



Public

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet<sup>1</sup>

### Overview

Project Name:	CUNEXT ELECTRO COPPER REFINING
Project Number:	2023-0764
Country:	Spain
Project Description:	The Project consists of a green field electrolysis plant for high purity cathode fabrication that will be installed in Cordoba (Spain).
EIA required:	yes
Invest EU sustainability proofing required	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>2</sup> :	yes

### Environmental and Social Assessment

#### Environmental Assessment

- The Project consists of the installation of an electro-refining plant (electrolysis), which will recover copper from secondary copper from non-ferrous metallic waste, to manufacture grade A copper cathode with a low carbon footprint reducing the consumption of natural resources. The Project will be implemented on a green field site located in Cordoba, Spain close to the promoters existing copper rod manufacturing facility.
- The Project concerns “Production and Processing of Metals” which falls under Annex II of EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU, the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) 2010/75/EU and Decision EU 2016/1032, establishing BAT conclusions (BREF) for the non-ferrous metals industries. The Project requires an EIA which was shared by the promoter and reviewed by the EIB. The operating permit for the Project incorporates limits which are compliant with the “best available techniques” as defined in the European Commission’s enforcement decision establishing conclusions on the best available techniques for the non-ferrous metals industries under IED of 13 June 2016.
- The proposed site for the Project is not part of the European network of Natura 2000 protected areas (Natura 2000 Network). There are three Natura 2000 areas within in wider region with the closest being 4km from the site. As part of the EIA a specific study was carried out to investigate the impact of the Project on the Natura 2000 network in which it was concluded that it is unlikely that there will be direct and/or indirect effects related to the Project.

<sup>1</sup> The information contained in the document reflects the requirement related to the environmental, social and climate information to be provided to Investment Committee as required by the Invest EU Regulation and it represents the equivalent of the information required in the template of the InvestEU sustainability proofing summary

<sup>2</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.



- The biodiversity impact was considered on an area of 5km surrounding the site and focused on birds as the most sensitive species to this Project due to the risks of electrocution and collision with the aerial section of the projected power line. The competent authorities concluded that the implementation of the Project is environmentally compatible but noted that this is dependent on the environmental viability of the power line which is to be built and on which its operation depends.
- The Project will fall under the SEVESO III directive due to the presence of dangerous substances in quantities that exceed the thresholds defined in the legislation. The promoter has notified the competent authorities.
- The Project will be supplied with water from an existing pipeline located less than 100m away. The on-site wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) installed as part of the Project aims at zero discharge to a natural body of water. All rainwater will be collected and processed through the WWTP.

### **Climate Assessment**

The Project will increase the amount of recycled copper used to produce copper wire rod displacing high carbon primary copper and reducing the carbon footprint of the product.

The Project supports climate change mitigation through contributing to EU's transition towards a net zero economy by deploying novel technology to decarbonise the metals sector.

The Project is therefore considered to be 'Paris aligned', both against low carbon and resilience goals, and is in line with the EIB Group Climate Bank Roadmap 2021- 2025.

The physical climate risks related to the Project have been assessed and are understood by the promoter who will incorporate mitigation measures into the design.

**EIB Paris Alignment for Counterparties (PATH) Framework** *If the counterparty is not in scope of the PATH framework, delete this section including this heading*

The counterparty Cunext Group is in scope and screened in, to the PATH framework, because it is considered high emitting.

The counterparty has agreed to develop its decarbonisation plan and publicly disclose a new alignment plan.

### **EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise**

The Project is primarily motivated by decarbonisation and part of Cunext's decarbonisation strategy.

The absolute scope 1 & 2 emissions of the Project are estimated at 22 kt CO<sub>2</sub>e/year which is based on the electricity use and the grid carbon intensity. No fossil fuels are used in the Project.

The promoter has not carried out a full lifecycle analysis of the new copper wire rod process but a significant reduction in emission is expected through the use of scrap material rather than primary copper.

### **Social Assessment**

The Project will provide a significant contribution to the development of the South Region of Spain, particularly Andalucía.



It will deliver social benefits through the creation of direct and indirect employment. It will also support the local workforce through training and upskilling, contribute to the green transition of the regional economy, by reducing the environmental impact of its supply chain.

### **Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement**

A public consultation was carried out as part of the EIA process which was announced on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. The public consultation period was for a period of 30 working days. The promoter confirmed that no comments were received.

### **Other Environmental and Social Aspects**

Cunext have the following accreditations for the Cordoba site,

- Occupational health and safety management systems accredited to ISO 45001
- Environmental management system accredited to ISO 14001
- Quality management system accredited to ISO 9001
- Energy management system accredited to ISO 50001



## Conclusions and Recommendations

The Project contributes to the net zero goals of the EU by deploying novel technology to decarbonise the copper production sector.

The Project will provide a significant social contribution to the development of the South Region of Spain, particularly Andalucía.

Sustainability proofing conclusion: the Project will be carried out in compliance with applicable national and EU environmental and social legislation. Based on the information provided by the Promoter the Project ECS risks and impacts are deemed to be low, no additional mitigation measures required. Therefore, no further sustainability proofing is required.

### Undertakings

- The counterparty has agreed to develop its decarbonisation plan and publicly disclose a new alignment plan.

Overall, and with regard to the contractual conditions included above, the Project is acceptable for EIB financing in environmental and social terms.