



LIFE Project Number
LIFE09 NAT /HU/000384

Mid-term Report
Covering the project activities from 01/10/2010 to 21/10/2013

Reporting Date
21/10/2013

LIFE + PROJECT NAME or Acronym
**Conservation of Falco cherrug in Northeast Bulgaria,
Hungary, Romania and Slovakia**

Data Project

Project location:	Northeast Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia
Project start date:	01/10/2010
Project end date:	30/09/2014
Total budget:	€ 4 032 828
EC contribution:	€ 3 006 470
(%) of eligible costs:	74,55

Data Beneficiary

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**1. Table of contents**

2. List of abbreviations.....	7
3. Executive summary.....	8
3.1. General progress.....	8
3.2. Assessment as to whether the project objectives and work plan are still viable.....	9
3.3. Problems encountered.....	10
3.3.1. <i>The global and especially the European economic crises influence.....</i>	10
3.3.2. <i>The Hungarian Government “unorthodox” economic policy especially the energy and tax policy.....</i>	10
3.3.3. <i>NGO partners could not access to their portion of LIFE contribution for a long period</i>	10
3.3.4. <i>Very long bureaucratic tender procedure in Hungary.....</i>	10
3.3.5. <i>Changing ownership of the electric company in Bulgaria.....</i>	10
3.3.6. <i>The Romanian Government refuse to extend the ROSPA069 Natura 2000 area.....</i>	10
3.3.7. <i>Advertisement rules and regulations hamper information sign erection.....</i>	10
3.3.8. <i>Auditor performance was not satisfactory.....</i>	10
3.3.8. <i>Pure quality of one ÉMÁSZ subcontractor’s work.....</i>	10
3.4. Measures taken to alleviate the effects of these problems.....	10
4. Administrative part	11
4.1. Description of project management.....	11
4.1.1. <i>Contracting project management.....</i>	11
4.1.2. <i>Temporary project management.....</i>	11
4.1.3. <i>Project management activities.....</i>	12
4.2. Changes in the project management structure.....	13
4.3. Up to date organigramme of the project team and the project management structure.....	14
4.4. Delivered report since the project start.....	14
4.5. Extension of the project period.....	14
5. Technical part.....	15
5.1. Actions.....	15
5.1.1. <u>Action A: Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or</u>	15
<i>A1: Assessment of the effects of current agricultural subsidies and related habitat.....</i>	15
<i>A2: Elaboration of habitat management guideline for grasslands and proposal for</i>	20
<i>A3: Preparing guideline about the effect of wind farms on F. cherrug population for.....</i>	21
<i>A4: Identifying of prey assortment using of video camera and photo traps at nests to.....</i>	24
5.1.2. <u>Action C: Concrete conservation actions.....</u>	29
<i>C1: Implement, promote and enforce the agri-environment scheme for S. citellus.....</i>	29
<i>C2: Production and installation of nest boxes in Bulgaria and Romania according to.....</i>	30
<i>C3: Repatriation of S. citellus on Natura 2000 habitats where it is missing in Hungary,.....</i>	33
<i>C4: Locate and insulate dangerous electric pylons.....</i>	36
<i>C5: Keeping and breeding of injured birds and repatriation of juveniles.....</i>	43
<i>C6: Guarding of endangered nests by photo traps and video cameras.....</i>	44
<i>C7: Marking juveniles with PTT to collect migratory and immigration data.....</i>	45
5.1.3. <u>Action D: Public awareness and dissemination of results.....</u>	46
<i>D1: Lobbying for installation of nest boxes in electric pylons.....</i>	46
<i>D2: Lobbying for insulation of electric pylons.....</i>	47
<i>D3: Erecting information signs at project site.....</i>	49
<i>D4: Design and operate project web site.....</i>	50
<i>D5: Secure public support for conservation efforts.....</i>	51
<i>D6: Informing media about project’s aims, activities and achievements.....</i>	55
<i>D7: Layman’s report.....</i>	57



5.1.4. Action E: Overall project operation and monitoring.....	57
E1: Monitoring of installed nest boxes in Bulgaria Romania according to the Hungarian ...	57
E2: Monitoring of repatriated <i>S. citellus</i> population using the Hungarian and Slovak.....	58
E3: Efficiency control of dangerous electric pylon's insulation.....	61
E4: Technical management of the project.....	61
E5: Financial management.....	62
E6: Training of project staff.....	63
E7: Held Steering Committee meetings.....	63
E8: Baseline survey to monitor project success.....	64
E9: Collecting migratory and immigration data by satellite telemetry, bird ringing and.....	65
E10: After Life Conservation Plan.....	66
5.2. Envisaged progress until next report.....	67
5.2.1. Revised reporting schedule.....	67
5.2.2. Deliverables and milestones.....	67
5.2.3. Corrected time table illustrating progress.....	67
5.3. Impact.....	67
5.4. Outside LIFE.....	67
6. Financial part.....	71
6.1. Costs incurred.....	71
6.1.1. Comment on the budget.....	72

Tables:

Table 1: Prey composition identified by pictures in Hungary.....	26
Table 2: Prey composition identified by pictures in Slovakia.....	28
Table 3: Installed and planned nest boxes in Romania.....	32
Table 4: <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation results in Hungary.....	34
Table 5: <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation results in Slovakia.....	35
Table 6: Schedule of the insulation after the MTR in Bulgaria.....	37
Table 7: Monitoring and assessment the impact of communication and dissemination.....	53
Table 8: DELIVERABLE PRODUCTS OF THE PROJECT.....	68
Table 9: MILESTONES OF THE PROJECT.....	69
Table10: TIMETABLE.....	70
Table11: Incurred costs by cost categories.....	71
Table12: Incurred costs by Partners and sources.....	71

7. Annexes

7.1. Partnership agreements

13 original Partnership Agreements and 5 Financial Amendments (**Annexed to IR**)

3 original Modification of Partnership Agreements (**Annexed to PR**)

7.2. Maps, drawings, technical designs, technical memos etc. (DVD only)

Annex I. List of annexes of Inception Report (**Refer to Annex ... of IR**)

Annex II. List of annexes of Progress Report (**Refer to Annex ... of PR**)

Annexes of Mid-term Report

These annexes may include more than one maps or pictures

Annex A1/1 Received Meteorological Data in Bulgaria

Annex A1/2 Agri-environment scheme published in the State Gazette in Bulgaria

Annex A1/3 Memos of the meeting with the farmers in Bulgaria

Annex A1/4 Pictures of the meeting with the farmers in Bulgaria

Annex A1/5 Movement of the tagged adult male in the project area along ROSPA0069

Annex A1/6 Survey report from 2013



Annex A1/7	Memos of meetings with a specialist in agri-environmental schemes in Romania
Annex A2/1	2013's survey report from Romania
Annex A2/2	Report about the discovered illegal land use in the survey area in Romania
Annex A3/1	Photos from the field work in Bulgaria
Annex A3/2	Sensitivity map of the project area in Bulgaria
Annex A3/3	Photos from the poisoned <i>F. cherrug</i> tagged with PTT
Annex A3/4	Status of the tagged birds
Annex A3/5	Tagged <i>F. cherrug</i> 's movement around wind farms along power lines
Annex A3/6	Tagged <i>F. cherrug</i> 's movement around wind farms open areas without power lines
Annex A3/7	Movements of adult male in planned wind farm area
Annex A3/8	Survey report from Romania
Annex A3/9	Analyses of PTT tagged juveniles' movements around wind farms in Slovakia
Annex A4/1	Video pictures of the different preys
Annex A4/2	Photo trap's photo of PTT tagged male feeding chicks
Annex A4/3	Land use by PTT tagged males
Annex A4/4	Survey report from Romania
Annex A4/5	Pictures from photo-traps and of video camera in Slovakia
Annex C1/1	Dagmar Tomková Slovak farmers' annual reports
Annex C1/2	AGROSPOL Hradová, spol. s r.o. Tisovec Slovak farmers' annual reports
Annex C1/3	Memos of the RDP WG meetings
Annex C1/4	Material for discussion by the RDP WG meeting in June 2013
Annex C1/5	Proposal for agri-environment scheme
Annex C2/1	Installed nest boxes in Romania in 2013
Annex C3/1	Survey of donor <i>S. citellus</i> population of Kecskemét Airbase
Annex C3/2	Survey of donor <i>S. citellus</i> population of Budapest Airport
Annex C3/3	Site preparation in HUKN10002
Annex C3/4	Trapping <i>S. citellus</i> on Kecskemét Airbase
Annex C3/5	Repatriation of trapped <i>S. citellus</i> in HUKN10002
Annex C3/6	Trapping <i>S. citellus</i> on Budapest Airport
Annex C3/7	EIA of the <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation submitted to the Roman Academy of Science
Annex C3/8	Detailed protocol for <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation in Slovakia
Annex C3/9	Report from <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation in 2013 in Slovakia
Annex C3/10	<i>S. citellus</i> repatriation in SKCHVU016 and in SKCHVU017
Annex C4/1	Memos of the meetings with the experts of Energo-Pro Grid in Bulgaria
Annex C4/2	Pictures of the meetings with the experts of Energo-Pro Grid in Bulgaria
Annex C4/3a-b	Maps of the insulated sections in Bulgaria
Annex C4/4	Pictures of the insulation work and the insulated pylons in Bulgaria
Annex C4/5	MEMO of the co-ordinating meeting about ÉMÁSZ's work in 2013
Annex C4/6	Technical report of the 2013's correction of the errors made by JUKO Ltd.
Annex C4/7a-c	Maps of insulated pylons by SPAs in Hungary
Annex C4/8	Survey of the material and work needed to insulate the selected pylons in 2013-14
Annex C4/9	Minutes of insulation coordination meeting on 23.08.2013.
Annex C4/10	Pictures of insulations and insulated pylons
Annex C4/11	Certification of Completion
Annex C4/12	Letter of DÉMÁSZ's why they are not working in 2013
Annex C4/13	MRD's invitation for a meeting about DÉMÁSZ problem on 13. February 2013.



Annex C4/14	MEMO of the co-ordination meeting
Annex C4/15	EC's letter about the eligibility of sister company's work
Annex C4/16	State Secretary of Environment's letter to DÉMÁSZ about their responsibility
Annex C4/17	Reply to the State Secretary of Environment
Annex C4/18	Minutes of the meeting about DÉMÁSZ's work within the project.
Annex C4/19	Survey of priority sections for insulation by EDF-ÉMÁSZ
Annex C4/20	Letter to the State Secretary of Environment about the tax reduction
Annex C4/21	Letter of the Ministry of National Economy about the disagreement of tax reduction
Annex C4/22	Pictures of pylons selected for insulation in Dobrodgea
Annex C4/23	Report about the insulation work in West-Romania
Annex C4/24	Maps of pylons were insulated in SKCHVU016
Annex C4/25	Maps of pylons were insulated in SKCHVU023
Annex C4/26	Maps of pylons were insulated in SKCHVU014
Annex C4/27	Pictures of insulated pylons in Slovakia
Annex C5/1	Releasing the recovered bird by "Bird" the World Champion Boxer
Annex C5/2	Romanian report about the action
Annex C5/3	Pictures about insured bird in cage
Annex C5/4	Pictures about the release of recovered bird in Slovakia.
Annex C7/1	Pictures about Kilo's tagging in Romania.
Annex C7/2	Movement of Kilo.
Annex D1/1	Invitation for the Bird Protection Conference organised by MAVIR on 6. March 2013.
Annex D1/2	Program of the Bird Protection Conference
Annex D1/3	List of invitees for the Bird Protection Conference
Annex D1/4	Pictures about the conference and the introduction of nest box installation on high voltage electric pylons for the audience of the conference
Annex D1/5	Documents of agreements with Transelectrica for nest box installation in Dobrogea
Annex D1/6	Documents of agreements with Transelectrica for nest box installation in West-Romania
Annex D3/1	Monitoring the visitors of the information signs in Kaliakra and Dobrich
Annex D3/2	The last information board installed in Romania
Annex D4/1a-c	Analytics of the project web page
Annex D4/2	Web camera pictures from <i>F. cherrug</i> breeding in 2013
Annex D4/3	Web camera pictures from <i>F. subbuteo</i> breeding in 2013
Annex D5/1	Dissemination of the posters in Bulgaria
Annex D5/2	Bulgarian leaflet
Annex D5/3	Distribution of leaflets
Annex D5/4	Bulgarian documentary Video
Annex D5/5	Dissemination of leaflets in Hungary
Annex D5/6	List and pictures of presentations
Annex D5/7	Filled questioners
Annex D5/8a-b	Romanian posters
Annex D5/9a-b	Romanian leaflets
Annex D5/10	Pictures about shooting the film
Annex D5/11	Presentations in Slovakia
Annex D5/12	Article published in Slovakia
Annex D5/13	T-shirts produced in Slovakia
Annex D5/14	Brochures produced in Slovakia



Annex D5/15	Distribution of brochures
Annex D5/16	Filled out form
Annex D6/1	Actualised list of media appearance
Annex D6/2	Bulgarian Project's Press Book with examples of different media releases from the beginning of the project.
Annex D6/3	Article about the importance of insulation of dangerous electric pylons was published in the BSPB's magazine "Za ptitsite"
Annex D6/4	Hungarian publication (TermészetBarát 2013/1)
Annex D6/5	Hungarian press release
Annex D6/6	Press Conference in Budapest Airport during <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation
Annex D6/7a	Collection of published news about the <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation
Annex D6/7b	Article published by Petőfi Népe about the <i>S. citellus</i> repatriation
Annex D6/8	Romanian press release
Annex D6/9	Invitation for releasing recovered <i>F. cherrug</i> in Slovakia
Annex D6/10	Slovak TV spot about releasing <i>F. cherrug</i>
Annex E1/1	Pictures from the nest box monitoring in Bulgaria
Annex E1/2	Pictures of nest boxes occupied by <i>F. tinnunculus</i> in Bulgaria
Annex E1/3	Monitoring in Romania
Annex E2/1a	Location of the burrows made by the repatriated <i>S. citellus</i> population in HUKN10002
Annex E2/1b	Pictures of new burrows in HUKN10002
Annex E2/2	Monitoring report from Romania
Annex E2/3	Description of <i>S. citellus</i> monitoring methods
Annex E2/4	GPS data of <i>S. citellus</i> burrows
Annex E2/5	Monitoring repatriated population in Slovakia
Annex E2/6	Hungarian <i>S. citellus</i> Monitoring Protocol
Annex E3/1	Survey sheets
Annex E3/2	Monitoring report from Romania
Annex E7/1	Invitation for Steering Committee meeting in 2013
Annex E7/2	Presentation of the Project Manager about the progress
Annex E7/3	Presentation of the Project Manager about the forthcoming tasks
Annex E7/4	Pictures of the SCM
Annex E7/5	Presentation of the achievements in Bulgaria
Annex E7/6	Presentation of the achievements in Romania
Annex E7/7	Presentation of the achievements in Slovakia
Annex E7/8	Minutes of the SC meeting
Annex E8/1	Survey report of Romania
Annex E9/1	Report from the 2 nd CMS Saker Falcon Task Force
Annex F1	VAT declarations
Annex F2	Documents of personnel costs calculation of full time staff
Annex F3	Jozef Chavko's contracts and time sheets from the two positions
Annex F4	Declaration of unit costs of cars
Annex F5	Documents of travel costs calculations applying unit costs
Annex F6	Documents of travel costs calculations applying fuel costs of justified km
Annex F7	Certification of Completion of GA Kft.'s and JUKO Kft.'s work
Annex F8	Invoices of GA Kft.'s and JUKO Kft.'s about insulation work
Annex F9	Bank statements of payments of GA Kft's and JUKO Kft.'s invoices
Annex F10	Invoices and payment documents of PTTs
Missing Annex D6-11 of PR	



2. List of abbreviations

BNPD	Bükk National Park Directorate
BSPB	BirdLife Bulgaria
CMS	Convention of Migratory Species
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowances
EC	European Commission
EDF-DÉMÁSZ	EDF-DÉMÁSZ electric distributor Ltd.
ENEL	ENEL electric distributor Ltd.
E.On	EO.On electric distributor Ltd.
ÉMÁSZ	ÉMÁSZ electric distributor Ltd.
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSM	Global System for Mobile
HQ	Headquarter
KEOP	Environment and Energy Operational Programme
KMNPD	Körös-Maros National Park Directorate
KNPD	Kiskunság National Park Directorate
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Food
MAVIR	Hungarian Transmission System Operator Company Ltd.
MILVUS	„Milvus Group” Association
MME	BirdLife Hungary
MNE	Ministry of National Economy
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forest
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organisations
NW	North West
PA	Partnership Agreement
PROVÉRTES	Pro Vértés Non-profit Private Limited Company
PTT	Platform Transmitter Terminals
RD	Rural Development
RDP	Rural Development Program
RPS	Raptor Protection of Slovakia
SC	Steering Committee
SOR	BirdLife Romania
SPA	Special Protected Area
SSE	State Secretary of Environment
ToR	Terms of Reference
WG	Working Group
ZFK	Green Corridor Public Foundation
ZSE a.s.	West-Slovakian Electric Company



3. Executive summary (max 3 pages)

3.1. General progress.

The start and work of the project was hampered seriously by Hungarian administrative difficulties i.e. NGO partners could not access to their money, very slow and long tender process, very slow process to enquiring permissions from national authorities. Thanks to the enthusiastic work of all project staff of every partner the project could survive and did a promising start despite of these serious problems. In the second part of 2011 the project activities speeded up although the tender process was very slow in the public sector. Some unforeseen problems also hampered the work but finally the project was progressing well except the insulation of the dangerous electric pylons what is behind schedule due to different reasons.

Summary of progress during reporting period:

- Field surveys have been carried out. Data was collected from stakeholders. GIS database has been established and filled with data. A detailed knowledge base was established on the exact effect of specific agricultural practices and subsidy systems on *F. cherrug* habitats and food supply. The results have made it possible to further specify the measures beneficial for *F. cherrug* and were incorporated into the subsidies. In Bulgaria it was incorporated into the existing *Aquila heliaca* subsidy system, while in Romania an integrated subsidy system proposal will be submitted to the Ministry. Leaflets are designed and ready for printing in Bulgaria. In Bulgaria about 30 farmers, in Romania 100 farmers were contacted each year (A1).
- The *S. citellus* populated areas have been identified and surveyed within the two SPAs and in the new *F. cherrug* populated area in Romania. Survey reports have been prepared. A preliminary proposal for the Agri-environmental Working Group of MoA has been prepared and negotiated (A2).
- Field data collection of roaming birds around wind farms have been done in Bulgaria. 32 PTT have been purchased in Hungary. Out of these, 17 adults and 6 juvenile birds were tagged in Hungary, 3 juveniles and 2 adults were tagged in Romania, 1 juvenile in Czech Republic and movement of tagged birds was studied. In Slovakia 4 PTT were purchased and installed on juveniles (A3).
- A video camera was installed in Hungary and Slovakia and its pictures were broadcasted in the project web from Hungary in 2011 & 2012 and in RPS web from Slovakia in 2012. 14 photo traps were purchased and installed in Hungary. In Slovakia photo traps used for guarding were used also to collect data on prey. Recorded data were evaluated. (A4)
- Agreements on subsidies signed with the farmers in 2 pilot areas. 20 hectares of land was under the measures on each site in both years. The final payment of the scheme was calculated. Five meetings with the working group of RDP. The Scheme was submitted to the Ministries for consideration. (C1)
- All planned nest boxes were installed in Bulgaria, 7 nest boxes “type 1” and 67 nest boxes “type 2” have been installed in Romania. (C2)
- 235 *S. citellus* repatriated in Hungary, 49 inds. repatriated in Romania and 387 inds. repatriated and marked by chip in Slovakia. (C3)
- Baseline surveys for killed birds were going on. Insulation materials were purchased by BSPB in Bulgaria, MILVUS & SOR in Romania and ZSE in Slovakia. Subcontractors were selected by tenders and 327 pylons were insulated in Bulgaria, 2829 pylons insulated in Hungary, 23 pylons insulated in Romania and 744 pylons insulated in Slovakia (C4).



- 2x2 cages were built in Slovakia and in Romania. Injured birds were rescued in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. Recovered birds were released in Hungary and Slovakia. (C5)
- Three photo traps with GSM system were used for nest guarding and all the three pairs had successful breeding. (C6)
- Three juveniles were marked by PTT in Romania. (C7/A3)
- An International Conference was organised by MAVIR in 2010, 2011 and 2013. ENEL participated in it in 2013. A meeting with the Romanian Electric Suppliers was organised by MoEF and meeting among the Romanian electric suppliers and Romanian project partners were held several times. An agreement was made with ENEL, Electrica and Transelectrica about nest box installation (D1)
- Decision makers of the Romanian Electricity Companies accepted the idea to insulate the dangerous pylons of medium-voltage power lines and started the insulation (D2).
- In Bulgaria 2, in Hungary 14, in Romania 3, in Slovakia 2 information signs have been erected. (D3)
- Web page: www.sakerlife.mme.hu is functioning. (D4)
- Posters were designed. 1000 posters were printed in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. 800 and 900 posters are displayed. Leaflets are designed. 1000 leaflets were printed in Bulgaria and Romania and 2500 leaflets were printed in Hungary and about 2000 are already distributed. 300 DVDs were produced and distributed about the web 2012's video in Hungary. 300 pcs of T-shirts and 500 copies of brochures were produced in Slovakia (D5).
- Six press conferences were organised, 15 Press Releases were released, 16 TVs and 7 radio broadcasted, 14 newspapers and 121 online news reported about the project work. (D6).
- The nest box monitoring was started in 2013 (E1).
- Repatriations of *S. citellus* were confirmed successful in four NATURA 2000 sites until the dormant period (E2).
- Repeated survey has been done on the insulated sections of electric pylons (E3)
- Project management team is in place and did intensive coordination to overcome on the bureaucratic problems. The project management team has regularly visited partners (E4).
- Project Auditor has changed and regular financial monitoring was going on (E5).
- Project staff was trained and project work is standardised (E6).
- Three annual SC meeting were held with good attendance. (E7)
- Large areas were surveyed in both countries. 5 pairs were found in Romania among them a new successfully breeding pair. (E8)
- Visits in Ukraine for networking and to assist *F. cherrug* conservation and ensure support of our roaming birds. Contribution to CMS work in conservation of *F. cherrug* (E9).

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

The project partners were working hard and did a good progress thanks to the enthusiastic project team and the experienced project management team. The partners have used all possible solutions and all effort to alleviate the difficulties created by the administrative problems. Since the Hungarian Government recently disclosed its plan to nationalise the energy sector. It is uncertain whether EDF-DÉMÁSZ will complete its work in this situation.



3.3. Problems encountered.

3.3.1. *The global and especially the European economic crises influence*

It had influenced the project in many different ways. Especially the NGOs financial situation hardened very much.

3.3.2. *The Hungarian Government “unorthodox” economic policy especially the energy and tax policy*

EDF-DÉMÁSZ was affected most about the government policy and as a result of this the work of EDF-DÉMÁSZ is hampered (**Annex C4/12**). The Hungarian Government recently disclosed his plan to nationalise the energy sector therefore it is uncertain whether EDF-DÉMÁSZ will complete its work in this uncertain situation.

3.3.3. *NGO partners could not access to their portion of LIFE contribution for a long period.*

Organisations like the co-ordinating beneficiary who is covered by the National Budget cannot support NGOs due to modification of the Public Finance Act effective from 01.01.2011. Therefore, after the signature of the Partnership Agreement the director requested permission from MRD to transfer LIFE contribution to the NGO partners (6 out of 13) on the 5 April 2011 and another three times. Despite that the LIFE contribution is not a part of the national budget and the Grant Agreement signed before the law was changed MRD could not decide about it but they asked the permission from MNE.

3.3.4. *Very long bureaucratic tender procedure in Hungary*

The tender procedure was very long and bureaucratic what hampered the effective procurement and use of satellite transmitters. All steps of the tender process planned by the national parks i.e. invitation of lawyers for bid, selection of lawyer, tender conditions, issuing the tender had to be approved by the MRD.

3.3.5. *Changing ownership of the electric company in Bulgaria*

The changes of ownership hampered the insulation work in Bulgaria because all agreements had to be renegotiated with the new owner.

3.3.6. *The Romanian Government refuse to extend the ROSPA069 Natura 2000 area*

MILVUS attempt failed to include this important habitat into the ROSPA069 Natura 2000 area by extension.

3.3.7. *Advertisement rules and regulations hampers information sign erection*

Especially in Bulgaria and Romania the responsible municipalities did not want to permit the erection of information signs in frequent places without payment.

3.3.8. *Auditor performance was not satisfactory*

We realised that the auditor was not well prepared for that international projects job.

3.3.9. *Poor quality of one ÉMÁSZ subcontractor’s work in 2012.*

JUKO Ltd. which was one of the winners of the tender of ÉMÁSZ did not do a good quality work.

3.4. Measures taken to alleviate the effects of these problems

- Referring to the Hungarian Government “unorthodox” economic policy we had several meetings and actions to be able to rescue the project’s work (**Annex C4/13-C4/21**).
- Referring to the situation that NGO partners could not access to their portion of LIFE contribution for a long period Intensive communication (6 letters) was going



on towards MRD requesting and urging permission to transfer money to NGOs. After 3 months waiting in vain press releases were sent to national media by the partners. Minister of national economy's letter of 04. July 2011 devolve the responsibility to minister of rural development. On 05. July a telephone call from MRD let the director understand that any written permission won't come, but he can transfer the money therefore he took the responsibility to transfer the money finally. First instalments were transferred on 8. July 2011.

- *Referring to the very long bureaucratic tender procedure in Hungary* the project management and the partners did intensive negotiations with the stakeholders to solve the problems. We rearranged the MRD co-financing among partners. MRD co-founding is going to the National Parks only and more LIFE co-founding is going to the NGOs. We rearranged the procurement of PTTs. MME purchased 4 items to speed up the process. BNPD purchased PTTs instead of MILVUS.
- *The Romanian Government refuses to extend the ROSPA069 Natura 2000 area MILVUS* and SOR protesting and lobbying for the extension of ROSPA069 in MoFF and in DG Environment of EC.
- *Referring to the changing ownership of the electric company in Bulgaria* BSPB made an agreement with the new owner also about the insulation in Bulgaria.
- *Referring to the advertisement rules and regulations what hampered information sign erection* partners negotiated with the concerned municipalities and new locations were selected for the information signs in Bulgaria and Romania or location was rented.
- *Referring to auditor performance was not satisfactory* we replaced the auditor.
- *Referring to the poor quality of one ÉMÁSZ subcontractor's work* BNPD hired an expert to check carefully the quality of work of the subcontractors of ÉMÁSZ. We did not accept its work before all mistakes were corrected. This subcontractor did not get more work from ÉMÁSZ and BNPD continues the control of the work.

4. Administrative part

4.1. Description of project management

4.1.1. Contracting project management

BNPD the co-ordinating beneficiary informed the State Secretary of Environment on 22 September 2010 that the new project was scheduled to start on 01.10.2010 and external assistance had to be contracted for the project management. The supporting letter from the SSE was received on 15 October 2010. In the meantime BNPD had to apply for the permission of the minister of RD. This was received on 3 December 2010 and the tender could start. As a result of the tender process the contract was signed by the selected external assistance (FENCON Consulting Ltd.) on 13 January 2011. FENCON Ltd. is providing the project manager and project administrator and operating the Project Office in the co-ordinating beneficiary's HQ.

4.1.2. Temporary project management at the beginning

The former LIFE project's management began to organise the project's start voluntarily in October. They were contracted as temporary project management between 8 November and 31 December 2010. They worked again voluntarily until 12 January 2011.



4.1.3. *Project management activities*

- Partner co-ordinators were appointed by all partner organisations in October 2010. Detailed work plan and budget of all partners were divided for years and for months of the actual target years.
- The acting project manager took part on the Kick of Meeting in Ljubljana as a volunteer and presented the project on 11-12 January 2011 (**Refer to Annex E4/1 of IR**).
- Travel issue of external project manager was solved with the assistance of the project monitor and an agreement was signed between the director of BNPD and the project manager about the use of the project car. (**Refer to Annex E4/2 of IR**).
- Project Hand-book were prepared electronically for each project partners and handed over during the project training (**Refer to Annex E4/3 of IR**).
- Two days project training was organised in Felsőtárkány in Hungary on 21-22 February 2011, where all partners' team took part to learn about the technical, administrative and financial issues of the project implementation (**Refer to Annex E4/4 of IR**).
- Partnership Agreements and Financial Amendment for NGOs were prepared and signed (**Refer to Annex 7.1 of IR**).
- Steering Committee was established and the Steering Committee held annual meetings in every March. (**Refer to Annexes E7/1-E7/3 of IR, E7/1-E7/3 of PR and Annexes E7/1-E7/8**).
- The project was managed by FENCON Ltd. on behalf of the co-ordinating beneficiary. The project manager had managed the annual work planning and approved the annual work plans and budget. He controlled the work of the acting project administrator. He kept daily contact with the partner co-ordinators by email and telephone. He regularly visited the partners and helped them to solve the incoming problems. He co-ordinated their co-operation by organising and chairing some specific meetings. He initiated networking with other projects. He was involved in intensive communication with the public. He had several presentations for different audience. He regularly report to the director of the co-ordinated beneficiary. He informed the external monitor about the monthly progress and escorted him also during his project inspections (**Refer to Annexes E4/6 & E4/7 of IR; A1/12, A4/7, C4/7, 4/9, D1/1-D1/6, D5/10, D6/4&5, D4/11, E7/1-E7/3 of PR and Annexes C3/4, C3/5, C4/5, C4/14, C4/18, D1/1, D1/3, E7/1-E7/3, E7/8**).
- The project administrator and the acting administrator share the work until the end of 2012. The project administrator kept contact with the foreigner beneficiaries' financial managers and/or partner co-ordinators while the acting one kept contact with the Hungarians. They checked the financial reports of the beneficiaries against the approved annual work plan and budget. The acting project administrator escorted the project manager time by time during his visit at the beneficiaries. They are continuously maintaining the project financial report form with the accepted incurred costs.
- Partner co-ordinators prepared the partner organisations annual work plan and budget and submitted for approval to the project manager. They organised and co-ordinated the work of the partner beneficiary and reported the progress and problems to the project manager occasionally but at least monthly.



4.2. Changes in the project management structure

Mr. József Duska director of BNPD was replaced by Mr. Szilárd Grédics from 11.10.2011.

Mr. László Nagy the auditor was replaced by Mrs. Tünde Kolbe from December 2012.

Ms. Dóra Kiss acting project administrator was replaced by Mrs. Viktória Bene project administrator who returned from maternity leave on 01.01.2013.

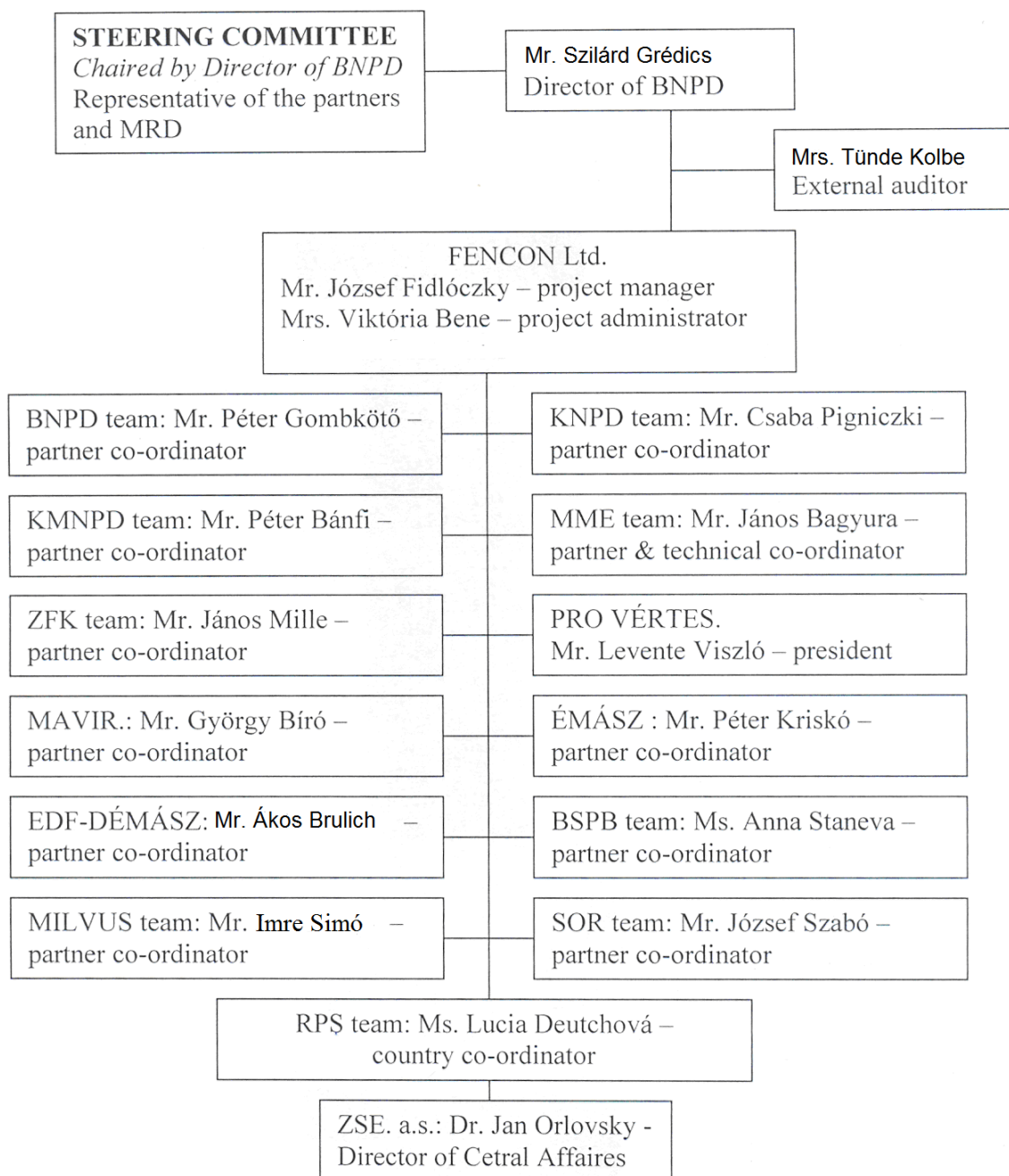
Mr. István Pakai partner co-ordinator of EDF-DÉMÁSZ was replaced by Ákos Brulich from 01.07. 2013.

Mr. Attila Nagy acting partner co-ordinator was replaced by Mr. Imre Simó from 01.10. 2013.

Ms. Zsuzsanna Acél-Fr. Communication Manager of MILVUS was replaced by Luke Dale-Harris from 01.10. 2013.



4.3. Up to date organigramme of the project team and the project management structure



4.4. Delivered report since the project start

Inception Report was submitted in July 2011.

Progress Report was submitted in January 2013.

4.5. Extension of the project period

Despite of the hardships on the time being no extension would be foreseen.



5. Technical part

The project aims to transfer the knowledge and experiences of Hungarian and Slovak partners gained during the LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 project to Bulgarian and Romanian partners and help them to implement the best practices of *F. cherrug* conservation. At the same time, the project also aims to eliminate some endangering threat in the core area too.

5.1. Actions

5.1.1. Action A: Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or of action plans

Action A1:

Name of the action: Assessment of the effects of current agricultural subsidies and related habitat management practices on *F. cherrug*'s habitat in Bulgaria and Romania applying the Hungarian - Slovak methods

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – June 2014

Achievements:

- Field surveys have been carried out.
- Data collected from stakeholders.
- GIS database was established and filled with data.
- A detailed knowledge base established on the exact effect of specific agricultural practices and subsidy systems on *F. cherrug* habitats and food supply.
- The results made it possible to further specify the measures beneficial for *F. cherrug* and was incorporated into the subsidies. In Bulgaria it was incorporated into the existing *Aquila heliaca* subsidy system while in Romania an integrated subsidy system proposal will be submitted to the Ministry.
- In Bulgaria about 30 farmers in Romania 100 farmers were contacted each year.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Bulgaria:

In 2011 the methodology of *F. cherrug* habitat's study developed by the LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 project has been translated into Bulgarian and adapted to the existing situation in Bulgaria (**Refer to Annex A1/1 of IR**). Consultations have been made with the BSPB GIS expert and the 40 km² pilot areas have been chosen within the two Natura 2000 zones "Batova". (**Refer to Annex A1/2 of IR**) and "Suha Reka" (**Refer Annex A1/3 of IR**). The initial field studies on biodiversity within the two representative 40² km areas were realised between 6th and 15th of June 2011. All counts on birds and mammals (**Refer to Annex A1/4 of IR**) – potential prey of *F. cherrug* were done according to the Slovak - Hungarian methodology in both "Suha Reka" and "Batova" SPAs (**Refer to Annex A1/5 of IR**). In June, official letters sent to the target Agri-environment institutions (**Refer to Annex A1/6 of IR**). Field survey on the potential prey for *F. cherrug* and its habitat, including habitat management data collection were conducted as follows: July 2011, February, April, June and October 2012 (**Refer to Annexes A1/1-A1/2 of PR**). The collected field data on available bird and rodent prey for the *F. cherrug* was transferred from paper blanks into Excel



data sheets and prepared for the GIS and statistical analyses (**Refer to Annex A1/3 of PR**). Licensed statistical software STATISTICA 10 (created by StatSoft) has been purchased in October 2012 and a GIS database established. Additionally, there were realized 6 meetings with representatives from municipalities, farmers and land owners from the project area, to collect information on land use practices and EU subsidies, as well as to inform the local people about the existing opportunities for applying for financial support in April 2012 (**Refer to Annexes A1/4-A1/5 of PR**). Project staffs and specialists were in close contacts with an estimated 30 farmers (**Refer to Annex A1/6 of PR**). An inquiry form was used to collect information from the land owners (**Refer to Annex A1/7 of PR**). The survey was conducted within 16 farmers and 10 deputy mayors. A summary of results has been prepared in Bulgarian (**Refer to Annex A1/8 of PR**). Meantime, main part of the necessary meteorological data has been downloaded from available on-line data-base (**Annex A1/1**). In September 2012, as a reply to the request of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF) of Bulgaria, with the collaboration of the BSPB's Agri-environmental team, the project team has prepared an explanatory text about the importance of pastures and other types of non-irrigated arable land for the presence and abundance of *F. cherrug*'s prey like *S. citellus* and *Alauda arvensis*, and the need of land management for the preservation of the potential *F. cherrug*'s habitats in Bulgaria, especially in Dobrudzha (the projects target area) (**Refer to Annex A1/10 of PR**). This text was used as a base for updating the existing agri-environmental measure for the *Aquila heliaca* under measure number 214 – Agri-environmental payments. The text prepared by BSPB has been presented to the permanent working group under Axis 2 of the Rural Development Program. The text was accepted by the working group and introduced to the Committee for approval. The final decision of the MAF was published in the State Gazette in March 2013, as Ordinance amending and supplementing Ordinance № 11 of 2009 on the terms and conditions for the implementation of Measure 214 "Agri-environmental payments" from the Rural Development Programme for the period 2007 – 2013 (**Annex A1/2**). Even though the name of the measure did not change (it refers only the name of the *Aquila heliaca*, but neither the *F. cherrug* nor the *Neophron percnopterus*), the amendment includes the addition of new layer in GIS, based on the data about historical and recent observations of *F. cherrug* in Bulgaria and temporary settlement areas, including important data collected during this project. Finally the entire territories of villages have been included in the list of potential subsidy candidate agricultural lands. The measure concentrates on the preservation and restoration of pastures from arable land, thus significantly increasing the number and land size of potential candidates. Since BSPB was expecting the approval of the complemented agri-environmental measure 214 in January/February 2013 therefore the agri-environmental expert of BSPB has contacted some of the farmers from the project area to inform them about the procedure of document submission for the subsidies before and after the official publication of the measure. A total of six meetings with farmers from the project area were realized in May and July 2013 (**Annexes A1/3-A1/4**), mainly to inform them about the amended measure, the preparation of documents for the 2014 application, and the other options for applying for subsidies as Natura 2000 measure that can influence the preservation of suitable habitats for *F. cherrug*. The A4 size leaflets produced in action D5 were distributed among farmers. The analysis of field data in GIS was initiated. There was a draft design of the leaflets (**Refer to Annex A1/11 of PR**) about the agri-environmental payments however it may be modified for the new period of 2014-2020 therefore it will be finalised, printed in 1000 copies and distributed in 2014.

In Hungary:

Documents elaborated under LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 project were handed over to the Bulgarian and Romanian partners. In September 2011 during the inspection of the Bulgarian and Romanian project sites the adopted methodology from the previous LIFE project was



consulted with the Bulgarian and Romanian colleagues (**Refer to Annex A1/12 of IR**). This helped to adjust the methodology to the Bulgarian and Romanian conditions.

In Romania:

In Macin Niculuțel ROSPA0073 the pilot area was selected (**Refer to Annex A1/7 of IR**). In 2012 a basic survey in order to identify crop structure and the applied subsidies was carried out on about 40 sq. km survey area around the last known pairs' habitat (**Refer to Annex A1/7 of PR**). Prey species survey and road kill survey was carried out in the area (**Refer to Annex A1/13 of PR**). The collected data are currently recording into the GIS database. These data will be used also to prepare a preliminary proposal until the beginning of next year for the Agri-environmental Working Group of the Ministry of Agriculture. The work was repeated again around the newly installed nest boxes. There was not any successful nesting pair in the project area from Dobrogea even in the installed nest-boxes in 2013. A single breeding attempt was registered in Dobrogea, in the area where last year birds were recorded, that turned out to be unsuccessful.

Instead of Campia Crisului Alb și Crisului Negru ROSPA0015 *we have selected the most relevant area along ROSPA0069* for the baseline survey, taking into consideration the location of the breeding pair found during this spring, and the daily movements and hunting behaviour of these birds. The selected area is app. 48 km² (**Refer to Annex A1/8 of IR**). We have made a basic survey in order to identify the crop structure of this area (**Refer to Annex A1/9 of IR**). The collected data was introduced in a GIS database. Transects and observation points for the prey species survey were selected based on the analysis of the geographic datasets mentioned above (**Refer to Annex A1/10 of IR**). The prey species survey protocols from LIFE06NAT/H/000096 project were adopted for the Romanian specific conditions, the whole material was translated into Romanian language (**Refer to Annex A1/11 of IR**). Standard data sheets were created for the prey species surveys (**Refer to Annex A1/12 of IR**). A first survey was made in the late of June (vole, hamster, bird species, rabbit, and road-kill survey) (**Refer to Annex A1/13 of IR**). The movements of the breeding *F. cherrug* pair were monitored and registered regularly (two days in a week) in order to identify the main important hunting areas (**Refer to Annex A1/14 of IR**). We have made regular observation to identify the species captured by the Falcons, carried to the nest to feed the chicks (**Refer to Annex A1/15 of IR**). In West-Romania several survey sessions (August, October, November 2011, and May, November 2012) carried out in the nearby of ROSPA0069. Unfortunately *F. cherrug* didn't breed in this area due to lack of suitable nest in 2012, but we observed the local pair and other different specimens several times. After installation of a nest box on an electric pylon after the breeding season the pair was often seen around it. These indicated that the area is an important one for *F. cherrug*. These surveys have covered the crop structure, prey species: vole, hamster, bird species, and road-kill survey) and the applied subsidies of this area (**Refer to Annex A1/14 of IR**). The collected data was introduced in the GIS database. A preliminary report presented the data collected so far (**Refer to Annex A1/15 of PR**). A *F. cherrug* pair was breeding in 2013 in the very vicinity of the A1 area from Western Romania (the nest was 3 km away from the edge of the A1 survey area). The male was successfully tagged, and we obtained important data about the range and movements of the adult male, which partially overlap with our A1 survey area (**Annex A1/5**). In the period between January 2013 – August 2013 two further survey sessions (April-May, July-August) were carried out in the nearby of ROSPA0069. Similar to the previous period, these surveys covered the crop structure, prey species abundance and the applied subsidies used by farmers as well (**Annex A1/6**). The last survey session is planned to be done in autumn 2013. A meeting with local farmers is planned in the late autumn 2013 in order to identify their problems and expectations regarding the future agri-environmental scheme. The Agri-environmental Working Group of the Ministry of Agriculture was contacted in order to



introduce *F. cherrug*-specific measures into the agri-environmental scheme for 2014 already in 2012. We had several meetings with a specialist in agri-environmental schemes (Mr. Răzvan Popa from the Adept Foundation), who is being involved in a working group settled by the MoA and which is responsible for shaping new agri-environmental schemes (**Annex A1/7**). After these discussions we decided to develop an integrated scheme covering not only the *F. cherrug* and *S. citellus* (a separate *F. cherrug*-scheme wouldn't be accepted by the MoA), but also further Annex 1 species which are specific for lowland areas from Romania, as *F. vespertinus*, *Coracias garrulous*, and *Lanius minor*. The scheme proposal is planned to be handled to the MoA in spring 2014. The leaflets will promote the new scheme and will be distributed in the main *F. cherrug* areas from both Western Romania and Dobrugea.

In Slovakia:

The methodology prepared within LIFE was consulted with Romanian colleagues. In September 2011, during the inspection of the Romanian project sites, we gained important information, which we could consult with Romanian colleagues. This helped to adjust the methodology to Romanian conditions (**Refer to Annex A1/16 of IR**).

Problems and their impacts:

In Bulgaria:

Due to delay of the first payment of project funds, the planned field studies within this action did not start in full scale according to the work plan but during the visits of the sites within the Action E8 (Baseline Survey) preliminary information was gathered for both "Batova" and "Suha Reka" SPAs on the composition and numbers of some potential prey for *F. cherrug*, land uses, agricultural practices, infrastructure elements, etc. (However it won't effect the result of the action in the long run since the money was transferred.)

We could not reach 100 stakeholders, mentioned in the project document, because of the specifics of the management of the arable land in Dobruzha. The majority of the people contacted by the BSPB's project team are not land owners, but they lease or rent the land they cultivate or graze their animals on. Generally, in Dobruzha vast areas are being managed under the principle of land consolidation, which means that not the land owners but the leaseholders manage the land. This is the reason why it is most important to contact the leaseholders (which are actually the farmers) instead of the land owners, which are more in numbers but do not decide about the land management.

In Romania:

Unfortunately there was not any nesting pair in the two project SPA areas in 2011. A new pair was found in outside SPA in a wind farm project area, which is also important for Action A3. We requested EC's approval for the changes of the pilot area for this action from ROSPA0015 to beside ROSPA0069 first time on 26 May 2011. The proposed extension of ROSPA0069 finally was not included in the national law (HG971/2011) regarding the modification of SPAs. Therefore MILVUS and ROS have officially protested at the Romanian MoEF for exclusion of the proposed extension of the ROSPA0069 as well as of many other sites (**Refer to Annex A1/17 of PR**). At the same time MILVUS and ROS have informed the DG Environment about the main problems regarded this issue, and have presented reports for many sites including ROSPA0069 among them (**Refer to Annex A1/18 of PR**). Unfortunately the old nest was fallen down after the breeding season in 2011 and we can install nest box as a replacement on the electric pylon only after the 2012's breeding season. Therefore no *F. cherrug* bred in the vicinity of ROSPA0069 hence it was not possible to catch an adult bird for being equipped with PTT in 2012. We had to wait long for the farmers' data from the land office to be able to contact them but there were some data protection issues what had to be solved. We have to wait with the leaflets until the multispecies agri-environmental measures are accepted by the MoA, as the main reason of



this leaflet would be to push the stakeholders to choose agri-environmental scheme instead of regular Ground-based Payments Scheme. It cannot be done until the measures we are going to propose to be included in the Romanian agri-environmental scheme, are not in place. Unfortunately large amount of data was lost because of technical problems caused by the PTT in 2013.

Modifications:

In Bulgaria:

The GIS expert work was reallocated from Personnel costs to External assistance, due to the fact that BSPB 's GIS expert is no more contracted in the organisation. At the same time, the Personnel costs of the GIS expert were reallocated to the agri-environmental expert, so the number of working hours of the agri-environmental expert was increased. This additional working time was reasonably dedicated to higher effort to inform local farmers and land owners from the project area about the EU subsidies related to different agri-environmental measures and practices that could positively influence the habitat conditions for *F. cherrug* (**Annexes A1/3-A1/4**). Even though, there are any *F. cherrug* breeding within the project area yet, it results that the Natura 2000 areas covered by the project are very important places as temporary settlement areas, especially during migration and wintering, which is confirmed by the high number of observations in this time. Because the existing agri-environmental measure for the *Aquila heliaca* under measure number 214 – Agri-environmental payments was adjusted to *F. cherrug*'s demand instead of the a special one for *F. cherrug* as a successfully working measure in Southern Bulgaria, as well as promoting adequate practices for the preservation of habitats both for the *A. heliaca* and *F. cherrug*, the Ministry of Agriculture of Bulgaria was more willing to accept the adjustment of the existing measure to the demands of *F. cherrug*, than to implement a separate measure for the *F. cherrug*. On the other hand, the “hidden” name of *F. cherrug* in the measure's name, should be a positive step regarding the sensitive status of the species in Bulgaria and the threat from falconry.

In Romania:

Instead of Campia Crisului Alb si Crisului Negru ROSPA0015 we have selected the most relevant area in ROSPA0069 for the baseline survey, taking into consideration the location of the breeding pair found during this spring, and the daily movements and hunting behaviour of these birds. The selected area is app. 48 km² (**Refer to Annex A1/8 of IR**). This was the only area where *F. cherrug* nest was found in Romania in 2011 and possibility to use tagged adult birds for this A1 study is very important. Once the *F. cherrug*-specific multispecies Agri-environmental measures are accepted, we will be able to disseminate the information through leaflets, most probably at the beginning of 2014.

Comments on Commission's requests:

The proposed extension of ROSPA0069 finally was not included in the national law (HG971/2011) regarding the modification of SPAs. Therefore MILVUS and ROS have officially protested at the Romanian MoEF for exclusion of the proposed extension of the ROSPA0069 as well as of many other sites (**Refer to Annex A1/17 of PR**). The two organizations have informed the DG Environment about the omissions of Romania regarding this issue (**Refer to Annex A1/18 of PR**). The ROSPA0069 was one of the main cases what was presented. Please find the current status of the wind park of Sannicolau Mare in A3 Action.

**Action A2:**

Name of the action: Elaboration of habitat management guideline for grasslands and proposal for appropriate subsidies to stimulate proper farming on the protected *S. citellus* habitats using the Hungarian - Slovak method as the result of former LIFE project

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – June 2014

Achievements:

- The *S. citellus* populated areas have been identified and surveyed within the two SPAs and in the new *F. cherrug* populated area.
- Survey reports have been prepared.
- A preliminary proposal for the Agri-environmental Working Group of MoA has been prepared and negotiated.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:**In Hungary:**

Documents elaborated under LIFE06NAT/H/000096 project were handed over to the Bulgarian and Romanian partners. In September 2011 during the inspection of the Romanian project sites the adopted methodology from the previous LIFE project was consulted with the Romanian colleagues. This helped to adjust the methodology to the Romanian conditions (**Annex A1/12**).

In Romania:

Elaboration of the documents prepared under LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 project into the Romanian conditions started. We extended this activity near to ROSPA0069 too where *F. cherrug* was breeding. *S. citellus* habitats where animals were present have been assessed in all targeted SPA visited. GPS's coordinates were taken at each site where *S. citellus* was observed, at least 10 new locations for *S. citellus* has been recorded so far (**Refer to Annex A2 of IR**). Several evaluation of *S. citellus* habitat was taken in the three target area (ROSPA0047 Hunedoara Timișană, ROSPA0015 Câmpia Crișului Alb și Crișului Negru, and ROSCI0345 Pajistea Cenad). The ROSCI0345 Pajistea Cenad was endorsed in December 2011 exactly in the same place which was allocated for *S. citellus* repatriation within the proposed ROSPA0069 extension what was not extended. (**Refer to Annex A2/1 of PR**). Different relevant information (management of the pastures, number and species of grazing animals, ecological history of these areas, legal and property issues, etc) were gathered as well (**Refer to Annex A2/2 of PR**). The preliminary results are presented through a report (**Refer to Annex A2/3 of PR**). In 2013 further monitoring activities (abundance surveys etc.) were held in the survey areas (**Annex A2/1**). These data were used also to prepare a preliminary proposal for the Agri-environmental Working Group of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Agri-environmental Working Group of the Ministry of Agriculture was contacted in order to introduce *S. citellus*-specific measures into the agri-environmental scheme for 2014 already in 2012. We had several meetings with a specialist in agri-environmental schemes (Mr. Răzvan Popa from the Adept Foundation), who is being involved in a working group settled by the MoA and which is responsible for shaping new agri-environmental schemes (**Annex A1/7**). After these discussions we decided to develop an integrated scheme covering not only the *F. cherrug* and *S. citellus* (a separate *F. cherrug*-scheme wouldn't be accepted by the MoA), but



LIFE09 NAT/HU/000384

also further Annex 1 species which are specific for lowland areas from Romania, as *F. vespertinus*, *Coracias garrulous*, and *Lanius minor*. The scheme proposal is planned to be handled to the MoA in spring 2014. The adaptation work for habitat rehabilitation and management method developed by LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 for grasslands on *F. cherrug* and *S. citellus* common habitats of Romania is still going on.

In Slovakia:

Experience gained during LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 were consulted in September 2011.

Problems and their impacts:

The proposed extension of ROSPA0069 finally was not included in the national law (HG971/2011) regarding the modification of SPAs. Therefore MILVUS and ROS have officially protested at the Romanian MoEF for exclusion of the proposed extension of the ROSPA0069 (**Refer to Annex A1/17 of PR**).

Modifications:

We intended to extend this activity near to ROSPA0069 too where *F. cherrug* was breeding. Instead of ROSPA0069 extension the work was carried out in ROSCI0345 Pajistea Cenad was endorsed in December 2011 exactly in the same place which was allocated for *S. citellus* repatriation within the proposed ROSPA0069 extension what was not extended. This SCI was proposed by the MILVUS and it was designated especially for the conservation of *S. citellus* (**Refer to Annex A2/1 of PR**). Unfortunately we found out that one of our survey areas populated with *S. citellus* (Vinga, Arad County) was partially ploughed. As the ploughed grassland lay in a Natura 2000 site designated for *F. cherrug* among other species, it is an illegal activity and a report was sent to the authorities responsible for environment. (**Annex A2/2**).

Comments on Commission's requests:

Please refer to A1.

Action A3:

Name of the action: Preparing guideline about the effect of wind farms on *F. cherrug* population for authorities evaluating wind farm's applications

Proposed start and end of the action: October 2011 – September 2014

Achievements:

- Birds tagged with PTT:
 - In Bulgaria:** monitoring of Hungarian/Slovakian/Romanian tagged birds eventually appeared on Bulgarian territory
 - In Hungary:** 17 adults and 6 juveniles
 - In Romania:** 2 adults and 3 juveniles
 - In Slovakia:** 4 juveniles
 - 1 juvenile tagged in Czech Republic too
- Movement of tagged birds around of existing and potential wind farms was studied

Action status: ongoing

**Description of the progress during the reporting time:****In Bulgaria:**

Although this activity entirely depends on the appearance of satellite tagged *F. cherrug* from other project countries, BSPB carried out some preliminary work on the issue. Detailed maps of some of the wind parks within the Project territory were prepared (**Refer to Annex A3/1 of IR**). BSPB's volunteers in the areas of wind parks were instructed to record specific data about the attitude of *F. cherrug* towards wind turbines in case they will have a chance to observe the species close to the wind constructions (**Refer to Annex A3/2 of IR**). Project information and assistance was provided to enhance the forthcoming government strategic document on the future development of the wind energy sector (**Refer to Annex A3/3 of IR**). Field observations on the impact of wind farms on birds of prey has been done close to wind farms in Balchik and Kavarna (**Refer to Annex A3/1 of PR**). In 2012 data about the attitude of *F. cherrug* towards wind turbines was collected from BSPB's volunteers and staff working on other projects within the project area (**Refer to Annex A3/2 of PR**). All these data has been given to the BSPB's EU Policy Officer for the ongoing dialogue with the EC about the implications of wind farm constructions on the migration route Via Pontica in Eastern Bulgaria. In January-February 2013 data was again collected through volunteers of BSPB. The details of observations of *F. cherrug* and other birds of prey were added to the already collected database. In June and July monitoring of birds of prey in few wind farms within the project area was realised (**Annex A3/1**). A sensitivity map (**Annex A3/2**) of the project area (including data about historical and recent places of observations of *F. cherrug*, the location of existing and planned wind farms, habitat characteristics etc.) was prepared in GIS. Obviously, together with data from satellite tagged birds, these data will be the basis for the guidelines to be elaborated under A3 action.

In Hungary:

Tender process in state sector was became a very slow and long process. Therefore procurement of PTTs has delayed very much. 2 adult males and one juvenile were tagged by old repaired PTTs along the largest wind farms in NW-Hungary in the wind farm triangle of Austria-Hungary-Slovakia in 2011 (**Refer to Annexes A3/4-A3/5 of IR**). 4 PTTs were purchased by MME to speed up the work. While we were waiting for the transmitters we started to feed the potential adult birds (**Refer to Annex A3/3 of PR**). The 4 PTTs were received in February 2012. Two adults (a pair) were tagged by PTT in the Hevesi-sik (HUBN10004) in March 2012 and an adult male was trapped and tagged near Ceglédbercel on a potential wind farm area (**Refer to Annex A3/4 of PR**). (The fourth was used to tag a juvenile female *F. cherrug* near to Sannicolau Mare in Romania.) 14 PTT were delivered to BNPD in May 2012 just in time to tag juveniles. 6 juveniles were tagged in June (**Refer to Annex A3/5 of PR**). We continuously monitored the movement of the birds and collected information about them (**Refer to Annex A3/6 of PR**). Unfortunately we lost many of them for different reason. We continue the feeding of the potential adult birds for tagging. The last 10 PTTs were received in November 2012. Land use of the existing and potential wind farm areas were checked (**Refer to Annex A3/8 of PR**). Five adult males were trapped and marked with PTT in February 2013. Among them one of the old PTT was replaced because it stopped to signal. Three + one adult males were trapped and marked with PTT in March 2013. One of them killed by collision and the transmitter was replaced to another. Another adult male was trapped and marked with PTT in April. One was killed by poison and was found by the co-ordinates of the transmitter (**Annex A3/3**). Two adult males were trapped and marked with PTT in May. In the main time János Bagyura from MME held training for MILVUS team how to catch adult mail efficiently. An adult female was trapped together ringed and released. Tagged adult males were monitored in June. One was fined very weak therefore it was taken



to one of the rescue centre. Transmitter was removed and it was released later. The status of the tagged birds is given in **(Annex A3/4)**. Recovered PTTs will be reinstalled next year.

Preliminary findings:

At the moment, the only appropriate place for existing wind farm study is near the Austrian border. Large-scale wind farm development was planned before 2010 however the entering government has frozen the subventions to green energy, thus all green energy projects – including wind farm development ones – have been on a halt recently. One adult *F. cherrug* pair started breeding very close to a wind farm site. As his movements show, he regularly uses the pylons of high-voltage power lines among the wind turbines as perching points. However, there are only a few turbines there and he apparently do not get very close to them **(Annex A3/5)**. If we compare the further areas without pylons, we can see differences in habitat use as for land with and without wind turbines: if there are no tempting pylons for perching (they are higher than any trees in the area), the male prefers to use the areas without the turbines. For comparison, movements of the male tagged in 2009 are also shown. Apparently, he clearly avoids the massive wind farm with a hundred turbines in Austria (just as the tagged *Aquila heliaca* from the other LIFE project) **(Annex A3/6)**. However, it is somewhat tricky, as most of those turbines were built only in 2011, but the bird's data are from 2009. It seems that the birds avoid that area at the earliest construction movements just like in Romania. Further data is needed next year to see better in this issue. Other tagged adult *F. cherrug* live in areas, where wind farm development is commenced or planned and data on their movements will be used for analysing general behaviour of *F. cherrug* **(Annex A3/7)** and later in the local or regional wind farm authorization processes, and for the preparation of the wind farm guidelines.

In Romania:

In 2011 information was collected about the planned wind farms, and we realized that one of them is located near to ROSPA0069 exactly where the only known breeding pair of *F. cherrug* breeds **(Refer to Annexes A3/6-A3/7 of IR)**. The environment authorities were contacted for forthcoming wind farm project implementations as on neighbouring sites of Macin SPA wind measuring pylons were observed **(Refer to Annex A3/8 of IR)**. In Western Romania information was collected and evaluated about the planned wind farm along ROSPA0069 in 2012 **(Refer to Annexes A3/9a-b of PR)**. Informing County Environment Office, municipality and investor about the project activities and the potential conflict of wind farm and *F. cherrug* in the area **(Refer to Annex A3/10 of PR)**.

Study has been carried out concerning the wind-farm project developments in Dobrogea. A *F. cherrug* nest was identified where we have collected valuable information about the effect of wind farm because the pair left its nest due to the wind farm construction. Probably the same pair occupied a hooded crow nest on an electricity pylon app. 4 km south from the previous one. The Milvus Group's specialists tried to capture the adult male however unfortunately the bird fall from the mist-net, therefore the chance to equip it with PTT was skipped. In the autumn 2012 the Milvus Group carried out a 2x10 days camp for monitoring the migrating and local raptor activities in the vicinity of the Macin Mountains, where three wind parks are prepared for construction. Several observations were made on *F. cherrug* as well. Our report is presented attached **(Refer to Annex A3/11 of PR)**. In 2013 an adult male named János was tagged near the Jimbolia of West Romania where a wind park is planned to be built. Both János' and Toro's (the adult male tagged near the A1 area) movements partially overlap with the wind park areas from Jimbolia and Sannicolau Mare respectively. The specific capturing methods used for tagging adult falcons were kindly shared by the MME specialists. Our report is presented attached **(Annex A3/8)**. In Dobrogea there has been an attempt to catch the birds that started to breed, carried out by the Milvus employees, unfortunately it was unsuccessful.

*In Slovakia:*

The occupancy of potential nests was checked. Several inspections were made to record the breeding success and number of chicks. All 4 PTTs have been purchased, tested and installed on 4 juveniles in 3 nests in the vicinity of wind power plants (**Refer to Annex A3/9 of IR**). We followed up the tagged juveniles from the nests situated in the vicinity of power plants in Austria in SKCHVU016. One of the tagged birds was found electrocuted in August 2011 in Czech Republic. The second bird got lost in France and another of them in Turkey in November 2011. Although we were in touch with French colleagues they did not manage to find the body. One of the PTTs was transmitting until November 2012. The bird started to migrate in April 2012 to south-west. The bird spent the winter in Romania and Bulgaria. We got regular information from Bulgarian colleagues based on our data from the PTT. In November 2012 we lost signal with the last PTT, and in the same time our Romanian colleagues found it in the last location but without the bird. The data from all of the PTTs are being evaluated and will be used for preparation of the guideline (**Refer to Annexes A3/7 and A3/12 of PR**). The data collected from the PTTs were analysed in 2013 (**Annex A3/9**). 3 main factors were evaluated: distance of the coordinate from the existing wind-power plant, movements and preferences of the tagged *F. cherrug* individuals as well as the barrier effect of the wind-power plants and impact on the studied individuals. The results will be discussed with other partners and incorporated in the guidelines.

Problems and their impacts:

Trapping attempt in Dobrogea failed.

Tender process in state sector became a very slow and long process in Hungary what delayed the procurement and use of PTTs.

All juveniles tagged in Slovakia in 2011 have died.

The PTT of János deployed serious problems and only few data was sent. Manual downloading of the data with a specific antenna did not work out either. Several attempts were made to recapture János to change the PTT, but all failed because of the high of the crops and the fact that he is covering a bigger territory after the juveniles left the breeding area. We hope János to reoccupy its territory in the first months of 2014 giving us a chance to recapture him.

Modifications:

To speed up the work old PTTs were repaired and used and 4 PTTs were purchased by MME. BNPD has agreed with MILVUS to buy the PTTs instead what were planned for them and provide PTTs to them in case of need.

Comments on Commission's requests:

Substantial numbers of birds were tagged despite of the very bad weather in the spring. We could collect lots of useful information especially along the existing wind farms. We intend to tag some adult male along the wind farms before the next breeding season in Slovakia also.

Action A4:

Name of the action: Identifying of prey assortment using of video camera and photo traps at nests to convince hunters and pigeon keepers

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – September 2014

**Achievements:**

- A video camera was installed in Hungary and Slovakia and its pictures were broadcasted in the project web from Hungary and in RPS web from Slovakia.
- 14 photo traps were purchased and installed in Hungary.
- In Slovakia photo traps used for guarding were used also to collect data on prey each year.
- Recorded data were evaluated.

Action status: ongoing**Description of the progress during the reporting time:****In Hungary:****By Video captures:**

MAVIR in cooperation with MME and PROVÉRTES has installed a video camera in a traditionally occupied nest box on an electric pylon in 2011 (**Refer to Annex A4/1 of IR**). Unfortunately the *F. cherrug* pair had chosen a *Buteo buteo* nest instead of it. The nest box was occupied by a *F. tinnunculus* pair (**Refer to Annex A4/2 of IR**). We decided to continue with them that year and we got lots of new and exciting information (www.sakerlife.mme.hu). The 400 kV power line was demolished for reconstruction therefore the web camera was moved to another nest box where *F. cherrug* was breeding in 2012. MAVIR got to install a sophisticated Video transmission system. Two camera were installed one of them was infrared what enabled to monitor the nest box 24 hours a day (**Refer to Annex A4/1 of PR**). The nest box was monitored continuously from the start of the breeding much after the fledging (**Refer to Annex A4/2 of PR**). The video pictures were transmitted by GSM system to the web of the project and MAVIR also to PROVÉRTES. It was also continuously recorded. PROVÉRTES staffs evaluated the pictures to identify the preys. A standard datasheet was developed to record the preys (**Refer to Annex A4/3 of PR**). There were 190 recorded preys on the video (**Refer to Annex A4/4 of PR**) what were evaluated (**Table 1**).

MAVIR got to install the same sophisticated Video transmission system into the same nest box in 2013. However because of the lack of food due to bad weather condition only one chick hatched. The video pictures were transmitted by GSM system to the web of the project and MAVIR also to PROVÉRTES. It was also continuously recorded. PROVÉRTES staffs evaluated the pictures to identify the preys. There were 176 recorded preys on the video (**Annex A4/1**) what were evaluated (**Table 1**).

By photo traps:

In 2011: the procurement of photo traps was delayed very much due to the very slow and long tender process in the state sector. KMNPD purchased one local product in May 2011. They installed it for test. MME could not buy them because of lack of money due to money transfer problem. However they borrowed two items to overcome on this problem and installed one on tree and the other on pylon (**Refer to Annex A4/3 of IR**). Two staff of BNPD got climbing training replacing former licensed staff who retired (**Refer to Annex A4/4 of IR**). Procurement by BNPD, KNPD and MAVIR was going on and completed after the breeding season. 14 photo traps were purchased.

In 2012: the selection of successful breeding pairs were done for installation of photo traps. 11 photo traps were installed on high voltage electric pylons (2 by DÉMÁSZ/KNPD and 9 by MAVIR/BNPD/MME) (**Refer to Annexes A3/8 and A4/5 of PR**). KMNPD tested one photo trap on trees while PROVÉRTES was prepared to install one on trees but the breeding failed. The photo traps were removed after the fledging of the juveniles. The pictures were downloaded from the memory cards to the computer and were evaluated (**Refer to Annex A4/6 of PR**). There was a meeting organised to evaluate the first year's experience of photo



trapping and agree the next years methodology, technology and system on 7 September 2012 in MME HQ (Refer to Annex A4/7 of PR).

Table 1: Prey composition identified by pictures in Hungary

Year	2012		2013	
Mammals	Number of specimens	%	Number of specimens	%
Spermophilus citellus	176	25,73	56	6,97
Lepus europaeus	64	9,36	77	9,59
small mammals not identifiable	30	4,39	13	1,62
mammals not identifiable	12	1,75	3	0,37
Cricetus cricetus	6	0,88	1	0,12
Microtus arvalis	5	0,73	28	3,49
Crocidura leucodon	0	0	1	0,12
Rattus sp.	4	0,58	1	0,12
Talpa europaea	1	0,15	0	0
Birds				
Columba sp.	224	32,75	253	31,51
Sturnus vulgaris	32	4,68	187	23,29
small birds not identifiable	31	4,53	37	4,61
birds not identifiable	14	2,05	17	2,12
Phasianus colchicus	10	1,46	2	0,25
Vanellus vanellus	4	0,58	40	4,98
Alauda arvensis	4	0,58	15	1,87
Turdus philomelos	0	0	1	0,12
Coturnix coturnix	1	0,15	2	0,25
Columba oenas	1	0,15	0	0
Columba palumbus	1	0,15	0	0
Streptopelia decaocto	1	0,15	1	0,12
Streptopelia turtur	1	0,15	3	0,37
Passer montanus	1	0,15	0	0
Saxicola rubetra	1	0,15	1	0,12
Carduelis chloris	1	0,15	0	0
Lanius collurio	0	0	1	0,12
Lanius minor	0	0	2	0,25
Emberiza citrinella	0	0	2	0,25
Pica pica	0	0	1	0,12
Reptiles				
Lacerta viridis	1	0,15	3	0,37
Lacerta agilis	0	0	1	0,12
Sauria sp.	1	0,15	1	0,12
Bufo bufo	0	0	1	0,12
Not identifiable				
Not identifiable	57	8,33	52	6,48
Total:	684	100	803	100



In 2013: the first priority for photo trapping was those breeding pairs where the males are tagged by PTT (**Annex A4/2**) to get information not only about the prey but to be able to identify the habitat from where the prey was taken (**Annex A4/3**). All photo traps were installed but unfortunately many breeding attempts failed this year due to the returned winter in the breeding season. Therefore we had to replace the photo-traps from the aborted breeding to late breeding pairs. Altogether 11 clutches feeding were recorded. Out of this one tagged mail's feeding were recorded. The results of the action are presented in **Table 1** above.

In Romania:

In 2011 breeding pairs were not found in Dobrogea and due to delayed advanced payment photo traps were not procured.

In 2012 three potential breeding pairs has been discovered during the baseline survey in Dobrogea in abandoned Hooded Crow's nest, however it was too late to install any photo trap there. Food remains were collected under the occupied nest last year. Negotiation and agreement was made with Transelectrica about the installation of dummy cameras.

In 2013 a photo-trap was successfully installed near the nest of Toro, in the vicinity of the A1 area, with the help of ENEL Romania. Almost 10000 images were taken and analysed. Our report is presented attached (**Annex A4/4**).

In Slovakia:

The video-camera was purchased and installed (**Refer to Annex A4/5 of IR**) during ringing of the chicks, the breeding has been recorded. After the breeding period the record will be analysed. The photo traps has been purchased and installed as well (**Refer to Annex A4/6 of IR**), the pictures are being collected on a memory card and will be analysed after the breeding period (**Refer to Annex A4/7 of IR**). The pictures of the video-camera recorded in 2011 was analysed (**Refer to Annex A4/8 of PR**). The video-recorded pair changed the nesting place and moved from aluminium box to a wooden one on the neighbouring pylon. Therefore we had to find a solution – either to prevent the nesting of pair in wooden nest box and hope the pair will move back to the same aluminium box, or to remove the whole camera system. We decided to install the camera on another nest, in the period when the chicks were two weeks old. In May 2012 the video-camera was ready to be installed, but after climbing up to the nest we realised that the chicks were dead (**Refer to Annex A4/9 of PR**). Because of the complicated process of installation and data transfer it was not possible to replace the camera to another nest. All of the purchased photo-traps were installed, checked in case of need and removed after the breeding season of each year. The pictures from the photo-traps were copied to the computer and analysed. Based on the first analysis, higher density of small mammals and birds was recorded from the photo-trap pictures than from the analysis of food remains removed from the nest box (**Refer to Annex A4/10 of PR and Table 2**). It means the photo-traps bring very important results concerning the prey composition of *F.cherrug*. We have also identified that the adults are marked with rings in some cases (**Refer to Annex A4/11 of PR**). This was new information. It was also recorded when the adults come to the nest box to spend the night there and that they prefer the landing platform as night roosting place (**Refer to Annex A4/12 of PR**). In 2013 *F.cherrug* pair was nesting in an artificial nest where the dummy camera was installed before the breeding period. This enabled the use of video-camera on this nest. Because of extremely cold weather in the beginning of the breeding period a lot of *F.cherrug* pairs started to breed later than usually or were not breeding at all. *F.cherrug* pair followed by video-camera was breeding later. The camera was installed in the beginning of April. The nesting has been streamed online on the project web page and RPS web page. Whole nesting has been recorded and is being analysed. The recording and streaming was stopped on 30. June. 3 juveniles successfully left the nest.

Valuable data about the prey composition has been collected, over 2,2 TB (about 720 hours) of data has been recorded. The data were offered via RPS web page to be analysed by a



student or any expert as a theme for a Thesis or other scientific material. The result of the prey assortment analysis of photo-traps is presented in **Table 2** below. The analysis of video-records is still going on. The pictures from photo-traps and pictures of camera can be seen in **(Annex A4/5)**.

Table 2: Prey composition identified by pictures in Slovakia

Year	2012		2013	
Mammals	Number of specimens	%	Number of specimens	%
<i>Spermophilus citellus</i>				
<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	5	5,88	6	5,55
small mammals not identifiable			2	1,85
mammals not identifiable				
<i>Cricetus cricetus</i>	7	8,24	9	8,33
<i>Microtus arvalis</i>	3	3,53	4	3,70
<i>Rattus sp.</i>				
<i>Talpa europaea</i>				
Birds				
<i>Columba sp.</i>	41	48,24	52	48,15
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	11	12,94	17	15,74
small birds not identifiable	14	16,47	9	8,33
birds not identifiable				
<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>			2	1,85
<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>				
<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	2	2,35		
<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>				
<i>Columba oenas</i>				
<i>Columba palumbus</i>			3	2,77
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>				
<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>			2	1,85
<i>Passer montanus</i>				
<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>				
<i>Carduelis chloris</i>				
Reptiles				
<i>Lacerta viridis</i>				
<i>Sauria sp.</i>				
Not identifiable				
Not identifiable	2	2,35	2	
Total:	85	100	108	100

Problems and their impacts:

In Romania:

- Breeding pairs were not found in Dobrogea.
- Due to delayed advanced payment photo traps were not procured in time.



In Slovakia:

It was not possible to install the video-camera in 2012 in Slovakia, because the chicks on the nest were dead. Because of complicated manipulation it was not possible to use the camera on other nest this year.

Modifications:

In Hungary:

MAVIR got to install a very sophisticated broadband GSM transmitted Video system what made it enable to continuously follow up the activities in the nest on the web. In 2013 after the *F. cherrug* breeding the *F. subbuteo* breeding was recorded in the same nest.

Comments on Commission's requests:

The video camera was successfully replaced to an active nest box and breeding were successfully recorded.

We estimated the size of the unidentifiable preys.

We installed the full numbers of photo-traps however many breeding have failed due to the bad weather in the spring therefore a few did not provided data despite of the early replacement. However the working photo-traps provided lots of valuable data about the prey assortment.

5.1.2. Action C: Concrete conservation actions

Action C1:

Name of the action: Implement, promote and enforce the agri-environment scheme for *S. citellus*

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – June 2014

Achievements:

- Agreements signed with the farmers in the pilot area.
- 20 hectares of land was under the measures on each site in both years.
- The final payment of the scheme was calculated.
- Five meetings with the working group of RDP
- The Scheme was submitted to the Ministries for consideration.

Action status: completed

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Slovakia:

An agreement has been signed with farmers on both sites where the repatriation of suslik is being done. 20 hectares will be under the measures on each site. Particular conditions for management measures have been agreed in the agreement (**Refer to Annexes C1/1-C1/2 of IR**). A meeting of a Working group for the implementation of environmental measures into the RDP was held in March 2011 (**Refer to Annexes C1/3-C1/4 of PR**). 20 hectares of land was under the measures on each site in each year. The farmers submitted the annual reports based on the agreements (**Refer to Annex C1/1 of PR and Annexes C1/1-C1/2**). Each report was consulted by details and questions were discussed. No problems were recorded during the



management measures implementation. The subsidies from project sources were paid to both farmers for 2011 and 2012. In the proposal of the agri-environment scheme payment of 100 – 150 euro per one hectare was proposed. This proposal includes real management costs as well as very important costs for motivation of farmers to implement the measures. The same principle was used to calculate subsidies for farmers already implementing the measures within the project. The reported data together with other data from farmers are being used by negotiations with the MoE for the calculation of the final payment of the scheme, together with the statistical data provided by Research Institute for Soil Science and Conservation. These statistical data will be available during the negotiation process. The information from other farmers will be used as well. However after the change of the government in Slovakia the negotiating process concerning the RDP was postponed. A meeting of a Working group for the implementation of environmental measures into the RDP was held in February 2012 and August 2012 (**Refer to Annexes C1/2-C1/3 of PR**). Three meetings were held in 2013 – one in January and two in June (**Annex C1/3**). The meetings in June were rather informal meetings of the Working Group, the invitation was distributed via e-mail message. The material discussed can be found in **Annex C1/4**. During the meetings RPS informed about the AES for *S. citellus* and the mechanism of subsidies was discussed. A proposal of agri-scheme was prepared (**Annex C1/5**), submitted to the Ministry of Environment as well as to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and discussed with both Ministries. Cooperation with the State Nature Conservancy and a non-governmental Agri-environmental Association called Agroekoforum was kept in order to prepare and promote common proposal of the scheme. The proposal was used for comments of RPS for the draft of the Action Plan for the Conservation of the European Ground Squirrel *S. citellus* in the European Union.

Problems and their impacts:

The change of the government in Slovakia caused delay comparing to original schedule of the negotiations.

Modifications:

The proposal of the scheme was submitted to the ministries a year later.

Comments on Commission's requests:

In March 2011 the 1st meeting of the Working group for preparation and modification of RDP was held (**Refer to Annex C1/4 of PR**). The aim of first meeting of the working group, formed for the purpose of modification of the RDP programming period 2014 - 2020, was to evaluate the co-sponsor of the measures (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, PPA), identification of barriers to the implementation of measures under Axis 2 of the RDP 2007 to 2013 design brief and vision solutions and critical points of cooperation in the next programming period RPS is included in member of the Working group. The Working group is working on preparation of different parts of RPD, including AES. **The result of the first meeting was specification of the aims of the group and preparation of the schedule of work (Refer to Annex C1/5 of PR).**

The scheme proposal was submitted to the Ministry of Environment in Slovakia.

Action C2:

Name of the action: Production and installation of nest boxes in Bulgaria and Romania according to the Hungarian experience

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – March 2014

**Achievements:**

- All planned nest boxes installed in Bulgaria and Hungary
- 7 nest boxes “type 1” and 67 nest boxes “type 2” have been installed in Romania

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:**In Bulgaria:**

According to the project work plan 10 nest boxes “type 2” have been produced in 2011 (**Refer to Annex C2/1 of IR**). Meeting with the relevant division of the National Electric Company was done and permission was obtained to install the aluminium nest boxes on the high voltage power lines (**Refer to Annex C2/2 of IR**). GPS coordinates of the appropriate trees for the nest boxes installation has been taken and the ten wooden nest boxes area also produced. Unfortunately, this was followed by certain postponement of the action due to the adverse weather conditions in Dobrudzha during fall and winter 2011, as well as, in the case of aluminum nest boxes, because of our dependence on the Electric System Operator’s work plan and maintenance procedures. Despite of the complications all planned ten wooden and ten aluminum nest boxes have been installed within the project area (**Refer to Annexes C2/1-C2/2 of PR**).

In Hungary:

Three nest boxes were installed during conferences.

In Romania:

In West-Romania 50 aluminium nest boxes (“type 2”) were installed in the four western counties: Satu Mare (2), Bihor (14), Arad (7), Timis (27). Another three wooden nest boxes (“type 1”) were installed in Bihor and Satu Mare counties in 2012 (**Refer to Annexes C2/3-C2/4 of PR**). Another 2 wooden (“type 1”) nest boxes were installed in 2013 (**Annex C2/1**). The remaining 35 nest-boxes will be installed before the next breeding season in March 2014. **In Dobrogea** 2 wooden (“type 1”) nest boxes and 17 aluminium (“type 2”) were installed in. Regarding the location of the installed nest-boxes they have been chosen according to the newly identified *F. cherrug* nests. 7 nest boxes were installed in and in the bordering area of ROSPA0073, while the remaining 12 close to Padurea Babadag, Stepa Casimcea and Dunarea Veche Bratul Macin SPA’s (**Annexes C2/4-C2/5**). The remaining 21 nest-boxes will be installed until the end of the project. Most of them will be installed on high voltage electricity pylons crossing Dobrogea from North to South (from Ukraine to Bulgaria) and also on locations where historical data/evidence exists on *F. cherrug* movements (migration gathering sites and birds observed during breeding season).

Problems and their impacts:**In Bulgaria:**

Due to adverse weather condition the installation had to postpone for the spring 2012.

In Romania:

The nest boxes were installed just after of the breeding season due to the long and slow negotiation with the electric companies during the lobbying therefore there was not any breeding attempt in them during 2012. Because of on-going negotiations with Transelectrica (D1) 35 aluminium nest boxes still wait for installation. They were distributed to the Transelectrica’s warehouses from Oradea and Arad.



Modifications:

In Hungary:

The last nest box was installed in the International Conference organised by MAVIR in March 2013.

In Romania:

Based on the TDO's approval on 29 May 2012 we revised our plan and increased the planned aluminium nest boxes with 85 items (**Refer to Annexes C2/3 and C2/5 of PR**). Originally we planned a very low numbers due to two different reasons:

1. The aluminium nest boxes must be installing on electric pylons but the electric companies were not very keen on it. Therefore we planned action D1 to convince them based on the Hungarian and Slovak experience but we were very careful about its success.
2. Our calculation was based on very limited information about the real size of the *F. cherrug* population in Romania.

However thanks to the successful lobbying (D1) together with our Hungarian colleagues we could convince the electric companies to install nest boxes on the pylons and in the other hand as a result of the intensive baseline survey (E8) with the assistance of the Hungarian colleagues we understand better the status of the *F. cherrug* population of Romania. First of all we understood that **the most limiting factor is the lack of suitable nest**. Even the existing breeding pairs hardly can find abandoned natural nest and those very few one are also in bad quality. The potential new breeding pairs from the expanding population in Hungary would not find nest also in West-Romania. In the present we know about 5-6 territories occupied by adult pairs, unfortunately most of them do not have proper nest or even not at all. Based on the lessons learned from Hungary and Slovakia, knowing the habitats in West-Romania, we expect that *F. cherrug* population may increase rapidly in the next 10 years if we cover the potential regions with artificial nests. We kept in mind the dynamics of the Hungarian and Serbian population identifying the locations of the nest boxes therefore we concentrate our effort on the south-western part of Romania named Banat (Arad and Timis counties), where *F. cherrug* pairs are known. The initially planned locations of wooden "type 1" nests were changed as we tried to fill the gaps where there is not possible to install artificial nests on high voltage pylons (**Refer to Annex C2/3 of PR**). The situation is the same in Dobrogea where *F. cherrug* moved down from the cliffs in ROSPA0073 due to regular human disturbance and also expanding from Ukraine to Romania but cannot find nests on the electric pylons connecting Ukraine with Bulgaria across the area. The locations of the nest boxes were adjusted to newly found pairs in the high voltage electric pylon crossing the area in a north-south direction from Ukraine towards Bulgaria. First of all the old nests were replaced by nest boxes and some other nest boxes were installed and will be installed in suitable distances (**Refer to Annex C2/5 of PR**).

Comments on Commission's requests:

Explanation is given in "Modification".

Table 3: Installed and planned nest boxes in Romania

Partner	Project area	Type 1 (wooden)			Type 2 (aluminium)		
		Installed	planned	total	installed	planned	total
MILVUS	West-Romania (Refer to Annexes	5	Annex C2/1)	5	50	35	85
ROS	Dobrogea, Oltenia (Refer to Annex	2	C2/5 of PR)	5	17	18	35
	TOTAL:	7	3	10	67	53	120

**Action C3:**

Name of the action: Repatriation of *S. citellus* on Natura 2000 habitats where it is missing in Hungary, Slovakia (using ear-tags) and Romania based on the Hungarian & Slovak experience

Proposed start and end of the action: March 2011 – August 2013

Achievements:

- 235 inds. repatriated in Hungary,
- 49 inds. repatriated in Romania and
- 387 inds. repatriated in Slovakia
- The animals were marked by chip in Slovakia

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:**In Hungary:**

Repatriation from Siófok-Kiliti Airport to HUDD10008 Belső-Somogy by the Green Corridor Public Foundation (ZFK).

ZFK surveyed the donor population and applied for permission from Nature Conservation Authorities in 2011. Unfortunately Siófok airport is divided between two provinces therefore permission was needed from both Nature Conservation Authorities. This situation increased the time needed for permission therefore ZFK decided to do the repatriation in April 2012. ZFK submitted a new request for permission of *S. citellus* repatriation in April 2012 to the Nature Conservation Authority on 29 January 2012 (**Refer to Annex C3/1 of PR**). However the Authority requested again and again additional supplements. Finally the permission was given for a short period (19-31 July 2012) on 28 June 2012 (**Refer to Annex C3/2 of PR**). Based on the permission the host site in HUDD10008 Belső-Somogy was prepared. One hectare (100mX100m) area was fenced around with a 1m high iron mesh. Inside the area 80 holes were drilled for the planned 50 animals (**Refer to Annex C3/3 of PR**). We trapped the animals with apple live traps in Siófok-Kiliti Airport on 26-27 July 2012 (**Refer to Annex C3/4 of PR**). Finally 37 *S. citellus* were repatriated (**Refer to Annex C3/5 of PR**). Out of them 9 were juveniles. 2/3-rd of the adults was female. The repatriated colony was guarded and feed with apple and oat (**Refer to Annex C3/6 of PR**). ZFK had a plan to continue the repatriation in April 2013 but probably due to the return winter in spring there were not too much sign for living *S. citellus* in the site. Besides the Government had a plan to nationalise the lands owned by the public foundations therefore ZFK decided not to repatriate any more *S. citellus* to the site in question. The Government finally abandoned this idea so ZFK will reconsider to take another effort next year. They will consult with the *S. citellus* specialist from Kaposvár University to ensure the success of it.

Repatriation from Kecskemét airbase and Budapest airport to HUKN10002 Kiskunsági szikes tavak és az örvégi túrjánvidék by KNPD.

KNPD applied for permission from the National Inspectorate for Environment, Nature and Water in March 2013 however it took a lot of time to get it. In the main time KNPD selected the subcontractor for the work and surveyed the potential donor populations in April 2013. They did not find any *S. citellus* in the Danube's dam in Dunaegyháza but they found sufficient number in Kecskemét airbase and Budapest International Airport (**Annexes C3/1-C3/2**). They received the permission in June and did the repatriation in July.



The subcontractor started to prepare the site first. They drill holes in 4 ha large area, covered the holes by empty beer bottle and fenced the area by plastic mesh around (**Annex C3/3**). Trapping *S. citellus* started in Kecskemét airbase on 15 July and 123 individuals were caught within 3 days (**Annex C3/4**). The caught animals were transported in the evening to the host site and released next early morning (**Annex C3/5**). Trapping continued in Budapest International Airport on 18-19 July and another 75 animals were caught there (**Annex C3/6**). The repatriated population was guarded (**Annex C3/3**).

Table 4: *S. citellus* repatriation results in Hungary

Year	donor site	number of individuals	Site of release	Annexes
2012	Siófok Kiliti Airport	37	HUDD10008	C3/1 - C3/6 of PR
2013	Kecskemét Airbase & Budapest Airport	198	HUKN10002	C3/1 - C3/6

In Romania:

In 2011 several potential donor populations was selected for repatriation Host sites were carefully selected within the originally allocated areas as well (**Refer to Annex C3/1 of IR**). MILVUS submitted a request for permission of *S. citellus* repatriation in 2012 to the Regional Environmental Agency in Timisoara in 09.07.2012 (**Refer to Annex C3/7 of PR**). However the Agency did not give permission for ROSPA0047 and ROSCI0345 but requested an EIA for it (**Refer to Annex C3/8 of PR**). Therefore the first-ever *S. citellus* repatriation in Romania took place only in ROSPA0015 Câmpia Crișului Alb și Crișului Negru between 18 and 22 August 2012. Derogation was requested from and permitted by the Romanian Academy (**Refer to Annex C3/9a-b of PR**). The outskirts of Arad town were selected for donor site. The *S. citellus* population of the area is endangered by the expansion of the town. The grazing of the area is decreasing, only a very few livestock is grazing there. The industrial zone is continuously reducing its size. There are a lot of rubbish and pye-dogs there (**Refer to Annex C3/10 of PR**). Based on the permission we prepared the host site. Inside the area 50 holes were drilled for the planned 50 animals (**Refer to Annex C3/11 of PR**). We trapped the animals with 50 apple live traps (**Refer to Annex C3/12 of PR**). Finally 49 *S. citellus* were repatriated. Out of them 30 were juveniles 11 sub-adults and 8 adults. 49% of them were female. The repatriated colony was guarded and feed with apple and melon. (**Refer to Annex C3/13 of PR**). The required EIA was prepared and submitted to the Romanian Academy for endorsement (**Annex C3/7**). The study includes the reasons and methods of repatriations, and the impact of these activities on the whole *S. citellus* population from West-Romania. In the meantime, unfortunately one of the pasture selected as donor site was partially ploughed (see also Action A.2) and the *S. citellus* population was heavily effected, therefore the repatriation from Vinga to Ortisoara (ROSPA0047) was cancelled. We are still waiting for the endorsement of the Romanian Academy, therefore we have to postpone the repatriation of about 250 *S. citellus* for the spring of 2014.

In Slovakia:

Permission for the capturing and repatriation of *S. citellus* as a protected animal has been obtained from the Ministry of Environment. All of the source sites have been affected by heavy rains in 2010 and the donor colonies are not so strong. Therefore the methods and plans for capturing had to be considered carefully. It was expected that the numbers of released individuals would have to be reduced. The first capturing and releasing was done in April 2011 on a new sites, therefore we started with several individuals. It was necessary to ensure guarding of the individuals for several days after the releasing. 10 individuals (2,5%) were



repatriated to SKCHVU017 Muránska planina – Stolica and 24 individuals (1,5%) to SKCHVU016 Záhorské Pomoravie (**Refer to Annexes C3/2-C3/3 of IR**). Extremely bad weather conditions (heavy rains, night frost in April) significantly influenced the donor sites negatively. Due to the reduced size of *S. citellus* populations more donating sites had to be used to avoid the negative influence of the donor populations. The population of Bratislava airport was especially damaged, therefore this site was not used as donor site. We follow the same methodology what was developed during the previous project. From 11 places 374 *S. citellus* individuals were repatriated into 2 SPAs. Details are given in Table 5. Each individual was marked by a chip in order to estimate the success of the action within E.2. The detailed protocols are being prepared (**Annex C3/8**) as well as the Report from repatriation and monitoring from 2013 (**Annex C3/9**).

Table 5: *S. citellus* repatriation results in Slovakia

year	donor site	number of individuals	Site of release	Annexes
2011	Chtelnica, Kuchyňa, Nové Zámky airport, ZOO Bojnice	98	SKCHVU016	C3/14 of PR
2011	Biele Vody	10	SKCHVU017	C3/15 of PR
2012	Nové Zámky airport, Trnava airport, ZOO Bojnice, Chtelnica	59	SKCHVU016	C3/14 of PR
2012	Zádiel, Turňa nad Bodvou, Gemerské Dechtáre, Jesenské, Košice airport	81	SKCHVU017	C3/15-C3/16 of PR
2013	Chtelnica, Kuchyňa, Nové Zámky airport, ZOO Bojnice	80	SKCHVU016	C3/10
2013	Jesenské, Gemerské Dechtáre, Spišská Nová Ves airport, Košice airport	59	SKCHVU017	C3/10

Problems and their impacts:

In Hungary:

ZFK had a plan to continue the repatriation in April 2013 but probably due to the return winter in spring there were not too much sign for living *S. citellus* in the site. Besides the Government had a plan to nationalise the lands owned by the public foundations and lease it for farmers therefore ZFK decided not to repatriate any more *S. citellus* to the site in question. The Government finally abandoned this idea so ZFK will reconsider to take another effort next year. They will consult with the *S. citellus* specialist from Kaposvár University to ensure the success of it.

KNPD wants to repatriate *S. citellus* for rehabilitated grassland from old Alfa Alfa field. However due to the very dry 2012 they had to postponed the repatriation to 2013.

The bureaucracy made very short the period for repatriation what resulted less repatriated animals. Form September 2012 the *S. citellus* became strictly protected therefore the bureaucracy increased. Late permissions made possible the summer repatriation only. The very dry summer was not a favor for *S. citellus*. Lack of natural food was replaced by feed.

In Romania:

Regional Environmental Agency in Timisoara did not give permission for repatriation to ROSPA0047 and ROSCI0345 but requested an EIA (**Refer to Annex C3/8 of PR**). The Romanian Academy is not yet accepted our study.

**In Slovakia:**

S. citellus populations on donor sites were influenced by heavy rains in 2010 even in 2012 and 2013. Therefore more donor sites had to be used to capture individuals for repatriation in Slovakia and the number of captured individuals had to be reduced comparing to original plan.

Modifications:

In Hungary originally 200 *S. citellus* repatriation was planned for both site. ZFK repatriated only 37 individuals in 2012 and had a plan to continue the repatriation in April 2013 but because of the Government had a plan to nationalise the lands owned by the public foundations and lease it for farmers therefore ZFK decided not to repatriate any more *S. citellus* to the site in question. The Government finally abandoned this idea so ZFK will reconsider to take another effort next year. They will consult with the *S. citellus* specialist from Kaposvár University to ensure the success of it. KNPD also considering to repatriate about another 50 *S. citellus* to the other corner of that large area. It is foreseen that altogether about 350-400 inds. will be repatriated in Hungary.

In Romania the donor site was changed from Macea to Arad (**Refer to Annex C3/9 of PR**).

In Slovakia ear-tag was changed to chip to mark the individuals. Due to extremely bad weather conditions that complicated the implementation of the action we expect the numbers of individuals repatriated in Slovakia will be reduced from originally planned 800 individuals to 500 individuals.

Comments on Commission's requests:

In Hungary during the former project the *S. citellus* repatriation went smoothly. The target of the current project is considerably less than before however since the government changed the bureaucracy slow down all activities very much. It is probably because the protection status of the *S. citellus* has increased and the experienced officials were replaced by inexperienced ones. We started the preparation in time as a normal routine but we could not foreseen, that the administrative process would slow down very much. Finally we overcome on this problem.

In Romania *S. citellus* population of Arad is not affected by any particular ongoing investment but it is endangered by many different factors mentioned before.

Action C4:

Name of the action: Locate and insulate dangerous electric pylons

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – August 2014

Achievements:

- Baseline surveys were going on.
- Subcontractors were selected by tenders.
- Insulation materials were purchased by BSPB in Bulgaria and ZSE in Slovakia.
- 327 pylons insulated in Bulgaria.
- 2829 pylons insulated in Hungary.
- 23 pylons insulated in Romania.
- 744 pylons insulated in Slovakia.

Action status: ongoing



Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Bulgaria:

Baseline survey of killed birds along some sectors of 20 kV power lines, identified for insulation, took place during field visits in January, February, March and April 2011. Considerable part of the 20 kV power lines in the Project territory were assessed again to obtain actual information about the level of risk they can impose on *F. cherrug* occurring in the specific area. In some part of the 20 kV power lines in the Project territory are of such type, which can be considered to be of no risk from electrocution (insulators turned down, existing elements, which make impossible medium size or large birds to perch close to the power cable). **(Refer to Annex C4/1 of IR)** However, most of the sectors planned for insulation remain current for this action with these minor exceptions. **(Refer to Annex C4/2 of IR)** A new map with changes was prepared **(Refer to Annex C4/4 of IR)**. An official letter asking for formal meeting on the issue was sent to the E.ON Electricity Company, responsible for the maintenance of the 20 kV power lines on the Project territory **(Refer to Annex C4/5 of IR)**. First meeting with E.ON electric company realized in July 2011 **(Refer to Annex C4/1 of PR)**. Till November 2011 all the electric pylons planned for insulation have been photographed and GPS coordinates have been taken for all of them, and then included in a database **(Refer to Annex C4/2 of PR)**, which was used by the electric company for planning and realizing the insulation of the pylons. A second meeting between BSPB and E.ON Bulgaria was held in Varna on 13 February 2012 **(Refer to Annex C4/3 of PR)**. During the meeting BSPB presented the results of the work done so far of identifying, taking GPS coordinates and pictures of the 600 electric posts that are to be insulated, as well as the collected information of electrocuted birds **(Refer to Annex C4/4a-b of PR)**. E.ON Bulgaria expressed their willingness to accept the cooperation proposal, which may involve signing a memorandum of understanding between the two organizations. In April a draft contract for the insulation of the electric pylons was prepared for E.ON Bulgaria. However in the main time the owner of the electric network has been changed to Energo-Pro Grid therefore negotiation had to start with the new owner. In October 2012 a Memorandum of collaboration between BSPB and Energo-Pro Grid has been signed **(Refer to Annex C4/5 of PR)**. After that the preparation of the insulation started again. Tender was issued, evaluated and the necessary insulation materials were ordered. In the beginning of 2013 technical meetings were held with the experts of Energo-Pro Grid to plan the insulation **(Annexes C4/1-C4/2)**.

Table 6: Schedule of the insulation after MTR in Bulgaria

Nr of pylons	Range of pylons	Name of area	Period of insulation
10 10 1 2	H1-H10 F56 – F79 A29 F21, F22	Kaliakra Krapets Durankulak Shabla	01.10. 2013-31.12.2013
117 18 20 6 7 17 15 20 20 10	L11-L47+ J8-J25 K1-K20 I40-I45 J1-J7 I1-I17 N1-N15 O1-O20 E1-E20	General Kolevo Balchik Balchik Sokolovo Sokolovo Senokos Voditsa Suvorovo Krapets-Bezhanovo Krapets/Shabla	01.01.2014-30.07.2014



The delivery places of insulators and the insulation process was co-ordinated with their local branches. The ordered insulators were delivered in February. The insulation work initiated in May and 327 pylons were insulated until the end of September (**Annexes C4/3-C4/4**). The schedule of the remaining 273 pylons' insulation is given in **Table 6.** above. The collaboration with the electric company “Energo-Pro Grid” Ltd. is very good.

In Hungary:

Baseline survey was carried out by BNPD, KMNPD and KNPD. The survey sheets (**Refer to Annex C4/6 of IR**) were sent to the Monitoring Centre of MME for data processing. In KNPD area some pylons have to be changed because in the main time LIFE05NAT/H/000122 project have insulated them as an emergency (**Refer to Annexes C4/7-C4/8 of IR**). The result is given in **Annex C4/6 of PR.**

Insulation work on ÉMÁSZ/BNPD territory:

There was a co-ordination meeting among the concerned parties to adjust and coordinate the LIFE+ and KEOP projects activities on 16.02.2012. (**Refer to Annex C4/7 of PR**). Based on the result of this meeting ÉMÁSZ provided its digital data base about their pylons to BNPD what was used to adjusted the priority polygons to the electric sections, it means to the switches at the ends of certain power line sections and identified the co-ordinates of the start and end pylons of the priority section for insulation (**Refer to Annex C4/8a-c of PR**). In the same time it was also adjusted with the KEOP project to avoid any overlapping pylons. There was a follow up meeting on 11.04.2012 to check the status of the implementation (**Refer to Annex C4/9 of PR**). ÉMÁSZ finally completed its tender for the 2012 year's work and selected two subcontractors (GA and JUKO) for the work. The subcontractors surveyed the committed sections and made their work plan (**Refer to Annex C4/10a of PR**). Based on this plan **2104 pylons were insulated (Refer to Annex C4/10b of PR)**. In the main time a standard certification of completion was designed which will be used by all project in Hungary (**Refer to Annex C4/11 of PR**). The rangers of BNPD checked the insulated pylons and took pictures from them and recorded their coordinates during E3 action (**Refer to Annex C4/12 of PR**). BNPD hired the best expert Mr. Péter Tóth to check the pictures to confirm the work before signing the certification of completion. He checked the pictures of each pylon of every power line section carefully and made their qualification in a table sheet form (**Refer to Annex C4/13 of PR**). Based on his qualification the certifications of completion were issued for the insulated sections of GA because the minor problems what were identified can be easily solved next year in the frame of their warrantee. Unfortunately he found much more error and shortage in the work of JUKO therefore we asked them to make a correction before we can issue the certification and send the pictures from the correction for proof. However for our great surprise instead of correcting the errors they tried to cheat us taking pictures from other correct pylons. Our expert discovered that (**Refer to Annex C4/14a of PR**) therefore we refused to issue any certification for completion (**Refer to Annex C4/14b of PR**).

The project manager organised a meeting among concerned parties (ÉMÁSZ, BNPD and subcontractors of BNPD) to evaluate the work done in 2012, to agree about the schedule and the preparation of the work for 2013 on 21. February 2013. Two main tasks were identified and scheduled: (1) Insulation of the remaining pylons (2) correction of JUKO's last years work. Regarding to (1) parties have agreed that BNPD will get to survey the remaining pylons and will provide ÉMÁSZ with the necessary information. Based on this information ÉMÁSZ will get to insulate all remaining pylons until the end of the year. Referring to (2) parties have agreed that BNPD's subcontractor will get to supervise the reparation work (**Annex C4/5**). Based on this agreed schedule JUKO corrected the last year's work under the supervision of BNPD's subcontracted specialist between 20. March and 03. April 2013 (**Annex C4/6**). **Finally altogether 1925 insulated pylons were accepted and paid until the end of June**



2013 (Annex C4/7a-c). ÉMÁSZ applied penalty on JUKO due to late delivery and reduced the paid sum of the invoice with the penalty.

Based on the mentioned agreement BNPD's subcontracted specialist surveyed the remaining 1776 pylons and **identified** the materials and works for **more 1756 pylons which need to be insulated for bird safety (Annexes C4/7a-c - C4/8)**. This survey work was done according to the agreed schedule in May-June 2013. Invitation for tender issued on 31. July 2013 on the remaining work. Selected subcontractors declared on 15 August. There was a co-ordination meeting among ÉMÁSZ, the potential sub-contractor, the project manager and the expert of BNPD where the project manager explained the urgency and the importance of the forthcoming work and the participants discussed how to speed up the work after the contract will be signed **(Annex C4/9)**. The potential subcontractors started to design the work after the meeting. The subcontract signed with GA Magyarország Kft. and SAG Hungaria Kft. on 5. September. Péter Tóth expert held training for the staff of ÉMÁSZ and their subcontractors. BNPD contracted a subcontractor to supervise the work of the subcontractors and endorse the completed sections on behalf of BNPD. Subcontractors started to work on 23 September. They completed the work on 904 pylons until 15 October. The BNPD's subcontractor checked and endorsed the work **(Annexes C4/7a-c - C4/10-C4/11)**. ÉMÁSZ will complete the work until the end of May 2014 latest.

Insulation work on DÉMÁSZ/KNPD&KMNPD territories:

DÉMÁSZ has issued a tender for the next four years period from June 2012 including the insulation works too. The tender was repeated and subcontractors were selected. A new competitive bid suppose to be opened among them for the insulation work but it was stopped. In January 2013 the manager of DÉMÁSZ informed the director of BNPD that they cannot fulfil its obligation due to the new taxes imposed by the government **(Annex C4/12)**. For the request of the project manager MRD invited the concerned parties for a meeting on 13. February 2013 **(Annex C4/13)**. In the meeting DÉMÁSZ introduced the implication of the new taxes what makes it impossible to fulfil their commitment. They may reconsider to spend the available LIFE money this year and add their own contribution to it next year if their sister company can work **(Annex C4/14)**. The project manager initiated a negotiation with EC about the work of their sister company and forwarded the favourable reply to them **(Annex C4/15)**. After the meeting the Secretary of Environment confirmed in a letter to the manager of DÉMÁSZ that MRD cannot overtake the own contribution of DÉMÁSZ but expect that DÉMÁSZ would spent the already available money and add their contribution **(Annex C4/16)**. DÉMÁSZ responded that they are ready to start the work this year but the future is uncertain **(Annex C4/17)**. A meeting what was initiated by the project manager to speed up the work was held on 8. May 2013. The first priority sections were identified by KNPD & KMNPD and it was agreed that DÉMÁSZ would issue a tender for the necessary material after the survey of the need. The work may start in September although DÉMÁSZ could not grant it **(Annex C4/18)**. To speed up the work BNPD agree to get to survey the selected priority sections to identify the needed materials and work as it was done for ÉMÁSZ. Péter Tóth the subcontractor of BNPD did it during July. He identified 625 pylons for insulation on these sections **(Annex C4/19)**. In the main time the tender for selecting suppliers of materials was going on. The director of BNPD advised to the State Secretary of Environment to request the government to let the electric companies to reduce their extra tax with their contribution to the EU projects **(Annex C4/20)**. Unfortunately the Ministry of National Economy did not support this issue **(Annex C4/21)**. DÉMÁSZ would not start the insulation before the end of October 2013 and did not provided information for their future plan.

In Romania:

In 2011 negotiation started with the SC ENEL Banat SA power company to acquire maps with the existing medium voltage poles in Arad and Timiş counties. Electric pylons have been



located on the sites in all visited areas in the south (**Refer to Annex C4/9 of IR**). We've checked 753 medium voltage pylons in the 7 km radius neighbourhood of the only known breeding pair from the Western part of the country (**Refer to Annex C4/10 of IR**). GPS points and different kind of data (type of pylon, type of wire arrangement, nr of wire, position of cable insulators, surrounding habitat type, electrocuted bird species found, and status of corps) was collected for each pylon, noted on standard data forms. We've found remains of several electrocuted birds. In 2012 we analyzed the data collected near Sannicolau Mare in West-Romania in 2011. During the base line survey (E8) we have to understand that we have to change our strategy. There are too much dangerous electric pylons to be insulated. The first priority must be given to those which are located near to the breeding pairs. However we just start to install the nest boxes in 2012 therefore only after occupation would be possible to identify the pylons for insulations.

In case of Dobrogea the work was speed up in the International Conference (D1-D2) organised by MAVIR in 2013 where ENEL met Megawatt (insulator supplier from Hungary) and agreed on assistance to identify the materials needed for insulation and to obtain a specialists view from ENEL. In the period of 22-30 August 2013 selected pylons (around 150) photographed (**Annex C4/22**) and sent to Megawatt to evaluate the materials needed for insulation. Following Megawatt's offer, a meeting will be organized with ENEL Dobrogea. It is foreseen that the insulation works will be finalized in this section until the end of October 2013. The pylons selected for insulation are located around the known breeding pair in South-Romania and around the pylons where 3 different breeding attempts were recorded in 2012. These pylons are carrying 6 wires (a normal electricity pylon hold 3 wires) which means that cost and installation will be two times bigger than expected, or foreseen in the project. Pylons on *F. cherrug* foraging sites will be insulated until the end of November 2013.

In West-Romania 23 electric pylons were insulated near an active pair's nest with the help of ENEL Romania. The specialists of ENEL were familiarized with the adequate mounting technics of isolators on the most common pole types in West-Romania. Specific materials were selected to insulate different types of poles. In the winter of 2013-2014 we will identify the dangerous poles in the neighborhood of the occupied nests and those will be insulated in the spring of 2014. Our report is presented attached (**Annex C4/23**).

In Slovakia:

A baseline survey has been done. 1241 pylons were inspected within the baseline survey. Nine *F. cherrug* were found dead most probably due to electrocution during the monitoring of 22 kV power lines in Western and Eastern Slovakia in 2012. This, as well as the movement of PTT tagged birds confirms the necessity of insulation of the dangerous pylons. 412 pylons were insulated in SKCHVU023 (**Annexes C4/24 & C4/27**) and 202 pylons in SKCHVU016 (**Annexes C4/25 & C4/27**) in 2012. Another 405 pylons were identified for insulation and out of these 130 pylons were insulated in SKCHVU014 in 2013 (**Annexes C4/26 & C4/27**).

Problems and their impacts:

In Bulgaria:

There is a significant delay in the implementation of this action because of the changes of ownership over the electric company (Energo-Pro officially replaced E.ON on 04.07.2012). For almost seven months BSPB was waiting for the decision of the new owners to consider and accept the collaboration offered by BSPB in terms of *F. cherrug* conservation and prevention of electrocution of birds and disturbance in electricity supply for the people.

In Hungary:

DÉMÁSZ has issued a tender for the next four years period from June 2012 including the insulation works too but the French owner EDF ordered them to reopen the tender with a much lower price reducing all kind of investment to the absolute necessary level due to



Hungarian Government economic policy. The tender was repeated and subcontractors were just selected. A new competitive bid was open among them for the insulation work but it was stopped. In the main time DÉMÁSZ warned the audience of the Unimpeded Sky Treaty meeting on 16 November 2012 that they may not do any insulation in the future due to the disadvantage economic conditions. In January 2013 the manager of DÉMÁSZ informed the director of BNPD that DÉMÁSZ cannot fulfil its obligation due to the new taxes imposed by the government (**Annex C4/11**). BNPD requested the help of State Secretary responsible for Environment that the electric supplier companies should get permission to reduce their new extra taxes with their own contribution to EU projects (**Annex C4/20**). However the Ministry of National Economy did not support this request (**Annex C4/21**). Finally DÉMÁSZ decided to start the work and spend the money from the first instalment but the future is uncertain. BNPD agreed to advance the remaining part of the costs of first priority sections if it would be necessary. However the work would not start before the end of October 2013 and it is not clear yet whether DÉMÁSZ is willing to do more over the 625 pylons or not.

In Romania:

The delay in nest box installation results delay of insulation but it is not endangering the success of the action.

Modifications:

In Bulgaria:

Because some of the initially planned sectors have been changed into no risk pylons, therefore we proposed some changes in the initially proposed sectors for insulation to be made. A new map with the proposed changes was prepared (**Refer to Annex C4/4 of IR**). The replacement pylons were also very dangerous since many carcasses were found under them (**Refer to Annexes C4/11-C4/12 of IR**). As the majority of the installation costs will be covered by Energo-Pro, therefore we reallocated 9480 EUR from External assistance and 1100 EUR from travel to consumable costs, thus providing a total of 34580 EUR for 400 insulators. For the remaining 200 pylons 13000 EUR consumable costs were allocated from the Hungarian electric companies. Few insignificant changes has been done to the planned insulation of electric pylons, due to 1) 15 pylons of cut off power line, 2) 8 errors in GPS-registered pylons or pylons that were mistakenly registered as dangerous type pylons, and 3) 22 pylons that were visited more frequently by *F. cherrug* and other birds of prey and need to be insulated first, so will be exchanged with other initially planned pylons (**Annex C4/3**).

In Hungary:

BNPD hired the best expert Mr. Péter Tóth to check the pictures to confirm the completed work before signing the certification of completion. He confirmed 1925 insulated pylons (**Annex C4/6**). He also surveyed the remaining 1756 pylons (**Annex C4/8**). It means altogether only 3681 pylons must be insulated. It is less than what was originally planned. The main reason of that DÉMÁSZ records are out of date. Within the polygons some pylons do not exist any longer or in the main time it was already replaced with insulated one. According to experts recommendation the head of the pylons will be replaced on 372 pylons with three different types of new safe heads. Some of the saved money used to cover the costs of 200 insulators in Bulgaria. BNPD subcontracted the supervisor/controller to check and endorse the work. Mr. Tóth as a subcontractor of BNPD also surveyed the pylons to be insulated by DÉMÁSZ in 2013 (**Annex C4/18**).

According to the latest information DÉMÁSZ may merge the selected subcontractor Primavill Kft. with the DÉMÁSZ Hálózati Elosztó Kft. (project partner) due to the enforcement of the Government, therefore it is foreseen that the external assistance costs may have to be reallocated to personnel and travel costs.

In Slovakia:



When preparing the project proposal, we calculated the number of pylons based on the approximate length of the power line planned to be insulated. During the insulation itself the real number of pylons was identified, so there is usually difference between the estimated number and real number of pylons. Two power lines were insulated in the project area so far. In the area SKCHVU016 Záhorské Pomoravie – north 145 pylons were estimated when preparing the project proposal, the real number of pylons in the project area was 202. (**Annex C4/25**) In the area SKCHVU023 Uľanská mokrad' 360 pylons were estimated within the longest line, the real number of pylons was 412 (**Annex C4/24**) (in the map attached to the Progress Report mistakenly reported as 420 pylons) (**Refer to Annex C4/16 of PR**). From the above mentioned reasons we would like to modify the number of insulated pylons according to the real number in all concerned SPAs either already insulated or planned for insulation. We would like to remove the SKCHVU012 from the project areas, where the C4 action was supposed to be implemented, because the conditions to include *F.cherrug* in the SDF of this SPA are not met. 95 pylons were planned to be insulated in SKCHVU012. However in SKCHVU023 and SKCHVU016 altogether 109 pylons more were insulated than originally planned. We would like to include the SKCHVU014 Malé Karpaty as a project area for the action C4. The SPA is listed among project sites in the project proposal. The reason is that a dangerous power line was identified during the field survey – several cadavers of birds of prey were found under it. The line is close to the *S.citellus* colony, created during the LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 project and it is a very important feeding territory of *F.cherrug*, breeding in the vicinity (the nest where the video-camera was installed within Action A.4 is about 12 km). The dangerous power line includes about 130 pylons (**Annex C4/26**), the exact number will be known after the documentation of ZSE is available. Although the number of identified dangerous pylons for insulation is higher than it was planned but ZSE will insulate them with its own money within the originally planned amount.

Comments on Commission's requests:

Unfortunately the jpg map from the proposed Bulgarian insulation changes lost its readability due to conversion to pdf version what we did not recognise. Please find the jpg version in **Annex C4/16 of PR**.

In Hungary ÉMÁSZ have established three short sections by three different types of new head before. They were tested from bird protection, security of electric supply and price point of view and we are also studied the possibility to replace insulation by replacing the heads within the project. Since the first test justified all the three heads ÉMÁSZ decided to replace the insulation of 372 pylons using again all the three new heads upon the recommendation of the expert to get more operational and maintenance experience.

BNPD and ÉMÁSZ are involved in KEOP project in North-East Hungary while MME and DÉMÁSZ are involved in KEOP project in South Hungary but the work would be done in the responsibility area of KMNP and KNP. BNPD and MME are the co-ordinating beneficiaries. They are designing the projects and they will do quality control of the work while the electric companies will co-finance it and got to implement it. These projects are scheduled after the LIFE+ project therefore these have not any impact on the LIFE+ project. The delay of LIFE+ project may have some impact on the KEOP projects however we are networking to ensure the less impact. The government tax policy has much more indirect impact on all insulation projects. DÉMÁSZ already gave up the KEOP project and it is uncertain how far they are ready to fulfil their commitment in the LIFE project. Anyway the KEOP projects are completely separated from the LIFE+ Project both in the site and in financially. All pylons are identified by co-ordinates. The insulated sections are identified by the co-ordinates of the two ends in the certification of completion and recorded in the GIS database what is exchanged among the parties.

**Action C5:**

Name of the action: Keeping and breeding of injured birds and repatriation of juveniles

Proposed start and end of the action: April 2011 – Sept 2014

Expected results:

4 cages will be built in Romania and Slovakia.

Insured birds may recover and can be repatriated.

Disabled birds may breed in captivity and their chicks will strengthen natural population.

Achievements:

- 2x2 cages were built in Slovakia and Romania.
- Insured birds were rescued in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.
- Recovered birds were released in Hungary and Slovakia.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:**In Hungary:**

One injured juveniles was found and taken to one of the rehabilitation centre in 2011. **(Refer to Annex C5/1 of IR)**. The bird cannot be released because of the nature of the injury. It may be kept for breeding. In 23 May 2013, a weakened *F. cherrug* was found by the colleagues of Bükk National Park Directorate, near Tisza Lake. With the assistance of MME/BirdLife Hungary, the bird was taken to Budapest Zoo for health check and treatment. This adult male was ringed this spring near Csákvár, where he later started to breed. The breeding failed due to the bad weather and lack of food, and this bird started to move around to find proper food sources, as other satellite tracked males did it, as well. This is how he reached the River Tisza. The reason, why he got weakened is not known. As it was found by the veterinarian of Budapest Zoo, he did not have any injury, however poisoning could not be excluded, especially that bird was found in the region most affected by direct poisoning of birds of prey. The recovered bird released by Zsolt Erdei World Champion boxer on 28 June in Csákvár **(Annex C5/1)**. In 12 July 2013 a juvenile male was found with insured wing most probably due to collision. It would never be completely recover therefore it would be kept for breeding in a rescue centre.

In Romania:

Preliminary discussions were held with the director of the ZOO from Târgu Mureş (where the Milvus Group's headquarter is), as they could provide enough space and excellent conditions for us to erect the cages **(Refer to Annex C5/2 of IR)**. Finally we decide to build two cages in our property. The construction of a 4x4x21m size cages was going on in Sansimion, Mures County **(Refer to Annex C5/1 of PR)** and it was completed. A juvenile *F. cherrug* rescued in Arad County and was taken to Targu Mures into the rehabilitation centre of the Milvus Group in 2012. The bird presents some slight affection at one of its wings, which was expected to be healed in a couple of month. It was moved into the cage in the summer of 2013 for flying exercises and to re-familiarize to catch live animals (pigeons). An adult female wounded to her wing, unable to fly, was found in Bihor County. Medical attendance is on-going, she will be ready soon for moving into the bigger cage. The releasing to the wild is unsure yet as there is a possibility that the bird will not be able to mount all her wing feathers. Our report is presented attached **(Annex C5/2)**.

*In Slovakia:*

One injured *F.cherrug* was transported to the rehabilitation centre in Zázrivá and was released in June 2011 (**Refer to Annex C5/3 of IR**). Agreement with ZOO Bratislava and rehabilitation centre in Ratnovce, where the two cages will be built is being prepared. Both cages for disabled individuals were built and opened by the presence of media (**Refer to Annex C5/2 of PR**). The cages are being used to keep disabled birds. In June 2012 a *F. cherrug* female was found in East-Slovakia with Hungarian ring. After several days she was released. One *F. cherrug* individual ringed in West-Slovakia in 2012, was found on the Bratislava airport injured by the plane and died during the transport. One injured *F.cherrug* male was found near a road in Western Slovakia in June 2013 and was placed to the cage in ZOO Bratislava (**Annex C5/3**). One *F.cherrug* individual with a Slovak ring was found in Austria in April 2013 and treated in a local rescue centre, after consultation with experts from rehabilitation centre in Ratnovce. The individual was released in May 2013 (**Annex C5/4**). Both cages are being used for injured individuals of different bird of prey species.

Modifications:

Finally we decided to build the cages at Sansimion (Mures County) on the property of the Milvus Group.

Comments on Commission's requests

Finally we did not build the cage in the Zoo but at Sansimion (Mures County) on MILVUS Group's property.

Action C6:

Name of the action: Guarding of endangered nests by photo traps and video cameras

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – March 2014

Achievements:

Three photo traps with GSM system were used and all the three pair has a successful breeding in Slovakia.

Action status: ongoing

*Description of the progress during the reporting time:**In Romania:*

F. cherrug abandon the old nesting sites on the cliff of the Macin Mountains, and they move to high voltage pylons on the plain like *F. cherrug* did in Hungary before. Even in 2013 there was no *F. cherrug* presence at the known nest places therefore this action did not get effective in Romania.

In Slovakia:

The video-camera installed within A4 action also serves as a guarding system (**Refer to Annex A4/5 of IR**). Another 3 GSM photo-traps were purchased and installed to ensure safe nesting on sites where there is a suspicion of nest robbery from the past (**Refer to Annex A4/6 of IR**). Three photo traps (GSM systems) were used in every year, and successful nesting was ensured by the guarded pairs where there was a suspicion of nest robbery from the past. Pictures from the photo-traps were copied to the computer and analysed (**Refer to Annex A4/12 of PR and Annex A4/5**). The pictures are also used for PR activities.



Problems and their impacts:

F. cherrug abandon the old nesting sites on the cliff of the Macin Mountains.

Modifications:

As the importance of the breeding places on cliffs is vanishing, and significance of high voltage pylons increases, a decision was made to ensure proper breeding conditions on high voltage power lines instead of no-more-used cliffs. Therefore the amount of money for one camera was used in C2 action to increase the number of artificial nests to be mounted in Dobrogea and West-Romania.

Comments on Commission's requests

In the past three years there was no *F. cherrug* breeding in the Macin Mountains. However we used a camera within action A4 in West-Romania.

Action C7:

Name of the action: Marking juveniles with PTT to collect migratory and immigration data

Proposed start and end of the action: May 2011 – June 2013

Achievements:

Three juveniles were marked by PTT in Romania

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Romania:

In 2011 we agreed with the electric power distribution company to provide support for tagging a chick with PTT recovered from the former Hungarian project. A female juvenile named Maia was tagged on 14 June 2011 (**Refer to Annex C7 of IR**). A female juvenile named Thea was tagged near to Arad in West-Romania in 2012. (**Refer to Annexes A3/7 and C7/1 of PR**). Maia died in Bosnia. Her PTT was recovered near to Saraievo (**Refer to Annexes A3/7 and C7/2 of PR**). A juvenile named Kilo was ringed and tagged with PTT in 2013 in West-Romania with the help of Transelectrica (**Annexes A3/4 & C7/1-C7/2**).

Problems and their impacts:

A breeding pair in Dobrogea has found too late in 2012. The juveniles left the nest already therefore it was not possible to tag them. The ringing and tagging of another juvenile from West- Romania failed in 2013 as he left the nest very early.

Modifications:

It was agreed that instead of MILVUS, BNPD will purchase the PTTs with one tender and will provide it to MILVUS when those are needed.

A recovered PTT from the former project was used to mark Tobias the son of Barnabas a male bird tagged in 2007 in Hungary was tagged in Czech Republic where Barnabas is breeding (**Refer to Annexes A3/7 and C7/3 of PR**).



5.1.3. Action D: Public awareness and dissemination of results

Action D1:

Name of the action: Lobbying for installation of nest boxes in electric pylons

Proposed start and end of the action: October 2010 – March 2011

Achievements:

- International Bird Protection Conferences organised by MAVIR in 2010, 2011 and 2013. ENEL's participation on it in 2013.
- Meeting for the Romanian Electric Supplier organised by MoEF.
- Meeting among the Romanian electric suppliers and Romanian project partners
- Agreement with ENEL, Electrica and Transelectrica about nest box installation.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Hungary:

MAVIR organised a conference in November 2010 and MME in April 2011. Representatives of Romanian Electric Suppliers were expected but they did not come. MAVIR organised again an international conference on 23 November 2011 where most of the project partners introduced their activities in connection to the electric network (**Refer to Annexes D1/1-D1/2 of PR**). The representatives of Romanian Electric Suppliers were expected but they did not come again. An aluminium nest box installation was introduced to the audience of the conference (**Refer to Annex D1/3 of PR**).

The Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forestry invited the electric companies for a meeting to the ministry on 14. December 2011. György Biró (MAVIR), János Bagyura (MME) and József Fidlóczky (FENCON Ltd. on behalf of BNPD) took part on the meeting. The Hungarian partners introduced the method, experiences, result of the nest box installation on electric pylons and the advantage of it for the electric distributor company. They brought an aluminium nest box with them what they handed over to the Romanian partner. (**Refer to Annex D1/4 of PR**).

The “traditional” MAVIR conference was postponed from 16. November 2012 to 6. March 2013 (**Annexes D1/1-D1/3**). The project beneficiaries introduced their activities in each project country. This was the first time that the Romanian and Slovakian electric distributor companies were participated. Before the conference a nest box installation under tension was introduced (**Annex D1/4**).

In Romania:

In 2011 we have contacted the three relevant electric distributor companies in this issue; we have invited them to the international conference on power lines and bird mortality, held in Budapest. We were join the meeting, unfortunately no one of the invited companies was shown up. We have presented the presentations of the meeting in CD for the companies. We have asked for the support of the MoE to invite these companies for a meeting where the representatives of the Hungarian companies may participate to help to introduce this issue. We used the occasion of PTT tagging for lobby too. One of the electric companies, ENEL assisted us to tag a juvenile in a nest on a pylon. The participating staffs of ENEL were convinced about the importance and safety of nest box installation and show interest about it.



LIFE09 NAT/HU/000384

A first large scale meeting was organised with the help of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in 14 December 2011 in Bucharest where representatives from every electricity supplier company from Romania participated and the Hungarian partners took part also (**Refer to Annexes D1/5-D1/6 of PR**). In the meeting we introduced the problem and the Hungarian experiences. The meeting was successful. Several other meetings were held with the representatives of ENEL, Transelectrica and Electrica, letters were sent with our specific requirements (**Refer to Annex D1/7 of PR**). The lobby with ENEL and Electrica was successful as all the artificial nests we ask them to mount are in place. We also signed an agreement Transelectrica Timisoara about mounting 41 nest boxes on high voltage power lines in Arad and Timis counties (**Refer to Annex D1/8 of PR**).

First time ENEL representatives participated in the International Bird Protection conference organised by MAVIR in Hungary in 2013 (**Annex D1/3**). Although Transelectrica did not participated in the conference but their Dobrogea Directorate has also accepted the idea to install nest boxes on high voltage power lines. Three actions have been carried out for the installations and each time a letter of appreciation was sent out for the company and a press release was released too. Transelectrica has agreed to install the last nest boxes in Dobrogea on the transmission line from the Ukrainian boarder during the project period (**Annex D1/5**). Transelectrica has also agreed to install the remaining nest boxes in West-Romania in their own expense before the next breeding season in March 2014 (**Annex D1/6**).

Problems and their impacts:

None of the invited Romanian companies participated in the relevant meetings in Hungary in 2011 and 2012 but ENEL took part in 2013. Despite of our agreement with Transelectrica Timisoara in late November 2012 we have received a letter from them (**Refer to Annex D1/9 of PR**) as they didn't get the approval to cover the costs of the installation from their HQ in Bucharest. After further negotiation finally we have agreed on this issue.

Comments on Commission's requests:

The first meeting was held in 14 December 2011 in Bucharest (**Refer to Annexes D1/5-D1/6 of PR**). ENEL participated in the International Bird Protection Conference in Hungary in 2013.

Action D2:

Name of the action: Lobbying for insulation of electric pylons

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – June 2011

Achievements:

- International Bird Protection Conferences organised by MAVIR. ENEL's participation on it in 2013.
- Meeting for the Romanian Electric Supplier organised by MoEF.
- Meeting among the Romanian electric suppliers and Romanian project partners
- Decision makers of the Romanian Electricity Companies accepted the idea to insulate the dangerous pylons of medium-voltage power lines and started this activity.

Action status: ongoing

**Description of the progress during the reporting time:****In Hungary:**

MAVIR organised a conference in November 2010 and MME in April 2011. Representatives of Romanian Electric Suppliers were expected but they did not come. MAVIR organised again an international conference on 23 November 2011 where most of the project partners introduced their activities in connection to the electric network (**Refer to Annexes D1/1-D1/2 of PR**). The representatives of Romanian Electric Suppliers were expected but they did not come again. An aluminium nest box installation was introduced to the audience of the conference (**Refer to Annex D1/3 of PR**).

The Romanian Ministry of Environment and Forestry invited the electric companies for a meeting to the ministry on 14. December 2011. György Biró (MAVIR), János Bagyura (MME) and József Fidlóczky (FENCON Ltd. on behalf of BNPD) took part on the meeting. The Hungarian partners introduced the method, experiences, result of the nest box installation on electric pylons and the advantage of it for the electric distributor company. They brought an aluminium nest box with them what they handed over to the Romanian partner. (**Refer to Annex D1/4 of PR**).

The “traditional” MAVIR conference was postponed from 16. November 2012 to 6. March 2013 (**Annexes D1/1-D1/3**). The project beneficiaries introduced their activities in each project country. This was the first time that the Romanian and Slovakian electric distributor companies were participated. Before the conference a nest box installation under tension was introduced (**Annex D1/4**).

In Romania:

We have contacted the three relevant electric distributor companies in this issue; we have invited them to the international conferences on power lines and bird mortality, held in Budapest. We were join the meetings and ENEL participated on it in 2013. We introduced the presentations of the meetings in CD and the so called “Budapest declaration” (**Refer to Annex D2 of IR**) for the companies. We have asked the support of the MoE to invite these companies for a meeting where the representatives of the Hungarian companies may participate to help to introduce this issue. We used the occasion of PTT tagging for lobby too. One of the electric companies, ENEL assisted us to tag a juvenile in a nest on a pylon. A first large scale meeting was organised with the help of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in 14 December 2011 in Bucharest where representatives from every electricity supplier company from Romania participated and the Hungarian partners took part also (**Refer to Annexes D1/5-D1/6 of PR**). In the meeting we introduced the problem and the Hungarian experiences. The meeting was successful. Several meetings were held with the representatives of ENEL Banat. They tested 50 sets of insulators they were given in Timis County, near Ianova (**Refer to Annex D2/1 of PR**). We agreed with ENEL Banat to insulate 350 pylons in West-Romania (**Refer to Annex D2/2 of PR**). In the International Conference in Hungary ENEL made direct contact with Megawatt Ltd. one of the producers of new insulation materials.

Problems and their impacts:

None of the invited Romanian companies participated in the relevant meetings in Hungary in 2011 and 2012 but ENEL took part in 2013.

Comments on Commission's requests:

The first meeting was held in 14 December 2011 in Bucharest (**Refer to Annexes D1/5-D1/6 of PR**). ENEL participated in the International Bird Protection Conference in Hungary in 2013.

**Action D3:**

Name of the action: Erecting information signs at project site

Proposed start and end of the action: September 2011 – March 2012

Achievements:

In Bulgaria 2, in Hungary 14, in Romania 4, Slovakia 2 information signs have been erected

Action status: completed

Description of the progress during the reporting time:**In Bulgaria:**

The text of the information signs has been translated into Bulgarian. The most appropriate sites visited and assessed for installation of information panels. The best site is Cape Kaliakra, visited annually by about 1 000 000 people from Bulgaria and abroad. Some preliminary consultations took place. Second appropriate place is one of the most famous summer sea resorts “Albena”, located near to the “Batova” Natura 2000 zone (**Refer to Annex D3/1 of IR**). In December 2011 a public tender procedure has been initiated for the production of information signs. However insufficient number of offers obtained, therefore the procedure was repeated twice. In February 2012 the information signs were ordered. In the main time two permissions were obtained; from the Ministry of Environment and Water of Bulgaria, and Albena Ltd. (resort managing company) for the installation of the information boards. In April the information signs were ready for installation. In May one information sign was erected in Kaliakra Natura 2000 site and the fundamentals of the second one were prepared in the town of Dobrich. In June the second information sign was erected on the prepared fundament (**Refer to Annex D3/1 of PR**). Monitoring the visitors of the information signs was done in Kaliakra and Dobrich between June and August 2012 and 2013. A short report has been prepared (**Refer to Annex D3/2 of PR and Annex D3/1**).

In Hungary:

Due to the very difficult procurement process in the state organisation the procurement of the information boards was transferred from BNPD to MME. MME selected the supplier already but it cannot order the production due to the money transfer problem. However the signboard has been designed for all the four countries (**Refer to Annex D3/2 of IR**) as a credit and waiting for production. Finally 14 information signs were prepared based on the design in the end of 2011. These were distributed among the partners. Some of the partners installed them in their own premises while others in public areas. Permissions were obtained from the municipalities during the winter. During the spring and summer all the information signs were erected on the selected locations (**Refer to Annex D3/3 of PR**).

In Romania:

In 2011 the text of the information signs has been translated into Romanian. Targeted project site managers at Macin National Park have been informed about the erection of information signs, local authorities to be contacted (**Refer to Annex D3/3 of PR**). In 2012 two information boards were erected in West-Romania and one in the south in Greci at the entrance of the Macin National Park (**Refer to Annex D3/4 of PR**). The last information sign was erected in escăria Cefa – Pădurea Rădvani SPA in 2013 (**Annex D3/2**).

In Slovakia:

The text of the information signs has been translated into Slovak. The possibility of installation of a signboard in Abrahám municipality in SKCHVU023 Uľanská mokrad' was



LIFE09 NAT/HU/000384

consulted with the land-using Company. One of the signboards will be installed near their seat in Abrahám village (**Refer to Annex D3/4 of IR**). Both information signs were installed one in ZOO Bratislava and the other in Abrahám village (**Refer to Annex D3/5 of PR**). The information board in Abraham will be replaced into a more frequently visited place this year.

Problems and their impacts:

In Bulgaria:

The implementation was delayed due to administrative difficulties. One of the two initially planned locations for the information signs – that in Albena resort, had to be changed, as obtaining permission could delay the activity with another six months to one year. Even though BSPB has received an official acceptance from the Executive Director of Albena Ltd. (the managing company of the resort), it resulted that Albena Ltd. have to include the installation of any single advertising/information panel within the resort's Master Plan for the next period, than to accord this plan with two ministries (The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications), as well as with the Senior Architect of the Municipality of Balchik. In consequence, a new location has been chosen for the installation of the second information board – the Centre for protection of animals and nature in Dobrich, which is a place visited by many people, mainly from Dobrich and its surroundings, and especially by families with children.

In Hungary:

- Very difficult procurement process in the state organisation.
- The money transfer problem for the NGOs.
- Sometimes we did not get the permission from municipalities for the requested place but we got another frequently visited place (**Refer to Annex D3/6 of PR**).

In Romania:

The forth information board what we planned to erect in Salonta, West-Romania but we did not receive a positive response from the City hall of Salonta on this matter (**Refer to Annex D3/7a-b of PR**) therefore new location was selected.

Modifications:

MME had to produce them Instead of BNPD due to very slow, long and costly procurement process in the state sector.

Two more information boards were produced and installed in Hungary within the original budget.

Some originally planned places were changed according to the permissions of the concerned Municipalities.

Comments on Commission's requests:

The information boards have been installed and the action has been completed.

Action D4:

Name of the action: Design and operate project web site

Proposed start and end of the action: October 2010 – September 2014

Achievements:



LIFE09 NAT/HU/000384

Web page: www.sakerlife.mme.hu is functioning, it was continuously maintained. During eleven months in 2012 there were 743 862 visits from 162 731 address from 117 countries. There were more than 1000 visits from 21 countries (**Refer to Annex D4 of PR**). During the first eight months of 2013, 56 667 visitors visited the site by 306 735 times from 105 countries (**Annex D4/1a-c**).

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Bulgaria:

The content of the project website has been translated into Bulgarian and fifteen news about the progress of the project activities in Bulgaria have been prepared by BSPB for the project web page. Additionally, this news was published on BSPB's official web site and Facebook page. News from other partners has been translated into Bulgarian for the project web site.

In Hungary:

Website www.sakerlife.mme.hu was developed in five languages and it is operating now. It is common with the former project's website. Selection between the old and new project can be done in the home page. Website was continuously maintained and it provides information about the project progress. The web camera installed at a nest box was connected to the web page and the breeding of the *F. cherrug* pair could be monitored continuously in 2012 and in 2013 (**Annex D4/2**). In 2013 a *Falco subbuteo* pair started to breed after the *F. cherrug* in the nest box. MAVIR continue the broadcasting their breeding also from the nest box to maintain the attraction of the peoples (**Annex D4/3**).

In Romania:

The content of the project website has been translated into Romanian and several articles were created in three different languages (RO, HU, EN).

In Slovakia:

The content of the project website has been translated into Slovak and new articles were submitted and published. The streaming of video from camera installed under Action A.4 was ensured in 2013.

Comments on Commission's requests:

Results are presented. The Inception Report's and Progress Report's links are available in the Results section.

Action D5:

Name of the action: Secure public support for conservation efforts

Proposed start and end of the action: July 2011 – September 2014

Achievements:

- Posters have designed. 1000 posters have printed in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.
- Leaflets are designed. 1000 leaflets printed in Bulgaria and Romania and 2500 leaflets printed in Hungary and about 2000 already distributed.
- 300 pcs of T-shirts and 500 copies of brochures were produced in Slovakia
- 300 DVD was produced and distributed about the web 2012's video in Hungary.



Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Bulgaria:

A questionnaire related to the conservation of *F. cherrug* has been prepared (**Refer to Annex D5/1 of IR**) and it was disseminated within stakeholders of the project area from June 2011 (**Refer to Annex D5/2 of IR**). General information about the project as well as two materials on *F. cherrug* observations and the beginning of the project was uploaded on BSPB's official web site (http://bspb.org/show2.php?id=1852&menu_id=37). 1000 copies of A2-size posters were printed in April 2012 (**Refer to Annex D5/1 to PR**). Their distribution initiated on 6th of May, when an official event was organized by BSPB in the town of Varna, celebrating the 20th anniversary of LIFE Programme. Around 300 posters were distributed within BSPB's regional offices and BSPB's volunteers for dissemination, within participants of BSPB volunteering brigades in Madzharovo and Atanasovsko Lake in August 2012, and within visitors of the 2nd Kite Festival, dedicated to the conservation of the Red-Breasted Goose, organized by BSPB in Shabla. The target groups were: children, local people, teachers, birders and bird lovers, representatives of local institutions. Some posters were distributed also through the Green Visitor Centre in Shabla village (**Refer to Annex D5/2 of PR**). In September the preparation of the leaflet design was initiated and was submitted for the approval of the PR board of BSPB. A report on the preliminary results of monitoring and assessment the impact of communication and dissemination was prepared by BSPB (**Refer to Annex D5/3 of PR**). More than half of the project posters has been distributed within local institutions from Dobrudzha area, as well as during some open-air events in 2013 (**Annex D5/1**). After approval of the design 1000 copies of leaflets were printed in January 2013 (**Annex D5/2**). From April the project posters and leaflets started to be vastly distributed in the project area (**Annex D5/3**). Some documentary video material was taken by the project team, showing the field activities, so those may be used also for the project film (**Annex D5/4**).

In Hungary:

We printed A3 size posters instead of A2 because it is easier to install it on the information boards of Municipalities, schools, medical centres, pubs. 1000 copies of posters were printed in May 2012 (**Refer to Annex D5/4 of PR**). The posters were distributed among the Hungarian partners and they displayed them in their areas in public places like public offices, schools, pubs, etc. (**Refer to Annex D5/5 of PR**). 2500 copies of leaflets (**Refer to Annex D5/6 of PR**) were printed and distributed among the partners in October. The partners use them in different event and when they were negotiating peoples in the field. About 2000 copies are already distributed. (**Refer to Annex D5/7 of PR, Annex D5/5**). MAVIR got to prepare a 25' Video summary of the nest camera records from 2012 free of charge (**Refer to Annex D5/8 of PR**). About 300 copies of DVD were distributed in different events for example in the Unimpeded Sky Treaty meeting. 23 presentations were held about the project in different audience in different places by different peoples (**Refer to Annex D5/9-D5/11 of PR, Annex D5/6**). A questioner was designed to assess the impact of the communication (**Refer to Annex D5/12 of PR**) and it was displayed on the web and we tried to use them during some event. However the questioners are not very popular in Hungary, therefore only a few were returned after the events. Therefore we changed the method and our colleagues have filled the questioner interviewing the participants (**Annex D5/7**).

In Romania:

The Hungarian poster and leaflets were adapted into Romanian. The draft version was submitted to the board for comments (**Refer to Annex D5/13-D/14 of PR**). These were finalised and printed in 2013 (**Annexes D5/8a-b-D5/9a-b**).



The subcontractor was selected for film production and contract was signed. Shooting have been started (**Annex D5/10**). Local filmmakers were identified by the partners in all the participant countries for fast and effective work.

In Slovakia:

There were 7 presentations (**Annex D5/11**) held about the project and 5 articles published (**Annex D5/12**). 300 pcs of T-shirts (**Annex D5/13**) and 500 pcs of brochures were produced (**Annex D5/14**) and are being distributed to stakeholders, project staff and volunteers (**Annex D5/15**). A questionnaire was prepared based on the form from Hungarian colleagues and published online on RPS web page in February 2013. The stakeholders were being asked to fill the form either online or in printed form, according to their preferences. Forms filled in printed version are being transformed to electronic version. After they do so, the project brochure is being distributed to them, together with further information about the project and reference to the project web page. The information is also provided during personal meetings. After that the stakeholders fill in the form for the second time. This will ensure monitoring of impact of the project actions. Over 30 stakeholders, mostly farmers and hunters were contacted to fill in the form (**Annex D5/16**). After collecting responses from all farmers the impact will be evaluated.

Problems and their impacts:

In Bulgaria:

The delay in publishing the leaflets was due to administrative reasons. After clarifying the content of the leaflet in October 2012 by the BSPB project team, it had to be adopted by BSPB's PR team and the design had to be changed few times before finalizing the design. On the other hand, in December it was already impossible to print the leaflets as the publishing companies have many orders to accomplish and do not accept new ones.

In Romania:

It was important to specify first the most important areas for PR activities. Based on the baseline survey we identified the target communities. Due to delay of project start the film making was delayed also.

Modifications:

RPS produced project T-shirts instead of posters according to the approval of EC. DVDs from project films will be ready end of June 2014 only.

Comments on Commission's requests:

The subcontractor was selected for film production and contract was signed. Shooting have been started (**Annex D5/10**). Local filmmakers were identified by the partners in all the participant countries for fast and effective work.

Table 7: Monitoring and assessment the impact of communication and dissemination:

Action nr	Monitored activity	Methodology	Result indicator
D.1	Lobbying for installation of nest boxes in electric pylons in Romania	Accounting the installed nest boxes in Romania	67 aluminium nest boxes installed in pylons
D.2	Lobbying for insulation of electric pylons in Romania	Accounting the insulated electric pylons in Romania	23 pylons already insulated
D.3	Visitors of erected information sign at project	Responsible project staff randomly visiting the	BG=50 per 2 hours HU=2~50 per hours



	site	signboards and recording number of peoples met at signboards	RO=1,5 per hours SK=50 per hours in the ZOO and 1,2 per hours in Abraham
D.4	Use of project web site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Google Analytics • Counting request for permissions to use data published on web • Counting references made of web 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 743862 visits of 162731 visitors in 2012; 306735 visits of 56667 visitors in 2013 • Number of visits by country is given in Annex D4 of PR, Annex D4/1c • BG=0, HU=3, RO=3, SK=n.a. • BG=0, HU=5, RO=3, SK=n.a.
D.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A2 size posters • A4 size leaflets • Project film on DVD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveying the number of posters displayed in public places • Recording the sort and number of events and participants where leaflets are distributed • Maintaining record and statistic about the distribution and presentations of the film • Observing TV watch data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BG=400, HU=950 • BU=500 • HU= about 2000 leaflets are distributed in events • Film is under preparation (HU=300 extra DVD distributed) • 16 TV broadcasted • About 15 million people approached
D.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press Conferences • Press releases • Articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining record about the number of invitation and participants • Observing media watch data • Maintaining record about the number of occasion and targeted press • Observing media watch data • Maintaining record about the submitted articles • Requesting copies about the published articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 press conferences • 67 participants • 12 TV and a newspaper • 15 press releases, 35 press approached • 16 news published • 14 articles submitted



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining record about the published copies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 articles published
D.7	Layman's report	Maintaining record about the distribution	number of copies distributed

Action D6:

Name of the action: Informing media about project's aims, activities and achievements

Proposed start and end of the action: October 2010 – September 2014

Achievements:

- 6 Press Conferences
- 15 press releases
- 9 own-written articles in newspapers, magazines, websites
- 6 scientific papers
- 6 guided site visits for the media
- 16TVs, 7 radio, 14 newspapers, 121 online news published

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Bulgaria:

One Press Conference has been organized on 31st of March 2011 at the National Press Club with the Bulgarian News Agency in Sofia, to launch the project (**Refer to Annex D6/1 of IR**). Representatives of 10 different media have participated in the event (**Refer to Annex D6/2 of IR**). During the conference Dr. Petar Iankov, the Technical Coordinator of the Project in Bulgaria, gave a presentation on the purpose and activities with the aim to bring the conservation problems of *F. cherrug* to the general public (**Refer to Annex D6/3 of IR**). As a result of the Press Conference and the distributed first press release (**Refer to Annex D6/4 of IR**) on the project the event was widely covered by over 20 electronic media, radio channels and newspapers (**Refer to Annex D6/5 of IR**). One article on the conservation of *F. cherrug* in Bulgaria and the start of the project has been prepared and published in June in the BSPB Magazine "Za Ptitsite" (**Refer to Annex D6/6 of IR**). The magazine is printed in 1000 copies and is distributed within BSPB members and partners. Another article about the Project was published in one of the most popular Bulgarian magazine for hunters "Lov i oruzhie" (**Refer to Annex D6/7 of IR**). An article was submitted about Slavka's wintering in Bulgaria to the Heliaca (**Refer to Annex D6/1 of PR**). Between 01.07.2011 and 31.12.2012 there were 47 media appearances about three main topics: co-operation with electric companies, bird crime, effects of wind farms (**Annex D6/1 refer to Annex D6/2 of PR**). Three times four TV channels (3 national televisions reflected themes on bird crime and *F. cherrug* conservation and Petar Iankov gave an interview on Nova TV, presenting the conservation efforts about the *F. cherrug* and Bird Crime on national and international level in the occasion of the Bird crime conference on 19 April 2012) and six times seven radio channels broadcasted three main issues. Five newspapers and a magazine published these main topics four times (**Refer to Annex D6/3 of PR**). Most time (29) news was published by online media. During the first eight months of 2013 six interviews were given for national and local radio and television. In



January the Focus Information Agency (on-line and radio), BTV National Television, Reuters (**Annex D6/1**) and two newspapers from Silistra and Rousse reflected an interview given by Petar Iankov about Mid-winter count, interesting observations of birds, our LIFE project, as well as the threats for the *F. cherrug* in North-Eastern Bulgaria; in April one interview was given for the national Darik Radio about bird migration and the LIFE Project activities, and another interview was given for the national newsletter “24 hours” about the birds and the bad weather conditions in spring, where the project was also mentioned; in May one interview was given by Petar Yankov for the national BNR - Radio Binar about the recently presented film about birds in Bulgaria, where the LIFE Project aims and activities were mentioned (**Annex D6/2**). One press-release was published in national and regional media about the initiated insulation of electric pylons in Dobrudzha. Most of the news was published in on-line media (**Annex D6/1**). Four news was prepared for the BSPB’s website and the FaceBook page of BSPB. One article about the importance of insulation of dangerous electric pylons was published in the BSPB's magazine “Za ptitsite” in June 2013 (**Annex D6/3**).

In Hungary:

The project was launched in the press conference organised in the venue of the International Conference where most partners were present in September 2010 (**Refer to Annex D6/8 of IR**).

In 2011 an article from the *F. cherrug* conservation results was submitted for Heliaca periodical (**Refer to Annex D6/9 of IR**). Two press releases were issued from tagged birds and International Conference about “Power lines and bird mortality in Europe” (**Refer to Annex D6/10 of IR**). MME issued another press release about poisoned *F. cherrug* (**Refer to Annex D6/11 of IR**).

In 2012 an article was published and another was submitted to Heliaca periodical about the *F. cherrug* conservation progress and annual results (**Refer to Annexes D6/4a-b of PR**). An article was published in the Zöld Horizont about the project (**Refer to Annex-D6/5 of PR**). Another article was submitted to the proceedings of the International Conference in Ukraine (**Refer to Annex-D6/6 of PR**). An article was submitted for the French Ornithos Scientific paper (**Refer Annex-D6/7 of PR**). A press conference was organised by MAVIR for the occasion of marking the chicks with ornithological rings in the “nestweb” (**Refer to Annex D6/8-D6/9 of PR**). Two press releases were issued one about the nestweb and another about the press conference (**Refer to Annex D6/10 of PR**). There were a total of 16 media appearances about three main topics: nestweb, repatriation of *S. citellus*, and conservation of *F. cherrug* by LIFE support (**Annex D6/1 refer to Annex D6/2 of PR**). **Three times four TV channels** broadcasted about the nest web and the *S. citellus* repatriation. **One radio channels** broadcasted also about the nest web. An article was published **by a monthly** periodical about the project work with LIFE support (**Refer to Annex D6/11 of PR**). **Seven online newsletters** were published by five online media.

In 2013, 1 article in nature conservation journal (TermészetBúvár 2013/1) on the satellite tracking part of the programme (**Annex D6/4**), 8 press releases were published (topics: *F. cherrug* population development in 2012; launching *F. cherrug* nest web camera; poisoned satellite-tracked *F. cherrug* and other raptors; ringing the chick in the web camera nest; removing satellite tag from Lehel, the *F. cherrug* tagged in 2007; releasing recovered *F. cherrug* by 'Madár', the Hungarian box champion; *F. cherrug* chick from the web camera nest fledged; *S. citellus* repatriation) (**Annex D6/5**), 3 press conferences were held (poisoned satellite-tracked *F. cherrug*; releasing recovered *F. cherrug*, *S. citellus* repatriation) (**Annex D6/6**), and following the press releases and conferences 34 media appearances occurred. Counting all media types, but only the primary appearances, not considering the high number of subsequent citations by many websites (**Annexes D6/1 & D6/7a-b**),

*In Romania:*

A press release (**Annex D2/1 of PR**) was sent and a press conference (**Annex D6/12 of PR**) was organised jointly by MILVUS and ENEL in the beginning of April 2012 concerning the newly placed nest-boxes. An article has been prepared about the project achievements for the ROS publication “Alcedo” (**Annex D6/13 of PR**). There were a total of 35 media appearances about two main topics: Installation of nest boxes and tagging by PTTs (**Annex D6/2 of PR**). **Three times four TV channels** broadcasted (**Annexes D6/14-D6/17 of PR**), and **31 online newsletter** published the main topics (**Annex D6/18 of PR**). A MILVUS-TRANSELECTRICA TIMISOARA common press release was sent in May 2013 to local press from Timis County (**Annex D6/8**).

In Slovakia:

Eight Press Releases about the project and its outputs, about the money transfer problem (**Refer to Annex D6/5 of IR**), about the cages, the PTT tagged *F. cherrug* Slavka in Prague and the Bulgarian colleagues saved Slavka (**Refer to Annex D6/19 of PR**) were submitted to media and published on RPS web site and other web sites. An article was submitted to the Slovak Raptor Journal about the trend and conservation of the species in West Slovakia (**Refer to Annex D6/12 of IR**). There were a total of 11 media appearances about two main topics: inauguration of cages and Slavka (**Refer to Annex D6/2 of PR**). **Two TV** broadcasted about inauguration of cages and **9 online newsletters** published the main topics in 2012 (**Refer to Annex D6/20 of PR**). Four online articles (**Annex D6/1**) and **one TV spot** were presented concerning the release of a rescued *F. cherrug* back to the wild in May 2013 (**Annexes D6/9-D6/10**).

Comments on Commission's requests:

Deliverables are included in the annexes. Missing Annex D6/11 of IR is annexed.

Action D7:

Name of the action: Layman's report

Proposed start and end of the action: April 2014 – June 2014

Action status: pending

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

ONLY in 2014!

5.1.4. Action E: Overall project operation and monitoring

Action E1:

Name of the action: Monitoring of installed nest boxes in Bulgaria and Romania according to the Hungarian and Slovak experience (*incl. collection & analysis of food remains*)

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2012 – March 2014



Achievements:

The nest box monitoring carried out in 2013.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Bulgaria:

Because of the delay of nest boxes installation, a full survey report on their occupancy by *F. cherrug* or other birds of prey will be submitted in 2014. Two aluminium and two wooden nest boxes were checked twice during June and August 2012 but there were not any sign of occupancy. In 2013 three field visits for monitoring of the installed aluminium and wooden nest boxes were realised (in May, June and July) (**Annex E1/1**). There were no *F. cherrug* breeding registered in both types of nest boxes. However about 90% of the installed nest boxes were occupied by *Falco tinnunculus* (**Annex E1/2**).

In Romania:

Because of the delay of nest boxes installation the nest box monitoring started in 2013. All the installed nest-boxes were checked in 2013 but only *F. tinnunculus* were breeding in it (**Annex E1/3**).

Problems and their impacts:

The chance of occupation of the nest boxes during the very first year of their installation was very low, thus a complete monitoring of the nest boxes started in 2013 and will be completed during the breeding seasons of 2014.

Modifications:

Because of the delay of the nest boxes full scale monitoring started only in 2013.

Comments on Commission's requests:

We will submit a complete monitoring report with the Final Report.

Action E2:

Name of the action: Monitoring of repatriated *S. citellus* population using the Hungarian and Slovak experience of former LIFE project

Proposed start and end of the action: June 2011 – August 2013

Achievements:

Repatriations were confirmed successful in four NATURA 2000 sites until the dormant period.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Hungary:

In HUDD10008 the repatriated animals were fed and guarded. Monitoring of the repatriated population was carried out during the guarding and also after that on the 30th and 45th days after the repatriation. The animals extended the artificial holes and created their burrows (**Refer to Annex E2/1 of PR**). Thanks to the feeding they remained in the area despite of the



severe draught. We recorded two predations by *Buteo buteo* only. There was any dog or fox predation. The repatriated population successfully accommodated in the fenced area however two burrows system were created outside of the fences too. Based on our monitoring we believe that 95 % of the repatriated population successfully hibernated. Unfortunately due to the severe weather (returned winter) in the spring the repatriated population did not survived. In HUKN10002 the repatriated animals were guarded. Monitoring of the repatriated population was carried out during the guarding and also after that on the 30th and 45th days after the repatriation. The animals extended the artificial holes, created their burrows and occupied larger area (**Annex E2/1a-b**). Proper information about the survival rate and reproduction will be collected next year.

In Romania:

In the days following translocation, repatriated animals were checked twice a day, in the morning and evening hours. During these controls any appreciable change had been recorded. We recorded individuals which stayed in the artificial burrows or those which have left it and later returned, digging activity of animals, the rate of retention cap removal, the number of abandoned artificial burrows, presence or absence of food, presence and number of actively foraging individuals around artificial burrows. The release area had been previously evaluated based on several indicators, so that the target area meets the basic needs of the species. The soil is easy to dig, the groundwater table is low, the grassy vegetation is low with patches of medium height tussocks and there are fairly many positive micro-relief forms. The size of the area ensures the viability of newly adapted colonies. The area is used as a pasture for sheep, which should remain unchanged in the long run, thus ensuring the long-term survival of *S. citellus* populations.

Generally, a translocation is considered successful if it results in a self-sustaining population. The three main objectives of a reintroduction are: (1) survival of the animals after release, (2) settlement of animals in the release area, and (3) successful reproduction in the release area. The first and second objectives deal with the days or weeks immediately after release of the animals. Consequently, long-term survival at the release site strongly depends on this critical period. There are a lot of factors that influence the outcome of this critical period including, e.g. suitable habitat, predator exclusion, and confinement of the animals to the release site. In our case it is yet too soon to determine the success of the translocation. This can and should be evaluated on multiple temporal scales. Post release monitoring of the animals should occur via observation for 5 years. One should do visual census of the *S. citellus* on the release site for at least three days during the activity peaks. Following this, used burrow counts are recommended every month from the release until the first hibernation. Data on *S. citellus* census numbers at the release area are required to decide if the translocation was successful in the long term (**Refer to Annex E2/2 of PR**). The *S. citellus* repatriation's success was monitored all year long in 2013 near Santana, Western Romania. Several artificial burrows with *S. citellus* released were identified in 2013 as being occupied. The existing population was strengthened, however further specimens need to be released in 2013/2014 for a strong population. Our report is presented attached (**Annex E2/2**).

In Slovakia:

It was necessary to concentrate on the monitoring of the success of the release on both sites where the new colonies has been established. Acclimatization of released *S. citellus* have been recorded and the success of the release itself by observation. According to the monitoring the first phase of the repatriation was successful, what is very important information for the next implementation of C3 action (**Refer to Annex C3/3: 2nd picture of IR**). Intensive monitoring of the released individuals was carried out, with the use of photo-traps in 2012 (**Refer to Annex E2/3 of PR**). The results are very interesting – for example in one case 5 out of 10 released males used one burrow. We have also recorded predation of *S. citellus* by other



species. Based on the consultation and approval we used the microchips to identify the recaptured individuals in 2012 and 2013. This method helps to evaluate the success of releasing. Monitoring was carried out after every releasing phase (**Annex C3/9**). New methods were tested to check the behaviour of individuals. The methods are described in details in **Annex E2/3**. All active burrows were recorded in GPS database (**Annex E2/4**). After every releasing the number of burrows increased (**Annex E2/5**). The next releasing was adjusted to the results of the previous ones. Successful hibernation was confirmed on both project sites. This indicates that the sites are suitable for *S. citellus*. Based on the observations some measures were needed to be carried out to ensure the reproduction – several females were released in burrows occupied with the highest number of males. After the release of females the repatriation was continued in safe distance to avoid disturbance of the pairs. There is high potential on both sites and many burrows to be occupied by *S. citellus* to create a vital colony. Description of situation on both project sites where the *S. citellus* was repatriated in different years:

In 2011: There was heavy rain and floods in 2010 in the whole territory of Slovakia. That was a reason why many of *S. citellus* colonies disappeared, even strong and stabile ones. Therefore it was not possible to capture enough individuals to establish the population on project sites.

In 2012: Successful hibernation of released individuals was recorded on both sites. Some more individuals were released to strengthen the population in order to follow the aim to establish a colony on both sites. *S. citellus* colony in SKCHVU016 was still not stabile. In SKCHVU017 the colony was already stabilised. The population was spread in several sub-colonies. Successful reproduction was supposed on this site.

In 2013: In SKCHVU017 the status of the colony after hibernation was evaluated as very good. Continuous rainy weather in May, June and beginning of July influenced both sites significantly and resulted in decline of the population. In SKCHVU016 only 6 individuals and in SKCHVU017 the presence of only 10 individuals was proved. Later higher numbers of *S. citellus* were proved and after releasing in summer both sites are now in a status of a stable colony again. We suppose successful reproduction for the next year. It was confirmed that the weather can influence the population significantly. Therefore it is necessary to continue the releasing to strengthen both populations and ensure its stabilisation. When the assumption of reproduction will be confirmed, the populations will be stable.

Problems and their impacts:

In Hungary and Slovakia the populations were significantly influenced by extremely bad weather (heavy rain, floods and snow) especially in 2010 and 2013.

Modifications:

In Slovakia photo traps and chips were used first time for better monitoring.

Comments on Commission's requests:

In Hungary and Romania the guide line what was developed by LIFE06NAT/H/000096 project was used (**Refer to Annex E2/4 of PR and Annex E2/6**). In Slovakia the methods included in the original guideline developed for LIFE06NAT/H/000096 were adjusted to the experience of the project works considering the new method applied first time of this project (**Annex E2/3**).



Action E3:

Name of the action: Efficiency control of dangerous electric pylon's insulation

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – September 2014

Achievements:

Repeated survey has been done on the insulated sections of electric pylons.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Bulgaria:

Since action C4 has not been completed, the efficiency control of the insulated dangerous electric pylons could not be realized. Efficiency control has been done only within the part of the power lines close to Dobrich, which was insulated by E.ON electric company. The activity was done in October 2012. No bird carcasses were found under the insulated pylons, but it should also be mentioned that in 2012 the land around the power line was planted with maize, which could impede the hunting and presence of birds of prey and storks in the place. Further visits to the power line will show more accurate data.

In Hungary:

Baseline survey was carried out by BNPD, KMNP and KNPD. The survey sheets (**Refer to Annex C4/6 of IR**) were sent to the Monitoring Centre of MME for data processing. The result is given in **Annex C4/6 of PR**. Once the insulation work was completed in some section within BNPD's territory the responsible rangers of BNPD checked the insulated sections of the power lines. They checked the surroundings for carcasses of killed birds. They filled out the survey sheets again (**Refer to Annex C4/6 of IR and Annex E3/1**) and send them to MME's Monitoring Centre to data processing. The first result is given in **Annex C4/6 of PR**. Since the insulation work is recently going on and the efficiency control is following the insulation therefore final efficiency data will be given in the Final Report.

Romania:

The insulated powerline from Timis County, Western Romania was monitored once till now at the end of August 2013. No remains of electrocuted birds were found under the insulated poles (**Annex E3/2**).

In Slovakia:

All of the pylons insulated under C.4 are under survey, no electrocuted bird has been found until now. Data are being evaluated.

Problems and their impacts:

The insulation work is behind schedule.

Action E4:

Name of the action: Technical management of the project

Proposed start and end of the action: October 2010 – September 2014

Achievements:

- Project management functioning



- Project is running relatively well despite of the lots of difficulties

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

Project management is done by FENCON Ltd.

Description can be found under point 4 above.

Problems and their impacts:

- Slow tender process delayed the procurements.
- The economic crises reduced the capacity especially of the NGOs.
- The Hungarian government tax and energy policy endangering the commitment of the electric companies.

Modifications:

Mrs. Viktória Bene project administrator returned from maternity leave from 1. January 2013.

Action E5:

Name of the action: Financial management

Proposed start and end of the action: October 2010 – September 2014

Achievements:

- Project Auditor has changed
- Regular financial monitoring is going on

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

Financial management is done by FENCON Ltd. as a part of project management.

The project administrator is dealing with the financial management. Mrs. Viktória Bene is the project administrator who was in maternity leave until the end of 2012. Ms. Dóra Kiss was the acting project administrator advised by Viktória until the end of 2012.

Description can be found under point 6. below.

Problems and their impacts:

The auditor's performance did not satisfy the management.

Modifications:

The auditor is replaced at the end of 2012 but she will recheck all financial documents.

The new auditor:

Kolbe Könyvvizsgáló Kft. (Kolbe Auditor Ltd.)

1137 Budapest, Szent István park 14.

Registration nr.: 01-09-260371

Represented by Tünde Kolbe manager/auditor



Action E6:

Name of the action: Training of project staff

Proposed start and end of the action: December 2010

Achievements:

Project staff trained and project work standardised.

Action status: completed

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

In Hungary:

Two days project training was organised in Felsőtárkány in 21-22 February 2011, where all partners' team took part to learn about the technical, administrative and financial issues of the project implementation (**Refer to Annexes E4/4 and E6 of IR**).

Action E7:

Name of the action: Held Steering Committee meetings

Proposed start and end of the action: March 2011 – March 2014

Achievements:

- Annual SC meetings held with good attendance

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

First meeting was organised in Felsőtárkány in Hungary on 23 March 2011 (**Refer to Annex E7/1 of IR**). The meeting was chaired by the director and chair Mr. József Duska.

Dimitar Gradinarov – representative of the BSPB has been available for participation in the Steering Committee via Internet, as he could not participate personally in the meeting. Because of technical reasons, the connection could not be realized. The president of MILVUS's car was broken down before the Hungarian border therefore he could not participate on it. RPS could not participate due to project inspection of another LIFE project. ToR of SC was adopted (**Refer to Annex E7/2 of IR**). Minutes of it was distributed among the partners (**Refer to Annexes E4/5 and E7/3 of IR**).

Second meeting was organised in Felsőtárkány on 27 March 2012 (**Refer to Annex E7/1 of PR**). The meeting was chaired by the new director and chair Mr. Szilárd Grédics. Only one partner was absent. Problems and achievements of first year and work plan of the target year were discussed (**Refer to Annex E7/2 of PR**). The representative of each country introduced their work and achievements. Minutes was distributed among the partners (**Refer to Annex E7/3 of PR**).

Third meeting was organised in Felsőtárkány on 27 March 2013 (**Annex E7/1**). The meeting was chaired by the director and chair Mr. Szilárd Grédics. Problems and achievements of the second year and work plan of the target year were discussed (**Annexes E7/2-E7/4**). The representative of each country introduced their work and achievements (**Annexes E7/5-E7/7**). Minutes was distributed among the partners (**Annex E7/8**).

**Action E8:**

Name of the action: Baseline survey to monitor project success

Proposed start and end of the action: January 2011 – January 2014

Achievements:

- Large areas were surveyed in both countries.
- 5 pairs were found in Romania among them a new successfully breeding pair.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:**In Bulgaria:**

Four field surveys were carried out in 2011. The first two were in January and February to register *F. cherrug* in the Project territory during the winter season. Over 20 records of at least 4 different *F. cherrug* (2 adult and 2 juvenile birds) were gathered, including photo and video shots. Areas of winter occurrence were outlined; data on the daily activity and movements of the *F. cherrug* were collected. Two other field visits took place in March and April and covered both the entire Project territory at the beginning of the breeding season. All suitable sites for breeding were visited, carefully checked and documented (recorded by GPS and photographed). They include cliffs, high voltage electricity lines, forest edges and tree lines, and previously installed artificial nest boxes. A pair of *F. cherrug* was observed in April in an area, very suitable for breeding, but no occupied nest was found. All nests of large birds were recorded; abundant additional information about the state of the habitats, threatening factors and other was collected (**Refer to Annex E8/1 of IR**). In August 2011 the field work on base line survey was completed. The collected data has been analysed. In February 2012 the final Baseline Survey Report has been written in Bulgarian language (**Refer to Annex E8/1 of PR**).

In Romania:

In 2011 70% of the project area from the Western part of Romania was covered by baseline survey. We've made our survey following the high voltage electricity lines. János Bagyura from MME helped the baseline survey and found a breeding pair in a raven nest on pylon near to ROSPA0069 (**Refer to Annex E8/2 of IR**). We have collected several data regarding the presence of the target species in this area. In Oltenia baseline survey was carried out in all of project targeted SPA's, moreover data received from birds equipped with satellite transmitters from previous years were checked on sites. Unfortunately no occupied nests were identified along these site visits. 3 SPA's were visited in southern Romania and most of the points from where birds from previous years were transmitting, were checked. In Dobrodgea, south-eastern Romania, all the SPA's targeted by the project were checked, also 3 more sites (all SPA's) from were previous years *F. cherrug* were reported have been visited (**Refer to Annex E8/3 of IR**). Unfortunately any *F. cherrug* was not found. The baseline survey for assessing the Saker Falcon population was carried out by the Milvus Group both in the Western Plain and in Dobrudja region in 2012. A detailed survey report is given in **Annex E8/2 of PR**. Large areas were covered in Dobrogea in order to identify breeding pairs, beginning with the Macin Mountains and checking several times from mid February to July all of the installed nest-boxes and the major electricity lines. All the known places where *F. cherrug* has been observed in the last 10 years were checked. A single pair was identified



around Dulgheru with breeding attempt that turned out to be unsuccessful in June when the pair left the area. Baseline survey was carried out in other target SPAs in Oltenia confirming the absence of the species in the area. Large areas of West-Romania were monitored in the spring of 2013. Three active territories were identified, two pairs brood successfully, both in Raven nests. Our report is presented attached (**Annex E8/1**).

Action E9:

Name of the action: Collecting migratory and immigration data by satellite telemetry, bird ringing and feather analysis

Proposed start and end of the action: April 2011 – June 2014

Achievements:

- Visits in Ukraine for networking and to assist *F. cherrug* conservation and ensure support of our roaming birds.
- Contribution to CMS work in conservation of *F. cherrug*.

Action status: ongoing

Description of the progress during the reporting time:

There were many networking in the frame of this action what produced a lot of useful information:

- Three persons team led by the project manager visited the Ministry of Culture in Croatia upon their invitation to introduce the project and discuss about the possible cooperation in *F. cherrug* conservation on 23.11.2010 (**Refer to Annexes E9/1-E9/3 of IR**). Following this meeting two persons (from BNPD and MME) visited the area on February 2011 where some PTT tagged *F. cherrug* turned around before and where our birds may need some help sometimes (**Refer to Annex E9/4 of IR**).
- A two person's team from BNPD visited Ukraine upon their invitation to discuss cooperation and transfer knowledge what would be essential when our birds may need some help between 29 May and 10 June (**Refer to Annexes E9/5-E9/6 of IR**).
- Maia the tagged bird died in Bosnia, A Romanian team with the assistance of the Bosnian colleagues fund her carcasses and recovered her PTT in October 2011(**Refer to Annexes A3/7 and C7/2 of PR**).
- The Bulgarian colleagues monitored the wintering Slávka and collected information about her land use and preys between 23.10.2011 and 20.03.2012 (**Refer to Annex D6/1 of PR**).
- A joint Hungarian-Romanian four persons team from BNPD and MILVUS visited Ukraine second time to collect information and transfer knowledge to the Ukrainian colleagues than continue the visit in the neighbouring Romania area in Dobrogea exactly one year after the first visit between 29 May and 10 June 2012 (**Refer to Annex E9/1 of PR**). The team monitored the area what Slávka was using in Ukraine too (**Refer to Annex E9/2 of PR**).
- Tobias the son of Barnabas was tagged in Czech Republic with the assistance of the Czech colleagues in June and his movement was monitored (**Refer to Annexes A3/7 and C7/3 of PR**).



LIFE09 NAT/HU/000384

- The Romanian colleagues monitored the land use and preys of the tagged bird Matyi in West Romania in July 2012 (**Refer to Annex E9/3 of PR**).
- Slávka died in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian colleagues searched and found her carcasses and PTTs (**Refer to Annexes A3/7 and E9/4 of PR**).
- Thea the female bird tagged in W-Romania start to breed in Crimea in Ukraine in 2013. The Ukrainian colleagues went to check her but in the main time the breeding failed.

The project contributed the international conservation of the *F. cherrug*. Mátyás Prommer took part in the following events:

- 10th Conference of Parties of CMS in Norway in November 2011 as an advisor to the Hungarian Government representative. He contributed a lot of the upgrading of *F. cherrug*.
- 1st Meeting of the CMS Saker Falcon Task Force in Abu Dhabi in March 2012 (**Refer to Annexes E9/5a-b of PR**).
- 1st Meeting Of The Signatories To The Memorandum Of Understanding On The Conservation Of Migratory Birds Of Prey In Africa And Eurasia (**Refer to Annexes E9/6a-b of PR**).
- 2nd Meeting of the CMS Saker Falcon Task Force in Abu Dhabi in September 2013. (**Annex E9/1**)

Besides of these the international mailing list established by LIFE06 NAT/H/000096 was maintained and information was regularly exchanged.

Modifications:

The participation of the CMS and Task Force meetings did not planned. Participation of in the CoP meeting was financed by the Hungarian Government. The participation costs on the first Task Force meeting covered by an Arab foundation, the second by the Hungarian Government. Only one was covered by the project.

Action E10:

Name of the action: After Life Conservation Plan

Proposed start and end of the action: July 2014 – September 2014

Action status: *pending*

Description of the progress during the reporting time:
2014 only!



5.2. Envisaged progress until next report.

5.2.1. Revised reporting schedule

We revised the original schedule during the Inception Report. However due to the administrative problems we did not spend 150% of the first instalment in the reporting period therefore we had to reschedule our reporting plan again. Although there is some delay of the insulation of the dangerous electric pylons especially in Hungary due to EDF-DÉMÁSZ economic problems, but we will complete the work during the last year.

5.2.2. Deliverables and milestones

In the tables we indicate the delivered one by green colour.

5.3. Impact

The electrocution is one of the most endangering factors for the *F. cherrug* but also for most large size birds. Therefore the insulation of the dangerous electric pylons has a great impact on the target and other species like *Aquila heliaca*, *F. vespertinus*, *Ciconia ciconia* etc.

Since the *F. cherrug* do not build nest and because there are only few nest of other large birds are available in Bulgaria and especially in Romania therefore the installation of the nest boxes has also a great impact on the Falcon species. The fact that in Hungary where nest box installation started much before most of the *F. cherrug* population is breeding in nest boxes today.

The repatriation of *S. citellus* for suitable habitat has a great impact not only on the *F. cherrug* population but also on the *S. citellus* itself.

Because the *F. cherrug* is sharing the habitat with many other species such as *Aquila heliaca*, *F. vespertinus* therefore all kind of habitat improvement i.e. proper site management, advanced agri-environment scheme, prevention from wind farm have considerable impact on the species.

5.4. Outside LIFE

Mátyás Prommer from BNPD took part on the COP10 of the Convention on Migratory Species CMS in Bergen, Norway from 20th – 25th November 2011 as an advisor to the MRD representative. Where the Resolution 10.28 was adopted by the Parties. The Resolution lists the Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*) in CMS Appendix I, excluding the population in Mongolia. Mátyás and the project had a key roll in this resolution.

He took part also in the inaugural meeting of the Saker Falcon Task Force in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), on 29 March 2012 and in the 2nd Task Force meeting as the representative of the Hungarian Government in September 2013.

MAVIR prepared and distributed about 300 DVD about the Video camera pictures in its own costs.


Table 8: DELIVERABLE PRODUCTS OF THE PROJECT

Name of the Deliverable	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Minutes of "Start up" Steering Committee Meeting	E7	30.09.2010
Technical guidelines	C1-C7	30.11.2010
Monitoring protocol	E1, E2, E3	30.11.2010
Work plan	E4	30.11.2010
Project Handbook	E4	15.12.2010
Web site developed	D4	31.12.2010
Minutes of project's staff training	E6	31.12.2010
Minutes of Steering Committee Meeting	E7	31.03.2011
Articles submitted for newspapers and magazines	D6	31.03.2011
Spring media release	D6	30.04.2011
A2 size posters	D5	30.09.2013
A4 size leaflets	D5	30.09.2013
Information sign erected	D3	30.03.2013
Autumn media release	D6	30.09.2011
Cages for disabled birds erected	C5	31.08.2013
Annual monitoring report Nr.1	E1, E2, E3	31.12.2011
Minutes of Steering Committee Meeting	E7	31.03.2012
Articles submitted for newspapers and magazines	D6	31.03.2012
Spring media release	D6	30.04.2012
Autumn media release	D6	30.09.2012
Annual monitoring report Nr.2	E1, E2, E3	31.12.2012
Minutes of Steering Committee Meeting	E7	31.03.2013
Articles submitted for newspapers and magazines	D6	31.03.2013
Spring media release	D6	30.04.2013
Annual monitoring report Nr.3.	E1, E2	31.12.2013
Annual monitoring report Nr.3.	E3	30.09.2014
Minutes of Steering Committee Meeting	E7	31.03.2014
Articles submitted for newspapers and magazines	D6	31.03.2014
Spring media release	D6	30.04.2014
Layman's report	D7	31.05.2014
Proposal for adjustment of agri-environment subsidies	A1	31.07.2014
Recommendation to revise the F. cherrug Action Plan	E9	30.09.2014
After-LIFE Conservation Plan	E10	30.09.2014

Legend: D6=Corrected code 31.01.2012= rescheduled deliverables Work plan=Completed


Table 9: MILESTONES OF THE PROJECT

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Project Staff in place at all relevant position	E4	01.10.2010
Press conference	D6	15.10.2010
Project Auditor contracted	E5	30.11.2010
Evaluation of offers and selection of suppliers	A1, A3,A4,C2,C3,C4 C5,C6,C7,D4,E4	30.08.2011
Adults tagged by PTT	A1, A3,	05.03.2011
Juveniles ringed & tagged with satellite transmitter	A3,C7	15.06.2011
First batch of <i>S. citellus</i> are repatriated	C3	15.08.2011
First batch of nest boxes are installed	C2	31.12.2011
First batch of dangerous electric pylons insulated	C4	31.12.2011
Second batch adults tagged by PTT	A3	05.03.2012
Second batch juveniles are tagged	A3,C7	15.06.2012
Second batch of <i>S. citellus</i> are repatriated	C3	15.08.2012
Second batch nest boxes are installed	C2	31.12.2012
Second batch of dangerous electric pylons insulated	C4	31.12.2012
Third batch juveniles are tagged	A3	15.06.2013
Video, DVD for public	D5	30.06.2014
Third batch nest boxes are installed	C2	31.11.2013
Third batch of dangerous electric pylons insulated	C4	31.11.2013
Report on satellite tracking	A3,C7	31.11.2013
Last batch of dangerous electric pylons insulated	C4	30.09.2014
Press conference	D6	30.09.2014



5.2.3. Corrected time table illustrating progress

There were some mistakes in the time table what is corrected.

Table 10: TIMETABLE

Table 10: THE RIVER																				
Action	2010				2011				2012				2013				2014			
Number	September			IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
A. Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or action plans :																				
1.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
C. Concrete conservation actions :																				
1.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
2.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
3.					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
4.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
5.						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
6.					✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓		
7.						✓				✓				✓						
D. Public awareness and dissemination of results :																				
1.				✓	✓	!	!	!	!	!	!	!	!	!	!	!				
2.					✓	✓	!	!	!	!	!	!	!	!	!	!				
3.					!	!	!	✓	✓	!	!	!	!	!	!					
4.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
5.							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
6.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
7.																		✓		
E. Overall project operation and monitoring:																				
1.									✓	✓	!		✓	✓			✓	✓		
2.						✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓		
3.							✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
4.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
5.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
6.				✓																
7.					✓				✓				✓				✓			
8.					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓			
9.				!	!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
10.																			✓	



6. Financial part

6.1. Costs incurred.

Table 11: Incurred costs by cost categories

Budget breakdown categories	Total cost in €	Costs incurred from the start date to 21.10.2013 in €	% of total costs 5/2*100
1	2	5	6
1. Personnel	591 512	442 689	74,84
2. Travel and subsistence	210 271	140 672	66,90
3. External assistance	1 138 627	679 467	59,67
4. Durable goods			
Infrastructure	4 660	4 660	100
Equipment	285 114	247 887	86,94
5. Land purchase / long-term lease			
6. Consumables	1 523 615	410 808	26,96
7. Other Costs	15 200	16 802	110,54
8. Overheads	263 830	129 194	48,97
TOTAL	4 032 828	2 072 179	51,38

Table 12: Incurred costs by Partners and sources

Country code	Beneficiary n°	Beneficiary short name	Total costs planned in €	Incured LIFE costs €	Incured own contribution	Incured co-financier money €	Total costs €
HU	1	BNPD	619 393	362 497	31 143	71 569	465 209
HU	2	KNPDP	30 604	8 287	8 931	552	17 770
HU	3	KMNPD	21 390	4 362	10 605	441	15 408
HU	4	MME	164 489	124 572	4 917	4 361	133 850
HU	5	ZFK	1 748	388	621	0	1 009
HU	6	Pro Vértés	21 837	9 932	95	30	10 057
HU	7	MAVÍR	21 768	6 360	51 594	0	57 954
HU	8	ÉMÁSZ	1 490 360	470 344	157 796	0	628 140
HU	9	DÉMÁSZ	518 102	0	0	0	0
BU	10	BSPB	130 066	80 575	6 594	0	87 169
RO	11	MILVUS	336 695	202 210	8 709	0	210 919
RO	12	SOR	164 840	79 190	7 349	0	86 539
SK	13	RPS	251 536	184 853	10 577	0	195 430
SK	14	ZSE	260 000	2 000	160 725	0	162 725
TOTAL			4 032 828	1 535 570	459 656	76 953	2 072 179



6.1.1. Comment on the budget

Table 9. and 10. give a summary of the incurred costs during the project period. However the real expenditure may be a little bit more since there are some incurred costs what was incurred at the end of the period and which is still waiting for some justification document.

Most partners (BSPB, BNPD, KMNPB, KNPD, MME, MILVUS, RPS) cannot reclaim VAT therefore their total costs were accounted on the project. SOR has alternating periods where they could or not the VAT. Their declarations are annexed (**Annex F1**).

Only 51,38% of the planned costs were incurred.

There are two main reasons of the low expenditure comparing to the project schedule:

1. Delay of the insulation of dangerous electric pylons especially in Hungary. DÉMÁSZ which has 12,8% share of the total costs did not work yet. ÉMÁSZ share is about 37% of the total cost. Although the insulation is going on but current only 42,1% of the planned total costs are paid and accounted.

2. Despite of the delay of insulation 64% of the costs were spent in Hungary. The project costs were based on 250 HUF/€ exchange rate, however until now as an average the Euro worth about 15 % more HUF and it is about 4 times of the average official inflation rate.

6.1.1.1. Personnel costs

It is in line with the progress of the work and the time spent. Personnel costs of September 2013 excluded due to administrative process. The personnel costs were calculated according to the CP. (**Annexes F2**)

More than one position in the same time:

Some people had two part time contracts for two different positions in the same time in RPS.

Jozef Chavko had two contracts for Scientific Coordinator position from January 2011 and Junior Specialist position from May 2011 to August 2013. (**Annex F3**)

Lucia Deutchová had two contracts for Country Coordinator position from January 2011 and Agri-environment Expert from August 2011 to June 2013.

Replacements:

Vladimir Nemcek was working as Junior Specialist from December 2010 to April 2011. He was replaced by Jozef Chavko between May 2011 and August 2013. Vladimir Nemcek is working again as Junior Specialist from September 2013.

Annually more short term contracts:

In BSPB there are some persons (Bojidar Ivanov, Edita Difova, Marina Georgieva) who had contracts which is overlapping two years but in the main time they were contracted again after that. Therefore in some years they have two different contracts for different period of the years.

6.1.1.2. Travel and subsistence

Travel:

In Hungary all costs (fuel, repair, insurance, toll fee, etc. excluding amortisation) in relation with company's cars accounted on the cars and km unit cost are calculated and accounted quarterly. A correction may calculate and accounted at the end of the year. Partners declared their unit costs by car what were used for the project (**Annex F4**). These unit costs were used to calculate the project costs multiplying the justified km of the given month and the unit costs. The drivers with cars are reported in cumulative manners in suitable time units (**Annex F5**).

In the other countries partners accounted only the fuel costs of justified km (**Annex F6**).

Subsistence:

DSA and accommodations were accounted for. In Hungary DSA was paid only in case of travel abroad. Meals for participants of project training and SC meeting were also accounted here.



6.1.1.3. External assistance

Only 59,67 % of it was spent until now. The main reason is the delay of insulation work. Besides of this ÉMÁSZ applied a total 27424 € penalty on JUKO Kft. because their delay due to lots of correction demand (**Annexes F7-F9**). BNPD subcontracted a specialist to survey the material and control the quality of the work upon the request of the electric companies (ÉMÁSZ and DÉMÁSZ).

We may need to reallocate a part of this cost for personnel and travel based upon the latest information from DÉMÁSZ about the possible merging of the selected subcontractor with the project partner.

Less money was paid out for project management also until today for two different reasons. Due to the slow tender process the project management was subcontracted only after three months. Before that temporary project management was working partly in short term employment or voluntarily. Due to the long payment process according to the tender regulation the project management service reimbursed only until July now.

6.1.1.4. Durable goods

Infrastructure: 100% utilised

Equipment: Only 86,72% of the budget were used while the necessary equipments are purchased (**Annex F10**). Only a few replacements may be needed in the future.

6.1.1.5. Consumables

Most costs (37,78%) of the total budget were planned for this costs category but the less (26,96%) of this was utilised until now mainly due to delay of insulation (**Annexes F7-F9**).

6.1.1.6. Other costs

Originally small amount was planned for that (0,38%) and it was the only cost category what was overspent (110,54%). Those partners which accounted only the fuel cost on the travel cost accounted the car related costs (fuel, repair, insurance, toll fee) here. Some legal fees were accounted here too.

6.1.1.7. Overheads

As an average 7% overheads cost are calculated, however in case of ZSE only 5000 € and in case of ÉMÁSZ which has the largest budget with relatively less administration only 5 % was planned in contrary with RPS where 11,32% and with MME where 20 % was planned due to the most administration besides of BNPD where the subcontracted project management are doing the administration.

Comments on Commission's requests:

Detailed information from separation of insulation within LIFE and KEOP projects is given in Action C4. Information on financial sources used by all beneficiaries is given in table 10.

BSPB reallocated money from external assistance to consumables to be able to insulate the planned pylons.

All invoices what the project office accepted have the project reference number and all project equipment bears the LIFE project logo.



7.2. Maps, drawings, technical designs, technical memos etc. (DVD only)

For your attention!
These annexes may include more than one maps or pictures