

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: Autovía A23 (Caldearenas-Lanave, Congosto de Isuela-Arguis)
 Project Number: 20140025 (12-HU-5700, 12-HU-5730)
 Country: SPAIN
 Project Description: Construction of 15.3 km of the A-23 (2x2) motorway in Huesca, upgrading the current N-330. Sections: i) Caldearenas-Lanave (KP 595+500 to KP 614+000) and, ii) Congosto de Isuela-Arguis (KP 589+000 to KP 592+000)

EIA required: yes

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: yes

(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 project is included in the PITVI (Plan de Infraestructuras, Transporte y Vivienda 2012-2024) for which the SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) is being performed in compliance with the EU SEA Directive 2001/142, transposed into the Spanish Law 9/2006. The consultation period was recently closed (14.03.2014) with no major complaints.

The project is located in Huesca and includes the construction of 15.3 km of the A-23 (2x2) motorway, upgrading the current N-330 road. The project comprises two road sections: i) Caldearenas-Lanave (12 km - scheme 12-HU-5730 -) and, ii) Congosto de Isuela-Arguis (3.3 km – scheme 12-HU-5700 -). The project falls under the scope of Annex I of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. Both road sections were considered in the same preliminary design and share the same Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The full EIA was carried out under the Environmental Spanish Law RD 1302/1986, including public consultation (PC). The Environmental Decision (EIS) was issued by the Competent Authority on the 04.12.2002 and, according to the current Environmental Law (21/2013), is in force until December 2019.

The project is located in a forested area, in the vicinity of three Natura 2000 sites. During the EIA procedure and in line with the Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (79/409/EEC) Directives, all the potentially affected protected sites have been analysed. Form A has been provided to the Bank confirming these facts. The EIS provides mitigation and protection measures, reflected in the construction designs, which are observed during execution, guaranteeing no major impact of the project to the environment. In particular, the project includes a viaduct (350m long) to cross the Guarga River, designed to minimize the impact to its protected riverbed.

The project's impact at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable. At operation stage, the major impacts will be connected to noise and pollution and road use generated waste. However the final design includes mitigation measures to reduce the project's impact to legal thresholds. The project has no particular residual impacts apart from those normally expected from road construction. The institutional capacity of the Promoter to manage the environmental issues is deemed high and therefore the project is acceptable for the Bank in environmental and social terms.

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.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project is aiming at completing two missing links of the A-23 (a total of 15.3 km) facilitating the connection between Sagunto and Jaca and comprises two sections: i) Caldearenas-Lanave (12km) (scheme 12-HU-5730) and, ii) Congosto de Isuela-Arguis (3.3km) (12-HU-5700). The motorway A-23 from Sagunto to Huesca (367 km) is in operation since 2008, however its connections to the north of Spain (Jaca) and with the Atlantic-Mediterranean axe (A-21) are still uncompleted.

The project comprises the upgrading of part of the N-330 to motorway design standards (2x2). Particularly, works include the widening of the current N-330 in one direction (1x2) plus the construction of a new carriageway (1x2) in the other direction. In some minor sections, works include the construction of new road (2x2) with motorway standards. The project includes four tunnels, two of which (length above 500m) are being constructed and upgraded according to the EU Directive 2004/54/EC on minimum safety requirements for tunnels. In addition, the project also includes nine viaducts, one of which crosses the Guarga River located in a Natura 2000 site.

Both project sections included in the project were considered in the same preliminary design and share the same EIA. The preliminary design was launched by Ministerio de Fomento (MdF) in 2000. The project falls under Annex I of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU and therefore was subject to EIA, including PC. The EIS was issued by the Competent Authority ("Secretaría General de Medioambiente") on the 04.12.2002 and is still in force. Mitigation and protecting measures have been considered in the designs guaranteeing no major impact on the protected sites and species (mainly fishes -european nase- and mammals -otter-).

The project is located in a forested area, not inhabited. There are 3 Natura 2000 sites located in the vicinity of the project (SPA ES00000 and SCI ES2410025 "Sierra y Cañones de Guara" and SCI ES2410067 "La Guarguera"). During the EIA procedure, all potentially affected protected sites, habitats and species have been analysed in line with the Habitats and Birds Directives.

During construction, the project will increase noise levels, and will impact water and air quality. Affected trees will be protected in appropriate manner and tree clearance will be conducted out the nesting season. Mitigation measures considered in the designs include drainage systems, management of earthworks (that are balanced), location of waste and landfills, animal crossings, separate cleaning areas for machinery and reparation of the vegetation damaged with local species. There are no archeological sites identified in the vicinity of the project. Original shepherd houses will be respected and repaired when needed. Affected flock crossings will be repaired, as for instance the called "Cañada Real de Monrepós" that will be reconstructed as cycle path. The project's impact at the construction stage will be short-lived and reversible, at a level which is deemed acceptable.

Particular attention is given to cross the Guarga River, registered within a Natura 2000 site (SCI ES2410067 "La Guarguera"). Accordingly, a special bridge has been designed, saving the distance of 350m in just three supports to guarantee the minimum interference to the riverbed. The construction of the viaduct includes protection measures (i.e: animal crossings, etc.) to preserve habitat connectivity.

At operation stage, the major impacts will be connected to noise and pollution and road use generated waste however the project includes adequate environmental measures to mitigate this impact. Furthermore, the new layout of the road, with its viaduct over the Guarga River will decrease interferences to the riverbed, improving original habitat conditions. In addition, the project is expected to bring about environmental benefits as a result of the reduction of the local traffic-related emissions thanks to the improvement of traffic conditions, in particular those linked to long distance travelers.

The above-mentioned measures are considered as adequate.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

CO2 estimates have been calculated on the following basis:

- Estimated annual third party greenhouse emissions (vehicular use, from existing and generated demand) from the use of the project in a standard year of operation; Forecast absolute (gross) emissions are 16,378 tonnes of CO2 equivalent per year; and
- Forecast emissions increase in 3,608 tonnes of CO2 equivalent per year, as travel distances for segments of long-distance traffic attracted to the project, and the traffic is increased. The project boundaries are:
 - Existing network comprising the existing N-330 road in the route of the new motorway sections, and the already completed sections of the A-23.
 - In the “with project” case, in addition the 15 km new motorway built under the project.
- The baseline is the forecast third party emissions, in the absence of the project, from the existing network. The forecasts reflect the Services’ assumptions on traffic, traffic growth, speed flow, infrastructure capacity and fuel consumption. The absolute emission forecast includes both the existing and additional network.
- For the annual accounting purposes of the EIB Carbon Footprint, the project emissions will be prorated according to the EIB lending amount signed in that year, as a proportion of project cost.

Social Assessment

Expropriations are carried out in line with the Spanish Law. According to the information provided by the promoter, 100% of the land (some of 64 plots) affected by the project, has been already provided to the contractors. The project will not entail involuntary resettlement and up to date, no major complaints regarding land acquisitions were raised during the public consultation phase.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

PC was carried out in 2001 as part of each EIA process, in conformity with EU Directives and Spanish Legislation. During PC, complaints and remarks received (both from public and private stakeholders) were incorporated in the EIA and resulted in a number of guidelines reflected in the final design.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The project has an environmental supervisor from the promoter to guarantee the implementation of all the environmental measures included in the EIS.

The new road includes safety measures in line with the technical characteristics of the road, contributing to upgrade the road network to current safety standards and improve road safety in the region.