Infrastructure and the Sustainable Development Goals

Infrastructure is directly mentioned in the 9th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) and is widely seen as a necessary condition to achieve a number of other SDGs.

Based on our own financings and investments, NIBC views infrastructure within our communities as potentially contributing towards as 10 or more of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Our Concerns

Infrastructure projects can also have significant and impactful sustainability risks if not developed responsibly.

Such projects might have an impact on biodiversity and ecosystems. Global water scarcity is creating potentially material Environmental & Social (E&S) issues. The stand-alone and cumulative impacts of infrastructure development can be material.
OUR POLICY

NIBC is committed to taking E&S criteria into account in every aspect of our decision-making for financings and investments in the infrastructure sector.

We provide financial services to the infrastructure sector in the following ways:

- Project Finance, advisory and equity investment related to a specific project;
- Corporate Lending where use of funds is for general corporate purposes, equity investments and advisory services.

Our clients are active in diverse areas of the infrastructure sector, such as:

- Airports, ports and harbours;
- Road and rails;
- Renewable energy;
- Power transmission and telecommunication;
- Social infrastructure such as public buildings, judicial buildings, hospitals and schools;
- Water utilities (i.e. desalination plants);
- Sanitation services (i.e. water treatment plants);
- Oil-, gas- and chemical storage.

Most of the activities we finance occur in high income OECD countries. We rely on the regulatory frameworks in place in those countries to govern E&S issues.

Equator Principles

NIBC will only finance or invest in projects that are compliant with the Equator Principles and applies the Equator Principles / IFC Performance Standards as the E&S due diligence framework for all advisory activities, project financing and equity investments related to a specific project.

Furthermore, NIBC only provides financial services to clients that have both the commitment and capacity to manage the E&S impacts of their activities in line with the standards as defined in our policies.

NIBC will not finance or invest in coal or lignite-fired power generation projects or mining projects.

We prefer use of sustainable technologies to mitigate environmental impacts and see this as an indication of a client’s commitment to mitigate emissions, pollution, waste and other potential impacts.

NIBC supports the disclosure of infrastructure footprint data, such as carbon emissions, energy efficiency, and water use. We encourage reuse of existing materials and applying circular economy concepts to avoid unnecessary waste.

We expect land rights and natural resources of projects to be acquired with free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of their users.

Conventions and Standards

NIBC will be guided by the following industry standards when assessing a client’s approach to managing the E&S impacts resulting from its activities.

- Equator Principles
- IFC Performance Standards
- UNEP Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative;
- Carbon Disclosure Project;
- GHG Protocol facilitated by the World Business Council on Sustainable Development;
- Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB)
- The World Resources Institute;
- The World Coal Institute;
- Environmental Impact Assessments.

This policy applies to our clients and all new services provided to them by NIBC. This policy is an extension of the general NIBC Sustainability policy and human rights and environmental policy supplements.

NIBC works with clients who meet or aim to meet our sustainability standards and will review our commitment to any client or transaction where such standards are not or no longer met.

NIBC shall exercise discretion in deciding whether to apply this policy to the provision of financial services to a company that has only marginal involvement in the infrastructure sector. NIBC will make such decisions on a case-by-case basis after assessing the materiality of any risk that NIBC is supporting unsustainable activities.

NIBC encourages companies to include clauses on compliance with social, economic and environmental criteria in their contracts with subcontractors and suppliers. These should be evidenced by the companies concerned where practicable via certifications, site visits, and/or audits to help ensure responsible practice throughout their supply chains.

We acknowledge that legacy issues may arise from continuing engagements entered before the implementation of this policy. Although the policy is not intended to be applied to financing agreements and investments retrospectively, NIBC endeavours to address potentially material legacy issues relevant to a particular engagement whenever a specific issue arises. In addition, clients are assessed against these policies as part of the periodic review process or as they become due for renewal.
Feedback Welcome

NIBC welcomes feedback on its policies and practices from its stakeholders. We believe that dialogue on issues and dilemmas is an opportunity for NIBC to not only improve its practices and strengthen its policies, but importantly to create value for our clients, investors and other stakeholders.

Even with the best policies and practices in place, NIBC may cause or contribute to an adverse impact that was not foreseen or prevented. If it is identified that NIBC is responsible for such an impact, we will endeavour to remedy or co-operate in the remediation of the situation through legitimate processes. Any person or party who believes that the NIBC has not acted in accordance with this policy, has suggestions on how we can strengthen our policies or has other feedback relating to our sustainability policies is invited to contact us.

Feedback: csr@nibc.com
Grievances: https://www.nibc.com/contact-nibc/complaints-form/

Alternatively, you may also write a letter to NIBC at the following address:
NIBC Bank N.V.
For the attention of: The Complaints Commission
PO Box 380
2501 BH The Hague

Updates

NIBC reviews and updates its policies on a regular basis. Our sustainability policies are reviewed at least annually. Reviews do not always result in policy changes. Therefore policy documents will be updated if and when changes are made and have been approved according to NIBCs agreed procedures.