

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: HIGHWAYS IX
 Project Number: 2014-0595
 Country: Slovenia
 Project Description: The project concerns the construction of a motorway section on the A4, the upgrading of an interchange on the A2 and investments in electro-mechanical equipment, ITS and control centres.

EIA required: yes

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: 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

The project concerns the construction of 13.031 km of a new dual 2-lane motorway section between Draženci and the border with Croatia in Gruškovje, along the corridor A4 Slivnica-Republic of Croatia. The project includes as well the upgrade of the Šmarje-Sap junction in the A2 Karavanke-Obrežje motorway, the rehabilitation of several motorway sections and various investments in electro-mechanical equipment (EM), intelligent transport systems (ITS) and control centres across the Slovenian motorway network.

The main component of the project, the motorway section Draženci-Gruškovje, is included in the National Spatial Plan for the Ptuj (Draženci)–Gruškovje motorway section, subject to an Strategic Environmental Assessment according to the SEA Directive 2001/42/EU. The SEA was issued in July 2007 and completed in March 2010.

The construction of the new motorway section and the upgrade of the Šmarje-Sap junction fall under Annex I of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. In both cases, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), including public consultation, has been carried out by the promoter DARS². The EIAs have been developed according to the Slovenian Law and Non-Technical Summaries (NTSS) are available. The road rehabilitation schemes and the investments in EM, ITS and control centres do not require an EIA.

There are two Natura 2000 sites bordering the planned motorway section: Haloze – Vinorodne (SCI - SI3000117) and Boč – Haloze – Donačka gora (SCI - SI3000118). Following the assessment carried out under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the competent authority has confirmed that the project will not have any significant impact on protected areas (Form A has been provided). None of the other components of the project is close to any Natura 2000 areas.

As an undertaking, the Borrower shall provide final building permits. Subject to the fulfilment of this condition, the project is satisfactory to 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.

² DRUŽBA ZA AVTOCESTE V REPUBLIKI SLOVENIJI, d.d., Toll Motorway Company of Slovenia. The sole founder and shareholder of DARS is the Republic of Slovenia.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

As a Member State of the EU, Slovenia has harmonised its environmental legislation with the relevant EU Directives, which obliges DARS to obtain an environmental clearance after studies and public consultations in line with common EU practices. Thus, EIAs have been undertaken for the new motorway section Draženci-Gruškovje and for the interchange Šmarje-Sap, subsequent to the corresponding screening as per the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. The road rehabilitation schemes and the investments in EM, ITS and control centres do not require an EIA.

The new motorway section affects tangentially two Natura 2000 areas: the far western part of the area Haloze – Vinorodne (SCI - SI3000117) and the eastern part of the area Boč – Haloze – Donačka gora (SCI - SI3000118). Incursion of this component of the project into the two Natura areas is limited to their respective boundaries. A declaration from the competent authority (Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning) on the assessment carried out under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) is available (Form A). Appropriate mitigation measures have been considered.

The area of influence of the motorway section Draženci-Gruškovje affects as well the ecosystem and hydrologic conditions of the natural assets of national importance Rogatnica and Tržec-Gramoznica. Mitigation measures are envisaged to preserve natural vegetation and the natural profile of the stream, including the replacement of the natural habitat for the Dusky Large Blue butterfly.

The additional negative impacts of the project both during construction and operation are those associated to the main components (Draženci-Gruškovje section and Šmarje-Sap interchange). At construction stage, the project will mainly increase noise and vibration levels, and will impact air quality, surface water, flora and fauna, landscape and cultural heritage. Similar impacts may be reported at operation stage. Proportionate mitigation measures have been prescribed, including creation of crossings for fauna, replacement habitats, preservation of existing hydrological regime or archaeological research and protective excavations. For both the motorway section and the Šmarje-Sap interchange, noise mitigation measures are foreseen in order to reduce noise emissions at their source, by prescribing the adequate pavement solutions, and to prevent the expansion of noise into the environment, by means of more than 9 km of noise barriers. The project envisages as well the implementation of noise passive protection in those buildings more directly exposed.

The new motorway section is expected to generate environmental and social benefits due to the improvement in traffic conditions and road safety in the villages along the existing main road, which would no longer suffer from traffic congestion. In addition, as the motorway section will assume the majority of transit and a considerable portion of regional traffic, noise protection will be significantly improved in the parallel road network. Safety conditions across the entire Slovenian motorway network will be enhanced as well through specific investments on safety equipment.

The project includes the rearrangement of the international border crossing in Gruškovje, which is still part of the external borders of the European Union, since Croatia has not yet joined the Schengen Area. Improved traffic conditions are likely to extend over the crossing border to the adjacent section of the Croatian motorway A2, especially when Croatia becomes part of Schengen.

Social Assessment

Overall, around 225 ha of land will be used for the project (the majority of them correspond to the new motorway section). Out of them, 81,494 m² need to be expropriated, i.e. 3.6%. The

Promoter is in the process of acquiring the land required for both the Draženci-Gruškovje motorway section and for the Šmarje-Sap interchange. None of the other components of the project (road rehabilitation schemes and the investments in EM, ITS and control centres) requires land acquisition.

As part of the noise mitigation measures along the new motorway section corridor, demolition of some individual residential buildings is prescribed and therefore minor resettlement is expected. Appropriate compensation is envisaged as per the Slovenian law.

No major complaint was raised on land acquisition issues during public consultation or after.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The National Spatial Plan for the Draženci-MMP Gruškovje motorway section has been subject to several public consultation processes since its inception in 2002 (public hearings in October 2004, September-October 2006, January-February and November 2009).

As part of the approval process of the EIA for the motorway section Draženci-Gruškovje and pursuant to Paragraph 3 of Article 58 of the Slovenian Environmental Protection Act (ZVO-1), a public consultation took place from 25 April 2012 to 24 May 2012. Previous consent for the planned development has been obtained from the relevant concerned public authorities.