

# Environmental Impact Assessment

## Screening Report

(According to Schedule IB of S.L. 549.46)

**PA file no.:** PA08757/17

**EA file no.:** EA 00043/16

**Project Title:** Construction of the Malta-Italy gas pipeline EU Project of Common Interest, including a terminal station at DPS, an onshore HDD route through Delimara Peninsula and the laying of an offshore 22" diameter pipeline extending up to Gela, Sicily.

**Location:** Delimara Power Station and offshore route within the Malta Territorial Waters, Delimara, Marsaxlokk, Malta

**Screening date:** November 2017

### **1. Description of proposal**

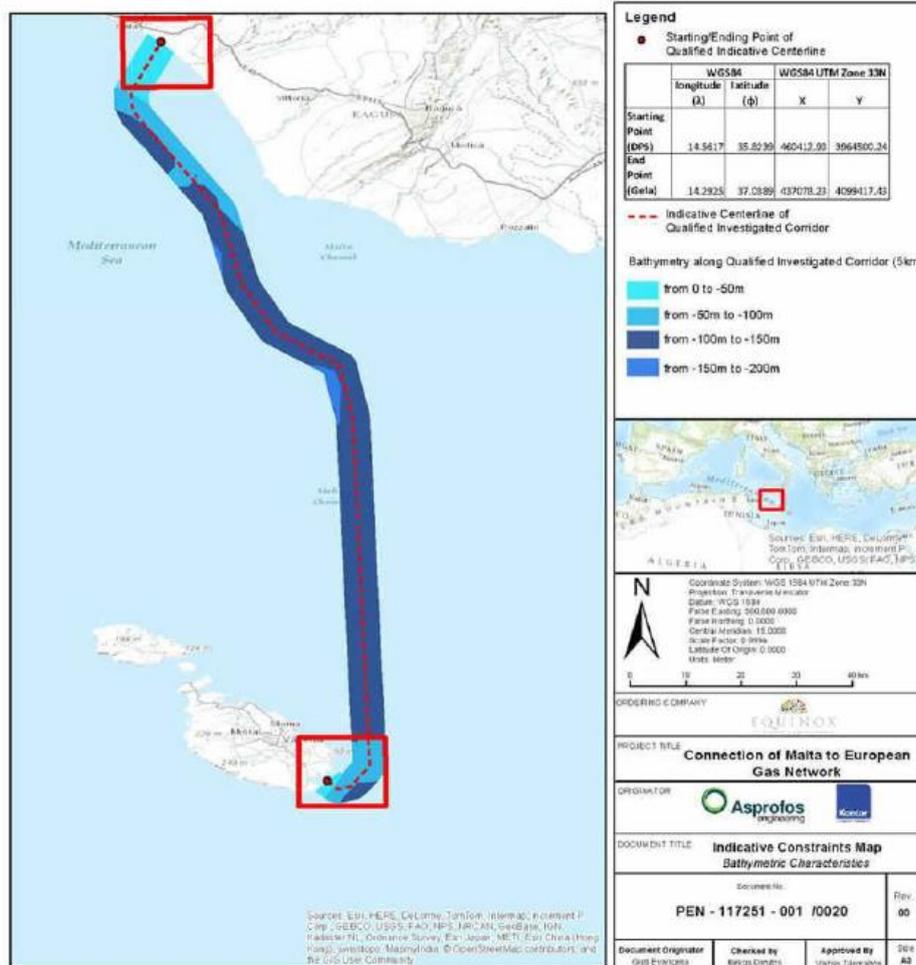
#### **1.1 Outline of project/development**

In line with Regulation (EU) No 347 of 2017 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2013, '*no Member State should remain isolated from the European gas and electricity networks after 2015 or see its energy security jeopardised by lack of the appropriate connections*', the Government of Malta intends to implement a connection with the trans-European Natural Gas Network to end Malta's isolation, through a 22 inch diameter approximately 158 kilometre pipeline to Sicily primarily for the importation of gas from the Italian National Gas network. Figure 1 below shows the pipeline route between Malta (Delimara) and Sicily (Gela).

The project has been identified as a 'Project of Common Interest' (PCI) under priority corridor 'North-South gas interconnections in Western Europe' in 2013 and its PCI status has been reconfirmed in the 2nd PCI list adopted on the 18th November 2015. In 2017, the project has been resubmitted for the 3rd PCI candidature. The European Union is expected to adopt the 3rd PCI list by the end of this year.

In April 2015, a comprehensive pre-feasibility and cost-benefit analysis, 50% co-financed by the European Union in the field of trans-European Energy networks (TEN-E), was carried out. The technical and financial viability of the project, including a high-level environmental impact/risk assessment and the legislative/regulatory aspects pertaining to the project were determined.

The 22 inch diameter gas pipeline between Gela and Delimara was identified as the most economically feasible solution to be considered as the first phase of the PCI implementation. The possibility of exporting gas to Italy sourced from an FSRU located approx. 12km offshore from Malta could potentially be considered as a second phase of the project and is subject to further in-depth analysis and market development.



**Figure 1: Pipeline route and 5km wide corridor identified during the Feasibility Study (Source: PDS, 2017)**

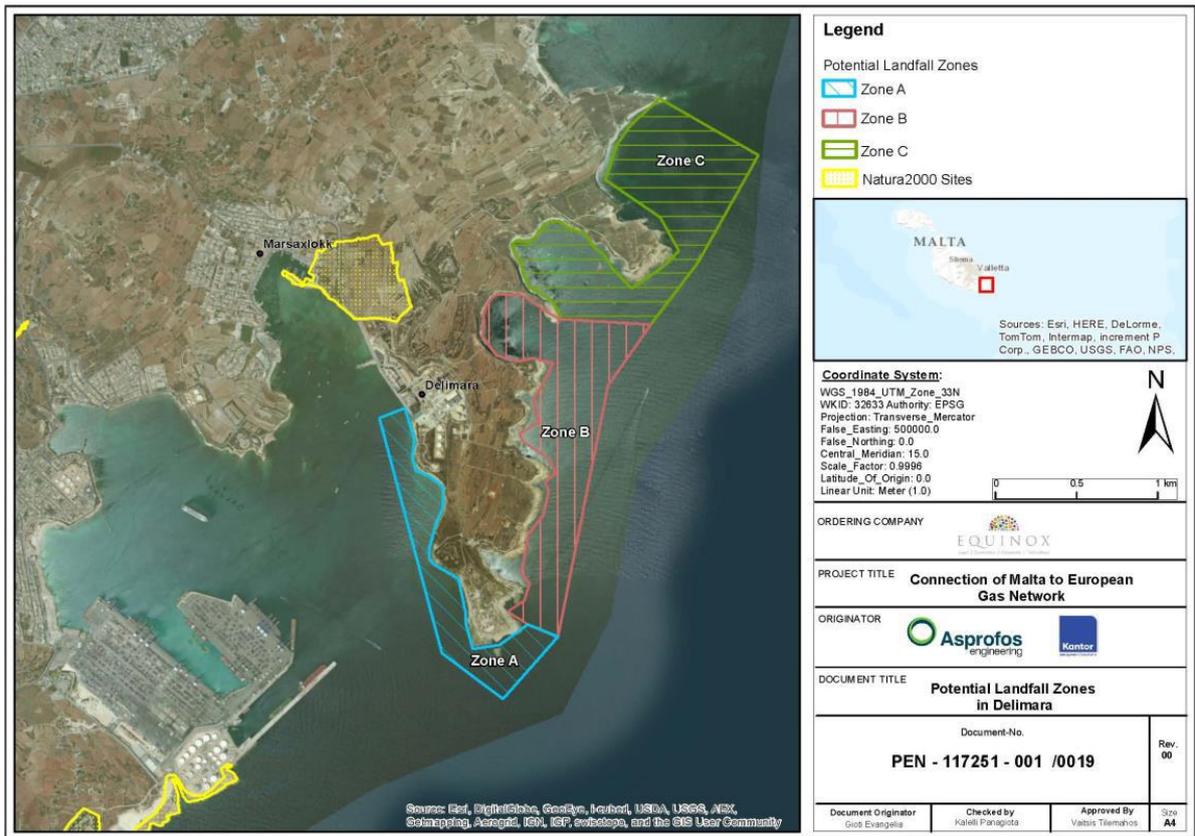
The proposed submarine interconnection will require an on land terminal on either side of the islands i.e. Sicily and Malta. With regards to Malta, the offshore pipeline will exit close to the Delimara Peninsula, where a tunnel with a length of 1080m will be tunnelled using a Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) method until the onshore entry point. From this point an onshore pipeline covering a total length of 702m will connect to the terminal station at the Delimara Power Station (DPS) having an area of approximately 3,640m<sup>2</sup>.

### 1.2 Site description and related considerations

Three zones (A, B and C) in the Delimara peninsula area were identified (Figure 2) in a feasibility study to determine the possible location for the landing area/points for the natural gas pipeline in the vicinity of the Delimara Power Station (DPS).

Zone B was determined to be the best landing area given its location:

- outside the busy Marsaxlokk Bay;
- its proximity to the DPS;
- its limited interaction with the harbour's general naval traffic; and
- the presence of existing infrastructures leading to the DPS.



The shore and onshore approach falls within a Level 2 Area of Ecological Importance (AEI), "Rdum mid-Daħla ta' San Tumas sa is-Sarç" (GN 400 of 1996). The shore is also a terrestrial habitat featuring maritime garrigue. The Delimara Peninsula is also declared through the Marsaxlokk Bay Local Plan (MD01) as a National Park for its landscape.

The offshore proposal lies within two Special Protection Areas – Il-Baħar tal-Grigal (MT0000107 – host of *Hydrobates pelagicus* and *Puffinus yelkouan*) and Il-Baħar tal-Lvant (MT0000108 - *Calonectris diomedea* and *Hydrobates pelagicus*), as declared through the provisions of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Regulations of 2006 (S.L. 549.44).

The pipeline also passes through the WFD designated coastal water body MTC107 – Il-Port ta' Marsaxlokk.

A *Posidonia* baseline survey describes the area around the shore as rock/coral outcrop and coarse sediment (predominantly sand).



### 3. Screening Matrix

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Documentation
1	Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, landuse, changes in water bodies, etc)?	<p>The works proposed involve the laying of a 22 inch diameter and 158km long natural gas pipeline between Delimara (Malta) and Gela (Sicily) of which 152km is subsea.</p> <p>The offshore pipeline will exit close to the Delimara Peninsula, where a tunnel with a length of 1080m will be tunnelled using a HDD method until the onshore entry point. From this point an onshore pipeline covering a total length of 702m will connect to the terminal station at the DPS having an area of approximately 3,640m<sup>2</sup>.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A preliminary marine route survey of the offshore route between Delimara and Gela will be carried out including bathymetric, sediment composition, morphological, geohazard and seabed geological investigations. These studies will determine the optimal pipeline route.</p> <p>With regards to the onshore route and the site for the terminal station, geotechnical investigations will be carried out.</p> <p>A clearer picture of the significance of the impacts on the avifauna, marine mammals and seabed habitats will be available once the preliminary studies are carried out.</p>	PDS pg 43
2	Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	<p>A trenchless method (HDD) will be used from the exit point of the offshore pipeline to the onshore entry point.</p> <p>A terminal station having a footprint of 3,640m<sup>2</sup> will be constructed at the southern end of the DPS between the cliff face on the eastern side, the present regasification on the northern side and the sea to the south west. A small building at the SE end of the DPS plant shall house the electrical power and control equipment.</p> <p>Approximately 50,000m<sup>3</sup> of seawater will be used to hydro-test the pipeline.</p> <p>The project will use carbon steel piping, valves and instrumentation.</p> <p>Electricity will be used during the construction phase for the HDD unit and during the operation phase in the small</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>At this stage, the amount of natural resources to be used is unknown and therefore the impact is unclear. For example, the amount of natural gas to be transferred to Malta through the pipeline to connect Malta to the European Gas Network, is not known.</p>	PDS pg 34, 36, 55

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Documentation
		building at the DPS plant, plant lighting, control and instrumentation.		
3	Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials or energy, especially any resources which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	The purpose of the project is to transport natural gas from Sicily to Malta to connect Malta to the European Gas Network.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Further assessment is required to determine potential risk to human health and/or the environment given that the amount of natural gas to be transferred to Malta through the pipeline to connect Malta to the European Gas Network, is not known.</p> <p>Any assessments are to be in line with requirements set by relevant EU policy including the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Water Framework Directive.</p>	PDS pg 55
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction, operation or decommissioning?	<p>Yes. Impacts during the construction phase are expected due to the generation of inert waste material from the drilling operations of the onshore tunnel.</p> <p>No impacts are envisaged during the operational phase.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Unclear. Although the volume of excavated material is unknown at this stage, it is expected that the volumes to be generated will be substantial and thus should be disposed of according to National and EU legislations.</p>	PDS pg 55, 58
5	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	<p>During construction, pipe lay barrage (marine environment) and construction vehicles (terrestrial environment) will generate emissions, such as PM<sub>10</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>.</p> <p>During operation, risks of contamination from the gas into the surrounding marine and terrestrial environments are possible, although unlikely. The composition of the gas from the pipeline shall be according to standard E.N. 16726:2015.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Emissions generated from the construction phase, both in the marine and terrestrial environment are expected to be as those usually generated during construction phase.</p>	PDS pg 55
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic	Impacts during construction are possible on both the marine and terrestrial environments. Noise, vibration and light impacts within the marine	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Impacts during construction are possible on both the marine and terrestrial environments. Noise, vibration and light impacts within the marine environment could</p>	PDS pg 58

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Documentation
	radiation?	<p>environment are possible during the laying of the pipeline. On the other hand, vibration impacts on terrestrial ecology may arise during the drilling of the trenchless tunnel.</p> <p>No noise and vibration impacts are expected during the operational phase.</p>	<p>affect tuna farms, marine mammals, avifauna (due to SPAs – refer to Section 2.2 above) and other species. On the other hand, impacts on terrestrial ecology are likely but not expected to be significant.</p> <p>The significance of the impacts during construction are unclear, thus further assessment is necessary (especially a noise impact assessment) for the construction phase is required.</p> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged during operation given the nature of the project.</p>	
7	Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	<p>No impacts are envisaged on the terrestrial environment.</p> <p>Contamination risks to the marine environment may arise during:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Construction works;</li> <li>- Operation phase (potential pipeline failure); and</li> <li>- Disposal of 50,000m<sup>3</sup> of seawater containing corrosion inhibitors following hydro-testing.</li> </ul>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>During construction, release of pollutants from vessels may arise on the marine environment, including the release of pollutants.</p> <p>Potential failure of the gas pipeline during operation is also possible, however unlikely.</p> <p>The location of disposal of seawater is unknown. The presence of corrosion inhibitors may be harmful on the environment.</p> <p>In light of the above further assessment is required to determine potential risk of contamination to coastal and offshore waters.</p> <p>Assessments are to be in line with requirements set by relevant EU policy including the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Water Framework Directive.</p>	PDS Appendix 1
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the	Environmental risk is unknown at this stage. There are safety considerations in view of the site's proximity of the Terminal Station to the current regasification plans and FSU jetty.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The impacts of the proposal vis-à-vis risk are unknown at this stage, therefore further assessment is required.</p>	/

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	environment?			
9	Will the Project result in social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	No impacts are envisaged.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
10	Are there any such factors which should be considered such as the consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Yes.  Access roads during construction and operation (including emergency vehicles) to the terminal station at the DPS.  A terminal station having an area of approximately 3,640m <sup>2</sup> will be constructed at the southern end of the DPS complex.  The PDS also mentions the possibility of land reclamation for the construction of the onshore facility; however the extent and amount of reclaimed land will be indicated to the authority, once further information is available.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The terminal station is being proposed within the footprint of the DPS, however access road to the terminal may be required for the access of vehicles during the construction and operational phases. The requirement and possible impact for such shall be determined during the Front End Engineering phase.  If land reclamation would occur, an impact on the marine habitats present in the area would be envisaged. The significance of such impact will be determined once the marine benthic survey is carried out, since this would determine the extent of protected habitats within the area of proposed reclamation.  In the absence of detailed information about land reclamation, the cumulative impact as a result of the proposal is unclear, therefore further assessment is required.	PDS Pg 36, 58
11	Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	Yes.  The offshore proposal lies within two Special Protection Areas – Il-Baħar tal-Grigal (MT0000107) and Il-Baħar tal-Lvant (MT0000108), (G.N. 1311 of 2016) as declared through the provisions of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Regulations of 2006 (S.L. 549.44).  In addition the area may host	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Impacts during the construction phase on marine mammals and avifauna (presence of SPAs) needs to be assessed, especially in terms of noise and vibrations.  No significant environmental impacts are envisaged on the water body, if mitigation measures during construction phase are carried out.  No significant environmental impacts are envisaged on the Areas of Ecological Importance,	PDS pg 27, 49

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		<p>and may have an impact on species protected through the provisions of the Marine Mammals Protection Regulation of 2003 (S.L.549.35)</p> <p>The pipeline also passes through the WFD designated water body MTC107 – Il-Port ta' Marsaxlokk.</p> <p>The onshore approach falls within two Areas of Ecological Importance (AEI), Il-Bajja ta' San Tumas to Delimara (scheduled as per Gov Notice 400 of 1996).</p> <p>The Delimara Peninsula is also declared through the Marsaxlokk Bay Local Plan (MD01) as a National Park for its landscape.</p> <p><i>Posidonia oceanica</i> meadows are located to the west of the entrance to the Marsaxlokk Harbour and Il-Ballut ta' Marsaxlokk (Natura 2000 site MT 0000014; GN 112 of 2007), located within the harbour.</p>	<p>since a HDD method of drilling will be utilised, thus the surface of the peninsula will remain intact.</p> <p>No significant impact is envisaged on Il-Magħluq ta' Marsaxlokk saltmarsh (and its surrounding buffer area encompassing the lands at Il-Ballut) since it is not located on the pipeline route.</p>	
12	<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>Reply refers to Question 11.</p> <p>The onshore approach falls within a terrestrial habitat featuring maritime garrigue.</p> <p>In addition, the offshore route in the Hurds Bank area includes known maerl/rhodolith accumulation and an abundant population of the hatpin urchin (<i>Centrostephanus longispinus</i>).</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reply refers to Question 11.</p> <p>In addition, the pipeline route may have an impact on the species mentioned, thus further assessment is required to determine significance of impact.</p>	Internal consultation
13	<p>Are there any areas on or</p>	<p>Replies to questions 11 &amp; 12</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Documentation
	around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	refer.	Replies to questions 11 & 12 refer.	
14	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	<p>Reply refers to question 7 and 11.</p> <p>The pipeline also passes through the WFD designated coastal water body MTC107 – Il-Port ta' Marsaxlokk.</p> <p>The project also extends outside limits of this area into offshore marine waters.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any possible impacts may arise during operation due to leakages from the pipeline. The pipeline will be hydro-tested to mitigate any such impacts (amongst other possible impacts)</p> <p>No significant environmental impacts are envisaged on the water body, if mitigation measures during construction and operational phases are carried out.</p>	PDS pg 27
15	Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be effected by the project?	<p>The east-facing coast of the Delimara peninsula and its hinterland are scheduled as an Area of High Landscape Value (and also as a Level 2 Area of Ecological Importance) through Gov Notice 400 of 1996.</p> <p>The Delimara Peninsula is also declared through the Marsaxlokk Bay Local Plan (MD01) as a National Park for its landscape.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The offshore pipeline will exit close to the Delimara Peninsula, where a trenchless tunnel with a length of 1080m will be tunnelled using a HDD method until the onshore entry point. Thus, no significant environmental impacts are envisaged, since the integrity of the peninsula and its coast will not be visibly affected.</p>	PDS pg 27
16	Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	During the construction phase, a possible impact may arise during the laying of the pipeline. The peninsula is mainly dominated by agricultural land and an area of disturbed ground.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The significance of impacts on the marine environment, with regards to access to bathing areas need to be assessed.</p> <p>No significant impact is envisaged on the terrestrial environment since no public access to the proposed development is possible given its nature and integration with DPS.</p>	PDS pg 38

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Documentation
17	Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	<p>The terminal station will be restricted to the public due to its proximity to the DPS.</p> <p>With regards to the marine environment, several fish farms, an aquaculture zone and anchorage waiting area 4 are present in close proximity to the pipeline.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged to the terrestrial environment.</p> <p>On the other hand, further assessment is necessary in order to assess the impact and its significance on the marine environment.</p>	/
18	Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	<p>No. A trenchless method (HDD method) will be used for the onshore part of the project.</p> <p>With regards to the marine environment, the pipeline will be laid on the seabed, and thus will not be visible.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant environmental impacts are envisaged, since the terminal on land will be located within the power station precincts and such addition is not expected to have a significant effect on the visual element. The marine component will not be visible.</p>	PDS pg 26
19	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Remnants of old fortifications are present on the coast at Ras it-Tumbrell.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant environmental impacts are envisaged, since a trenchless tunnel will be tunnelled using a HDD method until the onshore entry point.</p>	/
20	Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Replies to question 1 refers.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Replies to question 1 refers.</p>	PDS pg 17 – 24, 36, 58
21	Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The onshore area is mainly dominated by agricultural land, disturbed ground and the Delimara Power Station.</p> <p>The Maltese coastal waters are predominately used for fishing and bathing activities. The final 10km portion of the route corridor lies within an area for fishing with occasional trawling reported. Two aquaculture fish farms are located close to the shoreline between Delimara Point and St. Thomas Bay. These are located towards</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impact is envisaged for the onshore approach of the project since a trenchless method will be used to drill the tunnel for the pipeline. With regards to the DPS, the project (i.e the terminal station) will complement the existing infrastructure.</p> <p>The offshore approach, further assessment is required to determine any impact and its significance on the fishing industry and other existing uses.</p>	PDS pgs 15,38, 41

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	by the project?	<p>the northwest from the proposed pipeline route. A third fish farm located further north does not however lie on the proposed pipeline route.</p> <p>The pipeline route corridor has been defined to minimize its interferences with other existing sea activities such as Anchorage Waiting Area 4, the SE aquaculture zone and shipping lanes.</p>		
22	Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	<p>The Delimara Peninsula is declared through the Marsaxlokk Bay Local Plan (MD01) as a National Park for its landscape.</p> <p>The onshore area is mainly dominated by agricultural land, disturbed ground and the Delimara Power Station.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impact is envisaged for the onshore approach of the project since a trenchless method will be used to drill the tunnel for the pipeline. With regards to the DPS, the project (i.e the terminal station) will complement the existing infrastructure.</p>	/
23	Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected by the project?	The Delimara Power Station is located within the Delimara peninsula and will be used to house a terminal station.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impact is envisaged since the proposed project, including the terminal station will complement the existing infrastructure.</p>	/
24	Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities which could be affected by the project?	No. None that are known of.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impact is envisaged.</p>	/
25	Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g.	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The pipeline also passes through the WFD designated coastal water body MTC107 – Il-Port ta' Marsaxlokk and extends outside the limits of</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant environmental impacts are envisaged on the water body, if mitigation measures during construction phase are carried out.</p>	PDS pg 27, 41

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	groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	this area into offshore marine waters.  These areas accommodate important economic activities including fishing and aquaculture.		
26	Are there any areas on or around the location which have already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	Reply to question 21 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to question 21 refers.	
27	Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, or subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No. The site is not particularly susceptible to such extreme events	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/

#### **4. Conclusion**

##### **4.1 EIA screening conclusion**

The above EIA screening matrix indicates that the proposed development would qualify for an EIA (EPS) under Schedule IA Category II Section 2.6.2.1 (*Oil and gas pipeline installations and pipelines for the transport of CO2 streams for the purpose of geological storage (projects not included in Category I of this Section)*) and Section 4.2.2.3 (*Construction of a building with footprint of more than*

500m<sup>2</sup>) of the EIA Regulations, 2007 (S.L. 549.46), in view of a number of unclear impacts. In this regard, the EIA would need to assess the following aspects:

- Impacts on the seabed;
- Impacts of noise and vibrations on the surrounding;
- The amount of waste generated;
- Risks to the environment given the transport of natural gas; and
- Cumulative impacts on the surrounding area of influence.

In the light of the above, it is confirmed that:

1. The proposed development qualifies for an EIA (EPS); and
2. The envisaged impacts of the proposal are such that the development cannot be exempted from such EIA requirement.

#### **4.2 AA screening conclusion**

The proposed development may cause significant noise and vibration impacts on the Special Protection Areas – Il-Baħar tal-Grigal (MT0000107) and Il-Baħar tal-Lvant (MT0000108), as declared through the provisions of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Regulations of 2006 (S.L. 549.44). In this regard, the proposal requires the submission of an Appropriate Assessment (AA) in terms of Regulation 19(1) of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (S.L. 549.44).

#### **4.3 Transboundary impacts**

The pipeline shall connect Malta to the trans-European Natural Gas Network through Gela (Sicily). Transboundary projects fall within Part V of the EIA Regulations, 2007 (S.L.549.46) and the UNECE Espoo Convention, where States are obliged to notify and consult each other on all major projects under consideration that are likely to have a significant adverse environmental impacts across borders. It is recommended that Malta starts such procedures as laid in the same Regulation and Convention.

#### **4.4 Recommended consultations**

It is being recommended that the following entities are also consulted: COMAH competent authority and Transport Malta.

#### **4.5 Screening disclaimer**

The above screening results, the ensuing conclusions and recommendations are without prejudice to any required changes or updates should the development proposal be eventually modified or should the information/assumptions provided turn out to be incorrect. Any deviations of the proposal from this submission would need to be re-assessed and the merits of this screening would need to be re-opened.