

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name: IRISH WATER INVESTMENT PROGRAMME  
Project Number: 2012-0078  
Country: Ireland  
Project Description: Part-financing the major Irish water supply and wastewater infrastructure investment for the period of 2012-13

EIA required: yes

The project consists of 23 schemes with 3 major components: water conservation, water supply and wastewater. These schemes are located in 5 river basins, six of them requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The Non-technical Summaries (NTS) have been submitted to the Bank for the wastewater schemes of Clonakilty, Ringsend, Swords and Youghal. The remaining wastewater schemes have been screened out. The NTS for Costello and River Barrow Abstraction water supply schemes have also been provided.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise<sup>1</sup>: no

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

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

The project is justified by Ireland's need to comply with key EU environmental directives: in particular with the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EC as amended by 98/15/EC).

The planning process of all projects financed by the EIB fully complies with the requirements of the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU); the project fully complies with the Birds and Habitats Directives (79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC respectively). The approval process of the investment programme complies with the requirements of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC).

The wastewater component will contribute to the pollution abatement on surface, underground and coastal waters. It will in turn improve the quality of water sources thus reducing the health risks associated to some water supply systems, as identified by the Environmental Protection Agency. The project also addresses and improves the management of the water resources.

Ireland's Climate Change policy has been fully reflected in the planning of the project.

The Promoter undertakings are the following:

- The promoter shall not commit any EIB funds against any scheme without receiving the consent from the competent authority, when required, regarding the Habitats directive and submitting the relevant forms to the Bank.

---

## Environmental and Social Assessment

### Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, as consolidated in 2011/92/EU, was transposed into Irish legislation by the Planning and Development Acts, the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 to 2002 and the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 1989-2000. The local authority (An Bord Pleanála) may require that an EIS be prepared, even if the development is below the threshold but if it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The full list of projects and threshold limits are set out in the Planning and Development Regulations (P&D Regulations 1999, 2001, 2006 and Planning & Development Act 2000).

The SEA Directive 2001/42/EC was transposed by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (SI 435 of 2004) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI 436 of 2004). The project components are located in 5 river basin districts in Ireland. The 2009-2015 River Basin management plans were adopted in July 2010, being subject to SEA. Consultation on the draft River Basin Management Plans took place between 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2008 and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009.

The main project scheme, the expansion of Ringsend Waste Water Treatment Plant, belongs to Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study, published in 2005. An SEA was conducted in 2007.

The water conservation component of the project will have a positive direct impact on the water resources. The reduction of water losses will contribute to optimize the use of the limited resources available and to reduce the energy consumption. It will have a positive impact on climate change mitigation.

The water supply component addresses current water deficiencies in a country where many regions are facing a situation where demand exceeds supply, posing greater social problems in the near future. A significant spending of the water supply component will address risks to public health -such as contamination with E. coli- identified by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The wastewater component includes upgrading of existing and new wastewater treatment plants, and sewerage systems. It will improve the quality of effluents that are discharged to surface and coastal waters. It will also reduce the level of pollution in water sources from septic tanks that feed drinking water supplies<sup>2</sup>. Sewerage networks are designed as separate systems for wastewater and storm water runoff, including storm tanks. This component will ensure compliance with the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EC as amended by 98/15/EC), the Bathing Directive 2006/7/EC and the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC).

Climate predictions for Ireland indicate that it will be subjected to much more unpredictable weather patterns in the future. Reports from EPA and the Irish Academy of Engineers highlight the state of knowledge on climate change impacts, identify that changing patterns of precipitation will impact on water services provision and on levels of pollution and contamination. Ireland has already recognised the reality of this situation, through its involvement in the Kyoto Protocol to control emissions of greenhouse gases, and the establishment of the National Climate Change Strategy (NCCS).

On the design criteria, it has been agreed to apply for drainage infrastructure a uniform factor of 1.1 (10 percent) to all design rainfall events for all durations and all return periods. This is considered to be a reasonable precautionary position. The cost of construction of new pipework is estimated to rise by 15 %.

The proposed EIB project will contribute to the Climate Change adaptation and mitigation as follows:

---

<sup>2</sup> Ireland has an open an infringement related to the implementation of Directive 91/271/EEC (urban wastewater treatment). The case concerns failure to provide particular agglomerations with populations exceeding 15.000 people with secondary wastewater treatment facilities by 31 December 2000.

#### Climate change mitigation

- water savings and cost-efficient infrastructure related to upgrading and new infrastructure will contribute to energy savings thus reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.
- Ringsend Wastewater Treatment Plant contributes to reduce greenhouse emissions by the use of the biogas generated during the sludge digestion process. The plant covers over 50% of its energy needs. Digested sludge is dried and marketed as fertilizer for farmers, thus avoiding methane emissions to the atmosphere resulting from decomposition -following the recommendations of the Sewage Sludge Directive 86/278/EEC-.

#### Climate change adaptation:

- optimisation of the water resources available and
- the construction of separate sewerage systems and storm water facilities, which will contribute to reduce flood impact in the project areas.

#### **Social Assessment, where applicable**

Social negative impacts include the possible disruption of services, noise and temporary occupation of public or private space, traffic disruptions, and safety hazards during construction. All these impacts will require strict management to minimize the negative disturbances, inconveniences and impacts common for this type of project and will be addressed in the planning permission.

#### **Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement, where required**

Public consultation takes place at all levels of the definition of investments. All projects are screened and the environmental authority decides whether or not a full EIA is required.

#### **Other Environmental and Social Aspects**

None

[PJ/ECSO 10.07.12]