

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	EU FUNDS LA RIOJA CO-FINANCING 2014-2020
Project Number:	2018-0251
Country:	Spain
Project Description:	Framework loan co-financing investment by the regional government of La Rioja of selected measures of its EAFRD, ERDF and ESF-supported programmes, during the 2014-2020 programming period
EIA required:	The project is a multi-scheme Framework Loan, some individual investments may require EIA
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	No

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project comprises a framework loan to support the Spanish Autonomous Community of La Rioja in the implementation of its programmes developed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Social Fund (SF). The programmes co-financed are in line with the Spanish Partnership Agreement, the relevant sectoral strategies at national and regional levels and, in particular, with the RIS 3 Smart Specialisation Strategy.

Under the RDP, eight measures will be supported by the project, including Investments in physical assets, Basic services and village renewal, Investments in forest area development, Cooperation (European Innovation Partnerships) and LEADER (local rural area development). OPIGE and OPSIE investments co-financed will comprise schemes on Research, Development and Innovation (RDI), Knowledge economy, Transition to low-carbon economy sustainable transport, Efficient use of resources, Enhancement of natural and cultural heritage, and SMEs and employment promotion.

The selected measures/axes under the project are expected to deliver multiple environmental benefits, through the reduction of the environmental footprint of agricultural, agro-forestry and agro-industry activities, as well as positive externalities due to afforestation and improved forest management. The programme is expected to contribute to EU environmental policy objectives in the field of soil and water management and climate change.

All investments envisaged under the project are subject to applicable EU environmental and social regulations. As such, SEAs have been conducted for both the RDP and the ERDF operational programme, in accordance with applicable regulation. In addition, certain project-supported activities may require an EIA, subject to determination by the competent authority, in accordance with the EIA Directive (2011/92/EU), as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU).

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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Furthermore, where an action may affect a Natura 2000 site, as designated according to Habitats or Birds Directives (1992/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC respectively), the Bank requires the Promoter to follow the directives' procedures, where applicable.

As the project is a multi-scheme framework loan, data available ex-ante is insufficient to conduct a detailed carbon footprint calculation, although investments foreseen under the project, such as afforestation and orchard development, manure management and energy efficiency, will act to mitigate emissions caused by project supported investments.

For example, under RDP measure 8, the project will support the reforestation of 7,000 hectares. Following the EIB carbon footprint methodology for forestry this is expected to result in approximately 36,000mt CO₂eq p.a. of sequestration, compared to a baseline of 8,600mt CO₂eq p.a.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

During the preparation of the 2014-2020 programmes supported by the project, public consultation and stakeholder engagement were conducted in line with the requirements of Regulation (EU) No 240/2014 on the European code of conduct on partnership in the framework of the European Structural and Investment Funds. During the preparation of the RDP, for example economic and social entities, including cooperatives and Local Action Groups were engaged in the conduct of the SWOT and needs analysis and input from affected local communities and administrations was received after publication of the draft programme. Public consultation will also be required in programme-specific monitoring and awareness activities, such as through the rural network established under the RDP, as well as in the EIA process, in accordance with the EIA Directive.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following undertakings will be required for this project:

- The Promoter will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including SEA (2001/42/EC), EIA (2014/52/EU) amending 2001/92/EC, and Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives, as applicable.
- The Promoter shall not commit any EIB funds against schemes that require an EIA or biodiversity assessment according to the EU acquis without, prior to commitment, receiving consent from the competent authority, and having the EIA process successfully completed, including information to and consultation with the public, if and when required by applicable EU legislation.
- The Promoter shall store and maintain updated the relevant documents (including environmental studies related to the EIA, the Non-Technical Summaries of the EIAs, and Nature/Biodiversity Assessments or equivalent documents supporting the compliance with the EU Habitats and Birds Directives – Form A/B or equivalents) to be provided to the Bank upon request.
- In case the EIB requires such documentation, the Promoter shall provide all documents requested promptly. The Promoter shall verify the compliance of the schemes with the relevant and applicable rules of the European Union legislation, in particular in the field of environment.

Taking into account the contractual undertakings associated with the project as well as the capacity of the Promoter and the systems in place to manage environmental and social impacts and issues, the project is acceptable for the Bank's financing in environmental and social terms.