

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE MOBILE UK
Project Number: 20120130
Country: UK
Project Description: The project concerns the upgrading and expansion of a 3G and the rolling out of a 4G based mobile broadband telecommunications network by the largest mobile operator in UK. The main components of the project relate to the investments in the Radio Access Network, the backhauling and the core network.

EIA required: no

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: 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 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 project includes the replacement of nodeB's and the roll-out of leading-edge eNodeB's will lower power consumption compared to the older equipment currently in use. In addition, the promoter is planning to close down around 8 500 cell sites until the year 2015 as part of its network integration programme, which will mean around 32% reduction of CO2 emission compared to 2011 levels.

Regarding the limitation of EMF exposure to the general public, the promoter will adhere to the guidelines set out by the International Commission for Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). EMF is however 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).

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

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.

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 project includes the replacement of nodeB's and the roll-out of leading-edge eNodeB's will lower power consumption compared to the older equipment in use. In addition, the promoter is planning to close down around 9 000 cell sites until the year 2015 as a part of its network integration programme, which will mean around 32% reduction of CO2 emission compared to 2011 levels.

Other measures having a positive environmental impact include the use of site sharing and recycling plans for old handsets.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The promoter's combined safety & environmental management system is certified under PAS99 by the British Standards Institute (BSI). The management system ensures comprehensive risk management, legal compliance employee competence and audits. The system is continually assessed by BSI including audits and site visits.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

Regarding the EMF radiation, the promoter will adhere to the guidelines set out by the International Commission for Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). The ICNIRP guidelines are also the basis for the levels defined in the EU recommendation 1999/519/EU. In the UK, the ICNIRP guidelines are being followed by all the mobile operators following the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP) report May 2000.

Operational mobile telecommunication sites are audited regularly on a random basis by the regulator Ofcom. In all measurements made in the last years by Ofcom, electromagnetic field emissions were well below the recommended guidelines.

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