

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ORANGE MOBILE AND RURAL BROADBAND
Project Number:	20110462
Country:	Spain
Project Description:	The project relates to the upgrade and extension of the mobile telecom network of Orange throughout Spain in order to provide high bandwidth 3G and LTE based mobile internet services to up to 97% of the population. The project includes specific investment-commitments to cover less-densely populated areas of the country. As part of the fixed-mobile convergence strategy of the promoter, the project also includes some investments in the roll-out of the fixed broadband network.
EIA required:	NO
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	NO
(Details are provided in section: "Carbon Footprint")	

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

The environmental impacts of mobile communication systems are mainly visual nuisance, electromagnetic field (EMF) radiation, and noise from diesel generators located at base stations and microwave radio towers. Other impacts can be mitigated by appropriate construction and operation measures.

The replacement of old equipment in the project (accounting for 13% of the project cost) is expected to result in lower energy consumption of the network leading to reduced CO₂ emissions.

The promoter's environmental commitment is focused on three aspects: i) minimizing the energy consumption; ii) reducing the CO₂ emission of its operations and iii) facing social concerns regarding Electromagnetic Fields.

Spanish law transposed the EU Council Recommendation of 1999 on the limitation of EMF exposure to the general public. However the field is under continuous study by international organizations, and in the most recent development in 2011 the WHO/International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified EMF radiation as possibly carcinogenic to humans.

Hence, the project is considered as acceptable for the Bank's financing, with minor negative residual impacts after (B).

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

Investments in mobile telecommunication projects (including investments in base stations, transmission systems and OSS) do not fall under Annex I or II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EC.

Regarding the energy consumption reduction, the promoter has launched a plan to reduce its energy consumption in 2020 by 15% against the 2006 levels. Therefore the improvements in energy efficiency of the equipments through the swap-out of old equipment are one of the main drivers of the project.

Other environmental measures include amongst others, the increase of use of renewable energies, site sharing and recycling plans for old handsets.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

Project is not included - the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies only include emissions from Investment Loans, and large allocations under Framework Loans, above the methodology thresholds.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The promoters has an ISO 14001 certified Environment Management System, and its health and safety management system is OHSAS 18001 certified.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

Regarding the EMF radiation, all of the promoter's sites comply with the EU recommendation 1999/519/EU on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields, which has been transposed into national law by the Real Decreto 1066/01. The EU Recommendation is based on the principles set out by the internationally recognised ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) for EMF Radiations. The compliance with the limits for every site of the network is certified on a yearly basis.

By following this recommendation, the level of EMF is, based on current scientific findings, not considered a risk, although it is under continuous study by international organizations. Despite this low risk, public perception in Spain is particularly sensitive towards the installation of high frequency antennas close to populated areas.