

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	PPCR FRAMEWORK LOAN FOR RENEWABLE INVESTMENTS
Project Number:	2016-0042
Country:	Greece
Project Description:	Framework loan for the financing of (i) wind farms as well as (ii) small hydropower plants geographically dispersed throughout mainland Greece and the islands.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The portfolio of projects under the framework loan is expected to encompass small windfarms of a total capacity of approx. 70 MW and small hydropower plants of a total capacity of approx. 20 MW (the largest one being 9 MW). The projects are geographically dispersed throughout mainland Greece and the islands. Several of the projects concern replacing or repowering existing power plants. Most of the power plants will be connected with the electricity system with medium voltage networks.

For all the projects financed by the Bank, adherence to the relevant EU environmental Directives shall be ensured. The projects of the portfolio under the framework loan fall under Annex II of Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, leaving it to the competent authority to determine whether or not an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. According to the national legislation, renewable energy projects are classified into two categories on the basis of pre-defined criteria (technology, capacity): projects with potentially significant environmental impact (category A) and projects with only local and less significant environmental impact (category B). Projects of category A require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Projects of category B are subject to general specifications, terms and restrictions according to the procedures defined in national legislation.

The majority of the projects under this framework loan (both the wind farms and the small hydropower plants) are expected to fall under category A and thus require an EIA. In any case, compliance with the EIA Directive must be ensured.

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.

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The investments targeted by the operation are expected to have limited residual social and environmental effects post mitigation. For the wind farms, the main impacts expected are noise and dust emission during construction and landscape and avifauna risks during operation. For the small hydropower plants, the impacts relate to the construction phase and, during operations, mainly to the water bodies.

Projects that have the potential to impact Natura 2000 sites have to undergo an appropriate assessment of their impacts on such sites, in-line with the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and Birds Directive 2009/147/EC. Four small windfarms in the current pipeline are located within Natura 2000 sites; three of these projects concern the repowering of existing wind power plants with long term monitoring data available. The Bank reviewed the appropriate assessments for these four projects. In all cases the competent authorities concluded, after due analysis, that the projects do not have a significant negative impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. The Bank therefore considers these wind farms in the pipeline to be in line with the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive.

For the small hydropower plants an assessment in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EU) is required.

As part of its standard work practices, the promoter, a company specialized in renewable energy projects, screens environmental and social aspects of its projects, including for compliance with relevant legislation. The promoter's capacity to assess environmental and social impacts is deemed satisfactory.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Projects that undergo EIA will include public consultation as part of the process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Bank's eligibility criteria, procedures and conditions for framework loan operations will apply. Appropriate procedures shall be undertaken by the promoter to ensure that project implementation is satisfactory and complies with the requirements of the Bank.

All projects under the framework loan are required to be compliant with national legislation and applicable EU Directives.

The social and environmental impacts and mitigation measures of all projects under the framework loan will be assessed individually by the promoter. For larger projects above an investment cost of EUR 25 million, the promoter shall provide all relevant documentation to the Bank as part of the Bank's ex-ante approval process.

With these conditions in place, the framework loan operation is considered acceptable for the bank in environmental and social terms.

PJ/SQM/ECSO