

Luxembourg, 28 August 2023

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

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| Project Name:  | WASSER BURGENLAND   |
| Project Number:  | 2023-0041   |
| Country:   | Austria   |
| Project Description:   | Financing the 2024-2030 investment programme of WLW (Wasserleitungsverband Nördliches Burgenland) for the rehabilitation and extension of water supply infrastructure in the Austrian federal state of Burgenland |
| EIA required:  | No  |
| Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>1</sup> :                             | no  |
| (details for projects included are provided in section: “EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise”) |   |

### Environmental and Social Assessment

#### Environmental Assessment

This is the second operation with the Wasserleitungsverband Nördliches Burgenland (WLW), the “Promoter”, a public law water supply association operating in the federal state of Burgenland, in Austria. The Project is implemented by WLW, an experienced Promoter, and takes into consideration environmental as required by European and National requirements. The Austrian legislation complies with the relevant EU Directives (SEA Directive 2001/42/EC, EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by the Directive 2014/52/EU, Birds Directive 2009/147/EC, Habitats Directive 92/43/EC, Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC). The Promoter is well aware of these requirements and acts accordingly. The new Drinking Water Directive 2020/2184 has not yet been transposed into national law, but its requirements have been taken into account for this programme.

The Project will co-finance investment schemes that form part of the Promoter's investment programme for 2024-2030. The main categories of the programme are upgrading and renewal of groundwater abstraction and treatment facilities (mainly wells and pumping stations for abstraction) and the rehabilitation of water mains (transport and local). This includes interconnections to neighbouring water supply networks as a security mechanism in case of water shortage during peak demand times.

<sup>1</sup> Only projects that meet the scope of the Carbon Footprint Exercise, as defined in the EIB Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: 20,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.



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### Strategic Environmental Assessment

Burgenland is part of the international Danube River basin districts. In 2021, the Austrian Government published the 3<sup>rd</sup> River Basin Management Plan for the period from 2022 to 2027<sup>2</sup>, which was subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)<sup>3</sup>, in accordance with Directive 2001/42/EC.

WLV's activities are fully compliant with the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC and with the principles of the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC.

### Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

This is an investment programme made up of multiple schemes. According to WLV, only wells with a depth of 1,000m or more or water mains with a length above 100km would be subjected to an EIA process. As of today, none of the schemes will be subjected to an EIA study under the EIA directive 2011/92/EC as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, which was transposed in Austria through the Federal Act on Environmental Impact Assessment (Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2000 – UVP-G 2000)<sup>4</sup>

There are several Natura 2000 conservation sites in the Promoter's service area, especially around Lake Neusiedl and in the drinking water protection zones around the well fields. For works within or in the vicinity of these sites, the nature protection law of the federal state of Burgenland (version of 9 July 2019)<sup>5</sup> applies. It transposes the Habitats and Birds EU Directives (92/43/EEC, 2009/147/EC) into law on the level of the federal state and determines the competent authority which is either on district level ("Bezirkshauptmann") or on federal state level<sup>6</sup>. The latter is competent for all works around Lake Neusiedl which comprises the largest site of the Natura 2000 sites within WLV's supply area. WLV seeks the relevant permit ("Naturschutzrechtliche Bewilligung") and aligns with any requirements from the competent authority.

The Promoter confirmed during appraisal that under the investment programme, as of today, all components are in compliance with the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and that there are no Project components that will impact negatively any Natura 2000 areas within the Project area.

Nevertheless, given that annual revisions may result in slight changes of the investment programme (in terms of the type and location of each scheme), some schemes under the programme may require a full EIA according to Directive 2011/92/EC as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU or affect protected areas and therefore compliance with the Habitats and Birds EU Directives (92/43/EEC, 2009/147/EC), will be checked during implementation of the operation.

<sup>2</sup> BUNDESMINISTERIUM FÜR LAND- UND FORSTWIRTSCHAFT, UMWELT UND WASSERWIRTSCHAFT: Nationaler Gewässerbewirtschaftungsplan (NGP) 2022-2027 [NGP 2021 \(bml.gv.at\)](https://www.bml.gv.at/NGP_2021)

<sup>3</sup> UMWELTBERICHT IM RAHMEN DER STRATEGISCHEN UMWELTPRÜFUNG GEM. RL 2001/42/EG GEM. EUWRRL [Nationaler Gewässerbewirtschaftungsplan 2021 \(bml.gv.at\)](https://www.bml.gv.at/Nationaler_Gewässerbewirtschaftungsplan_2021)

<sup>4</sup> [ERV\\_1993\\_697.pdf \(bka.gv.at\)](https://www.bka.gv.at/ERV_1993_697.pdf), latest update on March 23, 2023

<sup>5</sup> Burgenländisches Naturschutz- und Landschaftspflegegesetz: [NG 1990\\_Fassung\\_vom\\_09.07.2019.pdf \(burgenland.at\)](https://www.burgenland.at/NG_1990_Fassung_vom_09.07.2019.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Abteilung 4 - Hauptreferat Agrar-, Umwelt und Verkehrsrecht - Referat Naturschutzrecht



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### Environmental impacts

The Project's main focus is on adapting the water supply system to climate change impacts. In addition, it aims at improving security and quality of drinking water supply.

Due to the nature of the works to be implemented it is anticipated that the negative environmental impacts will likely be only associated with the period of construction and will be mainly local, temporary and reversible such as (i) minor disturbance due to replacement of water mains and (ii) temporary increase of traffic around the construction sites. These negative impacts will be mitigated with appropriate measures.

The main long-term positive environmental impacts of the operation are reduced water losses through reduced leakages in the rehabilitated parts of the network which will lead to a more efficient use of a resource vulnerable to climate change.

### **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation**

The Project is expected to positively contribute towards climate change mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation will be achieved by a number of performance improvement measures, including but not limited to reduction of water losses and leakages through the replacement of old transport mains and distribution lines. The Promoter has also confirmed that the overall energy consumption for abstraction and treatment is already below the threshold value of 0.5 KWh/m<sup>3</sup> and that it is expected to be further reduced after Project completion and will thus improve the already very good performance of the system.

Identified climate vulnerability within the WVL's service area, namely more rainfall in the winter months and more intense and prolonged droughts during the summer months, will be mitigated by increasing the water security of the supply system through the construction of new transport mains connecting the Promoter's network to the networks of neighbouring water suppliers and constructing new and deeper wells. Consequently, the Project is expected to contribute also significantly to climate Adaptation.

### **EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework**

The counterparty WLW is in scope and screened out of the PATH framework, because it is not considered high emitting nor high vulnerability.

### **Social Assessment**

The proposed investments will improve access to safe drinking water and sustain high water quality at affordable tariffs to the service area and will result in a more climate resilient and robust water supply system. This will yield lasting positive social benefits, including improving the living conditions of the inhabitants within WVL's service area and thus be beneficial for the public health. The works will also contribute to local employment creation during the construction period.

The negative social impacts of the Project are only temporary such as the possible disruption of water services and traffic, noise and temporary occupation of public and private space. They are common for this type of projects and will be addressed as part of the planning permission for the relevant schemes.



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## Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Where relevant, the Promoter will be required 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.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The Project contributes towards the fulfilment of SDGs, particularly SDG 3 on “Good Health and Well-being”, SDG 6 on “Clean water and sanitation”, SDG 10 “Reduced Inequalities”, SDG 11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities”, and SDG 13 on “Climate Action”.

Overall, the Project has positive net social and environmental benefits. By rehabilitating, upgrading and increasing the capacity of the abstraction and treatment facilities, and improving the performance of existing and new drinking water supply system, the Project is expected to generate a positive impact on the environment and will contribute to the improvement of living conditions of the population within WLV’s service area.

All Project components will be subject to the Promoter complying with the following requirements:

- 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 and Drinking Water Directive.
- The Promoter will be required not to allocate Bank funds to Project components that require a full EIA until the EIA and/or the necessary nature assessment have been finalized and approved by the relevant competent authority. Once any EIA is available, the Promoter will provide the Bank with an electronic copy of the EIA, for publication on the EIB website.
- The Promoter undertakes to provide to the Bank, if requested, any decisions issued by the competent authority that screen out Project components and the main reasons for not requiring EIA with the reference to the relevant criteria listed in Annex III of the EIA Directive.

Considered the above, the Project is acceptable for EIB financing from an environmental and social point of view.