Luxembourg, 9 June 2015

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ST MAARTEN FIBRE TO THE HOME (FTTH)
Project Number:	2014-0567
Country:	Sint Maarten
Project Description:	The project concerns the rollout of an optical fibre access network on the island of Sint Maarten (Dutch part of the island) in order to provide high speed fixed broadband telecom services to residential and business users. Based on this network the promoter will be able to provide triple play (voice, internet, TV) services to around 14 500 homes.
EIA required:	No
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise[1]:	No

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

If located in Europe, such investments in fixed telecommunications networks (e.g. civil works investments for optical fibre access networks and transmission systems) would not fall under Annex I or II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EC.

The passive underground fibre network together with the efficient active equipment will have very limited residual environmental effects during operation, but might create some disturbances during the construction phase, which will be mitigated by appropriate measures.

The reuse of existing ducting systems and the stringent procedures of the competent authorities will help to avoid unnecessary trenching works and should limit the impact during construction.

Therefore this project can be classified in environmental terms as acceptable for the Bank.

[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

If the project would be located in Europe, the relevant legislation ("Habitats" Directive 92/43/EEC and related Natura 2000 protection sites) would not include any provision regarding telecoms infrastructures, since individual schemes are small and not expected to have any significant negative impact.

In general and also in Sint Maarten, underground cable installation works require an approval by the competent authorities. The local authorities are rather stringent in the assessment of trenching works and inform also other utilities of planned activities in order to avoid double work as much as possible. The advantage of this process is that general traffic and tourist areas are as little as possible affected by such works, however it may result in longer rollout duration. A natural mitigation measure, that will reduce trenching works, is the wide availability of existing ducts that can be reused for this project too. Based on the experience with other similar projects there will be only a temporary impact during construction and a very limited direct impact during the operational phase due to the small network size.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The wide spread availability of broadband networks is one of the key pillars for the implementation of initiatives aiming at improving the sustainability of society, like smart grids or smart cities. The programme does therefore have a strong contribution to overall environmental and social sustainability.