

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	BELARUS TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY
Project Number:	2017-0027
Country:	<i>Belarus</i>
Project Description:	The project consists of the reconstruction of two sections on the extended TEN-t network in Belarus - M6 highway running from Minsk to the Polish border (led by the World Bank) and M7 highway running from Minsk to the Lithuanian border (to be led by the European Investment Bank). EIB financing will also cover an investment in associated border crossing infrastructure on the M7 highway at Kamenny Log, on the Belarusian side of the border.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project involves reconstruction of sections on the existing road network of Belarus. As the project is parallel financed by the World Bank and the EIB, each bank has performed due diligence and environmental and social assessment of the respective components it is going to finance. The World Bank led section is in more advanced stage of implementation. Due diligence of this component has been carried out before signing of the Loan Agreement between the World Bank and Belarus in 2014 and EIB considers that it has been carried out in line with the best MDB practice.

The Promoter has experience in performing environmental assessment for nationally, as well as IFI financed projects.

Compliance of the project with the principles of Annex I and Annex II of the EU EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended, and EIB Environmental and Social Guidelines was analysed alongside with compliance with the Belorussian legislation. Two main legal documents governing the EIA procedure in Belarus are Law No. 339-3 from 18.07.2016 "On State Ecological Expertise, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment" and Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers No.47 from 19.01.2017. "On EIA Procedure, EIA report and required qualification of experts carrying out an EIA". If located in the EU, the M7 project component would fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive

EIA procedure for the M7 highway project has been carried out according to the Belarusian EIA legislation, which in general follows the EU legal framework, including information

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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disclosure and public consultations. EIA Report dated 20.04.2017 in detail reflects analysis done during the EIA process and includes a non - technical summary.

Within the EIA a complex analysis has been carried out concerning the impact of the planned activity on environment, including health and safety of population, impact on wildlife and vegetation, land and water resources, climate, landscape, specially nearby protected natural territories (local biological reserve "Ordashinsky"). Measures and requirements terms for project designing have been developed aiming at minimizing of impact of the planned activity. The EIA concludes that the project will not create significant negative impact on environment and biodiversity, except limited negative impacts during the works process. Mitigation measures have been proposed to minimize this negative impact to extent possible. It has been proposed that the project design shall address several issues aimed to improve noise protection along the roadside in villages, traffic safety related to access and crossing facilities of the roadway by pedestrians as well as wildlife.

The EIA at the time of appraisal is with the Competent Authority and the Decision is still pending. Therefore, a condition for the 1st disbursement under the loan of submitting of a copy of the said Decision has been introduced.

Kamennij Log Border crossing point project has been screened out with regards to EIA by the Competent Authority (Ministry of National Resources and Nature Protection of Belarus) by issuing a decision No.3-20/1811 dated 17.07.2017, but still will have to pass State Environmental Expertise on design stage. A copy of the consent of the Competent Authority shall be submitted to the Bank prior to 1st disbursement for the BCP sub-project.

Social Assessment, where applicable

The EIB led project component is not expected to have a significant social impact as no involuntary resettlement is expected and the project will improve traffic safety conditions. Potential minor social impacts are expected during construction and are likely to be due to diversion of traffic, especially on the border crossing point.

For the World Bank led component a Resettlement Policy Framework and Resettlement Plan have been prepared during the project appraisal and preparation.

In accordance with national law on labour standards and ILO obligations ratified by Belarus, (Belarus has ratified all ILO fundamental conventions), the works contracts will comply with ILO core labour standards. Contractors shall ensure occupational and community health & safety as part of their works contracts.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Belarus is a signatory of Aarhus Convention of 1998 and therefore disclosure of information to public is embedded in the national legislation.

EIA report was made publically available and published on the sites of Grodnoavtodor and offices of local administrations. Information on public hearings was published in local newspapers. During the EIA procedure public consultations took place in Volozhin region of Minsk Oblast as well as Smorgon and Oshmyany regions of Grodno Oblast during the period from 19.05.2017 to 23.06.2017 in accordance with the legal requirements of the Republic of Belarus. 3 public hearings were organized and recommendations from these were reflected in the Minutes and later taken into account in drafting the EIA Report.

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On the EIB led component design solutions do not trigger resettlement and expropriation of private property.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

There are no particularly high climate risks. In July 2017, the Bank Services undertook a climate risk screening exercise based on the Aware™ geographic data set, compiled from the latest scientific information on current climate and related hazards together with projected changes for the future where available. The Services have shared the Aware™ climate risk screening with the Promoter and encouraged him to reflect the findings and the risk mitigation in the technical documentation. In addition, the Services have recommended that the Promoter reviews (i) the design of the underpasses to ensure that the increased risk of flooding is adequately addressed; and (ii) its maintenance standards to ensure that the risk of snow loading is adequately addressed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The EIB led project component is following the existing road alignment and foreseen works will be carried out within the existing road right-of-way. No widening is foreseen and therefore the impact on road side environment will be minor – mostly only during the works period.

The World Bank led section includes widening of M6 road from 2 to 4 lanes, and not just reconstruction. EIA was carried out and environmental authority has issued a favourable decision, land expropriation has been completed, necessary permits have been obtained and works are well underway.

Environmental decision on M7 highway reconstruction project, including favourable opinion on impact on protected areas, and Conclusions of Environmental Expertise for the Kamennij Log BCP design, issued by the Competent Authority, shall be submitted for Bank's review prior to the 1st disbursement under the loan for the respective sub-component.

Subject to the above mentioned environmental and social conditions being met, the overall residual environmental and social impacts of the Project are expected to be acceptable.