

LIFE Project Number

LIFE06 NAT/H/000098

2nd PROGRESS REPORT

Covering the project activities from 01.02.2009 to 28.02.2010

Reporting Date

20.04.2010

LIFE PROJECT NAME

**Conservation of *Euro-Siberian steppic woods* and
Pannonic sand steppes in ‘Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek’
pSCI**

Data Project

Project location	Hungary
Project start date:	01.09.2006.
Project end date:	31.08.2011.
Total Project duration (in months)	60 months
Total budget	1 863 236 €
EC contribution:	1 397 427 €
(%) of total costs	75%
(%) of eligible costs	75%

Data Beneficiary

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2nd Progress Report

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2. Lists of key-words and abbreviations

Key words:

Central-Hungary, Euro-Siberian steppe oaks, Pannonic sand steppes, conservation, management, Natura 2000

Abbreviations:

DINPI - Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate

NKÖ - Local Government of Nagykőrös Town

KöVa - operator of Pálfája Education Centre

WWF - World Wide Fund for Nature

MEW - Ministry for Environment and Water

SFS - State Forestry Service

NEFAG - Nagykőrös Forestry Company

pSCI - proposed Site of Community Importance

3. Executive Summary

Project objectives

Through the cooperation of Duna-Ipoly National Park Directorate, Local Government of Town Nagykőrös and WWF Hungary partners requisite for the establishment of the successful long-term conservation and improvement of the favourable conservational status of the Euro-Siberian steppe woods with *Quercus* spp. and Pannonic sand steppes priority habitats in 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' proposed priority Site of Community Importance are ensured. These unique habitats can be found exclusively in the Carpathian Basin, moreover steppe oak forests of Nagykőrös represent the last larger, more or less continuous area of them. These habitats are seriously threatened by the spread of alien species, problems in natural forest regeneration capacity, improper forest management practices, fragmentation and by the ignorance of society as well as lack of information related to this area.

Expected results:

- 1.) 405 ha area becomes free of invasive species in 99% (with using mechanical and chemical methods as well as post-treatment the arboreal and herbaceous invasive species are gradually removed from the area).
- 2.) With the exclusion of game, relevant information is gained on that the decrease of ground water level accounts alone for the elimination of the natural forest regeneration processes or the excessive game population has a devastating effect on these (with fencing off forest compartments and monitoring).
- 3.) Change in forest management practices by taking over the restricted right of disposal from the forest owners over 175 ha of pSCI (through agreements and compensation we ensure, that forestry management actions harming the precious habitats are halted for 90 years as exclusively the conservational management tasks can be implemented in these areas).
- 4.) 88.5 ha indigenous forest is established in the patches formerly occupied by invasives (the reconstruction of the external and inner unity of the habitat of steppe oak forests by artificial forest regeneration with indigenous species are implemented).
- 5.) Elimination of lack of information and ignorance of local communities as well as information dissemination and utilisation of know-how on the steppe oak forests through communication aiming at the public, professionals, together with environmental education (media work, website, professional and public events, reconstruction of Educational Centre, outbuildings and camp area together with equipment is completed, complex environmental educational programmes (min. 3) are developed complying with the local and regional needs in this pSCI site).
- 6.) Management plan of 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' Natura 2000 site is elaborated (in the management plan all available data - former and novel, national, international - suggestions and results of the research carried out in the area regarding the biological state and monitoring of the effects of management tasks are utilized).

List of key deliverables and outputs

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Deliverable or Milestone	Reference Action	Deadline	Status	Evidence of reaching deliverable/milestone	Annex
project system is established	A1	31.12.2006	completed 05.10.2006	minutes of the kick-off meeting	1 PR: A1-1
detailed partners' agreements are signed	A1	31.12.2006	completed 01.01.2007	partnership agreement	sent to the Commission on 02.05.2007
Advisory Board is set up	A1	31.12.2006	completed 08.05.2007	correspondence, memorandum and photo of the foundation meeting of Steppe Oaks Advisory Board, presentation	1 PR: A1-5/a-b, A1-6/a, A1-6/b, 1 PR: G/a
regional office is leased	A1	31.12.2006	completed 01.03.2007	photos on the leased regional office	1 PR: A1-3/a-d
personnel is recruited	A1	31.12.2006	completed 16.10.2006	official task descriptions	1 PR: A1-2
durable goods are purchased (4 WD car, 2 laptop, 2 GPS, 1 digital camera, personal computer, chain saw, clearing saw)	A1	31.12.2006	completed 30.03.2007 supplemented 31.08.2009	photo on 4WD car, personal computer, chain saw, clearing saw	1 PR: A1-4 2 PR: A1-2/1-2
project introductory brochure is prepared (10000 copies), and re-issued (3000 copies)	A1	31.12.2006	completed 14.03.2007 supplemented 30.04.2009	information brochure in Hungarian and English languages (samples are attached), list of distribution	1 PR: A1-7/a-b, A2-3, A1-8 MTR: A1-1 2 PR: A1-1
notice boards are placed out (2 items)	A1	31.12.2006	completed 22.03.2007	texts and photos on two information boards and their inauguration	1 PR: A1-9/a-b, A1-10/a-b
project logo and complex project design is ready	A2	31.12.2006	completed 27.02.2007	logo (appearing in every material connected to the project)	1 PR: A2-1
promotion materials are prepared (3000-3500 items)	A2	31.12.2006	completed 28.09.2007	promotion materials (folder, magnet, sticker, pen, textile bag) (samples are attached) and their distribution lists	1 PR: A2-2, A2-3 MTR: A2-1 2 PR: A2-1
authorized reconstruction plan for educational	A3	31.03.2007	completed 30.06.2007	photos of meetings, final authorised plans of the educational centre (plans are attached) and its	1 PR: A3-1/a-b, A3-2/a-c

centre and its surroundings is ready				surroundings	
public tendering is completed	A3	31.03.2007	completed 20.12.2007	summary of public tendering procedure, decision of board	1 PR: A3-3, A3-4
modified forestry management plans are completed	A4	31.03.2007	completed 31.08.2007	modified forestry management plan (example)	A4-1, A4-2, A4-3
detailed contracts are ready	A4	31.03.2007	completed 17.12.2007 12.08.2008	final detailed contract (example, same as in B1)	1 PR: B1-1/a-b MTR: B1-2 (on DVD)
public tendering is completed	A4	31.03.2007	completed for 2008-2009 works on-going for 2010 works	contracts on 331 ha	1 PR: A4-4/a-b, A4-5 MTR: A4-2/1-4 A4-3/1-5 A4-4/1-2 A4-5
management plan of 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' Natura 2000 site is ready	A5	31.07.2011	not started yet		
contracts are ready and signed (restricted right of disposal over 175 ha of pSCI)	B1	31.12.2006	completed 17.12.2007 (12.08.2008)	detailed pre-contract, signed contract (example), photo on the occasion Final signed contract (example), photo on occasion	1 PR: B1/a-b, B1-2 MTR: B1-1 B1-2 (on DVD)
restricted right of disposal over 175 ha of pSCI is taken over	B1	31.08.2011	completed		
70% elimination of arboreal invasives in 405 ha	C1	31.03.2008	completed on 397 ha 31.10.2009 not started yet on the rest of 405 ha of target site	photos, minutes on handovers, map	MTR: C1-1/1-5 C1-2 2 PR: C1-1/1-2 C1-C2-D1-D2-1
In a 88.5 ha area (60 ha in larger patches, 28.5 ha in smaller	C2	31.05.2008	completed on 55 ha, 31.03.2009 on-going on 10 ha	photos, minutes on handovers, map	MTR: C2-1 C2-2/1-5 C2-3 C2-4

patches) the reconstruction of the external and inner unity of the habitat by forest regeneration with indigenous species is developed, plantation is completed						2-PR: C2-1 C1-C2-D1-D2-1
12600 m game fence is completed	C3	31.12.2007	completed 15.04.2009 on-going: Strázsa-hegy game elimination	photos, map		MTR: C3-1/1-3 C3-2 2 PR: C3-1/1-6
reconstruction of Educational Centre, outbuildings and camp area together with equipment is completed	C4	31.05.2008	completed: reconstruction 05.06.2008	photos		MTR: C4-1/1-5 C4-2 2 PR: C4-1
405 ha area is free of invasive species in 99%	D1	30.11.2010	on-going	photos, map		2 PR: D1-1/1-2 C1-C2-D1-D2-1
88.5 ha indigenous forest is established	D2	30.11.2010	on-going	photos, map		2 PR: D2-1 C1-C2-D1-D2-1
4 national press conference with trip is completed	E1	31.08.2011	on-going	photos on national press conference and trip, press registration form		1 PR: E1-3/a-d MTR: E1-2 2 PR: E1-1 E1-2
1 international press conference with trip is completed	E1	31.08.2011	not started yet			
several press releases are completed	E1	31.08.2011	on-going	list of media coverage, selected articles, presentation, judgement on emendation		1 PR: E1-1, E1-2/a-e, G/b MTR: E1-1 E1-3/1-6

					2 PR: E1-3 E1-4/1-5 E1-5
website is set up	E2	31.01.2007	completed 02.04.2007	webpage in Hungarian and English	1 PR: E2-1/a-b
website is in operation with min. 30000 visitors per year	E2	31.08.2011	on-going	www.pusztaitolgyesek.hu, usage statistics	1 PR: E2-2 MTR: E2-1 2 PR: E2-1
educational programme (5 forest lessons, 1 summer camp, 1 Nature Trail programme) is completed	E3	31.05.2008	completed 31.03.2009	questionnaire, photos on 'Nagykörös Days', correspondence with schools, evaluation of inquiry, photo on exhibition stand and archery contest, presentation, syllabi of programs	1 PR: E3-1, E3-2/a-b, E3-3, E3-4, E4-2, E4-3/a-b, 1 PR: G/c 2 PR: E3-1/1-6 (on DVD)
1 'Train the trainer' programme, teaching aid book in 500 copies) is compiled	E3	31.05.2008	on-going	draft teaching aid booklet, photos on networking	1 PR: E3-5, E3-6/a-c
a brochure on the educational centre programme (15000 copies), is completed	E4	31.08.2011	on-going		
9 occasion with min. 100-150 participants	E4	31.08.2011	on-going	photos, poster	MTR: E4-5/1-7 2 PR: E4-1
establishment of the educational part of the website is completed	E4	no deadline foreseen	completed 02.04.2007	education webpage, usage statistics	1 PR: E4-1 MTR: E4-1/1-2 E2-2/1-2 2 PR: E4-2
75 forest lessons, 180 Nature Trail programmes, 9 summer camps are	E5	31.08.2011	on-going	photos, visitors statistics	MTR: E5-1/1-2 E5-2/1-4 2 PR: E5-1

completed					E5-2/1-5
6 'Train the trainer' programmes are completed	E5	31.08.2011	not started yet		
10000 website visitors	E5	31.08.2011	on-going	usage statistics	1 PR: E2-2 2 PR: E2-1 E4-2
1 conference with 75 participants, conference proceedings (500 items)	E6	31.07.2011	not started yet		

participation and presentation in conferences (in topics of botany, forestry, nature protection and conferences of green NGOs - altogether 4 occasions)	E6	31.07.2011	on-going	presentations on the project to professional audience	1 PR: G/d-h MTR: E6-1 E6-2
the edition of monograph (1000 copies), CD on steppe oak forests (500 copies)	E6	31.07.2011	not started yet		
study trips (on 3 occasions for 30 participants) is completed	E6	31.07.2011	on-going	photos on trip on 13.10.2007.	1 PR: E6-1/a-b
1 freely accessible Nature Trail is ready with guide book (8000 copies)	E7	31.03.2008	completed 31.05.2008	map on track of Nature Trail and bicycle route, photos, Nature Trail booklet	1 PR: E7-1 MTR: E7-1/1-5 E7-2 E7-3 2 PR: E7-1/1-4
Layman's report	E8	31.07.2011	not started yet		
effective project implementation	F1	31.08.2011	on-going	Minutes, memorials, list of participants and photo of annual project opening workshops	1 PR: F1-1/a-b MTR: F1-1/1-3 2 PR: F1-1 F1-2 F1-3

					F1-4 F1-5
Advisory Board field trip (altogether 5 occasions) is finished	F1	31.08.2011	on-going	photos on trip on 08.05.2007. photos on 26.11.2008 session, list of participants on 06.10.2009 session	1 PR: E1-3/a-d MTR: F1-2/1-2 2 PR: F1-6
20 sample areas in 10X10 m squares, a basic survey and 3-year data series for the 3 management elements and their research report is completed	F2	31.03.2011	on-going	studies, maps, photos	1 PR: F2-1, F2-2, F2-3, F2-4/a-b, F2-5, F2-6/a-b, F2-7, F2-8 MTR: F2-F3-1 F2-F3-2 F2-F3-3/1-4 (on DVD) F2-F3-4/1-2 2 PR: F2-F3-1 F2-F3-2 (on DVD) F2-1
10, 10X10 sample squares (botanical, including mosses and lichens, at least 5 Arthropoda taxa), a basic survey and 3-year data series, the examination of 3 tree trunk per year and their research report is compiled	F3	31.03.2011	on-going	studies, maps, photos	1 PR: F3-1, F3-3, F3-5, F3-6, F3-7, F3-8, F3-9 MTR: F2-F3-1 F2-F3-2 F2-F3-3/1-4 (on DVD) F2-F3-4/1-2 2 PR: F2-F3-1 F2-F3-2 (on DVD)
After-LIFE conservation plan is completed	F4	31.08.2011.	not started yet		

4. Technical progress

Table of technical progress on project actions by 28.02.2010

1.	2.	3.	4.
Action	Deadline	Status	Description
A1 - Establishment of the project system	31.12.2006	completed 08.05.2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ kick-off meeting is held ○ Partnership Agreement is bound ○ new staff is recruited (ranger, educational coordinator) ○ equipment is acquired (1 4WD car, 2 notebooks, 2 GPS, 1 digital photo camera, personal computer, chain saw, clearing saw) ○ project information brochure is edited (10000 items - 9000 in Hungarian 1000 in English), and reissued (3000 copies) ○ 2 information boards are erected ○ Advisory Board is set up
A2 - Brand design of the project	31.12.2006	completed 28.09.2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ logo and design of the program is created ○ promotional material is prepared (700 folder, 700 pen, 700 textile bag, 1000 magnet, 10000 sticker, 120 T-shirts)
A3 - Preparation of the reconstruction of the buildings	31.03.2007	completed 20.12.2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ authorised final plans of the reconstruction of the buildings and its surroundings are compiled ○ public tendering procedure is implemented
A4 - Preparation of the conservational management actions	31.03.2007	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ exact management needs by forest compartments are documented ○ new forestry management plans are compiled in which the management needs and change of function is included ○ planned management is agreed by the forest owners, managers ○ 5 tendering procedure is completed for 2008-2009 management on 397 ha

A5 - Elaboration of the conservational management plan of 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' Natura 2000 site	31.07.2011	not started yet	
B1 - Taking over the restricted right of disposal of habitats Euro-Siberian steppe woods and Pannonic sand steppes	31.08.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6 detailed pre-contracts are bound with forest owners and managers on the take-over of the restricted right of disposal of habitats Euro-Siberian steppe woods and Pannonic sand steppes, for 90 years (17.12.2007.) ○ 6 final contracts are bound (12.08.2008)
C1 - Removal of arboreal invasive species using mechanical and chemical methods	31.03.2008	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Arboreal invasive species are harvested, or stem injected on 397 ha land. (01.09.2008-31.10.2010)
C2 - Artificial forest regeneration with indigenous species	31.05.2008	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ cca. 55 ha of land formerly planted by arboreal invasive species has been planted by indigenous species (01.11.2008-15.04.2009)
C3 - Natural forest regeneration with the exclusion of game	31.12.2007	<p>Fences: completed 15.04.2009</p> <p>on-going:</p> <p>- fence of Strazsa hegy (not in our proposal, out of project budget)</p> <p>- further elimination of game</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 233 ha is getting fenced around by 25006 m long fence of 3 types: permanent, temporary and electric fence ○ most of big game is eliminated

C4 - Reconstruction of building complex for educational and ecotouristical purposes	31.05.2008	completed: reconstruction 05.06.2008 on-going: equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both the building and its surroundings are reconstructed. It was inaugurated on 05.06.2008
D1 - Treatment of herbaceous invasives, follow-up treatment of arboreal invasives	30.11.2010	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ cutting of Robinia and Prunus sprouts ○ chemical treatment of Robinia and Prunus sprouts ○ chemical treatment of Asclepias syriaca
D2 - Follow-up treatment of artificial forest regeneration	30.11.2010	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ hoeing of rows of saplings ○ mowing of lanes between rows of saplings ○ chemical treatment of Robinia and Prunus sprouts
E1 - Information to the general public - Media work	31.08.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ continuous media presence is achieved ○ 1 opening press conference and press trip for the national media is held (08.05.2007.) ○ press conference and press trip for the national media is held to the inauguration of Educational Centre (05.06.2008) ○ press trip for national media on 12.02.2010
E2 - Information to the general public - Website	31.08.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ website is set (02.04.2007.) ○ links are established ○ website continuously operates (cc. 75 000 visitors)
E3 - Development of programmes for the educational centre	31.05.2008	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ questionnaire inquiry on environmental education needs of locals (181 items) ○ information exchange within national parks and other LIFE-programs ○ syllabi for nature trail programs, outdoor-school classes and summer camps are

			ready
E4 - Communication of the educational programme to target groups	31.08.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ establishment of education webpage (cca. 5000 visitors) ○ communication with local educators and target groups ○ presence in local media presence ○ participation in local events with stand ○ cooperation with local NGOs and educational institutes, schools, kinder gardens
E5 - Starting up the educational programme and continuous operation of the educational centre	31.08.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 17 'outdoor school' classes ○ 2433 guided visitors on Nature Trail ○ 16 events with 2511 participants ○ 5 summer camps with 163 participants
E6 - Mutual communication aiming at different groups of professionals and dissemination of scientific results	31.07.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ project was presented at professional conferences, meetings (7 presentations) ○ field trip for 20 NGO members is held (13.10.2007.) ○ visit to Hortobágy NPD
E7 - Development of a Nature Trail	31.03.2008	completed 05.06.2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ track of Nature Trail (1800 m) and an additional bicycle route (2700 m) are inaugurated.
E8 - Compilation of Layman's report	31.07.2011	not started yet	
F1 - Project operation, organizing cooperation with the partners	31.08.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ communication between partners is continuous and effective ○ annual project opening workshops were held ○ thematic workshops were organized

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advisory Board participated in field trip ○ local office is rented ○ project equipment is in operation
F2 Conservation management monitoring	- 31.03.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ vegetation sample plots (20) were designated in 2007 and supplemented with 5 more in 2008, 2 more in 2009, when 5 plots were abandoned ○ vegetation quadrants were sampled in 2007, 2008 and 2009 ○ pitfall traps (85 items) and window traps (4 items) operated in 2007, pitfall tarps (40 items) in 2008, 2009 ○ game monitoring was carried out in 2007
F3 - Monitoring of biological status of habitat types of community importance	31.03.2011	on-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ sample plots (10) were designated ○ vegetation quadrants were sampled in 2007, 2008 and 2009 ○ pitfall traps operated in 2007 (45 items) and 2008, 2009 (30 items) and window traps (1 item) operated in 2007 ○ survey on weevils, longicorn beetles, orthoptera, moths were implemented in 2007 and 2008 ○ dead wood material was examined in 2007
F4 - Continuation of the activities after project completion and preparation of an After-LIFE conservation plan	31.08.2011	not started yet	

Description of technical progress on project actions by 28.02.2010

A1 - Establishment of the project system

Expected results:

- official leaders and stakeholders are informed on the project
- personnel is recruited
- local office is rented
- necessary equipment is purchased
- Advisory Board is set
- a full-colour brochure introducing the project in Hungarian and English languages, in 10000 copies,
- 2 information boards

Achievements:

- official leaders and stakeholders are informed on the project
- personnel is recruited (ranger, educational coordinator)
- local office is rented (Nagykőrös, Kálvin Square 6.)
- necessary equipment is purchased (4 WD car, 2 laptops, 2 GPS, 1 digital photo camera)
- Advisory Board is set
- a full-colour brochure introducing the project in Hungarian and English languages, in 10000 copies is issued and 3000 copies re-issued
- 2 information boards are erected

Action status: completed

Description:

The action was completed before 01.02.2009 – refer to the Midterm Report

The frame and stand of boards were repainted in 2009.

Full-colour brochure introducing the project was re-issued in 3000 copies

The equipment above was supplemented in 2009 by a desk computer and a multifunctional device (printer, scanner, photocopy machine, fax). Prior was necessary to get able to use ArcGIS software, which has high system requirements. By purchasing the multifunctional device we can reduce the time consuming out-of-office faxing and photocopying.

We also purchased a chain saw and a clearing saw with the necessary safety and maintaining accessories. These tools are mainly used by the field staff for the maintenance of fences (cutting of fallen trees on the fences, mowing of track of electric fences), after we realized that it is a cheaper way, than contracting it.

For distribution of project launch brochure, see **Annex PR2 A1-1**, for photos on recently purchased equipments, see **Annex PR2 A1-2/1-2**.

A2 - Brand design of the project

Expected results:

- identifiable and distinctive project logo and graphical elements that make up an easy-to-understand, nice and consistent brand design
- different types of promotion objects in altogether 3000-3500 pieces

Achievements:

- project logo was designed and it is in use
- graphical elements that make up an easy-to-understand, nice and consistent brand design were elaborated and used to create the project website, the information brochure and the promotional material
- different types of promotion objects decorated with the logo of the LIFE programme and with that of the project were obtained: 700 pcs of pens, 700 pcs of textile bags, 700 pcs of folders, 1000 pcs of fridge magnets and 10,000 pcs of colour stickers

Action status: completed

Description:

The action was completed before 01.02.2009 – refer to the Midterm Report

In spring 2009, we issued T-shirts with the project logo, Partner logos, LIFE and Natura 2000 logos on it.

For distribution list of promotional materials, see **Annex PR2 A2-1**

A3 - Preparation of the reconstruction of the buildings

Expected results:

- authorised reconstruction plan for the buildings of 'Pálfája' forest, which meets the environmental educational requirements both in appearance and function.

Achievements:

- authorised reconstruction plan for the buildings and their surroundings in 'Pálfája' forest, which meets the environmental educational requirements both in appearance and function.

Action status: completed

Description:

The action was completed before 01.02.2009 – refer to the Midterm Report

A4 - Preparation of the conservational management actions

Expected results:

The results of the preparation and authorisation of modified forest management plans are the following:

- the fragments of priority habitat types get the primarily protection function instead of a primarily economic function
- the preconditions for the nature conservational management actions are established in accordance with the actual forestry management plan
- on the basis of fieldwork the preparation of detailed contracts and public tendering is finished

Achievements:

The results of the preparation and authorisation of modified forest management plans are the following:

- the fragments of priority habitat types got the primarily protection function instead of a primarily economic function
- the preconditions for the nature conservational management actions are established in accordance with the actual forestry management plan
- on the basis of fieldwork the preparation of detailed contracts is ready
- public tendering is launched, and completed and contracted in case of 331 ha for management Actions C1, C2, C3 and the first season of D1, D2.

Action status: on-going, delayed

Description:

Premises: during 2006, 2007, 2008, broad negotiations with SFS took place including forest management plans, field data was collected referring the estimated amount and allocation of different conservation management activities, public tendering procedures were initiated and completed for the 2008-2009 management. For all the details of the above activities, please refer to the MTR, as well as for those on the state of Strázsa-hegy stand (Nagykőrös (98 A, B, C, D, E, T11, T12, NY forest compartments, land reg. No.:Nagykőrös 0821/1). For the delays concerning this Action, please refer to the MTR.

For Commission's request (11.05.2009), we report that this process of registration of DINPI as the forest manager of the Strázsa-hegy stand was completed in 29.01.2009 (for the initiating letter see **Annex MTR A4-7**, for the decree on registration see **Annex PR2 A4-2**)

For Commission's request (11.05.2009) on the issue of principal aim of certain forest compartments, we report that according to Hungarian legislation of forest management, the 10-year forest management plan of a certain compartment provides the basis of any management activity. Elaboration of management plans of compartments involved in our project were done by SFS in cooperation with DINPI, as conservation manager of the pSCI. Management plans involve not only the concrete conservation management we proposed, but the LIFE contribution itself is appointed in them.

In July 2009 a new law on forestry came into force. This new law contains such positive elements as considering Natura2000 status as a possible aim of forest stands (like "forest for soil protection" or "forest with economic aim"), or as using the term of "opening forest", specifically referring to shrub forests of karst lands and steppic forests. Latter means that the canopy cover may decrease to 30 % (and not only to 70 %) without obligation for artificial forest regeneration. Besides these positive elements, the new regulation caused some problems, as the necessary enacting clauses were published only on 13.11.2009, which resulted in some difficulties in starting management in Strázsa-hegy: neither timber harvest nor fence construction was possible to be authorized by SFS without having the forest management plan which we have to claim from the SFS, too, as recently registered forest managers of Strázsa-hegy stand. Although we claimed the forest management plan in August 2009, and then again after the enacting clauses came into force presenting the necessary application form, we still have not got it (for our requests, see **Annex PR2 A4-3, A4-4**). The only action the SFS authorized without the forest management plan in hand was stem injection, so we used this method on areas of Stázsa-hegy with subsequent artificial forest regeneration, too, not only in oak stands and grasslands.

Implementing Actions D1, D2 we faced problems (for details, see the description of referred Actions, and Part 5: Problems encountered). These problems mainly concerned the survival of saplings of forest plantations, that is the success of the forestations. In order to develop the methods used, we contracted a forestry expert to analyze the reasons of the unsatisfactory results and to pose the possible solutions, providing specific methods, technologies including both the assessed cost of the alternatives and the availability of the hardware they require. For the study he provided, see **Annex PR2 F2-1 on DVD**.

A5 - Elaboration of the conservational management plan of 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' Natura 2000 site

Expected results:

Long-term management plan of 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' pSCI is elaborated in digital and paper format as well as it is officially approved by the competent authority before end of the project. Basic and management data are recorded in GIS. The overview of the historical aspects - especially on forest use - are collected and analysed in a study.

Achievements: none

Action status: not started yet

B1 - Taking over the restricted right of disposal of habitats Euro-Siberian steppe woods and Pannonic sand steppes

Expected results:

Discontinuation of economic forest use on patches of habitats of community interest (altogether 175 hectares) as well as establishment of a long-term professional cooperation between the conservational manager and private owners

Achievements:

- 6 contract bound guaranteeing the discontinuation of economic forest use on patches of habitats of community interest (altogether 175 hectares) for 90 years as well as establishment of a long-term professional cooperation between the conservational manager and private owners
- Final contracts containing the precise square measure of leased lands were signed on 12.08.2008

Action status: completed

Description:

The action was completed before 01.02.2009 – refer to the Midterm Report

C1 - Removal of arboreal invasive species using mechanical and chemical methods

Expected results:

Considerable repress of invasive species, the decrease of load of invasives on Euro-Siberian steppic oak forests and Pannonic sand steppes and regeneration of grasslands on the total project area (altogether 405 hectare).

Achievements:

- 77 % of arboreal invasives are removed on 331 ha (all leased land, NEFAG land, Erdő Bt. land, Faith-Wood Kft. land)
- 50 % of arboreal invasives are removed on 60 ha (Pálfája stand)
- 99 % of arboreal invasives are stem injected on 10 ha (Strázsa-hegy stand)
- 95 % of logging waste is eliminated

Action status: on-going, delayed

Description:

Premises: arboreal invasives were removed in autumn 2008 on 331 ha of leased and un-leased land. For methods used (including chemical treatment, transportation, waste removal) and details on land involved, please refer to the MTR. One patch in forest compartment Nagykőrös 140B was not managed due to presence of black stork (Ciconia nigra).

Commission made note (11.05.2009) on the necessary removal of un-dispersed stacks of chopped logging waste. However, we experienced in many cases that both ants (*Formica rufa*) inhabited the stacks and adults of *Oryctes nasicornis* (legally protected species in Hungary) were found inside and around the stacks. Larvae of latter species grow in dead wooden material, which fact explains their presence around these stacks. According to order 13/2001. (V.9.) KöM ant-hills of *Formica rufa* are legally protected. Consequently we decided not to disturb these artificial microhabitats any more, although we began to remove them to the track of fences in order to make their maintenance easier.

Regrettably, in spring 2009, only one black stork individual was observed around the nest on forest compartment nagykőrös 140B and in its broader surroundings, and no nesting was observed at neither the two artificial nests we established in February 2009 in Nagykőrös 55 G and 137 F forest compartments, nor elsewhere in the pSCI. This is why we directed the subcontractor to harvest the Robinias on this spot in October 2009 by the technology used on the rest of the leased land in 2008. For a map of the area in question, see **Annex MTR A4-6**.

In 2009, elimination of arboreal invasives continued. On 10 ha of total 28.5 ha of Strázsa-hegy stand was stem injected in September and October 2009, mainly on 6,25 ha of homogenous Robinia stands.

We consulted on this method with colleagues at Kiskunsági and Hortobágyi National Park Directorates. They both have experience in eliminating Robinia individuals by stem injection in similar abiotic environment. We gained that it is worth to postpone the harvest of injected individuals to the second autumn or winter after injection in order to reduce root sprouting. In Strázsa-hegy, stem injection was planned to be used in oak stands, grass habitats and indigenous shrub stands. However, mainly due to legal regulations (for details see Action A4) this method was applied on areas of subsequent forest regeneration, too.

Removal of arboreal invasives on Strázsa-hegy is going to be completed in 2010. It will mostly involve indigenous habitats (oak stands, grass habitats, shrub stands). Mainly we will apply stem injection, especially in patches where we consider the removal of timber destructive to the habitats, but where we decide to remove timber, the methods and measure of it will be very strictly limited and controlled by DINPI staff.

In October 2009 we also started management in the Pálfája stand. We contracted the elimination of invasives smaller than 10 cm in stem diameter at breast height on 60 ha according to the modified technology used on leased land in 2008. First modification was the fact itself, that we start the elimination with the smaller individuals. We experienced in 2009, that invasive post treatment, rolling back Robinia root sprouts (see Action D1) is not compatible with the elimination of smaller tree individuals in organizational aspects: these two tasks require different tools, latter also call for chemical treatment. Bigger individuals are also easier to harvest and their amount is easier to assess after smaller ones are removed. The other modification was that we insisted on the immediate application of chemical to the cut surface, in order to avoid the skip of individuals, which is a serious threat to the

effectiveness of the treatment, especially in case of small individuals, which are hard to find in the forest grass layer. The 3 day deadline of stump treatment we had in 2008 is also much more difficult to control. The marketable portion of harvested trees was removed by the subcontractor during the winter by the end of February 2010. As Pálfája stand is owned and managed by NKÖ, DINPI contracted with NKÖ on the wood material. DINPI used the material to decrease the cost of this work. As a flow of goods will happen, the booking of such a construction is as follows: subcontractor issues invoice charging a part of its work for the market value of the marketable material, while DINPI issues invoice charging the marketable material itself. This all is necessary to satisfy legal criteria of VAT. Latter invoice will be in the project booking as negative cost.

Removal of arboreal invasive species in Pálfája will go on in 2010 and the years after. As we pointed in the MTR, the principal aim of this forest stand is “Recreational forest”, and it is highly visited by residents of Nagykőrös. Keeping in mind this exposed situation of the stand, a gradual removal of invasives is the way of management we would like to implement, in order to achieve all the support of the local society.

For the map of implemented Action C1, see **Annex PR2 C1-C2-D1-D2**.

C2 - Artificial forest regeneration with indigenous species

Expected results:

Transformation of the non-indigenous stands (*Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Pinus spp.*) of high canopy closure into stands of indigenous species (*Quercus ssp.*, *Populus spp.*) around (60 hectare) and within (28.5 hectare) the priority habitat patches (altogether 88.5 hectare). Enforcement of the stability and unity of the habitat fragments.

Achievements:

- 55 ha planted
- 43 ha partial soil preparation (on leased and un-leased land)
- 12 ha complete soil preparation (on un-leased land)
- partial soil preparation has proved to be usable with stumps left on site.

Action status: on-going, delayed

Description:

Premises: forest plantations started in November 2009 and were on-going by the submission date of the MTR. For methods used (including soil preparation, saplings) and details on land involved, please refer to the MTR.

As a result of public tendering Procedures 1-4 (see MTR, Action A4) we contracted 60 ha of artificial forest regeneration. Finally, by 15.04.2009 55 ha was planted, as about 5 ha was reconsidered as some patches were not Robinia stands, but highly opened, oak and shrub stands with favourable conservation state. As foreseen in the project proposal, this work covers a more intensive method on patches without significant indigenous vegetation. This is on accord with Commission’s note (13.06.2008).

Contracted acorn deposition (firstly foreseen to be implemented in autumn 2008, then we decided to postpone it to autumn 2009, due to the lack of fences and the subsequent damage by wild boars) in Nagykőrös 56 B (un-leased, NEFAG) was transferred to artificial regeneration areas of NEFAG in Action D2, as we consider 56 B as an area of opened oak stand with high conservation value not worth to disturb with acorn deposition.

For the map of implemented Action C2, see **Annex PR2 C1-C2-D1-D2**.

In our MTR, we reported the difficulties of purchasing saplings of mixing, colouring species, and we decided to use less species, but ones produced in vicinity of the project site. However, the forestry expert we contracted in autumn 2009 (see Action A4) suggested that it was important to use as many mixing species as possible, even if we can purchase them exclusively from further parts of Hungary, from different production sites. The law on forestry limits this possibility only in case of tree species used as dominant species of forestations.

For Commission's request (11.05.2009), we confirm that total soil preparation was used solely after dense non-indigenous forest stands, mainly Robinia stands and in one case Pinus stand, where the soil and the herbaceous layer was damaged.

Above the implemented, another cca. 15 ha of artificial forest registration are going to take place. This session is including the Strázsa-hegy stand, 2 ha in Pálfája around a magnificent oak individual "Pál fa" (2nd station of Nature Trail, please refer to the MTR, Action E7) as well as small spots to be supplemented within steppic oak forest patches emerging as a result of invasive removal (for details see **Planned project progress**). On all the sites mentioned above, drilling technology is proposed for different reasons. On Strázsa-hegy, the relief of the area still shows the natural pattern once typical for the entire region. This is a value to preserve, and a factor that requires smaller scale methods than the use of high power machines which need and create a more homogeneous way of management. In Pálfája, the site is a dense, young sprouted Robinia stand, which is basically proposed to be reforested after total soil preparation, which leads to a landscape looking like sand deserts for years. However, this forest compartment is in straight proximity of residential area, it is highly exposed to visitors, and contains not only the prominent oak individual mentioned above, but several other full-grown oak individuals. These factors exclude the use of total soil preparation: it would raise the sand load of the residential area, communicate that total soil preparation is the main method used in our project, and hurt the root system of the oaks. Latter aspect also excludes the use of partial soil preparation in oak stand supplements.

Purchasing the foreseen satellite images (MTR Action C2) were cancelled as we counted on aerial photographs, which were shot, but not converted to orthophotographs by the state company having this service, as the project site is right on the edge of the photographed region. All this turned out too late to order the satellite images.

C3 - Natural forest regeneration with the exclusion of game

Expected results:

12600 meter game fence is completed and the possibility of the investigation of the natural regeneration capacity is given. The natural forest regeneration is facilitated by the serious decrease in gnawing.

Achievements:

- 25006 m fence is ready
- most of big game is eliminated
- information plates on each fence

Action status: on-going, delayed

Description

Premises: fence construction started in January 2010 and were on-going by the submission date of the MTR. For the description of different type of fences, the referring tendering procedures and forest manager conditions, please refer to the MTR.

All the public tendered fences including electric ones were completed by 15.04.2009.

For the map of fences fulfilled, see **Annex MTR C3-2**, for photos on fence construction and maintenance, see **Annex PR2 C3-1/1-5**.

Although we purchased lockers to the gates of fences, until the gates are kept closed by users, we do not apply them, except for some cases in which the immigration of big game across accidentally opened gates is significant. Vandalism has not been a major problem so far.

The delayed construction of the fences was finished after the season of drive hunting so in some areas significant amount of game was included. Individual hunt of game took place through all year, but results were not satisfactory. In October, the next season for drive hunting started, so the local hunting society began to organize such events once a month. During nearly ten occasions, most of the wild boars were eliminated by using shotgun. As fallow deer and roe deer can be hunt only by using rifle, which operates in a much wider range and is consequently more dangerous to all participants of such an event, those were mainly individually hunt. Drive hunts were organized by the hunting society, but in most cases project staff join the driving team, in many cases supplemented by other DINPI and WWF employees and volunteers.

DINPI and the local hunting society (Nagykőrösi Csókáserdei Vadásztársaság) organized a drive of game on the 12.02.2010 without hunting, by opening the fences. This event involved nearly 200 volunteers mainly from Budapest and Nagykőrös, 15 members of the DINPI rangers, with presence of local and nationwide media (see also E1). Altogether 11 fallow deers have left the largest fenced area. For photo on this event, see **Annex C3-1/6, E1-1**.

For maintaining the fences DINPI purchased chain saw to eliminate fallen trees and mowing machine to reduce earth of electric fences by grass layer. Latter took place two times in 2009. However, experiences of this winter show that a supplementary power supply is necessary for satisfactory operation of electric fences, as solar cells do not provide enough in winter.

We put 2 sort of information plates onto each fence. The smaller ones indicate the logo of the project, name (“Game exclusion fence”), owner, operator of the fence, phone number, e-mail, website (see **Annex PR2 C3-1/3**) The larger ones are placed to sites with kind of an

entrance character of the pSCI, where most visitors enter. Compared to the smaller plates, information above is supplemented with a brief description of the conservation purpose of fencing (see **Annex PR2 C3-1/4**).

Further fence construction is proposed around Strázsa-hegy stand (28.5 ha, cca. 2500 m) in 2010.

Other proposed action is the on-going elimination of included and accidentally immigrated big game by hunting and one-way gates.

C4 - Reconstruction of building complex for educational and ecotouristical purposes

Expected results:

- A properly developed and equipped building complex with its surroundings is completed for the implementation of action E3.
- reconstructed educational centre (one-storied, with employing hall, auditory and warming-up kitchen)
- ecological devices (solar cells, water recycling device, etc.)
- reconstructed outbuildings (public washrooms)
- open-air wood instruments and playground (tables, benches, bars, crossing gates, etc.)
- arrangement of camping site and sport grounds (tent plots, forest playground, outdoors recreational sites, forest sports ground together with, gardening, renovation of roads in the surroundings)

Achievements:

- Building complex, including outbuildings, and its surroundings is restored for the implementation of action E3.
- About 80 % of equipment is obtained
- Solar collectors provide heated water
- open-air wood instruments and playground (tables, benches, bars, crossing gates, etc.)
- arrangement of camping site and sport grounds

Action status: completed

Description

Premises: Pálfája Education Centre was established by reconstruction of a former camp building. The Centre was inaugurated on 05.06.2008. Majority of necessary equipment was purchased. For details, please refer to the MTR.

A more important supplement of the equipment of the Centre was the purchase of camp beds (for photo, see **Annex PR2 C4-1**) for summer camps (Tents used for summer camps are property of DINPI).

For Commission's request (11.05.2009), we report that vandalism has not involved the Education Centre.

D1 - Treatment of herbaceous invasives, follow-up treatment of arboreal invasives

Expected results:

As a result of the action the removal of 99% of herbaceous invasives and arboreal invasive plants is expected on the whole project area (405 hectare).

Achievement:

80 % of herbaceous invasives are treated on 331 ha

90 % of arboreal invasives is eliminated

Action status: on-going, delayed

Follow-up treatment of arboreal invasives was one of the hardest tasks in 2009, of which we gained a lot of experiences we can both use in subsequent years and provide to other managers. A couple of these also refer to Action C1, C2 and D2.

Mechanical cutting of sprouts were applied twice as part of Action D2, and once out of artificial forest regeneration areas. It was accomplished by manhandled clearing saw and lopper. The amount of sprouts was higher than expected, and the time to treat them was rather short, as following the spring drought, summer precipitation induced very intensive sprouting of Robinia in a short time.

Following the mechanical treatment, spraying of chemical was applied. We experienced that results of treatment in September were faster and more spectacular than those in October. We suspect that stump treatment is more effective when used by the end of September.

Milkweed treatment took aim at larger, denser clone populations. Sporadically occurring individuals and the huge population in Strázsa-hegy will be treated in 2010. Spraying of Medallon chemical was applied once. According to experts of chemical treatments, that of milkweed is not yet a subject of consensus in respect of the applicable chemical and the timing of application.

For the map of implemented Action D1, see **Annex PR2 C1-C2-D1-D2**. For photos on this Action, see **Annex PR2 D1-1/1-2**.

In 2010 we propose the further treatment of arboreal invasives, too. This year we propose to apply spot sparkling first, and mechanical treatment afterwards on the sprouts appearing on forest regeneration sites in order to reduce their competition with saplings during the crucial summer months. Out of these sites we still have not decided to use the method of last season (mechanical treatment first, chemical afterwards) or the one described above.

D2 - Follow-up treatment of artificial forest regeneration

Expected results:

Artificial regeneration and transformation of invasive forest areas (88.5 hectare) is completed. The indigenous species of transformed forests ensures the connection between and within the priority habitat fragments.

Achievement:

55 ha of artificial forest regeneration areas were post-treated in 2009.

Action status: on-going, delayed

Besides Action D1, the follow-up treatment of forestations was the hardest task in 2009. It took place on all the 55 ha of forested land.

On areas with partial soil preparation it included hoeing of sapling rows three times, mowing of the area between the rows two times by mowing machine. In most cases this all meant the cutting of Robinia sprouts. Heavy sprouting caused very serious problems in implementing the follow-up treatment, and is the most important reason of the unsatisfactory survival (5-20 %) of saplings by the end of summer. In September chemical spraying was applied on Robinia sprouts with spectacular result. In November the contracted amount of sapling supplement was accomplished as follows. As there is accord among foresters that a less successful plantation should rather be replanted, than supplemented in high proportion (because of the importance of soil preparation), we directed the subcontractors to plant the contracted amount of saplings to the sites with higher success (15 ha), leaving the less successful sites without supplement (for further details on the reasons behind these results of plantations, see **5. Problems encountered**).

On areas with complete soil preparation (10 ha), follow-up treatment included hoeing of sapling rows three times and disking of inter line sections two times. As Robinia stumps were eliminated and the soil was deeply ploughed, Robinia sprouting was not significant, and consequently the survival rate of saplings was much higher (about 50-60%). Sapling supplement was carried out on these sites, too.

For the map of implemented Action D2, see **Annex PR2 C1-C2-D1-D2**. For photo on this Action, see **Annex PR2 D2-1**.

On cca. 27 ha of partial soil preparation sites, where survival of saplings was under expectations, we propose to use a developed method of partial soil preparation: a 60 cm wide 50 cm deep so called seedbed with a rectangular profile will be made. In order to secure the even depth of the seed bed, we will cut the stumps to make the motion of the tractor more even. Saplings and acorns will be planted into this seed bed by the middle of April.

Hoeing of rows of saplings and mowing of interline sections in the necessary measure will happen like in 2009.

E1 – Information to the general public – media work

Expected results:

- Increased interest on the issues targeted by the project and wide knowledge of the results achieved
- Wide media presence
- 4 press conferences with press trips held for the national media
- 1 press conference with a trip is organised for the international media
- Press releases are issued
- Press articles collected and filed in

Achievements by 31/12/2009:

- 1 opening press conference and press trip for local and national media to introduce the project, the problems to solve, goals to achieve, etc. was organized
- 1 press conference and press trip was organized for local and national media to the opening ceremony of the educational centre
- 1 press trip was organized for local and national media to the drive of game with volunteers
- Several press releases and articles were issued and sent out to the Hungarian media representatives
- Relatively high media coverage generated by the press trips and the press releases
- National and regional television channels broadcast about the project several times
- News and thematic articles were regularly published in the magazines, news papers and websites of the Beneficiary and Partners about the project goals and activities, the steppe oak woods, and the Natura 2000 network
- Articles were collected, filed in and made available on the project website

Action status: *On-going*

Description:

Premises: for the achievements of this Action by 31.01.2009, please refer to the MTR

In 2009 communication efforts were focused on the inhabitants of Nagykőrös. Regular articles were published in the local news-paper of the Municipality about the project activities. We highlighted the programs of the Educational Centre but we also informed people about the forestry works. On the websites of the Beneficiary and Partners regular news have been placed. Also on popular on-line portals some articles were published.

On the local television of Kecskemét, the biggest city in the region, news of the project were broadcast several times. This television presented different points of views and opinions about the forestry works and nature conservation goals of the project.

In addition, some local inhabitants (e.g. Tibor Kapas), who are interested in preserving the natural and cultural heritage of their town, have been involved more actively in the communication and education activities. Thanks to their local relationships their support to the project is very helpful and valuable. Some articles written by Tibor Kapas about the oak woods have been collected and filed as well.

At the end of the reporting period on 12.02.2010, linked to a volunteer-based game driving organized by local hunting society, WWF and DINPI (see also Action C3), a press trip was organized for the national media. For a photo, press registration form, see **Annex PR2 E1-1, E1-2**. Records are foreseen to be broadcasted in March 2010 on nation-wide TV channels.

As during 2009 there were no special event or milestone reached that would have given an opportunity to organize a press trip to the project site. Consequently media presence was lower than in the first two years of the project.

Regrettably, in 2009 the project also had some negative media appearances. Local TV channel of Kecskemét had some negative opinions on the project, but they also opened the door to our point of view. Later during the year we established a professional relationship with the editor.

However, in May 2009 issue of a monthly hunters' magazine, a hostile article was published, full of false statements and inspirations. The magazine has a strong anti-nature conservation attitude, for example in large carnivore issues. In accordance with the Hungarian regulations on media, we initiated emendation. As the editors refused to publish it, we initiated action at law. Consequently, the editorial office of the magazine attempted to retreat in form of some corrections published in the September issue. As we considered it unsatisfactory, litigation was going on. Finally, the judgement (**Annex PR2 E1-5**) of the court of first instance (10.11.2009) stated that 4 of 6 points of our statement of claim were reasonable, so the magazine had to publish emendation. This judgement is still not legally binding, but as far as we know the magazine will not appeal.

On 02.10.2009, a scandal focused program of a Hungarian news channel broadcasted a report on the project. Both the program and the channel itself have a Euro-sceptic attitude, which formed the basis for a report on a EU fund project. As it's criticism was more "professional", expressing mostly true statements in a very unfavorable light by using manipulative imaging, editing and comments, we decided not to start an action at law.

All the above negative media appearances had been directly or indirectly induced by Mr. Ferenc Farkas, a local forest manager who DINPI is in land leasing contract with. Although he repressed his negative opinion on our goals and methods during negotiations on the leasing contract, as the implementation started, he turned aggressive. Nevertheless, we constantly try to keep our relationship with Mr. Farkas on a professional track.

A list of printed and electronic media appearances (articles, news, interviews, broadcasts) is attached in Annex PR2 E1-3) Selected articles (5 examples from 2009) are also attached (Annex PR2 E1-4/1-5). Articles from previous years were attached to the 1st progress report in Annex PR1 E1-2 and the mid-term report in Annex MTR E1-3/1-6.

Plans for continuation of this action in the next 6 month:

In addition to the originally planned publications and communication activities we decided to publish a special issue of the WWF Magazine project in 15.000 pieces, in order to give out more information to local people about the nature conservation activities. Out of this 10.000 will be distributed with the local news paper, reaching all the households of Nagykőrös. Publication of articles and news in our own periodicals and the local news paper of Nagykőrös will also be continued. Continuous presence on the websites and blog of Beneficiary and Partners will be continued. Press releases will be issued at the important milestones of the project.

E2 - Information to the general public – website

Expected results:

- An up-to date website in Hungarian and English version with an e-mail address, downloads, links to a number of other websites (LIFE, beneficiary, partners, other projects)
- Banners and links are established
- A certain amount of visitors (expected number of visitors 30,000 per year) and downloads

Achievements by 28/02/2010:

- A project website in Hungarian and English on www.pusztaitolgyesek.hu was created, and its content is maintained up-to-date: required logos, a direct e-mail address of the project, contact information, project description, news, maps, downloads, photo gallery, links to a number of other websites (LIFE, Natura 2000, beneficiary, partners, co-financiers, other LIFE projects, related sites), etc.
- Links to the project website were placed on the websites of the Beneficiary, the Partners and other LIFE projects.
- Banners were created and placed
- Total number of visits to the website till 28.02.2010 was over 72,000

Action status: *On-going*

Description:

Premises: website was set up by 12.04.2007, including an on-line game, which was promoted by a competition. Links to the website were placed on other sites. For the details and usage data of previous years, please refer to the MTR.

During the reporting period (13 months) visits to the website have reached 26,500 (usage statistics are attached in **Annex PR2 E2-1**).

In 2009 traffic on the website slightly decreased in comparison to the previous year, when the campaign of the on-line game produced a huge peak during the summer. However this year visitors performed a continuous interest, with two moderate peaks in the spring and in the autumn. Many visitors returned to the website more than 3 times, and visited several pages before leaving.

Plans for continuation of this action in the next 6 month:

The website will be kept up-to-date with all the achievements, news, events and photos of the project. Continuous information before and after the programs of the educational centre will be published on the website. As a result of discussions with hunters, a minor modification will be made in the on-line game and it will be advertised again in the spring.

E3 - Development of programmes for the educational centre

Expected results:

- Preparation of the educational strategy for the area;
- Preparation of educational programmes for at least three main educational activities (min. 5 school class, min. 1 summer camp, min. 1 Nature Trail programme, with all necessary teaching materials and methods);
- Preparation of a 30 hours “Train the trainer programme”;

- Edition of a teaching aid book, in min. 500 copies;

Achievements:

- survey on environmental educational needs in the area
- exchange of experience with environmental educators
- collection of materials for the educational program
- educational programs worked out for the 'outdoors school' classes and the Nature Trail

Action status: on-going, delayed

Description:

Premises: preparation of an educational strategy was started in 2007, going on in 2008. For the details of this activity, please refer to the MTR

Based on all these experiences and educational materials, the educational programs were worked out for the 'outdoors' school classes and the Nature Trail, and after opening the educational complex and Nature Trail, the implementation of these programs could start (see Action E5).

Following the first season, syllabi for 4 age-groups (for 3-6, 7-10, 10-14, 12-16 years old children) and for summer camp was completed (for the syllabi in Hungarian, see **Annex PR2 E3-1/1-6 on DVD**). These documents served as the core of the popular programs during the first complete season of the Education Centre in 2009 (see Action E4-E5).

On the other hand, we faced difficulties preparing the 'Train the trainer programme'. The Education Program Coordinator, who both finalized the syllabi and arranged programs also established valuable professional relationships with many of the local educational institutions and employees of those. She experienced that although teachers are interested in such programmes, their employers do not tend to allow them to participate. Reasons behind this are lack of accreditation of the opening courses and charging after LIFE project period, together with the permanent financial and consequently human resource and substitution problems of educational institutions. Summarizing these circumstances, we conclude that the efforts necessary for such a programme are far more than the educational benefits possible to gain of it.

E4 - Communication of the educational programme to target groups

Expected results:

- Brochure on the educational centre programmes, 15000 copies
- Three types of green events annually, with 100-150 participants each (in 3 years, altogether on min. 9 occasions)
- The educational section of the main web page is emphasized
- High levels of public awareness on the educational centre and its programs and parallel to this, related to steppe oak forests of Nagykőrös and the Natura 2000 network

Achievements:

- The educational part of our webpage is in operation and serves up-to-date information with maps, photos, downloads, etc.
- A children drawing competition was organized in order to raise public attention to the opening of the educational centre and collect drawings for its decoration
- Family day in the Pálfája Educational Centre in 2008 and 2009
- Conference presentation on the project with emphasis on Actions directly related to the educational activities.
- Participation with stand in events in town, like 'Nagykőrös Days' in 2007, 2008, 2009
- many presentations in Action E6 and many actions of E1 notice the educational activities within the project

Action status: on-going

Description:

Premises: educational section of the project website was published and is in continuous operation. Drawing competition and volunteer work were parts of promotion of the Educational Centre. Minister of MEW participated in the opening ceremony of the Educational Centre, in the midst of nation-wide media attention. Participation in town events is a regular activity in promoting the educational programmes, as well as organizing our own events. For the details on activities of previous years, please refer to the MTR.,

In 2009 we participated in the two days weekend event 'Nagykőrös Days' with a stand for the third year.

In 2009 'Family day' was held on 26.09.2009. with about 40 participants. Program included handicraft work, making nest boxes, Nature Trail program.

The educational section of the project website is in operation. For the usage statistics, see **Annex PR2 E4-2.**

2009 was the first full year of operation of Educational Centre. Freshly recruited, local resident Education Program Coordinator Mária Vinczéné Sági started further intensive promotion of programs (for a photo on such an event, see **Annex PR2 E4-1**). Her activity included participating in local NGO-s events, establishing cooperation with organizations, personally meeting representatives of all the local educational institutes. Although the established cooperation with the organizations below is informal, it is probably the strongest basis of the operation of Pálfája Education Centre.

Range of cooperating organizations includes:

Aranykerék Bicycle Club
Horse Club of Nagykőrös
Club of Families Nagykőrös
Club of Retired People of Nagykőrös
Institution of Social Service of Nagykőrös for mentally handicapped people
Child Protection Service of Pest County
Dalmady Győző Kindergarten and Elementary School

As a result, the Educational Centre became part of "Things to see" in town, got integrated into the cultural and educational life and even the social service of Nagykőrös. Local teachers volunteer their time to help programs, entrepreneurs donated firewood or raw

material for handicraft programs, local companies consider the Centre as an obvious site for their events. To sum up, the Centre became a significant site of Nagykőrös, confirming both the proposed need for such a location and the efforts of the Education Program Coordinator.

In 2009 we have involved 6 young students of sciences (one of them from France) as WWF volunteers to the organization of the summer camp in the Educational Centre (6-10 July). Their participation had two purposes: on one hand they helped project staff with coordination and supervising of the children, and on the other they learned deeply about the project and the educational work and could spread the information among their fellow students by mouth-of-word.

Education Program Coordinator of Pálfája Education Center, ranger of Dinnyés area (valuable wetland at the western end of DINPI orbit), 4 elementary school pupils from Nagykőrös and 4 from village of Dinnyés represented DINPI on „Together for Nature” competition on 28-30.08.2009 in Apuseni National Park, Garda de Sus, Romania, which was an opportunity to report on the project on international level.

E5 - Starting up the educational programme and continuous operation of the educational centre

Expected participation of adult and children groups on the programmes (25 persons per group in average):

‘Outdoors’ school classes:

- 2008/2009 15 groups
- 2009/2010 25 groups
- 2010/2011 35 groups

Nature Trail programmes:

- 2008/2009 40 groups
- 2009/2010 60 groups
- 2010/2011 80 groups

Summer camps:

- 2008/2009 2 groups
- 2009/2010 3 groups
- 2010/2011 4 groups

Train the trainer programme:

- 2008/2009 1 group
- 2009/2010 2 groups
- 2010/2011 3 groups

Visitors on the education section of the web page:

- 2008/2009 2000 persons
- 2009/2010 3000 persons
- 2010/2011 5000 persons

Achievements:

'Outdoor' school classes:

- 2008-2009 17 groups

Nature Trail programmes:

- 2008-2009 73 groups, 2433 participants

Summer camps:

- 2008-2009 5 groups, 163 participants

Visitors on the education section of the web page:

- 01.02.2009-28.02.2010 3062 persons

Non-educational programs held

Action status: on-going

Description:

Premises: from the beginning of the project up to 31.10.2009, activities related to the educational program was responsibility of DINPI, while the reconstruction (see MTR Action C4), operation and maintenance of the Educational Centre was one of NKÖ. Following the opening ceremony, educational program started immediately with Nature Trail programs, followed by outdoor school classes in autumn. For the details, please refer to the MTR.

As recorded in our proposal, from 01.11.2009 the NKÖ took over the running of the educational program, too. NKÖ preferred to subcontract the operation of the Centre with a company owned 100 % by itself. After consulting this issue with representatives of the Commission on 10-11.03.2009 and having the formal statement on it on 11.05.2009, negotiations began between NKÖ and KöVa, the company in question. Although the informal part of the negotiations was fluent, and KöVa in fact started to operate the Centre, the written agreement is still not ready. Showing the commitment of KöVa to the operation of the Centre, since 01.11.2009 they have employed Mária Vinczéné Sápi, Education Program Coordinator employed by DINPI before that date. This is in accordance with intentions of DINPI on assuring the continual running of programs, highly based on the professional relationships Mária Vinczéné Sápi had substantiated (see also Action E4).

For the statistics of registered visitors in 2008-2009 see **Annex PR2 E5-1**.

Number of visitors rose significantly in 2009. Programs attracted mainly kindergartens and elementary schools, but adult groups, students of a relating technical college (for hunters), college, high schools, religious communities were also entertained. Programs were integrated into town level events like 'Nagykőrös Days' or Earth Day. Events of private companies were supplemented by nature trail program guided by the Education Program Coordinator, which was always appreciated by the company groups, too. Most of the groups arrived from Nagykőrös and its neighbouring settlements, but from further parts of Hungary and Budapest as well.

Altogether 5 summer camps were organized, one of them by DINPI itself while the rest by other organizations like Calvinist church, local teachers, schools, sport trainers. Although most of these camps had a particular central topic, like religion, language or sport, they all integrated the environmental education programs provided by the Education Program Coordinator.

One attractive service of the programs throughout the season was the horse-cart service. A local horse club provided it, which was offered as a way to get to the Centre from town in

case of larger groups as well as of visitors of events in town, and also a good opportunity to visit the broader surroundings of the Centre and the whole Pálfája stand, including the Nagykőrös 128 stand which is a nearby part of the project target area.

For photos on this Action, see **Annex PR2 E5-2/1-5**.

E6 - Mutual communication aiming at different groups of professionals and dissemination of scientific results

Expected results:

- Experts are continuously informed about achievements in the management tasks as well as they can provide feedback by their comments on these actions
- Approximately 75 scientific experts from all over Europe, as well as 20 Hungarian professionals, get acquainted with the results of the project
- NGOs active in the field of the Natura 2000 site management have the opportunity to learn from the experience of the project coordinators

Achievements:

- Experts are continuously informed about the goals, activities and insofar experiences of the project and have had the opportunity to provide feedback
- Project staff participated and presented the project at several thematic events (conferences, seminars and meetings)
- NGOs, active in the field of nature conservation were informed, got acquainted with the goals and learned about the insofar experiences of the project
- A field visit to the project site for representatives of NGOs was organized

Action status: on-going

Description:

Premises: for the list and description of several events referring to this Action by 31.01.2009, please refer to the MTR.

As 2009 was a year of extensive conservation management work, due to lack of capacity, we did not participate in conferences. However, we began to refresh our relationship with colleagues at Hortobágy and Kiskunság National Park Directorates, who manage some steppic oak stands on sandy soil, too.

E7 - Development of a Nature Trail

Expected results:

- introduction of the nature value and role of 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' pSCI and Natura 2000 network through 10 stations of the Nature Trail, with 2200 m length
- establishment of the first Nature Trail within the area of Nagykőrös town together with the local government

- free-of-charge service of the educational program
- 8000 copies of A5 format Nature Trail guide
- 1000-1500 visitors per year

Achievements:

- introduction of the nature value and role of 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' pSCI and Natura 2000 network through 10 stations of the Nature Trail, with 1800 m length
- establishment of the first Nature Trail within the area of Nagykőrös town together with the local government
- free-of-charge service of the educational program
- 8000 copies of A5 format Nature Trail guide
- 317 guided visitors in 2008, 2433 guided visitors in 2009, and cca. 5000 non guided visitors (latter by guess)

Action status: on-going

Description:

Premises: after planning and preparing, the Nature Trail was inaugurated on 05.06.2008. For the details, including the description of the stations, the guide booklet, please refer to the MTR

For details on Nature Trail programs held see Action E5. Here we only add that estimating the number of visitors not having resort to guidance is a heavy task, but since the Pálfája forest stand is a traditional recreational forest of local residents, it is likely to have a significant number of such visitors.

In 2009 some vandalism has occurred along the trail: in some cases, the station marks were damaged. The responsible NKÖ fixed them in each case.

For photos on this Action, see **Annex PR2 E7-1/1-4**.

E8 - The compilation of Layman's report

Expected results:

- 1000 copies of Layman's report in Hungarian and English languages (in A/4 format, on recycled paper, full colour, text with photos and figures)
- a publication documenting the aims, steps and goals of the project
- wider knowledge on the issues targeted by the project and increased awareness towards the Euro-Siberian steppic woods and Pannonic sand grasslands, threatening factors.

Achievement: none

Action status: not started yet

F1 - Project operation, organizing co-operation with the partners

Expected results:

Implementation of the project is proceeding effectively, organized and with expertise

Achievements:

- project staff works and cooperates
- local office is rented
- workshop was organized with project participants at the beginning of 2007, 2008, 2009
- thematic workshops with partners are held connected to certain actions throughout the year
- Advisory Board was convened once in 2007, 2008, 2009
- project equipment is in operation

Action status: on-going

Description:

Premises: regular meetings with project Partners, stakeholders and the Advisory Board of the project were held. Necessary equipment was purchased.

The equipment for the project was supplemented with a desk computer, a multi-functional device (fax, scanner, printer), chain saw, clearing saw (latter were mentioned in C3).

Advisory Board was informed on the state of the project on 06.10.2009. For list of participants, see **Annex PR2 F1-6**.

Annual season opening project meetings were held on 11.02.2009 and 02.02.2010. For lists of participants, memorials of 2009 and 2010 events, and a photo on the 2009 workshop, see **Annex PR2 F1-1, F1-2, F1-3, F1-4, F1-5**.

There were some personnel changes during the reporting period what are given in table below.

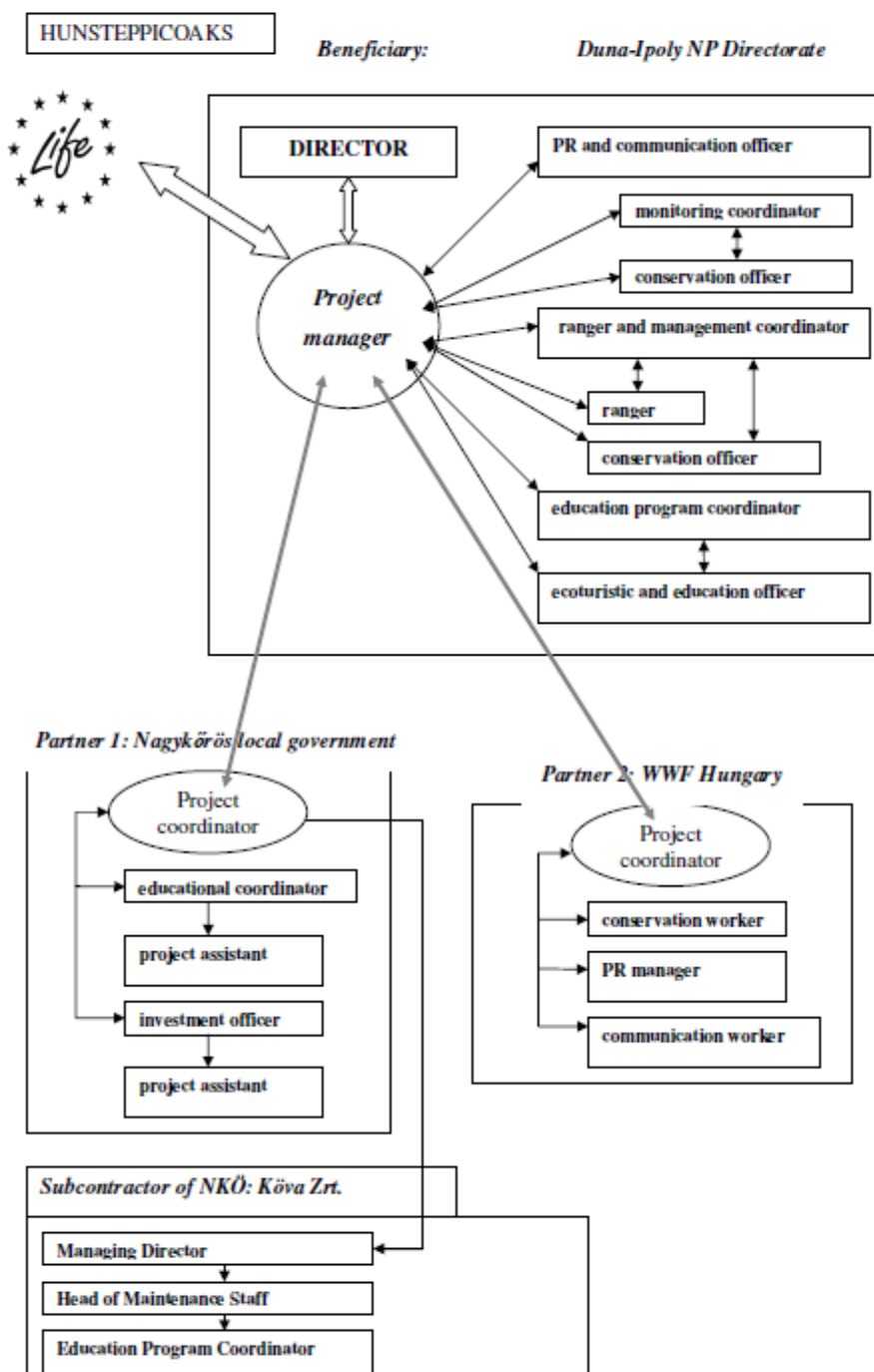
Name	Position	Partner	comments
Mária Vinczéné Sági	Educational program coordinator	DINPI	Mária Vinczéné Sági finished her work on 31/10/2009
István Justin	Ranger and management coordinator	DINPI	Was replaced by Dénes Dobrosi from 01/02/2010 (from 01/01/2010 to 31/01/2010 they worked together)

Since 01.11.2009, Mária Sági Vinczéné as educational program coordinator has been employed by KöVa Zrt., subcontractor of NKÖ on operation of the Pálfája Educational Centre.

As a field officer, Dénes Dobrosi follows István Justin. After getting the necessary qualifications, Dénes Dobrosi will join the DINPI ranger staff. Mr. Dobrosi is a forest engineer with significant experiences on forest plantations on sandy soil using indigenous species,

which he gained at Kiskunság National Park Directorate. In fall 2009 we contracted him to analyze the problems of forestations and to provide the feasible solutions (see also Action A4), then decided to involve him into the project as responsible person for the field works, especially the forestations.

After transferring the environmental educational tasks to NKÖ and its subcontractor, the organogram has changed as follows:



F2 - Conservation management monitoring

Expected results:

- the result of the action is the detailed documentation and evaluation of the effects of habitat management actions, through structural variables and indicator organizations
- on the basis of the monitoring data the real effects of the project are determinable and quantifiable, such as the trend of decrease of invasive species (coverage decline during the project, seedling grown up during the project, etc.)
- the results of F2 are important for the long-term management plan (management plan of the Natura 2000 site (Action A5) for determining the necessary tasks

Achievements:

- detailed documentation on basic state of the management quadrants in 2007, 2008 and detailed documentation on the state of the quadrants during the first year of management in 2009
- pitfall trap samples were collected as basic state survey in 2007, 2008 and as survey on the state during the first year of management in 2009.

Action status: on-going

Description:

Conservational management monitoring - botanical part:

Premises: in 2007 and 2008 botanical part of the monitoring was carried out. For methods and sites please refer to the MTR.

In 2009, 5 quadrants out of management areas were abandoned and 2 new ones were established, so altogether 22 quadrants were sampled. For their distribution map see **Annex PR2 F2-F3-1**

The detailed study of 2009 can be found **on DVD, in Annex PR2 F2-F3-2.**

Conservational management monitoring - zoological part:

Premises: in 2007 and 2008 zoological part of the monitoring was carried out. For methods and sites please refer to the MTR.

In 2009, the same sites were sampled as in 2008.

Conservational management monitoring – artificial forest regeneration part

As we reported (see Action D2 and 5. Problems encountered), survival rate of saplings planted were not satisfactory on cca. 27 ha of 55 ha planted. In order to develop the methods used, we contracted a forestry expert to study the survival rate and to analyze the potential reasons behind it (see also Action A4). For his study, see **Annex PR2 F2-1 on DVD**

F3 - Monitoring of biological status of habitat types of community importance

Expected results:

- the result of the action is the detailed documentation and evaluation of the natural values of the 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' pSCI, especially the qualitative and quantitative state and changes of reference habitat types and its species
- detailed lists of plant and animal species occurring, phyto-coenological records of reference habitat types and maps of the distribution of reference values utilized in editing the conservation management plan of the Natura 2000 site (Action A5).

Achievements:

- detailed documentation on basic state of the reference quadrants in 2007, 2008 and 2009
- pitfall trap samples were collected as basic state survey in 2007, 2008 and 2009
- taxa of weevils, longhorn beetles, moths, Orthoptera, spiders are collected, species lists are compiled
- dead wood material was investigated, species lists are available

Description:

Biodiversity monitoring - botanical part:

Premises: in 2007 and 2008 botanical part of the monitoring was carried out. For methods and sites please refer to the MTR.

In 2009 research took place on the same plots as in previous years. For their distribution map see **Annex PR2 F2-F3-1**

The detailed study of 2009 can be found **on DVD, in Annex PR2 F2-F3-2.**

Biodiversity monitoring - zoological part:

Premises: in 2007 and 2008 zoological part of the monitoring was carried out. For methods and sites please refer to the MTR.

In 2009 research took place on the same plots as in previous years.

F4 - Continuation of the activities after project completion and preparation of an After-LIFE conservation plan

Expected results:

- An after-LIFE conservation plan

- The successful conservation of the area and the enhancement of the favourable conservational status of the priority habitats are ensured.
- Over the priority habitats conservation disposes, consequently conservational management has priority importance
- The local stakeholders and the public, as well as professionals are continuously informed on the conservational issues on 'Nagykőrösi pusztai tölgyesek' pSCI
- Complex educational programs (with the emphasis on the Euro-siberian steppic oak forests and Pannonic sand steppes) operate in the areas.

Achievement: none

Action status: not started yet

5. Problems encountered

Reaching the undertaken stretch of managed area we still miss the Strázsa-hegy stand (Nagykőrös 98 forest stand; Nagykőrös 0821/1 in land register). Purchasing this land by DINPI from out of project budget is under process. About the third of its 28.5 ha stretch belongs to several private owners. We contracted with the owner of the two-third of the land and with most of the private owner, but some of them are not willing to sell their property or not available. The problem is that an owner doesn't own distinct parts of this site, but it is a common property of them all in a determined proportion. This means that we can not see the date when the 100 % of this land will belong to the DINPI. In order to make the undertaken management possible to implement, besides the above circumstances, we initiated the registration of DINPI as the forest manager of the land, which was accepted by the SFS (see **Annex PR2 A4-2**)

Although we considered the state of Strázsa-hegy ready to work, the new law on forestry issued in July created a *ex lex* state which significantly limited our opportunities of management work. The missing enacting clauses (which clarified the new form of permissions and management plans) were finally issued in November, so the management plans necessary for most of the permissions of SFS were ready to get. However, we still have not got it, but in personal communication SFS promised to send the management plan of Strázsa-hegy out soon.

Problems we faced in 2009 were the significant sprouting of Robinia, the low survival rate of saplings of plantations, the presence of big game in the area (see Action C3), and some negative media appearances (for details and solutions refer to Action E1).

In this Part of PR2 we discuss the problems of the plantations in detail. We faced both technological and organizational problems, which jointly resulted in low survival rate.

Technological problems included heavy sprouting of Robinia. This might have been a result the short time between timber harvest and soil preparation (2008), and so the latter induced heavier sprouting in 2009, besides chemical treatment. Spring 2009 was extremely dry in the region of the project site, which retarded Robinia sprouting (and damaged the planted saplings – see below). However, by the end of June, precipitation was significant, which induced extremely heavy sprouting of Robinia, which was kind of dormant before.

The other aspect of technological problems concerns the saplings. Spring drought has damaged them seriously, and the subsequent rain was not able to help them recovering.

For the precise detection of the problems emerged and to find the feasible solutions, we contracted a forestry expert (see also Action A4).

As a result of these experiences and the expert's study, we will be prepared for irrigation. During spring, kind of a bank will be hoed along the saplings which will let us react quickly to drought by irrigation. The other way we handle this situation is that on the sites of lowest survival we will apply a developed method of soil preparation. For-profit forest managers use total soil preparation because it improves the water management of the sandy soil. We have to find the optimum solution between the need for a minimum success of plantations and securing the permeability of forest regeneration sites for species of priority habitats around them. Using the 65 cm wide 50 cm deep seedbeds, we hope to find the optimum.

Organizational problems might have a role in difficulties in handling the serious threats of technological challenges mentioned above. As described in detail at Action A4, on the majority of the project site, all the works from timber harvest to first year of post-treatment were regulated within two contracts, and actually with the same contractor. As a nature of

large contracts, the contractor subcontracted a significant proportion of the job. In some cases this fact decreased our control on the precise implementation of works. For this reason, in 2010 we establish a construction provides us tighter control.

6. Financial issues

The reporting period (from 01/09/2006 to 28/02/2010) is 70,7 % of the total project period. We are working in HUF. However there is a high rate of fluctuation what makes difficult to estimate the real costs in € at the reporting time.

In our previous reports we accounted net costs on LIFE contribution excluding VAT for whole project period, however, we experienced that from 2008 on the new national tax legislation excludes all LIFE projects' tax from VAT reimbursement. Hereby from 01/01/2008 we have to account gross costs (including VAT). In final report we will provide also the necessary certificates.

For the calculation of the expenditures (incurred costs) in this report the official exchange rate 1 € = 264,78 HUF from 01/04/2010 as published in Central European Bank has been used.

The above mentioned change of the Hungarian VAT regulations caused also the unexpected increase of total incurred costs and at the moment the expenditures in the category Durable goods exceed the foreseen budget already by 18% (or 57.834 €). Hence, in order to make all incurred costs eligible, we have to ask the Commission for the modification of the budget according the Common Provisions. This modification request will be prepared and submitted immediately after the evaluation of this progress report.

Evaluation of expenditure according to cost categories:

PROJECT COSTS INCURRED BY COST CATEGORIES

	Cost category	Total cost according to the Commission's decision*	Total costs incurred from the start date to 28/02/2010	%
		EUR	EUR	EUR
1.	Personnel	238 872	188 476	79 %
2.	Travel	52 056	15 538	30 %
3.	External assistance	636 500	479 992	75 %
4.	Durables: total cost	329 600	387 434	118 %
5.	Land purchase	490 000	348 426	71 %
6.	Consumables	42 400	22 830	54 %
7.	Other costs	21 880	16 385	75 %
8.	Overheads	51 928	29 024	56 %
	SUM TOTAL	1 863 236	1 488 106	80 %

Personnel costs:

It is in line with the annual work plans and budget.

There were some personnel changes during the period what are given in table below.

Name	Position	Partner	comments
Mária Vinczéné Sági	Educational program coordinator	DINPI	Mária Vinczéné Sági finished her work on 31/10/2009
István Justin	Ranger and management coordinator	DINPI	Was replaced by Dénes Dobrosi from 01/02/2010 (from 01/01/2010 to 31/01/2010 they worked together)

Travel costs:

The Travel costs are under spent.

We are calculating with the km unit costs of the previous year.

Log books or travel claims are matching the time sheets.

We would like to request the Commission to authorize the use and account of a car (reg. number: JZY-663) in our project. This car was purchased by DINPI from the budget of, and is currently solely used by the project LIFE06 NAT/H/000104 (HUNDIDI), in which DINPI is a Partner. At the moment, due to its operation solely within the scope of HUNDIDI project, this car is not used to its full potential capacity, so the cca. 50 % use of it in HUNSTEPPICOAKS project would not impede the implementation of actions in HUNDIDI project, but would help very much in the implementation of our project.

External assistance:

Parallel to the delay of Actions C1, C2, C3, spending external assistance costs have a delay, too.

We transferred 3380 € of architectural plans and 610 € of information boards from Durables to External assistance.

Durables:

The Infrastructure part is going to be higher, than proposed, due to both the extra cost of Action C4 and C3. Heightening these factors, the VAT legislation mentioned above makes it likely to increase more, than 10 % of the budget category. Refer to the VAT-related comment above.

Great mass of equipment is purchased, except some furniture and educational equipment for the Pálfája Educational Centre.

Consumables:

It is basically in line with the plans and budget.

Other costs:

It is line with the annual work plans and budget.

Overheads:

It is under spent at the moment but we expect higher expenditures in overheads with the running of the Educational Centre.

Evaluation of expenditure according to sources:**PROJECT COSTS INCURRED BY SOURCES**

	Sources	Total	Incurred	%
		EUR	EUR	EUR
1	Partners	146 741	115 039	78 %
2	MEW	319 068	234 157	73 %
3	LIFE	1 397 427	1 138 910	82 %
	SUM TOTAL	1 863 236	1 488 106	80 %

Partners' contribution:

Regarding the reporting period it is including Personnel costs and part of Travel costs and Overheads.

MEW's co-financing:

State treasury is transferring MEW's contribution yearly by instalments according to the annual work plan and budget.

LIFE advance payment:

First and second instalment (70 % of total budget) is already spent.

PROJECT COSTS INCURRED BY PARTNERS

	Cost category	Total cost according to the Commission's decision*	Total costs incurred from the start date to 28/02/2010	%
		EUR	EUR	%
1.	DINPI	1 612 925	1 303 089	81 %
2.	Nagykőrös LG	167 400	150 310	90 %
3.	WWF	82 911	34 707	42 %
	SUM TOTAL	1 863 236	1 488 106	80 %

7. Planned project progress (for the next six months)A4 - Preparation of the conservational management actions

Permissions of forestry work in Strázsa-hegy land will be applied.

Procurement of 2010 forestry works (for details see Action A4)

C2 - Artificial forest regeneration with indigenous species

Further plantations will take place in autumn 2010 on Strázsa-hegy and Pálfája stands

C3 - Natural forest regeneration with the exclusion of game

Permanent control of both the condition of fences, especially of the electric ones and the presence of big game within the fenced areas. We continue to eliminate the big game present.

We will establish fence around the Strázsa-hegy land.

D1 - Treatment of herbaceous invasives, follow-up treatment of arboreal invasives

Second year of treatments of herbaceous invasives and follow-up treatment of arboreal invasives will take place.

D2 - Follow-up treatment of artificial forest regeneration

Second season of follow-up treatment of artificial forest regeneration will take place, including new technology of soil preparation, supplement of saplings, irrigation, if necessary.

E1 - Information to the general public - Media work

Publication of articles and news in our own periodicals and the local news paper of Nagykőrös will be continued, as local people are a primary target group. Continuous presence on the websites and blogs of project beneficiary and partners will be continued. Photo competition will be organized, special volume of WWF Magazine will be published.

Press releases will be issued at the important milestones of the project.

E2 - Information to the general public - Website

The website will be kept up-to-date with all the achievements, news and photos of the project. Continuous information on the programmes of the educational centre will be published on the website. The on-line game will be promoted again.

We will continue to follow with attention the web usage statistics.

E4 - Communication of the educational programme to target groups

We will carry on presenting programs on the website's educational part.

In the next 6 month we will organize weekend events.

E6 - Mutual communication aiming at different groups of professionals and dissemination of scientific results

We will continue participating in conferences and meetings on conservation topics.

We also plan to initiate improving discussions with forestry sector representatives.

This spring the nationwide Forestry Club intends to visit the project site.

We will receive colleagues from Hortobágy and Kiskunság National Park Directorates who deal with similar issues like Robinia elimination, forestation on dry production sites of Hungarian Plain.

E7 - Development of a Nature Trail

Continuous operation of Nature Trail will keep going.

F1 - Project operation, organizing co-operation with the partners

Partners will meet when project implementation requires personal discussion.

We plan to convene the Advisory Board for visiting the project target area.

F2 - Conservation management monitoring

Vegetation monitoring in the 22 management quadrants will be launched by 30.06.2010. Pitfall traps will be deposited in the project area during spring (the timing is dependent on weather conditions).

F3 - Monitoring of biological status of habitat types of community importance

Vegetation monitoring in the 10 biodiversity quadrants will be launched by 30.06.2010. Pitfall traps will be deposited in the project area during spring (the timing is dependent on weather conditions).

Annexes

- A1-1:** Distribution of project launch brochure
- A1-2/1-2:** Photos on equipment purchased in 2009
- A2-1:** Distribution list of promotional materials
- A4-1:** Overview of leased lands and forest managers on un-leased lands
- A4-2:** Decree on registration of DINPI as forest manager of Strázsa-hegy land
- A4-3:** 1st request for forest management plan of Strázsa-hegy
- A4-4:** 2nd request for forest management plan of Strázsa-hegy
- C1-C2-D1-D2:** Management on the project target area 2008-2009
- C1-1/1-2:** Photos
- C2-1:** Photo
- D1-1/1-2:** Photos
- D2-1:** Photo
- C3-1/1-6:** Photos
- C4-1:** Photo
- E1-1:** Photo
- E1-2:** Press registration form for press trip on 12.02.2010
- E1-3:** Media coverage 01.12.2008- 28.02.2010
- E1-4/1-5:** Examples of media coverage
- E1-5:** Judgement on emendation - 'Vadászlap' hunters' magazine
- E2-1:** Webusage statistics
- E3-1/1-6:** Syllabi for environmental education programs, see DVD
- E4-1:** Photo
- E4-2:** Webusage of education section of project website
- E5-1:** Summary of visitors of educational programs 2009
- E5-2/1-5:** Photos
- E7-1/1-4:** Photos
- F1-1:** List of participants – Annual project workshop 2009
- F1-2:** Photo – Annual project workshop 2009
- F1-3:** Memorial – Annual project workshop 2009
- F1-4:** List of participants – Annual project workshop 2010
- F1-5:** Memorial – Annual project workshop 2010
- F1-6:** List of participants – Meeting with Advisory Board 2009
- F2-F3-1:** Vegetation monitoring quadrants in 2009
- F2-F3-2:** Study – vegetation monitoring 2009, see DVD
- F2-1:** Study – forestry expert, see DVD