

Nature & Biodiversity

Projects 2008

nature



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION



environment

Index of Nature & Biodiversity projects selected in 2008

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	LIFE08 NAT/IT/000339 ORISTANESE	Oristanese land of waters: a network for the shared management of the SCIs/SPAs of the central-western coastal areas of Sardinia
	LIFE08 NAT/IT/000342 DEMETRA	Development of a quick monitoring index as a tool to assess environmental impacts of transgenic crops
	LIFE08 NAT/IT/000352 CRAINat	Conservation and Recovery of <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> in Italian Natura 2000 Sites
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	LIFE08 NAT/PL/000511 AQC Plan	Securing the population of <i>Aquila clanga</i> in Poland: preparation of the National Action Plan and primary site conservation
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	LIFE08 NAT/RO/000502 SFC Calimani-Gurghiu	Securing favorable conservation status for priority habitats from SCI Calimani-Gurghiu
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Location	Project number	Title of project
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	LIFE08 NAT/SK/000239 Microtus	Conservation of root vole * <i>Microtus oeconomus mehelyi</i>
SLOVENIA	LIFE08 NAT/SLO/000244 SloWolf	Conservation and surveillance of conservation status of wolf (<i>Canis lupus</i>) population in Slovenia
SPAIN	LIFE08 NAT/E/000055 Estuarios del Pais Vasco	Restoration of habitats of Community interest in the Basque Country's estuaries
	LIFE08 NAT/ E/000062VENENO NO	Action to fight illegal poison use in the natural environment in Spain
	LIFE08 NAT/E/000064 CUBOMED	Development and demonstration of eradication and control methods for an invasive species: <i>Carybdea marsupialis</i> (Cubozoa), Mediterranean
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	LIFE08 NAT/E/000072 Riparia-Ter	Recovery of riparian habitats of the Ter river
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	LIFE08 NAT/E/000077 CIRCUREVIEJA	Decantation circuit of residual salts and ecological recovery of the Natural Park of Las Lagunas de la Mata and Torrevieja
	LIFE08 NAT/E/000078 PROYECTO ESTANY	Improvement of the Natura 2000 habitats and species found in Banyoles: a demonstration project
SWEDEN	LIFE08 NAT/S/000261 SAMBAH	Static Acoustic Monitoring of the Baltic Sea Harbour porpoise
	LIFE08 NAT/S/000262 Hotad hävdad mark	Pastures and meadows in the middlemost part of Sweden
	LIFE08 NAT/S/000264 MOTH	Demonstration of an integrated North-European system for monitoring terrestrial habitats
	LIFE08 NAT/S/000266 Vindel River Life	Restoration of tributaries of the Vindel river combined with monitoring and evaluation of ecological responses of species and habitats
	LIFE08 NAT/S/000268 Life to ad(d)mire	Life to ad(d)mire – Restoring drained and overgrowing wetlands
UNITED KINGDOM	LIFE08 NAT/UK/000199 Alde-Ore	The Alde-Ore Estuary - Securing a sustainable future for wildlife
	LIFE08 NAT/UK/000201 ISAC 08	Irfon Special Area of Conservation Project
	LIFE08 NAT/UK/000202 MoorLIFE	MoorLIFE: Active blanket bog restoration in the South Pennine Moors
	LIFE08 NAT/UK/000204S cottish machair	Conserving machair habitats and species in a suite of Scottish Natura sites

LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity 2008: Commission funds 80 innovation projects in 22 countries with €107 million

The Commission has approved funding for 80 new nature and biodiversity projects in 22 countries under the LIFE+ programme's Nature & Biodiversity component for 2008. These projects will demonstrate new methods and techniques for dealing with a wide diversity of Europe's environmental problems.

The projects are led by 'beneficiaries', or project promoters, based in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. They represent a total investment of €199 million, of which the EU will provide some €107 million.

LIFE Nature in 2008

LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity projects improve the conservation status of endangered species and habitats. Of the 227 proposals received, the Commission selected 80 projects for funding from partnerships of conservation bodies, government authorities and other parties. Situated in 22 Member States, they represent a total investment of €199 million, of which the EU will provide some €107 million. The majority (74) are Nature projects, contributing to the implementation of the Birds and/or Habitats Directives and the Natura 2000 network. There are also six Biodiversity projects, a category of project introduced with LIFE+ that is designed for pilot schemes that tackle wider biodiversity issues.

Background

LIFE is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU and in certain non-EU countries. Since 1992, LIFE has co-financed some 3104 projects, contributing approximately €2.2 billion to the protection of the environment. LIFE+ is the new European financial instrument for the environment with a total budget of €2 143 billion for the period 2007-2013. During this period, the Commission will launch one call for LIFE+ project proposals per year.

LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity is one of three thematic components under the LIFE programme. The other two components, LIFE+ Environment Policy & Bio-diversity and LIFE+ Information & Communications, focus respectively on supporting pilot projects that contribute to the development of innovative policy ideas, technologies, methods and instruments and on disseminating information and raising the profile of environmental issues or providing training and awareness-raising for the prevention of forest fires.

More information on each LIFE+ project is available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.home&cfid=656029&ftoken=cab1cf8091752717-4430206A-E1CB-E45B-8COA15178EBFFE27>

It is also possible to contact the relevant national authorities: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/contact/nationalcontact/index.htm>

Water development Gail

- An integrated model for Natura 2000

Project background

Regulated rivers featuring flood dykes, which were formerly meandering and partly braided, are now widespread in Europe. They are a well-known example of the conflict between ecology and water management. From an ecological point of view, rivers should get more space to flow naturally and enable cross-links to surrounding areas. These objectives are often in contrast with the requirements of water management that aim to protect people and infrastructure from flooding. These contrast of objectives are very evident in the river Gail, part of the Natura 2000 site, Görttschacher Moos-Obermoos.

Project objectives

The project aims to demonstrate possible ways to reach a balance between ecological improvement and water management. It has three specific objectives:

- 1) Renatured Gail: The highly regulated river bed will be restored in order to increase space for natural near river development and to initiate morphological processes, as well as to enable the establishment of river specific habitats. Flood protection will be retained for the surrounding villages by maintaining the existing dykes. As a result, possible actions along the Gail will be limited to areas between the dykes. Several pilot areas will be selected in order to ascertain the best solution for optimal ecological improvement. Results will form the basis for further river engineering works along the Gail, as well as along other rivers facing similar problems.
- 2) Qualitative and quantitative improvement of floodplain habitats, their cross-links and the creation of side channels: Another target of the project is the improvement of water habitats in surrounding areas and the creation of cross-links between them.
- 3) Extension of areas with intensive use and creation of floodplain forests: Intensively used arable land will be changed into floodplain forest and marsh area respectively into buffer zones for water habitats. According to the Ramsar Convention, naturally existing wetlands can be re-established.

Specific results of the project will include:

- 1.2km of the river Gail will be restored;
- Some 4ha of additional gravel bars and pioneer locations will be created;

LIFE08 NAT/A/000613

LIFE+ Gail



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

Bundeswasserbauverwaltung, (vertreten durch das Amt der Kärnten Landesregierung, Abteilung 18 - Wasserwirtschaft, Unterabteilung Schutzwasserwirtschaft)

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Name of contact person

Norbert Sereinig

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,543,740.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,271,870.00 (50.00%)

- A new side channel, some 2.5km long, will be created;
- Two new lentic waters will be formed;
- Three oxbows will be revitalised;
- 8.73ha of land will be purchased by the state;
- Some 83ha of habitats will be improved.

Mur experience - Alpine river management Upper Mur

Project background

The Natura 2000 site, 'Ober- und Mittellauf der Mur mit Puxer Auwald, Puxer Wand and Gulsen', covers an area of 1 309ha. Long stretches of the Upper Mur river originally had a furcating riverbed. River engineering measures successively narrowed the original riverbed to its present shape with an average width of around 20m. However, the entire river was not systematically regulated, thereby preserving much of the path of the main riverbed. The unsystematic river regulation also caused widening of the river channel in some places, allowing the formation of typical river structures such as gravel islands. Because of this the Upper Mur still has meanders with slip-off- and undercut banks, sediment bars and islands and well-structured river stretches with a rich variation of wide and deep areas, which are home to a rich diversity of species and habitats. However, the narrowing of the river to its present main channel, and the consequent deepening of the riverbed, ultimately caused the disconnection of the river from the adjacent landscape. This led to loss of river-specific habitats and dynamism. Many riverine forest habitats, such as pools and oxbow lakes, disappeared, leading to the current endangerment of habitats and species.

Project objectives

The overall objective of this project is to restore, maintain and improve the characteristic river landscape of the Upper Mur, as a prerequisite for maintaining rare and endangered species listed in the Habitats Directive. The project will restore 3.2 km of the Mur by partially removing bank-reinforcement structures. This will facilitate dynamic processes, such as development of gravel banks and bank erosion. The project will also promote 17.7 ha of alluvial forests, providing new habitats for typical riverine plant and animal species, and will create artificial ponds (13 000m²) for amphibians such as the yellow-bellied toad (*Bombina variegata*).

These measures will be accompanied by a media and information campaign, including a project film targeted at local and regional communities. The project will thus improve habitats for fish species, such as Hucho hucho and Eudontomyzon spp. The restoration of alluvial forests will result in the spread of tree and shrub species such as *Alnus glutinosa*, *Fraxinus excelsior*

LIFE08 NAT/A/000614

Murerleben



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

Amt der Steiermärkischen Landesregierung

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Name of contact person

Rudolf Hornich

Duration of project:

60 months (01/02/2010 – 01/02/2015)

Total budget in euro:

2,784,131.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,392,065.00 (50.00%)

and *Salix eleagnos*. Restoration, improvement and reconnection of floodplain water bodies will lead to the creation of diverse aquatic and terrestrial habitats for *Bombina variegata* and *Triturus carnifex*.

Restoration of natural habitats in the Lomme river basin and in surrounding areas

Project background

The Lomme river basin is located in the Libin high plateau in the centre of the Ardennes in the Walloon region of Belgium. The Libin plateau is located between the Saint-Hubert and Croix-Scaille plateaux, both of which have benefited from LIFE restoration projects. The Lomme river basin is made up of a network of peaty and wetland habitats included in the Habitats Directive: sphagnum birch woods, alder woods, bogs, heathlands, transition mires, tall-herb communities of humid meadows, watercourse fringes and associated habitats such as dry heaths, mountain hay meadows and *Nardus stricta* pastures. The peat bogs shelter rare species such as *Boloria aquilonaris*, *Somatochlora arctica*, *Dactylorhiza sphagnicola*, and *Erica tetralix*. This area is designated as a Special Area of Conservation, but the habitats and associated species are threatened by habitat fragmentation as a result of spruce plantation, drying of soils and purple moor grass recolonisation. In addition, forestry production is causing a lot of problems in relation to soil structure, water quality, and biodiversity.

Project objectives

The LIFE LOMME project aims to restore 230 ha of peaty and wetland habitats. This will involve purchasing 40 ha and making compensation payments to landowners so that they definitively abandon forest production on a further 120 ha. The spruce and pine plantations on 100 ha will be cut and selective cutting and clearing will be carried out on a further 70 ha. The hydrology of the different sites will be restored by blocking 20 kms of drains, digging some 40 ponds, building 1 km of dikes and 10 culverts. In addition some 20 ha of deciduous forest will be restored by means of fenced enclosures.

The long-term management of the restored areas will be assured by putting in place the necessary procedures, material and infrastructure for regular mowing, cutting, grazing and coppicing with the help of local farmers.

The project will contribute to restoring the connectivity between sites and between the different high plateaux in the Ardennes, as well raising awareness among local communities and stakeholders as to the wider value of these restored areas. A wide range of other endangered species and habitats will also benefit from these comprehensive restoration actions.

LIFE08 NAT/B/000033
LOMME



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

Direction Générale de l'Agriculture, des Ressources Naturelles et de l'Environnement

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Name of contact person

Pierre Gérard

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,379,050.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,189,525.00 (50.00%)

Habitat restoration in the Visbeekvalley

Project background

Until the end of the 19th century, the Campine ('Kempen') region in Belgium consisted of a vast heath landscape. The intensification of agricultural practices and afforestation with conifer plantations resulted in a dramatic loss of the former heathlands, oligo-mesotrophic fen complexes and species-rich hay meadows. The Visbeek is one of the remnants of the heath landscape and the exceptional abiotic conditions in this valley resulted in the presence of many endangered Annex I habitats and associated rare and vulnerable species. The most important are *Molinia* meadows, alluvial forests, European dry heaths, inland dunes with open *Corynephorus* and *Agrostis* grasslands and Northern Atlantic wet heaths. The presence of oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters and oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains make the area of national and international importance.

The valley is also home to a number of rare and threatened species, including the spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*) and pool frogs (*Rana lessonae*), both of which are listed in the annexes of the Habitat Directive.

The Flemish region has designated the Visbeek as part of a larger special area for conservation (SAC). However, the habitats in the valley are under extreme pressure, mostly from the threat of habitat fragmentation, as well as afforestation, eutrophication, intensification of agriculture and disturbances of the natural hydrology.

Project objectives

The main objective of the project is the large-scale restoration of the habitats in the Visbeek valley, with the aim of securing a significant extension and improvement of the quality of the *Molinia*-meadows, heathland habitats, fen complexes and oligotrophic waters and alluvial forests. Sustainable grazing and mechanical management will be undertaken, with the involvement of local volunteer management teams. The project also aims to highlight the socio-economic potential of the area through, for example, the organisation of nature-oriented recreation.

LIFE08 NAT/B/000034

Life Visbeek



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

Natuurpunt Beheer vzw

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Name of contact person

Joost Dewyspelaere

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

4,243,249.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

2,121,624.00 (50.00%)

Expected results:

- The acquisition of 45 ha in the project area;
- Restoration of c.102 ha of target Annex I habitats in the project area;
- Restoration of 10 ha of *Molinia*-meadows;
- Removal of pine plantations (on 10 ha) and nutrient rich top soil from former arable fields (on 14 ha) to restore heathland habitats;
- Restoration of 4 ha of oligo-mesotrophic fen complexes;
- The re-establishment of 7 ha of alluvial forests;
- An increase in the populations of Annex II and IV species, such as *Rana lessonae* and *Luronium natans*;
- Better visitor facilities and more information (brochures, leaflets, flyers) about the area.

Habitat restoration in the Abeek valley

Project background

The lowland brook system of 'Abeek', situated in the Flemish Campine region, is an important natural area in Western Europe. The most important habitats found here include: sand dune and dune-heath vegetation on land dunes, dry heath land vegetation, transition mires, quaking bogs, *Molinia caerulea* meadows, species rich *Nardus*-grasslands, oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters, old oak forests, forests on extremely wet soils and an epiphyte flora. Several species listed in the Habitats Directive live in these habitats, such as *Luscinia svecica*, *Alcedo atthis*, *Botaurus stellaris*, *Lxobrychus minutus*, *Porzana porzana*, *Lanius collurio*, *Lullula arborea*, and *Pelobates fuscus*. The project area has been designated as an SAC by the government, but several habitats are under severe pressure and some species are on the verge of extinction because of habitat fragmentation, inadequate management, afforestation, intensive farming, unnatural hydrology, eutrophication and a lack of socio-economic support for the area.

Project objectives

The aim of the LIFE Abeek project is the large-scale restoration of the habitats in the Abeek valley. Specifically, this includes the restoration of the complex ground and semi-dry, poor sandy soil habitats, with an emphasis on *Nanocypertalia* fen vegetations and *Magnetopotamion*. It also aims to increase the breeding population of several birds listed in the Habitats Directive. The project will also seek to develop the socio-economic potential of the area through the organisation of nature-oriented recreation, the integration of volunteers in nature management and the provision of information to local people and visitors.

Expected results:

- The large-scale restoration and sustainable development of Annex I habitats in the project area. After the LIFE project, the valley of the Abeek will be one of the core areas in lowland Europe for several Annex I habitats, especially for quaking bogs, transition mires with small sedge communities, alluvial forests (*Saliceto-Franguletum* and *Carici elongatae-Alnetum*), *Corynephorus* and *Agrostis* dune grasslands, *psammophilous* heath lands with *Calluna* and *Genista* species, old oak forests, dry heath lands and *Nanocypertalia* fen vegetations;

LIFE08 NAT/B/000035

Life Abeek



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

Natuurpunt Beheer vzw

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Name of contact person

Joost Dewyspelaere

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

3,561,140.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,780,570.00 (50.00%)

- Conservation and increase in the population of *Luscinia svecica*;
- Better visitor facilities and more information (brochures, leaflets, flyers) about the area and a better socio-economic support for the Natura 2000 area;
- An increase in the number of visitors to the nature reserve.

Ecological restoration of the Pond area M-L through a close participation of the private and public land-owners and a tripple E-approach

Project background

The project area of Vijvergebied Midden-Limburg is located in the North-East of Belgium, in the region of Limburg. The area forms part of the Demer river basin and is crossed by two main lowland rivers, the Roosterbeek and Laambeek. These are typical lowland, seepage fed rivers, meandering through a sandy plain. Historically, large parts of the area were drained by a network of ditches and most watercourses were deepened and straightened. From the 19th century on, large heath surfaces were afforested or transformed into meadows or arable land. Furthermore, fish farming activities, already present, were intensified and commercialised, giving rise to large still water surfaces fed by a complicated network of in- and outflow ditches, sluices and artificially fed ponds. The area has by far the highest pond concentration in Belgium.

Project objectives

- To restore and conserve the following habitats and species of community importance in the Natura 2000 area of 'Vijvergebied Midden-Limburg' ('Pond area M-L'): bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*); tree frog (*Hyla arborea*); oligotrophic waters ; oligo- to mesotrophic standing waters; wet and dry heath; and hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities;
- To secure the ongoing participation of a group of private landowners and establish a close collaboration between all the stakeholders involved in the management of the area;
- To establish a sustainable basis for the conservation of the targeted species and habitats in the long term by enhancing synergies between ecology, education and the local economy (the 'triple E' approach);
- To enhance public awareness of Natura 2000 on a local, regional and national level;
- To demonstrate, and further develop, a best practice method on how to reach, motivate and involve private landowners as partners in the restoration, conservation and management of Natura 2000 areas.

LIFE08 NAT/B/000036
Triple E Pond area M-L



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Professional organisation

Name of beneficiary

European Landowners' Organisation asbl

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

2,696,042.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,348,021.00 (50.00%)

Ensuring Conservation of Priority Bird Species and Coastal Habitats at the Bourgas Natura 2000 Wetland Sites

Project background

The Bulgarian Black Sea coast consists of a complex of coastal wetlands that provide important breeding and wintering habitats for a significant number of bird species. The complex is an important migration stop for hundreds of thousands of birds flying on the East-European migratory route "Via Pontica." Notably, these coastal wetlands are the most significant breeding, wintering and staging sites in Europe for four globally endangered birds - pygmy cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*); Dalmatian pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*); white-headed duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*); and ferruginous duck (*Aythya nyroca*) - as well as the bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*). Despite the wetlands being classified as Natura 2000 sites and being protected in specific areas according to national legislation, there are still major threats to these birds that need to be tackled. Many of these come from the immediate proximity of the major Black Sea port and tourist destination, Burgas. They include habitat change and disturbance, power lines, illegal killing, accidental net catching, and industrial accidents.

Project objectives

The "Life for the Bourgas lakes" project aims to secure the long-term conservation of the five bird species included in Annex I of the Birds Directive and the sustainable management of their wetland habitats around the city of Burgas. To achieve this, it plans to:

- Strengthen the strategic planning framework through 1) developing or updating specific National Action Plans for each target species and the conservation of wetlands; and 2) incorporating appropriate prescriptions for priority species into SPA management plans;
- Maintain and enhance feeding, breeding and roosting habitats for the five priority bird species through repair of dyke systems, deepening of target lagoons, cutting of reeds and creation of roosting sites;
- Reduce the impact of threats to the birds through response plans for industrial accidents, insulation and marking of dangerous electricity infrastructure, introduction of a predator control system, and mitigation measures against illegal fishing, hunting and pollution of key sites;
- Introduce a suitable system for monitoring the populations and site use of the targeted species into Natura 2000 site management plans; and

LIFE08 NAT/BG/000277
LIFE FOR THE BOURGAS LAKE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Nada Tosheva

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,775,006.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,331,254.00 (75.00%)

- Enhance public understanding of and support for conservation of the priority bird species, their habitats and the wider Natura 2000 sites through a detailed communication strategy incorporating electronic and printed material, improved visitor infrastructure and informative events.

It is expected that the project will result in the creation of a public/private partnership that is unique in Bulgaria and that will act as an excellent model for subsequent partnerships in conservation projects elsewhere in the country.

Recovery of the Populations of Large European Vultures in Bulgaria

Project background

There are three large vulture species in Europe: the griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*); black vulture (*Aegypius monachos*); and bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*). Of these three, only the griffon vulture has a viable population now living in Bulgaria – but this is only a small population restricted to the Eastern Rhodopes. The black vulture no longer breeds in Bulgaria, although it does regularly visit feeding sites in the country. The bearded vulture is no longer to be found in Bulgaria at all. Green Balkans has already established the first and only wildlife rescue centre in Bulgaria, which participates in breeding of endangered raptors. It has initiated a breeding programme for the griffon and black vultures for restoration of their populations in their former ranges in Bulgaria and especially in the Balkan Mountains.

Project objectives

This LIFE project aims to restore the populations of the three large vulture species in Bulgaria through conservation measures and measures targeting the institutional capacity for vulture conservation. To achieve this objective, the project will work to:

- Reduce the impact of direct and indirect threats to large vultures in Bulgaria;
- Reintroduce the griffon vulture into the Balkan Mountains;
- Create favourable breeding conditions for the griffon, black and bearded vultures;
- Create positive attitudes towards vultures through the promotion of ecotourism and nature-friendly agriculture;
- Create capacity for pre- and post-reintroduction protection for the griffon vulture at the Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre in Stara Zagora;
- Create a functioning network of stakeholders that have an impact on nature conservation and reintroduction outcomes - NGOs, park directorates, hunters' associations, forest wardens, vets, local communities, etc. - for ongoing monitoring of the status of target habitats and reintroduced vulture species.

The project thus hopes to achieve the restoration of vulture populations across the range of its target sites in Bulgaria. This will, in turn, contribute to the recovery of the highly threatened vulture populations in the

LIFE08 NAT/BG/000278
VULTURES' RETURN



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Ivelin Ivanov

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,332,328.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

666,164.00 (50.00%)

wider Balkan region within the framework of the Balkan Vulture Action Plan.

A Pilot Network of Small Protected Sites for Plant Species in Bulgaria Using the Plant Micro-reserve Model

Project background

A plant micro-reserve (PMR) is a small - less than 20 ha - permanent, statutory reserve of high value in terms of either plant richness or the presence of rare species. While PMRs are particularly suitable for species with small and restricted populations, they are not by themselves sufficient to achieve the sustainable protection of the targeted plant species. PMRs can however be useful in informing the development of conservation actions tailored to the needs of the target species across a wider territory. A preliminary analysis of the current state of Bulgarian threatened and rare plants revealed 299 species in need of urgent conservation actions. The populations of 47 of these plants at present fall outside any protected area in Bulgaria and their survival is under serious threat.

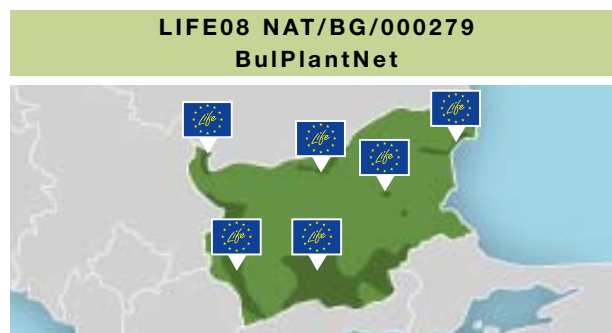
Project objectives

The strategic objective of this LIFE Nature project is to halt species loss and promote the conservation of plant biodiversity in Bulgaria. The project is focusing on plant species that are unique to Bulgaria or are of special European and national conservation importance. To work towards this ultimate aim, the project seeks to test the concept of Plant Micro-Reserves in Bulgaria. It will designate a network of Small Protected Sites (SPS) targeting the 47 plant species in need of urgent conservation actions and with strongly fragmented populations, all of which are currently located outside existing protected areas.

The project will develop Action and Monitoring Plans for the target plant species. Local experts will be trained to help in the monitoring process, facilitating data collection and the creation of inventories carried out. The beneficiary will undertake GIS mapping of the PMRs and prepare documents for the designation of SPS and the creation of an SPS network database.

According to the agreed action plans, in-situ and ex-situ conservation actions will be implemented, enhancing the conservation status of the targeted species. The project should also lead to the elaboration of a long-term strategy for the sustainable development of Small Protected Sites.

The project will run information campaigns, training and dissemination activities to increase the aware-



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Research institution

Name of beneficiary

Institute of Botany
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Name of contact person

Dimitar Peev

Duration of project:

42 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2013)

Total budget in euro:

503,778.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

227,957.00 (45.25%)

ness and engagement of local people, stakeholders and experts in the survival of these endangered plant species.

Conservation and Restoration of 11 Natura 2000 Riparian and Wetland Habitats in 10 SCI's Bulgarian Forests

Project background

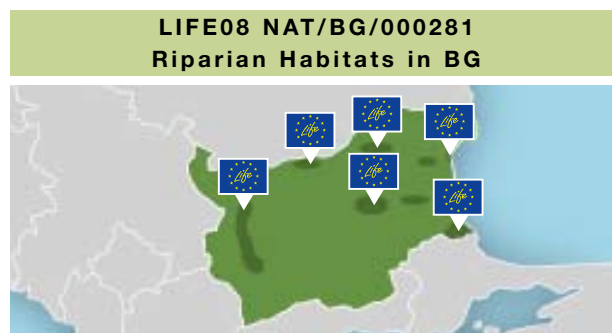
Riparian areas are located next to rivers and streams. They tend to provide specific habitats which allow for a higher density, diversity and productivity of some plant and animal species. Bulgaria has very limited experience in the management and restoration of such riparian and wetland natural habitat types. This project seeks to directly address this inexperience. It focuses on riparian habitats in 10 Natura 2000 network sites managed by the State forest agency in Bulgaria and designated as nature parks. The quantity and quality of biodiversity in the target areas make them sites of considerable national and European significance. They are the location of 11 priority habitat types. These sites also contain 13 endangered plant species that will be targeted by the project.

Project objectives

The goal of this LIFE Nature project is to improve the conservation status of 10 Sites of Community Importance managed by the State forestry agency through conservation and restoration of riparian and wetland habitats in forests. It specifically plans to restore or preserve 21 000 ha of riparian forest or associated habitats and 13 targeted plant species. A major strand of work will be to limit human and vehicle interference on the targeted sites through the construction of new infrastructure to control their movements. This will take the form of fences, bridges and targeted tourist facilities, including rest spots and information boards over 240.6 ha. Waste will also be removed from some 100 ha. Additionally, existing practices from intensive forestry will be used for the specific objective of restoring targeted natural riparian habitats. On four of the project sites, in-situ restoration of the 13 targeted plant species will also be implemented.

One of the project's broader objectives is to demonstrate and promote good practice for conservation and restoration of Natura 2000 sites in Bulgaria, which the beneficiary can notably implement on its own sites across the country.

Finally, the project will seek to raise awareness and understanding of Natura 2000 as an instrument for nature conservation amongst both specialised audiences and the wider public. It will develop a website,



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

State Forestry Agency

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Name of contact person

Kiril Tashev

Duration of project:

42 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,236,834.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

615,199.00 (49.74%)

produce specialised publications, undertake media work, and organise periodic regional meetings with stakeholders and training for non-state forest owners and forest managers.

Establishment of a Plant Micro-reserve Network in Cyprus for the Conservation of Priority Species and Habitats

Project background

In Cyprus, the following priority habitat types and plant species are considered as having threatened conservation status:

- Habitats: *Cedrus brevifolia* forests (*Cedrosetum brevifoliae*) and Scrub and low forest vegetation of *Quercus alnifolia*;
- Plant species: *Arabis kennedyae*, *Astragalus macrocarpus ssp. lefkarensis*, *Centaurea akamantis* and *Ophrys kotschyi*.

Project objectives

The project will address the threatened conservation status of the priority plant species and habitat types by establishing and managing a network of five plant micro-reserves (PMRs). The PMR concept envisages the conservation of small land plots of high value in terms of plant richness, endemism and rarity. The project will focus on the detailed monitoring and effective conservation of a significant part of the population of the species in question in Cyprus (20-85% for most species).

The project will:

- Describe the threats arising from recreation activities and disturbance of natural habitats, affecting the species and habitats. An information system will be set up for this purpose;
- Identify the most appropriate legal status for Cyprus's PMRs;
- Enrich the natural populations of the targeted species/habitat types both quantitatively and qualitatively. This is of great importance, since most of the targeted species are likely to have low genetic variability, and suffer from genetic erosion. Greater genetic diversity will help the species better face climate change;
- Reduce the negative impacts of fire on the populations/habitats of *Ophrys kotschyi*, *Arabis kennedyae* and *Cedrus brevifolia*;
- Prevent the uncontrolled expansion of cultivated areas towards the habitat of *Ophrys kotschyi*, and minimise the use of pesticides around the project areas;
- Promote ex situ conservation by establishing a seed bank and plant collections;
- Increase public awareness, and aim to reduce illegal collection of specimens, and other damaging activities such as waste dumping;

LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453
PLANT-NET CY



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment
Environment Service

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Name of contact person

Christina Pantazi

Duration of project:

42 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,550,297.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,070,265.00 (69.04%)

- Use the knowledge and experience that has been accumulated during the last 15 years from successful PMR projects for the conservation of the targeted species/habitats;
- Foster co-operation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot experts, and work towards a European network of PMRs, through which scientific information and best practices will be exchanged. The wider aim of this initiative will be to establish close co-operation between scientists and other stakeholders that have been involved in the PMR approach, towards the effective conservation of the threatened plants of Europe.

Dry Grassland in Denmark - Restoration and Conservation

Project background

European dry grasslands are considered to be threatened and vulnerable habitat types. In the latest evaluation (2007) of the conservation status of Annex I habitat types in Denmark, six habitat types that will be targeted by this project were evaluated as having unfavourable status. A previous LIFE project "Restoration of Dry Grassland in Denmark" (LIFE04 NAT/DK/000020) was carried out from 2004-2008 and the project's results included restoration of dry grassland through conversion of plantations and arable land, clearing of scrubland and grazing.

Project objectives

This project will follow on from the 2004-2008 project and continue with the restoration and conservation of dry grassland in new locations in Denmark, using the experience obtained in the previous project, supplemented with other methods. The main objective is to improve the conservation status, and to increase the dry grassland areas of: semi-natural dry grassland and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*); important orchid sites; and species-rich *Nardus* grassland on silicious substrates in mountain areas (and sub-mountain areas in Continental Europe).

Furthermore, the project aims to evaluate the feasibility of different methods, or combinations of methods, for controlling the invasive alien species *Rosa rugosa*. The objective is to optimise the efforts to control the distribution of this species, in order to obtain and maintain a favourable conservation status of dry coastal grassland habitats in Denmark. The project's third objective is to create and improve habitats for a number of targeted amphibian species: the great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*), Natterjack toad (*Bufo calamita*), European treefrog (*Hyla arborea*) and agile frog (*Rana dalmatina*), in order to achieve and maintain their favourable conservation status in Denmark.

LIFE08 NAT/DK/000464
DRY GRASSLAND



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

Danish Forest and Nature Agency

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Name of contact person

Annette Strøm Jacobsen

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

2,162,094.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,081,047.00 (50.00%)

Restoring semi-natural habitat types to a total cover of site Helnæs

Project background

In Denmark, a national assessment of the conservation status of habitat types and species covered by the Habitats Directive has identified the main threats to the semi-natural habitat types listed in Annex I as overgrowth with trees and shrubs, fragmentation, and desiccation of wetland habitat types. In the ongoing planning process to develop management plans and action plans for all Natura 2000 sites, according to Denmark's Act on Environmental Objectives, it is recommended that priority should be given to the restoration of species and habitat types whose conservation status is in danger of further deterioration during the first planning period (2010-2015).

Project objectives

For this project a site has been chosen where four of the five habitats that are present are considered nationally to be in danger of deterioration. The site has the potential to develop into a continuum of Annex I habitat types and habitats for Annex II species that are rarely seen in Denmark. The project site is situated on the Helnæs peninsula of Funen. It comprises a former marine bay, now drained for agricultural purposes, but partly restored with some salt meadows, fens, dry grasslands and meadows, and a hilly terrain, and Bobakkerne, with dry grasslands and salt meadows. Work at this site will contribute to the overall objective of restoring and maintaining at a favourable conservation status Danish areas of semi-natural habitats, which are presently evaluated as being a priority for nature restoration efforts. The main objective is to ensure proper conditions in the terrestrial area of the site for the present habitat types and the *Liparis loeselii* habitat, so that they can develop across the site and be restored to a favourable conservation status in the near future. The project also aims to improve the present habitats of *Triturus cristatus* and *Bufo calamita* and create new habitats for these amphibian species.

LIFE08 NAT/DK/000465
TOTAL COVER HELNÆS



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

Skov- og Naturstyrelsen

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Name of contact person

Annita Svensen

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 01/01/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,529,934.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,264,967.00 (50.00%)

Restoration of raised bog

Holmegaards Mose

Project background

In Denmark, a national assessment has been completed of the conservation status of habitat types and species covered by the EU Habitats Directive. The main threats identified to active raised bogs are desiccation, overgrowth with trees and shrubs, and fragmentation. In the ongoing planning process to develop management plans and action plans for all Natura 2000 sites, according to Denmark's Act on Environmental Objectives, it has been recommended that the restoration of sites with active raised bogs should be prioritised, because the national conservation status of this habitat type is in danger of further deterioration during the first planning period (2010-2015).

Project objectives

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the favourable conservation status of areas of active raised bog in Denmark. The project will concentrate on a site with the largest active raised bog area in eastern Denmark. The raised bog of Holmegårds Mose was exploited for more than a century to provide fuel for glass production and for heating. But parts of the active raised bog remain, and there is potential to reinstate large areas of active raised bog. The project site is situated in the southern part of the island Zealand.

The project will carry out restoration works to re-establish active raised bogs with a favourable conservation status in the main part of Holmegårds Mose. As a secondary objective, the project will carry out restoration works to ensure favourable conservation status for alkaline fens, degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration, and calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davalliana*, with a preference for maintaining or, if possible, expanding the area of the habitat for *Liparis loeselii*.

LIFE08 NAT/DK/000466
HOLMEGAARD MOSE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Kim Diget Christensen

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

891,706.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

445,853.00 (50.00%)

Securing *Leucorrhinia pectoralis* and *Pelobates fuscus* in the northern distribution area in Estonia and Denmark

Project background

The yellow-spotted whiteface toad (*Leucorrhinia pectoralis*), listed in Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive, and the Annex IV-listed common spadefoot toad (*Pelobates fuscus*), are threatened species in Europe. During the 20th century, the populations of the toads declined considerably, especially in the northern and western part of their distribution range. One of the main reasons for this significant decline was the destruction of their habitats; small freshwater bodies surrounded by natural or semi-natural communities. Despite its severe decline, large-scale habitat restoration for the yellow-spotted whiteface toad has not been carried out previously in Europe and only limited conservation work has been undertaken for the common spadefoot toad. Moreover, conservation attempts have often not succeeded in increasing reproductive and colonisation rates, underlining the need for species-specific conservation actions.

Project objectives

The overall objective of the project is to secure the small and isolated populations of yellow-spotted whiteface toad and common spadefoot toad in the northern part of their distribution range in Estonia and Denmark and draw up conservation measures for successful population management of these species, applicable on a wider national and European scale, and thereby ensuring their long-term viability.

Specific goals of the project are:

- To rescue the isolated populations of the yellow-spotted whiteface toad from extinction in the Gribskov, Arresø, Kattendale Mose project sites and in central Jutland (Egtved) – four out of the seven known localities of this species in Denmark;
- To rescue the populations of common spadefoot toad from extinction in the extreme northern part of its distribution range (Estonia) and in isolated sites in Denmark, in order to preserve the total gene pool of the species and avoid further range-reduction;
- To carry out large-scale habitat restoration, in order to preserve the populations of the yellow-spotted whiteface toad and common spadefoot toad and restore the structure of meta-populations.
- To establish three reserve populations of the common spadefoot toad in the Danish project sites, providing high quality habitat conditions;

LIFE08 NAT/EE/000257
DRAGONLIFE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

Environmental Board

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Voldemar Rannap

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,050,430.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

525,215.00 (50.00%)

- To highlight the small freshwater bodies that are valuable habitats for the target species and also for many other rare and threatened aquatic and semi-aquatic species;
- To raise awareness among of nature conservation staff, site managers, teachers, pupils and local inhabitants about the target species, by involving them in the species protection and habitat management activities;
- To establish an international co-operation network between experts and nature managers, in order to share knowledge and practical experiences and disseminate the results of the project.

Restoring the Natura 2000 network of Boreal Peatland Ecosystems “Boreal Peatland Life”

Project background

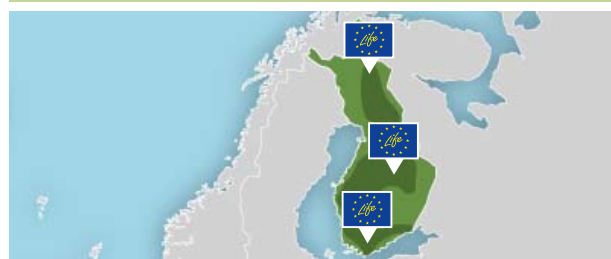
Peatlands are critical for biodiversity conservation. They support many specialised species and unique habitat types, and may provide a refuge for species that are affected by climate change. Moreover, peatlands are the most efficient terrestrial ecosystems as carbon sinks. The greatest threats to the Natura 2000 peatlands of Finland are related to ecological degradation, habitat destruction and a lack of public appreciation of their importance. Drainage is the most common problem for the peatland habitat types in Finland: drainage for forestry has negatively affected almost two-thirds of the original peatland area. Peatland drainage fundamentally changes the hydrology, flow, peat accumulation, acidity and nutrient conditions. These changes have reduced both the overall numbers and species diversity of the Natura 2000 habitat types.

Project objectives

The Boreal Peatland LIFE project aims to improve the habitat quality of 54 Natura 2000 sites in the unique Finnish peatland network. The project will concentrate on the restoration of priority habitats including three of the most threatened priority habitat types [Aapa mires* (7310), bog woodlands* (91D0), and active raised bogs* (7110)], which together cover 77% (6 597 ha) of a total project area of 7 704.55 ha. Whilst the project sites are scattered throughout the country, special emphasis will be given to the peatlands in the Suomenselkä ridge area of central Finland, where a total of 84% of the original peatland area is drained. In this demonstration zone, a wider variety of actions, including social ones, will be carried out to improve the quality and representativeness of the Natura 2000 areas. In order to meet these objectives, a detailed restoration plan including 29 concrete actions is planned on an area covering 2 478 ha. Management plans have been drawn up for three areas covering 2 261 ha. Six areas covering a total of 359 ha have been identified as potential sites for land for purchase by the state, or for the establishment of private nature reserves. The project aims to overcome any potential conflicts between conservation and land usage by versatile and participatory planning of the restoration measures.

Restoration of drained peatlands is based on restoring their hydrology. To this end, works to fill in ditches and

LIFE08 NAT/FIN/000596
Boreal Peatland Life



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

Metsähallitus
Natural Heritage Services

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Name of contact person

Jussi Päivinen

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

6,726,614.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

3,363,307.00 (50.00%)

build peat dams will be carried out at 52 project sites covering 2 478 ha. Trees and shrubs that have grown after drainage on originally open or half-open peatlands will be felled and removed from 43 sites covering 3 143 ha. Furthermore, dead wood will be created on 82 ha of bog woodlands (91D0*) and other forested mires. Unnecessary forest roads will also be demolished and landscaped at two sites.

Actions to increase public awareness are expected to generate people's interest in and appreciation of the conservation and restoration works and of the importance of the Natura 2000 network. The network of environmental educators, nature guides and other experts established during the project will be maintained beyond the duration of the project.

Restoration of the dynamics of Rhine alluvial habitats on Rohrschollen island

Project background

Of the many ecosystems found in the great alluvial plains of Europe, the richest and most complex are the dense, temperate and deciduous 'gallery' forests. They form long corridors stretching along the banks of the rivers flowing from the Alps, occupying land that is regularly flooded. They are notable for their wealth of ligneous species - trees, shrubs and large creepers. These forests are now regressing as a result of the major works that have been carried out in recent decades to the rivers. Consequently, the four major European rivers flowing down from the Alps - the Rhine, Rhone, Danube and Po - have lost most of their riparian forests.

Rohrschollen Island, located on the Rhine, 10 km upstream from Strasbourg, contains the priority habitat "Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior*", as well as "Riparian mixed forests along the great rivers (*Quercus robur*, *Ulmus laevis*, *Ulmus minor*)" and another seven habitats listed in annex I of the Habitats Directive. However, these key habitats are disappearing.

The main reason for this is the absence of dynamic flooding from the Rhine. Floods have become rare (the last one was in 1999) and static, and only happens in the framework of flood retention operations under joint French and German management. This has led to the progressive disappearance of the first stages of plant succession and simplified the spatio-temporal mosaic. This is compounded by the extension of hardwood forest units, which are renewed more slowly

Project objectives

The project aims to restore the alluvial dynamics based on the natural hydrological regime of the Rhine, with dynamic floods spilling over the island.

The main action concerns the creation of a water intake structure on the southern part of the island, so that the hydrographic network on the island (the Bauergrundwasser) can be supplied directly from the Rhine with 5-80 m³/second of water, depending on the river's natural hydrological conditions. Additional works on the secondary branches of the main stream on the island will establish effective exchanges with the river.

LIFE08 NAT/F/000471
Rohrschollen island



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

Ville de Strasbourg

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Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,080,000.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,040,000.00 (50.00%)

The project will contribute to the wider aim of restoring and perpetuating Europe's remarkable gallery forest habitats along the four main rivers flowing from the Alps. It will build on the presence of the willow and alder wood habitats at the Rohrschollen site that are essential to the regeneration of alluvial forest dynamics, but increasingly rare elsewhere in the Rhine valley.

In restoring the key habitats, the project also aims to help several species included in annexes I and II of the Habitats and Birds Directives. These include the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), great egret (*Egretta alba*), great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) and notably the spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*), which is scarce in the Rhine-Ried-Bruch alluvial sector of the Bas-Rhin département.

Conservation and integrated management of two bat species in the French Mediterranean region

Project background

Bats are highly threatened in Europe and the greater horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) and Geoffroy's bat (*Myotis emarginatus*) are particularly affected. Both species are listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive. With a total of 750 females, the reproductive population of the greater horseshoe bat in the Camargue is crucial to the maintenance of the species in the South of France, representing 24% of the reproductive population of the whole French Mediterranean.

Most of the roosts used by the greater horseshoe bat are also occupied by Geoffroy's bat; these two species have close ecological requirements and any action involving one species impacts also on the other. This project therefore looks at both species.

The project area is a network of six Natura 2000 sites centered on "geological" Camargue and two natural areas in the proximity. There are known to be some 550 individuals of each of the two target species in this area, and larger numbers of bats also use it for foraging.

Project objectives

The project aims to strengthen, improve and monitor the conservation status of both greater horseshoe and Geoffroy's bat populations in the Camargue region of France.

It aims to conserve and improve the quality of at least eight nursery colonies and hibernation roosts, through physical and/or regulatory protection. It will create a network of nursery roosts by fitting out 15 additional unoccupied buildings, and will prospect 80 buildings and 250 caves to discover new colonies.

It will create a minimum of 20 km of wooded corridors as additional foraging areas. Management capacity of foraging areas will be improved by extending Natura 2000 sites to include suitable habitats, and by proposing management actions on foraging sites that will be identified through telemetry. An innovative and predictive data-processing tool will be created to support enhanced management. The project will also improve food availability by promoting and evaluating bat-friendly pastoral practices for cattle owners and stock breeders.

LIFE08 NAT/F/000473

Life Chiro Med



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

51 months (01/01/2010 – 31/03/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,320,060.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,160,030.00 (50.00%)

Road mortality will be targeted by testing road-crossing systems at high-risk points near nursery colonies or between key sites.

The project will work to raise the awareness of managers, scientists and the general public concerning bats and their conservation, particularly regarding their roosting and feeding requirements. It will produce communication tools ranging from leaflets and exhibitions for the general public to technical seminars and guides for specialists.

Forest for Capercaillie

Project background

The capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*) is the largest member of the grouse family. It has very specific habitat requirements, needing old coniferous forests with a rich interior structure and dense ground vegetation of vaccinium species under a light canopy. Capercaillies avoid dense and young forests, which provide neither cover nor food and impede the rather cumbersome flight of these birds. The species is threatened by:

- Habitat degradation, particularly conversion of diverse native forest into often single-species timber plantations;
- Increased numbers of small predators such as the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*);
- Collision with fences; and in some areas,
- Excessive hunting.

Once found throughout the belt of coniferous forests across northern Europe, numbers of these birds have dwindled across the continent, even disappearing in some areas. The Vosges mountain range in north-eastern France is now the western limit of distribution and the last refuge of the Vosges Capercaillie sub-species (*Tetra urogallus major*) at the inter-regional level (Alsace/Lorraine). However, only around 100 individuals are left here, the population having declined drastically over the last 10 years. Since 2007, the Region of Lorraine is committed to putting in place urgent measures favourable to the survival of the capercaillie. These actions will form part of the interregional plan of preservation of forests of high ecological value.

Project objectives

This LIFE Nature project will focus on maintaining favourable habitats and re-establishing the tranquillity necessary for the survival and development of the capercaillie, the most emblematic species of the Vosges forests and their biodiversity.

Expected results:

- Putting in place of a forest management policy appropriate to the capercaillie's requirements, including setting up extensive areas of natural decay (900 ha), training forest managers and disseminating a forest guide;
- Setting up of quiet areas where the species is present, to be achieved by limiting access during

LIFE08 NAT/F/000474

Life+TétrasVoges



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

2,733,040.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,364,640.00 (49.93%)

certain periods and redirecting tourist paths, among other things;

- Raising awareness among tourists and the general public of the threats facing the Vosges capercaillie.

The project also seeks to demonstrate that it is possible to combine protection of a species and its environment with continuing economic activity. It will therefore aim to implement practices that are most likely to encourage economic, social and tourism development compatible with increasing the Vosges capercaillie population. The specific actions to improve the conservation status of the capercaillie will also benefit the entire forest bird fauna. Furthermore, the project will provide a major input to the national plan to preserve the capercaillie that is currently being prepared.

Towards an integrative management in favour of the terrestrial tortoises in Var – Creating tools for the managers of natural habitats in Europe

Project background

The Hermann's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*) benefits from an extremely positive image and is hugely popular as a pet. Yet the tortoise is not safe from human threats in its natural habitat. Wild populations of the tortoise are constantly decreasing and the reduction of favourable habitats has triggered its classification as an endangered species. This is true for the totality of its geographical distribution area and especially in the Var, southern France. Managers of natural areas lack both an understanding of the species and validated management practices for its conservation. A national restoration plan for the species validated by the CNPN (National Council of Nature Protection) has brought to light the particular lack of understanding of its preferred micro-habitats, precise diet and activity cycles. In the Var, there are several recurring threats to the species and its habitats, including destruction and fragmentation of its habitats by urbanisation, degradation of its habitats which are becoming overgrown with brush and forests or else are converted to intensive agriculture, destruction of populations by fire, mortality from farm and shrub/forest clearing machinery, capture of wild animals, predation by dogs, and a general lack of consideration (e.g. in land-use planning) for the needs of this endangered species.

Project objectives

The project aims to maintain, and where possible increase, the current fragmented populations of the Hermann's tortoise in the Var through improved management and protection practices. It hopes to increase the long-term viability of these populations, particularly those under most threat.

The project team will conceive, develop and experiment with management tools for the protection of the species. These tools will be chosen for their capacity to take into account all the identified threats to the species in an integrated manner.

Expected results include opening over 500 ha of habitats, validating a method to restore the herbaceous layer, optimising interfaces between closed and open areas (25 areas fenced, 600 m of hedges created), creating 10 water spots, as well as developing con-

LIFE08 NAT/F/000475
Life+ Tortue d'Hermann



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Sandrine Halbedel

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,768,438.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,384,219.00 (50.00%)

ventions with landowners, shepherds and other stakeholders.

The project actions tested will also have a demonstration value to managers in charge of other sites where Hermann's tortoise is found - notably in the Var, Corsica and sites in Spain and Italy.

It will also work to change perceptions of and attitudes towards the species amongst administrations, elected representatives and decision-makers as well as the general public. This will promote the integration of tortoise conservation considerations in land-use decisions and change behaviour which threatens the wild populations and habitats. Expected results include a decrease in the collection of wild tortoises, a decrease in predation by dogs, and a decrease in the uncontrolled releases of captive animals.

Urban bee biodiversity action plan

Project background

The service provided by bees in pollinating nearly 80% of the wild flora and 70% of the crops grown in Europe has an economic impact estimated at €14.2 billion for the EU-25 alone in 2005 (Gallai et al. 2009 Ecol. Econ. 68:810-829).

There are some 2 500 species of bee in Europe. However, recent studies have confirmed the already widely noted decline of European bee populations in terms of abundance as well as diversity (Biesmiejer et al. 2006 Science 313:351-354).

Recent work has also shown that urban habitats can harbour a large number of wild bee species (Matteson et al. 2008 Ann. Entomol. Soc. Am. 101:140-150) and they might therefore play a role as temporary or permanent refuges for some animal and plant species.

Project objectives

The LIFE Biodiversity project URBANBEES aims to carry out a demonstration project on the conservation of wild bees in the greater urban community of Lyon, France. It thus hopes to promote actions that will conserve and enhance the biodiversity of wild bees in urban habitats across Europe.

URBANBEES will develop and implement an action plan to conserve and enhance wild bee diversity in urban habitats. This plan will be predominantly based on specific nesting devices and appropriate management methods in parks and recreation areas.

A network of biological corridors will be developed across and between the project sites over some 8 000 m². These measures have two aims: to increase favourable habitats for wild bees; and to reduce the genetic isolation of individual populations.

The plan will include guidance on changing conventional practices in the management of parks and recreation areas in urban habitats to favour the return and re-establishment of indigenous plant and animal species and fight against alien species.

Recommendations will be implemented in 10 urban zones in the Greater Lyon area. This testing will lead to a validated action plan, which will be reproducible

LIFE08 NAT/F/000478
URBANBEES



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Research institution

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,171,842.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,084,196.00 (49.92%)

in other European cities. The project will target 20 cities across Europe for dissemination and awareness-raising.

The project will also aim to reach 200 000 people in urban communities through direct awareness-raising actions about bees and their ecological and economic importance. These actions will also seek to promote the more general cohabitation of humanity and nature in cities.

Upper Main valley

Project background

The project area encompasses c. 3 150 ha of the Upper Main valley and includes some of Bavaria's most species-rich alluvial valleys. Around 200 bird species use the Upper Main valley for breeding and foraging, or for resting during their migration, among them many species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive. In addition, a wide range of other species, especially dragonflies and damselflies, butterflies and moths, amphibians, spiders, fish, molluscs and mammals bolster biodiversity in the Upper Main valley.

The combination of this rich species mix and the valley's semi-natural floodplain habitat contributes to SAC and SPA designations in the Upper Main area, which is also a popular destination for river recreation. Balancing the needs of nature conservation with social and economic factors requires integrated approaches that attract support from a wide range of different regional stakeholders, including local and regional government, communities, NGOs, scientific institutions and the general public.

Project objectives

The project's overall objective is to ensure that the Upper Main valley remains an important corridor for water and wetland habitats and their characteristic species. Such a goal will contribute to the Natura 2000 network and will be achieved by wetland habitat work that targets 40 breeding and 26 migratory bird species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive. These include: *Luscinia svecica*, *Alcedo atthis*, *Botaurus stellaris*, *Circus aeruginosus*, *Sterna hirunda*, *Charadrius dubius*, *Porzana porzana*, *Rallus aquaticus*, *Ardea purpurea*, *Egretta alba*, *Tringa gareola*, *Ciconia ciconia* and *Limosa limosa*, as well as the meadow birds, *Gallinago gallinago* and *Crex crex*.

The project will also support habitats for the following species listed in Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive: *Castor fiber*, *Vertigo angustior*, *Glaucopsyche nausithous*, *G. teleius*, *Ophiogomphus cecilia* and *Misgurnus fossilis*. Further activities will help to protect, improve and integrate water and floodplain habitats listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive. Particular attention will be paid to standing, vegetated water bodies (habitat types 3130, 3150), water courses and rivers with vegetation or mud banks (habitat types

LIFE08 NAT/D/000001

Obermain



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

54 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,221,568.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,110,784.00 (50.00%)

3260, 3270), alluvial and riparian forests (habitat types 91E0*, 91F0), lowland hay meadows (habitat type 6510) and hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities (habitat type 6430).

Outcomes of these conservation actions will lead to improved and enlarged water and wetland habitats. All works will be carefully co-ordinated to ensure involvement and support from appropriate stakeholders, especially those from the recreation and tourism, fishing and conservation sectors. This integrated approach aims to help achieve operational efficiencies and ensure sustainable benefits for the long-term.

Optimisation of watercourses in Middle Franconia for the Green club-tailed Dragonfly (*Ophi-ogomphus cecilia*)

Project background

The project is based on the experience of a project from south-eastern Germany, conducted in the 1990s, to rehabilitate a watercourse in the vicinity of the current project area. The measures implemented by the former project led to a tenfold increase in the population of the green club-tailed dragonfly.

Project objectives

The main objective of the project is to improve the conservation status of green club-tailed dragonfly populations in Bavaria, via a co-ordinated set of habitat improvements in local watercourses.

Specific project actions will include:

- Widening the watercourses to lead to sedimentation and the creation of sandbanks, which provide suitable larval habitats;
- River bank interventions that simulate natural lateral erosion processes to produce other habitat features;
- 'By pass' channels will be introduced to help slow river flows in certain areas and so provide more favourable watercourse areas for green club-tailed dragonfly populations;
- Sediment deposits, caused by tree planting, and natural ground sills will be introduced to provide additional habitat features; and
- Removal of poplar, willow and alder will clear patches of the mostly narrow band of alluvial forest.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000002

Keiljungfer



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Andreas Von Lindeiner

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

954,870.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

477,435.00 (50.00%)

Preservation and restoration of base-rich to alkaline fens ("brown moss fens", NATURA 2000 habitat type 7230) in Brandenburg

Project background

Brown moss fens were once common in Brandenburg, however, near-natural base-rich or calcareous percolation mires and spring mires have now almost vanished because of drainage. Only three near-natural base-rich fens of lacustrine origin (terrestrialisation mires) still exist. Furthermore, there are many moderately degraded fens that are in need of restoration.

Project objectives

The project will help to stop the rapid loss of "base-rich to alkaline fens" (brown moss fens) in the German federal state of Brandenburg and contribute to the restoration, development and improvement of near-natural lowland-brown moss fens. Alkaline fens appear in all 14 project sites, covering two SPAs and 12 SCIs.

The project will develop, restore and extend the largest viable brown moss fen surface areas in Brandenburg. The ongoing loss of habitat area will be stopped, and hopefully reversed. Public awareness-raising about fen conservation measures will feature prominently during the project.

Expected results:

- Restoration of suitable conditions for the regeneration of tree-less alkaline fens at locations with degraded percolation, as well as on spring mire sites with a good restoration potential;
- Establishment of management practises to stabilise residual alkaline fens of lacustrine origin;
- Reintroduction of the natural vegetation structure and diversity of alkaline fens on disturbed sites;
- Conservation and improvement of Natura 2000-habitat types (bogs and wet forest) that are connected to brown moss fens;
- Population stabilisation or re-introduction of threatened or locally extinct plant species that are typical of alkaline fens in Brandenburg;
- Reduction of the decomposition of peat through by water-logging; and
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the restoration methods used.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000003
Kalkmoore Brandenburgs



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Bernhard Schmidt-Ruhe

Duration of project:

63 months (01/01/2010 – 31/03/2015)

Total budget in euro:

6,399,880.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

3,199,940.00 (50.00%)

Conserving and developing pastures (habitat types 4030, (*)6212, *6230, 6510, 8220, 8230) of the “Wetterauer Trockeninsel”

Project background

The nutrient-poor grasslands of Germany's middle Hesse were traditionally grazed and mowed by livestock farmers but changes in agricultural practices have altered the nature of these once species-rich grassland habitats. Reduced grazing pressures and abandonment of grassland management methods has led to an overgrowth of bushes and general deterioration of the nutrient-poor grassland habitats. This has led to a decline in characteristic plant species, some of which are now rare and endangered.

Efforts have already been made to address the decline in a limited number of areas, but more comprehensive interventions are required to strengthen the conservation status of priority plant species in the project area.

Project objectives

This project aims at safeguarding the long-term conservation, development and restoration of species-rich grassland and rock habitats in the Wetterauer Trockeninsel area. Project actions will cover the following six Annex 1 habitats: habitat code 4030 - European dry heaths (3.1 ha in the project area); *6212 - Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (27.1 ha); *6230 - Species-rich *Nardus* grasslands, on siliceous substrates in submountain areas (3.2 ha); 6510 - Lowland hay meadows (235.8 ha); 8220 - Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation (0.3 ha); and 8230 - Siliceous rock with pioneer vegetation of the *Sedo-Scleranthion* (2.1 ha). All of these habitats depend on traditional land use practices, especially sheep grazing and mowing.

Key project actions will be aimed at:

- Restoring, enlarging and recovering extensively used pastures with high ecological value;
- Facilitating appropriate land use methods by providing basic livestock infrastructure, opening up transhumance routes and introducing higher-yield pastures in carefully co-ordinated locations;
- Increasing awareness about the dependency of local wildlife on specific land use practices and introducing initiatives to promote demand for associated products that help create biodiversity benefits; and ultimately
- Achieving a long-term sustainable solution to appropriate land use in these important habitats, par-

LIFE08 NAT/D/000004
Wetterauer Hutungen



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

4,144,006.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

2,072,003.00 (50.00%)

ticularly in terms of maintaining necessary grazing pressures from sheep flocks.

Lessons learned during the project will be disseminated widely to ensure knowledge transfer about such approaches to EU species conservation.

Management and Connectivity of Amphibians in the Cultural Landscape of Lower Saxony

Project background

Amphibians are recognised as some of Europe's most endangered species. Loss of key habitat features has contributed to species decline as intensive land use systems remove ponds, close migration corridors and limit the availability of areas for foraging, hibernation and overwintering. Such factors have particularly affected amphibian species listed in Annex IV of the Habitat Directive.

Opportunities exist to improve the conservation status of these species in Germany's Lower Saxony region, where extensively used meadows and pastures can be managed to help support Annex IV amphibians such as *Pelobates fuscus*, *Bufo calamita*, *Hyla arborea*, *Rana arvalis* and *Rana lessonae*.

Project objectives

The main aim of the project is to create reproduction pond sites for the amphibians *Pelobates fuscus*, *Bufo calamita*, *Hyla arborea*, *Rana arvalis* and *Rana lessonae* (all Annex IV of the Habitats Directive) on extensively used meadows and pastures. The ponds will also help support other endangered species including amphibians (*Triturus cristatus*, *Bombina variegata*), dragonflies, water beetles and hydrophilic plant species. Habitat management interventions will take place in 15 locations, all of which are secured for nature conservation purposes, either as natural reserves or protected landscape elements.

Expected results:

- Increase in population sizes of the five Annex IV-listed amphibian species and also other endangered animal and plant species;
- Creation of specific types of ponds to act as breeding habitats, in order to improve coherence and connectivity between populations and to ensure recolonisation of restored habitats;
- Reduction of costs and effort for further long-term habitat management measures;
- Improvement and dissemination of knowledge about this type of conservation work within Germany and throughout the EU; and
- Strengthening of links between essential partners for this type of conservation work in Lower Saxony to ensure sustainable project outcomes.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000005
LIFE-AMPHIKULT



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,068,101.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

534,050.00 (50.00%)

Restoration of a side channel of the river Rhine near Wesel, Lower German Rhine

Project background

The "Unterer Niederrhein" is a wetland and pasture area containing, amongst others, a variety of river and alluvial habitats. The area holds RAMSAR and SPA designations, which help to protect its floodplain complex where priority bird species breed and winter. Alterations to the river's natural conditions are considered to have contributed to a lack of spawning grounds and breeding habitats for several fish species, such as the houting (*Coregonus oxyrhynchus*). Breeding and resting habitats for several rheophilic and migratory fish species listed in the Habitats Directive (*Alosa alosa*, *Cottus gobio*, *Aspius aspius*, *Romanogobio belingii* and *Barbus barbus*) have also declined and conservation measures are required to help restore the river ecosystem in support of its bird and fish species.

Project objectives

The main project objectives focus on improving the following NATURA 2000 sites: 'NSG Rheinaue Bislich-Vahnum, nur Teilfläche' and 'Rheinfischschutzzonen zwischen Emmerich und Bad Honnef'. These improvements will strengthen key elements of the SPA Natura 2000 network site and Ramsar site 'Unterer Niederrhein' by re-establishing near natural and dynamic river flow systems, as well as associated floodplain structures.

A 2.5km long secondary channel will be widened, deepened and re-opened to the river Rhine. Further habitat works will target restoration of natural river depths, bank structures, currents, sediments and sediment dynamics. Measures will be introduced to mitigate against habitat damage from waves caused by passing ships and efforts will be invested in safeguarding appropriate hydrological functions such as groundwater tables, flooding parameters and currents. Natural features will be extended to improve habitats for breeding or resident waders and other birds including arctic geese, swans and meadow species.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000007
Nebenrinne Bislich-Vahnum



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

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Duration of project:

72 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2015)

Total budget in euro:

2,640,301.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,320,150.00 (50.00%)

Near-natural river and flood plain development of the River Ems at Einen – river dynamics and habitat diversity

Project background

The Ems is one of Germany's smallest navigable rivers. Its floodplain areas, many of which are designated as Natura 2000 sites, contain a number of species and habitats covered by the Habitat Directive. As a result of previous conservation actions (also including two LIFE Nature projects) some of the areas within the Ems river floodplain have recently been re-colonised by rare species of fauna. Further river habitat restoration actions are now proposed to reinforce this process.

Project objectives

The project's main objectives include:

- Lengthening and widening around 4 km of the river course at Einen;
- Removing river bank stabilisation structures, thereby facilitating natural river erosion and sedimentation dynamics;
- Strengthening existing and developing new floodplain areas;
- Creating uninterrupted passages for fauna; and
- Demonstrating best practice in these types of conservation actions.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000008
Ems-Dynamik+Habitate



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

Bezirksregierung Münster

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Name of contact person

Franz Reinhard

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,843,346.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,421,673.00 (50.00%)

Restoration and improvement of the SCI “Möhne Oberlauf” and the SCI “Möhne Mittellauf”

Project background

Hydraulic engineering actions in the Möhne valley over previous centuries have had a negative impact on both the river and its floodplain, leading to a 30% reduction in the length of the river. This reduction subsequently led to erosion and eventually to fewer floods that naturally occur in a floodplain. Much of the land within the floodplain has been planted with Norway spruce (*Picea abies*), which has had an adverse impact on the habitats and species that naturally occur in a floodplain. The “Möhne Oberlauf” SCI is also negatively impacted by a abandonment of land use within the floodplain: farming is no longer profitable in this area. Reinstating conservation-oriented land use through the establishment of species-rich pastures and meadows is thus a key aim of the project. The “Möhne Mittellauf” SCI is mainly characterised by grassland but this is mostly cultivated intensively. This leads to run-off of fertiliser and pesticides into the river as well as the need to maintain the structurally degraded status of the river.

Project objectives

The project aims to restore and improve the natural dynamics and structural diversity of the Möhne valley. This will improve the status of a number of floodplain habitats listed in the Habitats Directive, including the priority habitat ‘Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior*’. The works should also aid the conservation status of species such as the brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), bullhead (*Cottus gobius*) and kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*); and also the black stork (*Ciconia nigra*) which is dependent on structurally diverse floodplains as a feeding habitat.

Expected results:

- Restoration of the indigenous woods and wet habitats of the floodplain and valley (to be achieved by eliminating Norway spruce and re-establishing the water levels through the re-naturalization of the river’s profile; the removal of an artificial embankment; the creation of pools and floodways; and wetland restoration through closure of drainage channels as well as the removal or reconfiguration of weirs);
- Less intensive agricultural land use and practices within the floodplain, leading to the development, in parts, of the hay meadow habitat;

LIFE08 NAT/D/000009

Life+ Möhneaeue



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

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Winfried von Schröder

Duration of project:

63 months (01/01/2010 – 31/03/2015)

Total budget in euro:

2,896,347.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,448,174.00 (50.00%)

- Expansion of the “Möhne Mittellauf” SCI: the site consists of five distinct sub-sites, one of which includes fairly large areas of arable land. These plots are difficult to obtain for any nature conservation measures. Nevertheless, to be able to significantly improve the status of this SCI, expansion on the east side of this sub-site is planned. The regional agricultural institutions have confirmed the feasibility of expansion. Within the expansion area, the above mentioned objectives and their positive impacts on the respective habitats and species are also applicable. This expansion area will be designated as a Natura 2000 area before the end of the project;
- Improvement of passages for fish: There are a number of different weirs – or in one case a box culvert acting as a weir – which prevent or obstruct fish migration. The project aims to improve or, if possible, to even fully restore fish passage at each of these locations.

Improvement of the connection between the river and the floodplain within the pSCI “Lippe floodplain between Hangfort and Hamm”

Project background

The river Lippe is the northernmost tributary of the river Rhine from the east. It runs along the southern edge of the Westphalian river basin. Between the mostly agricultural area of the Münsterland in the north and the industrial centres in the southwest, the river Lippe acts as a link between the biotopes of the Niederrhein in the West, via the Teutoburger Wald and the Eggegebirge, to the river Weser in the east. The environmental/nature significance of this connection is evidenced by the number of designated Sites of Community Interest (SCIs), which protect large parts of the Lippe floodplain and the river Lippe (i.e., habitats and species within the proposed sites are protected by the Habitats Directive). As a consequence of both of hydraulic engineering works to make the river easier to navigate, and intensive agricultural use, such designated sites need support and development measures in order to meet their protective objectives in a sustainable way.

Project objectives

The overall project objective is to preserve and enhance the conservation status of four sub-areas of the Lippe floodplain between Hangfort and Hamm (SCI) – areas where as yet, no ecological modifications have been carried out. The project will aim to improve the connection between the river and its floodplain in order to support the development of typical alluvial and river habitats.

Specific actions will include:

- Improving the connection between the floodplain and the river;
- Increasing the frequency of flooding;
- Adjusting the water balance to nature-orientated conditions;
- Developing the habitat types within the floodplain and in the river;
- Changing to less intensive farming methods.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000010
Life Projekt “Lippeaue”



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Oliver Schmidt-Formann

Duration of project:

60 months (01/03/2010 – 28/02/2015)

Total budget in euro:

6,011,951.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

3,005,975.00 (50.00%)

Development of humid and moist forests in the Soonwald

Project background

The Soonwald, a largely continuous forest area in Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, is of very high importance for nature conservation: large parts are covered with different forest types. All of them show a high amount of old growth beech and oak as well as significant numbers of humid sites. A substantial part of this area belongs to the state of Rheinland-Pfalz; the remaining 9% belongs to local communes. Many of the bogs and wetlands in the Soonwald have become degraded by drainage. Today, only small remnants of the "Hangbrücher" (transition mires) and bog woodlands remain. Former humid alder forests are now mainly covered with spruce and are in an unnatural condition. As a result of the continuous forest cover, the light-loving oak trees, which are of central importance for biodiversity, are increasingly pushed out of the forests and replaced by species of shade-loving tree species. Habitat features such as small pools, woodland meadows and forest edges are of great importance to the European wildcat (*Felis sylvestris*) and Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*), bats, birds, amphibians as well as other rare animal species.

Project objectives

The project will target the entire Natura 2000 site, which comprises more than 5 600 ha.

It aims to carry out rewetting and water management measures to improve the conservation status of the mires and forests within the project area. The main actions will focus on the blocking of ditches (to rewet the mires), and redirecting surface run-off into neighbouring forest stands. In addition, the removal of spruce from the humid and moist sites should benefit the maintenance of old growth oaks and promote their natural regeneration.

Other project actions will include:

- Creating new small ponds and restoring existing ones;
- Improving the habitat features which are of importance for the wildcat and lynx in the forests;
- Creating or restoring richly structured forest edges;
- Constructing paths for visitors;
- 'Environmental education' – encouraging volunteer work to actively involve visitors to the forests in the restoration/maintenance work.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000012

Soonwald



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Moritz Schmitt

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,751,852.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

875,926.00 (50.00%)

Improvement and Long-Term Safeguarding of the Natura 2000 Site “Dessau-Wörlitz Elbe Floodplain”

Project background

Flood prevention is not only a technical task; rather, it is a far reaching, multi-disciplinary and cross-border undertaking. Floodwater provision is an important component of any flood protection plan. According to the flood risk management guidelines of the EU, all floodplain areas with a risk of flooding are required to have a flood risk management plan in place. Therefore a range of measures have to be developed and implemented according to set priorities.

Project objectives

The Elbe by Vockerode project will establish a favourable conservation status in this unique riverine landscape on the middle Elbe, and will result in the improvement and long-term safeguarding of the site. The project will connect the natural conservation functions inherent in riparian dynamics and floodplain development with aspects of flood protection. The main objective of the project will be to enable natural succession dynamics of the entire area and to ensure a unique floodplain landscape and a favourable water status. The dyke relocation will result in extra retention areas, and the preventative values of natural ecological flood protection will be enhanced.

The project will also enable the approval process of the dyke relocation to be influenced, through the integration of natural protection dyke planning. It will set a precedent for the restoration of large river systems in middle Europe. Furthermore, it presents a unique opportunity to use natural protective measures in this floodplain area to provide the necessary future flood protection incorporating natural techniques. The project measure will serve to enhance the current state of the area and to restore it to a natural dynamic floodplain landscape with typical site specific habitat types. In some locations the goal is to prevent the transformation of the forest by invasive species, such as the American green ash, and promote endemic species of the Annexes of the Habitats Directive. Oxbow stretches, currently detached from the river will also be revitalised, for example with the creation of new wetland ecosystems, thereby improving habitat conditions for some species in the area.

LIFE08 NAT/D/000013
Elbauen bei Vockerode



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Karl Gutzweiler

Duration of project:

108 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2018)

Total budget in euro:

2,184,912.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,092,456.00 (50.00%)

Fire Restoration Methodology for Mediterranean Forests - Environmental safety & sustainability of 4 interventions in the Rhodes NATURA 2000 site

Project background

The island of Rhodes is one of Greece's major fire-afflicted areas, especially Mount Attaviros which was devastated by the fire of 2008. However, there is a knowledge gap in contemporary science regarding the management of Mediterranean forests and their restoration after fires.

Project objectives

The project aims to close the knowledge gap afflicting Mediterranean forests, and to restore target habitats such as matorrals *Juniperus* spp., which the 2008 fire damaged in the Natura 2000 site GR4210005. In parallel, restoration work will be done in areas with cypress forests (*Acero-Cupression*) and Mediterranean pine forests with endemic Mediterranean pines.

As well as restoring these seriously-damaged Natura 2000 habitats on Rhodes, the project will, based on its findings, prepare a restoration guide for fire-afflicted Mediterranean forests.

Expected results:

- An environmental study and implementation plan;
- Fenced experimental segments within the damaged forest showcasing anti-erosion measures, soil improvement, planting and irrigation;
- A good practice restoration guide for burnt Mediterranean forests.

The project will also organise two events on Greek Natura 2000 sites, and prepare dissemination and communication tools.

LIFE08 NAT/GR/000533
FRAMME



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Dafni Mavrogeorgou

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,636,750.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

786,365.00 (48.04%)

Automatic acoustic monitoring and inventorying of biodiversity

LIFE08 NAT/GR/000539
AMIBIO



Project background

Animals use acoustic vocalisation as a very efficient means of communication because the sound does not require visual contact between emitter and receiver, it can travel over long distances and can carry the information content under low visibility conditions. Animals use sound for mate attraction, territorial defence and for early warning of other members of the species of the presence of dangerous predators. Acoustic surveying can be used for rapid assessment programmes (RAP), which quickly assess the biodiversity of specific regions. This enables estimates of biodiversity to be made more quickly. Acoustic surveying is useful because many animals (such as birds, bats, frogs) and stridulating insects are heard more often than they are seen or trapped.

Project objectives

The project will construct prototype autonomous multi-sensor monitoring stations and automatically analyse their transmitted measurements as a basis for long-term monitoring of biodiversity activity trends in a region. The monitoring stations are small (< 0.5 m³) and are solar powered. They record audio, temperature and humidity and transmit these measurements for automatic statistical analysis to a remote central station far from the monitoring region.

The project will carry out systematic and non-intrusive acoustic surveys using the remote monitoring stations in order to assess biodiversity by conducting complete bio-inventories of the study site and to generate data about biodiversity composition within groups of taxa at multiple levels. Acoustic monitoring will be used to provide baseline information about specific groups of acoustically active biota, and to generate an index of biodiversity based on the complexity of calls recorded within a region.

The taxonomic groups of interest are stridulating insects, anurans, birds, bats and terrestrial animals in the area of a forest in a Natura 2000 site (Hymettus area with forest Kaisariani and lake Vouliagmeni). The sound monitoring will also enable detection of specific atypical sound events related to potentially hazardous human activities (for example, firing guns or tree-cutting).

Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Nikolaos Fakotakis

Duration of project:

41 months (01/02/2010 – 30/06/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,664,282.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

830,641.00 (49.91%)

Such events will be reported to the relevant authorities. The sensors can also be used to monitor natural and human-induced disasters, such as fires and storms.

Establishment of the Pannon Seed Bank for the long-term ex-situ conservation of Hungarian vascular wild plants

Project background

Around 2 200 wild vascular plant species occur in Hungary within the Pannonian biogeographical region – a region rich in biodiversity and endemic species. Since 2003, the country's complex nature conservation objectives have been determined by a national nature conservation master plan – part of Hungary's environmental programme. In-situ conservation has received high attention, although it is becoming extremely important to establish the national basis for ex-situ conservation as well. At the same time, the EU Biodiversity Action Plan aims to identify and fill in critical gaps in the ex-situ conservation programmes for wild species. A proposed 'Pannonian seed bank' for the long-term ex-situ conservation of Hungarian vascular wild plants should meet this requirement. The established Hungarian biodiversity monitoring system will provide reliable basic information for setting up the strategy for the Pannonian seed bank with regards to seed collection of wild native flora.

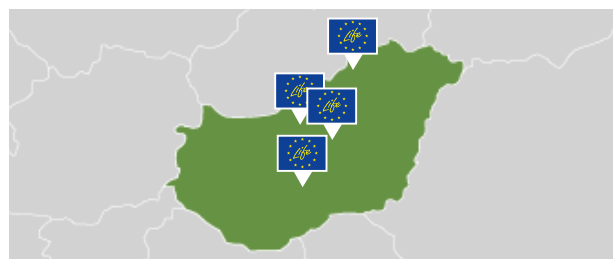
Project objectives

The project's main objective is to establish a Pannonian seed bank for the long-term preservation of seeds of the wild vascular flora of the Pannonian biogeographical region in order to assist in-situ species' conservation activities. As well as providing increased security in the event of accidental loss or degradation of endangered rare species, the seed bank may provide additional opportunities for monitoring genetic changes in wild populations. Additionally, it will facilitate access to research material, and assist multidisciplinary studies on maintaining diversity and stability in plant associations.

Specifically, the project will:

- Expand the current functions of the existing agricultural gene bank at the research centre for agrobotany (Tápiószele) of the central agricultural office by using professional expertise, existing knowledge and infrastructure (storage and laboratory capacity) in a cost-effective way;
- Collect and store by project end, approximately 50% of the Hungarian native flora (at least 800 species). A strategy will be developed for seed collection of wild vascular plants, assessing the existing seed collection and ex-situ storage methodology;
- Develop a computer-based information system for data management of the Pannonian seed bank;

LIFE08 NAT/H/000288
HUSEEDBANK



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Research institution

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Lazslo Holly

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

969,090.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

401,737.00 (49.78%)

- Establish storage capacity for duplicates at two geographically different locations: in a mine in the Aggtelek national park, and at the institute of ecology and botany in Vácrtót;
- Select seed bank samples to be used for pilot re-introduction in a typical sand steppe community with priority habitats in the Kiskunság national park, a Natura 2000 site; and
- Carry out an intensive communication programme targeting a professional audience, students, the general public, stakeholders, political decision-makers and international experts.

Restoration and conservation of priority-listed Pannonic sand land habitats in military owned area of the Hungarian Little Plain

Project background

Once covering vast areas of the Little Hungarian Plain (western Hungary), between the towns of Győr and Esztergom, only remnants of the priority habitats (Pannonic sand steppe and Pannonic inland sand dune thicket *Junipero-Populetum albae*) remain in the region as a result of human activities. A few patches can be found in the military sites near Győr where, as elsewhere in Europe, military ownership has left the habitats relatively undisturbed. For the same reasons, these sites now also provide a refuge for several rare species including: *Adonis vernalis*, *Stipa pennata*, *Stipa borysthénica*, *Oxytropis pilosa*, *Dianthus serotinus*, *Onosma arenaria* and *Gypsophila fastigiata* ssp. *arenaria*. A preliminary environmental management plan has been created for the area through co-operative work between environmental and military organisations.

Project objectives

The project's overall objective is to manage two Natura 2000 sites in the Little Hungarian Plain – the military practice ranges at Gönyű and Gyorszentiván – to restore degraded habitats (notably, the endangered Pannonic sand habitats) and populations of valuable species. The project also aims to preserve biodiversity and, most importantly, to find a balance between ongoing military activities and nature conservation needs. Conservation actions will tackle various threats to the habitats, which exist despite military ownership. These include the threat from invasive species, illegal motor sports and waste disposal.

Project actions will focus initially on roughly one-third of the military sites of Gönyű and Gyorszentiván (394 ha) with a view to developing a coherent network of natural sand habitats. (By project end, the intention is that this should rise to around 70%). The beneficiary will apply knowledge it is gaining through another ongoing LIFE project (LIFE07 NAT/HU/000321), located on military-owned land in the eastern Bakony mountains. Specifically, the 2008 project aims to eradicate completely invasive species in the area by 2014, by combining mechanical and chemical methods.

The threat of nutrient accumulation in the grasslands will be treated by controlled grassland burning. Artificial sand dunes will be built and sown in order to

LIFE08 NAT/H/000289
Hungarian Little Plain



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

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Rita Balogh

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,764,300.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,279,755.00 (72.54%)

restore the unique grassland habitats. In addition, a number of small lakes will be re-landscaped to create a single lake. Illegal waste dumps will be eliminated, and further waste disposal prevented. Comprehensive and long-term monitoring will be carried out. Nature areas that were previously closed to the public will be opened through the construction of a new educational trail. Overall, the project should help to improve public opinion and knowledge of the link between the military and the environment.

Urgent long term nature conservation actions for the SPA and the pSCIs of the Monti della Tolfa area

Project background

The degradation of the different forest and pasture habitats in the Tolfa area is threatening several bird species, because of the reduced area suitable for mating, nesting and feeding. Such degradation has been caused mainly by the abandonment of the once-cultivated woods and pastures, and by uncontrolled human activity in natural areas, including humid zones.

Project objectives

The main objective of the project is to ensure the long-term conservation of the unique habitats and related (Priority and of Community Importance) species included in one of the biggest SPAs in Italy, and in two pSCIs that are within the project area. The second objective is the implementation of actions that will enable human activities and nature conservation to take place at the same time. Thirdly, the project will increase the value of the area by highlighting to residents and visitors that it is a Natura 2000 site. This will be done through collaboration between four municipalities and three 'università agrarie', which manage the public access to the woods and pastures.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000316
MONTI DELLA TOLFA



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Lucia Dutto

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

3,613,738.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,789,243.00 (49.51%)

Increasing endangered biodiversity in agricultural and semi-natural areas: a demonstrative management model

Project background

Italy's Basso Molise area supports a variety of endangered species. Priority habitats are also located in the area and these include: *Salix alba* and *Populus alba* galleries, Riparian mixed forests, *Quercus pubescens* forests, Pannonian-Balkan turkey oak-sessile oak forests.

Strong links exist between the area's varied agricultural land use systems and the conservation status of its rich biodiversity. Conservation measures such as improving wildlife corridors, maintaining mosaic patterns of low impact farming systems, and sustaining water flows all contribute to supporting the long term viability of endangered species in the Basso Molise area.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to introduce a co-ordinated programme of integrated conservation actions that halt biodiversity loss in Basso Molise. This involves engaging public and private sector stakeholders in efforts to implement a territorial resource management model capable of conserving those agricultural and semi-natural habitats that support the following priority species: *Milvus milvus*, *Falco sub-buteo*, *Coracias garrulus*, *Melanocorypha calandra*, *Calandrella brachydactyla*, *Anthus campestris*, *Asio otus*, *Emys orbicularis*, *Bombina pachypus*, *Triturus carnifex* and *Eurotestudo hermanni*; as well as the habitats 92A0 *Salix alba* and *Populus alba* galleries, 91F0 Riparian mixed forests, 91AA* *Quercus pubescens* forests, 91M0 Pannonian-Balkan turkey oak-sessile oak forests).

All of these target species and habitats have strong links with agricultural systems and the resultant territorial management model is expected to provide a useful demonstration device for other European areas involved in sustaining High Nature Value farmland.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000324

DINAMO



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Giovanni Cannata

Duration of project:

36 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2012)

Total budget in euro:

1,692,494.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

836,413.00 (49.42%)

Development of coordinated protection measures for Wolf in Apennines

Project background

Large carnivores such as wolves and bears are usually perceived as a dangerous problem by local populations and farmers. This can result in threats to the species. A previous LIFE project (LIFE04 NAT/IT/000144) established actions to help improve the conservation status of endangered large carnivores in Europe but threats remain to Italian wolf populations. Dedicated measures are considered necessary to build on the previous LIFE project and introduce conservation procedures that ensure the sustainable management of wolf populations in Italy.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to develop and apply a coordinated programme of sustainable conservation measures that protect and manage wolves in the Apennines area. This will involve working with local stakeholders to help reduce negative perceptions and direct persecution of wolf populations. Actions will include introducing a standardised damage-compensation-prevention-mitigation assessment system to help reduce conflicts between livestock owners and wolves. Habitat works will also be carried out to reduce a range of natural and human risks to wolf populations. These actions will aim to limit disturbance at reproductive sites and during reproductive seasons, as well as other key phases of the wolf biological cycle.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000325
WOLFNET



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Park-Reserve authority

Name of beneficiary

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Nicola Cimini

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,597,982.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,052,271.00 (65.85%)

Urgent Pilot Actions for Amphibians, Reptiles and Chiroptera of Montenero

Project background

The Italian crested newt (*Triturus carnifex*) – long considered one of the four subspecies of the great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) – is found all over Italy (except for Sicily and Sardinia), southern-central Europe and the western Balkans. In general, the species group is suffering severe declines in many parts of the 37 known range countries. For this reason all four subspecies are included in Appendix II of the Bern Convention, in Annexes II and IVa of the Habitat Directive and in many national classifications as vulnerable, threatened or endangered. Threats to the species include direct habitat destruction and fragmentation, habitat degradation caused by agricultural practices, pollution, introduced species (especially predatory fish), lack of pond management and flood control measures. Despite being among the most intensively studied amphibian species in Europe, only limited conservation work has taken place, with the great crested newt and the Italian crested newt receiving the most attention to date.

The project site includes the southernmost part of the European distribution area of the target species and is a strategic area for the conservation of the four-lined snake (*Elaphe quatuorlineata*).

Project objectives

The aims of the project are:

- To secure the populations of the Italian crested newt (*Triturus carnifex*), the smooth newt (*Triturus vulgaris*), the Italian tree frog (*Hyla intermedia*), and Hermann's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*) with the release (from a temporary breeding centre) of tadpoles and juvenile individuals in the Natura 2000 network site Monte Calvo-Piana di Montenero; and
- To guarantee the survival of the populations of 12 bat species (*Myotis myotis*, *Myotis blythii*, *Myotis capaccinii*, *Miniopterus schreibersii*, *Rhinolophus euryale*, *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, *Eptesicus serotinus*, *Pipistrellus kuhlii*, *Nyctalus noctula*, *Hypsugo savii* and *Tadarida teniotis*). These 12 species represent more than one-third of all bat species found in Italy (34 in total) and close to one-third of all European species (39 in total).

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000326

Fauna di Montenero



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Park-Reserve authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Giacomo Diego Gatta

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 01/01/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,366,694.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

683,347.00 (50.00%)

Measures for the conservation of Chiroptera and Avifauna in Central Italy

Project background

Bats and raptors are two of the most threatened animal groups in Europe. Bats have been a protected species since 1939 and are included in the annexes of Bern Convention and the Habitat Directive. Out of the 34 species listed for Italy, 25 species have been recorded in Tuscany. The other targeted species of the project, the red kite (*Milvus milvus*), was reintroduced to Tuscany as part of a previous LIFE project (LIFE04 NAT/IT/000173) and has a stable population. The main threats affecting the populations of the bat species are habitat loss; deterioration and fragmentation caused by human activities; the risks inherent in the existence of small, fragmented populations; and direct disturbance to the bat colonies caused by people and forestry operations that are not compatible with these species. For the raptors, the main threat comes from power lines.

Project objectives

The project aims to:

- Protect the resting/breeding sites of cave-dwelling bat species;
- Increase the availability of foraging sites for bats;
- Increase the availability of resting/breeding sites for non cave-dwelling bat species;
- Establish two Minimum Viable Populations of red kite;
- Decrease dramatically the risk of electrocution for the red kite and other birds of prey listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000332
SAVE THE FLYERS



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

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Aldo Coppi

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

3,322,876.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,661,438.00 (50.00%)

Validation of risk management tools for genetically modified plants in protected and sensitive areas in Italy

Project background

An expert group, acting on behalf of the Italian Ministry of the Environment, has designed a methodology for assessing the environmental safety of deliberately releasing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The technique has been tested in a theoretical framework but it has not been validated in field conditions. This latter experience is considered necessary by the Italian Ministry of Environment, prior to the methodology being used in practice.

Project objectives

The main goal of this project is to validate a methodology for monitoring and managing possible environmental effects of genetically modified plants (GMPs) on plant and animal biodiversity. This will involve setting specific protection goals for sensitive or protected areas near genetically modified agro-ecosystems and monitoring any threat caused by the GMPs to the protected sites. The process will help identify optimal operational parameters for the monitoring system, and thus help improve knowledge about how best to manage environmental impacts from genetically modified plants.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000334

MAN-GMP-ITA



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Research institution

Name of beneficiary

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Salvatore Arpaia

Duration of project:

42 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,169,017.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

579,259.00 (49.55%)

Oristanese land of waters: a network for the shared management of the SCIs/SPAs of the central-western coastal areas of Sardinia

Project background

Sardinia contains a network of lagoons that extend over some 100 km². Five of these wetland areas are Ramsar sites, which between them support an important number of rare or endangered plant and bird species. Plants such as *Plagius flosculosus*, *Stachys glutinosa*, *A. paleoendemism*, *Limonium densiflorum*, *Corsica-Sicily-Algeria* and *Sardinia subendemism* are found in the lagoon area. More than 35 endangered bird species (exceeding 1 000 individuals) also use the lagoon habitats. These include; *Porphyrio porphyrio*, *Botaurus stellaris*, *Ixobrychus minutus* and *Ardea purpurea*.

Threats to the lagoon habitat arise from an increase in tourism activity, the construction of new buildings or roads, and the use of lagoon water supplies for agriculture. Habitat restoration responses are therefore required to conserve the lagoon species, particularly at the following sites located in Oristano municipality: Putzu Idu, Sal'e Porcus, Cabras, Mistras, Santa Giusta, Pauli Maiori, S'Ena Arrubia, Corru S'Ittiri, Marceddi and S. Giovanni.

Project objectives

The project's main objective is to establish a network of Natura 2000 sites that incorporates the Oristanese humid areas and covers the following priority habitats: 1150 Coastal lagoons; 1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand; 1410 Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*); 1420 Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic fruticeti halophilous scrubs (*Salicornietea fruticosi*); and *1510 Mediterranean salt steppes, *Limonietalia*. A management plan will be prepared and implemented for the SCI/SPA, which will include measures to support the conservation status of *Emys orbicularis*, *Sterna albifrons* and *Sterna hirundo*.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000339

ORISTANESE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

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Antonello Figus

Duration of project:

36 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2012)

Total budget in euro:

818,333.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

409,166.00 (50.00%)

Development of a quick monitoring index as a tool to assess environmental impacts of transgenic crops

Project background

The protection of human health and the environment requires that due attention be given to controlling risks from the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Outcomes from an EC working group on guidance for monitoring GMOs indicates that: 1) there is no guidance as to how existing monitoring programmes and data infrastructure schemes may support GMO monitoring; 2) there is no legal framework to regulate the coordination and harmonisation of GMO monitoring data; and 3) monitoring data should include standardised numerical raw data ready to be analysed.

Project objectives

The project aims to improve coordination and harmonisation of GMO monitoring data, with the establishment of a quick monitoring index (QMI) to rapidly assess the potential risk generated by a selected range of transgenic crops in well determined ecosystems or biotopes.

The index will take into account the level of risk posed by a range of transgenic crops, and their potential interactions. A GIS tool will be used to monitor and map the level of risk generated by transgenic plants in a given area. A model will be produced capable of monitoring risks from both actual and simulated transgenic crops.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000342
DEMETRA



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Public enterprise

Name of beneficiary

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Riccardo Russu

Duration of project:

36 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2012)

Total budget in euro:

1,822,590.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

897,834.00 (49.26%)

Conservation and Recovery of *Austropotamobius pallipes* in Italian Natura 2000 Sites

Project background

Austropotamobius pallipes is a species of crayfish mainly associated with fast-moving waters such as small mountain streams and the springs of large rivers. The species is intolerant of any kind of water pollution and it needs water temperatures below 25°C, with quite high concentrations of oxygen. For this reason it is considered a good biological indicator of the quality of water in the rivers and streams where it is found. The main threats to the species are: isolation of populations (this causes a bottleneck effect and increases the vulnerability of the populations); habitat degradation and water removal; the effects of climate change; the spread of invasive species (*Orconectes limosus* and *Procambarus clarkii*); and poaching and lack of knowledge of the species among local populations.

Project objectives

The project has the following objectives:

- To protect and increase the presence of *Austropotamobius pallipes* through the release of juvenile and mature crayfish in 47 Natura 2000 sites in the regions of Lombardia and Abruzzo, the Chieti and Isernia provinces, and the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park;
- The establishment of biogenetic reserves to ensure the survival of the species against threats such as species isolation and river flow reduction;
- The development of an agreed regulation at regional and local level for the conservation of the species, coherent with the aims of the Habitats Directive;
- Species conservation training;
- To create awareness of the importance of biodiversity and its protection among local stakeholders and communities.

Expected results:

- Creation of a permanent national team for the conservation and management of native freshwater crayfish;
- Assessment of the actual distribution of the species on at least 47 SCIs;
- Estimation of the consistency, state of health and genetics of the resident native populations and newly obtained native populations;
- Estimation of the presence and distribution of exotic species;
- Assessment of the condition of potential introduction/reintroduction sites;

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000352

CRAINat



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

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Name of contact person

Giancarlo Moca

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

3,086,259.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,538,191.00 (49.84%)

- An increase in the spread of autochthonous crayfish in the Natura 2000 sites concerned and subsequent improvement of the quality of running water;
- Creation/adjustment of new reproductive plants and an increase in know-how about crayfish aquaculture;
- Establishment of high tech systems linked to one workstation for the surveillance and management of reproductive plans, thereby reducing the numbers of site visits and reducing related CO₂ emissions;
- Creation of at least three source areas for the spread of the species;
- Production of 23 200 juvenile native crayfish specimens;
- Updating and processing of an action plan for the management of the species, adopted by all local authorities involved in the project (two regions, two provinces, one national park); and
- Dissemination of results to stakeholders and local communities.

Montecristo 2010: eradication of invasive plant and animal aliens and conservation of species/habitats in the Tuscan Archipelago, Italy

Project background

Habitats on Montecristo island are seriously threatened by the invasive alien tree species *Ailanthus altissima*. Another threat to indigenous species comes from the significant impact of rats on the nests and eggs of Puffinus yelkouan and other sea birds. Control measures to eradicate these two alien species are now deemed necessary. Yet these measures must not negatively impact a third exotic species, closely related to the wild goat (*Capra aegagrus*), which was introduced in pre-Roman times. In Pianosa, there is a threat to the matorral with *Juniperus* spp. caused by the spreading of umbrella pine (*Pinus halepensis*), while dune and vegetated sea cliffs of the Mediterranean coasts with endemic *Limonium* spp. are threatened by the invasive species *Carpobrotus sp.pl.*, *Acacia pycnantha* and *Ailanthus altissima*.

Project objectives

The project aims to eradicate two of the three invasive alien species that are currently impacting local biodiversity on Montecristo island - *Rattus rattus* and *Ailanthus altissima* – and to reduce the impact of the goat species without losing its local presence in the wild or subjecting it to possible effects of rat poisoning.

On Pianosa, also a protected island, although less secluded from human activities, the problem of alien plant species will be addressed. The project aims to eradicate three alien plants (*Carpobrotus sp.*, *Ailanthus altissima* and *Acacia pycnantha*) that still have a relatively limited distribution. A fourth species (*Pinus halepensis*) that has spread from plantations and is slowly invading a habitat listed in Annex I of Habitats Directive, will be controlled on a 10 ha plot.

Expected results:

- Rat eradication on Montecristo to be achieved within the project period;
- Improved breeding success of 3-10% of the global population of Puffinus yelkouan (from the first breeding season after rat removal);
- Improvement of 200-250 ha of natural habitats and vegetation as a result of Ailanthus removal;
- Goats to be managed and enclosed in an area of 20-30 ha, concomitant with an improvement in the conservation status of large mosaic formations of habitats *3170 and *6220;

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000353

Montecristo 2010



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

National authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Stefano Vagniluca

Duration of project:

54 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,584,856.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

792,428.00 (50.00%)

- More invertebrates, amphibians (*Discoglossus sardus*), reptiles (*Euleptes europaea*) and terrestrial birds (*Caprimulgus europaeus*) within one year of the project actions being concluded;
- Visibly improved foraging conditions for migrants during stopovers within two years of the project actions being concluded;
- Start of a policy of steadily improving the natural vegetation of Montecristo;
- On Pianosa, the project expects to eradicate *Carpobrotus sp.*, *Ailanthus altissima* and *Acacia pycnantha* and protect 10 ha of *Juniperus*-dominated habitat (5210), and 1 ha each of sandy habitat (2110) and coastal rocky habitat (1240) at locally important spots.

Conservation actions, habitat and species improvement, and preservation of SIC Colli Berici nature reserve

Project background

The Berici Hills are situated on the Venetian plains, an area that has been extensively altered by human activity. Some 16-18% of the area lies in the Veneto Region, with 28-30% of this located inside urban townships. The Berici Hills are recognised as an important "oasis" for the preservation of habitats and animal and plant species.

Project objectives

The aim of this project is the conservation and preservation of both habitats and species living inside the SCI "Colli Berici".

Specific objectives include:

- Conservation and protection of semi-natural dry grassland and scrubland found on calcareous substrates, which are threatened by scrub invasion and by the conversion of this habitat into agricultural land;
- Conservation and protection of bat species and caves from anthropogenic disturbance;
- Wetland restoration or creation to help the presence of amphibious and reptile species protected at the community level, such as *Bombina variegata*, *Triturus carnifex*, *Rana latastei*, *Emys orbicularis* and other species;
- Preservation of *Austropotamobius pallipes* from *Procambarus clarkii* invasion and improvement of the species's habitat;
- Conservation of calcareous rocky slopes with chasmodiphytic vegetation and rocky calcareous or basophil grasslands of the Alysso-Sedion albi from degradation caused by rock climbing;
- Conservation of the priority for conservation lime tree ravine forests habitat from invasion of exotic species such as *Robinia pseudoacacia* and *Ailanthus altissima*.

Expected results:

- Creation of a spatial database and GIS;
- Restoration of 25 ha of dry grasslands (habitat *6210);
- Increase in biodiversity and its evaluation through the monitoring of *Syrph Diptera* (insect biodiversity indices) as well as the creation of an index on avian species such as *Lanius collurio*, *Caprimulgus europaeus* and *Emberiza hortulana*;

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000362
COLLI BERICI NATURA 2000



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

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Name of contact person

Riccardo d'Amato

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,530,298.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

765,149.00 (50.00%)

- Grazing on at least 10 ha of dry grasslands;
- Protection of three of the most important caves through gates or grates conserving habitat 8310 and the chiropterans *Miniopterus schreibersii*, *Myotis myotis*, *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, *Myotis blythii* and *Myotis emarginatus* that live inside the caves;
- Improvement of 15 ha of woodlands belonging to habitat 9180* (Tilio-Acerion sloping forests, screes and ravines);
- Creation of four botanical micro-sanctuaries, which could provide the nucleus of a wider network;
- Improvement of *Austropotamobius pallipes* habitat in at least eight sites within the SCI;
- Restoration of 10 ponds and improvement of about 2 000m of surface water bodies;
- Production of 35 000 seedlings of *Saxifraga berica*, *Himantoglossum adriaticum* and other species belonging to habitat 6210* and the protection of humid environments;
- Creation of habitat 3150 in a former opencast mine.

Gypsum: protection and management of the habitats linked to the chalky formations of the Emilia-Romagna region

Project background

The importance of the Emilia Romagna region in terms of biodiversity is well known.

The area includes evaporites, a sedimentary rock formed by the precipitation of salts, and the chalky outcrops on the hills that run from Reggio Emilia to Ravenna are among the largest in Europe. The project actions will be carried out in all six of the region's Natura 2000 network sites that include the habitat type 'caves that are not open to the public'. Some 10% of Europe's Natura 2000 sites that contain this particular subtype of habitat will be affected by the project.

Project objectives

The main objective of the project is the protection of the habitat caves in the specific context of gypsum karst ecosystems. The other natural habitats connected with this karst landscape listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive to be addressed by the project are: 8210, 6110* and 7210*. Among the species linked with these habitats, the project aims to monitor and protect the troglomorphic chiropteran population.

Expected results:

- Closing of 15 natural and four artificial caves and the protection of more than 10 km of habitat 8310;
- Protection and conservation of all bat species (20) present in the Natura 2000 sites;
- Increased protection resulting from land purchase (28.5 ha) of more than 15 km of caves;
- Requalification of 27 caves of more than 20 km long;
- Long-term management of all the habitats of EU interest associated with the chalky formations, including some 700 caves not open to the public;
- Restoration of 3 000 m² of *7210 Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*;
- Increase in the area of buffer zone by 1 ha to reduce nutrient flows into the caves;
- Restoration of 360 m² of the habitats *6110 and 8210 through selective cutting of infesting vegetation;
- Reduction of trampling through direct protection of the habitat 6110 **Rupicolous calcareous* or basophilic grasslands of the *Alyso-Sedion albi*;

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000369

GYPNUM



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Park-Reserve authority

Name of beneficiary

Consorzio di Gestione del Parco Regionale dei Gessi Bolognesi e Calanchi dell'Abbadessa

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David Bianco

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,962,983.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

981,491.00 (50.00%)

- An increased number of roosting sites for bats;
- Increased knowledge of the 8310, 8210, *6110 and *7210 habitats and the bat species present at the sites;
- Exchange of best practices and experiences with other projects;
- Involvement of speleologists in managing the karst caves; and
- Increased awareness among stakeholders, tourists and local schools.

Restoration of beech and silver fir forests in the Tuscan Marches Apennines

Project background

In the Italian Apennines (Mediterranean area), climate change is causing particularly extreme, sudden and intense phenomena, suggesting a likely alteration in precipitation rates in the future, with atmospheric humidity reductions and a decrease in annual and summer rainfall. This could cause selective pressure – leading to genetic erosion in a very short timeframe - on the most sensitive ecosystems and species located at high altitudes, such as beech and silver fir forests (Apennine beech forests with *Taxus* and *Ilex*, and Apennine beech forests with *Abies alba* and beech forests with *Abies nebrodensis*), which are often isolated and have limited critical mass. These species have reproduction mechanisms and dynamics of genetic structure that will not enable them to react promptly to this fast phenomenon, leading to a high risk of losing or compromising the existence of key elements of forest diversity in these areas.

Project objectives

The general objective of the project is to safeguard mountain habitats with beech-silver fir Apennine forest and beech-yew forest, through restoration of the forest ecosystems by low impact techniques, focusing on sites where temperature increases and rainfall reduction problems are not foreseen in the short run.

Specific objectives include:

- Halting the loss of area of beech-silver fir Apennine forests because of genetic segregation of *Abies alba* relict populations, and recent climate change, which puts the species at risk of extinction;
- Consolidating in original locations beech-yew forest habitats that are strictly linked to beech-silver fir Apennine forest habitat;
- Consolidating animal populations (*Salamandrina terdigitata*, *Bombina variegata*) living in these habitats, favouring the preservation of ecological niche and reproductive sites.

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000371
RESILFOR



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

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Piergiuseppe Montini

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,300,000.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

626,100.00 (48.16%)

Urgent Protection Actions For Amphibians and Reptiles in the Matera Gravina

Project background

The most favourable habitats for amphibian and reptile species in the Gravina area have been modified over the time by human activities such as: the restoration of wetland areas for conversion to agricultural land; the felling of plains woods, also to clear land for agriculture; the pollution of surface and groundwater through the use of biocides in agriculture; the elimination from the agricultural landscape of the once common marginal vegetation strips along watercourses; the isolation of amphibian and reptile populations, which has caused inbreeding; the modification of water management measures, which alternately causes drought and floods, with heavy consequences on the water pools that host amphibian and reptile species. Furthermore, the lack of adequate knowledge of the target species is also considered to be a threat.

Project objectives

The aim of the project is to guarantee the survival and achieve an increase in the population of some species of amphibians and reptiles in the Gravina di Matera Natura 2000 site.

The project actions will be carried out in one of the most important Italian sites for the following species: *Elaphe situla*, *Triturus carnifex*, *Triturus vulgaris* and *Bombina pachypus*.

The site is also important at the European level because the above-mentioned species populations are found mainly in southern Italy. At the regional level (i.e. in Apulia and Basilicata regions), the site is a strategic area for the conservation of *Elaphe quatuorlineata*.

Expected results:

- Restoration of 21 ha of habitat 92 A0;
- Restoration of 2 ha of small wetlands;
- Restoration of two water bodies;
- Creation of 8 km hedgerows;
- Creation of 2 km of drystone wall;
- Planting of 100 000 local tree species (*Populus alba*, *Salix alba*, *Ulmus minor*, *Pyrus amygdaliformis*) to be used for forestry actions foreseen by the project;

LIFE08 NAT/IT/000372
ARUPA



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Enrico De Capua

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 01/01/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,667,000.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

831,999.00 (49.91%)

- An increase in the population of the following amphibian and reptile species with the release (from the breeding centre) of: 2 000 *Bombina pachypus* tadpoles; 5 000 *Hyla intermedia* tadpoles; 1 500 *Triturus carnifex* tadpoles; 1 500 *Triturus vulgaris* tadpoles; and 200 specimens of *Testudo hermanni*.

Restoration of Raised Bog Habitats in the Especially Protected Nature Areas of Latvia

Project background

Active raised bogs are one of Europe's rarest and most threatened habitats and thus are classified as priority for conservation in Annex I of the Habitats Directive, along with the associated bog woodland habitat.

Raised bogs are an important habitat in terms of conservation of many bird species. Raised bogs occur throughout Latvia. However, in recent decades they have been negatively influenced by various human activities. Drainage, peat extraction, forest planting and land reclamation have all contributed to the drying of bogs and the disappearance of birds.

Efforts to benefit the priority active raised bog and bog woodland should also favour other habitats of EU importance that are an integral part of the raised bog ecosystem: degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration; transition mires and quaking bogs (7140); depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*; and natural dystrophic lakes and ponds.

Project objectives

The project's principal aim is to restore and secure the most favourable conservation status for the priority active raised bog habitat (7110*) of the Habitats Directive and raised bog bird species of the Birds Directive.

The project will elaborate management plans and regulatory documents for each of four protected nature areas of raised bog habitat, covering 4 843 ha, of which 290 ha are degraded areas in critical need of restoration. The plans should be developed with local stakeholder groups and approved by the Ministry of the Environment.

It will implement practical work to restore the target habitat. Drainage ditches will be blocked to raise the water level. This should establish the conditions that will allow typical raised-bog species and habitats to regenerate. Sphagnum species should begin to dominate in the wetter areas and active peat formation should be restored.

The team will monitor the effects of the management actions on raised bog habitats, bird species and raised

LIFE08 NAT/LV/000449

Raised bogs



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

Name of beneficiary

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Mara Pakalne

Duration of project:

43 months (01/02/2010 – 31/08/2013)

Total budget in euro:

726,714.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

545,035.00 (75.00%)

bog hydrology to ensure successful habitat restoration. The actions should benefit eight habitats of the EU Habitats Directive - of which four are priority habitats - 22 species of the Birds Directive and six species of the Habitats Directive.

Finally, the project will raise awareness of raised-bog conservation by involving local society and stakeholders in the management activities. It will share best practice on bog restoration at national and international levels.

Propagation and development of dry, moist and wet heath in the Dwingelderveld SPA and pSCI

Project background

Dwingelderveld is a nature reserve in the north-eastern Dutch province of Drenthe. It is part of the Natura 2000 network, and is the largest remaining continuous wet heathland in western Europe. In 1991, the Dwingelderveld was proclaimed a National Park by the Dutch government. The park covers some 3 800 ha and is protected under both the EU Birds and Habitats Directives. The area contains expansive areas of moist heath, fen-bogs, acid fens, active raised bogs, dry heath, drift sands and juniper shrubs. The various habitats are also important for birds, including: woodlarks, Bewick's swan, black woodpeckers, little grebe, black-necked grebe, whinchat, common stonechat, shovelers, wheatears and teal. The area is also important for the northern crested newt. A former agricultural enclave, Noordenveld is located at the heart of the National Park. Here, the groundwater levels are kept artificially low for the benefit of agriculture by a system of drainage channels and ditches. This results in dehydration and acidification of the heathland. In addition, the Noordenveld topsoil is very rich in phosphates as a result of fertilisation for agricultural purposes. Dehydration, acidification and eutrophication are serious threats to the many vulnerable habitat types within the park area.

Project objectives

The aim of this project is to restore the natural water balance over 1 100 ha of Dwingelderveld, and to transform the Noordenveld. The project will undertake actions including combating dehydration, eutrophication and acidification; enlarging the area of moist heath within the Natura 2000 area; improving the quality of acid fens, active and recovering raised bogs, depression vegetation, and species-rich grasslands; and reducing disruption to the animals and birds characteristic of the area.

Expected results:

- The 'Noordenveld' enclave will be transformed into heathland, resulting in the extension of the area covered by the following habitats: dry heath (103 ha), moist heath (107 ha), depression vegetation (6 ha), acid fens (20 ha) and species-rich grasslands (5 ha);
- Wetting of the area is expected to increase the area of moist heath outside the Noordenveld (to 160 ha), the area of acid fens (to 34 ha) and the area of de-

LIFE08 NAT/NL/000192
"Healthy Heath"



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Peter Pasman

Duration of project:

72 months (01/01/2010 – 01/01/2016)

Total budget in euro:

7,885,287.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

3,942,643.00 (50.00%)

pression vegetation (to 8 ha). This will partially be at the expense of the dry heath;

- An acoustic fence will be installed along the nearby A28 motorway, creating a suitable nesting and resting biotope of some 135 ha.

Improvement of hydrological conditions in peat bog area

Fochteloërveen

Project background

The Fochteloërveen nature reserve is a peat bog on the border of the Drenthe and Friesland provinces. The quality of the bog has suffered seriously in recent decades, although a previous LIFE project, "Restoration programme of the Fochteloërveen raised bog" (1999-2003) improved its hydrological conditions.

East of the area restored by the earlier LIFE project, two intensively-cultivated grassland areas are situated: Kolonievaart (46 ha) and Stallaan (63 ha). In between these areas, there is heath land, forest, open water and former peat bogs – the so-called Norger Petgaten (55 ha) and the Esmeer (206 ha). These are characterised by a strongly-modified hydrological regime, negatively affecting the quality and extent of the bog habitats. Eutrophication is also a problem for the area.

Project objectives

The project's goals are to increase the size and quality of several Natura 2000 habitats, as follows: The Kolonievaart area will be rewetted in combination with the removal of the top soil. Water from the Fochteloërveen will be transported through the Kolonievaart to the brook valley of the Slokkert rivulet, improving the water quality in the brook valley. In the Norger Petgaten and Esmeer areas the water level will be raised. Ditches will be removed and barrages will be installed. Trees will be removed to reduce evaporation. The water levels in the Stallaan area will become much higher. The present ditches will be removed and dams with barrages will be installed, securing higher water levels.

A relatively nutrient rich wetland will develop in this area, which will hopefully become a habitat for rare wetland birds. The project measures will enhance water levels in the nearby Kolonieveld, which is situated on the fringe of the previous LIFE project area. Its water levels are, despite the measures taken in the first project, still too low in summer, because the Stallaan area, which is situated at a lower level, takes water from the Kolonieveld.

Long-term benefits of the measures (over a period of 15-50 years) will include an increase in the area and quality of active raised bogs, degraded raised bogs still

LIFE08 NAT/NL/000193
The Dutch Crane Resort



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

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Name of contact person

Fen Van Rossum

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,904,708.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,010,894.00 (34.80%)

capable of natural regeneration, and Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*. The project will also reduce human noise and interference in the total area, offering more possibilities for breeding, feeding and resting for rare birds. In addition, the construction of a viewing platform will enhance the appreciation of the area by visitors.

Restoring populations of Lesser Spotted Eagle at chosen areas of Natura 2000

Project background

The lesser spotted eagle (*Aquila pomarina*) is a species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive and it is also classified by BirdLife International as a species with unfavourable conservation status in Europe. Detailed surveys of the species have demonstrated its alarming decline in many European countries, especially at the western and southern boundaries of its range. This decline in population numbers throughout Europe appears to be largely caused by intensification of farm management practices and/or abandonment of land, crop monocultures, unsuitable mowing regimes, a general loss of landscape mosaics, large-scale drainage of riverside habitats, unsuitable natural regeneration and afforestation.

The project is located in two Natura 2000 sites in north-eastern Poland: Bialowieza forest (Puszcza Bialowieska) and Knyszynska forest (Puszcza Knyszynska).

Since the early 1990s (after the collapse of the state farm system), these unique landscapes, which are among the most valuable natural areas in Europe, have significantly deteriorated through loss of some habitats. These losses have been further exacerbated by low water levels in the Narewka river valley (one of the major river valleys in the Bialowieza forest) as a result of canalisation. This has led to oxbow lakes and interconnected canals drying out earlier in the year, thereby decreasing the availability of amphibian prey. Lesser spotted eagle productivity has consequently decreased from 52% to 29% in the area.

Project objectives

The project's general objective is to reverse the decline and enhance the breeding populations and range of the lesser spotted eagle in the Bialowieza and Knyszynska forests by 2015, by implementing direct conservation measures, such as restoration of water levels, removal of scrub, installation of artificial perches, and the reintroduction of grazing and the creation of small wetlands.

Specific objectives are to: (1) secure the long-term conservation of the species at national and regional level by the development of a national species action plan and a management programme for Knyszynska

LIFE08 NAT/PL/000510
LIFE AQUILA



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

4,544,890.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

3,408,667.00 (75.00%)

forest, and by engaging with organisations working with farmers; (2) to develop and promote on a landscape scale conservation models for sustainable land use for the lesser spotted eagle by 2015, by (a) determining the most favourable conditions and management for the species in target areas and, (b) developing and implementing landscape scale strategies for integrated, sustainable land use.

Other objectives are to raise awareness among local communities, especially farmers, children and tourists, by organising local events, establishing educational trails, media campaigns and seminars; and developing guidance and sharing knowledge with colleagues in Poland, Europe and elsewhere.

Securing the population of *Aquila clanga* in Poland: preparation of the National Action Plan and primary site conservation

Project background

The greater spotted eagle (*Aquila clanga*) is one of the rarest, still declining, globally threatened bird species. It is also one of the least known. The species is listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive.

The greater spotted eagle is found in Eastern Europe and Asia, with a very small world population, estimated at less than 3 000 breeding pairs, including some 800 pairs in Europe, some of which some may be mixed with the closely related lesser spotted eagle (*Aquila pomarina*).

In the past, the greater spotted eagle was widespread on fen mires and wet meadows neighbouring wet forests. Those habitats have disappeared from most of the species' former range in Europe because of drainage and disturbed water regimes, conversion of meadows into arable land, abandonment of traditional low intensity agriculture etc. Moreover cessation of cutting, grazing and burning of vegetation has led to overgrowth of eagle hunting sites by high reeds, willow bushes or succession forests of birch and alder. As a consequence, the greater spotted eagle has disappeared from the EU territory except for Poland and Estonia.

While Poland still accounts for around 35% of the EU population, there is really only one breeding area – the Biebrza valley in the north-eastern part of the country. Moreover, this population is also threatened.

Project objectives

The overall objective is to stabilise the population of greater spotted eagle in its last remaining breeding area in Poland both by improving and increasing eagle hunting and nesting habitat and by preparing a national action plan.

A partnership of two experienced NGOs and the Biebrza national park authority will help to effectively manage, monitor and implement the project activities in the project area - the Biebrza national park (SPA) and buffer zone.

Specific objectives will include: improvement and enlargement of *Aquila clanga* hunting habitats; protec-

LIFE08 NAT/PL/000511
AQC Plan



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

42 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2013)

Total budget in euro:

2,209,411.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,649,104.00 (74.64%)

tion of eagle nesting sites – mature, wet forests; raising awareness among authorities, key stakeholders and the local public of the conservation needs of the species; and identifying replicable mechanisms for ensuring the long-term sustainable management of the species in Poland.

The project's focus areas for active habitat management are located mainly in the breeding and hunting sites for the eagles in the Biebrza valley in the national park. However, some of the activities may be carried out in, and will have an effect on, the park's buffer zone, covering a total area of more than 66 000 hectares.

Conservation and restoration of xerothermic grasslands in Poland - theory and practice

Project background

The vast majority of the semi-natural dry grasslands (*Festuco brometalia*) that occur in Poland – listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive – are conserved, thanks to extensive agriculture – for the most part, grazing, mowing or burning. As in other areas of Europe, economic development over the past few decades has made this type of land use unprofitable. This has resulted in a decline in extensive grazing and forestation, and a change of use to arable lands, giving rise to problems such as eutrophication of the grasslands and interference from alien species linked to negative changes in abiotic (soil, climate, type of land) conditions.

The main problem is the invasion of alien species and natural succession. These two processes are increasing in intensity each year, and now the majority of the dry grasslands are overgrown with shrubs, covering almost 70% of their surface area.

Project objectives

The project objective is to improve the habitat conditions and restrict the succession of undesirable species on selected areas of dry grasslands by active conservation. Specific project objectives include: the reintroduction of traditional agriculture (mainly extensive grazing) on parts of the targeted habitat, which ensure their lasting and effective conservation; enhancing biodiversity on the project sites by forming a dynamic mosaic of habitats; and creating a knowledge base for the complete and complex conservation of these dry grasslands in Poland.

The project will also carry out extensive conservation actions to save associated species, e.g., the extremely endangered populations of the rare plant species, viper's bugloss (*Echium russicum*) (Annex II of the Habitat Directive) and *Stipa borysthenica*. (Note, it is estimated that without active conservation these species will become extinct in Poland within the next few years.)

The project plans to conserve eight Natura 2000 sites, five habitats listed in Annex I of the Habitat Directive (including three priority habitats) and nine species listed in Annex II of this directive. The project actions will be carried out in four nature reserves and 12 protected areas. The eight Natura 2000 sites selected for the project

LIFE08 NAT/PL/000513
XericGrasslandsPL



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,284,314.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

642,157.00 (50.00%)

are the most valuable Polish areas for semi-natural dry grasslands. They are located in two regions: Lublin and Lower Odra & Warta. Currently the dry grasslands, in both regions, are mainly small isolated patches (usually only a few hectares) located in the most extreme habitats in the landscape – steep slopes of river valleys and moraine hills, or limestone outcrops.

Over four years, various methods of active conservation for the dry grasslands will be tested and refined in specific conditions: “mobile pasturage”, creation of surrogate habitats for dry grasslands in man-made areas (creating grasslands from scratch), rehabilitation of the highly transformed patches (including the transplantation of patches of well-preserved grasslands, sowing seeds, tearing off the top layer of the soil etc.).

At the same time, the project will help to preserve and encourage local pasturing traditions and will spread awareness locally of the need to conserve these important grasslands.

Enhancing Habitat for the Iberian Lynx and Black Vulture in the Southeast of Portugal

Project background

Habitat loss - particularly of those habitats crucial for feeding and reproduction - is now one of the greatest threats to most at-risk species. One of the consequences of the loss and deterioration of the Mediterranean scrubland habitat in south-east Portugal is the lack of adequate and undisturbed areas for both Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*) and black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*). It is therefore of the utmost importance to implement actions that aim to promote the conditions needed by these critically endangered species. Actions should encourage and facilitate short-term settlement, the establishment of new breeding populations and extensions of range. This should help increase numbers and reduce the risk of extinction. The regions of Moura/Barrancos, Vale do Guadiana and Caldeirão - all Natura 2000 sites - have enormous potential in terms of the necessary conditions for the presence of the Iberian lynx and black vulture in Portugal. However, several threats to these species are still very much in evidence in these areas. These include habitat loss, scarcity of prey, lack of suitable conditions for reproduction, human disturbance and disease.

Project objectives

The main goal of this project is to enhance the suitable habitat for the establishment of resident and breeding populations of Iberian lynx and black vulture in south-east Portugal, in this way improving their conservation status. An early action of the project will be a habitat and prey survey, providing GIS-mapped cartography that will inform and focus efforts to conserve the target habitats and species. The project will identify priority zones of Mediterranean scrubland habitat for conservation and negotiate management agreements with landowners, managers and olive producers. Compensation payments will be agreed for leaving some areas unharvested and maintenance actions implemented in sensitive zones. This will help create targeted ecological corridors over at least 60 ha.

Specific actions will introduce both feeding stations and artificial dens/nests for the two target species and favour wild rabbit populations as a key prey. Health checks will be made, particularly to ensure that food does not carry infectious diseases or high concentrations of antibiotics. These activities will hope to favour

LIFE08 NAT/P/000227
Habitat Lince Abutre



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Nuno Pedroso

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

2,640,556.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,980,417.00 (75.00%)

the natural re-colonisation of areas. As well as a specific poison mitigation plan, the project will elaborate an action plan for the conservation of the black vulture on the project sites and develop links between the project and the action plan for the conservation of the Iberian lynx in Portugal. To further promote their long-term conservation, it will work to increase acceptance of both target species by local populations and stakeholders.

Best practices and demonstrative actions for conservation of *Ursus arctos* specie in Eastern Carpathians Romania

Project background

The Romanian brown bear (*Ursus arctos arctos*) population consists of around 6500-7000 individuals, representing more than 40% of the European total. The mountainous counties of Vrancea, Covasna and Harghita were home to some 2300 specimens at the end of 2008. However, this figure is decreasing as a result of extensive poaching, livestock grazing and the conversion of land for crops. Human disturbance of hibernation sites also has a critical effect on the health of young bears and on reproduction.

Juvenile mortality, conflicts with local inhabitants, infrastructure development and an overall degradation of the conservation status of the species further contributes to the decline in the brown bear population. Additionally, the extension and renovation of the road network in the area targeted by the project has fragmented brown bear habitats and increased direct killings because of the traffic. Efforts to overcome these problems are not helped by the fact that knowledge of the species is still limited, mainly because monitoring is largely based on traditional methods of observation.

Project objectives

The project aims to maintain the current conservation status of the species in several Natura 2000 sites by applying best practices and demonstrative activities and promoting them at national and European level. Preventing the decline of the brown bear population in the area is a key objective.

Overall, the project aims to promote a friendly cohabitation between bears and humans based on gathering more information on the bears' hibernation and feeding habits. It will also seek to actively protect hibernation dens from highly disturbing human activities such as logging. Measures will include banning human activities at critical periods, extending the Animal Rescue Mobile Unit team's activity, as well as increasing the capacity of the Bear Cub Rehabilitation Center. The project will set up several demonstration systems for the protection of farms using equipment and substances that repel bears and will also introduce a new "bear friendly" eco-label.

LIFE08 NAT/RO/000500
URSUSLIFE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

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Silviu Chriac

Duration of project:

47 months (15/01/2010 – 20/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

515,066.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

386,300.00 (75.00%)

Conservation of *Aquila pomarina* in Romania

Project background

The lesser spotted eagle (*Aquila pomarina*) is a raptor species with a breeding range restricted mostly to central, eastern and south-eastern Europe. It has suffered a major decline in many countries and Romania is now one of its most important strongholds. The Romanian *Aquila pomarina* population is estimated at 2000 pairs, representing 22.2% of the total EU population. The project area includes a number of SPAs that hold 26.6% of the Romanian population (532 pairs), which represents 5.9% of the EU and 2.66% of the global population. In Romania, the main threat to the survival of the lesser spotted eagle is habitat loss caused by aggressive forestry practices in nesting or breeding areas. However, other human activities (hunting, infrastructure development, etc) and overhead power lines also present an important threat. Forestry activities are often undertaken during the breeding season causing breeding failure. These practices put enormous pressure on the breeding habitat, resulting in significant modification or even loss of the habitat. Instability of the nests built in suboptimal habitats and consequent breeding failure results in increased mortality rates and a shrinking of the distribution range.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for the Romanian population of *Aquila pomarina*. This goal will be achieved through stabilising the existing population and ensuring conditions to maintain a favourable conservation status in the long term. Management measures at national level will be implemented in key Natura 2000 sites and a long-term commitment to continue such measures will become effective through the National Action Plan and the Lesser Spotted Eagle Friendly Habitat Management Guidelines.

A buffer zone system will be developed and implemented in co-operation with forest owners and/or managers to protect the nesting areas, leading eventually to the long-term stabilisation of currently threatened nests. Artificial nests in sensitive areas in key sites will also be built where necessary. Nests will also be protected against disturbance and direct persecution by setting barriers on forest roads in key areas and diverting tourist paths. Hunters and gamekeepers will be informed about the conservation values of the spe-

LIFE08 NAT/RO/000501
CAPR



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,884,138.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,413,104.00 (75%)

cies. All power lines will be checked in the key SPAs and the most dangerous 1500 pylons will be isolated, thus reducing mortalities caused by electrocution by 90%.

Securing favorable conservation status for priority habitats from SCI Calimani-Gurghiu

Project background

The Calimani and Gurghiu mountains have volcanic origins and with steep slopes and a diverse relief constitute a unique landscape. Their morphology and bio-climatic characteristics give rise to a biodiversity of high ecological value. More than 80% of the entire surface is covered by forest habitats and the site hosts 19 habitats of Community interest, eight mammal species, three amphibian and reptile species, six fish species, six invertebrate species and seven plant species listed in the Habitats Directive. It is also home to 22 bird species listed in the Birds Directive.

The degradation and loss of natural habitats of high ecological value – in particular, semi-natural grassland formations, forest habitats and temperate heaths – has increased over the past century. Nardus grasslands in this site are semi-natural habitats and are preserved by regular agricultural activities such as traditional grazing and mowing. However, the maintenance of grasslands has been modified or even disappeared, leading to the invasion of tall herbs and the establishment of trees and shrubs on grassland areas. Forests are subject to increased and unsustainable logging practices, being in many cases the most significant income source of the local population. Temperate heaths (almost 3500 ha covered by bushes with *Pinus mugo* and *Rhododendron hirsutum*), once naturally protected by difficult access, have now been almost completely destroyed by large-scale and intensive collection of medicinal plants.

Project objectives

The project aims to restore the bushes of *Pinus mugo* and *Rhododendron myrtifolium*, the alluvial forests of *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior*, and Nardus grasslands situated in the Calimani-Gurghiu mountain area in central Romania.

Restoration of alluvial forest will start by removing the invasive *Robinia pseudoacacia* species from the site followed by planting of the native species *Alnus incana*. The restoration of the Nardus grasslands will start by stripping the tall herbs (*Veratrum album*), followed by traditional sheep grazing. In order to avoid selective grazing, shepherds will promote the spread of Nardus. To promote the restoration of *Pinus mugo*

LIFE08 NAT/RO/000502
SFC Calimani-Gurghiu



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

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Calin Cengher

Duration of project:

36 months (05/01/2010 – 30/12/2012)

Total budget in euro:

941,620.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

705,744.00 (74.95%)

and *Rhododendron myrtifolium* a whole area will be planted with seeds of these species.

Expected results:

- Recovery of 30 ha of bushes with *Pinus mugo* and *Rhododendron hirsutum* habitat;
- Rehabilitation of 198 ha containing species-rich Nardus grasslands, situated in a high subalpine area of the Calimani mountain;
- Restoration of 111.66 ha of species-rich Nardus grasslands situated in the subalpine area of pSCI Calimani-Gurghiu;
- Restoration of 10.56 ha of alluvial forest with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Pandion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*).

Bat conservation in Padurea Craiului, Bihor and Trascau Mountains

Project background

Bats have complex and specialised habitat requirements, meaning that they use a variety of habitats spread over a large area. Some species can fly 20-40 km every night. Bats are most vulnerable during hibernation and when maternity colonies form, and over time, disturbance leads to population decline. A significant number of caves in the project implementation area are frequently or occasionally visited by tourists, sometimes without any kind of control, which disturbs the bat colonies. Other main threats include the negative attitude among the general public arising from misconceptions about bats, and the absence of comprehensive management plans.

Project objectives

The caves of the Pădurea Craiului, Bihor and Trascău mountains situated in north-western Romania are home to some important bat populations. This project targets seven of these species (listed in the Habitats Directive): greater mouse-eared bat (*Myotis myotis*), lesser mouse-eared bat (*Myotis oxygnathus*), greater horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), lesser horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*), Schreiber's bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii*), barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) and Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*).

The project aims to support long-term conservation and monitoring of bat populations by increasing public awareness and creating an expert network. As a basis for achieving these objectives, data will be gathered on all aspects of bat activity: roost sites used at different times of the year, foraging habitats, connectivity structures used during flights between shelters and feeding areas, and migration routes. The knowledge acquired will be used to compile management plans for the targeted bat species which will subsequently be disseminated to other Natura 2000 sites and protected areas.

A wide range of other measures are foreseen, including the closing of some caves to the public, limiting the number of visitors allowed to others, creating alternative tourism routes in the caves and installing proper lighting. Artificial bat boxes will be installed for forest dwelling bat species, and underground shelters will be cleared of hazardous waste and marked with

LIFE08 NAT/RO/000504
Bat-Conservation-RO



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

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Calin-Florin Mocan

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,286,575.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

643,288.00 (50.00%)

warning signs to reduce human disturbance. Particular attention will be given to public awareness initiatives and education activities, including with children.

Conservation of root vole **Microtus oeconomus mehelyi*

Project background

Mehely's subspecies of root vole, *Microtus oeconomus mehelyi*, is found only in western (especially north-western) Hungary, eastern Austria and south-western Slovakia, occupying habitats formed by sediments of freshwater marshes, swamps, floodplains or water-sides with dense vegetation. The current status of the Hungarian Mehely's root vole populations is poorly understood. In some areas it is a dominant species in small mammal communities, while in other areas it occurs in low number and only sporadically. Although the subspecies has been protected both in Slovakia, Austria and Hungary, habitat loss and fragmentation still remain a major threat. The main issues are large-scale land reclamation and drainage schemes, the ploughing of lowland meadows, the draining of wetlands and the overall intensification of production patterns in agriculture and forestry. *Microtus oeconomus* is listed in Appendix III of the Bern Convention and in the IUCN Red List in the category "Least Concern" (2002), and Mehely's subspecies root vole is listed in the annex of the EU habitats directive as a priority species.

Project objectives

The objective of this project is to improve the unfavourable conservation status of the Mehely's root vole, *Microtus oeconomus mehelyi*. The project will develop a strategic basis for the successful recovery of this endangered species by restoring and improving habitats on selected sites. Other specific objectives of the project include:

- Restoration of 'bio-corridors' connecting important wetland areas;
- Land lease or purchase and introduction of appropriate habitat management;
- Restoration of wet meadows as root vole habitats and buffer zones between wetlands and arable land;
- Acquisition of relevant scientific data on the target species and its habitats;
- Raising awareness among key stakeholders and the general public.

LIFE08 NAT/SK/000239

Microtus



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

72 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2015)

Total budget in euro:

3,626,018.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

2,719,513.00 (75.00%)

Conservation and surveillance of conservation status of wolf (*Canis lupus*) population in Slovenia

Project background

The wolf (*Canis lupus*) is a large-carnivore species with a historically controversial relationship with humans. It is an important species, listed in conservation documents such as the EU Habitat Directive and the Bern Convention. The wolf is indigenous to the mosaic of natural and cultural landscapes of Slovenia. Forests, which represent a high quality habitat for wolves, are well preserved in Slovenia and create an excellent base for successful long-term conservation of the wolf. The main conservation challenge is to reconcile the spectrum of human activities, interests and fears with the needs of the wolf.

Project objectives

The aim of this project is to facilitate long-term conservation of wolves, their prey, and their habitats in Slovenia. It will in particular aim to take into account human attitudes towards the wolf in order to overcome any apparent conflicts through a Wolf Management Action Plan. The project will seek to provide accurate scientific information on the wolf through a specific national wolf-surveillance system. Different techniques, such as non-invasive genetic sampling and GPS-GSM telemetry, will be used to monitor a range of parameters, including: population size and reproductive success; habitat use and preying rate; health status; and the number and distribution of wolf packs and litters. Three surveillance sessions will be carried out during the project. All the information will be centralised into a publically accessible internet-based portal.

This scientific information will help to inform the drafting of a species conservation action plan, which will be prepared in consultation with a range of stakeholders through facilitated workshops. The prey base of wolves will be assessed along with the damage wolves do to agricultural concerns. Prey species management guidelines will be drawn up. Potential 'hot spots' for wolf-human conflict will be identified and best practices recommended to deal with these issues. Four actions to protect livestock will be demonstrated and a damage-inspection manual provided. The key activity of promoting the peaceful coexistence of wolves and human activities will be fostered through educational material, seminars and a targeted public awareness and education campaign. The project will also survey

LIFE08 NAT/SLO/000244

SloWolf



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,017,773.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

721,850.00 (70.92%)

attitudes of the general public, hunters and sheep farmers towards wolves and their knowledge of the species. This will help to both inform and evaluate the success of the project's educational activities.

Restoration of habitats of Community interest in the Basque Country's estuaries

Project background

Spain's Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve is under threat from the alien species *Baccharis halimifolia*. A programme of actions will be introduced to prevent the spread of this invasive bushy shrub species. These control measures combine herbicide use and clearing/felling. The outcome will allow more natural hydrological flows within the estuaries of Urdaibai and Txingudi. Additional work is also now required to help regenerate biosphere reserve habitats that have been cleared of *Baccharis halimifolia*.

Project objectives

The main project objective focuses on regenerating habitats of community interest in order to help facilitate improved nesting, sheltering and migration conditions for priority bird species. Other goals include contributing to co-ordinated actions tackling similar nature conservation issues in Europe's Atlantic coastal estuaries. These cover Natura 2000 sites in the Basque Country and also extend into Brittany.

Expected results include:

- Restoring 314 ha of estuary and marsh habitat;
- Eliminating *Baccharis halimifolia* from key areas in the Basque Country's estuaries, particularly in Natura 2000 sites;
- Establishing and sustaining an ongoing International Commission of stakeholders involved in the conservation of Europe's Atlantic coast estuaries; and
- Increasing awareness and knowledge about the vulnerability of estuary habitats to threats from invasive species.

LIFE08 NAT/E/000055
Estuarios del Pais Vasco



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

Gobierno Vasco
Departamento de Medio Ambiente y Ordenación
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Name of contact person

Marta Rozas Ormazabal

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,852,825.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

926,412.00 (50.00%)

Action to fight illegal poison use in the natural environment in Spain

Project background

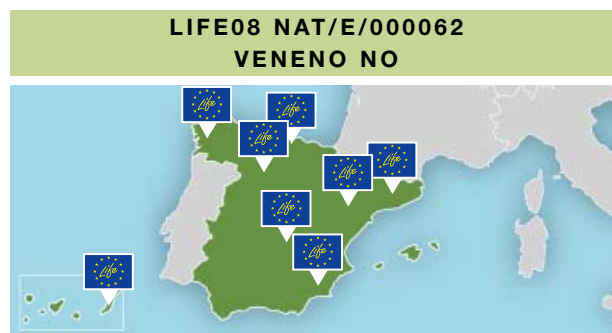
The 'Red Book' of Spanish Birds ('Libro Rojo de las Aves de España') highlights illegal use of poisons as a threat to endangered species protected by the Birds and Habitats Directives. Action is required to eliminate illegal use of poisons for predator control in Spain and so minimise such threats to the country's Red List species.

Project objectives

The main aim of the LIFE Nature VENENO NO project is to achieve a significant reduction in illegal poisoning incidents affecting protected species in Spain. Priority species targeted by the project include the Spanish imperial eagle, the Lammergeier vulture, the red kite and the Egyptian vulture (including the Canary Islands subspecies). All of these raptors are included in the annexes of the Birds and the Habitats Directives. Overall project goals aim to make important contributions to Spain's national strategy against the use of poisoned bait in the natural environment, approved by the National Commission for Nature Protection.

Expected results:

- Reduction in the illegal use of poisons for predator control, particularly in sites covered by Spain's SPA network;
- Approval of regional action plans and protocols to help authorities tackle illegal use of poisons for predator control;
- Introduction and maintenance of new specialised control patrols that will serve as a model for similar species protection initiatives;
- Increased public support for the prevention of illegal poison use in predator control; and
- Greater controls on the sale of licensed toxic products.



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Alejandro Sánchez

Duration of project:

51 months (01/01/2010 – 31/03/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,672,020.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

646,737.00 (38.68%)

Development and demonstration of eradication and control methods for an invasive species: *Carybdea marsupialis* (Cubozoa), Mediterranean

Project background

Spanish marine habitats have been adversely affected by increased populations of the predatory jellyfish *Carybdea marsupialis*. Expansion and mass proliferation of this species can offset the natural balance of biodiversity in marine ecosystems. The reasons behind unusual population growth patterns in *C. marsupialis* remain unknown, but these may follow a similar pattern of behaviour to other invasive species that can take advantage of environmental stresses caused by human activity.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to gain sufficient understanding about *C. marsupialis* blooms to help develop measures capable of mitigating against negative impacts from the jellyfish on Mediterranean marine ecosystems in Europe.

Expected results:

- Clarifying the cause of exponential growth in *C. marsupialis* populations;
- Confirming the consequences of *C. marsupialis* blooms on marine ecosystem integrity;
- Preparing and demonstrating techniques for detecting and quantifying *C. marsupialis* populations, as well as predicting trends in the species throughout Europe's Mediterranean coast;
- Restoring and/or improving a minimum of 120 ha of a marine habitat in the Denia coast area that has been invaded by *C. marsupialis*;
- Reducing the *C. marsupialis* population in the Denia beach areas by more than 70% compared with 2008 numbers;
- Raising awareness widely (among more than 2 million people via television) about the impacts on marine ecosystems of invasive species such as *C. marsupialis*;
- Creation of a complete database of *C. marsupialis* and other related marine invasive species in the European Mediterranean. This database will be accessible via the project web page; and
- Making the full project findings available to all European Mediterranean marine environment authorities and marine research centres, achieving dissemination to more than 70% of target authorities and research centres.

LIFE08 NAT/E/000064
CUBOMED



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

Name of beneficiary

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Cesar Bordehore Fontanet

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,683,195.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

813,498.00 (48.33%)

Conservation and management of special protection areas for steppe birds in Andalusia

Project background

Europe's steppe birds are currently one of the most endangered category of vertebrates, with up to 60% of species threatened to varying degrees. Spain's Andalusia region is home to the EU's richest diversity of steppe birds. However, according to the Red List of Threatened Vertebrates in Andalusia, 82% of non-passeriform steppe birds and 43% of passeriform birds in the region are endangered. This is a higher percentage of endangered species than for any ornithocenosis in a forest, water or mountain ecosystem.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to improve the conservation status of steppe birds in Andalusia. Priority species for the project's support include the great bustard, little bustard, Montagu's harrier, stone curlew, black-bellied sandgrouse, collared pratincole, European roller and little kestrel. Actions will target:

- The provision of food and shelter;
- Reduction of mortality risks;
- Increased awareness of conservation considerations; and
- The introduction of technology to improve/implement management plans for endangered species.

Expected results:

- The involvement of at least 120 private agricultural landowners in the conservation of steppe birds on the basis of 120 cooperation agreements;
- At least a 75% reduction in great bustard deaths caused by harvesting;
- A 75% reduction in deaths of Montagu's harrier caused by combine harvesters during the breeding season;
- A 90% reduction in the bird mortality rate from collisions with power lines, and a 60% reduction in bird deaths caused by collisions with livestock fences;
- An increase by three-to-five in the number of breeding colonies of lesser kestrel;
- Increased productivity of certain steppe-land bird species through the provision of food and elimination of threats;
- Improved public awareness about key conservation considerations for the target species;

LIFE08 NAT/E/000068
ZEPA ESTEPARIAS ANDALUCIA



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

Junta de Andalucía
Consejería de Medio Ambiente

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Name of contact person

Esperanza Perea Acosta

Duration of project:

47 months (01/02/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

8,636,466.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

4,722,420.00 (54.68%)

- Establishment of new rural development initiatives related to steppe-land birds; and
- The creation of a new nature tourism product.

Recovery of riparian habitats of the Ter river

Project background

Riparian habitats in Spain's Ter river catchment have been deteriorating both in number and quality. Losses have been attributed to changes in natural river dynamics following agricultural, industrial and/or urban developments along the riverbanks. Habitat degradation has been widespread and the problem is particularly acute in areas that were previously prone to natural flood cycles, or contained lagoons, ponds and mature alluvial forests.

Project objectives

The main focus for this project is the recovery of riparian habitats in the Ter river area, especially those classified as: alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* (Habitat 91E0*); *Salix alba* and *Populus alba* galleries (Habitat 92A0); and temporary Mediterranean ponds (Habitat 3170*). Works will cover habitat restoration actions supported by complementary measures to manage development pressures affecting the target sites.

Expected results:

- Restoration and recovery of at least 75 ha of riparian forests, including alluvial forests of *Alnus glutinosa*, *Salix alba* and *Populus alba* galleries;
- Recovery of at least two floodable areas with temporary Mediterranean ponds; and
- Facilitation of a general recovery of local fauna, including a wide range of species noted in the Birds and Habitat Directives.

LIFE08 NAT/E/000072

Riparia-Ter



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

Consortori Alba-Ter

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Name of contact person

Francesc Camps

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

929,100.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

464,550.00 (50.00%)

Management and conservation of **Osmoderma eremita*, **Rosalia alpina* and other saproxylic habitats of Community interest in Gipuzkoa

Project background

Pollarded trees provide a suitable habitat for saproxylic insects (i.e. ones that live within rotting wood). Spain's upland forest areas in Gipuzkoa host a diverse community of saproxylic insects, including species of Community interest that favour pollarded tree habitats. Only a small fraction of the Gipuzkoa forests are still managed in ways that help to sustain the availability of pollarded tree habitats and this poses a threat to associated biodiversity.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to support the conservation status of saproxylic coleopteran (beetle) populations in Gipuzkoa forests, particularly the priority species *Osmoderma eremita* and *Rosalia alpina*. This will be achieved by improving the availability and quality of habitats for saproxylic coleopteran populations in Gipuzkoa forests.

Expected results:

- Increased knowledge about the priority species *Osmoderma eremita* and *Rosalia alpina*;
- Greater availability of habitats for saproxylic coleopteran populations in Gipuzkoa forests, and improvement of connectivity among these habitats;
- Protection of 12 ha of forests containing pollarded trees, guaranteeing availability of habitats for saproxylic coleopteran (of Community interest);
- Improvement of habitat features on 150 ha of acidophilic beechwood (9120) in the Gipuzkoa pSCI forests;
- Increased knowledge about the biodiversity value and management requirements of pollarded trees in the project area;
- Public acquisition of Gipuzkoa Nature Network areas hosting target species and habitats;
- GIS mapping of priority habitats in the project area;
- Documenting and transfer of tree pollarding techniques to help sustain associated habitat features;
- Elaboration and implementation of a long-term management strategy for pollarded trees in the project area;
- Creation of a European network of forestry habitats with pollarded trees supporting saproxylic coleopteran species; and

LIFE08 NAT/E/000075
BIODIVERSIDAD Y TRASMOCHOS



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Dirección General de Montes y Medio Natural del
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Name of contact person

Valentín Mugarza Martínez

Duration of project:

36 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2012)

Total budget in euro:

3,051,817.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,525,909.00 (50.00%)

- Cataloguing of invertebrate species and preparation of management plans for these species in the Basque Country.

Decantation circuit of residual salts and ecological recovery of the Natural Park of Las Lagunas de la Mata and Torrevieja

Project background

The production of salt from Spain's Torrevieja and La Mata lakes has maintained a stable water sheet in these areas for centuries. The associated and distinct wetland habitat is protected under Ramsar, Natura 2000 and National Park designations but threats to this important habitat arise from the gradual silting process that occurs. Conservation bodies now acknowledge that mitigation measures are required to prevent excessive silting, particularly in the Torrevieja salt lake.

Project objectives

The project's main objective is to reduce levels of residual silt in the Torrevieja lake and restore priority habitats, such as the Audouin seagull nesting area, in order to strengthen local biodiversity.

Expected results:

- A 65 % reduction in the volume of residual salts discharged into the lake;
- Increased availability and quality of appropriate nesting sites for wetland birds;
- More vegetation coverage;
- Stabilisation of the size of nesting bird colonies in the project area, particularly the Audouin seagull population;
- Improved management of environmental resources to help sustain a stable wetland habitat in the project area; and
- Raised awareness about the project's objectives and actions, with the aim of strengthening ownership of the conservation actions among local businesses and the wider community.

LIFE08 NAT/E/000077
CIRCUREVIEJA



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

International enterprise

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Pedro Gómez Mateo

Duration of project:

19 months (01/01/2010 – 31/07/2011)

Total budget in euro:

396,622.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

228,122.00 (57.52%)

Improvement of the Natura 2000 habitats and species found in Banyoles: a demonstration project

Project background

Spain's Lake Banyoles is the second largest lake in the Iberian Peninsula. It is a unique Mediterranean wetland, designated as an SCI, which hosts several valuable EU-listed habitats, some of them priority. Four species of Community Interest resident in the Estany de Banyoles SCI have been identified as being at risk and in a critical situation. These are: *Emys orbicularis*, *Mauremys leprosa*, *Barbus meridionalis* and *Unio elongatulus*. Urgent conservation action is required to reverse the decline in these terrapin, fish and mussels species.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project is to stabilise species and habitats of Community Interest in the Natura 2000 Network site at "Estany de Banyoles". Actions will aim to control invasive species and strengthen the conservation status of *Emys orbicularis*, *Mauremys leprosa*, *Barbus meridionalis* and *Unio elongatulus*.

Captive breeding and/or restocking with stock from other nearby healthy populations is planned and work will also include restoring the quality of priority habitats and/or extending wetland habitats.

Expected results:

- Recovery of the four target species in the project site;
- The improvement of bankside habitats and underwater plant habitats;
- A reduction of threats from invasive alien species;
- An increase in knowledge about the target species and their conservation requirements;
- The preparation of management plans to support the long-term sustainability of the target species, and others, in the project site; and
- Dissemination of the results to increase awareness about the project's techniques and findings.

LIFE08 NAT/E/000078
PROYECTO ESTANY



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Local authority

Name of beneficiary

Consortori de l'Estany

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Miguel Noguer i Planas

Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,020,352.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

510,176.00 (50.00%)

Static Acoustic Monitoring of the Baltic Sea Harbour porpoise

Project background

The Baltic Sea subpopulation of harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) is small and has been drastically reduced in recent decades. The species is listed in Annexes II and IV of the Habitats Directive as well as in the national red lists of several Member States. This, in combination with a range of threats and problems that are still fairly poorly understood, especially with reference to potential cumulative impacts, necessitates the need for improved methodologies for collecting data on population size and range, and fluctuations over time.

Project objectives

The overall aim of the project is to apply a best practice methodology to provide data for the reliable assessment of the distribution and habitats of the Baltic Sea subpopulation of harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*). This should enable the designation of Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) for the endangered species within the Natura 2000 network, and also provide information for other relevant mitigation measures.

Specifically, the project aims to:

- Estimate densities, produce distribution maps and estimate numbers of harbour porpoises in the depth range of 5-80 m within the project area in the Baltic Sea (approximately south of latitude 55° 50' N and east of longitude 12° E in the east, and south of latitude 60°20'N in the north). Data and maps will be produced by season for the whole study area, and possibly by country waters, if feasible;
- Identify possible hotspots, habitat preferences, and areas with higher risk of conflicts with anthropogenic activities for the species. In Swedish waters, the project will use these results to identify appropriate areas for protection, and within these areas, suggest appropriate management of anthropogenic activities with known or potential negative impacts;
- Increase knowledge of the species in the nations bordering the Baltic Sea and within the EU;
- Implement best practice methods for cost-effective, large-scale surveillance of the species in a low density area.

LIFE08 NAT/S/000261
SAMBAH



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Small and medium sized enterprise

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Mats Amundin

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

4,244,013.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

2,112,098.00 (49.77%)

Pastures and meadows in the middlemost part of Sweden

Project background

Grasslands provide important habitats for many species, including herbs, insects and birds. Most of the maintenance-dependent grassland habitats in Europe are in decline. These habitats were once a common feature of the agricultural landscape, but the intensification of agriculture, together with economic development pressure, has led to an increasing abandonment of traditional management of meadows and pastures. The modernisation of agriculture has led to both a quantitative and qualitative decline in the maintenance of grasslands and wetlands. The areas that remain are often in poor condition and species dependent on them are faced with not only smaller and fewer suitable sites but also with increasing distances between such sites.

Project objectives

This project aims to preserve valuable grasslands and their associated flora and fauna. The overriding objective is to restore the meadows, pastures and wetland meadows in 62 Natura 2000 sites in Jämtland, Gävleborg, Värmland and Dalarna County. These grasslands all need to be maintained through grazing or cutting, the continuation and intensity of which are crucial for their protection and the good conservation status of the species they host. The project will target 13 maintenance-dependent grassland habitats listed in the EU Habitats Directive, including five priority habitats. A number of target species are also included at one specific project site, where nine bird species listed in the Annex I of the Birds Directive will be targeted. In total, 16 species listed in the habitats or birds directives are present within the project sites.

The results will aim to show an increase in the extent of maintenance-dependent Habitats Directive grassland, woodland and wetland habitats with favourable conservation status. In total, the area of grassland being cleared or restored is almost 630 ha. Together, the four counties in central Sweden involved in this project account for some 25% of the entire surface of the country, and contain a considerable share of its grasslands. The overall area is shaped by the same historical land use practices, its farmers face similar climatic and economic conditions, and its habitats face the same threats. Cooperation between neighbouring counties is, therefore, key to this project, creating important opportunities for the mutual exchange of

LIFE08 NAT/S/000262
Hotad hävdad mark



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Marie Brunsell

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

3,384,551.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,692,276.00 (50.00 %)

knowledge, experiences, problem-solving and the dissemination of results. This co-operation will also enable the project partners to view their smaller project areas in a wider context.

Demonstration of an integrated North-European system for monitoring terrestrial habitats

Project background

All EU Member States are required to report on the implementation of the Habitats Directive to the European Commission. This constitutes a major challenge, since for every habitat type it is necessary to deliver accurate estimates of coverage, distribution range, and status of several variables describing important functions and structures. Both current state and temporal changes need to be estimated. In Sweden, the government is required to evaluate the conservation status of 89 habitat types within up to three biogeographical regions. This means that a total of 187 separate habitat type assessments need to be conducted.

Project objectives

The objective of this demonstration project is to develop a cost-effective national monitoring system, adapted for northern European conditions, that can be used to monitor the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive. The project will demonstrate how auxiliary information can be used in connection with random sampling to improve the accuracy of the habitat assessments, even for sparse habitats. Furthermore, the project will show how the habitat monitoring system can be integrated into the framework of existing landscape level monitoring programmes that now exist in many European countries.

LIFE08 NAT/S/000264
MOTH



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

Name of beneficiary

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Hans Gardfjell

Duration of project:

54 months (01/01/2010 – 30/06/2014)

Total budget in euro:

4,792,873.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

2,396,437.00 (50.00 %)

Restoration of tributaries of the Vindel river combined with monitoring and evaluation of ecological responses of species and habitats

Project background

Actions to restore the tributaries of the Vindel river in the county of Västerbotten, located in the northern part of Sweden, to a more natural conservation status are considered a priority by the Swedish environmental protection agency, the county administrative board and the EU under the Habitats Directive and the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The aim of the WFD is to maintain the "high status" of waters where it exists, prevent any deterioration in the existing status of waters and achieve at least "good status" in relation to all waters by 2015.

Project objectives

The objective of this project is to achieve 'good status' for the waters of the Vindel river with reference to the WFD, and a good conservation status for the species in the project area, as defined by the Habitats Directive. This will be achieved by reducing or removing the remaining negative impacts of fragmentation and channelisation installations in 22 tributaries of the Vindel river system. Overall, the works will focus on a river stretch of just over 44 km.

The installations (e.g. dams) stem from the period of timber floating, which occurred from 1850 to 1976. These threaten the favourable conservation status of species and habitats within the Vindel river Natura 2000 site. The aim is that by the end of the project 73% of these obstructions to the natural river flow will have been removed and the conservation status of the river will be considerably improved. Certain constructions built for the former timber floating activities that have a high cultural and historical value will be left for educational or museum purposes. The 'Vindel River LIFE' project will restore two habitat types listed in the Habitats Directive and five species listed in Annex II of the directive.

Expected results:

- The removal of seven dams, or the provision of bypass channels. In total, 44.1 km of tributaries will be restored to a more favourable conservation status;
- Improved water flow regarding velocity and dynamics. This will mean: (1) slower currents and increased water levels; (2) mitigation of hydraulic disturbance during high flows; and (3) a reduction of flood risk in lower reaches during high flows;

LIFE08 NAT/S/000266

Vindel River Life



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

University

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Christer Nilsson

Duration of project:

60 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2014)

Total budget in euro:

2,675,513.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,337,757.00 (50.00 %)

- Improved conditions for species in the riparian zones, such as riparian plants and mammals. This will allow species and communities to recover to more natural and sustainable states;
- Improved conditions and changes in insect abundance and species composition will be achieved, directly, via changes in habitat, and indirectly via changes in the availability of food;
- Improved conditions for the water habitats that will allow species and communities to recover to more natural and sustainable status.

Life to ad(d)mire – Restoring drained and overgrowing wetlands

Project background

Wetlands have an important role to play in preserving biodiversity. Many plants and animals depend on wetland biotopes, and nearly 15% of Sweden's threatened species live in peatlands or on freshwater margins. Hydrological changes and plant invasion in wetlands adversely affect the animals and plants that live there. Tall plant and forest invasion in drained mires is a major problem for several bird species and for the plants displaced by the invaders. Invasion of wetlands can also be caused by the release of plant nutrients on neighbouring lands through forestry activities. Nitrogen deposition is a contributing factor to vegetation changes in some regions. Some parts of the wetlands have historically been used as meadows, but agricultural modernisation has made this use unprofitable and therefore almost none of these sites are in use today. Several species live in these sites, but their populations are decreasing or becoming extinct because of overgrowth and new management practices. Southern Sweden in particular has seen a significant loss of wetlands (e.g. approximately 90% in the Skåne region). Sweden nevertheless remains one of most wetland rich countries in the world.

Project objectives

The project aims to halt the decline of targeted habitats and species at 35 Natura 2000 sites through hydrological restoration and vegetation measures. One positive outcome would be that the current loss of CO₂ (due to drained peat) will stop and, hopefully, most of the hydrologically restored active bogs will revert to being carbon sinks.

The project area encompasses a total of 40 430 ha and directly targets 3 852 ha. This area includes the priority habitats 7110* - active raised bogs (3% of the habitat area inside all Natura 2000 areas in Sweden) and 7310* - Aapa mires (1%). The project is also targeting substantial parts of the habitats 7120 - degraded raised bogs (57% of the area within Natura 2000 site sin Sweden) and 7230 - alkaline fens (2.5%). The project also aims to disseminate information on wetland ecology and the importance of mires to the public and to site managers and landowners.

Expected results:

- 2 885 ha of drained wetland will be hydrologically restored;

LIFE08 NAT/S/000268

Life to ad(d)mire



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

Regional authority

Name of beneficiary

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Name of contact person

Lisa Tenning

Duration of project:

72 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2015)

Total budget in euro:

6,813,474.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

3,406,737.00 (50.00 %)

- 1 866 ha of overgrown wetland will be cleared;
- A 7.7 ha shallow lake will be opened;
- 13 ha of wetland hay meadows will be restored.

After completion of the restoration work, the "meadow sites" will be in such a condition as to enable further maintenance to be financed through the EU's agri-environmental subsidies, where continuous management is needed (e.g. hay meadows). In other parts, the natural processes will be restored in such a way that no more active management will be needed for at least two decades. These measures are expected to favour both the species indicated in the Habitats Directive or Birds Directive as well as targeted habitats.

The Alde-Ore Estuary - Securing a sustainable future for wildlife

Project background

This project aims to develop the management and infrastructure of two exceptional Natura 2000 wildlife sites, Orford Ness and Havergate Island, in the Alde-Ore estuary in order to sustain and enhance the habitats and species of European significance. The proposed actions build on conservation work already carried out on these sites by The National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the two largest nature conservation charities in the UK and Europe. The actions also further develop the nature conservation work supported by previous LIFE grants.

Project objectives

1. To establish a functional, efficient and sustainable infrastructure for water management and control of the coastal lagoons at Havergate Island and the coastal lagoons and marshes at Orford Ness. This will provide long-term improvements to habitat conditions and enable adaptation to the effects of climate change, including changing rainfall patterns and rises in sea-level.
2. To carry out sustainable habitat management, targeted at Annex 1 breeding bird species and habitats, including the creation of new breeding sites and improvements to existing sites and habitats. [Annex 1 target species include avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) and Sandwich tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*) and Annex II/2 species include the redshank (*Tringa totanus*)].
3. To significantly improve the protection of Annex 1 breeding bird species from predation and disturbance by red fox and brown rat, through fencing, ditching, remote monitoring work and direct predator control measures. [Annex 1 target species avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) and Sandwich tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*)].
4. To monitor and evaluate the effects of the proposed management systems on the Annex 1 bird species and other significant habitats and species during the project and to feed this information into future site management plans.
5. To implement systems to manage and control improper access to the southern section of Orford Ness spit, to prevent increasing damage to shingle habitats (codes 1210 and 1220 of the Habitats Directive) and the Annex 1 breeding bird species little tern (*Sterna albifrons*).

LIFE08 NAT/UK/000199
Alde-Ore



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

The National Trust

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/04/2010 – 31/03/2014)

Total budget in euro:

1,066,290.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

533,145.00 (50.00%)

6. To improve the visitor experience at both sites and to disseminate the project results to a wide European audience of site managers, ecologists and the general public.

Irfon Special Area of Conservation Project

Project background

Historically, the River Wye is the most famous and productive river in Wales for Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*). However, recent decades have seen a marked decline in salmon numbers to around 15% of previous levels. Many of the problems affecting the health of the overall river system arise in the uplands of mid-Wales from the impacts of acid rain, forestry plantations and over-grazing. These lead to problems of highly acidic streams, flash floods, siltation and pesticide pollution. An additional problem is that over-shading from woodlands along the river bank reduces the availability of food for salmon and other fish. While the individual problems are well-understood and some of the remedial actions are tried and tested, it is only by addressing these problems at a catchment scale that a real improvement in water quality and both in-stream and bank-side habitat quality can be achieved.

This project will take some of the knowledge about the ecological requirements of species, developed through projects such as LIFE in UK Rivers (LIFE99 NAT/UK/006088), and match this with the practical experience of river restoration projects to address the restoration of the Irfon catchment in mid-Wales. Within the catchment of the River Irfon, 74% of the land is agricultural and 23% is covered by forestry. Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) are present throughout most of the catchment, but are unable to survive in the strongly acidic headwaters of the system.

Project objectives

The project objectives are:

1. To restore the hydrological sources in the upper Irfon catchment by land purchase, the removal of conifers, infilling drains and adding lime (ground limestone at 20-40 tonnes/ha) to ameliorate the effect of acid runoff;
2. To restore and enhance the wildlife in 30 km of rivers by excluding livestock and reducing the shade from riparian woodlands; and
3. To implement conservation measures for the Annex II species, white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) and freshwater pearl-mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*).

The actions to restore the hydrology of the upper catchment will 'naturalise' water quality and quan-

LIFE08 NAT/UK/000201
ISAC 08



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

44 months (01/01/2010 – 15/09/2013)

Total budget in euro:

1,626,458.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

813,229.00 (50.00%)

tity in some 10 km of river SAC (Habitats Directive) area with measureable improvements to the numbers of young Atlantic salmon that the river can support. The population and range of other species will also increase and the recovery of the area will allow for four to six new territories for European otter (*Lutra lutra*). The management of the riparian zone will include tree management to reduce the over-shading of the river, the exclusion of livestock from the river banks and stream-bed to reduce siltation and in-channel habitat improvements to create specific habitat for target species. The specific actions for white-clawed crayfish include the re-introduction of the species at two sites in the SAC. For the freshwater pearl mussel, the project will develop an assisted breeding programme to re-introduce the species to the Irfon catchment. The project will adopt an ecosystems-approach to the restoration of the River Irfon. The focus on the whole system, and its key habitats and species, will help to make the river more resilient to climate change.

MoorLIFE: Active blanket bog restoration in the South Pennine Moors

Project background

The project is taking place on the South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC) included in the Natura 2000 network. This site is important for active blanket bog and represents the most south-easterly occurrence of the habitat in Europe. In addition, the project area forms part of two SPAs (Special Protection Areas according to the Birds Directive) – whose Annex 1 species include golden plover, dunlin, short-eared owl and merlin – all of which are dependent on blanket bog for breeding and/or feeding.

The conservation status of the site has, over the years, been under threat due to almost two centuries of heavy sulphate and nitrate pollution, leading to the destruction or severe depletion of the essential sphagnum moss cover of these moors. Consequently fire damage, of which there is a history of severe and repeated events, has led to more extreme levels of erosion than if the moorlands had remained sphagnum rich during this time. Today however, even with a much reduced pollution load, erosion is now so widespread that not only is it difficult for sphagnum to become re-established but even those areas which have managed to retain sphagnum cover remain under continued threat of further erosion and new fires. The restoration of the favourable condition of the site therefore depends on the re-establishment of a sphagnum rich bog surface.

Project objectives

The main purpose of the project is to protect the 1 600 ha of active blanket bog by reducing erosion on adjacent degraded peatland. To achieve this, the project aims to restore 862 ha of active blanket bog through stabilisation, diversification and gully blocking. To ensure the future sustainability of the blanket bog, the project also aims to carry out wildfire mitigation actions while also raising public awareness of wildfire risk and restoration. The final objective is to develop knowledge and understanding by effective communication to practitioners and policy makers.

LIFE08 NAT/UK/000202
MoorLIFE



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

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Duration of project:

61 months (01/04/2010 – 30/04/2015)

Total budget in euro:

6,690,856.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

5,018,142.00 (75.00%)

Conserving machair habitats and species in a suite of Scottish Natura sites

Project background

Machair is a unique coastal habitat listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive that is found only on the west coasts of Scotland and Ireland. Formed by calcium rich sand being blown onto acidic soil, the habitat has been keenly influenced by land management practices among the traditional crofting and farming communities, with extensive grazing and low intensity crop rotations. The machair also supports a wide range of wading birds in extremely high densities [such as ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) and dunlin (*Calidris alpina schinzii*)], while also providing suitable habitat for a range of other Annex 1 Birds Directive migratory species (such as Corncrake [*Crex crex*] and chough [*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*]). In recent years there has been a shift towards more intensive agriculture, with greater use of artificial fertilisers and pesticides, which threatens this unique habitat. The areas where machair is found are also facing problems with de-population with people leaving agriculture to seek employment opportunities away from the rural community.

Project objectives

The project's overall aim is to secure and improve the conservation status of 70% of the world's machair habitat and its associated species by implementing and demonstrating sustainable management methods that optimise the conservation potential and are compatible with local agricultural practices. The project will target machair habitat on three SACs and aims to secure the conservation of associated bird species in 10 machair SPAs - this covers a total area of over 23 000 ha. The project will bring 3 200 ha of machair habitat into favourable condition and improve the conservation status of the Annex 1 species, corncrake and chough, and the migratory species, dunlin and ringed plover.

Specific objectives include:

- Expanding the area of late harvested crop on arable machairs;
- Effecting a reduction in the area of under-sown arable crop;
- Introducing best practice arable crop production, including cultivation techniques, and demonstrating these to the crofting community;
- Identifying constraints to active management and increasing the capacity to undertake beneficial

LIFE08 NAT/UK/000204
Scottish machair



Beneficiary:

Type of beneficiary

NGO-Foundation

Name of beneficiary

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

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Duration of project:

48 months (01/01/2010 – 31/12/2013)

Total budget in euro:

2,735,031.00

EC contribution in euro with %:

1,367,515.00 (50.00%)

- management in crofting and farming communities on designated sites; and
- Securing the supply of local arable seed.



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