

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

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| Project Name:  | AFFORESTATION AND EROSION CONTROL III  |
| Project Number:  | 2015-0022  |
| Country:   | Turkey   |
| Project Description:   | Supporting forest rehabilitation, afforestation and erosion control activities in Turkey during the 2016-17 period through the Ministry of Forestry and Water Works. |
| EIA required:  | no   |
| Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>1</sup> : | yes  |

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

The operation is a programme of investments focussed on afforestation, improved forest management and erosion control measures in Turkey. It is a continuation of two operations between 2011 and 2015 with the same promoter. The activities will take place around the country.

Afforestation projects are included in Annex II of the EIA Directive and are generally screened out by the competent authorities (i.e. do not require a full EIA) in the case of afforestation/reforestation of existing forest land.

Public sector forestry and erosion control activities are exempt from EIA in Turkey. All the forests in Turkey are managed according to detailed Forest Management Plans, and the projects included in the programme will be implemented within the framework of these Plans. In addition, an Implementation Plan is systematically carried out. This covers environmental suitability, species selection, plantation density, soil, vegetation, topography, slope and other considerations relating to technical feasibility and site suitability. Consultation with and approval of local land users is a criterion for site selection. The procedures are considered to be consistent with EU practices. Turkey, as a candidate country, is deemed to follow the EU's EIA Directives. However, there is a possibility that some of the related works – storage facilities, small-scale infrastructure – may require an EIA. Therefore, an undertaking has been included in order to avoid that funds are allocated to schemes that require an EIA according to EU and/or national law.

Because of the project's focus on afforestation, erosion control and forest rehabilitation works, it is likely to deliver multiple environmental benefits. The project is expected to contribute to both EU and Turkish environmental policy objectives in the fields of climate change, biodiversity and soil management. In particular, the programme contributes to both climate change mitigation and adaptation. Growing forests sequester carbon and standing forest ecosystems are important carbon stocks. Meanwhile, the increasing droughts and intense precipitation are likely to exacerbate the already serious problem of soil erosion. The present operation's extensive measures to address this are a valuable step towards adapting to this increased risk.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 CO<sub>2</sub>e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO<sub>2</sub>e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Implementation of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification is currently being extended in Turkey, with significant progress in recent years.

### **Environmental Assessment**

The programme is expected to deliver multiple environmental benefits. It will sequester greenhouse gases, protect against soil erosion, protect water resources, enhance biodiversity and improve forest ecosystem health. It is in support of the Turkish government's ambitious plans to address climate change and improve natural resource management, which underpin economic growth and sustainability.

The operation complies with applicable national and EU legislation on sustainable forest management and safeguarding of protected areas. The General Directorate of Forests also carries out a range of activities in support of resolutions under the Forest Europe process (the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe), as well as the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Soil erosion is a severe problem in Turkey. The majority of the country's soils are prone to erosion risk due to the country's topography and steep slopes. The present operation will continue to support Turkey's ongoing programme of soil erosion mitigation works.

The Country's Strategic Plan includes a range of quantitative annual performance indicators. These include coverage of enhanced forest management plans which integrate biodiversity conservation; implementation of improved silvicultural measures to improve timber output from productive stands; achieve 30% forest cover by 2017; fight erosion; and increase area of forest covered by certification (FSC). A selection of these performance indicators will be tracked during project monitoring. All Turkey's forests are managed according to detailed Forest Management Plans, and the projects included in the programme will be implemented within the framework of these Plans. In addition, an Implementation Plan is systematically carried out for all afforestation projects in Turkey. This covers environmental suitability, species selection, plantation density, soil, vegetation, topography, slope and other considerations relating to technical feasibility and site suitability. Consultation with and approval of local land users is a criterion for site selection.

### **EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise**

When the full programme has been implemented, the estimated overall absolute annual sequestration of the project in a standard year is estimated to be approximately 840 kT CO<sub>2e</sub>. This breaks down as 120 kT CO<sub>2e</sub> on the 20,000 ha rehabilitated forest; and about 720 Kt CO<sub>2e</sub> on the 80,000 ha of newly planted forest. The annual sequestration of the degraded forests without the project is estimated at 60 kT CO<sub>2e</sub> on the respective 20,000 ha. The net effect (relative) of the project is thus an additional sequestration of 780 kT CO<sub>2e</sub>.

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**

Disputes over ownership, boundaries and rights of use have characterized the recent history of Turkish forests. Completion of forest cadastral surveys and settlement of ownership disputes is a priority challenge. Furthermore, approximately 25% of the Turkish population lives either within or on the margins of the forest, or within a 10 km radius of a forest area. These people tend to have significantly lower income than the remaining 75% of the population. Many depend on the forest for fuelwood, grazing and other traditional uses. Managing forests to meet these needs, while preventing overexploitation, and taking local people's interests into account in planning further forest expansions, are essential for the long-term success of the activities supported within this operation.

Luxembourg, 16 October 2015

In conducting new afforestation and erosion control works, the interests of local people and forest villagers are taken into account. If disagreements arise, the authorities will propose an alternative, but ultimately the consent of the local people is essential if the works are to proceed. In certain limited cases, financial compensation may be provided (by the Ministry for Disaster Recovery).