



LIFE Project Number

<**LIFE13 NAT/HU/000081**>

MIDTERM Report

Covering the project activities from 01/09/2014 to 31/05/2017

Reporting Date

<**31/05/2017**>

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym

<**ROLLER – Conservation of the European Roller (*Coracias garrulus*) in the Carpathian Basin**>

Project Data

Project location	Hungary and Romania
Project start date:	<01/09/2014>
Project end date:	<31/03/2020> Extension date: <dd/mm/yyyy >
Total Project duration (in months)	<67> months (including Extension of <XX> months)
Total budget	€5 046 097
Total eligible budget	€
EU contribution:	€3 784 572
(%) of total costs	75 %
(%) of eligible costs	

Beneficiary Data

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2. Executive Summary

2.1. General progress

The main aim of the Roller LIFE+ project is to:

- Strengthen the European core population in the Carpathian basin and ensure its conservation by the implementation of suitable conservation measures.
- Restore former Roller habitats and demonstrate new or unfamiliar management practices.
- Increase the population size of the Roller by creating new nest sites and by the promotion of bird friendly habitat management of Natura 2000 sites.
- Involve relevant stakeholders into the conservation activity and therefore establish the fundamentals of sustainable protection of the species.
- Decrease the mortality of the targeted population by promoting the bird friendly electric pylon designs, insulating the most relevant pylons.
- Identify endangered migratory and roosting sites; make the first steps for their conservation through networking.

After the establishment of the operational project team, management and administrative system of the project (period closed with the Inception Report by 31.05.2015) we started the implementation phase. The first progress report of the project was submitted by 31.03.2016. The EC accepted these reports and asked to speed up some direct conservation actions and the building of the Roller Visitor Centre.

The preparatory actions reached the goals set up in the project time schedule or are in the most advanced stage achievable.

In action A1 the final reports on the sustainable management of Roller nesting habitats were submitted, the consultation with concerning authorities about the forest management guidelines will follow soon.

In action A2 several milestones has been already reached, e.g.: the “*Database about suitable habitats for nestbox mounting and existing cavities for breeding in western Romania*” and the “*Database on existing Roller nestboxes in the Hungarian project SPAs*”, and we delivered the “*Handbook of nestbox installation methods*” with the last report.

The National Action Plan for the species is under development, we started to consult the Ministry of Rural Development in Hungary regarding the future endorsement possibility of National Action Plan (action A3).

Before the first field season the *Monitoring plan* (deliverable action A4) has been developed and we trained the participants according to it (milestone action A4).

In the framework of the direct conservation actions, we made significant progress in the reporting period, but some further delays occurred also. The root causes of delays are the complicated planning and the related permission procedures, moreover the public procurement procedures are additional obstacles of the scheduled implementation.

Going into details of habitat restoration and creation of new future habitats, in action C1 the necessary preparatory processes need more time than planned. Concerning the habitat restoration works we are still waiting for the necessary permits therefore the final deadline need revision again. The new planned date is by 28/02/2018. The tenant got the permit in May

2016 valid until the end of the year for the elimination of the invasive trees. The works are expected to take place in late summer/early autumn this year.

In case of action C2 and C5 for the tree plantation works BNPD announced the tender, which was closed by the reporting date. The progress of evaluation is running currently, the contract is expected to be signed this summer and the plantations can start in autumn. By 31.03.2017 the planned elimination and plantation works couldn't be finished, the expected date of finishing is the latest by 28/02/2018. Regarding the plantation of trees in Romania the legal background and property issues of the plantations was clarified, the location of the 50 patches were selected and the permissions for these arrived. The public procurement is announced the results will be available in the next month.

The third habitat restoration action (C3) progress as planned, DALERD finished the clearing of invasive tree species, soil works and the plantation works in the targeted areas. Until the reporting period totally 118 900 pcs of saplings were planted, the care works are continuous.

The Farmers for Roller program (action C6) has also tree plantation activities, in Hungary altogether 76 farmers were contracted by 2016 and we started the plantations of the 2835 saplings and placement of 339 nestboxes procured for them. In Romania 7 farmers were contracted, however the procurement of saplings and necessary equipments run together with action C5 therefore this action also experience some delays. Based on the attitude of the target group we are convinced to achieve the targeted goals. We ask the EC to allow us to continue the action until the end of the project and increase the performance, if the budget of beneficiaries will make it possible.

In Romania the protection of the remaining tree lines is crucial to provide nesting place for the species, therefore our priority was to set up and run the patrolling under action C9. The database of trees recorded on the selected routes was already provided in the last report (milestone), the controlling activities resulted in two crime events up to the date of reporting, all related documentation was submitted to the relevant authorities.

To create nesting sites we installed altogether 1755 nest boxes in Hungary and Romania up to the reporting date (action C4).

In the framework of action C7 we reached the milestone: "Database of powerlines selected for nestbox installation in western Romania" during the last reporting period, and further implementation will be facilitated by an expert hired recently (not planned before, but preliminary approved by the EC in e-mail). The action is re-scheduled as asked, insulations are planned to be finished by the end of 2018.

In the action C8 we started to locate migratory routes by ringing 4907 birds (including 2096 colour-ringed birds). Altogether 177 individuals were recaptured in 2015 and 2016. 12 adult rollers were deployed with satellite tags, 5 of them reached the wintering ground, and finally 3 arrived back to the breeding ground in the subsequent year.

To measure the effect of the project and produce baseline data for the main indicators we simultaneously started all relevant monitoring activities.

An external company started the monitoring action under action D1 to survey the species composition and abundance of potential prey species of European roller (arthropods, amphibians, reptiles and mammals) to follow up changes resulting from restoration activities of action C1, C2 and C3. We used Pica GPS loggers to study habitat use of Rollers breeding in the reconstruction area.

We monitored the population of Rollers in the project area. In the project area the first two years (2015-2016) the breeding population of the species was stable with 981 and 1009 recorded breeding pairs respectively.

The socio-economic assessment of the project impacts are externalized in both countries, the Romanian company already submitted two reports in this issue (action D3).

The monitoring of electric pylon insulation also started in Hungary. In the two years (2015/2016) 1704 and 3793 pylons were surveyed respectively by project employees and volunteers, data was analysed by the Monitoring Centre of BirdLife Hungary.

Despite the relatively early stage of Roller project, we made some progress in all relevant communication and demonstrative actions.

- 3 demonstration events (action E1).
- We printed brochures about Natura 2000 and the problem of illegal logging, we presented the project in 23 schools in Romania (action E2).
- The conceptual and implementation plans of Roller Visitor Centre are ready, the necessary permits arrived finally. KNPD waits for the approval of the Ministry to launch the public procurement. The visitor centre can be opened until 31/12/2018 (action E3).
- The project information boards are in place (18 in Hungary, 30 in Romania), however the interactive trails are delayed due to the related delays in concrete conservation actions. Details are provided in the description of the action (action E4).
- 1st and 2nd set of PR materials, educational toys and the general project demonstrating leaflet had been procured in both countries (action E5).
- The performance of communication actions action E6 and E7 can be evaluated in details based on the description of these actions and the statistics provided. The external company responsible for the film making provides regularly the episodes as scheduled. The trilingual central webpage of the project is ready: <http://rollerproject.eu/> and the Facebook site is also online (<https://www.facebook.com/rollerproject>). They are updated regularly with news in all 3 languages. Up to reporting date we have 58 project news (average 2.07 news/month).

The project was presented at LIFE meetings in Budapest and Prague, published an article in Acta Zoologica, and one poster was also presented at the MTBK Conference in 2014, Szeged (action E8).

KNPD and MME held a conference between 19-21st January, 2017 where 68 participants attended from 27 countries joined forces to develop the ISAP of the European Roller (action E9). The same occasion but in different days (as side event outside the scope of this project) we started also to build up the CMS Flyway Action Plan for the Species.

Due to other priorities MME staff did not started action E10 “Promote bird friendly electric pylon design” as scheduled. Workshops and trainings are re-scheduled between 1st October 2017 and 31st March, 2018. Until then we assess all pylon types and study the insulation methods and possibilities.

List of milestones and deliverables achieved /delivered:

Submitted together with the inception report:

- A5 Business Plan delivered by the subcontractor (deliverable)
- E6 Project website online (milestone)
- F1 Signed Partnership Agreements and Financial Guidelines (deliverable)
- F1 AWP of the Beneficiaries (milestone)
- F4 Contract of the auditor (milestone)

Submitted together with the progress report:

- A1 Habitat maps of study sites (milestone)
- A2 Database about suitable habitats for nestbox mounting and existing cavities for breeding in Romania (milestone)
- A2 Database on existing Roller nestboxes in the Hugarian project SPAs (milestone)
- A2 Handbook of nestbox installation methods (milestone)
- A4 Monitoring Plan (deliverable)
- A4 Monitoring training of participants (milestone)
- C3 Elimination of invasive trees (milestone)
- C7 Database of powerlines selected for nestbox installation in western Romania (milestone)
- C9 Database of trees recorded on the selected routes (milestone)
- D4 Survey 1. results available in Hungary (milestone)
- E4 Project boards erected (milestone)
- E5 First set of deliverable PR materials produced (deliverable)
- F1 AWP of Beneficiaries (milestone)

Attached to/ achieved with the current mid-term report:

- A1 Final report of the study by the subcontractor (deliverable)
- C1 Beginning of grazing (milestone)
- C2 Management by grazing (milestone)
- C2 Elimination of invasive trees and sowing of seed mixture of ploughed land (milestone)
- C3 Plantation of trees (milestone)
- C3 Establish meadows (milestone)
- C5 Selecting of habitats and property issues clarified (milestone)
- C8 1st assessment of threats by partner NGOs (deliverable)
- E10 Conflict map of bird electrocutions (deliverable) – Annual map is attached, final report by 31/12/2019
- F1 AWP of Beneficiaries (milestone)

The project structure and working methods secure the implementation of the planned actions. Delays still persist in the public procurement processes of the public bodies. Both the national park directorates in Hungary and APMSM in Romania are in delay with the procurement of tree saplings. We expect all 3 ABs to finish the process until this autumn when the plantations are planned to begin.

Another delay persists at the other public procurement process of KNPD connected to the Roller Visitor Centre. We expect to start the construction works in early 2018 the latest. The progression of the project is in accordance with the proposal in general despite of the delays

in these actions, beneficiaries are committed to maintain the project goals and implement the rescheduled project plan.

The early stage of the project does not allow the deep analysis of long-term benefits. Direct conservation actions did not finish yet, and the first direct effects of the activities on Roller population is only expected to be measurable from the next year.

The financial progress of the project is affected by the delay in major procurements. According to the proposal the project didn't reached the threshold to apply for 40% of EC co-financing together with this mid-term report. This is the reason to ask for two mid-term reports paired with two 20% pre-financing payments. The beneficiaries are committed and able to manage the financial delays, the most probably the later will not affect the performance of the project.

2.2. Assessment of viability of the project objectives and work plan

The project objectives and the work plan are still viable, in spite of the delays deriving mainly from the permission and public procurement process of public beneficiaries. The delays are not threatening the general progress of the project and all the main indicators can be fulfilled within the original time frame. We already rescheduled the affected actions, the public procurements are in the final phase, further delays are unlikely to happen.

2.3. Problems encountered

The financial balancing of the Romanian part of the project depends mainly on the own contribution of APMSM. However as we already informed the Commission in the IR of the project the Romanian Ministry of Environment Water and Forest (RMEWF) is always late to approve the necessary budget for APMSM. Now it seems the staff overcame to the problem and can handle the cash-flow need of the project within the budget of the Beneficiary.

Procurement processes and permit procedures of public body beneficiaries caused delays in the implementation of individual actions. However, the overall achievements made so far and the envisaged progress of this actions are believed to secure the final implementation of the project.

We ask the kind approval of the minor modifications necessary to accommodate to the changing demands of external circumstances detailed in the description of the individual actions (section 5.1). These are needed to keep the best possible project performance and therefore the scheduled implementation of project actions.

The overall execution of project is managed according to the project proposal, however some delays occurred as it is usual with a large complex project with numerous beneficiaries. We believe that these will not affect the overall objectives of the project. We think the original indicators will be achieved both in by action and the whole project.

3. Introduction

The target species of this project, the European Roller is the only species in the family Coraciidae to breed in Europe. Following a moderate decline during 1970-1990, the species has continued to decline by up to 25% across Europe during 1990-2000. Overall European decline exceeded 30% in three generations (15 years) in Europe at the time of the proposal writing and in consequence the species was listed as Category 1. Near Threatened in IUCN Red List.

Meanwhile conservation actions in several countries have contributed to national recoveries, especially the nest box schemes proved to be successful to create new nesting sites in suitable habitats.

Therefore the Roller has been downlisted to Least Concern on IUCN Red List recently. Although the population is still thought to be declining, the declines are not thought to be sufficiently rapid to warrant listing as Near Threatened.

The following specific objectives have been targeted by the project:

1. Create nesting opportunities for Roller in 17 SPAs in Hungary holding altogether 589-717 breeding pairs and in 15 SPAs in Western-Romania holding altogether 97-137 breeding pairs.
2. Improve nesting and feeding habitats on the three characteristic Roller habitat types on three project sites. Demonstrate the new management methods to owners and managers of key Roller habitats to promote their use.
3. Decrease mortality of Rollers caused by unsafe nesting opportunities and electrocution.
4. Promote the bird friendly habitat management of Natura 2000 sites, prevent especially tree logging.
5. Ensure sustainable and long-term conservation management of the species by the “Farmer for Rollers program” and the creation of National Action Plan in Hungary
6. Increase public awareness of European Roller to strengthen the conservation of the species.

Sites involved:

- ROSPA0014 Câmpia Cermeiului SPA
- ROSPA0015 Câmpia Crișului Alb și Crișului Negru SPA
- ROSPA0016 Câmpia Nirului - Valea Ierului SPA
- ROSPA0047 Hunedoara Timișană SPA
- ROSPA0067 Lunca Barcăului SPA
- ROSPA0069 Lunca Mureșului Inferior SPA
- ROSPA0078 Mlaștina Satchinez SPA
- ROSPA0095 Pădurea Macedonia SPA
- ROSPA0097 Pescăria Cefa - Pădurea Rădvani SPA
- ROSPA0103 Valea Alceului SPA
- ROSPA0126 Livezile - Dolăț SPA
- ROSPA0127 Lunca Bârzavei SPA
- ROSPA0128 Lunca Timișului SPA
- ROSPA0142 Teremia Mare - Tomnatic SPA
- ROSPA0144 Uivar - Dinaș SPA
- HUBN10002 Borsodi Sík SPA
- HUBN10004 Hevesi-sík SPA
- HUBN10005 Kesznyéten SPA
- HUDI10001 Abonyi-kaszálóerdő SPA
- HUDI10004 Jászkarajenői puszták SPA

- HUHN10001 Szatmár-Bereg SPA
- HUHN10002 Hortobágy SPA
- HUHN10003 Bihar SPA
- HUHN10005 Jászság SPA
- HUKM10004 Vásárhely környéki és csanádi-háti puszták SPA
- HUKN10001 Felső-kiskunsági szikes puszták és turjánvidék SPA
- HUKN10002 Kiskunsági szikes tavak and the őrjegi turjánvidék SPA
- HUKN10007 Alsó-Tiszavölgy SPA
- HUKN10008 Balástya–Szatymaz környéki homokvidék SPA
- HUKN30001 Csongrád-bokrosi Sóstó SPA
- HUKN30002 Gátéri Fehér-tó SPA
- HUKN30003 Izsáki Kolon-tó SPA

Main conservation issues present in our project area and thus being targeted:

Threat 1: Decreased size and quality of foraging habitat

Threat 2: Loss of suitable nest sites

Threat 3: Increased mortality

Threat 4: Low public awareness

Threat 5: Absence of strategic tools ensuring the proper conservation management of European Roller

Socio-economic context

The project is aiming to increase social awareness via actions focused on raising awareness of key stakeholders (land users, hunters, decision makers) as well as wide public, i.e. meetings, excursions, providing consultations, dissemination of educational materials, presenting the information on info boards. Foreseen effects of the project, concerning the socio-economic impact are:

- Increasing awareness of local people and key stakeholders concerning the local Natura 2000 sites and its importance for *Coracias garrulus*.
- Developing positive attitude to Roller and the Natura 2000 site itself
- Reducing negative perceptions, human disturbance and illegal activities
- Using services of local companies and thus providing short-term employment opportunities for local people during the project duration. Local companies will be used to provide services such as land management, tree planting. Cooperation between stakeholders and local companies will be improved.
- The land users which implement proper management practices will be supported by subsidies. Land users will also benefit from the restoration of windbreaks and forest patches, as this measure will contribute to limit the soil erosion. This action, as well as installation of nest-boxes, will attract several bird species, which will feed on rodents and insects causing damages on crops.
- Local population will also benefit from the improved ecosystem functions by increased biodiversity of the area.

Expected longer-term results:

The Roller breeding population of targeted SPAs in Hungary will increase by >20% during the project period and it will reach 707-860 breeding pairs by 2019. The figure below show that the project already reached one of this criteria (number of pairs). This is rather due to the better monitoring of the species and the conservation efforts made in the elapsed time from the writing of the proposal to the date of currently valid population estimate. We are voluntarily committed to target the 20% increase instead of numbers, thus increase the population of Roller to at least 1076 pairs in Hungary.

The population of the western Romanian project area (15 SPAs) will increase by >20% during the project and it will reach 116-164 breeding pairs in 2019.

459 hectares of new nesting and foraging habitat in different regions of Hungary will be developed for Rollers by the project beneficiaries. The treated parts of the roller home-ranges will be used more frequently for hunting (data provided by Action D1 for each treated site). Based on the experiences of these actions (C1, C2, and C3) and followed by the appropriate monitoring (D1) and dissemination of the management techniques (E1) the know-how necessary for the range expansion of the species in the Carpathian-basin will be established.

1000 dangerous pylons will be insulated in Romania (C.7).

Plantation and maintenance of forest patches, treelines and solitaire trees, wooden poles will establish the background of long term the sustainable management of Roller nesting habitats in Natura 2000 sites. Revealing migratory stop-over sites and the initiative of their conservation will help to minimize the mortality factors on surveyed pathways.

The evaluation of project efforts in this relatively early stage is not possible, however as this diagram shows the targeted population seems to show stability in numbers.

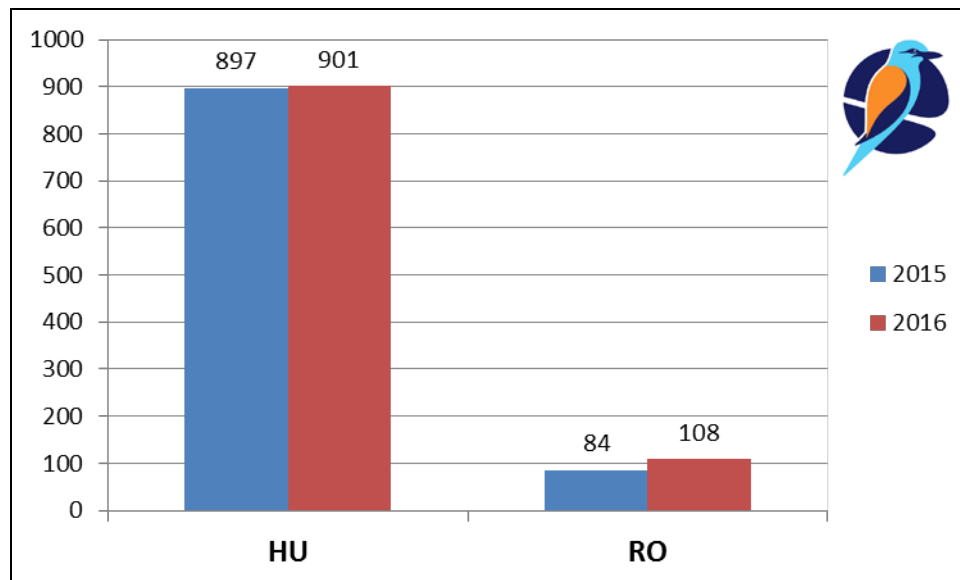


Table 1: number of Roller pairs of the project sites in 2015-16

Next years will show if the complex activities will result in the increase of the population, but some early results of our preparatory actions and international trends highlight the importance of active conservation measures in favour of the species.

4. Administrative part

4.1 Description of the management system

Project phases

The Inception Report was submitted in June, 2015 and was accepted by the EC in August. Partnership Agreements (PA) had been signed between CB and each ABs between August and October, 2014 submitted together with the Inception Report. The Progress Report was submitted in March, 2016 and was accepted in July.

A new, modified Partnership Agreement was signed on 19/07/2016 with KNPD (please find it under administrative annexes), the reason was the reallocation of nestbox procurements from KNPD to MME because KNPD had difficulties with procuring the originally planned wooden concrete nestboxes from Germany.

Mr. András Kovács from the External Monitoring Team NEEMO visited the CB on 2 missions (31/07-31/08/2015 and 25-26/08/2016).

Activities and tasks

According to the approved proposal the Project Management was selected through a competitive tender process; the tender was held on 17/10/2014, decision was made on the same day and contract was signed with the Consulex Ltd. on 17/10/2014. The project management team (Peter Palatitz, Zsófia Sümegi - Consulex Ltd.) has coordinated the technical implementation of the project, working in close relation with the administrative and financial staff of MME BirdLife Hungary represented by Lilla Barabás senior administrator and Eszter Babinszkiné Gombos junior administrator. Later in June 2016 Lilla Barabás was replaced by Anna Hunor-Kálmánczi in the position of senior administrator.

The management tasks are detailed in the organigramme of the project team under point 4.3.

The detailed management tasks are as follows:

- *Technical coordination and communication*
 - *Planning*: Annual working plan (prepared by the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the external company, final version accepted by the Director of CB)
 - *Monitoring*: Monthly task report (prepared by the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the external company, final version accepted by the Director of CB)
 - *Reporting*: Annual report (prepared by the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the external company, final version accepted by the Director of CB and the Project Manager)
 - *Communication*: Annual agenda of tasks (prepared by the Communication officer and/or the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the external company, final version accepted by the Communication director of CB and the Project Manager)
- *Financial coordination and book keeping*
 - *Planning*: Annual financial plan (prepared by the Project assistant and the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs in accordance with the technical plans, revised by the

- Project Assistant of the CB and the external company, final version accepted by the Director of CB and the Project Manager)
- *Monitoring*: Monthly financial reports (prepared by the Project assistant of the CB and ABs, sent to the Project Assistant of the CB.)
 - *Reporting and payment process*: Annual Report and payment request (prepared by the Project Assistant and the Project Coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the Project Assistant of the CB and the external company, final version accepted by the Director of CB and the Project Manager). If deemed necessary the payment request is also accepted quarterly with the related financial report.

Partnership Agreements (PA) had been signed between CB and each ABs and submitted together with the Inception Report. The up-to date monitoring of the administrative requirements and technical advancements based on the approval system of unified Annual Working Plans (AWP). A monthly reporting system was set up and both financial and technical progress reports are required from Beneficiaries at the end of every month. If deemed necessary the payment request is also accepted quarterly with the related financial report.

No changes are envisioned regarding the project duration or project management structure.

4.2 Evaluation of the management system

The project management process allows the Coordinating Beneficiary the follow up of the project implementation. The overall execution of project is managed according to the project proposal, however some delays or minor changes have been occurred as it is usual with a large complex project with numerous beneficiaries.

The communication with the external monitoring team and the desk officers were always helpful, we always had answers to our questions with short notice.

Overall project operation and monitoring of the project progress:

F.1 Overall project operation and management

Status: ongoing, in time

Since the last report we held several meetings with partners:

- meeting with KNPD at 22th March, 2016
- meeting with APMSM at 12th October, 2016
- meeting with BNPD at 26th August, 2016 as field monitor visit and at 23th February, 2017.

There was a meeting with Dalerd Ltd. at the MME office about financial issues at 29th September, 2016. APMSM and Milvus Group had meetings at 5th February and 13th April, 2016. We had a monitoring visit at 25th August in the MME office and made a field trip with the monitor at 26th August to the project area of BNPD.

We also held an annual overall project meeting with all the partners at 28th November in Kecskemét to discuss the progress of the project actions (documentation attached as annex F1).

F.2 Developing an After-Life Conservation Plan

Status: not relevant, start date: 01.01.2019.

F.3 Networking with other projects

Status: ongoing, in time

The project was presented at LIFE Projects Fair in Prague on 25th April, 2016 organised by Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic in the frame of LIFE 14 CAP/CZ/0001 project (see the presentation and a picture under annex F3).

Within the scope of Action E9 (Update of the European SAP) the project made significant effort to establish the network of Roller specialists all over Europe. We hosted 68 experts from 27 countries for 3 days and demonstrated the objectives and results of the current life project. For further details please see the detailed description of the action.

The communication and information exchange with the LIFE Capacity project in Hungary as with the National LIFE+ Contact Point and all relevant other LIFE+ project is continuous eg. Dalerd took part in the project event of LIFEinFORESTS project LIFE13 INF/HU/001163 Living Forest Conference in Sopron at 21-22/03/2017.

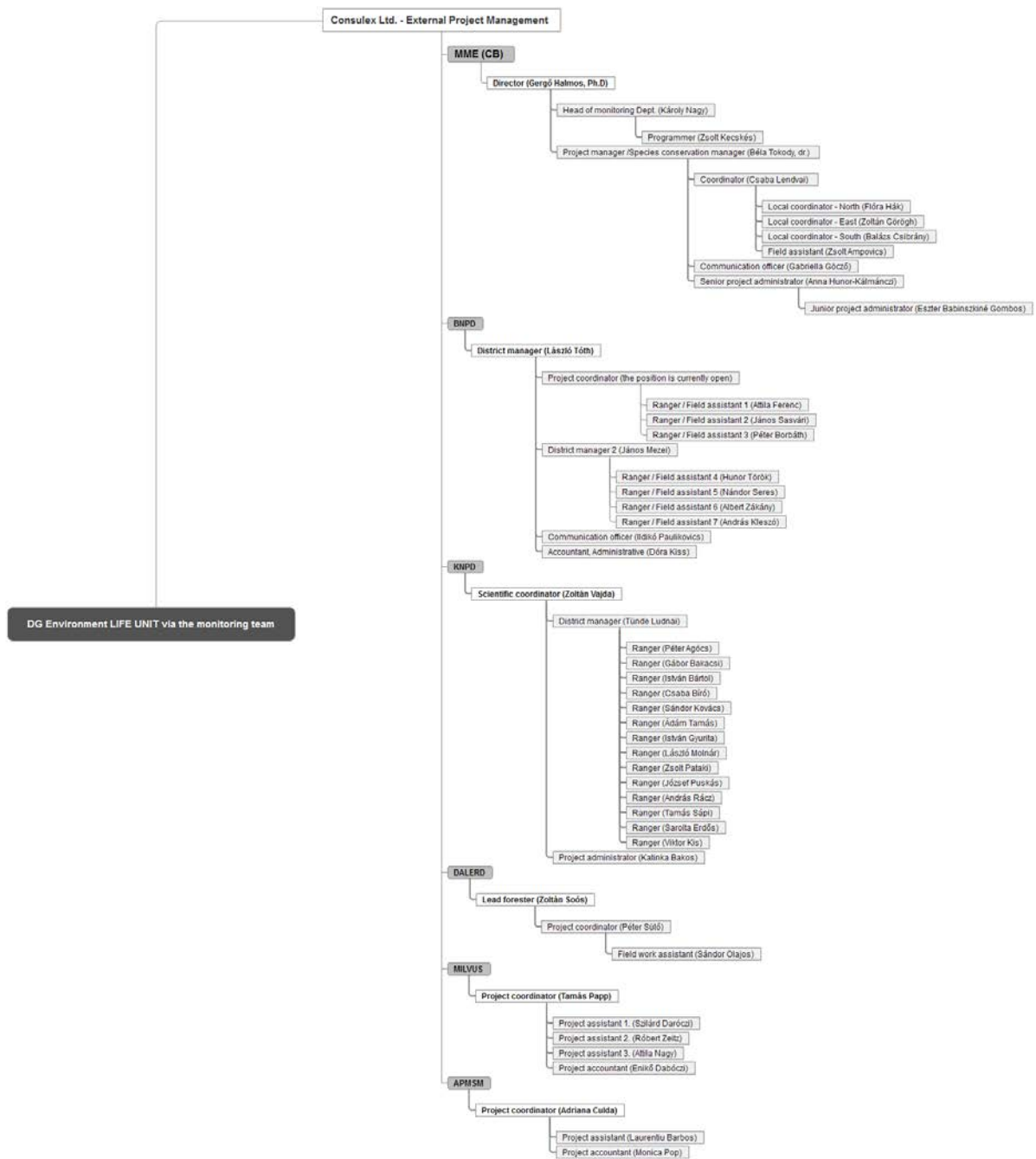
F.4 External audit

Status: ongoing, in time

Consultation about the financial issues with the auditor is continuous.

In the 22th January 2015, MME staff organised a meeting with the Auditor and Dalerd Ltd.

4.3 Organigramme of the project team and the management system



5. Technical part

5.1. Technical progress, per task

Overview of main achievements of the project in the reporting period

Name of the Milestone	Action code	Deadline (planned)	Deadline (accomplished)	Deliverable/ Milestone/ Report
Final report of the study by the subcontractor	A1	28/02/2017	28/02/2017	Deliverable
Study on the potential range expansion of the species in Hungary	A2	30/03/2016	planned by 28/02/2018	Deliverable
End of investment phase of the habitat restoration	C.1	29/02/2016	planned by 28/02/2018	Milestone
Beginning of grazing	C1	24/04/2016	24/04/2016	Milestone
Plantation of trees	C2	31/03/2016	planned by 31/12/2017	Milestone
Management by grazing	C2	24/04/2016	24/04/2016	Milestone
Elimination of invasive trees and sowing of seed mixture of ploughed land	C2	15/10/2016	31/03/2017	Milestone
Plantation of trees	C3	31/03/2016	replacement is continuous	Milestone
Establish meadows	C3	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	Milestone
Selecting of habitats and property issues clarified	C5	31/03/2016	31/03/2017	Milestone
Plantation of forest patches and erection of wooden poles	C5	31/03/2017	planned by 31/03/2018	Milestone
Powerlines selected for nestbox installation isolated in western Romania	C7	30/04/2016	planned by 30/11/2018	Milestone
Results of PTT and geolocator data analysis	C8	31/03/2017	planned by 28/02/2018	Milestone
1st assessment of threats by partner NGOs	C8	31/03/2018	31/03/2017	Deliverable
Report about illegal logging	C9	31/03/2017	the action is expanded until the end of the project, the report will be handed in with the final report	Milestone
Survey 1. results available in Romania	D4	05/12/2016	Postponed to the next reporting period based on the results of action C7	Milestone
Opening of the Roller Visitor Centre	E3	31/05/2017	planned by 31/12/2018	Milestone

Conflict map of bird electrocutions	E10	31/03/2016	annual map is attached, final map by 31/12/2019	Deliverable
Workshops and trainings completed	E10	31/03/2017	planned by 31/03/2018	Milestone
AWP of Beneficiaries	F1	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	Milestone

Notes: To facilitate the transparency and the understanding of the current advancement of the project, we provide information about the overall status of each action compared to the schedule approved in the application. The meanings of different categories are:

"Status: not relevant, start date"= the action is not starting until the next reporting date

"Status: preparatory phase, in time"= the action is not started yet, but will start until the next reporting date, therefore some preparatory activities have been made

"Status: ongoing, in time"= the action is started and running as planned

"Status: ongoing, small delay"= the action is not started as planned, or the performance is delayed

"Status: accomplished"= the action is not started as planned, or the performance is delayed

New consolidated version of the Gantt chart, including the requested changes (with blue) (attached to the current report under annex 7.4 Gantt chart):

Action code	Action short name	Action status	Project start: 01/09/2014											
			Achieved						Planned					
			2016				2017				2018			
	OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS (REPORTING SCHEDULE)	planned	Pr											
		achieved	Pr											
A.	Preparatory actions													
A.1	Establish the sustainable management of Roller nesting habitats	planned	x	x	x	x	D							
		small delay	x	x	x	x	D	x						
A.2	Assessment of existing breeding opportunities	planned	D											
		small delay	D	x	x	x	x	x						
A.3	National Action Plan	planned	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	M	x	x	x
		in time	x	x	x	x	x	x						
A.4	Elaborate monitoring schemes and training of participants	planned	M											
		accomplished	M											
A.5	Roller Visitor Center business plan	planned												
		accomplished												
C.	Concrete conservation actions													
C.1	Restoration of steppe habitats	planned	M	M	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
		delay	x	x	x	x	x	x						
C.2	Restoration of wooded pastures	planned	M	M	x	M	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
		delay	x	M	M	x	x	x						
C.3	Management of riparian forest	planned	M	x	M	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
		in time	M	x	M	x	x	x						
C.4	Create nesting sites	planned	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	M	x	x	x	x
		in time	x	x	x	x	x	x						
C.5	Plantation and maintenance of forest patches	planned	M	x	x	x	M	x	M	x	x	x	x	x
		small delay	M	x	x	x	x	x						
C.6	Farmers for Roller Program	planned	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	M	M	x	x	x
		in time	x	x	x	x	x	x						
C.7	Insulate dangerous pylons	planned	x	M	x	x	x	x	M	x	x	x	x	x
		small delay	x	x	x	x	x	x						
C.8	Reveal threats during migration/wintering	planned	x	x	x	x	M	x	x	x	D	x	x	D
		in time	x	x	x	x	M	x						
C.9	Control activities to identify and proceed against illegal logging	planned	x	x	x	x	M	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
		in time	x	x	x	x	x	x						

Action code	Action short name	Action status	Project start: 01/09/2014													
			Proposed in application file or in reports													
			Achieved				Planned				Planned					
		2016				2017				2018						
		I.	II.	III.	IV.	I.	II.	III.	IV.	I.	II.	III.	IV.	I.		
D.	Monitoring															
D.1	Monitoring of habitat reconstruction actions	planned in time					x	x					x	x	x	D
D.2	Monitoring of Roller population	planned not relevant											x	x	x	
D.3	Assess the socio-econ. impact	planned in time				x				x					x	
D.4	Monitoring of the electric pylon insulation	planned small delay			x	M				x	x			x	x	
E.	Public awareness															
E.1	Demonstration of foraging habitat management techniques for stakeholders	planned in time	x				x	x	M				x			x
E.2	Prevent tree logging on Natura 2000 sites	planned in time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	D		x	x	x	M
E.3	Roller Visitor Center	planned delay	x	x	x	x	x	x	M							
E.4	Notice boards and educational trail	planned small delay	x	x	x	x	x	x								
E.5	Communication materials	planned in time												x	x	D
E.6	Project website, Layman's report	planned in time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
E.7	Continuous media coverage	planned in time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	D	
E.8	Technical communication	planned in time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
E.9	International Species Action Plan	planned not relevant								x	x	x	x	M	D	
E.10	Bird friendly electric pylon design	planned small delay	D	x	x	x	M	x	x	x	M					
F.	Overall project operation															
F.1	Project operation and management	planned in time	M	x	x	M	x	x	x	M						x
F.2	After LIFE Conservation Plan	planned not relevant														
F.3	Networking	planned in time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
F.4	External audit	planned in time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

A.1 Establish the sustainable management of Roller nesting habitats

Status: accomplished

In Hungary:

Field works were carried out in HUKN10007, HUKN10008 and HUKN30003 SPAs in 2015 and 2016. All of the study sites had significant population of cavity-maker species. The highest abundance was found in HUKN10007 SPA, where the estimated population size of Green Woodpeckers was 25-30 pairs and 11 in case of Black woodpeckers. In HUKN10008 SPA 7 Green Woodpeckers and 3 Black Woodpeckers was found. The HUKN30003 SPA was the only site where Black Woodpeckers were more numerous, 5 pairs to 4 pairs of Green Woodpeckers. The cavity-maker species often shared the same forest patches.

The most important factor affecting the Green Woodpecker' occurrence was the area, the size and number of the old deciduous forests.

Ant survey was also carried out in two study sites HUKN10007 and HUKN10008 SPAs. Representative sampling around location occupied and control points were done in a 500 m radius area. Twenty quadrats sized 5 m x 5 m (25 m²) were mapped around each location point, where the density of ant nests, ant diversity and the type of habitat were recorded.

Our results indicate that the HUKN10008 SPA provides better conditions for Green Woodpeckers owing to the significantly higher abundance of ants both on territories of woodpeckers and control points. Because of the high rate of agricultural areas and smaller

amount of suitable habitats, the density of ant nests was significantly lower on the mapped points of HUKN10007 SPA. On both study sites, the density of ant nests was significantly higher on the territories of the Green Woodpecker than on control points without the nests of the Green Woodpecker. Diversity of ants was highest on territories of the Green Woodpecker of the HUKN10008 SPA.

The population of the European roller was the largest in HUKN10007 SPA, however the number of rollers breeding in old woodpecker cavities was the highest in HUKN10008 SPA. In all study sites the use of woodpecker hollows by rollers was very low, rollers mainly breed in artificial nest-boxes even when natural breeding sites were available. High abundance of invasive species in gallery forests seems unfavourable for Rollers.

The detailed final report can be found as Annex A1_1.

The main suggested habitat and management guidelines to preserve breeding habitat for Green Woodpecker and Rollers are:

- plantation of soft wood patches, area 1-1,5 ha
- preserve dead wood in forest patches
- preserve at least 20 old trees (poplar or willow species) when the patch is deforested
- maintain high quality grasslands as foraging sites
- eliminate invasive tree species

Delivery of the habitat and forest management guidelines to the concerning authorities and negotiation with stakeholders will start later this year.

In Romania:

Field works were carried out in 3 SPAs in Romania (Câmpia Crişurilor, Lunca Mureşului and Lunca Timişului sites) in 2016. Within the study there were selected a number of 277 points. For checking the presence of the two target woodpecker species, we used playback of the drumming and sound in every circle. A study regarding the habitat composition within a circle of 500 m radius around these points was carried out too. The presence of woodpeckers was confirmed in 71 points out of 277. We selected randomly a similar set of 71 points, where there were no woodpecker observations to check potential differences in several habitat parameters.

In the statistical analysis we included the surface of all habitat types and all woodpecker observations regarding the two target species. We also measured: the species composition of trees and the circumference of the nearest trees to the points (5 trees from the dominant species and up to 3 trees from the subdominant ones, according to their frequency).

Conclusions:

- samples with Green Woodpeckers contain the highest percentage of suitable Roller habitat, that is an evidence of the connection between the two species
- the Roller habitat is very weakly represented in the study areas, which means that there is no more overlap remained between the Roller and the hole-making species, this will lead very shortly to the extinction of the species
- overlapping exists only in very small isolated areas, where old, scattered trees exist in pastures with closed forests nearby. Woodpeckers survived in the compact forests, and sometimes come out to the remaining pastures with scattered trees.
- woodpeckers don't breed in small forest patches
- suitable forest patches are not existing in the Western Plain anymore. Only 3.43% of this area is covered by forests, the percentage of those between 1 and 20ha area is only 0.02%.

The presence of following elements are critical for the Roller to survive in the Western Plain: The pastures, grasslands produce big size insects, reptiles, rodents, main food of the species, but also there is availability of ant species here, important food of the Green Woodpecker, the

main hollow-maker species for the Roller. It is also crucial the presence of trees in this habitat, where hollow-making woodpecker species can breed, and Rollers can find these cavities for breeding.

All these elements can be ensured for the Rollers only by involving the main stakeholders, who have their activity in the Roller habitat, therefore have responsibilities too. First of all, Roller is a protected species in Romania, and with joining the EU, we assumed that all priority species population will not continue to decrease in Natura 2000 sites. In the Western Plain is important to plant tree patches, the shape, size and species composition of these should take into account the need of Roller too. Placing of artificial nest boxes may solve the problem of lack of nest sites temporarily, where these plantations take place. There are several campaigns in the area of forest planting, but unfortunately not with taking into account nature conservation aspects (not using indigenous species, planting on grasslands, etc.).

The detailed final report can be find as Annex A1_2.

Delivery of the habitat and forest management guidelines to the concerning authorities and negotiation with stakeholders will start later this year.

A.2 Assessment of existing breeding opportunities

Status: accomplished/small delay

In Hungary:

Corrigendum: Due to technical problems in the GIS database, in the last report we included wrong numbers on the Roller population in 2015 in Hungary. The correct number of estimated Roller breeding population in the project sites was 686 pairs and we detected 211 pairs in the 5 km buffer zone of the SPAs in 2015. We proved the breeding of altogether 897 Roller pairs, thus we will use this reference number as baseline data of indicators to evaluate the project achievements. We provided the breeding distribution of the population of each project SPA with buffer zone on table and maps attached to the progress report. For the updated data of following years please see Action D2 where we will regularly provide the up to date population estimates.

In Romania:

A study has been made about the nesting cavity supply in some target SPA's (identified natural woodpecker holes, woodpecker territories and existing nestboxes). The estimated Roller breeding population in the Romanian project sites was 60 pairs and we detected 24 pairs in the 5 km buffer zone of the SPAs (the detailed table was attached to the progress report). We proved the breeding of altogether 84 Roller pairs, thus we will use this reference number as baseline data of indicators to evaluate the project achievements. For the updated data of following years please see action D2 where we will regularly provide the up to date population estimates.

The handbook of nestbox installation methods is ready and available on the website in three languages. A printed copy was handed in with the progress report. (http://rollerproject.eu/sites/default/files/allando_tartalmak/Letoltesek/conservation_of_the_european_roller.pdf).

There is a delay according to the deliverable "Study on the potential range expansion of the species in Hungary". Since we planned to hand in a study published in scientific paper, we expect it to be published before 28th February 2018 the latest.

A.3 Elaborate National Action Plan for the species

Status: preparatory phase

The action plan is in preparatory phase, data collection is underway (threats, exceptional breeding places etc.).

Following the consultations with the relevant Ministry staff (András Schmidt, Department of Nature Conservation) we agreed to submit the final work version of the National Species Action Plan by 31.03.2018 to allow the wide range consultation of stakeholders.

MME staff organised a meeting under action E9 which was a good platform not only to discuss the international problems but to begin continuous consultations with Hungarian specialists about the national issues.

A.4 Elaborate monitoring schemes and training of participants

Status: accomplished

A detailed monitoring plan has been developed and handed in with the progress report. Altogether 6 trainings were held for the project participants, 4 in Hungary and 2 in Romania. Overall 94 /HU/ and 34 /RO/ persons participated to the events (documentation was attached to the progress report).

A.5 Develop the business plan for the sustainable management of the Roller Visitor Centre

Status: accomplished

The business plan of the Visitor Centre was handed in with the progress report.

C.1 Restoration of steppe habitats

Status: delay

Cultivation works:

In February 2015 KNPD started the preparation and concertation of planned field works with the local directorate of water management (ATIVIZIG). Quotations for geodesy surveys arrived in April; application for the declaration of trustees from the local directorate of water management (ATIVIZIG), contract signed with the subcontractor.

After the geodesy survey and the implementation plan arrived from the subcontractor the plans with water rights licence were sent to ATIVIZIG, but it was suspended due to completing request for missing documents. The needed NFA owner permit is under delivery. There was also a request for completing geodesy survey which was subcontracted to Info Geo Bt. Their documentation was sent, but the remaining missing documents are still under preparation by Pro Aqua. We expect to get the missing documents in the near future and submit the whole package the earliest possible, to get the all final documents necessary to launch the public procurement process.

Elimination of invasive trees: KNPD requested the local forestry authority's permission for the planned elimination works in September 2015. However the permission arrived in December its validity expired in 31th December 2015 and a new request was be handed in for

2016. Meanwhile KNPD ordered soil exploration at the restoration area to help the planning of tree plantations. The new request was prepared in accordance with the results of the habitat exploration.

In 2016, while the tenant farmer sent the application and later the missing documents to the local forestry authority in regard of elimination of *E. angustifolia*, the legal background changed and a new permission was required. The new permission arrived in November, 2016 and its validity expired in 31th December, 2016 and the tenant farmer was not able to perform the elimination works. A new request for permission was handed in to the forestry authority, this time it arrived in May for the requested locations (for the permission please see annex C1_1).

The delayed Milestone “End of investment phase of the habitat restoration works can be reached by 28/02/2018.

In the mission letter Ares(2016)7007584 - 16/12/2016 EC asked to submit the related contracts for grazing with this report, please find it under annex C1_2.

C.2 Restoration of wooded pastures

Status: delay

The elimination of invasive trees started in early autumn 2016 followed by the preparation of the soil on 24 hectares before sowing seed mixture in spring, 2017.

The planned milestone “Plantation of trees” has not been reached due to administrative complications. BNPD started the preparation of public procurement process and hired one specialized external advisor. However the obligation to include the clearing and plantation works to all the similar activities of the Beneficiary resulted in some delays.

For the plantation works of action C2 and C5 BNPD announced the tender, which was closed by reporting date. The progress of evaluation is running currently, the contract is expected to be signed this summer and the plantations can start in autumn. By 31.03.2017 the planned elimination and plantation works couldn't be finished, the expected date of finishing is the spring of 2018 the latest.

For pictures and the map about the locations of the restoration please see annex C2_1.

In the mission letter Ares(2016)7007584 - 16/12/2016 EC asked to submit the related contracts for grazing with this report, please find it under annex C2_2.

C.3 Management of riparian forest

Status: ongoing, in time

Dalerd Zrt. continued the works as planned.

The elimination of invasive species completed and there was significant progression in the planned works such as cleaning the area, planting, mowing timber, road repairing works and manual and mechanical care of saplings, injection of herbicides. The table about the amount of finished works can be found as annex C3_1.

Plantation of trees: There is still delay in the plantation of native trees at Csanytelek 3 B because of the water coverage at the project site by River Tisza again. Unfortunately the area is in a deep surface level which is covered with water very easily.

Until the reporting period totally 118 900 pcs of saplings were planted. The rest of the planned number (63 900) of saplings serves as replacement in the future in accordance with

the weather conditions and the development of the planted saplings. For the details (regions, area sizes, sapling species etc.) see annex C3_2.

In the mission letter Ares(2016)7007584 - 16/12/2016 EC asked to provide details and justification for renting of the machinery to the subcontractor with the next report. Since the planned works of the AB requires special machinery, the project team already prepared the proposal with the procurement of this special equipment. Available subcontractors do not own proper devices and the Beneficiary do not have own staff for the use of this machines (this is the general case all over the county concerning the forestry companies). The project staff examined the legal background of the renting, and concluded as the only viable solution based on different legal and administrative regulations concerning the Forestry companies. The fee of the renting is accounted as direct income to the project, the use of the equipment is exclusive to the project (this later can be followed by the daily administration of machinery use).

C.4 Create nesting sites

Status: ongoing, in time

In Hungary:

Altogether 1280 wooden concrete nestboxes were delivered to Hungary in November, 2016. Their placement is still in progress, see pictures under annex C4_1. Most of them serves as a replacement of the old ones and the other portion means new nesting opportunity for the birds.

The number of placed nestboxes until 31/03/2017:

Kiskunság National Park	784 pcs
Körös-Maros National Park	89 pcs
Hortobágy National Park	37 pcs
	910 pcs

AB BNPD ordered the first portion (500 pcs) of nestboxes, the placed amount by locations until reporting date (for pictures please see annex C4_2):

BMTK /Borsodi-Mezőség/	150 pcs
DHTE /Dél-heves region/	120 pcs
KTK /Kesznyéten/	75 pcs
	345 pcs

Modification accepted by EC: The project proposal aimed also to create artificial cavities to help cavity-making woodpecker species under action C4. However studies showed that there are more natural cavities at the project area than expected, therefore the monitoring of these natural holes is more reasonable. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

In Romania:

Wooden nestboxes were ordered and in total 800 pcs arrived to Arad, Romania, and their placement started in 2016. Up to the reporting date cca. 500 pcs of them were placed, however maps can only be delivered about the progression until the end of 2016 (241 nest boxes), due to the field works in progress (please find them under annex C4_3).

The prototype of the wooden concrete nestbox will be prepared and tested during 2017. 200 pcs of them will be delivered if the tests are successful.

Modification: Milvus Group wishes to continue the action until the end of the project, which was kindly approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

C.5 Plantation and maintenance of forest patches

Status: ongoing, small delay

In Hungary:

KNPD is in negotiation with the Forestry Authority on the mandatory replacement plantations in case of Székalj project site (KNPD was obligated to plant 6 pcs of patches sized 400-500 m² with native tree species /*Pyrus pyraeaster*, *Fraxinus angustifolia subsp. pannonica*, *Ulmus laevis*, *Quercus robur*, *Ulmus minor*, *Prunus spinosa*, *Cornus sanguine*, *Euonymus europaeus*, *Crataegus monogyna*/ after 1st September in the permission for 2017) (see Action C1 for details).

For the planned locations of tree plantations see maps under annex C5_1, for the NFA owner permission see annex C5_2.

The difficulties in the tender process of BNPD resulted in some delays. Finally, for the plantation works of action C2 and C5 BNPD announced the tender, which was closed by reporting date. The progress of evaluation is running currently, the contract is expected to be signed this summer and the plantations can start in autumn. By 31.03.2017 the planned elimination and plantation works couldn't be finished, the expected date of planting the saplings is the spring of 2018 the latest.

For the planned locations of plantations in HUBN10002 please see annex C5_3. The locations at HUBN10004 did not change since the progress report.

In Romania:

Legal background and property issues of the plantations was clarified, the location of the 50 patches were selected and the permissions for these arrived (for the database of the plantations and pole placing locations see annex C5_4). Communication with the relevant municipalities on the 14 SPAs where the plantations and the poles will be placed is continuous. There is a delay in the plantations because of the changes in the public procurement processes. For speeding up the procedure, an external expert was subcontracted and the public procurement process started in March, 2017. The estimated timing of the first plantations is autumn, 2017.

C.6 Farmers for Roller Program

Status: ongoing, in time

In Hungary:

We contracted altogether 76 farmers in 2016 and we started the plantations of the 2835 saplings and placement of 339 nestboxes procured for them. The permissions for plantations

arrived for most of the locations and they took place at BNPD and KNPD project areas. 3 forums were held by BNPD, their documentations were sent with the progress report. The maps and pictures about the plantations and the database of contracted farmers can be found under annex C6_1 and C6_2.

In Romania:

Procurement of the equipment and consumables started, the public procurement process runs together with action C5.

7 farmers were contracted in an event held on 6th December, 2016 (please find the commitments and the documentations about the event under annex C6_3).

AMPSM and Milvus Group wishes to continue the action until the end of the project since there's a delay in the procurement process of this action. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

C.7 Insulate dangerous pylons

Status: ongoing, small delay

In the mission letter Ares(2016)7007584 - 16/12/2016 EC asked us to submit a new schedule of the pylon insulations in order it couldn't start as planned.

New electric power modification schedule:

1. Negotiation with the Electricity Company (ENEL) about the exact locations of the pylon which should be modified and about the materials that can be used. This is still going on as the work is done by the electricity company (the project is only providing the insulation materials) - and so the company has to include this works in their annual schedule. Also, before the work can begin there should be a common agreement about the insulation materials that should/can be used on the pylons. This process will be facilitated by the expert hired recently according the approval of this modification by the monitoring team. Schedule: May-July 2017.

2. Buying the materials for the insulation of pylons. This can be done only after the first point is done. Schedule: August - October 2017.

3. Insulation of the power-lines. The exact schedule of this action depends on the electricity company. Schedule: March - November 2018.

Milvus Group also wishes to subcontract an expert for a more effective accomplishment of the action with budget reallocation preliminary approved by the EC in e-mail before.

The tasks of the subcontractor:

1. Preliminary coordination meetings with the electricity company - to decide upon the type of the insulators, the methods that can be used, etc.

2. Calculating the exact amount of materials needed for the insulation of the 1000 pylons. This can be done only after there is an agreement with the electricity company about the materials they accept on their lines. The work is done based on the pictures taken about the pylons by the staff of the LIFE project. There is a chance that for some special pylon types it is impossible to tell the materials needed for isolation only based on pictures. In these cases the subcontractor might have to travel and check those pylons in the field.

3. Training for the staff responsible for the isolation work.

4. Controlling the quality of work in the field - the experience is that this only works if somebody is checking the working team every day, gives them practical advice about the problems encountered, etc. If this is done only on a weekly basis - the problems identified can be solved later at a much higher cost.

A conflict map and the database were handed in with the progress report.

C.8 Reveal threats during migration/wintering

Status: ongoing, in time

The planned contracts about checking the stopover sites and assessing the threats with the BirdLife partner NGOs signed (Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds, BirdLife Cyprus, Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, Bird protection and study society of Serbia).

Altogether 4907 birds were ringed and 2096 birds were tagged with colour rings too, and 177 individuals were recaptured in 2015 and 2016. The staff of MME BirdLife Hungary tested the possible harnesses on captive *Corvus monedula* specimens in the ZOO of Szeged. According to the available permits we caught birds and deployed the PTTs in June. In 2015, despite the preparation works and the tests, 3 Rollers lost the device in some days and only one could be recovered successfully. We used altogether 8 PTTs, but unfortunately only 4 devices remained active at the end of the breeding season. Finally 2 birds started the migration and arrived successfully to the wintering area in Namibia and Botswana, but only 1 bird returned. In 2016 we deployed another 4 birds in Hungary. They all started migration but only 3 of them arrived to the wintering sites and started the migration back to the breeding site. Two of these birds arrived back to the territory up to the reporting date. See satellitetracking.eu for further details and up to date maps.

In 2017, we ordered an additional 4 PTTs in Hungary and 7 PTTs in Romania. The procurement of 90 geolocators for Hungary and 25 geolocators for Romania also finished, we start their placement in June, 2017.

Deliverable “1st assessment of threats by partner NGOs” is ready earlier than planned in the proposal, please find it under annex C8.

C.9 Control activities to identify and proceed against illegal logging

Status: ongoing, in time

At the beginning of 2015 the preparation of booklets finished, which are used in the field during the regular controls. These notes contain the following information: 1. detailed maps of the surveying routes, location of the control points; 2. table with trees seen from a certain point (species, number, direction from the point); 3. each point has a table to be filled in the field during controls, point coordinates, and two photo images showing the trees or tree patches in vegetation and non-vegetation period. A GPS track helps the fieldworker to travel around the route. The field notes were attached to the progress report.

During the continuous monitoring illegal logging was identified at ROSPA0097 project site in November 2015. After the documentation the crime was reported to Environment Department in Bihor county (Garda de Mediu – Comisariatul Judeţan Bihor). The documentation of recce with the colleagues of Environment Department and Environmental Protection Agency of Bihor county was attached to the progress report.

Modification: APMSM and Milvus Group wishes to continue the action until the end of the project, which was kindly approved by the EC. Therefore the report about the illegal logging

will be handed in with the final report. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

D.1 Monitoring of habitat reconstruction actions

Status: ongoing, in time

All the works are subcontracted to an external company. The company had been chosen with a three-quotations selecting process. The first report about 2015 was attached to the progress report, the report about 2016 can be find as annex D1.

In 2016 the monitoring continued, however the reconstruction works couldn't start at C1 and C2 sites because of the delay in the permitting processes. Therefore, the baseline survey of small mammals, reptiles and amphibians was repeated during this season. The insect samples collected in 2015 were sorted out and identified during 2016 and baseline state of insect prey availability was statistically analysed. Also the botanical data collected in 2015 could be evaluated in 2016 completing the baseline survey with understanding the conditions.

The results showed that among the C.1. project sites, Székalj have a lowest arthropod food availability for Rollers. Among C.2. project sites, the energy weed area have lowest diversity and abundance of arthropods and a wooded pasture have a highest food availability.

Monitoring of Rollers' habitat use on project site also continued. 4 adult rollers were tagged on C.1. and 3 at C.2. project sites and 1 individual was also tagged in the neighbourhood of the C3 site. Birds' movements indicated that pairs breeding in project sites used the area intensively during the season, however the neighbouring pairs did not use the projects sites as a foraging areas.

The results of mammal baseline survey showed the followings. Overall, the expected species were found in the traps, rare or unexpected species were not found. Generally few animals were trapped except for the area of Dalerd. The number of open lowland species (common vole (*Microtus arvalis*), shrew species (*Soricidae*)) was around the lower threshold of detectability with live trapping in most of the studied areas but a slow increase was experienced in the autumn trapping period. However a prosperous year was found in view of wood mice species. They have been found in several places.

The result of reptile and amphibian survey showed that important Roller' prey species such *Pelobates fuscus*, *Lacerta agilis*, *Natrix natrix* are present on C.1. and C.2. project site. However, the abundance of frog species can probably decrease after the reconstruction a channels, the area will still provide suitable habitats for them. The C.3. project site have lower diversity and abundance of studied taxa then the other areas.

The action will be adapted to the timing of habitat reconstructions, in consultation with the monitor later in this year and before the next breeding season.

D.2 Monitoring of Roller population

Status: preparatory phase, in time

Monitoring of Roller population runs continuous in all projects SPAs. However baseline data was determined in 2015, the breeding data was collected in 2016 as well.

The number of breeding pairs in the SPAs and the buffer zones shows the following:

In Hungary:

Name	Code	SPA		Puffer		Total	
		2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
Abonyi-kaszálóerdő	HUDI10001	1	2	0	0	1	2
Alsó-Tisza-völgy	HUKN10007	45	61	27	31	72	92
Balástya–Szatymaz környéki homokvidék	HUKN10008	20	20	35	39	55	59
Bihar	HUHN10003	44	38	8	8	52	46
Borsodi-sík	HUBN10002	148	130	12	21	160	151
Csongrád-bokrosi Sóstó	HUKN30001	0	0	7	11	7	11
Felső-kiskunsági szikes puszták és turjánvidék	HUKN10001	40	46	14	7	54	53
Gátéri Fehér-tó	HUKN30002	0	0	6	8	6	8
Hevesi-sík	HUBN10004	143	139	11	6	154	145
Hortobágy	HUHN10002	120	119	34	34	154	153
Izsáki Kolon-tó	HUKN30003	5	5	8	9	13	14
Jászkarajenői puszták	HUDI10004	7	11	4	5	11	16
Jászság	HUHN10005	17	17	10	7	27	24
Kesznyéten	HUBN10005	26	26	3	2	29	28
Kiskunsági szikes tavak és az őrjegi turjánvidék	HUKN10002	22	27	12	9	34	36
Szatmár-Bereg	HUHN10001	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vásárhelyi-és Csanádi puszták	HUKM10004	48	42	20	21	68	63
Total		686	683	211	218	897	901

In Romania:

SPA	Code	SPA		Puffer		Total	
		2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
Câmpia Nirului – Valea Ierului	ROSPA0016	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunca Barcăului	ROSPA0067	1	1	0	0	1	1
Valea Alceului	ROSPA0103	0	1	0	0	0	1
Pescăria Cefa – Pădurea Rădvani	ROSPA0097	3	10	1	1	4	11
Câmpia Crișului Albși Crișului Negru	ROSPA0015	30	36	6	4	36	40
Câmpia Cermeiului	ROSPA0014	1	2	0	2	1	4
Lunca Mureșului inferior	ROSPA0069	18	32	15	8	33	40
Hunedoara Timișană	ROSPA0047	1	1	0	0	1	1
Mlaștina Satchinez	ROSPA0078	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teremia Mare - Tomnatic	ROSPA0142	1	1	1	2	2	3
Uivar-Diniaș	ROSPA0144	2	2	0	1	2	3
Pădurea Macedonia	ROSPA0095	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunca Timișului	ROSPA0128	3	3	1	1	4	4
Livezile - Dolăț	ROSPA0126	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lunca Bârzavei	ROSPA0127	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		60	89	24	19	84	108

The baseline data of known breeding pairs in the project area in Hungary show higher number as expected earlier. This is mainly due to the elapsed time from the writing of the proposal and the better initial monitoring in action A2. The project staff started the change and refurbishment of old nest boxes, however the effect of this is only expected to affect the size of the population in the later stage of the project. The stable numbers in Hungary and the moderate increase in Romania give place to optimism for the future.

D.3 Assess the socioeconomic impact of the project actions

Status: ongoing, in time

In Romania: contract with the subcontractor signed in 2015. Data collected through questionnaires were analysed (220 questionnaires in 2015, 229 in 2016).

The study showed that:

- The main sources of information among those who know about the project were public information and posters/billboards.
- Most respondents gave correct answers to the questions about the project, the proportion of those who have checked the “I don’t know” option is between 1.7% and 4.3%.
- More than half of respondents believe that the main benefit of the project is the increasing the number of the Roller.
- Nearly half of respondents say the fate of Roller is important to them.

The surveys about 2015 were attached to the progress report, the survey about 2016 can be found under annex D3.

In Hungary the works were subcontracted to an external company, the data collection started the evaluation will take place in a later stage of the project implementation.

D.4 Monitoring of the electronic pylon insulation

Status: ongoing, in time

In 2015 in Hungary 1704 pylons were surveyed in a total length of 158 km by project employees and volunteers, data was analysed by the Monitoring Centre of BirdLife Hungary. Only 1 roller was found among the 56 dead individuals of 18 taxa.

In 2016 the monitoring continued: the number of surveyed pylons grew to 3793, and the participants found 182 individuals of 22 taxa, 8 of them were roller. For details please see annex D4.

Minor modification:

The approved proposal text envisaged one baseline survey in 2015 and a second survey in 2019 in Hungary and the related reporting by 31.12.2019. However to ensure the best possible coverage of project sites with monitoring we decided to annually repeat the surveys. This will not affect the budget of the action, as volunteers will help the work of the professional staff.

In Romania:

the action could not start because of the delay in action C7.

5.2 Dissemination actions

5.2.1 Objectives

- E.1 Demonstration of foraging habitat management techniques for stakeholders
- E.2 Prevent tree logging on Natura 2000 sites
- E.3 Roller Visitor Centre
- E.4 Produce and erect notice boards
- E.5 Produce communication materials
- E.6 Develop and maintain project website, produce Layman's report
- E.7 Ensure continuous media coverage of the project
- E.8 Technical communication of project results
- E.9 Update the International Species Action Plan
- E.10 Promote bird friendly electric pylon design

The number of reaches by specific actions and by planned communication tools are continuously followed and specified at the relevant actions.

The main objectives planned in the proposal:

- action E1: 5-2-5 demonstrative workshops (1/year) at KNPD, BNPD and Dalerd habitat reconstruction sites with altogether 925 participants: farmers, foresters, participants of Farmers for Rollers program, concerning authorities, 20 presentations on local events and participation at 3 professional event to demonstrate the results. The project goals, habitat reconstruction methods and achieved results will be presented at local events where we can also demonstrate the treatments to that land owners who are not professional farmers, however they are interested in bird conservation opportunities. Non-specialist target groups such as students and local people will be informed about management techniques. On the demonstrative workshops a commitment will be signed by 50 participants that in case of available funding they are ready to use the presented methods in favour of the species.
- action E2:
In Hungary: Meetings will be organized for key stakeholders (farmers, local NGOs, general public), to promote Natura2000 network's general measures and Roller friendly forestry management. Leaflets will be delivered to increase stakeholders' awareness about Natura2000 network and the protection of tree-lines and old trees.
In Romania: Meetings will be organized for key stakeholders (farmers, local NGOs, general public, local authorities), to promote Natura2000 network's general measures and Roller friendly forestry management. Brochures and leaflets will be delivered about Natura 2000, the target species and the importance of key habitats to increase stakeholders' awareness about Natura2000 network and the protection of tree-lines and old trees.
- action E3: opening a Visitor Centre with accommodation, an exhibition and conference room. Our plan is to host more than 15000 visitors till the end of the project.
- action E4:
In Hungary: 18 notice boards, 2 educational trails, 1 online camera system
In Romania: 30 information boards

- action E5: producing a high amount of PR materials that will be disseminated continuously in the Roller Visitor Centre (action E3), on workshops (action C6, E2), and on specific educational programmes organized for schools and kindergartens. Deliverable products are effective tools for raising the awareness of the general public, and especially of the young generations. The products will reach minimally 50 000 people, with a special emphasis on children and students.
- action E6: producing and maintaining a regularly updated trilingual website (we expect more than 1 million visitors during the project), produce a layman's report in both paper and electronic formats in 3 languages (HU: 2000, RO: 1000, ENG: 300). The paper version will be disseminated among decision makers, international partners and key stakeholders, while the electronic version will be freely available on the project website. The report will describe the project and its achievements in succinct, non-technical language.
- action E7: 3 press conferences, ca. 100 press releases, appearances in the most relevant TV and radio channels, and printed and online journals (>1000 media reports), producing a 50 min. film and 10x2 min. shortfilms disseminated on DVDs (2000 copies) and on TV channels
- action E8: For the dissemination of results 3 presentations or posters on international conferences will be held: (European Congress of Conservation Biology, International Ornithological Congress, Open Landscapes Conference, European Conference on Ecological Restoration). In addition 20 presentations or posters on workshops and national conferences will be held; 5 scientific publications will be written.
- action E9: produce the Updated International Species Action Plan of European Roller.
- action E10: 4 workshops and 12 trainings will be organized to demonstrate the proper installation of different bird protection tools (insulators, anti-collision systems) for the target groups (experts who take part in additional implementation of bird- friendly devices /insulators, anti-collision devices, bird diverters/ such as managers, engineers and professional fieldworkers of electric companies. Designers will be invited, as well.). Technical brochure and its online version will be published and regularly refreshed on the project website (action E7).

5.2.2 Dissemination: overview per activity

The media and the public are greatly interested in the project. Our press releases are well used by the media and appear in mainstream online and written magazines, TV and radio. The short films received a lot of positive feedback, and both the general public and roller experts found the website useful from all over the world. The interactive map showing the satellite tagged birds generated a great interest. Our events are well attended. We only had small challenges with the online nest camera last year. Viewers became emotionally attached to the roller family and at times it was difficult to explain the natural processes happening in the nest.

E.1 Demonstration of foraging habitat management techniques for stakeholders

Status: ongoing, in time

In 2015 Dalerd Ltd. held a demonstrative event in Alsó-Tisza-völgy SPA (HUKN10007) with 27 stakeholders (2015.06.17) (documentation attached to the progress report).

In 2016 2 demonstrative events were held:

- KNPD held an event to demonstrate the project sites before the restoration works at 29th June, 2016 with 34 participants,
- Dalerd held an event at their project site at 22th September, 2016 with 70 participants.

For the documentations please see annex E1_1 and E1_2.

Dalerd also took part in the project event of LIFEinFORESTS project LIFE13 INF/HU/001163 Living Forest Conference in Sopron at 21-22/03/2017

E.2 Prevent tree logging on Natura 2000 sites

Status: ongoing, in time

This action already started in Romania. APMSM procured the equipments, the leaflets and brochures about Natura 2000 and illegal logging (see as annex E2_1). A database was made about schools of Satu Mare, Bihor, Arad and Timiș counties where the awareness raising presentations can be held.

In 2016, APMSM held presentations in 23 schools about the project and the Natura 2000 network. In Bihor county they made partnership with 7 education institutions. (See pictures as annex E2_2)

E.3 Roller Visitor Centre

Status: ongoing, in time

In November 2014 the project team started the acquisition of the necessary permits for all relevant activities (monitoring, habitat reconstruction – e.g. the elimination of dykes, canals and *Elaeagnus angustifolia*, and building watchtower, Visitor Centre, educational trail).

KNPD started the procurement process to select the responsible architect for the works.

Conceptual planning of the Visitor Centre were subcontracted, construction permit was obtained. The work version of the conceptual plan is attached as annex E3_1.

As next step KNPD wait for the approval of the Ministry and wishes to subcontract a public procurement expert to help speeding up the processes (it was approved by the EC).

In the mission letter Ares(2016)7007584 - 16/12/2016 EC asked for a new schedule of the action: since the construction permit became legitimate (see letter attached as annex E3_2), the public procurement process is the next step which can take up to 3,5 - 8 months. It means that the works can start in the beginning of 2018 the latest. The construction works can be performed within 6-10 months, so the Visitor Centre can be opened until 31/12/2018.

E.4 Produce and erect notice boards

Status: ongoing, small delay

The notice boards about the project are ready, 18 bilingual boards were installed in Hungary and 30 in Romania with different designs (milestone by 30/09/2015, documentation handed in with the progress report).

The planning of the interactive educational trail in HUBN10002 was delayed, the preparation of the public procurement process for the selection of the subcontractor is underway. The new target date for the trail is 30/09/2017 which was accepted by the EC after the progress report.

The concept plan of the interactive educational trail in HUKN10007 is ready but the graphical works, the printing, and the installation is delayed due to the delayed construction work of the Visitor Centre. The plan of some of the boards was revised with the external monitoring team and approved by the EC with the progress report. The graphical planning started, but the printing and installation will be harmonized with the progress of the construction works, the trail will be ready by the opening of the Visitor Centre, hopefully in early 2018.

E.5 Produce communication materials

Status: ongoing, in time

In Hungary:

1st and 2nd set of PR materials, educational toys and the general project demonstrating leaflet had been procured.

The PR sets contain:

PR set for Roller project	Nr. Of ordered items
mug	200 pc
T-shirt	830 pc
Polar sweater	200 pc
pencil, pen	2000 pc
linen bag	500 pc
backpack	70 pc
baseball hat	140 pc
fridge magnet	2000 pc
pinbadge	2000 pc
leaflet	25000 pc (Hungarian)+ 3000 pc (English)
sticker	50000 pc
roll-up	8 pc
poster	1000 pc
linen bag (2 nd set)	3000 pc
thermos (2 nd set)	40 pc
windshield shade (2 nd set)	200 pc
notebook (2 nd set)	100 pc

In Romania:

APMSM produced the 1st set of PR materials in 2015 and plans to produce the 2nd part in 2018.

Products	Produced pcs	Left
Pin	1500	1000
Stationery	2000	500
T-shirt	800	700
Leaflet	1500	1000
Linen bag	1500	1000
A3 poster	1500	1000
Mug	300	200
Calendar	3000	2000
A7 sticker	1500	1000
Leaflet for children	1500	1000
Magnet	2000	500

Pictures about most of the products were handed in with the progress report, for the windshield shade, thermos and the notebook please see annex E5.

E.6 Develop and maintain project website, produce Layman's report

Status: ongoing, in time

The trilingual central webpage of the project is ready: <http://rollerproject.eu/> and the Facebook site is also online (<https://www.facebook.com/rollerproject>). They are updated regularly with news in all 3 languages. Up to reporting date we have 58 project news (average 2.07 news/month).

All beneficiaries prepared one page on their own sites to show their role in the Roller project, the collection was handed in with the inception report.

E.7 Ensure continuous media coverage of the project

Status: ongoing, in time

Major achievements and statistics up to the reporting date:

WEBSITE (www.rollerproject.eu):

- 58 project news (average 2,07 news/month)
- 16 601 viewer (5 continents, 121 countries)
- 53 954 page downloads (2,21 pages/user)

FACEBOOK (www.facebook.com/rollerproject):

- 92 uploaded news, timeline photo or photo gallery
- Likes: 1 556
- Active users: 20 530
- Talking about: 278 974

YOUTUBE: 8626 views

In Hungary:

6 national, 9 local press appearances, 66 news on different webpages, 10 radio news and 2 tv reports.

The production of the project films are subcontracted to an external company. 5 short films are ready and available online:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAaK2g469AY&list=PLpISPejBNAbw7BJWfue_ueLFSEd-B15j&index=1

In Romania:

APMSM and Milvus Group made 4 press releases, 8 news in national press, 38 online news, 9 TV appearances, 4 radio reports and 1 article in special paper (see documentations and scanned versions of articles as annex E7_1 and the collection as annex E7_2).

E.8 Technical communication of project results

Status: ongoing, in time

The procurement of equipments started. There is no significant progress as the implementation of the action is planned after processing the results of „C” actions.

The project was presented at the Kick-off meeting in Budapest, published an article in Acta Zoologica (http://actazool.nhmus.hu/63/1/ActaZH_2017_Vol_63_1_123.pdf) and a poster was also presented at the MTBK Conference in 2014, Szeged (see them under annex E8).

E.9 Update the International Species Action Plan

Status: ongoing, in time

KNPD and MME held a conference between 19-21st January, 2017 (for documentation please see annex E9). 68 participants attended from 27 countries and they discussed the primary threatening factors and the international issues of the species. The presentations and their recordings are available online (<http://rollerproject.eu/hu/content/nemzetkozi-fajvedelmi-terv-konferencia-2017-kecskemet>). The first work version of the ISAP will be prepared until 31th August, 2017 which will be spread for comments among the international experts.

The same event was used to develop the first draft of the Flyway Action Plan of the species. Details will be reported later as complementary activity outside of the scope of the LIFE project.

E.10 Promote bird friendly electric pylon design

Status: ongoing, small delay

Since MME modified the pylon monitoring with annual repeats, the final conflict map will be prepared until 31st December, 2019. Until then a yearly updated map will be prepared about the studied lines, please find it as annex E10.

Workshops and trainings are re-scheduled between 1st October 2017 and 31st March, 2018. Until then we assess all pylon types and study the insulation methods and possibilities.

5.3 Evaluation of Project Implementation

Methodology applied in the project: The techniques used are state of the art solutions, most of cases involves the leading experts and the most advanced solutions of the related fields. We had some difficulties with unexpected natural processes /woodpeckers seem not to use the natural cavities – see in action Action A1. And C4. At least in the study site the regional (landscape scale) availability of natural cavities do not directly influence the number of breeding rollers. This fact has to be carefully evaluated in the Action Plans of the species under the threat of conservation dependency.

Action C8: Rollers possess the agility of the famous showman Houdini and can “escape” from the harnesses, if this later are not set tightly enough. As captive testing is not an option, one has to be careful when deploying the first devices and give time to observe and evaluate the first harnesses made.

Action C1/C2/C5/E3 : All public beneficiaries has to be very careful when planning actions targeting subcontracted works or procurements over the limit of national public tendering. Regular changes in the legal background, very complicated tendering processes and the change of market environment due to the elapsed time can seriously delay the implementation of the affected actions. We propose to hire special subcontracted staff for the procurements of such complex activities.

Some not foreseen changes were taken outside the scope of the project /eg. the legal background changes of procurements in both countries/. This may cause delays in the implementation, but the planned results are still achievable and are in harmony with the planned goals and the objectives set up in the proposal.

The effectiveness of the dissemination is judged to be satisfactory, number of participants in project events and the drawbacks of stakeholders indicate. This stage of the project do not allow deep analysis, further reports (especially the final report) will systematically check the achieved results and compare to the planned indicators.

Please find the achieved milestones and deliverables under 2.1 and 5.1 and under the technical actions descriptions where we compare the results achieved until reporting date against the objectives of the proposal.

Envisaged progress until next report

Overview of main achievements of the project as planned in the proposal until the next report cut-off date (30.11.2018).

Name of the milestone	Action code	Deadline (planned)	Deliverable/ Milestone/ Report
Study on the potential range expansion of the species in Hungary	A2	planned by 28/02/2018	Deliverable
Meeting of participants	A3	31/03/2018	Milestone
End of investment phase of the habitat restoration	C1	28/02/2018	Milestone
Plantation of trees	C2	planned by 31/12/2017	Milestone
Nestboxes installed, artificial cavities made	C4	31/03/2018	Milestone
Plantation of forest patches and erection of wooden poles	C5	planned by 31/03/2018	Milestone
Plantation of solitary trees in western Romania	C5	30/09/2017	Milestone
Plantations are in place	C6	31/03/2018	Milestone
Nestboxes and T-woods installed	C6	30/04/2018	Milestone
Powerlines selected for nestbox installation isolated in western Romania	C7	planned by 30/11/2018	Milestone
Database of dangerous powerlines in western Romania	C7	31/08/2017	Milestone
Results of PTT and geolocator data analysis	C8	planned by 28/02/2018	Milestone
Report about illegal logging	C9	planned by 31/03/2020	Milestone
Survey 1. results available in Romania	D4	Postponed to the next reporting period based on the results of action C7	Milestone
BNPD workshop for 100 persons (farmers)	E1	31/07/2017	Milestone
Report on tree logging	E2	31/10/2017	Deliverable
Opening of the Roller Visitor Centre	E3	planned by 31/12/2018	Milestone

Meeting of country representatives	E9	30/09/2018	Milestone
Conflict map of bird electrocutions	E10	final map by 31/12/2019	Deliverable
Workshops and trainings completed	E10	planned by 31/03/2018	Milestone
AWP of Beneficiaries	F1	31/12/2017	Milestone

Colour marked milestones are postponed from the current reporting period, therefore the deadline indicates the re-planned situation.

5.4 Analysis of long-term benefits

1. Environmental benefits

a, Direct / quantitative environmental benefits: The Carpathian Basin holds the core population of European roller in the eastern part of the European Union. We already The project directly improves 727589 hectares of Natura 2000 key habitat (1530 "Pannonic salt steppes and salt marshes and 6250 "Pannonic loess steppic grasslands") and indirectly the other habitats surrounding. Tree plantations are implemented all over this area and altogether 1755 nestbox were already installed in the project sites. Additional site related specific treatments and habitat reconstructions are to be taken place on altogether 459 hectares (Actions C1, C2, C3).

b, Policy: European rollers are top predators of various invertebrate taxa. The viability of roller population can be used as general indicators of agro-biodiversity of these habitats. Therefore Roller is used as flagship species in the conservation of open lowland habitats of the EU. The development ISAP has primary importance (see action E10) and we are also committed to help the cross-border conservation of the species
When CMS launched the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP) process and Roller has been chosen as flagship species. We are proud to participate to the development of the Flyway Action Plan and host the event in January 2017 together with the scheduled international conference under Action E10.

2. Long-term benefits and sustainability

a. Long-term / qualitative environmental benefits: European rollers are easily accepted by citizens and stakeholders as target species of conservation efforts. The migratory behaviour of rollers helps to build the network of conservationists working together in daily basis. This later may have an outmost importance in the future to make further concrete steps on the way designated by international policies, acts and climate mitigation processes.

b. Long-term / qualitative economic benefits: Natural value of economically less developed regions is usually higher. Rollers inhabit this unfavourable regions where industry, commerce and profit oriented sectors are less active. The restoration of biodiversity function of such

habitats and the development of the traditional agriculture through agricultural policies may help to stabilize the economic viability of these regions.

c. Long-term / qualitative social benefits:

The project itself gives work to local workers as subcontractors. We also aim to develop a more nature friendly view of farmers. We are especially proud to give work to a high number of woman, mainly as administrative/office staff.

d. Continuation of the project actions by the beneficiary or by other stakeholders: The beneficiaries are committed to continue the project actions. To help this goal we built most of the actions to achieve a self-sustainable stage at the end of the project period. All necessary commitment will be provided in the After-LIFE Conservation Plan annexed to the final report of the project.

3. Replicability, demonstration, transferability, cooperation: Generally we tried to document all aspects of our conservation efforts. We are in close relation with NGOs and state agencies working in the field of conservation. All our protocols, the regular update of events, the achieved goals (eg. technical reports) are refreshed in 3 languages on our website, rollerproject.eu. We will submit scientific publications to ensure the high quality and the replicability of our work.

4. Best Practice lessons learned by the half of the project:

We summarized the best practice of nest site creation methodology and monitoring for the species in Action A2 and A4 respectively.

We proposed guidelines for forest management in Roller key SPAs in Action A1.

5. Demonstration value of the project: In this early stage of the project, even if the demonstration actions are started, they are expected to reach their full performance only in the second half of the project period. - Local farmers are interested to learn more from nature friendly farming tools and related agricultural treatments (Actions C1, C2, C3, C6).

People are always fascinated by the nature, especially bird migration and new technologies making the demonstration of the results easier (Actions C8, E6, E8).

6. Long term direct indicators of the project success are the number of breeding pairs of European roller in the project area, and the Carpathian Basin. The first two years Roller show a stable population size in the studied area, with some signs of slight increase in Romania due to the recently installed nestboxes. In case if the targeted increase of the Roller population (min. 20%) can be achieved within the duration of the project, the most relevant long term indicator of the project success will be the sustainability of this population with low (or zero) recurring conservation cost.

6. Comments on the financial report

6.1. Summary of Costs Incurred

The planned project duration is 67 months, this reporting period covers 31 months, meaning that 46,27 % of the project timespan is over.

As shown in the expenditure summary table, the overall project expenditure from 01.09.2014 to 31.03.2017 is 1 846 215 € which is 36,59 % of total budget. The received first pre-financing payment is 1 513 828,8 € This means that the project cost is 121,96 % of the received funding.

Spending of the different cost categories are mostly in accordance with the time phase of the project. In regard of BNPDs planned “External” costs the events and the study connected to the National Action Plan will be realized in the future and this resulted in underspending of this cost category. Delays of KNPDs works in action C1 (restoration of steppe habitats) and works of APMSM in action C5 (plantation and maintenance of forest patches) also delayed the spending. Underspending of “Durables” costs is the outcome of the delayed construction works of the Roller Visitor Centre. There is a delay in the public procurement processes of the Hungarian national park directorates and APMSM which results in the underspending of “Consumables” costs. Argos fees planned under “Other” costs become relevant in the near future because PTT tagging starts only this year in Romania, so this cost category is also underspent at the reporting date compared to the planned budget.

PROJECT COSTS INCURRED				
Cost category	Budget according to the grant agreement	Officially approved budget with modifications	Costs incurred within the project duration	%**
1. Personnel	1 393 555 €	1 393 555 €	528 271 €	37,91%
2. Travel	374 950 €	358 210 €	102 751 €	28,68%
3. External assistance	1 355 395 €	1 068 409 €	352 802 €	33,02%
4. Durables: total <u>non-depreciated</u> cost	881 735 €	1 177 761 €	545 911 €	46,35%
- <i>Infrastructure sub-tot.</i>	181 120 €	460 420 €	739 €	0,16%
- <i>Equipment sub-tot.</i>	700 615 €	717 341 €	545 172 €	76,00%
- <i>Prototypes sub-tot.</i>	0 €	0 €	0 €	0 %
5. Consumables	609 630 €	611 330 €	169 357 €	27,70%
6. Other costs	114 648 €	120 648 €	31 887 €	26,43%
7. Overheads	316 184 €	316 184 €	115 235 €	36,45%
TOTAL	5 046 097 €	5 046 097 €	1 846 215 €	36,59%

We realized some reallocation in the project budget.

The following reallocations did not exceed 30 000 € or the 10%:

From **Travel** to External, Equipment and Other sum 20 500 € To Travel from Equipment 3 760 € (Total difference: 16 740 € 4,46 %)

From **Equipment** to Travel 3 760 € to Consumable 700 €

To Equipment from External 18 686 € from Travel 2 500 € (Total difference: 16 726 € 2,39 %)

To **Consumables** from Equipment 700 € from External 1 000 € (Total difference: 1 700 € 0,28 %)

To **Other** from Travel 6 000 € It means 5,23%.

The following reallocations did exceed 30 000 € or 10%:

From **External** to Infrastructure 279 300 € to Equipment 18 686 € to Consumables 1 000 €

To External from Travel 12 000 € (Total difference: 286 986 € 21,17 %)

To **Infrastructure** from External 279 300 € 154,21%.

In the Inception Report we asked the EC to allow us to recategorise 279 300 € (tree plantation works) from External to Infrastructure to fulfill the accounting rules in Hungary which was kindly approved by the EC.

6.2. Accounting system

Project partners have established their own separate system for managing finances exclusively for the project. Every beneficiary uses a definite code which ensures that these costs are easily tracked within the accounting system.

There is severe emphasis on controlling, as checking wouldn't happen only by Associated Beneficiary internally, but between the AB and the CB. All relevant documentation is checked monthly or quarterly by the CB's project administrator. It is responsibility of all beneficiaries to guard the original financial documentation and send official copies to the CB (except in case of the time sheets, where CB asks for originals). Incurred costs of project partners are approved by CB only if all relevant documents are provided along with the technical reports or other technical document (deliverables, technical annex etc.) that are requested by the project management. Financial sources are distributed in accordance with the Annual Working Plan and budget.

Work time registration systems had also been set up or adjusted to comply with LIFE's regulations. Partners use day-to-day paper-based time-sheets to keep track of worked hours – action codes on which the person is working also need to be marked on the sheets. Validation of time sheets is done by the program coordinator (or by the direct supervisor in case of the coordinator himself/herself).

All costs connected to the project undergo a 3-steps approval system. The first and second steps are the local program coordinator and the responsible person at the financial department. The third step is the control check at the CB.

A Financial Guideline was prepared specifically for this project based on the Common Provision and presented to the ABs at the beginning of the project. The CP was also sent to the ABs.

We emphasized the necessity of the project reference code LIFE13 NAT/HU/000081 on the relevant contracts, invoices etc. Each partner got a project stamp with the ID code that is also applied on the project documents in case the invoice provider should fail to fulfil this requirement for some reason – mainly on low cost invoices.

6.3. Partnership arrangements

Monthly or quarterly financial reports are revised by the CBs financial administrator, accounting tables are filled by ABs. Financial reports of the Hungarian partners are translated by CBs financial administrator. When the reports and the corroborative documents are correct AB prepares the payment request concerning the accounting period. The administrator of the CB verifies the professional and technical fulfillment with the project management team. ABs receive LIFE contribution as post-financing in accordance with the Partnership Agreements and the Financial Guidelines after the reports and the documentations were judged to be proper by the CB.

6.4. Auditor's report/declaration

Auditor's data:

Name: Kolbe Tünde

Address: 1131 Budapest, Szent István park 14.

Tax registration number: 10807891-2-41

email: tunde@kolbe.hu

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6.5 Summary of costs per action

Action no.	Short name of action	1. Personnel	2. Travel and subsistence	3. External assistance	4.a Infrastructure	4.b Equipment	4.c Prototype	5. Purchase or lease of land	6. Consumables	7. Other costs	TOTAL
A1	Sustainable management of nesting habitats	36 088	2 040	20 310		1 321					59 759
A2	Assessment of existing breeding opportunities	59 296	19 952						274		79 522
A3	National Action Plan	3 495	1 479	0							4 974
A4	Monitoring schemes and trainings	7 260	799								8 059
A5	Business plan for the Roller Visitor Center	73	23	2 917		0					3 012
C1	Restoration of steppe habitats	428	40	8 048						1 503	10 019
C2	Restoration of wooded pastures	1 249	424			11 123					12 796
C3	Management of riparian forests	28 243	6 479	163 379		177 143			13 084	26	388 354
C4	Create nesting sites	59 299	22 142	238		147 322			84 055	14 350	327 406
C5	Plantation and maintenance of forest patches	12 672	2 334			13 509			43	1 801	30 360
C6	Farmers for Rollers Program	28 375	6 860	607		38 257			6 844	174	81 118
C7	Insulate dangerous pylons	1 732	830						0		2 563
C8	Reveal threats during migration/wintering	6 605	1 888	17 103		106 266			10 813	11 483	154 157
C9	Proceed against illegal logging	29 586	9 507								39 093
D1	Monitoring of habitat reconstruction actions	210	70	23 011		21 455			0		44 745
D2	Monitoring of Roller populations	6 369	2 570			6 792			446		16 178
D3	Assess socioeconomic impact			728							728
D4	Monitoring of the electric pylon insulation	2 085	484								2 570
E1	Demonstration of habitat management techniques	41	86	1 761						384	2 273
E2	Prevent tree logging on Natura2000 sites	7 110	307			2 531			4 981		14 929
E3	Roller Visitor Center	10 690	1 454	257	739	6 533			891	245	20 809
E4	Notice boards and educational trail	9 187	61	16 658		4 511			676		31 093
E5	Produce communication materials	22 095	70						46 281		68 446
E6	Project website, Layman's report	10 537		170					0		10 707
E7	Ensure media coverage of the project	8 770	1 280	1 890					58		11 998
E8	Technical communication of the results	623	207			2 510			17	1 110	4 467
E9	Upgrading the International Species Action Plan	8 442	9 822	8 136							26 400
E10	Promote bird friendly pylon design	8 739	1 526								10 265
F1	Project management	158 490	9 373	85 609		5 897			894	812	261 074
F2	After-Life conservation plan										0
F3	Networking with other projects	482	644								1 126
F4	External audit			1 980							1 980
Overheads	Overheads										115 235
	TOTAL	528 271	102 751	352 802	739	545 172	0	0	169 357	31 887	1 846 215

Modifications sent and approved with the Inception Report (reporting date: 08/06/2015, EC letter: Ref. Ares(2015)5999451):

- At Milvus Group 2 full-time project staff had been planned originally. As field work often requires at least 2 persons, the positions have been split among 3 employees. The project coordinator could receive 37.5% of the available personal cost and 2 project assistants (an administrative and a field assistant) get 31.25%-31.25% respectively.
- BNPD has budgeted tree plantation works under external assistance (€ 279 300) and nestboxes under consumables (€ 30 000) in the original proposal. According to the National Park's accountants, these costs should be categorized under infrastructures to comply with current Hungarian accounting rules. Since both procurements will be implemented exactly as planned, these would not alter the original goals, nor the indicated budget of the project.
- One desktop computer and 2 laptops were approved in the proposal, however one more laptop and an additional monitor were necessary for the persons working exclusively for the project. The additional equipment has been procured for Balázs Csibrány who started working as new employee at 01.04.2015. (field assistant and manager of the Roller Visitor Centre).
- Milvus Group: the beneficiary preferred to purchase one field scope instead of the approved two binoculars, as the first serves better the planned work (colour ring recovery needs major resolution).
- C8: The procurement of PTTs in Hungary seemed feasible to be managed by MME and the related amount had to be moved to the budget of CB, despite to split these between partners (KNPD and BNPD). This unique equipments has to be ordered from one specialized company from the USA, complicating the public procurement process of the PTTs in case of public beneficiaries. The CB and ABs therefore agreed to keep together in MME budget the import of the devices, as this solution secures the scheduled implementation of the action
- D1: The procurement of GPS bugs in Hungary will be managed by MME and the related amount has to be moved to the budget of CB, despite to split these between partners (KNPD and BNPD). The reason is the same as described in action C8.
- E4: The planning of graphical design and the realization of 70x100 cm posters were moved from each Hungarian Beneficiaries to the CB. This cost effective solution helped us to keep deadlines and uniformity of the project on each project SPA. The minor budget change has been documented accordingly. Beneficiaries ensured the raising of notice boards and provided the necessary wooden poles as planned in the proposal.

Modifications sent and approved with the Progress Report (Reporting date: 31/03/2016, EC letter: Ref. Ares(2016)3271363):

- The project website (E1) was developed by MME's own programmer (Zsolt Kecskés) (from External cost we changed to Personnel cost). As he maintains the system side of the website and regularly refreshes the software, we keep accounting a minimal ratio (5%) of his wage on the project.
- As MME is a national organization a local coordinator was needed in the northern region of the country. Flóra Hák is employed in a part-time job, the personnel costs cover her salary.

- As it was indicated and explained in the Inception Report Assoc. Beneficiary Milvus Group split the 2 field worker positions into 3 part-time jobs. That's why they would also need 3 manual GPS instead of the planned 2 (original plan/real cost: €1200/€1321).
- Coord. Beneficiary MME has previously reported some necessity of additional equipment via the external monitor, as follows:
 - Canon EOS 70D + EF-S 18-55 IS camera, Canon EF lenses (€2510)
 - KNPD would like to procure 3 field scopes and tripods in spite of the planned 6 (Action C8) for the same total cost of €9000. These devices are more modern than the planned ones and this modification does not endanger the objectives originally set in the project.
- Coord. Beneficiary MME also identified the need of the following equipments and asked for approval in the Progress Report:
 - HP LaserJet Black printer for employees working in Szeged (Balázs Csibrány/Béla Tokody), necessary for administrative work (€104)
 - 3 drill driver needed for the plantation of trees under Action C6 (Farmers for Roller). The plantation of trees originally planned as external assistance is not realistic on several dozen of locations. It seems more realistic to effectuate the plantations with MME staff and volunteers. To secure the scheduled implementation, at least 3 different teams will work simultaneously (soil drilling machine approx. €200/each)
 - Samsung Galaxy S4 cell phone (Béla Tokody – replacement for a previous broken phone): the communication of the project manager is the key of the effectiveness of the project (€206)
 - Lenovo thinkpad for new employee (Flóra Hák) (€191)
 - 2 pc tablets for monitoring (Balázs Csibrány/Béla Tokody) necessary for fluent monitoring (€300)
 - Circular saw, jig saw, drill driver for nestbox reparation (included in the original proposal as tools under “Consumables” cost category but their unit costs indicate their reclassification as “Equipments” – Action C4) (€600)

The modifications listed below were sent to the monitor previously in the monthly reports with details and justification and were approved by the EC in e-mail.

Milvus Group wishes to continue action C4 (the maintenance of the nestboxes is continuous), C6 (communication with farmers and the widening of the stakeholder network is continuous) and C9 (tree logging is deemed to be a crucial danger in regard of the species) until the end of the project regarding that the some of the actions is already in delay. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

APMSM wishes to continue action C9 until the end of the project with the rearrangement of 2370 €(personnel and travel cost) left at action A4. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

Personnel cost:

Some personnel changes have occurred since the progress report, which are shown on the organigramme.

Milvus Group requires to employ 4 persons for their originally planned personnel budget. This is reasonable for the fieldworks running parallel under actions C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9 D2, D4 in a huge area. The new employee is Attila Nagy. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

From the **MME** Ottó Veszelinov left the project, Zoltán Görögh is employed in his position from 01/03/2017 without budget changes. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017.

For the fieldworks in 2017 MME contracted an additional person (Zsolt Ampovics) in the time period 01/02/2017 – 30/09/2017. This modification does not require the increase of personnel costs. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

Lilla Barabás left the project, Anna Hunor-Kálmánczi is employed in her position from 01/10/2016 without budget changes.

From the **BNPD** Róbert Enyedi left the project, his position is still open. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017.

KNPD wishes to move the tasks of Dr. Csaba Vadász to Sarolta Erdős, the tasks of Miklós Lóránt to István Gyurita and the tasks of Péter Kurmai to Ádám Tamás without budget changes. The originally employed persons are applied in most of their working hours in other projects (eg. Great Bustard LIFE+) therefore the change is reasonable. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017 and 25/04/2017.

Travel and subsistence:

APMSM wishes to continue action C9 until the end of the project with the rearrangement of 2370 € (personnel and travel cost) left at action A4 to the budget of action C9. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

Milvus Group would like to move the unused 12 000 € from travel cost category from the successfully closed A1, A2, A4 actions to action C7 external assistance cost category (new budget line). This additional subcontracted expert would help the fluent implementation of the electric pylon insulation works. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017.

They also would like to move the unused 6 000 € travel cost category from the successfully closed A1, A2, A4 actions to increase the approved Other costs in action C4 (13 000 € from which 12 000 € are already spent). This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017.

In order to reach to goal of the ISAP Conference under action E9 (an international meeting where all the problems can be argued of the species among the specialists from all over the breeding and wintering area and the migration route to create an effective International Action Plan) **MME** overspent the budget allocated to organising the conference with approximately 4900 € therefore the following changes are reasonable in the budget of travel cost:

MME reallocated 1300 € from action C4 Equipment to action E9 Travel and 2460 € from action C8 Equipment to action E9 Travel. Additionally 2 budget items were reallocated from **KNPD** to the action, please find it below, under External assistance.

Moreover MME will be represented by Orsolya Kiss at the EOU 2017 conference in Turku, Finland. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 11/04/2017.

External assistance:

APMSM rearranged in total 5000 € under action C6 from catering to public procurement consultant for 3000 € and non-planned but necessary field **equipment** /ladder with a roof rack for its transport /and minor quantity of **consumables** /Hilti ribbon, screw, clue, hammer/ in total for 2000 €. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

MME reallocated from **KNPD** the followings: installation of geolocators 3000 € under action C8, renting bus at the ISAP Conference 300 € under action E9, accommodation and catering at the ISAP Conference 865 € under action E9. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 11/04/2017 and 15/02/2017.

MME reallocated another 2000 € for geocator installation from **BNPD** under action C8. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

Equipment:

Milvus Group wishes to purchase a driller for the tree plantations with reallocating 2500 € travel cost to equipment under action C5. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017.

In action C4 **MME** rearranged the planned 2200 € for the drill-driver to purchase equipments for climbing (400 €) and an endoscope (500 €) for monitoring of the breeding species. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

MME reallocated 2800 € from **KNPD** to erect notice boards under action E4. This was approved by the EC after the Inception Report in letter Ares(2015)3400017.

KNPD wishes to use the budget line (17 686 EUR external assistance) approved and not used for the elimination of invasive trees under action C1 for action E3 for building watch tower (the elimination works will be executed from sources outside LIFE, as the authorities identified the renter as responsible of the elimination). For the watch tower 5 330 EUR has been approved, but this seems far less than needed to build the tower. The increase of the budget would allow to build a more suitable tower to allow a better view of the Fehér-tó from The Visitor Centre. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017.

Consumables:

In this cost category **MME** reallocated the following items from **KNPD**: action C4 - purchasing nestboxes 40 000 € action C6 - purchasing "T" perching poles 1050 € purchasing Barn Roller nestboxes 3000 € action C8 – purchasing geolocators 4500 € The reallocation of

nestbox procurements was 43 000 € in total which resulted in the modification of the Partnership Agreement, please find it under the Administrative annexes.

Purchasing of geolocators was reallocated also from **BNPD**, 3000 € under action C8. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 15/02/2017.

BNPD moved 1500 € from their budget line C6/Consumables/1000 pieces to MME. MME plans to produce a field bird guide for farmers and the extra amount (approx. 750 pcs) from this 1500 € would be spread among the farmers at BNPD. This was approved by the EC in e-mail via TMO on 25/04/2017.

In the Inception Report we asked the EC to allow us to recategorise 30 000 € (nestboxes) from Consumables to Infrastructure. Meanwhile the accounting rules of BNPD changed, and they wish to account the costs as Consumables according to the new rules and the original budget plan.

We ask the EC to kindly approve the following small modifications:

Minor modifications not indicated in the previous reports or the monthly reports:

- **Milvus Group** procured 2 laptops as planned in their original budget. Since they employ now 4 persons on the project they wish to obtain an extra laptop for the remaining cost (900 €) on the budget line.
- **Dalerd** obtained a new mobile phone for the project coordinator Péter Sütő which was not foreseen (action C3, Consumables, 200 €) in the budget plan.
- Although it was not foreseen in the budget, but we found the following services necessary to the successful project implementation:
 - advise on public procurement, Szeo Bt, action F1, 382,75 €
 - translation costs, Zölei Anikó, action E7, 484,48 €
 - translation costs, Teneritas Bt, action E7, 122,32 €
 - translation costs, Teneritas Bt, action E7, 158,64 €

7. Annexes

Our list of annexes attached in electronic format:

- 7.1 Administrative annexes:
 - Modified Partnership Agreement of KNPD
 - action F1: F1: Documents of the partner meetings
 - action F3: F3: Presentation and photo at the LIFE Projects Fair

- 7.2 Technical annexes
 - action A1:
 - A1_1: Habitat and forest management guideline in Hungary – DELIVERABLE with English summary;
 - A1_2: Habitat and forest management guideline in western Romania – DELIVERABLE
 - action C1:
 - C1_1: Permission for eliminating *E. angustifolia*;
 - C1_2: Contract for grazing
 - action C2:
 - C2_1: Pictures and map about the habitat restoration works;
 - C2_2: Contract for grazing
 - action C3:
 - C3_1: Table about the finished works;
 - C3_2: Details of the plantations
 - action C4:
 - C4_1: Pictures about the nestbox placements in the project areas of KNPD;
 - C4_2: Pictures about the nestbox placements in the project areas of BNPD;
 - C4_3: Maps and pictures about the nestbox distribution in the Romanian project areas
 - action C5:
 - C5_1: Maps about the planned locations of tree plantations at KNPD;
 - C5_2: NFA owner permission at KNPD site;
 - C5_3: Map about the planned locations of tree plantations at BNPD;
 - C5_4: Database of the plantations and pole placing locations in Romania
 - action C6:
 - C6_1: Pictures and maps about the plantations in Hungary;
 - C6_2: Database about the contracted farmers in Hungary;
 - C6_3: Farmers contracts and documentation of farmer meeting in Romania
 - action C8:
 - C8: 1st assessment of threats by partner NGOs – DELIVERABLE
 - action D1:
 - D1: Monitoring report
 - action D3:
 - D3: Socioeconomic report from Romania
 - action D4:
 - D4: Data and map about the pylon monitoring in 2016

- 7.3 Dissemination annexes
 - action E1:
 - E1_1: Documentation of demonstrative event held by Dalerd;
 - E1_2: Documentation of demonstrative event held by KNPD
 - action E2:
 - E2_1: Leaflets and brochures about Natura 2000 and illegal logging;
 - E2_2: Pictures about presentations in schools by APMSM
 - action E3:
 - E3_1: Conceptual plan of the Visitor Centre;
 - E3_2: Letter about the construction permit became legitimate
 - action E5:
 - E5: Pictures about the new PR items
 - action E7:
 - E7_1: Collection of different media appearances;
 - E7_2: Table of appearances
 - action E8:
 - E8: Scientific appearances
 - action E9:
 - E9: Documents and photos about the ISAP Conference
 - action E10:
 - E10: Updated map about the studied lines

- 7.4 Gantt chart

- 8. Financial report and annexes
 - Certifications of CB and ABs
 - Financial reports of CB and ABs
 - Financial statements of CB and ABs
 - Payment request
 - Consolidated cost statement
 - Summary of costs per action