

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	<i>FINGRID TRANSMISSION UPGRADE</i>
Project Number:	<i>2018-0550</i>
Country:	<i>Finland</i>
Project Description:	<i>Investment in upgrading of the Finnish electricity transmission grid.</i>
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 an investment programme in the Finnish transmission system with several schemes. There are two schemes related to transmission lines, four to substations and one to an information system.

Construction of overhead electrical power lines with a voltage of 220 kV or more and a length of more than 15 km fall under Annex I of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU and have to undergo a mandatory EIA process. One of the programme components fall under this category and an EIA has been undertaken. This is the so-called "Forest line", a 310 km transmission line from Pyhaselkä to Petäjävesi, for which an EIA was undertaken in 2012. The EIA studied different alternative routings and analysed their respective impact on landscape, vegetation clearance, electromagnetic fields, noise nuisance, collision and electrocution of flying vertebrates and disturbance during construction. The final route selection was made in mutual understanding with the competent authority and the environmental permit was given in 2013, after which the detailed planning could start. The EIA process also included the Appropriate Assessments under the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC).

The other transmission line, from Imatra to Huutokoski, is implemented at 110 kV and is a refurbishment of an existing line without widening the right-of-way. Although it is 130 km long, it is, due to the voltage level and being a refurbishment, screened out from a full EIA process by the Competent Authority. However, Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) and the Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC) have been undertaken, as the existing line route passes Natura200 sites, and approved. The screening process was reviewed by the Bank and found to be in line with 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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Other components, being substations and information systems, fall neither under Annex I nor Annex II of the Directive, but environmental studies and screening have been undertaken as per requirements of national legislation. These programme schemes have limited environmental consequences and the aforementioned screening studies have enabled the avoidance of sites where Appropriate Assessment would have been necessary.

The promoter has a strong organisation for environmental impact assessment at the planning stage and for supervising contractors during implementation.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

Greenhouse gas emissions of the project relate to losses in the network. Absolute emissions of the project elements are estimated to 7 kton of CO₂/year whereas the avoided emissions, compared to no investments scenario in the system amount to 22 kton of CO₂/year.

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'.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Public consultation has been undertaken in the EIA process and in the municipal building permit process for the projects that did not undergo EIA.

For the new "Forest line" some expropriation of land has taken place within the legal framework without evictions. Expropriated land is mostly low value forests or peatland and to some extent cultivated fields. All compensation has been agreed with the landowners without legal disputes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project is acceptable for EIB financing in E&S terms.