

Public Consultation on the EIB Group's Environmental and Social Framework

Webinar on **Standard 3 – Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention**

Tuesday, 29 June 2021

Summary of Discussion

Objective

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is hosting a series of 13 webinars in the context of the public consultation on the EIB Group Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework (ESSF), open from 3 June to 6 August 2021. The overall objective of the webinars is to facilitate dialogue with stakeholders on the EIB Group Environmental and Social Policy (hereinafter “the Policy”) and Standards.

On 29 June 2021, the EIB hosted a webinar on Standard 3 – Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention. The Standard outlines the promoter’s responsibilities to ensure an integrated approach to resource efficiency, pollution prevention and control of emissions to air, water and land, noise pollution, radiation, prevention of accidents, as well as waste management and the safe use of hazardous substances and pesticides.

Introduction

The EIB welcomed the 53 webinar attendees (43 external, 10 EIB Group staff) and explained the webinar housekeeping rules and arrangements to ensure an effective discussion, noting that participant statements would not be attributed to individuals or organisations in the summary report and any comments made during the discussion would not be considered as formal contributions. The EIB invited participants to submit their written contributions to the public consultation by 6 August 2021 on the public consultation [website](#).

The EIB delivered a [presentation](#) on Standard 3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention. It summarized the background to the public consultation, the ESSF currently in force, and the main changes to the Standard under consideration. The floor then opened for discussion.

Discussion

A participant began the discussion with a question regarding how the **Do No Significant Harm principle and EU taxonomy** will be applied to projects. The EIB updated the participants on the status of their assessment regarding how the Do No Significant Harm principle is reflected in the due diligence process. It was noted that not all aspects of the Do No Significant Harm principle are relevant to the EIB and that there are other criteria related to other legislation and standards that are being considered. Currently, all the aspects are being assessed and once that assessment has been concluded then the EIB will reflect their findings in the due diligence process.

Another participant made the point that the Standard has a heavy focus on resource efficiency and asked to what extent is **circularity through lifetime extension** taken into account as part of the Standard and the Bank’s circular economy strategy. The EIB clarified that the specific requirements on circular economy and resource efficiency in the Standard use a similar wording to the EU Taxonomy Regulation (Article 17). The wording reflects what the EIB understands when it comes to the Do No Significant Harm principle and circular economy which is the focus of the Environmental and Social Standards. Concerning the extent that

lifetime extension is part of the circular economy strategy, the EIB supports these type of projects but made it clear that they consider them to go beyond what is defined by the Standards as the minimum requirement.

A representative of a non-governmental organization (NGO) then asked **how Standard 3 is expected to mitigate and prevent pollution in the livestock and agricultural sector**. The representative noted that the Standard focuses on improving technologies and circular economy but the livestock sector is hugely responsible for pollution. The EIB agreed that it is a sector that needs to be considered and certain activities of the sector fall under the Industrial Emissions Directive. For projects both inside and outside the EU, promoters have to demonstrate that they comply with Best Available Techniques (BATs) requirements. For projects outside the EU, the EIB is discussing with the promoters how to implement the BATs requirements. If the promoters cannot directly implement the requirements then they may be required to do so via an action plan. The EIB also has specific requirements for monitoring that the promoter must report on. When taking into account these considerations, the EIB believes this ensures the projects are implemented with minimal environmental impact as the requirements of the BATs are very detailed and the EIB follows these requirements.

A final question was raised by a participant asking the EIB to expand on **the role of electronics & Information and Communication Technology (ICT) life cycle management from the circular economy perspective** of this Standard. The EIB noted that ICT equipment is a significant source of waste generation when the products do not promote reuse. As part of the due diligence for these types of projects, the EIB asks the promoter to clarify how the project promotes circular economy strategies and longer life of ICT products as well as recycling measures for these products when they reach their end of life. The EIB pays attention to whether best practices within these industries are implemented to avoid significant waste generation.

Concluding remarks

The EIB thanked participants for their constructive participation, which allows the review of the ESSF to benefit from the expertise of a wide range of individuals and organisations. The EIB reiterated the invitation to submit written contributions by 6 August 2021 on the public consultation [website](#). After this date, the EIB will start publishing the written contributions received. 15 working days ahead of the Board of Directors meeting during which the revised ESSF will be discussed, a draft revised EIB-ESSF, reasoned responses to the contributions and a draft consultation report will also be published.