

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	<i>Slovakia Forestry and Environment</i>
Project Number:	<i>2012-0478</i>
Country:	<i>Slovak Republic</i>
Project Description:	<i>Co-financing of selected measures of the Slovakian Rural Development Programme</i>
EIA required:	The project is a multi-scheme Framework Loan, and individual investments may require EIA.
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise <sup>1</sup> :	no

### Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment, including key issues and overall conclusion and recommendation

The operation's focus is on afforestation, forest rehabilitation and protection, and improved environmental performance of farms. It is expected to deliver multiple environmental benefits, including improved forest ecosystem health, increased greenhouse gas sequestration, reduction of nitrate emissions and increased production of renewable energy, and to contribute to nature protection objectives.

The programme's investments in facilities for on-farm nutrient management will reduce nitrate and phosphate pollution arising from agricultural activities, directly contributing to Slovakia's compliance with the EU Nitrates Directive and the country's progress towards meeting the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

The RDP as a whole aims to invest in and strengthen the country's rural economy, thus improving social and economic prospects for rural communities and reducing rural depopulation.

### Environmental and Social Assessment

#### Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

The EU environmental Directives transposed into Slovak legislation require the verification of environmental compliance both at the Operational Programme (OP) level (SEA) and project level (EIA, Natura 2000). The EIA and SEA Directives are transposed into national law via Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on assessment of environmental impact of projects or programmes.

Some of the schemes financed by this operation are likely to fall under Annex I or Annex II of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, amended by Directives 97/11/EC and 2003/35/EC. Should an EIA be required, the Promoter is obliged to make the Non-Technical Summary of the EIAs publicly available, and in addition to provide this to the EIB.

Most activities supported by the RDP do not require an EIA, but some – such as the construction of new forest access roads or other small-scale construction in rural villages – may do. The approval of the competent authority for the EIA is part of the approval process to obtain a permit for such activities, which in turn is a prerequisite for accessing RDP financing to reimburse eligible costs. Both the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture

<sup>1</sup> 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 CO<sub>2</sub>e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO<sub>2</sub>e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

and Rural Development underline the necessity to apply thoroughly environmental assessment legislation to the individual activities that are supported by the country's RDP, in compliance with the Act No. 24/2006 Coll.

Where an EIA is carried out, the non-technical summary is made available on the website of the Ministry of Environment ([www.enviroportal.sk](http://www.enviroportal.sk)).

### **Nature Protection**

The Habitats and Birds Directives are transposed into Slovak law via the provisions of Act no. 543/2002 on nature and landscape. Responsibility for implementation lies with the State Nature Conservancy, a specialised agency of the Ministry of Environment.

Some of the schemes may have impacts on protected sites and therefore will be subject to an appropriate assessment in accordance with Article 6 of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EC. Where this is the case, a positive opinion of the relevant nature protection body has to be attached to the application.

Several of the RDP's measures target agricultural or forestry land within Natura 2000 areas, specifically encouraging management which is orientated towards maintaining the conservation status of those sites.

### **Strategic Impact Assessment (SEA)**

An SEA was carried out for the RDP in accordance with the Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as of 27 June 2001 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment and with the Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on the Assessment of the Impacts to the Environments and on Amendments of some other Acts. The documents from the assessment process were made available on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture SR: [www.land.gov.sk](http://www.land.gov.sk) and of the Ministry of Environment SR: [www.enviroportal.sk](http://www.enviroportal.sk) and the public were asked to participate in the SEA process (through newspapers announcements). Via this process, the Ministry of Environment gave its approval to the Programme, and no substantial revisions to the Programme were called for.