations on the General Plan and the Road Plan via hearings, workshops, site visits along with direct negotiations during 2012 and 2013. Issues related to local land owners comments and the environment. These comments have been taken on board as required.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Vaalimaa border station is the busiest border crossing site on the Finnish-Russian Border with an average of 1.2 million vehicles and 2.6 million passengers at peak annually. The traffic at the border is expected to increase in the medium term, with the new road. A 500 space parking area for trucks is to be constructed as part of the project in addition to the current one and will include toilets, showers, reservation for kiosks. The municipality at Vaalimaa will also contribute to financing the lighting, streets, light traffic lanes, and general construction. The truck park will help alleviate the long queues caused from the laden trucks queuing on the Finnish side (at the Border) and which can be as long as 10 km. A truck reservation system will be implemented at the park.
Flying squirrels

The effects of the preservation area will be followed as part of the general environmental effects monitoring of the project to ensure the settlement of the habitat by flying squirrels as intended. As flying squirrel feeding -and resting areas move from year to year the road area and nearby areas must be inspected each year before start of construction. If new nesting trees or resting areas are detected, new special permits must be applied for. During spring 2013 a new nature inventory of flying squirrels was carried out in the Lelu area (5 sites). No observations (droppings) have been made in any of the areas including the breeding habitats found earlier in year 2011. During construction yearly control visits will be made and controls will also be implemented 2 and 5 years after construction.
Monitoring of the flying squirrels at the Lelu intersection will be done in order to gain useful information on flying squirrel behaviour, territories and nesting areas. Monitoring will also be done as part of the compensation monitoring at the Miehikkälä preservation site.