

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: 2018-0663
Project Number: Water Authority Rivierenland
Country: The Netherlands
Project Description: The operation concerns the 2019-2023 investment programme of Waterschap Rivierenland. The investment programme will focus on flood protection and wastewater treatment in its area of responsibility between the rivers Rhine/Lek and the Meuse.

EIA required: yes
This is a programme made up of multiple schemes. Some of the schemes will require an EIA. The Promoter shall provide the link to the website where the NTSs and the full copies of the EIAs are published or send copies to the Bank, to be published on the EIB's website.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The proposed programme involves flood protection works - mainly dyke strengthening (reinforcement, upgrade, etc) of about 160km length out of the total 555 km of primary dykes under the promoter's area of responsibility between the river Rhine/Lek and the river Meuse. It stretches from the German border up to Kinderdijk near Dordrecht, and across the Provinces of Gelderland and Noord Brabant. The programme will also co-finance the replacement of five existing Waste Water Treatment Plants (WWTPs) by a new WWTP, the "RWZI Dodewaard", together with all related wastewater transport infrastructure. Additionally under the programme two energy plants at existing WWTP sites will be constructed to implement a sludge fermentation process with the aim to capture and reuse most of the biogas existing in the wastewater sludge.

The relevant EU Directives as transposed into the Dutch legislation require that the works and plans are assessed both at programme level (SEA Directive 2001/42/EC) and at project level (EIA Directive 2014/52/EC, Birds Directive 2009/147/EC and Habitats Directive 92/43/EC). SEAs are carried out for higher level planning - National Delta Programme, the Provincial Water Plans and Spatial Plans as well as certain project components that concern

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 20,000 tons CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

Luxembourg, 25 March 2019

multiple/longer stretches. The Promoter is well aware of these requirements and acts accordingly.

The programme implements the local components of the “High Water Protection Programme - (Hoogwaterbeschermingsprogramma - HWBP)”, currently focused on flood defences that failed to meet requirements in the 2011 flood assessment. The Flood Protection Programme implements the National Water Plan II (2016-2021) policies and measures under the Delta Programme, which seeks to expedite and intensify climate adaptation, in order for the Netherlands to be climate-resilient by 2050.

The National Water Plan II includes the relevant plans and programmes required under the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) and the Urban Waste Water Directive (91/271/EEC). These programmes and plans are subject to SEAs at each significant update. The investments are in line with these plans.

Five of the flood protection schemes under the programme will require EIAs and some will also require the Appropriate Assessment for potential impacts on the 11 Natura 2000 areas within the Rivierenland area.

The main impacts of the dyke related earthworks affect species such as migrating birds, amphibians such as the great crested newt (salamander), moor frogs that hibernate in the dyke “body”, mammals such as water shrews (mice) and various bat species as well as the great (mud) fish that can be found in the drain ditches at the foot of the dykes.

Negative temporary effects on species, fauna and landscape are expected during construction and thereafter will be alleviated by implementing the necessary mitigation measures as they will be indicated under the Appropriate Assessment required by the competent authority. These may include for example working only in designated months or lowering water levels in the ditches that are to be backfilled and catching the fish with nets for relocation before the backfilling. The programme will furthermore favour ecologically based restoration activities in order to improve degraded waterways over hard engineering solutions.

The National Water Plan II (2016-2021) applies the climate scenarios of the Royal Dutch Meteorological Institute (KNMI), and the expectations of the Delta Programme commission for the plausible upper limit in the long term. In line with government policy, described in the National Water Plan II, the KNMI scenarios also adhere to the objectives for flood protection under the 2019-2023 investment programme of the Waterschap Rivierenland which mainly focuses on reinforcements of about 160km long primary dykes. Hence the project contributes significantly to the Bank’s transversal objective of Climate Adaptation.

In addition to this, the climate strategy of Waterschap Rivierenland is also driven by contributing significantly to climate mitigation. The water authority aims to self-generate 40% of its energy consumption by 2023 (end of the investment programme) with the intent to have an energy neutral organisation until 2030. To achieve these targets, the 2019-2023 investment programme includes: (i) investments in solar panels at several sites of WWTPs not in use any more (renewable energy generation) which results in GHG emission reduction of about 13.650eqtCO₂/year, and (ii) biogas capture and reuse in an improved anaerobic digestion to be installed in two plants (one at WWTP Tiel and at WWTP Sleenwijk). This process has a significant contribution to climate change mitigation, since it increases the methane capture and reuse by more than 20-30% compared to a conventional anaerobic digestion. The combined GHG emissions reduction of both plants can be quantified at 3,950 tCO₂eq/year.

Luxembourg, 25 March 2019

Social Assessment

In case of dyke breach or overtopping, large proportions of the area would be flooded as the land is flat and all below the river level during high flow situations. Improving and raising the dykes therefore reduces the risk of flooding and the related (significant) impact to the population.

Minor nuisances are possible during construction for residents adjacent to new infrastructure, and this concerns mostly noise, dust, landscaping and adaptation to current routes prior to the new access roads and more certainly with regard to the new access roads. Appropriate stakeholder information, consultation, mitigation and compensation procedures will be followed.

The works will also contribute to employment creation during construction. No permanent employment due to the project is foreseen. Overall, the works will have net positive environmental and social outcomes.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

All projects, related reports and progress details can be followed on the promoter website. Consultations with affected communities and interested parties take place in line with the requirements of the Directives.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In line with the EU Directives, the project will result in upgrading flood protection works based on the new flood safety requirements and will enhance water quality through improving wastewater and sludge treatment processes. The capacity of the promoter is deemed high, having strong in-house technical capabilities in environmental and social management.

The Promoter will be required to act according to the provisions of the relevant EU Directives, including the EIA (2014/52/EC) amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EC, Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds (2009/147/EC) Directives. The promoter undertakes not to allocate Bank funds to project components 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.

The promoter shall not commit any EIB funds against any project component 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.

Under these conditions the project is acceptable for EIB financing in Environmental and Social terms.

PJ/SQM/ECSO