Luxembourg, 10 March 2016

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	*ENERGIEPARK BRUCK ONSHORE WIND*
Project Number:	*2015-0689*
Country:	*Austria*
Project Description:	*Construction and operation of two wind parks and a single wind turbine in the Austrian Federal States of Lower Austria and Burgenland, respectively. The project has a total capacity of 39 MW. The two wind farms were appraised already as part of operation ENERGIEPARK BRUCK WIND POWER (2012-0061).*

EIA required: yes
(An EIA is pursued only for a part of the project. The corresponding NTSs will eventually be published on EIB website.)

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise[1]: yes
(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project relates to three wind farms in the Austrian federal states of Lower Austria and Burgenland, respectively. The greater project region is a relatively sensitive bird area with several Special Protection Areas present.

Scheme Bruckneudorf is located inside a preferential development zone of the wind power development plan of Burgenland which is based upon an SEA. Hof and Seibersdorf had already been granted their re-zoning decision before Lower Austria had established such wind power development plan. However, the location of both schemes is nevertheless located inside the preferential development zones of the plan that has entered into force later.

Wind farms fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. It is therefore up to the Member State's competent authority to judge whether an individual wind farm requires an EIA or not, based on criteria defined in Annex III of the EIA Directive. In line with national legislation, wind farms Seibersdorf (above 20 MW) and Bruckneudorf (above 20 MW when factoring-in neighbouring wind farms) were screened-in, whilst scheme Hof (below 20 MW with no neighbouring wind farms during authorisation) was screened out.

Schemes Seibersdorf and Hof (comprising 12 wind turbines in total) are also part of operation ENERGIEPARK BRUCK WIND POWER (2012-0061) with the same promoter. The due diligence of that preceding operation back in 2012 had confirmed the promoter's adequate environmental management capacity. This is further confirmed by monitoring experience gained since then. At the time of the corresponding appraisal, however, the two schemes Seibersdorf and Hof were at an early authorisation stage and corresponding loan conditions were proposed.

Since then, both wind farms have finalised their authorisation processes.

Both wind farms are located on agricultural land and outside protected areas. They are just a few km distant to each other. The closest Natura 2000 site for both projects is the Site of Community Interest (SCI) and Special Protection Area (SPA) "Feuchte Ebene Leithaauen" (AT1220V00, AT1220000). It is less than 1 km distant to the closest turbines. Further Natura 2000 sites are within 3-10 km to the two schemes. Consequently, Appropriate Assessments

[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.

in line with EU Directives were carried out in both authorisation procedures, concluding that the projects have no significant impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites.

In both authorisation processes concerns were raised during consultation. In the case of Seibersdorf, these were raised by residents of the project area and relating to a broad scope of issues from visual impacts to infrasound risks. Further, an Austrian authority raised concerns about project impacts on civil aviation radar systems. In the case of Hof, some residents of the project area raised concerns about noise impacts in particular. In all cases, the competent authorities consulted experts on these concerns and reflected them in their permit decision making to the extent necessary.

The environmental permits were granted by the competent authorities to the Seibersdorf scheme in June 2014 and to the Hof scheme in the period 2012-2013, respectively. The permits generally oblige the promoter to apply all relevant mitigation measures, e.g. on health and safety, ground water protection, noise and traffic during construction, and noise, shadow flickering and icing risks during operation. In the case of Seibersdorf, the permit obliges the promoter also to permanently install 9 ha of new bird and bat habitat in the project region in order to mitigate potential impacts on such species.

There is a permit amendment process ongoing for both schemes (Hof and Seibersdorf) in order to allow i) for the use of a turbine with a greater rotor diameter (115 m instead of 101 m) and ii) for a different foundation design for some turbines in view of high ground water levels. The promoter in its application for amendment provided expert studies which conclude that there are no significant negative environmental impacts resulting from these changes. In December 2015, the competent authorities have granted approval to these non-significant changes of the Seibersdorf permit under conditions. A similar decision for the Hof scheme is expected to be granted in early 2016.

The project also comprises a single wind turbine which is part of the wind farm Bruckneudorf. Another wind turbine of the same wind farm is part of operation IMWIND WIND POWER II (2014-0629) with a different promoter. The corresponding appraisal concluded that this wind farm's authorisation process is satisfactory to the Bank. Since then, no information has been collected that would suggest to change this conclusion.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

The direct CO2 equivalent emissions of the 3 wind farms under this investment programme are negligible.

In accordance with the Bank's current Carbon Footprint methodology it is calculated that based on the avoidance of electricity generation from a combination of existing and new power plants in Austria (75% operating margin and 25% build margin), the total relative effect of the project is a net reduction in CO2 equivalent emissions by 58 kt CO2e/yr.

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.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is proposed that an environmental permit, in-line with the final design of the scheme Hof, must be provided to the Bank prior to a related disbursement.

Based on the information available and subject to the proposed loan condition, the project is acceptable for Bank financing.

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