



LIFE Project Number
LIFE12 NAT/HU/001188

Progress Report
Covering the project activities from 01/06/2014 to 30/11/2015

Reporting Date
22/01/2016

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym
Restoration of Pannonic sodic wetlands in the Kiskunság

Data Project

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Project location | Hungary |
| Project start date: | 01/10/2013 |
| Project end date: | 30/06/2019 Extension date: - |
| Total budget | 7 199 323 € |
| EC contribution: | 5 399 492 € |
| (%) of eligible costs | 75% |

Data Beneficiary

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
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2. List of key-words and abbreviations (when appropriate).

KNPD- Kiskunság National Park Directorate
KSPB- Kiskunság Society for Protection of Birds
Dunatáj PF- Dunatáj Public Foundation
NFMO- National Fund Managing Organisation
IR – Inception Report
CB – Coordinating Beneficiary
AB – Associated Beneficiary

3. Executive summary (max 3 pages).

3.1. General progress.

In our project Kiskunság National Park Directorate, Dunatáj PF and Kiskunság Society for Protection of Birds aim the conservation and state improvement of the Böddi-szék, a priority 1530 habitat type in Hungary. The original water dynamics and natural habitats of the sodic lake and its catchment area will be restored at this unique site. One of the most important target that have been set up in the project is to increase the numbers of grazing animals since habitat degradation was largely caused as a result of under management. We encourage local farmers to increase the number of their grazing animals since in the long run proper management could be maintained by their contribution.

The preliminary water rights plan was produced as part of action A2. Three potential tracks of the new canal have been identified and the authorization procedure is in progress. Sustainable land use plan was revised for the year 2015 by project staff.

As for the whole project we have signed 380 contracts (336 KNPD, 44 Dunatáj PF) by 30/11/2015 and the total area purchased is 278.51 ha (KNPD 170.25 ha, Dunatáj PF 108.26 ha).

A tractor and a shredder was purchased by Dunatáj PF and with their use 103 ha biomass had been reduced in 2014 and 362 ha area in 2015.

Invasive species were treated with chemicals on an extension of 180 ha area.

As we expect the improvement of the whole ecological system of the alkaline wetland habitats, multilayer monitoring analyses were set up to detect the simultaneous changes of the most possible elements of the system. The protocol of D1, D2 and D3 activity is therefore harmonised, the common observation and sampling points of the tree different activity reflect well the changes from several aspect, so the results of the project are measured by the change of state in the whole system. Monitoring of abiotic and biotic factors on project site produced huge amount of essential baseline data to represent impacts of project activity. Limnologic data show significant differences in the chemical characteristics of the separated water bodies, and the density of the main zooplankton indicator species *Arctodiaptomus spinosus* is definitely higher in the open water bodies than at sampling points with dense marsh vegetation. Evaluating botanical data, the first appearance of transient succession stage of the marshland into sodic meadow is already recognisable at C2 activity sites. The produced habitat map is an essential tool in the documentation of large-scale management of the project, including activities like C2 as well and helps to design management patterns, as part of A4 activity.

Documenting of feeding and nesting sites as part of ornithological monitoring represents a completely new method at the project site, which aims to understand the status of bird species specially confined to sodic lakes and their catchment areas, e.g. *Vanellus vanellus*, *Recurvirostra avosetta*, *Charadrius alexandrinus*. Although the avifauna of the project site with its variable habitat types appears diverse, the status of the sodic lake ecosystem could be

understand by focusing the monitoring to the aquatic birds which play a key role in bottom up and top down regulation of the ecosystem at the same time.

Socio-economic relationship of the project site is complicated. Socio-economic study in the frame of action D4 is focusing mainly to understand the present situation of ecosystem services and to define potential methods to improve social participation in the sodic pan ecosystem. The Questionnaires about ecotourism, the semi-structured interviews made with the local farmers and the stakeholders are helping us to understand the importance and weight of the different services of the sodic pans. Local people were attentive during D4 interviews hence D4 activity complemented our public awareness efforts (E1) at a wide social basis.

3.2. Assessment as to whether the project objectives and work plan are still viable.

Realistic conservation aims have been set in the course of proposal compilation hence the targets identified could be reached via the implementation of actions by the proposed end date 30/06/2019. We can state that the overall objectives of the project are still viable.

The deadline of our next report is 30/11/2016 (1st Midterm Report).

3.3. Problems encountered.

Concerning the acquisition of durable goods KNPD faces many difficulties. The procedure of public procurement is getting more difficult since it is continuously changing, needs more time and preliminary approval by relevant Ministry Departments.

In the course of land purchase B2 action large undivided parcels that are present in the area making our efforts more difficult. Some of the owners could not be reached on the given addresses, the land registry database often missing data, and in many cases the owners have passed away. Due to the great number of the owners in the same parcel the registration procedure takes very long time (more than half a year). In case land is purchased by the KNPD the registered owner is the Hungarian State and the management right is automatically given to NFMO. The KNPD could not become land a registered land user until the management agreement is signed with the NFMO. Until mid November 2015 there have been no possibilities to submit a request. Without this agreement the KNPD can not act as the manager of the purchased parcel which causes delays in action C5, and C6.

4. Administrative part

Project staff members of the CB implement their tasks continuously according to project proposal and in line with their working contracts and job descriptions. The project manager holds regular internal meetings at least two times a month in order to discuss the implemented and the forthcoming tasks. The personal meetings with project coordinators of ABs are held regularly, at least twice a month. Communication on phone and by e-mail is more frequent.

Project structure can be seen on Annex 1 organigramme.

KNPD requested for a VAT declaration concerning LIFE 12 NAT/HU/001188 project in December 2014. The Tax Authority declared that concerning the goods and services related to the project the VAT is not recoverable. The declaration can be seen as Annex_2.

We submitted the IR on 29th July 2014.

We do not envisage the extension of the project duration at this stage of the project implementation.

5. Technical part

5.1. Actions (please follow the structure of your proposal).

5.1.1. Action A1 – Production of Natura 2000 and Environmental Impact Assessments

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Before the detailed planning of canal translocation the estimation of environmental effects through authority procedure is necessary. In our case we have to complete an authorization procedure, in which the environmental authority (Government Office of Bács-Kiskun County) examines the potential tracks of the new canal section. The potential tracks are shown in the plan finished in September 2015, produced in action A2. After receiving the plan it have been carefully reviewed and on 15/10/2015 three environmental experts with appropriate privileges were tendered for the production of the Preliminary Impact Assessment Documentation. After receiving and evaluating the 3 valid offer bids, the contract was signed with the best applicant on 12/11/2015. Personal consultations were carried out with the expert to provide background materials and to discuss details as accurate as possible. In the documentation the environmental expert examines and compares the environmental and natural effects of the 3 potential tracks.

Preliminary Impact Assessment Documentation and Natura 2000 Impact Assessment is going to be prepared in a short time, according to the received working copy.

Environmental Impact Assessment related to building permission (action A3) – forecasted in the last report – is unnecessary, since there is no building permission obligation according to our present information and relevant legislation.

A study concept was prepared for an examination of the hydrodynamic impacts of canal displacement, and the order of the study is in progress. This study will be appropriate for forecasting changes in land use, caused by groundwater level changes along the current and future canal tracks.

5.1.2. Action A2 - Production of Water Management Plan with Water Rights Implementation Permit

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Obtaining the Preliminary Water Rights Permission constitutes guarantee – under same conditions of planned activities – by the request of Water Rights Implementation Permit. All relevant authorities can examine the planned canal tracks and its technical effects, but needs less preparation and time. In the case all authorities accept the preliminary plans (the activities receive Preliminary Water Rights Permission), detailed construction planning can be carried out.

In a competition process started in July 2015, the water management planner with the best offer was chosen, and the contract was signed on 07/08/2015. During the planning process several consultations were held with the water manager, Lower Danube Valley Water Directorate (ADUVIZIG) with special attention to the building parameters and future water management of the planned canal sections. The Preliminary Water Rights Permission Plan was produced on 30/09/2015 and contains the 3 potential new canal tracks, the list of the parcels involved, the canal cross section parameters, a description of main implementation actions and work phases, and the amount of ground mass needs to be moved. Annex_A2 shows the details of the plan.

After receiving the Preliminary Water Rights Permission Plan it have been carefully reviewed by the project coordinator, and approved by CB hence the process of authorization could have started in October 2015.

5.1.3. Action A3 – Production of Building Plan with Permission

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

The exact locations of the sweep wells to be renovated were identified. According to the latest consultations (phone communication) with authorities the structural renovation does not belong to the activities subject to licensing since it is not included in recent legislation.

As a result of networking KNPD cooperated with Hortobágy Nonprofit Kft. and the project manager and project coordinator of our project visited the herdsman accommodation and warehouse built in the frame of LIFE11 NAT/HU/000924 project. Based on this field experience, a similar building-complex would meet our project aims too, since it allows storage of machinery and equipment necessary for livestock farming, and provides shelter for the herdsman. According to the authorization experience of Hortobágy Nonprofit Kft. and the information of competent building authority, the building-complex according to its parameters does not belong to the activities subject to licensing.

5.1.4. Action A4 – Sustainable Land use Plan

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Sustainable Land Use Plan was updated by relevant project staff for the year 2015 (Annex A4_1). In this revised plan every activity to be done in 2015 was described according to the proposal. To have a general overview of the ongoing actions for decision-makers of the CB, the antecedent activities related to the actions are listed as well.

During the preparation of the Land Use Plan we have put emphasis to explore land use relationship of the private land managers, farmers, land owners of the project area as well, in order to have a complex overview of the whole management of the sodic wetland ecosystem.

5.1.5. Action B1 – Purchase of the area of new canal track

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

According to project description the purchase of the new track of canal is possible in the possession of licensed water rights plan. An external company produced the preliminary water rights plan by 30/09/2015 as part of action A2. In the plan there have been three potential tracks of the new canal section delineated. Afterwards the water rights plan was submitted to the Water Authority in October 2015 and its authorisation is in progress. As soon as the track of the new canal section will be finalized the CB can start the direct land purchase of B1 action.

However, as we have already reported in our IR B1 action KNPD has practiced its preemptive right and purchased a land plot in Dunatetétlen (3 ha). Further plots (Dunatetétlen) were purchased along the proposed new canal tracks in recent reporting period. These plots purchased in the frame of the LIFE project B2 action together with those that had already been in the ownership and management of KNPD or Dunatáj PF before the LIFE project are shown on Annex_B1_1. Although we allocated the land purchase of these plots exclusively to action B2, it should also be taken into consideration that the identified new canal tracks pass through the above mentioned parcels. The overlapping can be as much as 50 % in case of the red track version.

Land acquisition procedures were discussed at meetings (04/06/2015 Baja, 10/07/2015 Kecskemét) and in official correspondence (11/08/2015, 18/09/2015, 19/10/2015, 06/11/2015) by relevant authorities (Water Authority, Government Office of Bács-Kiskun County, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Interior) and the CB. These negotiations were needed

since the delineated tracks of the new canal section pass through unprotected areas as well, where nature conservation organizations have limited potential for land acquisition.

5.1.6. Action B2 – Land purchase for habitat improvement

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Land purchase for the improvement of Natura 2000 habitats have been continued according to the procedures described in details in IR. Both conservational manager (KNPD, Dunatáj PF) already present in the project site had increased their property. Although we have allocated 4 years for the accomplishment of the action due to the change of legislation concerning land public foundations are not allowed to purchase land in Hungary from 01/05/2014.

In the IR we have reported that Dunatáj PF purchased 106.78 hectares, instead of the final 108,26 ha total area. The reason behind this is that one contract was deliberately left out of the IR by the KNPD, since the property had a registered encumbrance due to an administrative mistake of the Land Registry Office. The situation was cleared in recent reporting period and the new proprietor Dunatáj PF could be registered in the documents on 08/04/2015. Afterwards the money for the land deposited at the lawyer by Dunatáj PF could have been transferred to the previous owner.

The land purchase was successfully accomplished by Dunatáj PF signing altogether 44 contracts with properties in 13 parcels. The 108.26 ha total area slightly exceeds the planned 80 hectares. According to the provided documents the ownership of Dunatáj PF had been registered in all 45 cases by 30/11/2015 (one contract included the purchase of two plots, and each plot is registered separately in the related documents).

(Annex_B2_1_land_purchase_Dunataj)

In Hungary there is an existing, separate registration that is compulsory for all land users. The Land Registry Office is in charge for the registration of the land use right in the Land Use Database. Dunatáj PF was able to have its land use rights registered in case of 10 plots. 7 of them were purchased as entire plots (1/1 property ratio), in two cases Dunatáj PF and KNPD have together the 100% property ratio (plots Dunatetétlen 014/21 and 019/6), while a land use agreement was signed by all owners of the plot Dunatetétlen 022/21, hence the exactly demarked area managed by Dunatáj PF is clearly indicated.

KNPD can obtain land propriety rights for the Hungarian state in case of protected areas. The two different land purchase procedures have remained the same as it was described in details in IR. Since land registry documents are continuously changing, an important task of the land administrator is to download the whole document of the plot from the Hungarian Land Administration System (TAKARNET) before the actual purchase takes place in order to countercheck the information provided by the owner.

The KNPD has sent out more than 400 offers for purchase in the reporting period. The largest, undivided parcels in the heart of the project area were identified as priority for purchase. As a result we were able to sign 306 contracts in recent reporting period. Hence the total number of contracts signed on the basis of this procedure was 311 by 30/11/2015.

In case of ownership change concerning plots inside a protected area, the Hungarian State has preemptive right prior to anybody. The requests in relation with practicing the preemptive right concerning parcels inside the project area were evaluated on the basis of their extension, location and natural state and as a result KNPD gave its declaration. In case the KNPD practiced its preemptive right, the land purchase contract was signed between the seller and the KNPD. By 30/11/2015 KNPD has 25 contracts signed with a procedure of practicing its

preemptive right, of which 13 were signed in recent reporting period. The total area purchased this way is 20.7 ha, of which 3.6 ha purchased in recent reporting period.

By the other procedure (providing an offer) KNPD have purchased a total area of 149.55 ha, of which 141.53 ha was purchased in recent reporting period.

(Annex_B2_2_land_purchase_KNPD)

As for the whole project we have signed 380 contracts (336 KNPD, 44 Dunatáj PF) by 30/11/2015 and the total area purchased is 278.51 ha (KNPD 170.25 ha, Dunatáj PF 108.26 ha) as it can be seen on Annex_B2_3.

All contracts signed include a clear reference that the particular parcel has been purchased in the framework of the LIFE+ project and also includes the compulsory conservation clause providing the long term conservational guarantee.

In case land is purchased by the KNPD the registered owner is the Hungarian State and the management right is automatically given to NFMO. According to the information provided by the Ministry of Agriculture there is a possibility to request the management right in a special procedure from NFMO to the KNPD. All land property that have been purchased in the frame of our LIFE project have been included in the consolidated request of KNPD submitted in mid-November 2015 to the Ministry of Agriculture (Annex_B2_4). In case of official approval NFMO and KNPD will sign the management right contract including purchased LIFE parcels. Afterwards KNPD can submit requests to the Land Registry Office in order to register its management right.

5.1.7. Action C1 – Restoration of the natural water balance of the sodic lake

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

-

5.1.8. Action C2 – Biomass reduction for making the areas suitable for grazing

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

The tractor and the shredder was purchased and delivered to Dunatáj PF in June, 2014 by company provided the best offer for both machines in the public tendering procedure.

Late spring and summer of 2014 was extremely wet compared to the average precipitations. Consequently, biomass reduction could have been carried out only on 103 ha in 2014, since most of the depressions identified as priority areas for this preliminary management were covered with water. In such circumstances proper management could not be done, since there would have been more damage caused by the tracks of the machines. However, conditions were ideal in the summer months of 2015 for the management activity, and after installation of the machines the preliminary management was carried out on 362 ha area. (Annex_C2_1_photo_documentation; Annex_C2_2_map)

The shredder was also used in the autumn of 2015, and the vegetation that was not grazed by the herds and flocks of local animal keepers was cut and cleared on the pasture lands, hence Natura 2000 habitats inside the project area were maintained.

5.1.9. Action C3 – Establishment of the infrastructural background of livestock keeping

Action status:

ongoing, delay due to invalidated offer

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Preparatory works for building the fold system around the summer stand of cattle and for the purchase of an electric fence system that is to be placed inside the fold have been carried out. The tendering procedure for the building of the fold system started in October 2015. KNPD has requested three companies to submit an offer for the construction works. Unfortunately, by the given deadline we have received only one offer. Although it was valid, the given price of the work including the cost of materials was five times more than the budget allocated for the construction in the proposal. Therefore, the CB invalidated the procedure. According to recent estimations the budget could be two or three times higher than it was expected. Hence a new selection procedure will take place in the first quarter of 2016.

The implementation of sweep well reconstruction was delayed due to the difficulty in finding potential contractors who know the method of traditional manual well digging, since it is no longer widespread. Therefore finding the proper potential contractors took more effort and longer time.

5.1.10. Action C4 – High level grazing of the sodic wetlands and its catchment area for conservational purposes

Action status:

not due yet

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

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5.1.11. Action C5 – Restoration of the catchment area of the Pannonic sodic wetland

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Dunatáj PF had purchased altogether 3,56 ha arable land in 4 plot numbers, while KNPD had purchased 3,27 ha ploughland in 3 plot numbers by 30/11/2015. The direct management can start on a particular plot after the land use right is registered in the database of the Land Registry Office. This procedure is in progress in case of the Dunatáj PF, and their land use right have already been registered in two plots. Direct management will take place in 2016 spring or autumn depending on the actual field conditions. The other two plots are large, undivided parcels, where a special land use agreement must be signed by all landowners and users and then submitted to the Land Registry Office. In case of plot Dunatetétlen 039/8 the agreement was compiled and it is under signature. However, the arable land inside this plot has naturally turned into grassland since it has not been cultivated since the project commencement. In order to avoid the dominant weed species shredding of these parcels were carried out by the tractor and the shredder purchased from LIFE sources. This way we have reached a goal of the action and the habitat have been improved on a total 4,95 ha area, however not by direct grassland restoration. The compilation of the agreement for the parcel Dunatetétlen 019/12 is in progress.

In the latter two undivided parcels KNPD has also purchased areas from LIFE sources, however the management right transition is in progress, as reported in the description of B2. Supporting documents are attached as Annex_B2_4.

The extension of extensively used land inside the project area has also been enlarged due to alfalfa field establishments by local farmers that took place on two arable 'islands' demarked as priority sites for grassland restoration in proposal. Hence another 8 ha land in two plots (2,1 ha Dunatetétlen 058/16 and 5,9 ha Dunatetétlen 065/8) is extensively used from 2015 on. (Annex_C5_1)

We also put a great emphasis to the identification and marking of grassland borders. As a result we have detected 13,6 ha grassland area south of the existing canal which was ploughed up in the past few years. We marked the borders and informed land users about this discrepancy. Since the area is adjacent to native grasslands we expect that most of the area will regenerate naturally, however occasional direct management could be needed which will be determined on the basis of monitoring results.

5.1.12. Action C6 – Elimination of the stands of non-indigenous and invasive species from the catchment area of the Pannonic sodic wetland

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

1. *Elaeagnus angustifolia*

Elimination of *Elaeagnus angustifolia* started in August 2014 with the analysis of the habitat map database and field observations in order to separate *E. angustifolia* individuals into groups regarding their height. Height determination is essential since both the method of the elimination and also the need of permission to cut *E. angustifolia* individuals depend on this categorization. Shoots and small trees up to 2 meters height can be eliminated by point spraying and can be removed from the area without any permission. The elimination of the trees higher than 2 meters starts with a special chemical handling. Stem injection is the proper, applied pre-treatment method that hinders the growing of rudimentary shoots after cutting the trunk. The permission for the chemical handling from the Nature Conservation Authority was received in September, 2014.

The chemical handling (spraying and stem injection) was accomplished in October 2014 in the parcels 058/46, 065/8, 065/10, 065/20, 066/8, 066/9, 066/10, 066/11, 068/1, 068/2 (map Annex C6_1) effectively since approximately 90 % of the trees dried out (Annex C6_2). *E. angustifolia* stands on these parcels cover 75 % of the whole extension of infected areas on the project site.

In September 2015 the *E. angustifolia* individuals on which the chemical handling did not resulted complete drying out (10%), the handling (point spraying or stem injection) was repeated again.

For the cutting of individuals higher than 2 meters permission is needed from the Forestry Authority. The permission for cutting out the trees was sent to the Forestry Authority in December, 2014. We did not receive the permit, as the Authority obligated the KNPD to submit with the request an additional document, the approval of all competent land owners and land users, which is a legal obligation. In case of the parcel Dunatetétlen 065/20 there are more than 300 owners, some of them could not be reached on the given address, some of them passed away. Since we need the approval of ALL owners, we are not able to apply for the permission at this point. The single solution could be that we will continue with B2 land purchase and increase our property ratio in the particular parcel, and then have the parcel divided.

2. *Robinia pseudoacacia*

Dunatáj PF purchased 0,8 ha forest area (plot number 065/7, forest compartment Dunatetétlen 19 C) with *Robinia pseudoacacia* stand as part of action B2. In order to manage forest area (as official Forest Manager of the forestry compartment) there is an obligatory registration process at Forestry Authority. Only registered forest managers can apply for modification of the Forest Management Plan, which is essential for the cutting of the trees in a forest department. A contract with a professional forest management expert is needed for the application. The contract was signed on 20/07/2015. The registration process was completed

by 26/08/2015 (Annex C6_3), so Dunatáj PF could initiate allowably the modification of the Forest Management Plan.

3. *Asclepias syriaca*

On the 2345 ha project site the total 3,7 ha stands of *Asclepias syriaca* were handled in 2014 and 2015 consequently. Stands were treated with chemicals three times each year. Density of the stands was reduced after the first year handling averagely by 40%. Some sporadic new occurrences have been observed in spring 2015, hence their handling started in May 2015.

5.1.13. Action D1 – Monitoring of hydrological and hydro-biological factors of the open sodic wetland habitats

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

The hydrological and hydro-biological monitoring action is coordinated by KSPB. The implementation of the action is carried out as external assistance. The report of the contract (signed in previous reporting period) for the professional study work “Establishing the basis of the monitoring and evaluating the monitoring protocol” was accomplished by November 2014. (Annex D1_1). This report summarises the scientific background for the essential tasks of the hidrological and hidrobiological monitoring. For the monitoring activity two contracts were signed by KSPB in April, 2015, chosen the bid offering best value.

Both contracts determine yearly reporting periods. Results of the hidrological and hidrobiological monitoring of the present reporting period are represented in Annex_D1_2 and Annex_D1_3. The monitoring results demonstrate data about different ecological status of the project area, including the crossing canal as well.

5.1.14. Action D2 – Monitoring the distribution and state of Pannonic salt steppes and salt marshes habitat of community importance (1530)

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

All three sub-actions (vegetation mapping, transect investigation, monitoring of the effects of the grazing) are ongoing.

1. Habitat map of the first year of the project is completed. The digitizing was based on the aerial photograph made in the project's starting date, 2013. For the categories field data collected by the GPS (purchased for the D2 Action) was used. Altogether 3800 distinct poligones were digitized. The overview of the map and an example of the thematic use of the map can be seen in Annex D2_1. The follow-up monitoring of the eradication of invasive species like *Elaeagnus angustifolia*, *Asclepias syriaca* is also part of this mapping activity.
2. The nine, 300 m long transects for the analyses of the changes in the alkaline zoning system due to rehabilitation were selected in the second part of May, 2014. Yearly two investigations, altogether four investigations along the nine transect were accomplished until the end of this reporting period. Evaluation of the data of the year 2015 is ongoing.
3. For the monitoring the effects of special grazing 18 sample sites (50m x 50 m) were designated on grazing area (Annex D2_2). Data collection is carried out making relevés. Evaluation of the data is ongoing.

5.1.15. Action D3 – Ornithological monitoring

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

The ornithological monitoring started right after the beginning of the project. Ornithological data was collected from different habitats on the whole project area, most importantly on the sodic lake and sodic wetlands. Field investigations are most intensive in the migration and breeding periods. Preferred places of birds for feeding, nesting and resting were identified and included in a database. Scientific article has been published to the Hungarian Waterfowl Publications including a part of the data collected during monitoring activity (Annex D3_1).

Annual ornithological reports are prepared. Concerning the present reporting period the Annual ornithological report summarising 2013 and the whole year of 2014 is attached as Annex D3_2. A short overview about the ornithological monitoring of the year 2015 can be seen on project website.

5.1.16. Action D4 – Complex sustainability study of socio-economical impact of different management types and methods of sodic wetlands

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Beneficiary responsible for the implementation is KNPD. External assistance is used for the implementation. A scientific expert group was contracted (March 2015) based on the bid offering best value.

The interdisciplinary work needs large scientific study area for data evaluation, therefore the whole Sodic lake area of the Upper-Kiskunság (including the project area) were selected as target area. The Expert Group is coordinating the activity by creating the scientific background for the work and determining the tasks for the implementation. For the effective monitoring activity and fieldwork two persons are employed by KNPD, so the budget of the action is distributed as external and personal cost.

The first report of the was accomplished by May, 2015 (Annex D4_1). In this report the scientific background of the monitoring activity and the methodology to be used were described. According the methods proposed the monitoring activity started as follows (showing only activities of the present reporting period):

1. Preparatory stage (2015 May-August): creating database of stakeholders; finalizing questionnaire; training of the two employee of BEN.
2. Data collection stage (2015 September on): ecotouristic interviewing; semi-structured interviewing; desk research - collecting literature, landscape history. Altogether 111 questionnaires were filled in during environmental education and ecotouristic field events (Annex D4_2). Evaluation of the results of the questionnaires is reported in Annex D4_3. Until present reporting period 20 semi-structured interview were made. A workshop was organized at BEN in order to harmonize basic approach of the monitoring (November, 2015.). According to the aims of the workshop the nature conservation professionals of BEN and the project staff presented nature conservation objectives and point of view in sodic wetland management. The potential landscape development strategies and possibilities were also discussed (see Annex D4_4).
3. Evaluating stage (2015 October on): Evaluation of ecotouristic questionnaires (Report accomplished by 2015 November); landscape history evaluation, evaluation of socio-economic situation, evaluation the effects of the project about socio-economic situation.

5.1.17. Action E1 – Locals informed and included

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

The logo of the project was designed by a professional artist by 07/11/2014. The logo appears on the project website, in all presentations and also on all printed products of the project. A characteristic bird species of the sodic lakes, the avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) appears on the logo. (Annex_E1_1)

Dunatáj PF have an A4 size leaflet designed and produced in 3000 copies on 30/09/2015 by a professional designer. The leaflet contains data about the project structure, describes general information about Böddi-szék and also the objectives and main actions of the project. Naturally the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos appear on the leaflet as well.

Dunatáj PF disseminated the leaflet according to the followings:

800 copies were given to project beneficiaries.

300 copies were delivered to the households at Dunatétlen and to the Mayor's Office.

300 copies were placed at the busiest places of the neighbour settlement, Harta (Mayor's Office, Post Office, Health Centres, and groceries).

300 copies were disseminated in the course of the programs and field trips organized by the Dunatáj PF:

On 03/10/2015 – International Birding Day

On 14/11/2015 – “Márton napi libales”

On 26/10/2015 and on 30/11/2015 – “Gondolatok a természetéről” a series of presentations

200 copies were disseminated to local schoolchildren who attended “Márton napi libales” organized on 09/11/2015, 11/11/2015 and on 13/11/2015.

39 copies were also disseminated by the CB's employees. 27 person filled the questionnaire compiled in the framework of D4 action on the International Birding Day organized on 03/10/2015 and on 04/10/2015. Interviews were prepared with 12 local farmers. (Annex_E1_2; Annex_E1_3)

A project film, a 26 minute DVD will be produced in order to introduce the 1530 habitat types and their proper nature conservational management to the general public. A professional team was selected and contracted on 27/10/2014 for the production of the project film and the multiplication of the DVD. The film will be prepared in Hungarian language with English subtitle. The screenplay was compiled until 30/11/2015. It summarizes the aim, the content and structure of the film and also the technics and the planned time schedule of the shooting. Shooting has already started in 2015. (Annex_E1_4)

A public forum was held in order to inform locals about the nature conservational projects of the CB at the village hall of Dunatétlen on 16/12/2014. The mayor of Dunatétlen opened the event. The LIFE project was presented by the project manager. After the presentations questions of locals were discussed. (Annex_E1_5; Annex_E1_6; Annex_E1_7)

A field trip was organized by the monitoring expert of the CB to the students of the University of Szeged on 02/10/2015. The aim of the trip was to introduce the project, the nature conservational values and the habitat management on the project site. The students also filled questionnaires related to D4 action. (Annex_E1_8; Annex_E1_9)

A student's workbook in 900 copies and a kid's sticker brochure in 3000 copies were designed and printed by 16/03/2015. The B5 size workbook is 20 pages and it introduces the wildlife and the main nature values of the project site. The B5 size kid's sticker brochure is 8 pages and contains pictures of characteristic species of the sodic lakes.

5.1.18. Action E2 – Information for the media

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

The second press release was compiled and sent out to the media on 04/11/2015. It was related to the field trip organized on the project site on 14/11/2015 by Dunatáj PF. The press release introduces the project site, the aim of the project and it also informs about the scale of the European Union support and the source of it (LIFE+). The main characteristics of the bird species that can be seen in autumn at Böddi-szék are described in the press release. At the end it draws attention to the field trips organized by KNPD and Dunatáj PF on the project site. The press release appeared in more national, regional and local media. (Annex_E2_1; Annex_E2_2) Three articles related to the project appeared in national periodicals and magazines. These papers are mainly read by nature conservational experts, teachers and students who are important target groups of the project. Madártávlat, Természetbúvár and Élet és Tudomány are spread altogether in more than 35.000 copies which means a relevant reader basis. A one and a half page report appeared in Szabadszék on 10/04/2015 about an interview with the project manager prepared in November 2014. Szabadszék is a national weekly newspaper issued in 76.000 copies and mostly read by villagers living in the countryside. Information for local people about the project site and project activities is relevant regarding the social acceptance of the project. In this respect the most valuable appearance is the half page article in Petőfi Népe presenting Böddi-szék as a target spot for excursions. The article draws attention to a project event organized by Dunatáj PF. Petőfi Népe is a regional daily paper distributed in 19.000 copies. (Annex_E2_3)

5.1.19. Action E3 – Setting up a project website

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

KNPD selected a professional web designer in a cost effective selection procedure. The contract was signed on 11/07/2014 including the graphic design and the construction of the website and also the annual fee of hosting. The website was designed and developed according to conception of the CB and it is operational since 14/08/2014 both in Hungarian and in English languages. The news section is updated regularly. The dissemination products prepared (the logo of the project, the leaflet printed by Dunatáj PF, the design of the 6 information boards) are uploaded on the website. According to proposal a contractor was charged with the regular (4 times a year) update of the project site on 27/10/2014. In the first year he implemented several tasks in order to upgrade the project website. He gave assistance in updating news section with picture uploading and filtering potential problems. He improved the structure of the English version taking into consideration the CB's operational experiences concerning the Hungarian version. After the thorough revision of the website possibilities of development in appearance were suggested. The news section of the English version was updated.

Web statistic data shows approximately 200-220 visitors on the project website on a monthly average.

Although the person in charge of website related tasks remained the same, the form of enterprise has been changed since he terminated acting as a private entrepreneur. Afterwards he is employed by a firm, which has been contracted to implement these tasks in the future.

5.1.20. Action E4 – Installing observation towers and information boards

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

For the production of the 6 notice boards the CB has contacted 4 professional designers. Three of them has submitted offers by the given deadline. The contract was signed on 27/10/2014 by the designer giving the most competitive offer. The 6 boards have been produced and delivered on 26/11/2014. Due to winter conditions the installation could take place in the following spring and all 6 notice boards were placed out by 07/04/2015. Besides the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos, the logo of the project, the logos of project beneficiaries and also the logo of the co-financer appear on the boards. Since the primary aim of the notice boards is to draw the attention of people, inform them about the project and the Natura 2000 site the boards have been installed along the main roads inside the project area. They are clearly visible from a distance, hence informing the general public about the ongoing LIFE project. (Annex_E4_1; Annex_E4_2)

Dunatáj PF has negotiated the representatives of local municipalities about the installation of the 3 information boards in public areas. They were informed that a special permission is needed above a certain surface size. They have contacted potential designers to produce the 3 information boards.

5.1.21. Action E5 – Establishment of a nature trail

Action status:

not due yet

Description of the results achieved in reporting period: -

-

5.1.22. Action E6 – Workshop on practical site management for conservational purposes

Action status:

not due yet

Description of the results achieved in reporting period: -

-

5.1.23. Action E7 – Layman's report

Action status:

not due yet

Description of the results achieved in reporting period: -

-

5.1.24. Action F1 – Project management

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

The deputy director of KNPD performed the role of the director besides his original position between 25/01/2014 and 10/03/2015. On 11/03/2015 a new director was appointed. After the takeover of his main tasks the project management informed the director about the project in April and May. Together with AB's representatives he also attended on the 3rd technical meeting.

Project staff members of the CB implement their tasks continuously according to project proposal and in line with their working contracts and job descriptions. The project manager holds regular internal meetings at least two times a month in order to discuss the implemented and the forthcoming tasks.

The personal meetings with project coordinators of ABs are held regularly, at least twice a month. Communication on phone and by e-mail is more frequent.

To handle the increased tasks related to land purchase the CB decided to employ a half time employee beside the land administrator from 23/06/2014 to 31/08/2014 taking to consideration the fact that the precise compilation of land purchase offers and contracts concerning two large plots (Dunatétlen 058/46 and 065/20) with more hundred owners required more time. This way the two land administrators could implement that huge task parallel concerning the two plots, hence related activities could be accelerated and the double check of these important documents could be ensured.

The contract of the land administrator was modified and her job description was completed with the task of socio-economic data collecting from 01/07/2015. Another half time employee was contracted from 01/07/2015 until 30/06/2016 to implement socio-economic data collecting (part of D4 action). Although all related costs of D4 action were planned as external assistance, the CB decided the employment of two half-time workers (budgeted as personnel) since it seemed more reasonable to have the questionnaires filled and the interviews organized by two local people living in the study area.

Tasks of AB's are organized and supervised by their project coordinators. Following changes in personal in the advisory board of Dunatáj PF the LIFE project coordinator was also nominated as general manager from 01/01/2015. The AB determined the working time need for the fulfilment of this new task hence his working time has been divided and from 2015 on he works 80% for the LIFE project (budgeted as LIFE personnel) while the additional 20% working time is paid outside of LIFE sources. In his timesheets his LIFE related working hours are clearly registered.

The external monitor visited the project on 30/09/2015. On behalf of KNPD the project manager, the project coordinator, the project assistant and the monitoring expert were present, while Dunatáj PF represented the ABs by the chairman and the project coordinator. Results achieved so far were presented and fully discussed action by action and the incurred problems were described and explained in details. Following the administrative part of the mission a field trip was organized to the project site where the products and the implemented actions of the project could have been seen and documented.

In recent reporting period we purchased the digital camera, the binocular and the field GPS for the project manager. The public procurement of the 4WD car and the notebooks for the manager and the project assistant is in progress.

5.1.25. Action F2 – Hold technical meetings

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Regular technical meetings are held once a year in order to inform the representatives of all beneficiaries about the implementation of project actions and to discuss the possible solution of the problems incurred. The 3rd technical meeting was held in Fülöpszállás, on 25/06/2015. Representatives of the 3 project organizations and the local government were present and the whole project staff participated on the event. The project manager held an overall project presentation, while project employees (project coordinator, project assistant, monitoring expert, land administrator – KNPD, project coordinator – KSPB) held presentations focusing on their main tasks. The actions implemented by Dunatáj PF were presented in detail by the

chairman. This meeting had a great importance since this was the first occasion that all project staff were present and the representatives of ABs could directly exchange their views on the project with the management of KNPD. (Annex_F2_1; Annex_F2_2)

5.1.26. Action F3 – Auditor

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

KNPD contracted the project auditor on 30/12/2013. The auditor's first task was to supervise the established financial and reporting system before the submission of the IR in order to find eventual problems. The auditor reviewed all supporting documents and all financial tables related to the reporting period. The actions implemented were discussed and incurred costs were revised with respect to the rules of the Common Provisions. As a result of the supervision the auditor compiled and sent an executive letter to the director of KNPD including the outcome and the suggestion of the revision.

According to the contract the auditor shall supervise the financial reports submitted to the European Commission. Since the beneficiaries could not consume at least 100% of the first pre-financing payment until 30/11/2015, the CB can submit the 1st Progress Report instead of the 1st Midterm Report. Due to this change in the timing of the reports the contract of the auditor was also modified.

5.1.27. Action F4 – Networking

Action status:

ongoing

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

Networking with a Slovakian LIFE project on 07/08/2014.

Sodic habitats are extremely rare in Slovakia and their conservational state had been degraded in the last few decades. The Slovakian LIFE+ project (LIFE10 NAT/SK/0839) aims to have these rare sodic habitats conserved and improve their ecological state. Field coordinator of the project visited our project site at Böddi-szék on 07/08/2014. The KNPD and Dunatáj PF staff introduced him with the planned habitat improvement measures and experiences of the proper sodic habitat management for nature conservation had also been shared during the visit. Annex_F4_1.

As it was envisaged in IR the project manager attended the International Wetland Congress titled Wetlands biodiversity and services: tools for socio-ecological development that was held in Huesca, Spain between 14 and 18 September, 2014. The Conference had a Satellite LIFE section, where different LIFE projects dealing with wetland habitats were presented. The international conference offered a good opportunity to exchange knowledge, views and ideas on wetlands, their conservational status and vulnerabilities. Our project was presented with oral presentation with the title „*Restoration of Pannonic sodic wetlands in Hungary*”. In the presentation the project *LIFE Sodic wetland* was introduced to the conference participants and the importance of proper habitat management was emphasized. The conference call, the schedule of the conference and the abstract of the presentation are attached as Annex_F4_2; Annex_F4_3.

There had been direct networking with two Hungarian LIFE projects in the reporting period. We participated and held presentations on the workshop of LIFE11 NAT/HU/000924 project in Balmazújváros on 30/01/2015 (Annex_F4_4) and also on the LIFE10 NAT/HU/000018 project in Túrkeve on 25/03/2015 (Annex_F4_5; Annex_F4_6).

The project staff of LIFE11 NAT/HU/000924 project has visited the Böddi-szék and our project on 28/10/2015. The biomass reduction and the grazing of different habitats were

discussed in details in the field. A week later the project manager and the project coordinator of our project visited the project site of the latter project at Hortobágy. Animal husbandry issues have been discussed and related infrastructures constructed from LIFE sources have been visited. (Annex_F4_7)

5.1.28. Action F5 – After LIFE conservation plan

Action status:

not due yet

Description of the results achieved in reporting period:

-

| DELIVERABLE PRODUCTS OF THE PROJECT | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Name of the Deliverable | Number of the associated action | Deadline | Status | Date of completion |
| Project Agreement signed | F 1 | 30/11/2013 | Completed | 30/12/2013 |
| Logo of the project designed | E 1 | 30/04/2014 | Completed | 07/11/2014 |
| 3.000 copies of leaflet printed | E 1 | 30/06/2014 | Completed | 30/09/2015 |
| Sustainable Land Use Plan worked out | A 4 | 30/06/2014 | Completed | 30/06/2014 |
| Building Plans with permission produced | A 3 | 30/09/2014 | On-going | |
| Environmental impact assessment produced | A 1 | 31/12/2014 | On-going | |
| Natura2000 assessment for activities of actions C1, C3 produced | A 1 | 31/12/2014 | On-going | |
| Annual report produced | D2 | 31/12/2014 | Completed | 31/12/2014 |
| Annual ornithological report produced | D3 | 31/12/2014 | Completed | 31/12/2014 |
| Kid's sticker brochure designed | E 1 | 31/03/2015 | Completed | 16/03/2015 |
| Student workbook designed | E 1 | 31/03/2015 | Completed | 16/03/2015 |
| 1st press release | E 2 | 31/07/2015 | Completed | 29/05/2014 |

| MILESTONES | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Name of the Milestone | Number of the associated action | Deadline | Status | Date of completion |
| Nomination of project manager | F 1 | 01/10/2013 | Completed | 01/10/2013 |
| Project staff appointed at all beneficiaries | F 1 | 01/10/2013 | Completed | 15/11/2013 |
| Project start up meeting | F 2 | 09/10/2013 | Completed | 25/11/2013 |
| Project auditor contracted | F 3 | 31/12/2013 | Completed | 30/12/2013 |
| Website developed | E 3 | 31/03/2014 | Completed | 14/08/2014 |
| Project start up press conference | E 2 | 30/04/2014 | Completed | 29/05/2014 |
| 6 notice boards erected | E 4 | 30/06/2014 | Completed | 26/11/2014 |
| Sustainable Land Use Plan produced | A 4 | 30/06/2014 | Completed | 30/06/2014 |
| Building Plans with permission produced | A 3 | 30/09/2014 | On-going | |
| 12 hectares Elaeagnus stands eliminated | C 6 | 31/10/2014 | On-going | |
| Area of new canal track purchased | B 1 | 31/12/2014 | On-going | |
| Environmental Impact and Natura 2000 Assessments produced | A 1 | 31/12/2014 | On-going | |
| 3 information boards erected | E 4 | 30/06/2015 | Delayed | |
| 2 observation towers constructed | E 4 | 30/09/2015 | Delayed | |

5.2. Envisaged progress until next report.

A1: Based on the Preliminary Impact Assessment Documentation and Natura 2000 Impact Assessment the competent authority and the specialized authorities will determine, if the planned activities cause significant effect on the surrounding environmental system. The authority procedure is going to start in December 2015, takes about 45 days, and there can be two possible orders in the end. One potential case is that the authorities find that the planned activities impact significantly the environment, so Environmental Impact Assessment is necessary for the detailed examination of the effects. This way the preparation of documents and completion of the new authority procedure will take more time. In the other case – if significant effect is not supposed– no additional assessment is needed, and the water rights authority procedures can be carried out.

A hydrodynamic model of groundwater and surface water system will be prepared by a geology expert until January 2016.

A2: After the completion of Preliminary Impact Assessment (and Environmental Impact Assessment, if needed) the Preliminary Water Rights Permission procedure will continue, and the best canal track according to technological aspects will be chosen by the authority. After that purchase of area providing the space requirements of the new canal track (action B1) can be done, followed by the detailed basic studies of geodesy and soil analysis, which are fundamental conditions of Water Rights Implementation Plan.

A hydrodynamic model of groundwater and surface water system (shown in action A1) will be used in order to get the declaration of acceptance after the overall examination of future water management.

A3: The building plan of herdsman accommodation and warehouse will be prepared by an authorized designer. Additionally, an electric plan is needed for describing the possible solutions to the optimal power supply facilities.

A4: The sustainable land use plan will be updated by relevant project staff by June 2016. Taking into consideration spring weather conditions and land use database that will be created by the GIS officer of KNPD.

B1: Direct land purchase of the new canal track will start as soon as the new canal track is finalized.

B2: Land purchase will be carried out by KNPD by the submission of next report. We plan to purchase 50 hectares.

C1: Side branches of the bisecting canal will be surveyed and shallow ditches will be filled up by external assistance.

C2: Annual targets will be reached and the shredder will be used to reduce biomass from 330 ha.

C3: A new tendering procedure for the building of the fold system providing suitable background for high level grazing will take place in the first quarter of 2016, the construction works can be done expectedly until mid-April 2016. Purchasing the electric fence system starts in December 2015, the installation can be done after the fold system's construction is finished.

Sweep well renovation will be finished expectedly in June 2016, after the tendering procedure is completed. The exact time period suitable for construction largely depends on the actual terrain conditions and the accessibility of the intervention area.

C4: KNPD will purchase 100 cattle and while Dunatáj PF will purchase 100 sheep by July 2016. Hence these animals will graze the purchased grasslands.

C5: Dunatáj PF will cut 0,8 ha Robinia forest and arable land purchased from LIFE sources that is in the land use of Beneficiaries will be converted to grassland or will be places for alfalfa establishment according to location.

C6: Chemical handling of *Elaeagnus angustifolia* will be completed on the whole project site. Tree cutting and removing unclassifiable tree material from the project site will be started in year 2016 and will continue parallel with the collection of approvals from the land users and owners of the infected parcels.

Dunatáj PF applies for modification of the Forest Management Plan and will cut all Robinia trees from the purchased compartment.

After purchase of the forest compartment 19A KNPD starts forest reconstruction.

Due to the chemical handling cover of *A. syriaca* stands will further reduce significantly.

D1: The monitoring activity is continuous. The project activities carried out (e.g. during action C2) affected hidrological and hidrobiological sampling points as well. Evaluated data could be represented in next report.

D2: Vegetation monitoring will be continued according to monitoring protocol. Vegetation monitoring will reflect well the status of habitats, vegetation zones and the effects of special

grazing. Vegetation monitoring will be an effective tool to represent project's results covering all the 2345 hectares of the project area.

D3: The ornithological monitoring activity will be continuous.

D4: The Discussion stage of the research will be accomplished. In the frame of the discussion stage forums will be organised with special stakeholder groups about conflict managing (if needed) and about future perspectives, possibilities in management of the sodic wetland ecosystem. Final report of the external assistance will be ready in June, 2016. The data collection for the book promoting best practice methods of sustainable habitat management from the past and present in the Danube-valley begins.

E1: A moving photo exhibition will be organized as external assistance and will be presented at 2 locations.

E2: The 3rd press release and three articles will be published until next report.

E3: Regular update of the website both in Hungarian and in English languages. Up-to-date news and information about the project will be available. Dissemination materials and reports will regularly be uploaded.

E4: The 3 information boards will be produced in winter and they will be installed in spring at the latest by Dunatáj PF. According to preliminary enquires the allocated cost for the production of the tower should be increased up to 50% in order to produce towers which fit entirely to the landscape.

F1: The appropriate level of communication will be maintained with the coordinators of the associated beneficiaries and local stakeholder. Technical and financial reports will be produced and submitted regularly which will be the base for updating the registers at the coordinating beneficiary. The coordinating beneficiary plans to complete and submit the Midterm Report to the Commission by 30/11/2016.

F2: The subsequent technical meeting will be held in the second quarter of 2016 where local government representatives and relevant authorities will also be invited.

F3: According to the modified contract the auditor shall supervise the 1st Midterm Report, which is due on 30/11/2016.

TIMETABLE

Legend: the actual time when a particular action was implemented is marked with yellow, orange shows the implementation periods of actions due by next reporting date, red ticks are updated time frames inline with the proposal of the commission (D1, D2 and A4, B1).

| Action no. | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| A. Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or of action plans: | | | | | | | |
| A.1 | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| A.2 | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| A.3 | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| A.4 | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| B. Purchase/lease of land and/or compensation payments for use rights: | | | | | | | |
| B.1 | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| B.2 | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. Concrete conservation actions: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C.1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C.2 | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C.3 | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C.4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C.5 | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | |
| C.6 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D.1 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| D.2 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| D.3 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| D.4 | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| E. Public awareness and dissemination of results: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E.1 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| E.2 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| E.3 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| E.4 | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| E.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | |
| E.6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | |
| E.7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| F. Overall project operation and monitoring of the project progress: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F.1 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| F.2 | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | | ✓ |
| F.3 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| F.4 | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| F.5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | |

5.3. Impact:

Although we are in the first phase of the project implementation, our conservation management activities have already had positive effects on the natural and native semi natural habitats and species of the project area. Invasive plant species elimination was carried out in 180 ha thus the conservation state of Pannonic sodic steppes have been improved. Biomass reduction was carried out 362 ha which is beneficial for native grassland species present in the area.

6. Financial part

6.1. Costs incurred

| Budget breakdown categories | Total cost in € | Costs incurred from the start date to 30.11.2015 in € | % of total costs |
|------------------------------------|------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. Personnel | 770 106 | 234 714 | 30,48 |
| 2. Travel and subsistence | 73 135 | 25 446 | 34,79 |
| 3. External assistance | 1 222 025 | 42 411 | 3,47 |
| 4. Durable goods | | | |
| Infrastructure | 2 420 447 | 3 014 | 0,12 |
| Equipment | 721 551 | 102 770 | 14,24 |
| Prototype | | | |
| 5. Land purchase / long-term lease | 1 285 610 | 556 241 | 43,27 |
| 6. Consumables | 234 351 | 18 442 | 7,87 |
| 7. Other Costs | 116 122 | 500 | 0,43 |
| 8. Overheads | 355 976 | 29 910 | 8,40 |
| TOTAL | 7 199 323 | 1 013 448 | 14,08 |

| Action number and name | Foreseen costs | Spent so far | Remaining | Projected final cost |
|---|----------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Action A1 – Production of Natura 2000 and Environmental Impact Assessments | 61 486 | 5 707,57 | 55 778,43 | 61 486 |
| Action A2 - Production of Water Management Plan with Water Rights Implementation Permit | 165 828 | 6 278,63 | 159 549,37 | 165 828 |
| Action A3 – Production of Building Plan with Permission | 11 812 | 1 959,64 | 9 852,36 | 11 812 |
| Action A4 – Sustainable Land use Plan | 10 729 | 6 984,01 | 3 744,99 | 10 729 |
| Action B1 – Purchase of the area of new canal track | 69 380 | 0 | 69 380 | 69 380 |
| Action B2 – Land purchase for habitat improvement | 1 341 427 | 619 629,45 | 721 797,55 | 1 341 427 |
| Action C1 – Restoration of the natural water balance of the sodic lake | 2 852 293 | 2 864,88 | 2 849 428,12 | 2 852 293 |

| Action number and name | Foreseen costs | Spent so far | Remaining | Projected final cost |
|--|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Action C2 – Biomass reduction for making the areas suitable for grazing | 154 143 | 97 015,56 | 57 127,44 | 154 143 |
| Action C3 – Establishment of the infrastructural background of livestock keeping | 347 888 | 247,23 | 347 640,77 | 347 888 |
| Action C4 – High level grazing of the sodic wetlands and its catchment area for conservational purposes | 894 991 | 0 | 894 991 | 894 991 |
| Action C5 – Restoration of the catchment area of the Pannonic sodic wetland | 26 156 | 0 | 26 156 | 26 156 |
| Action C6 – Elimination of the stands of non-indigenous and invasive species from the catchment area of the Pannonic sodic wetland | 76 260 | 5 468,80 | 70 791,2 | 76 260 |
| Action D1 – Monitoring of hydrological and hydro-biological factors of the open sodic wetland habitats | 57 249 | 17 214,29 | 40 034,71 | 57 249 |
| Action D2 – Monitoring the distribution and state of Pannonic salt steppes and salt marshes habitat of community importance (1530) | 80 094 | 35 776,37 | 44 317,63 | 80 094 |
| Action D3 – Ornithological monitoring | 55 709 | 26 041,97 | 29 667,03 | 55 709 |
| Action D4 – Complex sustainability study of socio-economical impact of different management types and methods of sodic wetlands | 37 761 | 7 359,34 | 30 401,66 | 37 761 |
| Action E1 – Locals informed and included | 74 084 | 13 690,90 | 60 393,10 | 74 084 |
| Action E2 – Information for the media | 16 280 | 6 565,98 | 9 714,02 | 16 280 |
| Action E3 – Setting up a project website | 6 250 | 1 435,68 | 4 814,32 | 6 250 |
| Action E4 – Installing observation towers and information boards | 30 186 | 3 084,40 | 27 101,6 | 30 186 |
| Action E5 – Establishment of a nature trail | 64 286 | 0 | 64 286 | 64 286 |
| Action E6 – Workshop on practical site management for conservational purposes | 21 000 | 0 | 21 000 | 21 000 |
| Action E7 – Layman's report | 2 745 | 0 | 2 745 | 2 745 |
| Action F1 – Project management | 349 615 | 120 836,97 | 228 778,03 | 349 615 |
| Action F2 – Hold technical meetings | 6 672 | 1 703,01 | 4 968,99 | 6 672 |
| Action F3 – Auditor | 15 465 | 1 913,74 | 13 551,26 | 15 465 |
| Action F4 – Networking | 13 558 | 1 759,47 | 11 798,53 | 13 558 |
| Action F5 – After LIFE conservation plan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 6 843 347 | 983 537,89 | 5 859 809,11 | 6 843 347 |

The 30 % threshold value of total costs is expected to be reached by 30/11/2016.