

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	GAIA WATER INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADE
Project Number:	20170619
Country:	Italy
Project Description:	Investments for the upgrade of the water infrastructure in the service area known as Toscana Nord in the Region of Tuscany, during the period 2018-2022.
EIA required:	yes

This is an investment programme made up of multiple schemes. Some of them might require an EIA under Annex II of the EIA Directive 2014/52/EC amending Directive 2011/92/EC.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project concerns the 2018-2022 water investment programme of GAIA, a publicly owned utility providing Integrated Water Services (“IWS”) in the Region of Tuscany, in Italy. The Promoter’s service area - known as “ATO Toscana Nord” – covers 46 municipalities with a total population of ca. 432,000 inhabitants.

The project consists of numerous small to medium size investments aimed at upgrading and optimising the existing water treatment and distribution systems, to ensure compliance with national and European legislation. The operation is expected to enhance the services’ efficiency and reliability, notably through the interconnection of the drinking water distribution networks.

The master plan of the ATO (“*Piano d’Ambito*” - PdA) is the planning framework of the proposed operation. The initial PdA was approved by the local authority in 2006 and has been subject to several modifications over the years to incorporate regulatory updates and/or investment priority changes, up to the last release in 2016. The PdA was subject to a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (“SEA”) according to Directive 2001/42/EC.

The project will deliver substantial environmental quality improvements, notably in the form of a more rational use of water resources that outweigh the negative impacts which occur mainly during construction (traffic, noise and dust). None of the works will be implemented inside or in the vicinity of Natura 2000 or other protected sites. Some project schemes might fall under Annex II of the Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Directive. Therefore, the decision whether an EIA is required is left to the competent authority namely the Environmental and Energy Department of the Region of Tuscany, on the basis of the criteria defined in Annex III of the EIA Directive.

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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Finally, the project will contribute to Climate Adaptation and Mitigation by supporting investments that increase resilience to climate related risks and reduce GHG emissions.

Social Assessment, where applicable

By increasing the quality and reliability of water supply services, the project is expected to bring substantial health advantages and environmental quality improvements to the population.

Social negative impacts are only temporary and include possible disruption of services and traffic, noise and temporary occupation of public and private space, as well as safety hazards during the construction phase, which will be addressed as part of the planning for the implementation of each scheme.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Promoter will be requested to ensure compliance with national and European environmental legislation, notably to facilitate public access to environmental information and guarantee public consultation during the environmental decision process, where relevant, in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

During the project's due diligence, the Promoter has demonstrated sound practice with respect to environmental, health and safety management. In addition to procedures to meet regulatory requirements, the Promoter has a comprehensive environmental management system which is applied to new projects and monitors ongoing operations. The Promoter has the following certifications: ISO 9001 (Quality Certification), ISO 14001 (Environmental Certification), ISO 50001 (Energy Management Certification) and OSHAS 18001 (Occupational Health and Safety).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project is driven by the requirement to ensure compliance with relevant EU environmental directives and it will also contribute towards increasing resilience to the effects of climate change as well as efficiency improvements that will reduce emissions. All schemes under the project will be subject to the Promoter's compliance with the following requirements:

1. The Promoter undertakes not to allocate Bank funds to project schemes that require a full EIA until the EIA and/or the necessary nature assessment have been finalised and approved by the relevant competent authority. Once any EIA is available, the promoter will provide the Bank with an electronic copy of its Non-Technical Summary (NTS) and full copy of the EIA, for publication on the EIB website.
2. The Promoter shall not commit any EIB funds against any scheme that impacts nature conservation sites, without receiving from the relevant competent authorities the declaration under Art. 6(3) of the Habitats Directive that there are no significant effects and informing the Bank of such declaration having been obtained.
3. The Promoter undertakes to provide to the Bank, if requested, any decision and subsequent justification that screen out project schemes from the requirement of a full EIA as well as the decisions issued by the competent authorities regarding the Habitats and Birds Directives.

Under these conditions the operation is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.