

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	BLACK SEA GAS CONNECTION
Project Number:	2018-0237
Country:	Romania
Project Description:	The Project comprises the construction of new onshore natural gas transmission pipeline which will connect the gas production from the Black Sea with the BRUA (Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria) gas corridor.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no
(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")	

Environmental and Social Assessment

The Project consists of the construction of a new natural gas transmission pipeline from the Black Sea shore to the interconnection point with National Transmission System at Podisor. The new pipeline will connect the gas sources available at the Black Sea shore and the natural gas transmission corridor Bulgaria–Romania–Hungary–Austria (BRUA) connecting the gas transmission systems of South-East Europe and Central and Western Europe. The Project includes a 308 km transmission pipeline (32.5 km of DN1200 and 275.6 km of DN1000 pipeline at a pressure of 63 bar) with the associated facilities (valve stations, pig launching station and interconnection with the existing transmission lines and the Podisor compressor station).

Environmental Assessment

The Project is part of the Development Plan for the National Gas Transmission System 2017-2026. The Plan initially did not go through a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), but during appraisal, the Promoter expressed its willingness to carry out an SEA to support the future updates of the Plan. The EIB provides technical assistance to the Promoter in performing this task in line with requirement of the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC.

The Project is subject to the obligations under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU prior to its amendment, because the opinion referred to in Art. 5 (2) of the Directive 2011/92/EU (scoping opinion) was issued before 16 May 2017. An ESIA and an appropriate assessment were completed for the project and the EIA Decision was issued on 10/05/2018.

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, 11.12.2018

Impacts that can be typically expected are mainly temporary by their nature and relate mainly to construction works and partially to operation of the pipeline. The potential impacts include clearing of rights of way, noise, dust, erosion and sedimentation, increased traffic, temporary access restrictions, construction camps and lay-down areas, waste disposal, crossing of highways, rails and water ways, biodiversity, worker and community health and safety as well as economic displacement. These impacts can usually be effectively managed by appropriate mitigation measures in order to avoid unacceptable nuisance to other parties and the public. Since the construction of a pipeline is a linear work, the project area will be affected only locally and temporarily in its different sections (a few weeks per section). For this reason, no section will be affected for the entire duration of the construction period, which significantly reduces the negative impacts. A large portion of the project's area is cultivated agricultural land. Permanent and temporary losses of land and crops are expected from the project. Vegetation with short roots, like vegetables, cereals and pastures will be replanted after the construction works are finished. Forest trees, orchards and vineyards cannot be replanted.

The project crosses eight Natura 2000 sites, three Ramsar sites and one protected area of national interest. The impact on all identified protected areas were evaluated in an Appropriate Assessment Study and relevant mitigation measures and conditions were imposed as part of the EIA Decision.

The project is not intended to serve incremental gas demand; it only provides diversification of gas supply routes and sources. Therefore, no significant changes in CO₂ emissions are associated with the project.

Social Assessment

The main expected social impacts relate to the compensations for losses incurred by the set easements and protection area of the pipeline, including losses for destroyed crops and cut forest. All land owners affected by project will be identified and compensated according to the national law and the international requirements.

The project does not result in relocation of population.

Special archaeological studies are being prepared for the pipeline route. The studies include desktop research and non-intrusive field surveys. Locations of potential archaeological interest will be defined and recommendations concerning intrusive surveys to be carried out before construction works will be made.

The project is expected to have both short term and long term positive socio-economic impacts. The temporary employment opportunities are considered as short term positive impact and improved access to gas, the security of supply and the improved competition in the gas market are the long term positive impacts.

The Promoter based on previous experience of cooperation with International Financing Institutions developed requirements aligned with EU regulations and internationally acceptable practice on Labour Standards as well as Occupational and Community Health and Safety. These requirements will be contractual obligations for the subcontractors implementing the Project.

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Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Public consultation meetings took place in different localities along the route of the pipeline (2 meetings in each of the three involved regions). The comments raised by the public and NGOs during the public debates were submitted to the environmental authority for consideration in permitting process. The main comments referred to setting of the starting point of the gas pipeline on the Black Sea shore and the impact on the nearby touristic area; cumulative impact with the gas metering station; description of the technological process; air quality.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The Promoter implements policies for Quality and Environment, Human Resources management and for Corporate Social Responsibility. The Promoter is accredited to meet the standards of ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and OSHAS 18001. The site visit demonstrated the appropriate implementation of health, safety, security and environmental standards.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The key environmental and social impacts from construction and operation of the pipeline will be managed, avoided, reduced or mitigated through measures identified in the EIA Report and related management plan, consistent with national legislation, EU requirements, as well as EIB Environmental and Social Standards.

The following environmental related conditions have to be fulfilled:

- The Promoter undertakes that the mitigation measures outlined in the EIA Report and Appropriate Assessment Study as well as in the environmental and construction permits will be fulfilled and complied with in all respects as per conditions. The compliance with those requirements should be confirmed in both the Project Progress Reports and the Project Completion Report according to the reporting criteria defined in finance contract.

Based on the information provided by the Promoter, and provided that the defined environmental conditions are fulfilled, the project is acceptable to the Bank in environmental terms.