

Luxembourg, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	VENTO DI VINO WIND
Project Number:	2024-0088
Country:	Italy
Project Description:	Construction and operation of a 45 MW wind farm, which is the extension of an existing 23 MW wind farm in operation since late 2011. The project is located in Mazara del Vallo, Sicily (Italy).

EIA required: yes

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise<sup>1</sup>: yes

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

### Environmental and Social Assessment

The project, named Vento di Vino 2, consists of the construction and operation of a wind power plant of 44.8 MW and other ancillary facilities as described below, such as access roads and grid connection works. The project is the extension of an existing 23 MW wind farm (Vento di Vino 1) in operation since late 2011, and is expected to be implemented in the period from early 2025 to July 2026.

The project is located in the Mazara del Vallo municipality, in the region of Sicily. The project scope includes:

- The wind generation plant composed of seven turbines.
- The 30 kV underground interconnection (ca. 12km) to the existing substation Vento di Vino, which is adjacent to the interconnection point at Mazara 2 substation, property of the Distribution System Operator.
- The upgrade, inside the existing perimeter of the substation Vento di Vino, including a new transformer.

The grid connection solution for the project entails the reinforcement of the existing 150 kV overhead transmission line Fulgatore-Partanna, part of the national grid and managed by the transmission system operator (ca. 78km). This reinforcement does not form part of the EIB financed scope. The duration of implementation of the reinforcement works extends well beyond the implementation timeframe of the project.

### Environmental Assessment

The wind power plant falls under Annex II of the Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, therefore leaving it to the competent authority to determine according to Annex III of the said Directive whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. The upgrade of the existing substation Vento di Vino, the 30kV underground interconnection cables and the reinforcement of the existing 150kV lines do not fall under the Annexes of the EIA Directive. In line with national legislation, the project underwent a full EIA process. All the components of the project scope and the 150kV line upgrade have been included in a single EIA report and assessed

<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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together by the competent authority. The environmental permit (“Giudizio positivo di compatibilità ambientale V.I.A.”) was obtained on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

The main potential impacts of the project expected during construction are related to the increase of noise, traffic and quality of air. There is a potential temporary impact on fauna during this period that is expected to be recovered after the end of heavy construction activities on site. The EIA report includes a cumulative impact assessment taking into account the infrastructure in the proximity of the project, existing (including the nearby Vento di Vino 1) and planned.

During operation, the main potential impacts are those related to the visual impact in an area that is already affected by other wind farms, loss of habitat and potential collision of avifauna with the wind turbines. Other sector-typical impacts entail biodiversity loss, soil compaction, topsoil destruction and soil accumulation, among others.

In order to address the impacts identified, the EIA report and the VIA include several mitigation measures for the impacts, including but not limited to:

- People and Health: Minimize traffic disruptions during construction.
- Biodiversity: Avoid night work, limit movement of vehicles on site, and reduce intervention times.
- Soil: Maintain roads, reuse excavated material and restore (top)soil.
- Geology and Water: Manage rainwater, prevent soil accumulation and handle machinery fluids carefully.
- Atmosphere: Optimize transport for fuel savings.
- Landscape: Covering with topsoil the foundations and restore premises at the end of life of the project
- Noise:
  - Use -compliant with national requirements- equipment to minimize noise pollution during construction.
  - No night work.
  - Install soundproofing screens where noise exceeds limits.
- Vibrations:
  - Consider health effects due to vibrations in health & safety plans.
  - Coordination between contractors for minimising site vibrations.
- Non-ionizing Radiations:
  - Respect safety distances for electric, magnetic, and electromagnetic fields, in line with applicable legislation.
  - Building underground 30kV lines to minimize magnetic induction.
- Light and Optical Pollution: Use light signalling for night air flight.
- Ionizing Radiations: Meeting safety regulations for the equipment.

Due to visual impact, one wind turbine generator was eliminated from the original design. Furthermore, due to available technology choices, one more wind turbine generator was removed from the original layout, resulting in seven turbines in the final design. The conditions listed in the EIA decision and the EIA report, include amongst others:

- A monitoring plan (pre-construction phase, construction and operation) of at least 5-year duration regarding fauna, avifauna, flora and environmental components, referred to the lands inside and outside the project area with also reference to the implemented measures.
- A specific monitoring plan for avifauna covering all the phases of the project (pre-construction phase, construction and operation) to be conducted according to certain guidelines referred to in the permit
- A pre-construction monitoring of avifauna of 12 months duration (currently underway)

Regarding Natura 2000 network, the closest wind turbine generator is located less than 1 km away from the Special Area of Conservation ITA010014 (Sciare di Marsala). Although no wind turbine is located within the boundaries of this protected site, the 30kV underground interconnection line (most of which runs along a public road) runs through the protected area.



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Nevertheless, as the line is underground, impacts are expected to be limited to the construction period in increase of noise, traffic and quality of air and potential impacts to flora and soil, mitigated with the same measures as for the project outside protected area.

The Agency of the environmental authority in charge of protected areas, provided a favourable opinion with some conditions, including: purchasing certain lands to extract them from agricultural use and enhance natural values in them, extend bird monitoring post construction for at least three years, submit wildlife monitoring results every six months. Those measures are mainly related to reinforcement works of the 150kV transmission line, which is excluded from the scope financed by EIB.

### **Climate Assessment**

The project substantially contributes to the climate change mitigation objective. The project has been assessed for Paris alignment and is considered to be aligned both against low carbon and resilience goals against the policies set out in the Climate Bank Roadmap and the Bank's Energy Lending Policy. Residual risks from physical climate hazards are deemed low.

### **EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise**

The direct CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions of the project are negligible.

In accordance with the Bank's current Carbon Footprint methodology, it is calculated that, based on the avoidance of electricity generation from a combination of existing and new power plants in Italy (combined margin for intermittent generation), the total relative effect of the project is a net reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent emissions by ca. 41.2 kt CO<sub>2</sub>-eq/yr.

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.

### **Social Assessment, where applicable**

The land plots required for the wind plant are private and most of them have been purchased via bilateral agreements- the process for securing the land is still on-going. Most of the route of the 30kV underground cable runs along a public provincial road. For the sections not under/next to the road, the promoter plans to secure the plots via easements. In parallel, the promoter has obtained an expropriation approval (*Dichiarazione di Pubblica Utilità*) and will only resort to launching expropriation procedures in the case where voluntary agreements cannot be reached with all of the affected landowners.

There are some plots also required for building the access roads, which are expected to be purchased or leased via bilateral agreements.

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

Public consultations have been carried out under the EIA process.

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

The promoter is engaging with the municipality where the plant is located and has proposed an annual plan to be defined every year, with objectives related to conservation of cultural heritage and public facilities. The promoter is deemed to have the E&S capacity to implement the project in line with EIB's requirements.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The operation is acceptable in environmental, climate and social terms for EIB's financing under the following conditions:



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- The promoter will provide the Bank with the competent authority's approval of the final design of the project as soon as available.
- The promoter undertakes to report and monitor the progress and completion of implementation of the measures foreseen in the EIA reports and the permits, as well as report to the Bank on the progress and outcome of the avifauna and wildlife monitoring.