

Luxembourg, 19 September 2017

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	AVE Y Vasca Extension
Project Number:	2017-0041
Country:	Spain
Project Description:	New high speed core TEN-T 160 km railway line in the Basque Country between Vitoria, Bilbao and San Sebastian, including the sections within the three cities' build up areas, and its connection to the Spanish/French border by means of implementation of dual track gauge on 17 km existing infrastructure.
EIA required:	Yes
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 is included in the Infrastructure, Transport and Housing Master Plan "Plan de Infraestructuras, Transporte y Vivienda PITVI (2012-2024)", which has been subject of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with Directive 2001/42/EC. It was also included in the earlier strategic plans, such as the "Strategic Plan for Transport Infrastructure 2005-2020", which was also subject of a SEA.

The project falls within the scope of Annex I of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU).

From the perspective of the EIA procedure, as well as, of the assessment of impact on Natura 2000 sites, the project may be divided into the following two components:

- 1) New mainline between Arrazua/Ubarrundia (near Vitoria), Basauri (near Bilbao) and Astigarraga (near San Sebastian) and access by means of existing infrastructure to San Sebastian, and
- 2) New access to cities of Vitoria and Bilbao, new stations in Vitoria, Bilbao and San Sebastián, and access by means of existing infrastructure to Irún (at the Spanish/French border).

Mainline between Arrazua/Ubarrundia, Basauri and Astigarraga and access to San Sebastián

For this first component the Bank carried out the environmental and social due diligence in the framework of the previous operation related to this project (2011-0454 "AVE Y Vasca"), and its conclusions remain valid.

A new double track Y-shaped line will be built between Arrazua/Ubarrundia, Basauri and Astigarraga. The central node where the branches will be connected will be located in

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.

Luxembourg, 19 September 2017

Bergara. Due to complexity of the terrain, around 70% of the alignment will be on viaduct or in tunnel. The access to San Sebastian will be by means of the existing tracks, on which dual track gauge will be implemented.

For this component the EIA procedure, i.e. a full EIA with public consultation, was completed and environmental consent granted in 2000 in accordance with Directive 85/337/EC. A supplementary EIA was carried out and approved in 2009 for the section Zizurkil - Urnieta because of an impact on a mining area.

During construction, the impacts are largely temporary and localised, and are being addressed through an environmental monitoring plan. The main impacts are a significant amount of excavated material and its treatment in controlled dumps or assignment to other infrastructures with soil shortfall; impacts derived of the blasting in the tunnels. Due to the high percentage of alignment in tunnel, control of the phreatic level and drainages and spillways is necessary. There is also significant temporary disruption during construction because of noise, vibration, dust, etc. In addition to standard good practice, the mitigation measures include special water treatment, archaeological monitoring, installation of noise screens in the blasting areas, treatment of soil that is considered potentially contaminated, and landscape reparation during the execution of the works.

In the operation phase, the main impacts of the project are those typical for greenfield projects of a major linear infrastructure, such as change in land use, severance, noise or vibration and visual intrusion especially concerning the viaducts. The mitigation measures include alternative routes for affected roads, use of special technologies for avoiding vibrations at viaducts, landscaping and fauna crossings.

The line crosses on a viaduct a Natura 2000 site Río Zadorra (ES2110010) and runs at 2 km distance from another one, Urkiola (ES2130009). The competent authorities concluded that no significant impact on the sites is likely and, therefore, no assessment according to Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) is necessary; this has been confirmed and documented by the competent authorities.

Access to Vitoria and Bilbao, new stations in Vitoria, Bilbao and San Sebastian and Irún

The access to Vitoria will include a section on new alignment and a new underground station in the area where the existing Vitoria Dato station is located. The access to Bilbao will include a 6 km tunnel and a complete renewal of the Bilbao Abando station.

For this component the EIA procedures and analysis of likelihood of impact on Natura 2000 sites have yet to be carried out.

The existing San Sebastian Atotxa station will be modernised within the existing footprint of the railway.

The connection from San Sebastian to Irún will be by means of the existing tracks, on which dual track gauge will be implemented. The nature of works does not fall within the scope of the EIA Directive. The Promoter will carry out an analysis of measures necessary for compliance with the environmental requirements during the operation phase.

Overall, the project will have some positive environmental effects in comparison with the current situation, as it will have a significant contribution to increasing the modal share of rail versus road and air transport in the corridor, with environmentally favourable impact related to energy consumption, noise, pollutants and green-house gas emissions.

Luxembourg, 19 September 2017

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

The project is included on the following basis:

Estimated annual third party greenhouse gas emissions (vehicular use, from existing and induced demand) from the use of the project in an average year of operation over a 37-year assessment period:

- Forecast absolute (gross) emissions are 350,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent; and
- Forecast emissions savings are 370,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent.

The project assessment boundaries are:

- In the absolute case:
 - the new high speed railway line Vitoria – Bilbao/ San Sebastian and connection to the Spanish/French border, totalling 155 km of new infrastructure and 23 km on the existing rail infrastructure;
- In the baseline case:
 - the existing railway infrastructure, and road network of approximately the same length.

The forecasts in the baseline and absolute cases are based on Services' project specific assumptions about the workload of rail services (freight and passenger trains) and fuel efficiency of rail operations. In the baseline case, a portion of emissions from cars, buses and trucks is included using project specific emission factors, equivalent to those passenger or freight trips expected to shift from road to rail in the "with project" case. The estimation was carried out in the framework of operation 2011-0454 and the change of scope does have a significant impact thereon; therefore for consistency purposes estimations of 2011-0454 have been kept.

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.

These forecasts may differ from those of the Promoter due to different assumptions, boundaries and baselines.

Social Assessment

Land acquisition process follows the applicable legislation and is not finished for the parts for which the final design is yet to be completed.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

For the first component, mainline between Arrazua/Ubarrundia, Basauri and Astigarraga and access to San Sebastian, public consultation originally took place as part of the EIA procedure in 1998. Following some concerns raised in relation to affection of a mining area, public consultation for the complementary EIA took place in 2008.

For the second component, access to Vitoria and Bilbao and new stations, the public consultation will be carried out as part of the EIA and environmental consent procedure.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter, ADIF Alta Velocidad, has an established environmental policy and operates an Environmental Management System in accordance with ISO 14001:2015.

Luxembourg, 19 September 2017

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project falls within the scope of Annex I of the EIA Directive.

The Promoter obtained the environmental consent for the first component of the project (mainline between Arrazua/Ubarrundia, Basauri and Astigarraga, and access to San Sebastián) and opinion of the competent authorities concerning the absence of significant impact on Natura 2000 sites.

The project's residual negative impacts during construction and operation are limited and partly offset by the expected modal shift towards rail facilitated by the investment.

The Promoter will be required to submit to the Bank evidence of the completion of the EIA procedure for the access to Bilbao and Vitoria and the new stations in these cities and evidence of conformity with the Habitats Directive as well as an analysis of measures to be implemented on the San Sebastian – Irún section for compliance with the environmental requirements during the operation phase. The Promoter will undertake to implement the corresponding impact mitigation measures before the Project completion.

With these conditions in place the project is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.