Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	SWM SANDBANK OFFSHORE WINDPARK
Project Number:	20140445
Country:	Germany
Project Description:	288 MW Offshore wind farm located approx. 90 km west of the island Sylt in the German sector of the North Sea.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbor	1 Footprint Exercise ¹ : 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

By virtue of its technical characteristics the project falls under Annex II of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive 2011/92/EU (amended 2014/52/EU). According to national law the project is subject to a mandatory EIA, which was undertaken in 2003. Following rounds of public consultation and expert advice, the competent authority has approved the EIA in 2004 and granted a general, conditional construction and operating permit. With adequate precautionary and mitigation measures, the impacts on fauna and flora, including on local and migrating birds, marine mammals, benthos and invertebrates are considered to be acceptable.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

Offshore wind farms located in the German Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) were subject to a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA). The EIA was undertaken in 2003 by a project developer prior to the purchase of the project by the promoter's joint venture partner in 2011. The EIS was complemented by an Appropriate Assessment (AA) study (according to Habitat's Directive 92/43/EEC) on request of the competent authority aiming at assessing impacts on non-priority habitats, plants and animals as per Annex I, II of the directive. The project's distance to the Natura2000 site "Sylter Aussenriff" is ~12km.

Following rounds of public consultation and expert advice, the competent authority approved the EIA in 2004 and granted a general, conditional construction and operating permit. As common for these projects in the German EEZ, permits are granted partially, as the project progresses and subject to regular, continuous environmental assessments and satisfactory fulfilment of conditions.

Key conditions of the permit concern its limited validity linked to the start of construction at the latest by 12/2016 and completion of construction within one calendar year. Moreover, biennial environmental baseline studies (incl. surveys for mammals, birds, benthos and fish) are required, the latest of which should be up-to-date less than a year prior to construction. At present, the project's last baseline study dates from 2006. An update is envisaged.

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.

Based on the current analysis and approvals and with adequate precautionary and mitigation measures, the impacts on fauna and flora, including on local and migrating birds, marine mammals, benthos and invertebrates are considered to be acceptable. Following the results of the AA, the competent authority has further strengthened its strict conditions for underwater noise prevention measures during the installation of foundations (hammering) to protect harbour porpoise populations. As there is at present no such technology available that would allow staying below acceptable noise limits, works might have to be halted during the spring season.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

The direct CO2 emission of an offshore wind farm is deemed negligible.

In accordance with the Bank's current Carbon Footprint methodology it is calculated that based on the avoidance of electricity generation from a combination of existing and new power plants in Germany (75% operating margin and 25% build margin) the total relative effect of the project is a net reduction in CO2 equivalent emissions by 940 kt CO2e/yr.

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.