



LIFE Project Number
LIFE11 NAT/SI/882

Inception Report
Covering the project activities from **01/09/2012** to **31/05/2013**

Reporting Date
31/05/2013

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym
LIVEDRAVA

Data Project

Project location	Slovenia
Project start date:	01/09/2012
Project end date:	31/12/2017
Total budget	4.409.483€
EC contribution:	2.188.741€
(%) of eligible costs	50%

Data Beneficiary

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Notes:

According to the Common Provisions Article 12 – Technical activity reports, the coordinating beneficiary must provide the Commission with:

- one inception report, to be delivered within nine months of the project start;

The inception report shall contain the necessary information for the Commission to evaluate the state of implementation of the project, the respect of the work plan, the financial situation of the project and whether the project is on track towards achieving its objectives, or whether there are serious delays and/or obstacles.

The inception report shall contain an assessment as to whether the project objectives and work plan are still valid. On the basis of the inception report submitted by the coordinating beneficiary, and if the project's objectives are not achievable or the work plan is not feasible, the Commission may launch an early termination procedure, in accordance with Article 19.

Identical copies of the inception report, in both paper and electronic versions, shall be simultaneously forwarded to the Commission and to the external monitoring team designated by the Commission, both of them receiving one complete copy of the technical reports, including annexes.

The report shall normally contain a maximum of 20 pages, excluding annexes. Please use font Times New Roman 12 or equivalent.

By way of exception, if the threshold defined in Article 28.3 is reached within the first nine months of the project duration, the inception report and the mid-term report might be merged into one. In such case, the template of the mid-term report should be used, however, all the additional elements requested in the inception report (as compared to the mid-term report) should also be provided to the Commission.

Table of contents

1. List of abbreviations	3
2. Executive summary	4
2.1 General progress	4
2.2 Assessment as to whether the project objectives and work plan are still viable	5
2.3 Problems encountered	5
3. Administrative part	6
3.1 Description of project management	6
3.2 Organigramme of the project team and the project management structure	8
3.3 Partnership agreements status and key content	8
4. Technical part	9
4.1 Actions	9
4.2 Availability of appropriate licences and authorisations	30
4.3 Envisaged progress until next report	30
5. Financial part	31
5.1 Putting in place of the accounting system	31
5.2 Continued availability of co-financing	32
5.3 Costs incurred	32
6. Annexes	35
6.1 Partnership agreements	35
6.2 Deliverables, maps, photos, technical memos, questionnaires	35
6.3 Other	35

1. List of abbreviations

DOPPS - BirdLife Slovenia

DEM - Dravske elektrarne Maribor d.o.o.

VGB - Vodnogospodarski biro Maribor d.o.o.

DRAVA - DRAVA Vodnogospodarsko podjetje Ptuj, d.d.

PTUJ - Urban Municipality of Ptuj

RS - The Republic of Slovenia

ZRSVN - The Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation

TSO - Sugar factory Ormož

MRA - Maribor Development Agency

SPA - Special Protected Area

2. Executive summary

2.1. General progress

The project is generally progressing well. Project teams were established in coordinating and associated beneficiaries and formalities regarding contracts, recording of work and communication were established. In the beginning of the project several tender calls were issued and sub-contractors selected upon references and best prices. Necessary equipment was purchased. Staff on the project is working hard and with enthusiasm to realize the project aims and to promptly solve the problems.

According to the time plan several actions were carried out and are already finished, others started well. Blue-prints (A.1) for the restoration works in the planned Ormož Basins Nature reserve are finished. Within action A.3 tender call was successfully carried out, best offerer selected, which already finished blue-prints for visitor facility at Lake Ptuj. The land in planned Ormož Basins Nature reserve was successfully marked out (A.7), and a flooded forest of extreme nature-conservation importance was successfully purchased (B.2). Activities started to legally designate Ormož Basins as Nature Reserve (C.5), and for the removal of illegally placed hunters' platforms at Lake Ormož the best Croatian sub-contractor was selected who effectively started to work (C.6). We carried out conservation management at the breeding islands at Lake Ptuj, and breeding river banks for Sand Martin and Kingfisher were created (C.10). In both actions more than 20 volunteers helped. Both actions also showed immediate conservation success. Within D.2 monitoring together 78 pairs of Common Terns and 661 pairs of Black-headed Gulls were established at the breeding sites at Lake Ptuj and in total 385 pairs of Sand Martins and 1 pair of Kingfisher in the created breeding sites. All planned components of monitoring of bird populations started. Besides regular 10 day counts of waterbirds on all planned locations, monitoring in the riverbed and estimation of breeding numbers of project species, mapping at planned Ormož Basins Nature Reserve started, too. Monitoring of beetles, (D.3) successfully started as well, also already revealing important data – for example species *C. cinnaberinus* was directly confirmed in the purchased forest area. For the study of socio-economic impacts sub-contractor was selected and already carried out parameters estimation for the “before the project” state. Web site was created (E.2), so far in Slovene language only but will be available in English version in short period. Temporary office in planned Ormož Basins Nature Reserve was established, the place was completely renewed, solar power plant was installed and object is completely functional (E.4). All education programme was so far carried out according to the programme – public excursions, lectures and special programme for schools (E.8, E.9). Our media work was quite intensive. So far we produced 36 articles in newspapers and 11 on radio directly and positively describing this LIFE+ project. We estimate, too, that our project management (F.1) was successful, especially having in mind some difficulties at the beginning of this large project (see Problems encountered). So far we visited single site in Austria where similar LIFE project was carried out and had fruitful discussions with their staff that will help us in implementation of our project. Out of total 39 actions in the project, following the plan 15 has not started yet, 18 started successfully (out of them in 4 minor delay is present), 6 did not start or have not been realized mainly due floods of partnership changes.

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

The project objectives and work plan are still viable. We managed to solve partnership problems that occurred in the beginning and we argue that the changes did not affect project's viability. Quite a lot of time was invested in communication and solving the questions between partners. But this communication in another way strengthened the partnership and even enhanced loyalty towards the project. Floods interfered the work plan and the result is that some activities will be realized later than planned. However, still within the general frame of the project. Recent flood exposed many questions among public regarding past regulation projects, flood safety and impact of restoration upon quality of life along the river. It is extremely important that in this situation we continue working for the river restoration and awareness rising as blame was put to nature conservation in general in the public as if it was guilty for the floods.

2.3. Problems encountered

During this early 9-month period of the project we faced two larger and several smaller problems. We did everything in our strengths to solve them and continue realizing project aims.

First larger problem is partnership subject. This project is the largest one we ever applied for, and the first one for which we managed to obtain significant co-financing from the business sector, specifically from DEM. In Slovenia business sector can fund organisation or a project through donations only, or by invoicing. In our case donation was unacceptable for DEM because of the extra tax they would had to pay, so they rejected this option. In original application their role was associated beneficiary. When preparing their partnership's contract and discussing finances in details it became clear that they as beneficiary cannot fund the project in a way that other partners would make out accounts to them. As they remained convinced to support the project, the only logical and possible solution was to change their role from beneficiary to co-financer what is subject of the project modification request. Consequently we had to omit their action – C.7 – from the project. However this will influence the project only financially – reducing its total amount and increasing our own contributions what we are ready to take over. Namely DEM obliged itself to carry out all activities described in C.7 anyway. Not as part of the project but as its added value. So the aims of C.7 action will be reached in the predicted timeframe.

Furthermore ZRSVN decided to step out from the project as associated beneficiary. ZRSVN is a state nature-conservation authority who by legislation prepares opinions on plans and projects that have potential impact on nature. They must act as a strictly independent expert organisation and should keep that public image. Therefore ZRSVN decided they should not appear as the beneficiary in any project where some of their actions would be directly funded by DEM as DEM is at the same time the investor for e.g. hydropower plants on Mura River, for which ZRSVN is preparing the expert position paper. Somebody could easily misuse their role in the LIFE project and interpret it in the public that they are biased towards investors from which they receive funds. ZRSVN still strongly support LIVEDRAVA project with all its actions but they unfortunately cannot act as the beneficiary in it if DEM is the co-financer. Actions of ZRSVN will be taken over by other beneficiaries or will be sub-contracted.

Second larger problem were floods on the Drava River. In November 2012 Slovenia experienced most dramatic floods at the Drava River in the last 130 years also throughout

the entire project area. Estimated discharges were larger than 2800 m³/sec when normal ones are app. 50 m³/sec. Estimated damage caused by the flood was more than 150 million EUR and Slovenia asked EU for financial aid available in cases of natural catastrophes. Flood destroyed one hydropower plant on the Drava River (Formin) as the high water broke the dike of the derivation canal and high water completely flooded the engine room of the power plant. Regular smaller floods are a common natural phenomenon on Drava and we have been aware of their possible impact on the project actions – we explained this risk in expected constraints B4 part of the form – however such an extent of flood was far beyond any predictions. Floods had the following impact on the realization of project actions: delay of the A.1 action (new laser scan (LIDAR) data are needed after the flood), and changed timeframe for C.9 and C.11 action. Despite the changes that were caused in the riverbed by the flood we argue that all project actions are still feasible and necessary within this project.

Between smaller problems we expose:

- Because of the partnership issue actions A.6 and E.1 are delayed but the delay will be soon abolished.
- Action B.2 is delayed. Unexpectedly it turned out that the parcel we would like to buy is protected under »protected farm« status. We are searching for the solution to buy it or in a »worst« scenario to lease it for a long-term.
- Action C.3 is delayed due hard winter conditions 2012/2013 that prevented access and logging to start softwood management. The action will be carried out in autumn this year.
- Floods indirectly caused delay in action E.7. February was definitely too soon to launch such publication to 55.000 people along Drava River because of the general negative public attitude towards the river and its nature. We plan to realize it in the summer 2013.

3. Administrative part

3.1. Description of project management

The project management has been established in the first months of the project. Since then several activities by the coordinating beneficiary and associated beneficiaries have been done to organize and run the project:

Activities of the coordinating beneficiary

- Participation at the kick-off meeting.
- Detailed work plan was prepared, with list of activities and tasks for every action and the responsible personnel for that action. The plan is being revised regularly with the project team.
- Meetings with the associated beneficiaries (10) have been organized and regular correspondence established.
- Meetings with subcontractors have been organized.
- Monthly reporting of project personnel was established (standard forms) as well as preparation of the project timesheets.

Activities of the associated beneficiaries

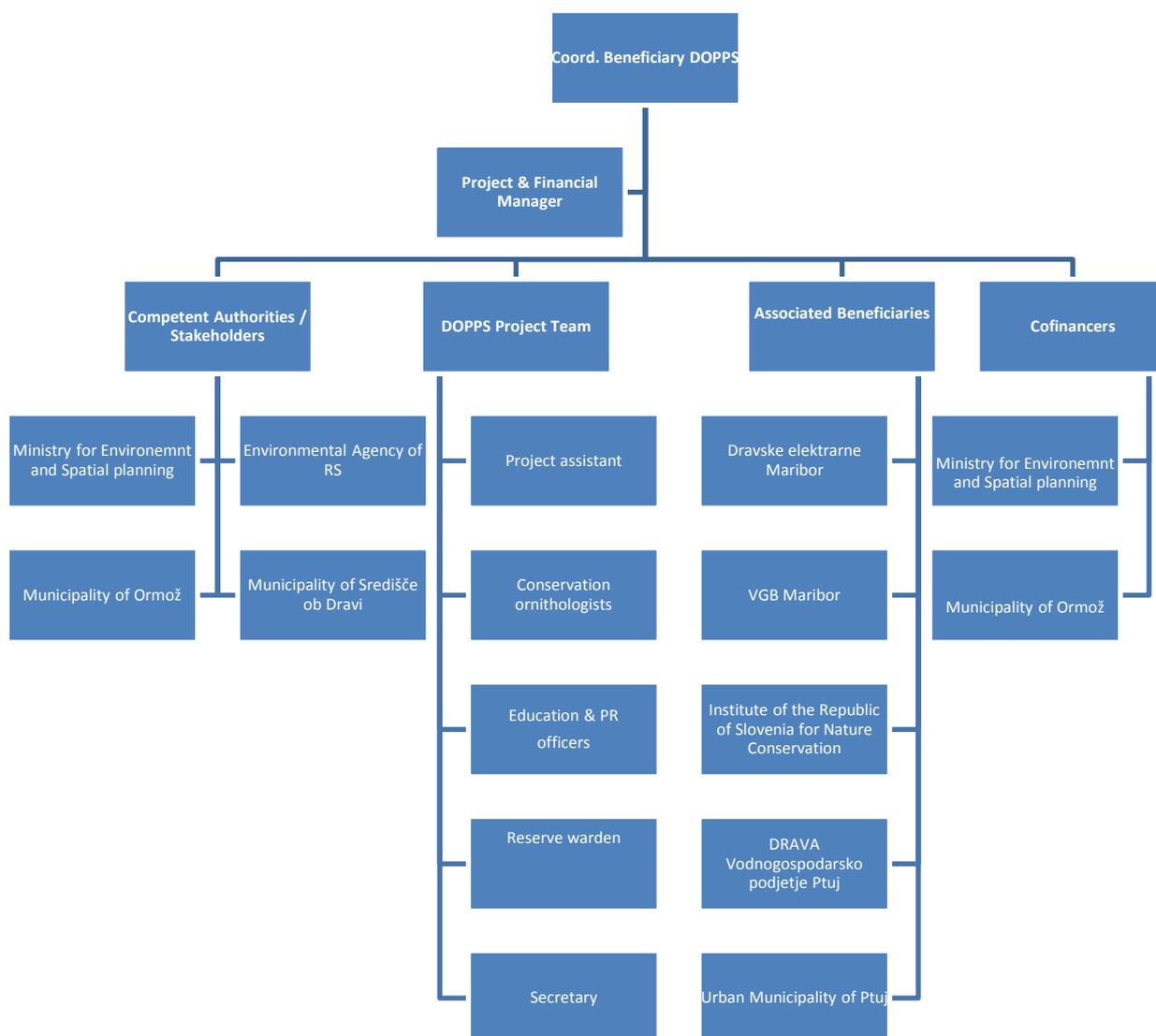
- VGB started with the implementation of the activities regarding Technical blue-prints for restoration works (ecological engineering measures) and action A.6 “Guidelines for sustainable water management of the Drava for the national Danube River basin management plan for the period from 2016-21”.

- PTUJ started with the implementation of the activities at the introductory meeting with co-ordinating beneficiary staff on January 22, 2013, and then actively co-operated with DOPPS and sub-contractor during the preparation of the blue-prints for the observation tower (A.3). They authorised the sub-contractor to obtain consents/ permits for the tower.
- DRAVA started with implementation of the action C.11 in September 2012, trying to obtain necessary consents. After the floods, further activities were not possible.
- ZRSVN started with the implementation of actions A.6 and E.1, but has stopped with all the activities after taking a decision to resign from the project by the end of 2012 (see modification request for details).
- DEM hasn't started with the implementation of the activities as originally planned as in the beginning of 2013 it became clear that their role will have to be changed (see modification request for details).

Activities of the all beneficiaries

- Project teams were established.
- The project has been implemented in the offices, listed in the project application; also the DOPPS' temporary project office in Ormož Basins was established (action E.4).
- The beneficiaries worked together to solve the partnership problems and made a common proposal of the solution of the situation by the change of the project role of two associated beneficiaries (see modification request for details).

3.2. Organigramme of the project team and the project management structure



3.3. Partnership agreements status and key content

- **Vodnogospodarski biro Maribor d.o.o. - VGB:** signed on 27.05.2013;
The agreement is drawn up in accordance with the template available in the LIFE+ project management tools on the LIFE web page and it contains all obligatory articles derived from the Common provisions. Key special provisions of the contract include: the actions to be implemented by the associated beneficiary, the deadlines for delivery of the reports to the Commission, the reporting periods of associated beneficiary to the coordinating beneficiary, the value of expected expenditure of the associated beneficiary, the proportion of financial contribution from the European Commission.
- **DRAVA Vodnogospodarsko podjetje Ptuj, d.d. - DRAVA:** signed on 30.05.2013;
The agreement is drawn up in accordance with the template available in the LIFE+ project management tools on the LIFE web page and it contains all obligatory articles derived from the Common provisions. Key special provisions of the contract

include: the actions to be implemented by the associated beneficiary, the deadlines for delivery of the reports to the Commission, the reporting periods of associated beneficiary to the coordinating beneficiary, the value of expected expenditure of the associated beneficiary, the proportion of financial contribution from the European Commission.

- **The Urban Municipality of Ptuj:** the agreement has not been signed yet. The agreement is drawn up in accordance with the template available in the LIFE+ project management tools on the LIFE web page and it contains all obligatory articles derived from the Common provisions. Key special provisions of the contract include: the actions to be implemented by the associated beneficiary, the deadlines for delivery of the reports to the Commission, the reporting periods of associated beneficiary to the coordinating beneficiary, the value of expected expenditure of the associated beneficiary, and the proportion of financial contribution from the European Commission.

Due to work overload of the particular services at Urban Municipality of Ptuj reconciliation of viewpoints took much more time than expected. The contract was therefore finally agreed between DOPPS and Urban Municipality of Ptuj in May 2013. Following the legal procedure of municipalities' work the Mayor can sign the contract only after the City Council approve it. Although this step is of more or less a formality it should not be avoided. City Council will confirm signing of the contract in their next meeting which will be held in June 2013.

4. Technical part

The project's prime objectives are to (1) preserve and enlarge populations of the Natura 2000 qualifying species (birds typical for lowland rivers, fishes and beetles) and habitat types with unfavourable conservation status along the Lower Drava River through restoration, management and improvement of habitats and establishment of protected areas, (2) achieve positive impacts on Natura 2000 species and habitats types through long-term sustainable water management of the Lower Drava River regulated by national Danube River basin management plan, along with assuring public safety against floods, (3) improve cooperation between the most important stake-holders along the Lower Drava River through implementation of common conservation activities, (4) educate public about natural values of Natura 2000 sites along the Drava River and project activities aiming to increase knowledge and general awareness on the importance of nature conservation.

4.1. Actions

Action A.1

Technical blue-prints for restoration works (ecological engineering measures)

What has been done

- Joint field excursions of beneficiaries DOPPS and VGB were carried out to the locations of restoration works - on 9.10.2013 to the river branches (fig *a1_01.jpg*, *a1.02.jpg*) and on 23.10.2012 (fig *a1_03.jpg* to *a1_07.jpg* & *minutes_23 okt 2012.doc*) to the Ormož Basins. Experts of the ex owner (Sugar factory Ormož) knowing the details of the basins cooperated to answer details regarding functioning of the old water supply system in the Basins.

- Geodesist's survey (8 files starting with *geodesy*.**) was carried in the Ormož Basins as the basis for the blueprints preparation for restoration purposes.
- Internal workshop of DOPPS's staff was carried out (12 Feb 2013) to define all the restoration parameters and conditions that should be considered during preparation of blueprints. The final document for VGB was prepared (*basins_conditions_30_03_2013.doc* & *basins_conditions_table.xls*).
- Blueprints for restoration works in the Ormož Basins were finished (*a1_project_basins*).

Problems and solutions

- Blue-prints preparation for the river branches restoration should start between Sep 2012-Feb 2013, too. Due to floods and changes in the riverbed it was impossible to prepare blue-prints using existing LIDAR laser scans (see also explanation in modification request letter). The blue-prints preparation for the river branches restoration will continue when new LIDAR will be available (presumably in autumn 2013) and will be finished between Dec 2013-May 2014.
- Blue-prints for the Ptuj island should be prepared between Apr 2013-May 2013. DEM who was in charge to carry out the realization of the island (C.7 action) changed from partner to co-financer and discussions were running with DEM how to realize the island anyway. DEM finally accepted they will realize the island at their own costs as the added project value till the end of 2013. Blue-prints for the Ptuj Island were therefore excluded from A.1 action.

Progress assessment and plan

- The implementation of the action is in accordance with the time plan considering blue-prints for the Ormož basins. Blue-prints will be available before the planned works.
- For the river branches restoration the action is delayed due objective factor – extreme floods caused changes in the riverbed and available data (LIDAR) were not any more useful for the engineering works. This part will continue in autumn 2013 when new LIDAR will be available for the Drava riverbed.

Objectives assessment

- Technical blue-prints for the restoration of Ormož Basins are finished - objective reached.
- Technical blue-prints for the restoration of river branches and their connection with the riverbed together with removal of existing embankments - objective not reached yet.

Action A.2

Hydraulic analysis – flood and sediment transport modelling

What has been done

- We made an inquiry for the purchase of the MIKE software and the possible dates of the training on the software use.
- VGB ordered the batimetry – geodetic survey of the riverbed – which is expected to be prepared by the end of September 2013.

Problems and solutions

- Due to the floods at the Drava in November 2012, the new LIDAR scanning is necessary for the entire riverbed which can be done by autumn 2013 as explained under Technical modifications because of the floods.
- This will require more intensive work by the VGB staff from autumn 2013, by when all the necessary data will be gathered and equipment purchased and is not

threatening the timely completion of this action nor achievement of the project results.

Progress assessment and plan

- Due to the floods at the Drava River in November 2012 are activities in a small delay, but the goals are not compromised.
- The regular work will continue according to the timeplan, presented in the project modification request.

Objectives assessment

- For all the reasons above, the goal will be achieved with a small delay, but the goals are not endangered.

Action A.3

Technical blue-prints for the Ormož Basins Nature Reserve visitor facilities

What has been done

- The action started with the preparation of the competition for the best architecture solution of the foreseen facilities (at the same time a call for tenders for the sub-contractor for the implementation of technical blue-prints according to the Slovene public tendering legislation). In October 2012, the conservation and project guidelines with the requested functionality and conservation limitations and the conditions for participation were prepared by DOPPS project staff and invitations sent out on the 8th of November, 2012.
- By 7th of December, 2012, the deadline for the submission of elaborates, DOPPS obtained 3 complete elaborates with offers. They were checked and evaluated by the committee for the evaluation of elaborates, using technical and financial criteria. The committee signed its final report on the 3rd of January, 2013, and selected the best architecture solution for the visitor facilities, prepared by architecture bureau Ravnikar Potokar d.o.o., which obtained 91 points (the further two followed with 77 and 61 points) (*A3_Contract_Jan.2013*).
- DOPPS negotiated with the selected sub-contractor for the preparation of the technical blue-prints and obtained the discount of 5,5% to the offered amount. The results of the competition were declared on the 11th of January. After receiving no complaints by unselected tenderers, the contract with the selected subcontractor was prepared and signed on the 13th of February, 2013.
- DOPPS sent the applications for the site plan information on the 1st of February and obtained the one for the area of Ormož Basins on the 12th of February and for the area of observation tower at Lake Ptuj on 19th February 2013.
- DOPPS carried out regular co-ordination meetings with the sub-contractor after signing of the contract, aiming to check the progress of the development of the solutions and to direct the sub-contractors work. Some meetings included also PTUJ staff, responsible for the construction of the observation tower under action E.5 as the documentation is also prepared under action A.3.
- Geologic research of the ground as well as geodetic scan at the micro locations of the buildings were ordered on the 17th of April, 2013 and obtained by mid-May 2013 (*A3_Geologic research, A.3_Geodetic scan*).
- The sub-contractor of the blue-prints prepared the documentation at the project idea level for all the foreseen facilities (*A3_Project idea_Tower Ptuj, A3_Project idea_Ormož Basins*) and sent out the requests for the consents for the construction of the observation tower at Lake Ptuj to all consent authorities – and already received some consents. This level of documentation is sufficient for all the facilities foreseen to be constructed within this project with the exception of

the stable, which will probably require the technical blue-prints for obtaining of the construction permit. As the legislation on construction permits is just changing in Slovenia, we need to wait until the final change is known.

Problems and solutions

- There have been no problems regarding this action in the first nine months of the project implementation.
- The delay which might happen in the near future is on obtaining of the water consent for the construction of the observation tower at Lake Ptuj, affecting the implementation of action E.5 so we put the reserve timeplan scenario to our project modification request with the deadline to finish this action by the end of September 2014.
- New fact which might affect the obtaining of the permit for the stable in the next stages is the Municipal Spatial Plan, adopted by the Municipality of Ormož in April 2013. Upon this plan, DOPPS will have to prepare/obtain the Detailed Spatial Plan for the area of Ormož Basins, describing all the spatial elements of the area. The expected time for preparation and adoption of such document is normally a year, but in this moment this doesn't affect the construction of the stable, foreseen in the period from September-November 2014.

Progress assessment and plan

- The implementation of the competition and first phase of the preparation of the blue-prints took some more time as originally foreseen but no negative consequences for further implementation of the project or expected results are expected.
- The regular work and preparation the documentation will continue according to the timeplan, presented in the project modification request.

Objectives assessment

- To carry out geologic research of the ground for further use during the preparation of the blue-prints: objective reached.
- To obtain digital geodetic map necessary for the preparation of the blue-prints: objective reached.
- To obtain the site plan information for both areas: objective reached.
- The technical blue-prints will be prepared: objective reached at the level of basic design and project idea, while the project for the construction permit and for the construction will be prepared according to the timetable in the project modification request.
- The project of inner design will be prepared: not due yet, this project will be ordered after the blue-prints are finished.
- The projects for the observation tower at Lake Ptuj up-dated: at the project start we decided to prepare a new design for the observation tower at Lake Ptuj and the prepared project idea is a sufficient level for the permits and construction; objective reached.
- All the consents obtained: not due yet.

Action A.4

Detailed grazing plan for the Ormož Basins Nature Reserve

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action A.5

Management plan for Ormož Basins Nature Reserve

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action A.6

Guidelines for sustainable water management of the Drava for the national Danube River basin management plan for the period from 2016-21

What has been done

- The action started with the introductory meeting of the staff of both beneficiaries, involved in the implementation of the action (VGB and ZRSVN) on 27th of November, 2012. At the meeting they were aiming to revise all the important issues concerning the implementation of the action and agree about the tasks to be implemented by each of them at this stage.
- Upon this, VGB prepared the contents related to water and water management and engineering issues (such as data about superficial and underground water, energy production, infrastructure, pollution, dumping grounds, gravel pits, intensive agriculture impacts, flood control, permits for water use, water grounds etc.), including the legislation frame and information about the monitoring. VGB also sent the information about the legislation and the list of stakeholders at the Drava to ZRSVN.

Problems and solutions

- The problem which temporarily stopped the implementation of the activities is the resignation of ZRSVN from this project in December 2012. VGB carried out its part of the agreed activities, while the ZRSVN part remained undone.
- After that, VGB and DOPPS were looking for solutions for the implementation of this action. They are presented in the project modification request and are based on increase of the work by VGB and hiring of a suitable sub-contractor. Upon the confirmation of this change by the Commission, the work will be resumed and no negative impacts are expected upon this temporary suspension.

Progress assessment and plan

- As the first year of the implementation of the action A.6 was mainly intended to gather input data and all the relevant information and organise the work of the project team on the preparation of the guidelines, the action will be very soon up-to-date after the confirmation of the proposed modification.
- After the confirmation, the sub-contractor will be selected and the input data gathering finished by VGB. From Autumn 2013 on, the activities will continue according to the plan.
- VGB will coordinate all the further activities, select a suitable sub-contractor to implement the action from nature conservation aspect, organize the foreseen workshops and support the work of the sub-contractor.

Objectives assessment

- This is one of the actions which will gather and summarize the results of other project actions and upon the work with relevant stakeholders it is planned to reach its objectives with the adoption of the Danube River basin management plan for the period from 2016-21. Objectives will be reached in indicated period, but all the stages of the preparation of the plan are important input towards the achievement of the final objective.

Action A.7

Geodetic survey and marking out the land (demarcation)

What has been done

- Geodetic survey was made by Surveying company ARM&GEO d.o.o. in April 2013.
- Parcel boundaries in the NROL area is covered by surveying company ARM&GEO d.o.o., which was chosen as the cheapest provider. On 20. 12. and 21. 12 2012 surveying company requested landowners, which lands adjoin lands owned by the DOPPS, to attend on the process of (border) demarcation. All landowners have agreed to border, proposed by the competent land surveyor at the border reading. Surveying company subsequently made elaborate arrangements for the borders of the parcels owned by the DOPPS in the cadastral municipality Frankovci and Pušenci. Study of border arrangement has been forwarded to the Surveying and Mapping Authority on April 17, 2013. After the official confirmation of study (expert's detailed report) the Surveying and Mapping Authority will issue a written order of recording of the regulated border. After the final decision the Surveying and Mapping Authority will subscribe the border in the cadastral register as a regulated border.

Problems and solutions

- In realization of geodetic survey there was no difficulties.
- Surveying company forwarded the study of border arrangements to the Surveying and Mapping Authority rather late (17.4.2013). The delay has occurred because it takes under Slovenian law, in cases where the owners of the land died, to determine the legal representatives, which are included in the boundaries arrangement process. Only with the approval of the final legal representative (in our case, they needed to confirm 4 new legal representatives) may continue the process of obtaining a written order on the Surveying and Mapping Authority. Because of long duration of administrative procedures, the final decision on the borders recording has not yet been issued.

Progress assessments and plan

- The selected architect had to determine the exact location of objects in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve (in progress), before we went into the execution of geodetic scan. We had to take into consideration the existing legislation on construction projects. Once this has been done, we ordered geodetic map. This part of the action was completed at the end of April 2013.
- Due to overgrown terrain we did not start the regulation of borders in October and November, as planned. We started the procedure after the first frost on December 20 and 21, 2012. At that time the area was passable enough for working in the field.
- Surveying company ARM&GEO d.o.o. setted up boundary stones with the consent of the owners of adjoining lands/plots. After this part of the procedure, we arranged borders on the field. Till this date we still do not have a written order on the recording of the border, as we put in the study of border arrangement only on April 17, 2013. The whole process is delayed because of long duration of confirmation 4 legal representatives of land (they replaced the deceased owners of the parcels, adjacent to the parcels owned by DOPPS).

Objectives assessment

- The geodetic survey is made. The goal is achieved.
- We settled and marked borders with neighboring land. The goal is achieved.

- Issue of written order of Surveying and Mapping Authority. The goal has not been achieved. Given that we submitted a study to the Surveying and Mapping Authority in April 2013, we expect their final decision not later than in June 2013.

Action B.1

Purchase of flooded forest fragment (priority habitat type 91E0* - Alluvial forests)

What has been done

- Sugar factory Ormož (Tovarna sladkorja Ormož d.d., TSO) in liquidation made on October 9, 2012 and October 29, 2012, under the applicable law of real estate, the announcement on the Administrative Unit of Ormož of intent sale of land (flooded forest fragment). During the period of 60 days, on November 15, 2012 and on December 4, 2012, the DOPPS officially accepted an offer to purchase the land.
- On December 21, 2012 both DOPPS and TSO d.d. in liquidation signed a deed of sale.
- On January 2, 2013 sent DOPPS to the Administrative Unit Ormož an application for approval of the legal transaction. Administrative Unit Ormož approved on January 25, 2013 the application for the legal transaction, and on February 27, 2013 DOPPS and TSO d.d. in liquidation, concluded and signed before a notary a contract for the purchase of the forest (*B1_Contract_Purchase of the flooded forest*).

Problems and solutions

- When purchasing flooded forest fragment there were no difficulties.

Progress assessments and plan

- With the purchase of flooded forest fragment we began on October 9, 2012. The purchase was completed with signing the purchase contract of the forest on February 27, 2013 and entry in the land register/cadastral register. Due to lengthy administrative procedures (4 months) the purchase was completed in February 2013.

Objectives assessment

- The purchase of flooded forest fragment. The goal is achieved.

Action B.2

Purchase of a single parcel to reach the integrity of the restored area

What has been done

- Contact with the parcel owner Mr. Torič was established and negotiations started.
- Lawyer was informed about the problems and started working on solutions.

Problems and solutions

- The owner of the parcel realized that his farm is under “protected farm” category and by the law he must not reduce the land surface by selling it. As he is otherwise willing to co-operate with us and “sell” the parcel there are 2 possible solutions he principally agrees with: (a) that we purchase parcel of app. same size somewhere else and exchange it with him for the one we have in the project. In this way he will keep the surface of the farmland unreduced and by law he can exchange parcels. (b) That we lease his parcel for the long term for the amount we otherwise planned for the purchase. The lease period will be 20-30 years.

- We already invested quite a lot of time searching for suitable parcel to purchase and exchange it (var. a), but so far we did not find any suitable. Therefore variant (b) seems more realistic.

Progress assessment and plan

- A delay is present due to unexpected circumstances (before our procedure even the parcel owner was unfamiliar with the “protected farm” fact), action is not realized yet.
- We still prefer to purchase the parcel hoping to find appropriate one for exchange (var. a). Therefore we plan to search it till the end of 2013. If unsuccessfully we plan to carry our long term lease (var. b) in 2014 (after approval of the LIFE commission).

Objectives assessment

- So far objectives are not reached but at the same time this is not causing any damage to the project so far as other actions in the reserve (habitat restoration C.1 & C.2, grazing C.4) has not started yet.

Action C.1

Construction of water supply and water regulation system in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action C.2

Restoration of the habitats for waterbirds in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action C.3

Habitat management in the softwood forest stands in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve

What has been done

- Contacts with local farmers were established to help us in physical realisation of the action (logging) with their machinery (tractors, steel wire ropes, winch).

Problems and solutions

- We proposed start of the softwood forest experiment between Jan-Mar 2013. The action could not be carried out because of very hard winter conditions between Jan-Mar 2013 what is very unusual for this part of Slovenia. Constant blanket of snow was present almost throughout all 3 months. On 27 Mar there was still 20 cm of snow in the area and stand of non-native hybrid poplars planned for logging was inaccessible by the machinery. After March we intentionally decided not to log because the breeding period of birds started.

Progress assessment and plan

- A delay is present for part of the action due weather circumstances, and this part is not realized yet. We will carry out this part of the action between Sep-Nov 2013.
- For another species – *G. bilineatus* the action has not started yet.

Objectives assessment

- So far objectives for part of the action are not reached but this will not influence monitoring results – please see D.3 action.

Action C.4

Establishment of a grazing system for long-term and sustainable wetland management in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action C.5

Declaration of Ormož Basins Nature Reserve and Nature park at the Drava River between Ormož and Središče ob Dravi

What has been done

- In January 2013, DOPPS has sent to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment a note, asking for a start of the procedure of the declaration of the Ormož Basins Nature Reserve. Already in 2010, DOPPS sent an initiative to ZRSVN who is a responsible authority for the preparation of the professional groundwork for the declaration of all the protected areas in Slovenia and upon this, ZRSVN asked the ministry to approve the suitability of the declaration of this area to start with the preparation of the groundwork. Upon this note, the ministry resumed the activities and confirmed the preparation of the groundwork to ZRSVN. This is part of the ZRSVN regular work program, not planned to be financed under this project.
- We reviewed what are the procedures for the declaration of the Nature park at the Drava river between Ormož and Središče ob Dravi. We also presented the idea of The Natural park to the mayor of municipality Središče ob Dravi.

Problems and solutions

- There have been no problems regarding this action.

Progress assessment and plan

- Ormož Basins Nature Reserve declaration: The action is progressing according to the plan. ZRSVN has included the preparation of the groundwork to its annual work plan for 2013 and DOPPS will prepare the draft of the crucial contents for the area protection legal act, mainly conservation regime, prohibitions in the area, necessary management. The preparation and adoption of the legal act is planned for 2014 and to be completed before June 2015.
- Nature Park at the Drava River between Ormož and Središče ob Dravi: In few months DOPPS will prepare a report and send it to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment. After that, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment will start the procedure of the declaration of the Nature Park at the Drava River between Ormož and Središče ob Dravi.

Objectives assessment

- The initial steps to reach the objectives of declaration of two protected areas within the LIVEDRAVA project area were done, the objectives are due to be reached after the declaration of both sites.

Action C.6

Removal of illegally built fishing and hunting platforms at Lake Ormož

What has been done

- We sent tender call (*#0_tender_call.doc*) and contract draft (*#0_Action C6_Contract_Draft_Feb_2013.doc*) for this action to 2 Croatian organisations on 13 Feb 2013. We received 2 complete offers (5 doc files starting with #1 and #2) in time. Organisation having best references and offering lowest price – Biom – was selected as the sub-contractor. Contract was signed (*Contract_biom.pdf*).

- The Association BIOM has since its contract conclusion in April 2013 conducted following activities on the Drava River and Ormož Lake: Contact with the Directorate for Nature was established. BIOM has contacted Mr. Hrvoje Stunković, inspector for nature protection responsible for the Drava area. BIOM and Mr Stunković have agreed to collaborate on the removal of the illegal hunting platforms. Educational activities for the school year of 2013/14, are in planning phase. BIOM has made a stakeholder database of the project region. Leaflets (2,500) and Posters (2,000) were drafted and are in press (c6_flyer_print.pdf, c6_poster_print.pdf). Photographs were provided by the local NGO from the Drava River, the Association Baobab that agreed to collaborate with BIOM on the protection on natural resources of the Drava River.
- Our staff and members produced ad hoc reports from the field regarding problems we are solving in this action (see file e.g. *Hunting on Ormoz Lake_jan2013.doc*)

Problems and solutions

- It took us slightly more time than expected to find possible appropriate sub-contractor in Croatia, therefore they started to work with a delay (contract signed 15 Apr 2013) regarding planned in application - Oct 2012.
- Therefore minor delay is present in printed informational and educational materials – planned to be finished by the end of April 2013. But as they started working very hard materials were prepared and are in print.

Progress assessment and plan

- The mentioned minor delay in printed materials was solved. Distribution of material will start. The timing of the action is not changing.

Objectives assessment

- To produce and distribute 2,000 posters and 2,500 leaflets (CRO). The objective is not changing – materials were produced with a minor delay and will be distributed.
- Legal removal of illegally placed platforms. The objective is not changing.

Action C.7

Creation of new artificial breeding island for Common Terns at Lake Ptuj

According to the project the action has not started yet. Due to partnership changes the action will not be carried out within the project – see modification request.

Action C.8

Conservation management of the breeding islands at Lake Ptuj

What has been done

- We purchased equipment needed to carry out the action – one motor scythe (brushcutter) and 2 motor chains. To carry out the action we used rubber boat with motor and car trailer for boat transportation purchased under D.2, too.
- According to proposal we carried out 2 cleanings of vegetation – on 20 Oct 2012 (19 people including volunteers present, fig *c8_01.jpg* to *c8_11.jpg*) and 2 Apr 2013 (2 staff + 2 volunteers, fig *c8_12.jpg*).

Problems and solutions

- No problems in implementation of this action.

Progress assessment and plan

- The action is progressing as planned.

Objectives assessment

- Existing islands will be mown and cleaned of vegetation twice per year during the project – after the end of the breeding season (Oct) and before the onset of the next one (Mar). The objective is not changing and was so far realized.
- New island will be mown for the first time in Sep 2014, in the next years will be thoroughly checked twice a year and vegetation removed. The objective is not changing and is not yet reached.

Action C.9

Restoration of the river branches

According to the project the action has not started yet. Field check of the changes after the extreme flood was carried out on 28 Nov 2013 at the Drava river section between Maribor-Ptuj (fig *c9_1.jpg* to *c9_8.jpg*). At the section Markovci pri Ptuj-Zavrč this is still impossible. Due damage of the hydropower plant all the water that otherwise flows in the power plant channel is now in old riverbed in this section. Please see changes in plan in project modification request.

Action C.10

Preparation of the river banks for breeding of Kingfisher and Sand Martin

What has been done

- Breeding sites for Kingfisher and Sand Martin were created at 8 sites along the Drava River. 4 breeding sites were created on 6 Apr 2013 – one close to Zlatoličje channel (app length 100 m, fig. *c10_site_1_1.JPG* to *c10_site_1_3.JPG*), and three between Starše and Zumrova jama (two smaller app 25 m long, and one larger app 150 m long, fig. *c10_site_2-3_1.jpg* to *c10_site_2-3_6.jpg* and *c10_site_4.jpg*). 3 breeding sites were created on 13 Apr 2013 – all close to the village Središče ob Dravi (each site app 100 m long, fig. *c10_site_5-7_1.jpg* to *c10_site_5-7_5.jpg*), and one on 19 Apr 2013 in a gravel pit Jurkovec close to Drava River in Ormož (app 100 m long, fig. *c10_site_8_1.jpg* and *c10_site_8_2.jpg*). More than 20 volunteers were involved in creation of all sites. Please see report in monitoring action D.2, point 3, for success in created breeding sites.

Problems and solutions

- It turned difficult to find 3 sites long 300, 200 and 150 m to create breeding places for the two species. Therefore we searched for more sites where we created breeding places of approximately planned total length. All sites are wide enough to hold a breeding Kingfisher or/and a colony of Sand Martins.

Progress assessment and plan

- The action has progressed as planned, the only change is that there were more breeding places created but at approximately same total length.

Objectives assessment

- The objectives are not changing and have been fully reached so far.

Action C.11

Management of gravel bars for the breeding of the Little Ringed Plover

What has been done

- Three meetings with beneficiary responsible for the action (VGP) were carried out where we agreed about details to realize the action.

Problems and solutions

- During our first meeting it turned out that the part of first bush removal was planned unrealistically too soon – between Sep-Oct 2012. It was impossible to get all the permits for the management of gravel bars so early from the beginning of the project. We plan to carry out both parts of bush removal at 5 sites in the first phase by the end of October 2013 as planned in the project.
- It turned out, too – after our discussions with staff of similar LIFE project in Austria, (see F.2 description), that manual removal of tree stumps from the gravel bars will not be possible. Therefore we proposed funds disposal for this action and add removal of stumps with tractor. During evaluation process commission financially reduced this action for 90%. Details are described in project modification request.

Progress assessment and plan

- First phase of bush removal was divided in 2 years - 2012 and 2013 and should be finished by the end of October 2013. We will finish first phase in time - all bush removal will be done in 2013.

Objectives assessment

- The objectives are in principle not changing. Selected 3 gravel bars between Maribor-Ptuj are still appropriate for the action but suitability of 2 gravel bars between Markovci-Zavrč is impossible to assess at the moment as the water in the riverbed is still high due to the damage of the Formin power plant in November 2012 flood. After the normalisation of the discharge we will assess both gravel bars again and search for alternatives in case of their unsuitability.

Action C.12

Reduction of human disturbance and destruction of bird breeding habitat at gravel bars.

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action D.1

Evaluation of the habitat and species monitoring results (ecosystem approach)

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action D.2

Impact of project actions on bird species

What has been done

- Six types of indicators/specific monitorings are proposed in the project.
- (1) Monitoring of waterbirds at Lake Ptuj, Lake Ormož and Ormož Basins Nature reserve was established. Protocols for standardized counts and maps were prepared (see three *D.2.1*.xls* forms and five *map*.jpg* maps), and regular counts are performed in 10-day intervals. So far 15 total counts were carried out (see ad hoc results for both lakes in file: *monitoring_lakes_2013.xls*) at each location following the protocols. As planned protocols include human impact monitoring.
- (2) Monitoring of breeding numbers of Common Tern and Black-Headed Gull was established. So far two counts (25 Apr and 21 May 2013) were carried out (fig *d2_01.jpg* to *d2_08.jpg*).
- (3) Monitoring of breeding riverbed birds was established. In the breeding season 2013 both counts using rubber boat were carried out - first in 24 and 25 Apr and second in 20 and 21 May 2013. During this monitoring success of action C.10 –

breeding of Kingfisher and Sand Martins (SM) was evaluated. Corresponding to C.10 in site one 90 pairs of SM are present (fig *d2_site1_09.JPG* to *d2_site1_12.JPG*), site two was destroyed by the river, in site 3 Kingfisher is breeding (fig *d2_site3_13.JPG*), in site four 260 pairs of SM breed (fig *d2_site4_14.JPG* to *d2_site4_16.JPG*), sites 5-7 are inaccessible due high water – most probably banks are flooded, in site eight 35 pairs of SM breed (fig *d2_site8_17.JPG*)

- (4) Monitoring of all qualifying species for SPA Drava at Ormož Basins Nature Reserve using mapping method was established. So far 8 mappings (4, 11, 18, 26 Apr, 3, 10, 17, 25 May) in the forest part of the Reserve were carried out and 5 mappings in open part (10, 18, 29 Apr, 10, 20 May). Please see example of map registrations from forest mapping on 4 Apr 2013 (fig *d2_18_mapping_example.JPG*).
- (5) Survival of Little Ringed Plover – we plan to start this research in 2014.
- (6) Physiognomic characteristics of vegetation – first mapping will be carried out in June according to the project.
- Rubber boat with the motor and additional small rubber boat (grey) were purchased to carry out the action (fig *d2_19_boats.JPG* and *d2_20_engine.JPG*)

Problems and solutions

- No problems in implementation of this action. Regarding point 3 - constant large discharges in the river part Markovci-Zavrč due hydro power plant Formin failure prevents this part to be monitored. But all gravel bars and sand banks are under the water in that part since flood had happened in Nov 2012.

Progress assessment and plan

- The action is progressing as planned. No delays.
- In 2013 we plan to create on-line web access database and digitalize all data.

Objectives assessment

- So far all objectives were reached. We are getting numbers, distributions and habitat use data of breeding and non-breeding populations of targeted bird species. We can already evaluate effect of actions like C.8, C.10.
- We purchased necessary equipment – 5 binoculars, 2 telescopes, PC, rubber boat with motor and car trailer for boat transportation. For the monitoring under point (3) we purchased one additional lighter small rubber boat without engine (fig *d2_19_boats.JPG* - grey boat above red). We argue this decision with the fact that boat for the river monitoring should be light as there is often necessary to carry it, and not very valuable as it damages usually on sharp stones and branches. The purchase was price effective, we did not exceed the costs for the boat, and the boat turned to be very useful.

Action D.3

Impact of project actions on beetle species

What has been done

- A tender call was carried out to search for appropriate sub-contractor that can carry out the action. Two offers came and one was selected (*D3_Offer_NIB*).
- Reconciliation of contract with selected sub-contractor is running at the moment.
- Sub-contractor started with the work. Examination of fallen trees was started to check the occupancy by *C. cinnaberinus* larvae in the area of Ormož Basins Nature Reserve. The larvae were found (fig *d3_01.jpg*, *d3_02.jpg*). In the area 5 intercept window traps were set on 19 Apr 2013 in each site defined under C.3 action – semi-optimal, sub-optimal and optimal. All together 15 traps that are

weekly checked and animals collected - so far on 26 Apr, 3 May, 10 May, 18 May 2013 (*fig d3_03.jpg*). Traps for water beetles were set at the area on 10 May 2013.

Problems and solutions

- To calculate the actions' value, offer from the largest research institution – National Institute of Biology (NIB) was obtained during the application. Since that time staff changes in researcher's team of (NIB) happened so there was completely unlikely that they or any single sub-contractor in Slovenia could realize action as a whole. Therefore we split the order to logical parts that can be executed by different groups of researchers. These parts are – (a) monitoring filed work, (b) water habitat features monitoring, (c) spatial modelling. Parts b and c has not been ordered yet but will be in right time.
- Mentioned in C.3 action the softwood experiment has not started yet, but on the 3 exact places where it will be set the traps were already placed. Explained from the experts - from the monitoring point of view this is even better as the zero state will be available now for all three places and management effect could be measured more accurately.

Progress assessment and plan

- The action is progressing as planned. No delays.

Objectives assessment

- So far all objectives were reached.

Action D.4

Impact of project actions on fish species

According to the project the action has not started yet. However the investigation of potential sub-contractors and their references were already carried out.

Action D.5

Study of the socio-economic impact of the project actions

What has been done?

- For realization of the study of socio-economic impact of the project actions we selected (on the basis of project tasks and demand) best bidder - Maribor Development Agency (MRA). We signed contract with MRA on February 2, 2013 (*D5_Contract MRA*).
- MRA received a chart with several statistical data of individual municipalities of the border project area covering various topics and gathered from various sources.
- MRA started collecting data and preparing charts and graphs to present the initial situation.
- The initial hypothesis /expected results were set.
- MRA prepared the lists in accordance to target groups for the needs of preparing the survey questionnaires.
- Several questionnaires (*1_Questionnaire, 2_Questionnaire, 3_Questionnaire*) were prepared and distributed to various target groups.
- MRA carried out 50 interviews with random inhabitants from the project area.
- MRA studied the »Assessing socio-economic benefits of natura 2000 - A toolkit for practitioners« document and adapted it for the needs of the project activities in accordance to the known data.
- A draft of indicators for a long term monitoring of effects and results of the project were prepared.

Problems and solutions

- After MRA concluded initial interviews with randomly selected people, we have realized a rather negative attitude against some project activities. Most people put the danger of flooding as more important priority in the area of River Drava than the protection of environment. This is certainly due to the consequences of heavy floods in late November 2012 and its effects for the population. Due to the negative feedback, MRA and we decided to shift the implementation of questionnaires for one to two months. Instead of May 31, 2013, the conclusion of the first part of the study will end on July 15, 2013.

Progress assessment and plan

- In June MRA will carry out the remaining interviews with the population, local authorities and representatives of NGOs.
- They will collect all missing questionnaires and begin the processing and analyses.
- They will prepare a graphic presentation of data and results of the analyses of the socio-economic situation at the beginning of the project.
- They will prepare the final suggestion of indicators for the long term monitoring of effects and results of the project.
- They will submit the final report on the socio-economic analyses of the project area.

Objectives assessment

- Analyses of the survey questionnaires, interviews and their presentation; the assessment of acceptability and the level of being informed about the project activities will be concluded in July 2013.
- Concluded analyses of socio-economic data, assessment of the situation and its presentation.
- Prepared indicators for long term monitoring of the effects and results of the project.

Action E.1

Notice boards in the project area

What has been done

- In October (04.10.2012) and in November (12.11.2012, 16.11.2012 in 29.11.2012) we met with ZRSVN (The Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation) which was the beneficiary responsible for action E.1 implementation.
- On the meetings we have defined six locations on the project area where the tables will stand.
- We also set the indicative form and content of tables. The contents of the tables are divided into two sections. We agreed that in the first part we will present general information about the project (project description, goals, a sketch of the project area), which is identical for all panels. The second section will present the area near the set table and the action that will be carried out near the table.

Problems and solutions

- In late December 2012, the ZRSVN temporary stopped with execution of activities under this action.
- In January 2013, we were informed by ZRSVN that they are leaving the project, so the action of setting the tables was temporary stopped.

- In accordance with the Project modification request, DOPPS will be responsible for the actions and will continue and conclude the activities of setting up the table by the end of June 2013.

Progress assessments and plan

- First months of the project (in October and November 2012) the execution of the action was running on schedule.
- At the end of December 2012 and in January 2013, with ZRSVN leaving the project, the execution of the action stopped.
- In the future DOPPS will take the execution of the action and by the end of June 2013 will finish with setting up the tables.

Objectives assessment

- In the project area we will set up 6 notice boards.
- For the reasons written above, the goal has not been achieved yet.

Action E.2

Web site of the project

What has been done

- We built the project web page (active since the end of December 2012): www.ptice.si/livedrava. The web page is bilingual – Slovenian and English. All content is available in both languages.
- The page is linked to web portal “e-ptice Slovenije” (e-birds of Slovenia).

Problems and solutions

- There have been no problems regarding this action. The web page has been available and operating.
- The only thing we would like to upgrade in the future is that the website would contain a table of contents and finished work by all project actions. We will incorporate review of the work by actions as soon as possible.

Progress assessment and plan

- The action has progressed as planned.
- During the project duration, the project web site will be regularly updated with project news, findings, results, as well as publications and other relevant documents.

Objectives assessment

- The objectives are not changing and have been mostly reached.

Action E.3

Layman’s report

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action E.4

Setting up the basic facilities in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve (the temporary project office)

What has been done

- The former purifying plant of the Sugar factory Ormož (Tovarna sladkorja Ormož d.d.), located in a Ormož Basins Nature Reserve (in progress) was after maintenance converted into a temporary office.
- First, we prepared abandoned building for reconstruction: we removed the old wiring (approximately 50 m), dismantled useless electrical panel (6 x 3 m) for controlling pumps and removed old and useless windows.

- To carry out the renovation work in the house (temporary office), we chose the most favourable price among three bidders.
- The renovation of temporary office started in the second half of October 2012. We carried out the installation of plasterboard on the ceiling and walls and we painted the walls. On the floor of the house, which was previously in metal plates, we laid wooden floor and paint it. Obsolete windows were replaced with new ones. We also made a toilet and a bathroom. Further, it was necessary to replace all electrical wiring and to equip facilities with new lights (*fig e4_01.jpg*).
- For heating the rooms we installed wood-burning fireplace.
- To provide electricity, we set up a solar power station (*fig e4_02.jpg*), which was chosen according to the lowest price of the bids. Solar power station supplies the office with the necessary energy. There is enough electricity for lights, computers, TV. During the winter months we will have to replace a solar power station by a generator.

Problems and solutions

- Due to considerable distance from the public infrastructure we still couldn't arrange temporary office connection to the power grid and water supply.
- Currently solar power station provides enough electricity in the temporary office.
- We will supply water from our well.

Progress assessments and plan

- We renovated the office in November 2012.
- Due to occupancy of the most favourable contractor we had one month delay.
- We are already using the office for the purposes of Ormož Basins Nature Reserve (in progress).

Objectives assessment

- The renovation of temporary office was completed in November 2012 (*fig e4_03.jpg*).
- Water supply will be arranged in June 2013.
- The goal is achieved.

Action E.5

Setting-up the basic visitor facilities at Lake Ptuj

What has been done

- For execution of the action is responsible project partner, the Municipality of Ptuj. We met with our partners at the Urban municipality of Ptuj on January 22 and in February 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to agree on a location, to obtain the necessary permissions for construction and other details of appearance, construction and maintenance of the observation tower, which will be set up with the intention of good observations of lake birds.

Problems and solutions

- The Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation (ZRSVN) was in charge for the second part of the action, the preparation and setting up education boards at four locations. In January 2013 we were informed by ZRSVN that they withdraw from the project. As a result, this part of the action has not started yet. In accordance with the "Project modification request" DOPPS will take over the execution of the action, which includes the preparation and design of education boards. Urban municipality of Ptuj will arrange setting up the boards. This part of the action will be carried out between June and September 2013. In

September 2014, the entire action will be completed. Please see changes and plan and project modification request.

Progress assessments and plan

- The construction of the observation tower is making progress on according to plan. The delay which might happen in the near future is on obtaining of the water consent for the construction of the observation tower, so we put the reserve timeplan scenario to our project modification request with the deadline to finish this action by the end of September 2014.
- Because of The Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation withdrawal, preparing and setting up education boards does not go according to plan. The final execution of this part of action is postponed until September 2013.

Objectives assessment

- For all the reasons above, the goal will be achieved with a maximum one-year delay.

Action E.6

Production and distribution of a documentary film

According to the project the action has not started yet. However, we already prepared an outline of the scenario and a plan for filming (*sinopsis LIVEDRAVA film.docx*) and had a meeting with the potential producer of the film.

Action E.7

Production and distribution of project publications

What has been done

- Text for the publication was written (*Brosura_besedilo_final.doc*) and majority of pictures were selected.
- Agreement with the designer has been made for the publication.

Problems and solutions

- Deadline of publication – February 2013. We delayed action because of two reasons. (1) When severe floods happened on Drava River in November 2012 many public servants and local mayors gave public statements that nature-conservationist are guilty for the flood. Of course the intention was to put the guilt on someone only. We argued against these demagogue statement (see e.g. article *Naravovarstveniki_niso_krivi_za_poplave.pdf*, meaning nature-conservationists are not guilty for the floods) but our feeling from the media was that the public attitude remained negative towards the river restoration for quite some time after the flood. February was definitely too soon to launch such publication to 55.000 people along Drava River. (2) In such a massive publication we wanted the information of project beneficiaries and project itself to be coherent till the end of the project. Due partnership changes that happened we found unsuitable to produce such publication with logos and information of beneficiaries knowing that they already decided for changed position.
- The publication will be prepared, printed and distributed by the mid September 2013.

Progress assessment and plan

- There is delay in project presentation brochure. The delay will be solved.

Objectives assessment

- The objectives have not been changed and are not yet reached.

Action E.8

Project educational program

What has been done

- We presented the purpose, goals, activities of the project LIVEDRAVA and work of DOPPS to Mr. Milan Fakin, the Principal of Elementary School Breg. We agreed that the ornithological youth camp, which is organized as a part of the project, will take place at elementary school Breg in Ptuj. At the meeting, we have agreed to use the school premises. We are allowed to use rooms to sleep, toilets, space for cabinet work with 6 computers and Internet use (*E8_Application_Execution of the camp*).
- We also determined the exact date of the camp. Youth Camp will last from Wednesday, June 26 till Tuesday, July 2, 2013.
- There will be six mentors and 24 young ornithologists, aged 12 to 18 years (6 groups and in each group approx. 4 participants).

Problems and solutions

- On execution of this action, there were no troubles.

Progress assessments and plan

- Execution of the action is running according to plan.

Objectives assessment

- The main goal of the camp will be to accustom and guide young ornithologists in research work and conservation of the nature.
- The camp will conclude with the presentation of results to the general public.
- The goal has not been achieved yet.

Action E.9

Public presentations and excursions

What has been done

- We organized 10 lectures entitled "The importance of the project LIVEDRAVA for people and nature." (*E9_Presentation_LIVEDRAVA*)
- Lectures were carried out at various locations: on January 23, 2013 in Ptuj, in Ormož on February 5, 2013, on February 6, 2013 in Maribor, on February 13, 2013 in Središče ob Dravi, in Obrež on February 20, 2013, in Markovci on March 21, 2013, in the Municipality Gorišnica on March 22, 2013 (to cover villages Muretinci, Mala vas, Gajevci, Placerovci) in Duplek on March 26, 2013, on March 27, 2013 in Starše and on March 28, 2013 in Skorba.
- Before each lecture, we learnt chargeable on the municipality with goals, content and course of the project LIVEDRAVA and with the contents of lectures (*E9_Notice of lecture for the municipality*). In each municipality, we have previously agreed to lease rooms and set dates for lectures.
- The public was informed about the lecture via the media of information, through local radio, newspapers, Internet sites (DOPPS, municipal website) (*E9_Announcement of lecture*).

Problems and solutions

- After the presentation of the goals, intentions and activities of the project LIVEDRAVA and presentation of content of lectures, the Municipality Zavrč showed no interest in the lectures to the general public. Despite the agreement with the director of municipal administration, to set an appointment for a presentation of the project and the contents of lectures to the mayor, the date has not been determined or the mayor did not have time for a meeting.
- Lectures were arranged in cities and villages, which are separated by a small distance.
- For objective reasons, we were not able to execute the lectures in the municipality of Zavrč as planned, but we carried out lectures in the adjacent municipalities Gorišnica and Markovci, bordering the municipality Zavrč. In this way we gave opportunity to the interested public from Municipality of Zavrč, to attend lectures in the neighbouring municipality.

Progress assessments and plan

- Planned work carried out according to plan.
- The exception is the replacement of one of the planned locations of lectures - instead of presentation in the municipality of Zavrč we had the presentation of the project to the general public in Maribor.

Objectives assessment

- The lectures were meant for informing the general public with the goals and content of the project.
- As part of lectures we presented endangered bird species in the study area, we explained the significance of the project for the conservation status of birds, fish and bugs.
- The goal is achieved.

Action F.1

Project management

What has been done

- We attended a Kick-off meeting of LIFE 2011 beneficiaries (Sofia, Bulgaria).
- We employed 2 additional persons who work on the project on a full-time basis – Dominik Bombek (Education and PR officer) and Polona Pagon (Project assistant).
- Annexes to existing work contracts were made between DOPPS and the employees working on the project.
- Detailed work plan was prepared, with list of activities and tasks for every action and the responsible personnel for that action. The plan is being revised regularly with the project team.
- The project team has been regularly meeting.
- There were regular meetings carried out to all project beneficiaries to discuss their duties and work plans in details (44 internal working meetings and 10 major meetings with partners).
- The report about the project course was given at the meetings of DOPPS' Executive Board.
- Monthly reporting of project personnel was established (standard forms) as well as preparation of the project timesheets.
- We prepared and harmonized agreements with associated beneficiaries and co-financers. Due to the changes in the beneficiaries' roles (see modification request) 2 of 5 agreements were signed with associated beneficiaries (VGB, DRAVA) and

- 2 of 2 agreements with the co-financers (Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment, Municipality of Ormož).
- The analytical accounting system (cost centre accounting) was established by the beneficiaries, who already started with the implementation of the activities (DOPPS, VGB). For example, DOPPS opened 21 new cost centres to be able to control the costs incurred by the project per actions.
 - The project has been implemented in the offices, listed in the project application, also the DOPPS' temporary project office in Ormož Basins was established (action E.4).

Problems and solutions

- During the first months of project implementation, we faced 2 problems that we managed to solve. (1) Institute of the Republic Slovenia for Nature Conservation (ZRSVN) left the project as project beneficiary. We explained reasons in the project modification request. Their duties were transferred to remaining beneficiaries and sub-contractors, ensuring the project objectives remain the same and will be achieved. (2) DEM wasn't able to co-finance the project in other way as through payment of the invoices and for this reason they changed their project role from beneficiary to co-financer. Detailed technical solutions about solving of these 2 problems are presented in the modification request.

Progress assessment and plan

- Solving mentioned 2 problems took us quite some time that was not planned. But as they were fundamental we put all our efforts to solve them and continue to realize the project. Now we finally set all the agreements and contracts what will positively influence the future co-ordination of the project.

Objectives assessment

- The objectives have not been changed and were so far reached according to the mentioned situation.

Action F.2

Networking with other projects

What has been done

- A visit to the similar LIFE project in Austria - "Live vein – Upper Drau River" and discussions with its project team were carried out on 6 Nov 2013. See implementation of the knowledge gained during the visit in project modification request – action C.11.
- SEE RIVER project was approved and we were invited to actively participate the workshops what we did (*SEE River_workshop_report_12.4.2013.pdf*). Next workshop is planned for 6 Jun 2013 and we will attend it.
- We carried out presentation of our project during the workshop for the potential LIFE+ applicants in 2013. The workshop was organized by the Ministry for Agriculture and Environment in Ljubljana on 9 May 2013.

Problems and solutions

- No problems in this action

Progress assessment and plan

- The action is progressing fine. We plan to continue excursions to the areas of similar project and meet people as planned in the project.

Objectives assessment

- The objectives have not been changed and are already partly reached.

Action F.3 Audit

According to the project the action has not started yet.

Action F.4 After-LIFE Conservation Plan

According to the project the action has not started yet.

4.2. Availability of appropriate licences and authorisations

Upon our request Agency of the RS of the Environment (ARSO) passed us permission (no. 35601-53/2013 – 4, dated 18 April 2013) for the realization of ecological study on Little Ringed Plover described under D.2 action, point 5. In the study capture-recapture, colour ringing and telemetry methods are planned for which such permission is needed.

4.3. Envisaged progress until next report

During the first nine months we have been faced with partnership problems and floods on the river but we managed to solve these difficulties. All partnership contracts are signed and needed technical changes are considered in project modification request and modified application. After the formalities are finally arranged, we will definitely have more time to concentrate and work on the content of the project. Therefore we are convinced the project work will continue even better than so far.

Next report is planned by the end of May 2014 and by that time we will realize as follows:

- All blue-prints for restoration works on Drava River will be prepared.
- Works on hydraulic analysis will start.
- Technical blue-prints for the Ormož Basins Nature Reserve visitor facilities will be prepared.
- Detailed grazing plan for Ormož Basins Nature Reserve will be prepared.
- Several SWOT workshops will be carried out for preparation of guidelines for sustainable water management of the Drava and needed analysis of spatial land-use and future infrastructure proposals will be carried out.
- Parcel in B.2 action will be either purchased or long-term leased.
- Water supply and water regulation system will be created and restoration of the habitats for waterbirds in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve will be carried out. Delay is possible in case of complications with the building permissions.
- Softwood ecological experiment will be set and restoration of old river branch in the Ormož Basins Nature Reserve will be finished.
- A closed wooden stable will be built in the area of Ormož Basins Nature Reserve, fences will be placed and grazing animals purchased and released.
- Activities will continue to declare Ormož Basins as Nature Reserve and Nature Park.
- Education materials will be printed and distributed among interested public in Croatia.
- Procedures to remove illegally built platforms will be in course.

- Conservation management of the breeding island at Lake Ptuj will continue as planned.
- Restoration of one river branch at location one – close to the Vurberk village will be carried out.
- River banks for breeding of the Kingfisher and Sand Martin will be improved each year.
- First bush removal at the five gravel bars will be carried out.
- Access to the 5 gravel bars will be prevented to reduce disturbance of breeding birds.
- Monitoring of bird and beetle species will continue as planned and monitoring of fish species will be established.
- First assessment of parameters within the socio-economic impact study will be finished and report available.
- Notice boards in the project area will be placed.
- Website will be regularly uploaded with fresh information in Slovene/English language.
- Basic visitor facilities in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve – observation plateaus and screening embankments will be created.
- Observation tower will be built and education boards will be erected at Lake Ptuj.
- Shooting phase for documentary film will be finished.
- Project presentation brochure will be printed and distributed among app. 55.000 households along the project area.
- Youth research camp will be carried out and excursions and lectures for pupils of primary and secondary schools will continue.
- Public excursions will continue as well as PR about the project activities.
- Visits to other LIFE project sites will be carried out.

- Breeding island for Common Terns at the Ptuj Lake will be created – please note that this action was excluded from the project due partnership changes but will be realised anyway as the added value of the project.

5. Financial part

5.1. Putting in place of the accounting system

The accounting system of the project is well established and is running in accordance with obligations of Article 6 of Common provisions. By now it has been established by the coordinating beneficiary and one of the associated beneficiaries – VGB. Nevertheless, the same system will apply to other beneficiaries before they start with the activities with financial consequences.

The beneficiaries maintain up-to-date accounting books in accordance with the normal accounting standards and the relevant laws and regulations. This LIFE+ project has its own accounting cost centres which allows for expenditure and income to be traced. Appropriate supporting documentation for expenditure, income and revenue of the project reported to the Commission is stored in special folders which are visibly marked with the project acronym and LIFE logo. This documentation includes tender documents, invoices, purchase orders, travel orders, proof of payments, salary slips and time sheets. The associated beneficiary (VGB until now) regularly sends copies of this documentation to the coordinating beneficiary therefore all the documentation can be checked at the place of the coordinating beneficiary. The personnel are obliged to fill in

the time sheets and send it to the project coordinator on monthly basis. The time sheets are checked, printed, signed and dated by the coordinator and the employee and stored in a special folder. All documentation contains a reference to this project (the acronym and the project number) and is linked to the analytical accounting system.

5.2. Continued availability of co-financing

The originally planned co-financing is still fully available and here the situation has changed substantially as presented in the project modification request (see the request for details).

Status of the agreements with the co-financers:

- Municipality of Ormož: contract signed on 30.10.2012
- Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment: contract signed on 28.5.2012
- DEM has accepted the role of the project co-financer and as evident from the new A6 form, they are willing to co-finance the project in the amount of 1,074,782€, which is their original amount of co-financing which they intended to invest in the project as associated beneficiary reduced for the total estimated costs of action C.7 and preparation of the blue-prints for them under A.1. Upon the confirmation of this solution, the beneficiaries will sign a contract with DEM and charge the co-financing amounts using invoices (drafts are enclosed to the modification request).

5.3 Costs incurred

Budget breakdown categories	Total cost in €	Costs incurred from the start date to 15.5.2013 in €	% of total costs
1. Personnel	1.422.143,00	88.364,42	6,2
2. Travel and subsistence	75.236,00	9.497,98	12,6
3. External assistance	1.161.264,00	22.686,09	2,0
4. Durable goods			
Infrastructure	1.052.868,00	645,32	0,1
Equipment	228.500,00	31.833,68	13,9
Prototype	/	/	/
5. Land purchase / long-term lease	62.178,00	56.362,75	90,6
6. Consumables	84.573,00	836,03	1,0
7. Other Costs	64.683,00	177,78	0,3
8. Overheads	258.038,00	/	/
TOTAL	4.409.483,00	210.478,54	4,8

There are no major discrepancies in spent budget posts. The exception is the budget posts "Land purchase", where we spent most of the available finances, because we bought the flooded forest fragment and finished the action. However, in four posts ("external assistance", "infrastructure", "consumables" and "other costs") the levels of spent post are

low compared to the overall level. This is because most of activities with expected costs in these posts have not yet started and have not yet been paid (because they are still running). Budget modifications are as presented in the project modification request. The 30 % threshold value of total costs is expected to be reached by the end of December 2013.

Action number and name	Foreseen costs	Spent so far	Remaining	Projected final cost
Action A.1 “Technical blue-prints for restoration works”	69.721	19.763,14	49.957,86	not projected yet
Action A.2 “Hydraulic analysis – flood and sediment transport modelling”	414.439	0	414.439,00	not projected yet
Action A.3 “Technical blue-prints for the Ormož Basins Nature Reserve visitor facilities”	125.209	12.318,89	112.890,11	not projected yet
Action A.4 “Detailed grazing plan for Ormož Basins Nature Reserve”	9.407	64,43	9.342,57	not projected yet
Action A.5 “Management plan for Ormož Basins Nature Reserve”	32.055	157,33	31.897,67	not projected yet
Action A.6 “Guidelines for sustainable water management of the Drava for the national Danube River basin management plan for the period from 2016-2021”	282.050	8.178,30	273.871,7	not projected yet
Action A.7 “Geodetic survey and marking out the land”	9.420	3.969,41	5.450,59	not projected yet
Action B.1 “Purchase of flooded forest fragment”	59.562	56.588,39	2.973,61	not projected yet
Action B.2 “Purchase of a single parcel to reach the integrity of the restored area”	12.892	0	12.892,00	not projected yet
Action C.1 “Construction of water supply and water regulation system in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve”	228.114	439,78	227.674,22	not projected yet
Action C.2 “Restoration of the habitats for waterbirds in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve”	240.682	355,02	240.326,98	not projected yet
Action C.3 “Habitat management in the softwood forest stands in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve”	15.958	97,69	15.860,31	not projected yet
Action C.4 “Establishment of a grazing system for long-term and sustainable wetland management in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve”	427.006	6,82	426.999,18	not projected yet
Action C.5 “Declaration of Ormož Basins Nature Reserve and Nature park at the Drava River between Ormož and Središče ob Dravi”	8.217	456,57	7.760,43	not projected yet
Action C.6 “Removal of illegally built fishing and hunting platforms at Lake Ormož”	48.292	7.171,71	41.120,29	not projected yet
Action C.7 “Creation of new artificial breeding island for Common Terns at	310.573	0	310.573,00	not projected yet

Lake Ptuj				
Action C.8 “Conservation management of the breeding islands at Lake Ptuj”	31.259	2.115,27	29.143,73	not projected yet
Action C.9 “Conservation management of the breeding islands at Lake Ptuj”	330.697	735,54	329.961,46	not projected yet
Action C.10 “Preparation of the river banks for breeding of the Kingfisher and Sand Martin”	14.862	534,29	14.327,71	not projected yet
Action C.11 “Management of gravel bars for the breeding of the Little Ringed Plover”	56.033	0	56.033,00	not projected yet
Action C.12 “Reduction of human disturbance and destruction of bird breeding habitat at gravel bars”	134.541	0	134.541,00	not projected yet
Action D.1 “Evaluation of the habitat and species monitoring results”	16.524	0	16.524,00	not projected yet
Action D.2 “Impact of project actions on bird species”	125.764	26.044,90	99.719,1	not projected yet
Action D.3 “Impact of project actions on beetle species”	157.839	975,15	156.863,85	not projected yet
Action D.4 “Impact of project actions on fish species”	71.981	536,46	71.444,54	not projected yet
Action D.5 “Study of the socio-economic impact of the project actions”	51.958	1.038,96	50.919,04	not projected yet
Action E.1 “Notice boards in the project area”	24.208	117,15	24.090,85	not projected yet
Action E.2 “Website of the project”	37.448	9.362,29	28.085,71	not projected yet
Action E.3 “Layman’s report”	7.454	0	7.454,00	not projected yet
Action E.4 “Setting-up the basic visitor facilities in Ormož Basins Nature Reserve”	217.681	12.754,42	204.926,58	not projected yet
Action E.5 “Setting-up the basic visitor facilities at Lake Ptuj”	89.078	259,51	88.818,49	not projected yet
Action E.6 “Production and distribution of a documentary film”	29.585	367,19	29.217,81	not projected yet
Action E.7 “Production and distribution of project publications”	47.128	716,87	46.411,13	not projected yet
Action E.8 “Project educational program”	34.826	683,87	34.142,13	not projected yet
Action E.9 “Public presentations and excursions”	53.368	7.257,26	46.110,74	not projected yet
Action F.1 “Project management”	295.247	32.002,06	263.244,94	not projected yet
Action F.2 “Networking with other projects”	21.785	0	21.785,00	not projected yet
Action F.3 “Audit”	8.582	0	8.582,00	not projected yet
Action F.4 “After-LIFE Conservation Plan”	0	0	0	not projected yet
Overheads	258.038	0	258.038,00	not projected yet
TOTAL	4.409.483	210.478,54	4.199.414,33	not projected yet

6. Annexes

6.1. Partnership agreements

Annex 1: Partnership agreement 1 (associated beneficiary Vodnogospodarski biro Maribor d.o.o. - VGB)

Annex 2: Partnership agreement 2 (associated beneficiary DRAVA Vodnogospodarsko podjetje Ptuj, d.d.)

Annex 3: A draft of Partnership agreement 3 (associated beneficiary Urban Municipality of Ptuj)

6.2. Deliverables, maps, photos, technical memos, questionnaires

Annex 4: The final deliverables and other items made during the project (maps, photos, technical designs, technical memos, questionnaires) are attached on a CD-ROM by each action.

6.3. Other

Annex 5: Co-financing agreement (Ministry of agriculture and the environment)
Co-financing agreement (Municipality of Ormož)