

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: EU FUNDS GALICIA CO-FINANCING 2014-2020
 Project Number: 20140487
 Country: Spain
 Project Description: The project, structured as a Structural Programme Loan, will support the Spanish 2014-2020 Partnership Agreement (PA) in Galicia focusing on two regional programmes; the Regional Operational Programme (ROP), and the Rural Development Programme (RDP)

EIA required: yes

This is multi-scheme multi-sector Structural Programme Loan operation which falls under the SEA Directive. An SEA is required. Some of the schemes may fall under Annex I or Annex II of the EIA Directive and have to be screened by the Competent Authority. Should any scheme fall under Annex I or be “screened in” under Annex II, the Promoter shall deliver the NTS of EIAs to the Bank, if applicable, before the Bank funds are allocated.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

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

The project, structured as a Structural Programme Loan, will support the Spanish 2014-2020 Partnership Agreement (PA) in Galicia focusing on two regional operational programmes; the Regional Operational Programme (ROP), and the Rural Development Programme (RDP). The investment will focus on the following priorities: research, development and innovation; information and communication technologies, including the development of e-government and e-commerce; enhancement of natural resources including forest management; sustainable transport; natural disasters prevention measures, climate action including energy efficiency and renewable energy; and basic infrastructure in rural areas.

The Operational Programmes were approved by the Galician authorities and have been submitted to the European Commission for approval. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out for both Operational Programmes. The public consultations for the SEAs began during the third quarter 2014 and are currently on-going; The SEAs have not identified any significant effect on the environment. The Bank is closely following the procedure, and the Promoter will inform the Bank on the outcome of the procedure and how any issues raised are addressed.

Some infrastructure schemes under this Structural Programme Loan are expected to fall under the EIA Directive, either under Annex I or Annex II. Should any scheme under this Structural Program Loan (SPL) fall under Annex II and be “screened in” by the Competent Authority, or fall under Annex I, the Promoter shall deliver the NTS of EIAs to the Bank, if applicable, before the Bank funds are allocated. The SEA contains appropriate conditions for each axis and/or measure.

One of the focal areas of the operation is afforestation, forest management and fire-fighting, under the aegis of the Rural Development Programme. These investments in Galicia’s ‘green infrastructure’ are expected to deliver multiple environmental benefits, including improved forest ecosystem health, improved greenhouse gas sequestration, reduced soil erosion,

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.

contribution to nature protection objectives and an increase in the use of forest-derived bioenergy.

The programme contributes to both greenhouse gas **mitigation** and **adaptation** to climate change impacts. As fires contribute to CO₂ emissions, measures to tackle them help to mitigate this source of greenhouse gas emissions. The trend towards longer, hotter and drier summers is an important driver of the expected increase in forest fire risk. The forest management practices promoted by this programme help to adapt to and to counteract these increased risks, and improved forest access roads will facilitate effective fighting of those fires that do occur.

Overall, the environmental and social impact is expected to be positive. It's expected that the investments under the present SPL will contribute to: diversify the Galician economy, increase its competitiveness, improve the environmental conditions and quality of life.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Legal Framework

Spain, as an EU Member State, has harmonised its environmental legislation in line with the relevant EU Directives, the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and the Habitats and Birds Directives 2009/147/EC. Projects that will receive environmental permits after the enactment of the new Directive on EIA in 2017, will fall under the new EU Directive.

Environmental Assessment

The intervention financed by the Bank will focus on the following sectors: research, and development and innovation; information and communication technologies, including the development of e-government and e-commerce, enhancement of natural resources, sustainable transport, natural disasters prevention measures and climate change, including energy efficiency and renewable energy, forestry and basic infrastructure in rural areas.

The Operational Programmes' implementation will generate several positive effects on different sectors of the environment, while for any negative effects mitigation measures are proposed.

It's expected that the implementation of the Regional Operational Programme will have positive externalities, such as biodiversity, cultural and natural landscape protection, improvement of water and soil quality, climate change adaptation and mitigation. The negative effects will be limited in time and space and the majority of them can be addressed at project level. Overall, it's expected that 83.19%-92.86% of the investments under the Regional Operational Programme will have net positive impact.

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) will also generate net positive externalities while addressing the main challenges of the Galician region, including the degradation of traditional landscape and biodiversity loss, forest fires, greenhouse emissions due to agriculture activities, erosion and deforestation, soil and water pollution.

Institutional Capacity of the Promoter

The experience from the previous programming period 2007-2013 showed that all projects falling under the EU EIA Directive and "screened in" for EIA were managed in line with the requirements under the Directive and the national legislative framework. The Bank received all necessary documents relating to the EIA process and concerned protected areas under Natura 2000. The Promoter's institutional capacity to manage social and environmental risks within the framework of this operation is therefore considered to be satisfactory.