

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	TI Rete Mobile A Banda Larga
Project Number:	2012 0239
Country:	Italy
Project Description:	The project concerns the promoter's investments in Italy to increase the availability and quality of very high speed mobile broadband services. It will comprise the installation of more than 10,000 new access nodes and thus introduce 4G/LTE based services to 28m inhabitants (45% of population) and improve coverage of 3G/UMTS based services to an additional 3.6m inhabitants (from 84% to 90% of population) in Italy.
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

The project activities do not fall under Annexes I and II of the EU Directive 2011/92/EC, and are therefore not subject to mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments. Generally, mobile networks based on UMTS/LTE technology have limited environmental effects.

The majority of new equipment will be put on existing sites. It is estimated that about 15% new sites will be erected. The impact, such as the radiation emissions or the visual detracting, from new towers and additional equipment at existing sites will be checked by the competent authorities and mitigated by appropriate construction and operation measures.

Potential health risks from electromagnetic radiation are still being studied at an international level, but WHO classified them in 2011 as being possibly carcinogenic to humans based on a review of recent studies. Therefore, more research on the link between cell phones and the cancer risk is proposed and users are asked to handle the cell phone more carefully particularly in the case of high usage. Still, the ICNIRP² thresholds are considered appropriate. Italy has implemented the principles of the EU recommendations (1999/519/EC), which are based on the ICNIRP principles, but have lowered the effective emission thresholds by 10 times below the EU recommendation.

The project part related to equipment renewal will create high savings due to lower power consumption of the new equipment. These savings partly compensate for the additional CO₂ emissions generated by the additional 4G/LTE nodes.

The project is classified as B, i.e. "acceptable, with minor negative residual impacts".

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 The International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

According to the latest EU implementation report prepared by BiPro in May 2008, the EU recommendation (1999/519/EC) on exposure limits (based on the ICNIRP³ principles) has been transposed in 2003 into national law. The Italian legislation has set even more stringent radiation emission thresholds (attention level) which are a 1/10 of the levels specified in the above EU recommendation for the 1 800 MHz frequency band. Italy has beside Belgium and Swiss the lowest emission levels in Europe.

The erection of new sites requires a building permit, which is combined with environmental assessments by the competent authorities. Therefore the promoter needs to prepare for new installations planning documents including a calculation of the expected radiation. Once the competent authorities approved the request including potential mitigation measures the construction can be started. In case of environmental protected areas such as nature conservation or heritage sites, a deepened environmental assessment is done by the competent authorities, often resulting in more stringent mitigation measures.

It is estimated that the current number of sites will increase only by about 15%, as new equipment will be often installed at existing sites. The project part related to equipment renewal will create high savings due to lower power consumption of the new equipment. These savings partly compensate for the additional CO2 emissions generated by the additional 4G/LTE nodes.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The promoter is very active and ambitious in its overall corporate social standards. All activities, targets and achievements are published in a separate annual sustainability report. The data contained in the report comprises Telecom Italia's significant impacts on its stakeholders, compared to economy, environment and society. The performance analysis and the associated reporting of the results are based on a multi-stakeholder approach and uses around 200 KPI (Key Performance Indicators), defined on the basis of the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) guidelines, the demands of stakeholders and the checklists of the leading rating agencies.

Based on this work the promoter managed to get listed in various sustainability indexes among which are the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index, FTSE4Good Global, FTSE4Good Environmental Leaders Europe and Ethibel Sustainability Indexes.

The own social standards are similarly imposed onto the suppliers, which need to sign up for Telecom Italia's Ethical Code, which transposes completely the UN principles of Global Compact. A further critical requirement for suppliers is the implementation of environmental certification such as ISO 14 001 and EMAS. The assessment of the suppliers is even expanded to the level of their factories, which are inspected on site by a Joint Audit Cooperation (JAC) which is a common initiative by European Telecom operators to check the social standards of suppliers on a worldwide basis.

³ The International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection