



LIFE Project Number
LIFE03NAT/SLO/000077

TECHNICAL FINAL REPORT
Covering the project activities from 1.1.2004 to 31.3.2007

Reporting Date
30.6.2007

LIFE PROJECT NAME
Establishing Long-term Protection of *Crex crex* in Slovenia

Data Project

Project location	Slovenia: Ljubljansko barje, Cerknjsko jezero, Nanoščica
Project start date:	1.1.2004
Project end date:	31.3.2007
Total Project duration (in months)	39 months
Total budget	809.024 €
EC contribution:	606.768 €
(%) of total costs	75%
(%) of eligible costs	75%

Data Beneficiary

Name Beneficiary	DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia
Contact person	Mr. Andrej Medved
Postal address	p.p. 2990, SI-1001 Ljubljana
Visit address	Tržaška cesta 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana
Telephone	++386-1-426-5875
Fax:	++386-1-425-1181
E-mail	andrej.medved@dopps-drustvo.si
Project Website	http://www.life-kosec.org

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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Objectives. The main project objective has been the preparation and creation of conservation tools for long term successful protection of *Crex crex* in Slovenia and the speeding up of the adoption of the European Union's Birds Directive in Slovenian legislation. To influence major threats to *Crex crex* on ground level, the project has aimed at producing appropriate habitat management solutions and educating local farmers and land owners on how to manage habitats in bird-friendly way and how to obtain additional funding for such management. Additionally, the project objective has been to raise awareness of general public, local stakeholders and decision-makers on local and national level.

Key Deliverables and Project Outputs. The Project has resulted in the following top 10 key Deliverables:

1. **Action Plan for Corncrake 2005 – 2015** elaborated and National Monitoring Scheme for Corncrake established with detailed data that will enable further follow up of environmental and agricultural policy development
2. **New Agri – Environmental Scheme VTR for Corncrake** and other endangered wet grassland birds protection in priority Natura 2000 sites prepared within the Rural development Programme for Republic of Slovenia 2007 – 2013 with cooperation with the responsible Ministry for Agriculture; Forestry and Food
3. **Outstanding promotion of Corncrake friendly wet grassland management** among farmers in Project areas and evident uptake of farmers' participation in HAB Agri – Environmental Scheme in period 2005 – 2006 for nearly 300%
4. **Excellent communication and cooperation** established with responsible public institutions in the field of Agriculture and Rural Development and especially with Farmer Advisors and local farmers which anticipates good conditions for a long term management of Project Areas
5. **Establishment and Formal inclusion of Nature Reserve Iški Morost** in Ljubljansko barje within the new Spatial Plan of Municipality of Ig and starting up the process of formal designation according to the National Nature Conservation Act
6. **Outstanding Mass media communication activities** of the Project Team resulting in a positive impact on Natura 2000 perception among general public and local communities – the Corncrake has become one of the symbols of Natura 2000 network in Slovenia
7. **The active involvement of the Project Team within the process of Landscape park** Ljubljansko barje designation with Project Team representative within the Landscape Park coordination Group
8. **Formal integration of Management guidelines** elaborated within the Project in the process of Cerknica Lake Regional Park management plan preparation and achievement of new LIFE project "Intermittent Cerknica lake" LIFE06NAT/SLO/000069 as after LIFE activity
9. **Successful implementation of land purchase** assigned to nature conservation property by the partner Municipality of Cerknica – Notranjski Regional Park in Cerknica Lake Project Area and self co-financing of the total purchased land of 150,5 ha (133,3 ha of land eligible)
10. **Methodology for Farmland Bird Index (FBI)** including Corncrake and other indicator species for wet grasslands habitats in Natura 2000 sites elaborated and its application to the Monitoring Scheme within Rural Development Programme 2007 - 2013

Evident changes in Agriculture and Rural Development policy in Slovenia with remark to Natura 2000 sites for Corncrake and inclusion of Biodiversity protection as a national priority task within Rural Development Programme have been identified as major Project Output. New conservation tool – Agri Environmental Scheme VTR has been created and offered to farmers in core Natura 2000 areas which strategically represents an important step forward in Slovenian Rural Development and Nature Conservation Policy. In addition to that the application of the Farmland Bird Index Monitoring Scheme including Corncrake as bio-indicator Specie enables the general monitoring of Slovenian Agriculture and Rural Development Policy especially its impacts on biodiversity. All Project Areas have been successfully designated as Natura 2000 sites in 2004 when Slovenia joined the EU. Other

environmental standards have been transposed to Slovene national legislation with more to come in the following years. The Project Team has gained enough experience and contacts needed to follow up the process of Bird Directive transposition. On the other side fair lobbying was enabled by working together with local communities especially farmers on Project Areas who possess excellent knowledge about grasslands management. The education process has been regularly performed in both directions - from the lecturer to public and the opposite. Land ownership and proper grassland management have both resulted as a very efficient nature conservation tool to be widely promoted among other organisations and Municipalities. The Municipality of Cerknica – Notranjski Regional Park has generated an excellent case study when purchased over foreseen amount of land according to the Project and co-financed it by its own financial sources. Attractive and friendly publications as leaflet for farmers, the colouring book, the Corncrake brochure and the project web site have made all Project activities and outputs to be shared with general public and especially local people and children from the Project Areas. The Project has emerged with a new symbol of Natura 2000 – the corncrake (*slo. kosec*) being the endangered bird and the farmer in same personality.

3. INTRODUCTION

Background to the project. Corncrake (*Crex crex*) is the only species of global conservation concern with a significant breeding population in Slovenia. Negative population trends as in most of the EU countries have been identified in the Slovenian Corncrake population in last decade. The main threats to its population are generated primarily by unsuitable types of agriculture. The Corncrake population depends on the existence of large areas mostly covered by extensive wet meadows that are generally sustained by low-input agricultural activities. Due to encroachment of high bushes, land abandonment and farming intensification that includes early mowing dates and conversion of meadows to arable land the total size of Corncrake suitable habitat in Slovenia is decreasing rapidly. Additionally, the absence of proactive conservation measures on a national level, Corncrake unfriendly agricultural policy and relatively low knowledge about species and its conservation requirements among general public are those reasons that explain why the Corncrake population in Slovenia is endangered and needs further special attention. The European Union has developed several tools for farmland bird conservation through the Birds Directive. In Slovenia, most of them have not been developed and implemented yet. We found the accession of Slovenia to EU and the Project as an opportunity to influence environmental and agricultural policies in a way to transpose and implement efficiently the conservation tools from the Birds Directive.

Overall objectives. The main project objective is the preparation and creation of conservation tools for long term successful protection of Corncrake in Slovenia and speeding up the process of adoption of the European Union's Birds Directive into the Slovenian legislation. To influence major threats to Corncrake on a ground level, the project aims at producing appropriate habitat management solutions and to educate local farmers and landowners about bird friendly habitat management. Additionally, the project objective is to raise awareness about birds and other species of general public, local stakeholders and decision-makers on local and national level.

Sites involved. Three out of eight most important sites for Corncrake in Slovenia are involved within the Project – Ljubljansko barje, Cerknica Lake and Nanošćica Basin.

Expected results. Based on a DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia expert proposal the Ministry of the Environment will designate the three Project areas as SPAs - Natura 2000 sites. The project will result in management guidelines that will serve as a basis for the preparation of management plans for the project areas and subsequently for all other SPAs in Slovenia that are important for wet extensive grassland habitats. An increased up-take of bird friendly agri-environmental measures will be achieved through educational and promotional project activities. Local stakeholders, decision makers as well as general public will become subject of a raised awareness about *Crex crex*. On a national level the project will result in changes of agriculture policy through encouraging the subsidizing of bird – friendly management in future SPAs and general support to low input agriculture. At the end of the project, a minimum size of 180 hectares of *Crex crex* breeding habitat in three project areas will be managed actively according to management guidelines. The established national monitoring scheme will result in overall insight to the conservation status of the species throughout the whole country. Project will build the capacity to provide suitable solutions for threats to *Crex crex* and other grassland habitat species that could turn up in other important bird areas in the future.

Socioeconomic context. In Slovene, the common name of *Crex crex* (kosec) is the same as the word denoting a person who mowes (kosec = mower). In light of this word game, *Crex crex* is likely to become a symbol of the possible harmonization of nature conservation interests (kosec as a threatened bird species) and agricultural interests (kosec as the symbol of man's activity in the environment). Protection of *Crex crex* as a globally threatened bird species needs to evolve into a public function which can provide managers of the species' habitats with additional economic benefits, in particular with regard to diverse rural development options, organic farming and links to the local tourist assets, which are all realistic sustainable development options.

4. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

4.1 Description and schematic presentation of working method

<i>Project Action / Sub-Action</i>	<i>Working Method, planning</i>
A. Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or action plans	
A.1 National <i>Crex crex</i> action plan	Literature Overview, Experts Contacted, External Assistance
A.2 Management guidelines for pSPAs	Literature Overview, Workshop for Experts, Field Experiments
A.3 Lj. Barje and Nanoščica Reserve documentation	External Assistance, Permits acquisition
B. Purchase/lease of land and/or rights	
B.1 Purchase in LJ. Barje area	Land Purchase Procedure
B.2 Lease in Lj. Barje area	Land Lease Procedure
B.3 Purchase in Cerknica area	Land Purchase Procedure
C. Non-recurring biotope management	
C.1 Create and maintain habitat in LJ reserve	Field management, Mowing, Mulching, Restoration Processes
C.2 Maintain habitats in Cerknica and Nanoščica area	Field management, Mowing, Mulching, Restoration Processes
C.3 Visitors infrastructure in LJ. reserve	External Assistance
D. Recurring biotope management	
D.1 purchase machinery	Purchasing procedure (public tender), Technical Assistance
E. Public awareness and dissemination of results	
E.1 Promote policies	Meetings, Workshops, Conferences, Contacts, Letters, E-mails, Lobbying
E.2 Consulting with farmers, ..., local authorities	Lectures, Field Meetings
E.3 Leaflet on <i>Crex crex</i> and grassland management	Concept building, External Assistance
E.4 Promotion on national level	Lectures, Leaflet publishing,
E.5 Promotion on local level	Lectures, Night Excursions, Articles publishing, Workshop, Colouring Book Publishing
E.6 Reserve promotion	Leaflet publishing
E.7 WEB site	External Assistance
E.8 Notice boards	External Assistance
F. Overall project operation and monitoring	
F.1 Project Co-ordination	Meetings, technical and financial management, accountancy according to the national legislation
F.2 Monitoring of <i>Crex crex</i> in Slovenia	Scientific research work, Field monitoring, Evaluation

4.2 Presentation of the Project team

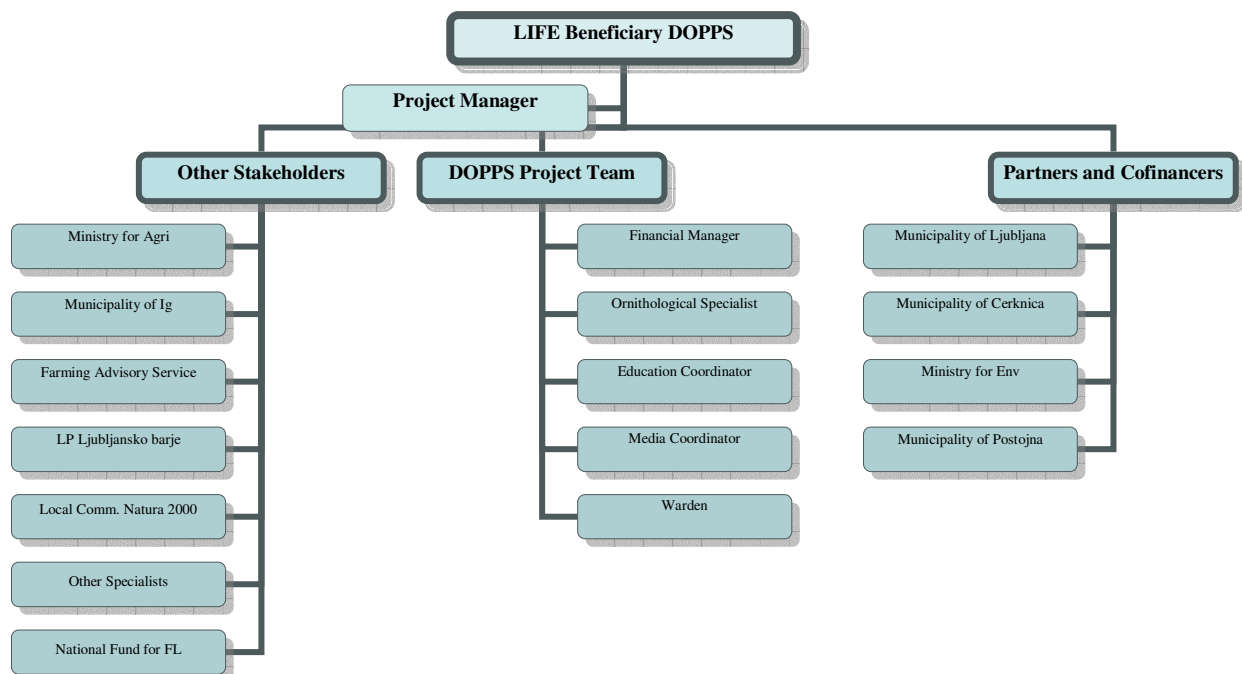
DOPPS - BirdLife Slovenia – the Beneficiary of the LIFE Nature III project (original Slovenian name: Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic Slovenije, acronym DOPPS) is a national, non-profit, non-governmental organization (NGO) that was established in 1979. Since that time, DOPPS has brought together over 1000 members from all parts of Slovenia to help preserve and enhance Slovenia's diverse bird populations. The mission of DOPPS, as detailed in the statute, is to protect

birds and their habitats through conservation work, research, education, popularisation and cooperation with other non-governmental and governmental organizations.

Most of the projects are led by the office with 18 full-time employees, while about 200 active volunteers help with the projects and other activities of DOPPS. DOPPS has contributed significantly to the designation of SPA – Natura 2000 sites in Slovenia and regularly runs the national monitoring scheme on SPAs in Slovenia as well as the International Water bird monitoring scheme IWC and Farmland Bird Index scheme FBI. The organization has excellent knowledge and experience in LIFE and Interreg project management.

DOPPS is the Slovenian partner of the global bird conservation network - BirdLife International. Through the partnership a lot of knowledge, know-how and conservation tools are gained as well as strong international support to our work is provided.

Project Organisation Organigram



Legend:

- LP Ljubljansko barje – Landscape Park Ljubljansko barje project team*
- Ministry for Agri – Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food of Republic of Slovenia*
- Ministry for Env – Ministry for Environmenta and Spatial Planning of Republic of Slovenia*
- Local Comm. Natura 2000 – Representatives of local communities within the Natura 2000 Project Areas*
- National Fund for FL –Fund for Farming and Forestry Land of Republic of Slovenija*

The project has been coordinated by the DOPPS Project Team and the Project Manager. During the project regular contacts have been kept with the Partners and Co-financers as well as with other Stakeholders have been identified as crucial for the project targets achievement. Between them especially the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Municipality of Ig, Farming Advisory service, the Landscape park Ljubljansko barje Project team, Local Communities in project areas and other specialists.

The Municipality of Cerknica – Project Partner has carried out the purchase of Land in Cerknica Lake project area and has performed active management of acquired land. From the nature conservation point of view the land acquisition has been identified as a very efficient tool. The Partner has managed to purchase more than 100 hectares land legally assigned to a long-life nature conservation status. The action performed has been identified as pilot case in Slovenia.

The Municipality of Ljubljana has been engaged to carry out three workshops for local people in the Ljubljansko barje Area. During the project an Initiative for Landscape Park Ljubljansko barje has emerged and the representative of the Ljubljana Municipality has taken the role of the Project Group coordinator. The Initiative is supported by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning.

Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning is the main public institution in implementation and creation of environmental and nature conservation policy as well as for the implementation of the Bird and Habitat Directive in Slovenia. During the project regular contacts have been kept with the Department for Nature Conservation Policy and Department for Protected Areas. Natura 2000 management plans and environmental standards integration into agriculture policy within the CAP reform have been the main issues.

Municipality of Postojna has contributed financially to the project supporting the project activities have been carried out in the Project Area of Nanošćica River Basin.

Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food is the responsible public institution for agriculture and rural development policy in Slovenia. Cooperation has been established within the framework of Rural Development Programme (RDP) for 2004 – 2006 and 2007 – 2013 especially regarding the preparation of the new agri – environmental schemes for farmers in Natura 2000 sites for the period 2007 – 2013. Representative of the Project Team has been elected as a member of the Monitoring Committee for RDP 2004 – 2006 and as a member of the Working Group for RDP Strategic and programming documents preparation for the period 2007 – 2013.

The Municipality of Ig represents the local community within the Ljubljansko barje Natura 2000 area. During the project duration representatives from the Municipality have demonstrated an outstanding will for cooperation within the establishment of the LIFE nature reserve Iški morost. They have significantly contributed to the process of achieving the permits needed for the establishment of visitor infrastructure. The LIFE nature reserve has been included in the process of adoption of the new municipality spatial plan.

The Farming Advisory Service is responsible for informing and educating farmers. Farming Advisors in the project areas took part in the LIFE project with their knowledge and experience in traditional farming practices. Lectures for farmers in Natura 2000 project areas and other meetings have been organised to increase the awareness about corncrake friendly grassland management.

Fund for Farming and Forestry Land of Republic of Slovenia is the public institution responsible for the state owned farming land in Slovenia. Land acquisition has been one of the most important project actions. In Ljubljansko barje project area intensive negotiations have been performed between beneficiary and national Fund in the process of land leasing.

4.3 Project Modification

The modification request was prepared by the Project Team and sent to the Commission on 28th September 2006. Particularly the minimal 3-month extension of the project was necessary and the financial modifications, due to the change of co-financing share of the Municipality of Postojna and over 10% change of costs in some of the categories. Technical modifications were not necessary upon the letters from the Commission, but as the modification request was prepared due to other reasons we included them to have more consistent project after the signing of Additional Clause.

The modification was approved by the Commission within the First Additional Clause signed on 14th November 2006.

5. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

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

A.1 – Production of national *Crex crex* Species action plan

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I
A1 Production of national <i>Crex crex</i> action plan													

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date	Approval date
April 2004 <i>(Preparation work for the 1st Draft SAP started)</i>	November 2006 <i>(Final Version of the SAP elaborated)</i>	6th February 2007 <i>(Approval of SAP by the Ministry of Environment)</i>

Activities and Results

The 1st draft version of the Species action plan (SAP) for Corncrake was prepared by DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia Project Team in February 2005. All available data and information about corncrake in Slovenia was used during its preparation, as well as knowledge gathered in some other countries. Some important chapters, notably the one on breeding biology are based exclusively on findings from other countries (mainly from Great Britain, Germany and Poland) due to almost complete lack of relevant data from Slovenia. Proposed actions reflected the level of our understanding of threats and habitat requirements of Corncrake at the beginning of the project and took into consideration characteristics of national agricultural policy. However, in the light of planned improvement of our knowledge and expected changes of the agricultural policy, the SAP was prone to substantial modifications in the near future. During SAP preparation RSPB manuals, worked templates and guidelines for preparation of action plans were studied, as well as existing and draft versions of European species action plans for Corncrake. The 1st Draft version of SAP consisted of three parts: 1) Summary of the SAP with objectives, 2) Biological assessment of the Corncrake and 3) Actions proposed to achieve objectives.

The 1st draft version of SAP was submitted to the national Corncrake expert M.Sc. Slavko Polak for scientific supervision. Following to that, numerous valuable consultations and discussions on Corncrake and its conservation have been performed with specialists, local farmers and Farmer Advisory service. Due to new information and knowledge about Corncrake and its conservation gained we decided to prepare the 2nd Draft version of SAP.

The 2nd Draft version of SAP was elaborated in December 2005. Comparing to the first, the second draft included the following improvements:

- all the new findings of the project research and management testing activities in 2005;
- the comments supplied by Corncrake expert M.Sc. Slavko Polak and some other scientists who were contacted to clarify certain issues;
- and the full list of sites in Slovenia where Corncrake occurs as requested by the Commission.

The 2nd Draft version of the SAP was distributed to the following institutions: all responsible or interested Departments of the Ministry of the Environment (Nature, SEA, Waters), Agency for the Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation, Slovenian Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry, involved Farming Advisors' Services, local authorities and project partners. The distribution was carried out in the beginning of 2006. Based on the feedback from various organisations the 2nd Draft Version of SAP was prepared and was annexed to the Technical Interim Report dated on 28th February 2006.

The Final Version of the SAP was elaborated in November 2006 based on all comments and data gained during the project period. This version of SAP represents the upgraded version of the 2nd Draft Version. Again, the so called Final Version of SAP was distributed to all stakeholders for comments and based on that the Final document was elaborated. The summary of the final SAP was published in the brochure on Corncrake and proper grassland management (action E.3) and on project web site.

In February 2007, we received the confirmation letter of the Ministry of the Environment stating that the Final Version of SAP was included in the process of Slovenian Operative Program - Management Program of Natura 2000 sites preparation (*slo. Operativni program – program upravljanja območij Natura 2000*). The Natura 2000 Management Program has just passed the public proceedings and should be soon confirmed by the Government. This document is crucial at the moment for biodiversity conservation in the country. The Final Version of SAP will be included in other related strategic and programming documents.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
1 st Draft of SAP 2005 – 2010	February 2005
2 nd Draft of SAP 2005 – 2010	December 2005
Formal Review no.2 by stakeholders	February 2006
Final Version of SAP 2005 – 2015	November 2006
Confirmation Letter by the Ministry of Environment	6 th February 2007

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
Long – term threats and limiting factors to <i>Crex crex</i> and its habitats in Slovenia to be identified and analysed.	Included into SAP 2005 – 2015
Conservation priorities to be defined, based on the aims and objectives for <i>Crex crex</i> protection and detailed recommendations for protective actions to be provided.	Included into SAP 2005 – 2015
Action Plan should provide professional guidelines and thus encourages effective protection of <i>Crex crex</i> and its key sites on national and local level.	Included into SAP 2005 – 2015 Confirmation Letter issued by the Ministry of Environment

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

No problems or drawbacks were encountered. Only the production of a draft and upgraded version was originally foreseen in the project proposal. Production of two drafts and final version is a minor change upon the decision of the beneficiary and improvement of the project. DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia was responsible to carry out this action.

Deliverables

Deliverables	Status	
	<i>Already delivered in previous</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>

	<i>Reports</i>	
1 st Draft of SAP 2005 – 2010	10 th March 2005 (Progress Report)	/
2 nd Draft of SAP 2005 – 2010	28 th February 2006 (Technical Interim Report)	/
Final Version of SAP 2005 – 2010 (Annex 1)	/	YES
Confirmation Letter by the Ministry of Environment (Annex 2)	/	YES

A.2 Management guidelines for SPA qualification species in 3 pSPAs

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007		
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I		
A.2 Management guidelines for pSPAs															

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
March 2004 <i>(Planning of experimental activities in Ljubljansko barje Area)</i>	December 2006 <i>(Final document elaborated by the Project Team)</i>

Activities and Results

In 2004, a study of Corncrake habitat requirements was started in Ljubljansko barje as a basis for modelling of reliable and effective management guidelines for the qualification species on three pSPAs. The aim of the study was to characterize and quantify as far as possible vegetation structure and floristic composition of Corncrake calling sites and meadows frequented by Corncrakes on regular basis. Results of the study revealed substantial differences between vegetation structure as well as floristic composition of the areas with and the areas without Corncrakes. More detailed scientific information and conclusions about the first part of the Survey were presented in the First Progress Report sent to the EC on 10th March 2005.

Slovenia designated Natura 2000 areas in April 2004, just before the accession to the EU. Also all three project areas, for which the management guidelines were foreseen to be elaborated, were designated.

Study of Corncrake habitat requirements - Vegetation structure survey. In spring-summer season of 2005 we carried out the remaining part of the study of Corncrake habitat requirements set up in spring 2004 on Ljubljansko barje. We found repetition of the survey extremely useful due to much different field conditions in subsequent survey years. Furthermore, we expanded the study area to another important Corncrake area, Planinsko polje. This site is large floodplain, characterized by somewhat different type of meadows. The vegetation surveys and Corncrake counts were performed using the same method as on Ljubljansko barje. Meadows on both study sites were representative of Corncrake habitats on wider range of sites in Slovenia. The field work needed for the completion of the study was finished in July 2005.

Study of Corncrake habitat requirements - Floristic survey. Additionally, in summer 2005 we subcontracted a team of expert botanists from Institute of Biology (Slovenian academy of sciences and art) to conduct floristic vegetation survey on study areas. The aim of this part of the study was to determine plant species characteristic for meadows with breeding Corncrakes and for meadows without Corncrakes. Upon the field-work carried out in 2004 and 2005, all the necessary data has been gathered to assess the Corncrake habitat requirements. The data was analysed by project staff, including two conservation ornithologists – Luka Božič and dr. Primož Kmecl.

Mowing and grazing experiments. In summer 2005, we designed of two special experiments. The aim of the *mowing experiment* was to evaluate three different mowing techniques (one commonly used outside-in way of mowing and two different inside-out ways of mowing) according to time consumption, labour, suitability to parcel structure and susceptibility to conservation aims. The experiment took place on the land acquired by the beneficiary in Ljubljansko barje in late August and September 2005. This action is connected with Action C.1 where it was foreseen that “*some of the project area will be used as ground for testing the optimal management techniques*”. The aim of the *Livestock Loading (Grazing) experiment* was to measure and evaluate middle / long-term impacts of different livestock loadings on Corncrake habitat (vegetation structure, floristic composition etc.). Selected experiment plots in Ljubljansko barje project area were planned to be exposed to autumn cattle grazing with different livestock loadings (measured as livestock units per hectare). Due to unfavourable weather conditions (high water levels in Ljubljansko Barje project area) the experiment could not be performed in autumn 2005 as was foreseen by the Project Team. Later the implementation wasn't reasonable as the results could not be obtained before the end of the project. However, as soon as the opportunity will show up, DOPPS will make sure that also the grazing experiment will be carried out.

Wet grasslands soil analysis was carried out in January 2005 upon A1 – methodology as a one of the supportive analysis necessary for the production of the management guidelines.

The Final Management guidelines were elaborated in December 2006 by dr. Primož Kmecl. During the period between April and August 2006 the preparation stage was carried out including mostly studying of literature and consultations with relevant scientific advisors. In September and November 2006, the final text review was done by ornithologist Luka Božič. As already mentioned, the final version was elaborated in December 2006.

The National Institute for Nature Conservation confirmed the management guidelines to be an important source of information and recommendation in the phase of Landscape Park Ljubljansko barje designation. The Notranjski Regional Park confirmed the inclusion of management guidelines into the regional park management plan that will be elaborated in the near future.

We have included the summary of the guidelines to the brochure on Corncrake and proper grassland management as well as on the project web site.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
Study of Corncrake habitat requirements - Vegetation structure survey	June 2005
Study of Corncrake habitat requirements - Floristic survey	June 2005
Mowing experiment	August – September 2005
Draft Management guidelines	October – November 2005
Wet grasslands soil analysis (A1 – methodology) in Ljubljansko barje Area	January 2005
Management guidelines for qualification species in 3 SPAs – Final document	December 2006
Confirmation Letter by the Institute for Nature Conservation of Republic of Slovenia	20 th March 2007

Confirmation Letter by the Notranjski Regional Park	23 rd March 2007
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Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
Three management guidelines to be prepared and focussed on effective, long term conservation of <i>Crex crex</i> within the project pSPAs through identification of suitable management and conservation measures.	Management guidelines – Final document from December 2006
Management guidelines to be distributed and promoted to the key institutions responsible for conservation of species on the national level. Encouragement of same institutions to use management plans as a tool for any <i>Crex crex</i> harmful activity prevention and to assure its successful long term protection.	Distribution and promotion done together with the SAP 2005 – 2010 (Final Version) Confirmation Letter by the Ministry of Environment (dated 6 th February 2007) Confirmation Letter by the Institute for Nature Conservation of Republic of Slovenia (dated 20 th March 2007)
Management guidelines to serve as pilot schemes for the preparation of professional basis for all other SPAs management plans in Slovenia.	Confirmation Letter by the Ministry of Environment (dated 6 th February 2007) Inclusion of management guidelines in the process of the National Natura 2000 general management plan preparation (in process).

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

The mowing and grazing experiments were added as additional activities to this Action. The purpose of both was to investigate in details the most suitable management of wet extensive grasslands from the technical perspective. The results of the mowing experiment were used as valuable information within activities under Action E.1 especially within the process of modeling new Corncrake friendly agri – environmental scheme at the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food. The action was not subject to any significant complications and delays, except for the implementation of the Grazing experiment which could not be performed due to unfavorable weather conditions in summer – autumn 2005.

Costs of additional experiments did not affect significantly the project budget and were covered within foreseen budget of the project activity.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Habitat Study	28 th February 2006 (Technical Interim Report)	/
Mowing Experiment Report	28 th February 2006 (Technical Interim Report)	/
Summary table of draft management guidelines	28 th February 2006 (Technical Interim Report)	/
Management Guidelines for	/	YES

qualification Species for 3 SPAs (dated on December 2006) (Annex 3)		
Confirmation Letter by the Institute for Nature Conservation of Republic of Slovenia (dated on 20 th March 2007) (Annex 4)	/	YES
Confirmation Letter by Notranjski Regional Park (dated 23 th March 2007) (Annex 4)		YES
Photos (CD)		YES

A.3 Technical documentation, permits and management plan for Ljubljansko barje project area

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007		
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I		
A.3 Lj. Barje and Nanoščica Reserve documentation															

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
September 2004	March 2007 <i>(Simple Spatial Plan for Nanoščica project area elaborated)</i>

Activities and Results

Soon after the start of the project in 2004, the Project Team found out and discussed alternative scenarios for setting up visitor infrastructure in the nature reserve. According to the project there was an excavation of a pond foreseen and setting up the infrastructure for visitors nearby the pond. Excavation of the pond had to be realised on the parcels no. 1055 and 1056 that were already leased by DOPPS from the period before the project (from 1998 on). The whole process of identifying the most suitable nature reserve concept was targeted at maximizing the range of biodiversity on one side and minimizing the possible negative impacts on Natura 2000 species and habitats in the reserve on the other side. The process was time consuming but at the end of the project the Project Team managed to implement an optimal solution with some modification approved by the EC within the First additional Clause signed on 14th November 2006.

As we estimated the possibility of accomplishment of the pond in 2004, an alternative much more realistic solution appeared. In vicinity there was an old and almost dry riverbed of River Iška, where the river meandered before the channels on Ljubljansko barje were dug out. The first alternative idea of the Project Team was to re-establish the old River Iška riverbed. Based on many discussions and final analysis made by specialists for different animal groups who elaborated expert evaluations for the area (field workshop organised by the Project Team in the project area on 8th September 2005) we decided to prepare four alternative scenarios – possible locations (A – D). All of them were studied and discussed in details by the Project Team and other external specialists. Specifics of each of four scenarios, their costs and benefits, valuations and details were analysed and described in the Second

Interim Activity Report dated on 22nd September 2005. Additionally the first Draft Spatial Plan was elaborated by the architect and annexed to the mentioned Report.

Among all alternative scenarios for water pond location the scenario B seemed to be the most appropriate with minimised negative impacts on biodiversity. Due to the fact, that most of the results of the activities carried out showed that location B is not suitable for the water body creation and that we gained new information about potential negative socio-economic impacts of this Action, we decided to revise the reasonableness of the creation of the water body as proposed in Action C.3, which also influences some of the Action A.3 activities.

The revision included all the aspects, including the objectives of the reserve, water body itself, expected results of the action, summarizing of the foreseen possible negative impacts of every location of water body to the Natura 2000 habitats and species and considering also socio-economic context and technical aspects. The internal revision process started in December 2005 and though the majority of the decisions were made in the beginning of 2006 together with the stake-holders we decided not to include the water pond within the nature reserve at all. The proposed modification of the Action was sent to the EC 28th September 2006 and approved with the First Additional Clause on 14th November 2006.

In the mean time the Project Team started to implement the new Action. A new draft Spatial plan was prepared by the landscape architect Tomaž Stupar and sent together with a Letter of explanation to the relevant institutions for any possible comments in July 2006. The first to response to the letter were the Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning (Letter received on 27th July 2006) and the National Institute for Nature Conservation (Letter received 16th June 2006). Comments from both Institutions were very favourable to the nature reserve concept. In the same time the Project Team informed also the Municipality of Ljubljana and the local community of Ig (Municipality of Ig) about the idea of nature reserve. Again, the response was very positive. Upon this positive feed-back, we started to obtain the permits. Based on our past experience with relevant institutions the achievement of all permits needed could be very time consuming. Until this stage, the simple Spatial Plan (NU – *slo. Načrt ureditve*) was enough to carry out all the necessary actions.

We applied for Planning information (*slo. Lokacijska informacija*) first at the local Municipality of Ig for: 1. birdwatching observatory, 2. footpath along river Iška and 3. Interpretation Boards. According to the law, the planning information is the first step in acquiring other permits. Based on the information from the Planning Information the Spatial Plan of the nature reserve was upgraded in many further steps and elaborated as Final Spatial Plan in the beginning of 2007, together with the technical documentation – blue-prints (PZI – *slo. Projekt za izvedbo*). In the next step the project Team applied for two crucial permits at the Agency for the Environment of the Republic of Slovenia:

1. Nature Conservation Permit
2. Water Permit

The Nature Conservation Permit was needed to allow the technical work in the field especially related to the setting up of visitor infrastructure. On the other hand, it gives the confirmation that the conditions for work implementation, stated in the Evaluation of Incidence, were met. The Water Permit needed to be acquired by the Beneficiary as the footpath in the nature reserve was planned in the 5 meter wide zone from the right side of river Iška. Due to regular high water level in whole Ljubljansko barje Area and possible flooding an additional study (Hydrological study) was elaborated by sub-contracted company (Inženiring za vode, d.o.o.) as a condition for obtaining positive Water Permit. The study produced new recommendations that were successfully integrated in the new upgraded Spatial plan for Nature Reserve. Finally, both Permits were acquired in the last quarter of the Project implementation and so allowed formally the establishment of the visitor infrastructure (see Action C.3 for details). To avoid any possible incidents within the birdwatching observatory object a Static Study was elaborated by sub-contracted company Spina.

Within the permit obtaining phase we applied for visitor infrastructure impacts on Natura 2000 species and habitats at the Nature Reserve. The Valuation of impacts was issued by the Institute for Nature Conservation of Republic of Slovenia on 17th June 2006 which was followed by nature conservation conditions to be integrated into the Spatial Plan received on 30th August 2006. Both documents represent the Evaluation of Incidence phase in Natura 2000 sites.

The Nature Reserve Area was called “Iški Morost” according to the proposals made by especially local farmers who used to manage this land for a long time. “Iški” is related to river Iška which has an old riverbed right across the middle of the Nature Reserve. The word “Morost” is an old very local traditional word that means extremely wet, extensive grasslands. Based on all information and experiences gained during the project implementation a Management Plan was prepared to define how the Iški Morost Nature Reserve will be managed after the end of the Project. Within the Plan all the actions needed for efficient management of the Reserve were identified and described. Additionally, an economic calculation of the foreseen costs with provisional budget of Nature Reserve management was elaborated to enable future financial planning of the Reserve.

With the aim to stimulate local farmer(s) and lobby for the reserve organisation in the future, a simple Spatial Plan was elaborated to show bird friendly development alternative on Natura 2000 wet grassland habitats in the Nanoščica project area. The visitor infrastructure was organized in a way to demonstrate the high range of biodiversity within the area. The Concept was developed based on the organisation of the Iški Morost Nature Reserve. After the project end, the Project Team will search for possible financing of the visitor infrastructure. Up to now, we have identified some possible EU funds, such as ERDF through Objective 3 program.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
Expert studies on dragonflies, butterflies, amphibians and flora elaborated	August – September 2004
First simple Spatial Plan of the Nature Reserve	February 2005
Technical Analysis and comparison of alternative water pond locations within the nature reserve	March 2005 – January 2006
Workshop with experts in Ljubljansko barje	8 th September 2005
Technical analysis of the water pond location at Vrbovski deli produced by company Inženiring za vode, d.o.o.	October 2005
First project Letter (<i>slo. Prvo obvestilo in pridobitev mnenja</i>) to the relevant institutions about Nature Reserve establishment	June 2006
Meeting organised for Stakeholders on Nature Reserve establishment at the Municipality of Ig	4 th July 2006
Evaluation of Incidence within the nature conservation conditions achieved by the Institute for Nature Conservation of Republic of Slovenia	17 th June 2006 and 30 th August 2006
Technical documentation – blue-prints (<i>slo. PZI – Projekt za izvedbo</i>) with upgrades prepared by Tomaž Stupar (Architect)	December 2006 – March 2007
Planning information (<i>slo. Lokacijska informacija</i>) for bird observatory, footpath along river Iška and interpretation boards issued by the Department for Spatial Planning – Municipality of Ig	14 th November 2006 and 28 th February 2007
Project conditions for visitor infrastructure within the Water Permit (<i>slo. Vodno soglasje</i>) issued by the Agency for Environment of Republic of Slovenia	8 th January 2007
Nature Conservation Permit (<i>slo. Naravovarstveno soglasje Natura 2000</i>) issued by the Agency for Environment of Republic of Slovenia (date)	23 rd March 2007
Static Study for birdwatching observatory in Nature Reserve elaborated by company Spina’	February 2007
Elaboration of Hydro Technical Study for the visitor infrastructure in the nature reserve produced by Inženiring za vode, d.o.o.	March 2007

Management Plan for Nature Reserve Iški morost elaborated	February 2006
Economic calculation on Nature reserve Iški Morost management	December 2006
Simple Spatial Plan for Nanoščica Project Area elaborated	February – March 2007

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
Habitats for different flora and fauna species to be designed for enabling successful habitat restoration supporting as many Natura 2000 habitats and species as possible.	Done within the long internal discussion and consultations with external experts and within expert studies. Map of Nature reserve habitat zonation produced.
Future organization of habitats and visitor infrastructure to be planned for enabling functioning of the area for education of public and demonstration of proper management techniques.	Expected result achieved. Please look at Action C.3 for details.
All the professional basis to be established for successful reserve operation after the project termination.	Done.
Elaboration of a concept and simple Spatial Plan for Nanoščica project Area as incentive to local farmers for development of future nature reserve.	Done.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

The Action was modified and First Additional Clause signed 14th November 2006. The decision on project modifications proposed to the EC was taken upon the following facts which were already presented in the Technical Interim report dated on 28th February 2006:

- **Conservation issues.** Scientific data in our project proposal and the research work carried out in 2004 - 2005 demonstrated very high biodiversity in Ljubljansko barje project area. Upon the expert evaluations, we concluded that the water body with standing water was not a habitat necessary for any of the existing or potential conservation important species of birds, amphibians, invertebrates etc.. The conclusion made by the Project team was that the creation of water body could not further increase the Natura 2000 habitats and species diversity in the project area which, on the other hand, was already very high.
- **Socio-economic context.** Different small-scale private development initiatives were identified in the local area of the Municipality of Ig. Some of them include the creation of the water bodies with different aims: fish ponds or tourism attractions based on creation of historic moor villages, including crannogs. Most of them are not acceptable from conservation or spatial planning point of view. With the creation of the water body within the Project, though with conservation aims, we could therefore create very bad example which would encourage such initiatives. The position of the Project Team was not to encourage such developments and this was one of the reasons for omitting of the water body, strongly supported by the local municipality as well.
- **Technical problems.** The technical aspects of the creation of the water body brought many problems. The main problem identified was lack of water in the drier periods. Upon the additional information gathered (from local people, responsible water authorities) the alternative to put the water pond close to draining channel was cancelled as well due to fact that the channel is not supplying the minimal water levels in dry years. The problem could be solved by strong water pump application but this would mean too much technical equipment which is too artificial. The possible technical solutions would not fit into the context of planned nature reserve.

As evident from our previous reports and correspondence, action A.3 was much more time-consuming as originally planned. All the possibilities to fit the water body into the project area were checked and discussed with stake-holders. As the activity has proved unnecessary from conservation point of view and is not influencing the achieving of conservation goals, with only possible technical solution which is not appropriate for nature reserve and potentially harmful socio-economic incidence, the decision was made in January 2006 to propose the Commission to exclude it from the project.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Draft Spatial Plan for Nature Reserve	22 nd September 2005 (Second Interim Activity Report)	/
Final Spatial Plan for Iški Morost Nature Reserve– NU (<i>slo. Načrt ureditve</i>) (Annex 5)	/	YES
Technical documentation for Iški Morost Nature Reserve infrastructure (<i>slo. Projekt za izvedbo – PZI</i>) (Annex 6)	/	YES
Static and Hydrological studies (Annex 7)		YES
Management Plan for Iški Morost Nature Reserve (Annex 8) with the Economic Calculation including Provisional Budget (Annex 9)	/	YES
Simple Spatial Plan for Nanoščica project area organisation – IDZ (<i>slo. Idejna zasnova</i>) (Annex 11)	/	YES
Evaluation of incidence (Annex 10)	/	YES
Photos (CD)		YES

B. Purchase/lease of land and/or rights

B.1 Lease of land in Ljubljansko barje area

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007	
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	
B.1 Lease in LJ barje area														

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
January 2004 <i>(situation review of the parcels to be leased from the National Farmland and Forest Fund)</i>	January 2007 <i>(Upgraded Leasing contract between DOPPS and National Fund signed on 23rd January 2007)</i>

Activities and Results

The aim of this action was to obtain a complex of land as big as possible in most important breeding area for Corncrake in Slovenia and to create and maintain optimal condition for its successful breeding. Action was carried out in synergy with Action B.2 – Purchase of Land in Ljubljansko barje Area. The total size of the land to be leased under this Action was 44,6 ha.

From 1998 on, DOPPS leased 3,8 ha of abandoned wet grassland in Ljubljansko barje, in the area known as Vrbovski tali. To re-establish and to increase suitable habitat for corncrake in this area DOPPS managed to lease additional 34,5 ha of wet grasslands from Farmland and Forest Fund of the Republic of Slovenia. The offer for land lease from Fund of Farming Land and Forests of Slovenia was published in public on 19th February 2004 and was followed by intensive negotiations to obtain the targeted size of land in Vrbovski deli. The contract was signed on 28th December 2004 for a period of 10 years with the possibility of leasing period extension after end of this contract. The 3,8 ha of land were added to the new Leasing Contract with a total amount of 37,5 ha.

Though the action was reported to be completed in 2004 we continued with checking the possibilities for additional land lease in Vrbovski deli. In the project proposal, a lease of 41,1 ha of land was foreseen what still made the difference of – 2,8 ha of Land. The Project Team analysed the possibilities of land lease extension and came out with two alternatives: one was to transfer the leased land by local farmer Mr Srečko Modic to the DOPPS Leasing Contract and the second one was to upgrade the DOPPS Leasing Contract from 2004 with the new open parcels which were subject to ownership clarifications in period after 2004. Both alternatives were realised and new Leasing Contract prepared by the National Fund. The new contract was signed 23rd January 2007 for **a total of 44,2 ha of land. Together with 7,7 ha of purchased land (see B.2 for details) DOPPS managed to obtain a complex of 51,9 hectares of land in Ljubljansko barje project area.**

The realised total amount of leased land within Action B.1 was 44,2 ha which is 0,4 ha less comparing with the foreseen amount of 44,6 under Action B.1. This minimal difference is due to the fact, that in time of project modification request preparation when further land lease has been negotiated with the Fund, they indicated that 44,6 ha will be possible to lease. In the end, they were not able to solve the ownership for 0,4 ha which has therefore not been included in the final contract. This is a minimal

change comparing to the original proposal and is not affecting the achieving of the goals in the project area.

As foreseen in the project, DOPPS intended to purchase the land as soon as the available funding will be obtained. However, due to the high prices of land in this area, this aim will be very hard to achieve and instead, we rather worked on legal protection of the reserve by the local community (see E.1 for details). However, we decided to raise funds to purchase the parcel no. 1382 where the bird observatory is located in order to have the infrastructure on own land. The purchase process started at the end of the project and we expect to by the land in 2008.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
First Leasing Contract signed for 37,5 ha with the National Fund	28 th December 2004
Identification of alternative scenarios for Leasing Contract extension and negotiations with local farmer Mr Srečko Modic and representative of the Farmland and Forest Fund Mr Aleš Krnec	August – November 2006
New Leasing Contract signed for the total size of 44,2 ha leased land with the National Fund	23 rd January 2007
Formal Letter sent to National Fund for starting the process of purchasing parcel no. 1382 in Iški Morost Nature Reserve	30 th March 2007

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
All together 44,6 hectares of land to be leased to assure <i>Crex crex</i> friendly management and establishing of the small nature reserve	According to the final Leasing Contract with the National Fund signed 23 rd January 2007 a total amount of 44,2 ha land was achieved. The Action was completed with a total result of -0,4 ha of leased land (minimal difference)
Habitats to be restored and active habitat management undertaken in the area according to action C.1 preventing afforestation due to abandonment, intensification of agriculture and draining of this area. This should lead to an increase in the <i>Crex crex</i> population.	Link to Action C.1
The land leased should give grounds for the habitat management, very important for its educational, demonstration and testing functions resulting in an improved knowledge of directly involved local stakeholders, authorities and farming advisors and raised awareness of general public.	Link to Actions E
Future purchase of leased and adjacent parcels should enable further assignment of acquired land as nature conservation property.	Lease of land enabled further purchase. The parcel no. Project Area is subject to formal designation as Nature Reserve under the Municipality of Ig Decree in process

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

The foreseen total amount of 44,6 ha of leased land under this Action was not achieved in 100% due to continued complications in land ownership and land market at the National Fund. We estimate the action implementation was very successful as the Project Team reached its 99% realisation.

Action was subject to Modification Request and finally modified with the First Additional Clause signed on 14th November 2006.

Deliverables (Annex 12)

Deliverables	Status	
	Already delivered in previous Reports	Annexed to the Final Report
Copy of the Leasing Contract between DOPPS and National Fund signed on 28 th December 2004	/	YES
Map of Parcels leased in Ljubljansko barje Area Version no.1 (according to the Contract signed on 28 th December 2004	22 nd September 2005 (Second Interim Activity Report)	/
Copy of the upgraded Leasing Contract between DOPPS and National Fund signed 23 rd January 2007	/	YES
Map of Parcels leased in Ljubljansko barje Area Version no.2 (according to the upgraded Contract)	/	YES

B.2 Purchase of land in Ljubljansko barje area

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007	
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	
B.2 Purchase in LJ Barje area														

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
August 2004 (intensive negotiations with local land owners started)	13th March 2007 (Application to the Land Register for parcel no.1026 purchased from the Roman Catholic Parish Tomišelj)

Activities and Results

Registration of farming activity at the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food. In 2004, DOPPS managed to register the farming activity at the Ministry of Agriculture and obtained the farming ID. This unexpected action was crucial in the farm land purchase procedure. In a dynamic land market, the Project Team used the farming ID as one of the negotiation arguments to enable the land purchase procedure.

Land purchase

To obtain as large complex of land in Ljubljansko barje project area as possible we aimed to purchase a minimum of 7,5 ha of privately owned land in the area of Vrbovski tali. The combination of purchased and leased land offers an optimal complex for establishing habitat for Corncrake in

Ljubljansko barje area. The parcels are distributed fragmentally all over the area known as Vrbovski tali.

The negotiations with the farmers and other land-owners began in August 2004, but we didn't manage to purchase any land in the first year of the project. We started to negotiate with three land owners, who owned approximately 6,0 ha of land in area of Vrbovski tali and they were all interested to sell the land. The negotiations on price for square meter of land were much more complicated and time consuming as foreseen in the project proposal. Before the Project Team managed to agree about the price, other project activities especially C.1 and various combinations of Actions E should have been performed in the local area.

In September 2005, we managed to purchase eleven parcels from three land owners with a total amount of 6,02 ha. In March 2005, the Project Team agreed with Mr. Smole to purchase additional three parcels with total amount of 1,19 ha, but the purchasing procedure was temporary stopped due to complications (1) parcels in question were formally still owned by Mr. Smole's late father and (2) Mr. Smole's farm was a protected farm. In the next months, the complications were solved by the Project Team and purchasing procedure with Mr. Smole carried out successfully. The Beneficiary helped Mr. Smole to arrange his own inheritance of the parcels after his late father. We subcontracted the company Geograd d.o.o. to carry out the retraining of the land use rank in land cadastre from meadow to pasture, as land category that could be only sold by protected farms. Preliminary Agreement with Mr. Smole was signed to assure his parcels will be sold to DOPPS when inheritance and other administrative procedures will be concluded.

In the mean time, other land owners were contacted and possibilities for land purchase analysed by the Project Team with the target to reach the 10,0 ha purchased land as foreseen in the project. Further negotiations were started with Mr. Lenarčič, Mr. Švigelj, Mrs. Maček, Mrs. Požar, Mr. and Mrs. Japelj, Mrs. Remškar and Roman Catholic Parish Tomišelj and administrative procedures for already purchased parcels continued. In August 2005, we concluded the remaining administrative procedures for the parcels purchased from Mr. Modic and Mrs. P. C. Kumše with the submitted applications to Land Register (ownership to DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia assigned). The negotiations with Roman Catholic Parish Tomišelj for the purchase of one parcel, covering 0,47 ha were realised as the last purchase procedure. Upon the positive response by the priest who showed absolute willingness to sell the parcel, we prepared Purchase offer and sent it to the Roman Catholic Diocese in Ljubljana on 24th October 2005. The contract for this piece of land was signed on 22nd January 2007. **In total, 7,7 ha of land was purchased by DOPPS in Ljubljansko barje project area from 5 land-owners.**

Assignment of the purchased land to Nature Conservation. Apart from the land purchase procedure, the Project Team investigated the possibilities to fulfil the provisions of article 31.2 of Standard Administrative Provisions. Due to the fact that “and/or” are used to specify the place of recording (*the article 31.2 says: “... the sales contract, and/or its recording on the land register, includes a guarantee of definitive assignment of the land to nature conservation...”*), we used the possibility of including the guarantee that the land will be assigned definitely to nature conservation in the sales contracts. To fulfil the Standard administrative Provision, annexes to sales contracts were signed with the land owners including the guarantee of definitive assignment of land to nature conservation, while in the contract with Mr. Smole and Roman Catholic Parish Tomišelj the guarantee is already included. **Therefore we can confirm, that all the sales contracts include the clause of a definitive assignment of purchased land to nature conservation.**

The investigation also revealed that the registration of the assignment to nature conservation into the Land Register could not be achieved at all. Only in protected areas, formal designation of a site according to the National Nature Conservation Law is recognised as a legal fact which has to be registered in the Land Register upon the Provisions issued to the land owners by the responsible Municipality or by Administrative Unit. This knowledge was used in the case of Action B.3 in Cerknica Lake project area. But anyway, the assignment of designated area in Land Register could not be equivalent to the assignment of the nature conservation property as stated in the SAP.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
Registration of farming activity at the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food (Farming ID – KMG MID obtained)	6 th February 2004
Sales contract signed with Ms D. Kumše for a total amount of 1,2 ha	6 th April 2005
Sales contract signed with Mr S. Modic for a total amount of 1,9 ha	20 th June 2005
Sales contract signed with Ms P. C. Kumše for a total amount of 2,9 ha	29 th June 2005
Annexes to the Sales contracts signed with Ms D. Kumše, Mr S. Modic and Ms P. C. Kumše – assignment of purchase land as nature conservation property	15 th June 2006
Sales contract with Mr F. Smole for a total amount of 1,2 ha (nature conservation property assignment already included within the Sales contract)	22 nd May 2006
Sales contract with Roman Catholic Parish for a total amount of 0,5 ha (nature conservation property assignment already included within the Sales contract)	22 nd January 2007

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
All together a minimum of 7,5 hectares of land to be purchased to assure <i>Crex crex</i> friendly management on the long term through its assignment as nature conservation property.	Total amount of 7,7 ha was purchased from local land owners.
Habitats were restored and active habitat management was undertaken in the area according to action C.1 preventing aforestation due to abandonment, intensification of agriculture and draining of this area. This has lead to an increase in the <i>Crex crex</i> population.	Link to Action C.1
The land leased should give grounds for habitat management, very important for its educational, demonstration and testing functions resulting in an improved knowledge of directly involved local stakeholders, authorities and farming advisors and raised awareness of general public.	Link to Actions E

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

As stated in the project expected constraints, the difficulties with the land purchase were one of the possibilities. The land purchasing procedure and negotiations with local land owners were absolutely a time consuming activity due to unexpected complications and delays. During the implementation of this action the Project Team gathered lot of experience which we briefly describe in the following paragraphs:

- **Complicated land transaction procedures.** In general, the Slovenian legislation is not favourable to selling agricultural land to non-farmers. According to National Farming Law the farm land is strictly protected. At least a quarter of a year time is needed only for reaching the land purchase agreement between all involved parties and for completion of all purchase procedures. Unfortunately, in most cases the whole procedure requires much more time than that. It depends on the status of the land owner, his ownership, location and many other circumstances which define the type of purchase procedure to be carried out.
- **Land Purchase from a Protected Farm.** Most of the land within a Protected Farm could not be sold to other non- farmers or even other farms. Special activity was performed to obtain a minimum available share of land to be purchased from the Protected Farm of Mr F. Smole. Land categorization study was elaborated by company Geograd.

- **Dynamic Farm Land Market in relation to Common Agriculture Policy subsidies.** A general increase and availability of CAP subsidies is responsible for an increased demand for farm land over its supply.
- **Pre-emption rules.** Farmers, lease holders and organizations with farming activity registration have priority for land purchase. At the start of the Project in 2004, the beneficiary needed to register the farming activity within the National Farming Organization Registry managed by the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food.
- **Complications in recording nature conservation property to Land Register.** According to the Slovene legislation such recording is not possible at all. Nature conservation property assignment was made in sales contracts or annexes to those.

Deliverables (Annex 13)

Deliverables	Status	
	Already delivered in previous Reports	Annexed to the Final Report
DOPPS Farming Activity Registration ID from the Register (Ministry)	/	YES
Copies of all 5 Sales contracts	/	YES
Map of all purchased parcels according to the Final Land Sales contracts (total amount of 7,7 ha)		YES

B.3 Purchase of land in Cerknjško jezero area

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007		
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I		
B.3 Purchase in Cerknica area															

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
January 2004 <i>(First announcement for land purchase in local magazine)</i>	March 2007 <i>(date of last contract with private land owner signed)</i>

Activities and Results

Cerkniško jezero is the second most important breeding site of Corncrake in Slovenia and the aim of the action was to purchase at least 100,0 ha of grassland within Corncrake breeding area in Cerknjško jezero. The purchase priority was given to the areas threatened by the land abandonment. The land was mostly privately owned and due to typical water regime fairly unfavourable for grassland management. There was a general willingness among land-owners to sell the land. The Municipality of Cerknica was responsible to carry out this action. They authorised the director of Notranjski Regional Park Mr. Valentin Schein to carry out the land purchase on behalf of the municipality.

First advertisement in local magazine "Notranjski mozaik" with land purchase call in Cerknjško jezero project area was published in January 2004. Some interested land-owners sent their acceptances based

on previous personal contacts with the local Partner. During the first year of the project, the Partner managed to acquire 27,1 ha of wet meadows from 7 different land-owners dispersed among whole area of Cerknica Lake. In the next period between 1st January 2005 – 31st July 2005, the Partner received another 19 offers for land purchase in the project area and 6 purchasing procedures were concluded for an updated total amount of 62,4 ha of land. In addition 27 new bids for a total amount of 75,5 ha were in process during that reporting period. In total, 133,3 ha of land were bought by the project partner Municipality of Cerknica in the Cerkniško jezero project area the ownership of the purchased land assigned to the Municipality of Cerknica in the Land Register.

According to the project, the land was purchased based on the concept of land-owners and not on specific parcel location. The concept was selected by the Project Team and the Partner as the only realistic solution to realise the target of this Action. It was based on a local philosophy “...when a farmer or land owner decides to sell the land, he will sell it completely in one shot...”. This fact brought to the situation where some parcels purchased by the Partner did not match with the project area in Cerknica Lake and so were not eligible to the Project. The Municipality found available financial sources for purchasing those parcels. This activity must be absolutely valued as added value to the Project, as in total the Municipality of Cerknica bought 150,5 ha of land assigned to nature conservation.

The project Partner was involved as well into investigation on the possibilities of nature conservation property assignment for the purchased land within the Land Register. According to the national legislation this is absolutely impossible. As already described under Action B.2, another related type of registration into the Land Register could be achieved in protected areas as is the case of the Notranjski Regional Park (designated as Regional Park according to the Nature Conservation Act by the Municipality of Cerknica in 2002).

To fulfil the Standard administrative Provision, annexes to notarial records were signed with 14 land-owners (with whom the contracts were signed before the definitive assignment possibilities were clarified through correspondence with the Commission) including the guarantee of definitive assignment of land to nature conservation, while in the case of further 25 land-owners the guarantee is already included in the notarial records. **Therefore we can confirm, that all the sales contracts include the clause of a definitive assignment of purchased land to nature conservation.**

As a result of the Project, the land purchase procedure according to Nature Conservation Act (*slo. Zakon o ohranjanju narave (uradno prečiščeno besedilo) /ZON-UPB2/ Uradni list RS, št. 96 /2004*) includes the following steps:

- Base for land purchase according to Nature conservation act lies in 84th article indent 6.
- (6) Local community has legal **pre-emptive right**, except for water land (*slo. vodno zemljišče*) on protected areas that were declared by local community. Pre-emptive right is empowered in manner of this act.
- According to 84th article indent 2 of Nature conservation act, the land owner that owns land on protected area has to notify managing authority and Ministry for the Environment and Spatial Planning about intention of selling the agricultural land. Offer for selling agricultural land must contain information about land, price and other terms of sale.
- After seller presents the “Offer for selling agricultural land” the partner checked if any burdens existed on this land. Existence of burdens is established based on land register copy (*slo. zemljiško knjižni izpisek*). Those documents are submitted by seller or municipality requests them from competent district court.
- Municipality of Cerknica requested Parcel map from Geodetic Agency of Republic of Slovenia (*slo. Geodetska uprava RS*) or from Administrative unit (*slo. Upravna enota*).
- Municipality of Cerknica issued the Planning Information (*slo. Lokacijska informacija*)
- Next step is obtaining consent from the Ministry of Defence due to the fact that the area lies near the military district Poček. To obtain consent to land purchase, application must be

consisted of Planning Information, copy from court register of Municipality of Cerknica (*slo. izpisek iz sodnega registra*) and all basic information about offered land.

- Municipality of Cerknica prepared “Statement of acceptance of offer” which consisted of all basic information about offered land and price.
- Notary then draws up the draft notarial record/act.
- Notary in presence of all contracting parties led the proceedings for purchase agreement.
- Notarial record is then signed by seller, purchaser and notary.
- Notary than verify notarial record in Tax Administration of the RS to obtain confirmation that paying tax on real estate sales is not necessary.
- Municipality of Cerknica requested confirmation from Administrative unit based on 87th article, indent 3 of Nature Conservation Act, Administrative unit don’t have to give consent to land purchase.
- Notary then drawn up the notarial record and sends it to all contracting parties.
- Notary prepared land register proposal (*slo. zemljiško-knjižni predlog*) to obtain entry of right of property (*slo. vpis lastninske pravice*).
- Purchaser paid the agreed purchase price to seller.
- Subject is closed when the Municipality of Cerknica received the decision of district court that the entry of right of property is allowed.

The whole Action can be estimated as outstanding activity. The Partner managed to purchase 133,3 ha of land which is app. 33% more than the minimum size of land set in the original project. Additionally, the Municipality took the advantage of the project environment to purchase additional 17,2 ha of land in project area vicinity which was not eligible to the project. All purchased land (eligible and not eligible for a total size of 150,5 ha) is assigned as nature conservation property, therefore a lot of added value has been realised within this action. The Municipality of Cerknica together with the Notranjski Regional Park presents a very positive case study for other local authorities (municipalities) in high nature value areas to promote the advantages and opportunities could be achieved from protection of nature on local level (Link to Action C.2 and Actions E).

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
First advertisement for farm land purchase in local magazine	February 2004
Final set of Contracts for a total amount of 133,3 ha of purchased land at the end of the Project	March 2007
Map of purchased farm land eligible to the Project and those purchased by the local authority Municipality of Cerknica outside the project area	March 2007

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
Ultimate acquisition of a minimum of 100 ha of land to be assigned as nature conservation land.	According to the Final Sales contract an amount of 133,3 was successfully purchased in project area. All purchased land was assigned as nature conservation property in the sales contracts within the Municipality of Cerknica ownership.
Future management of this land in a <i>Crex crex</i> friendly way (according to the management guidelines under action A.2) to be enabled. An important step to be made to prevent further aforestation and to control the spreading of reed – bed inside the <i>Crex crex</i> breeding habitat.	Link to Action C.2
A model case for other local authorities in Slovenia to be established for promotion of the advantages and opportunities arising from nature	Municipality of Cerknica was the first local authority to test the

protection on local level.	possibilities of purchasing farm land as well as registering it as nature conservation property. The procedure was studied in details.
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Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

The project partner managed to agree fair prices for land purchased which represented a good basis for acquiring more than 100,0 ha of land for the foreseen project action budget. The complications described under Action B.2 were not subject to this action. The National Nature Conservation Act defines special land purchasing procedures in designated areas if the purpose of the purchase is linked to nature conservation and if purchaser is either state or municipality. In these cases, the land purchase procedure is fairly simple and straightforward. In addition, there is no land transfer tax included in the total costs of transferring ownership between private land owner and municipality.

The case of nature conservation property registration was implemented in a same way as in Action B.2 with inclusion of the nature property assignment statement into the Notarial records.

Deliverables (Annex 14)

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Copies of 39 Notarial records/act for the land bought in Cerknica Lake project Area	/	YES
Map of purchased land in Cerknica Lake eligible / not eligible to the project (purchased by the Municipality outside the project area)		YES

C. Non-recurring management

C.1 Create and maintain habitats for *Crex crex* and other species in Ljubljansko barje reserve

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
C.1 Create and maintain habitat in LJ reserve																

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
August 2004 <i>(First restoration activity taken in Ljubljansko barje Area)</i>	March 2007 <i>(Management of habitats concluded with channel cleaning)</i>

Activities and Results

First restoration activities in the Ljubljansko barje project area were undertaken during the late summer and autumn 2004. The main purpose of the activity was to initialise restoration processes of grassland habitat. Nearly one third of the targeting land parcels that were leased from the national Farmland and Forests Fund and were extremely overgrown with forest vegetation and therefore unsuitable for any kind of farming. This land was hardly to be defined as Corncrake habitat. Other low-input wet grasslands that were kept in relatively good conditions were managed properly according to the Corncrake friendly management guidelines (Link to Action A.2). All activities under this Action were carried out in strong relation with local farmers and land-owners as well as Farmers advisory service. The Project Team was subject to a strong will for cooperation from the side of local community. Action C.1 was linked to Action E.2 and other related E Actions.

Most of the activities under this Action were allocated to two main issues:

- restoration of abandoned wet grasslands
- bird friendly management of low input wet grasslands

Restoration of grassland habitat in Vrbovski deli. In September – October 2004, the sub-contracted company Tisa d.o.o. and DOPPS volunteers managed to remove approximately 5,0 hectares of forests and bushes from the project area. The majority of the work was performed with heavy machinery. Our task was to restore grassland habitat in the area where most farmers decided not to farm anymore and convince them to restart farming in a bird friendly way. Apart from the restoration the Project Team was aiming to get new experience on the process of wet grassland restoration in general as this was identified as important threat to Corncrake in all project areas and in other SPAs. In achieving this target, an informal forum of local farmers was created to discuss the most suitable techniques for grassland restoration mostly composed by those farmers who were subject to Action B.2. The original moor soil profile structure was not significantly damaged in a way to allow the natural processes of re-establishing the primary grassland habitat in the next years (as soon as possible). In period 2005 – 2006, more than 10 field activities for DOPPS volunteers were organised to fasten the restoration process of grasslands. In autumn 2005, the Project Team engaged local farmer Mr Debevc to remove additional bushes from grasslands that were subject to critical abandonment.

Finally in August – September 2006 the company Tisa d.o.o. was sub-contracted again to perform restoration work on northern parts of the project area.

Detailed information about the area under restoration in project period 2004 – 2006 is given in summary table “*Management of Ljubljansko barje project area during project implementation in 2004 – 2006*”.

Existing grassland habitat management. Most of the Vrbovski deli area was covered with extensive grasslands. During the last decades the most suitable grasslands were temporally managed by local farmers and the hay or straw produced was used for cattle or horse breeding. Because of relatively poor natural conditions the targeted grasslands were not subject to any farming intensification. From the economic point of view, the management of these grasslands could be defined as additional cost to the farm which most farmers are not willing to cover.

During the project implementation, the Project Team managed to establish good communication with local farmers and produced a strategic plan as a base for future common grassland management in the project area. The strategic plan was composed by four smaller “management units” and was implemented on a yearly basis in consensus with all involved local farmers. Management units were defined on different local micro - climate conditions and so allowed better overview on specific management practices to be applied and time planning. The grassland was mowed according to the proposed bird friendly management guidelines produced under Action A.2 (late mowing, no mineral input, solitary bushes left, bird friendly type of mowing) during whole project implementation period (3 times). The straw was dried outdoor in the fields and then transferred to local stables. In most cases, the straw was used for litter. In the future, the Project Team suggests some more attention to be invested into finding out possible alternative uses of litter (biomass, compost, other products related to eco tourism, etc.).

Detailed information about the area under regular grassland management in project period 2004 – 2006 is given in summary table “*Management of Ljubljansko barje project area during project implementation in 2004 – 2006*”.

The whole Project area in Vrbovski deli is subject to formal designation as “Iški Morost Nature Reserve” started by the Project Team and the local Municipality of Ig. The proposed area of the Nature Reserve is wider and includes leased land under Action B.1, all purchased land under Action B.2 and some privately owned parcels in between with a total size of approximately 63,0 ha. When adopted, the Municipality Decree on Nature Reserve will set the elaborated management plan (Action A.3) as the basis for future management of the whole area including the privately owned land. Management guidelines (Action A.2) and other measures (drainage) will be set to benefit the Corncrake habitat.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Management of Ljubljansko barje project area during project implementation in 2004 – 2006

<i>Part of Project area – Nature Reserve Iški Morost (local name)</i>	<i>Total area * (ha)</i>	<i>Area of wet extensive grasslands under active management in period 2004 – 2006** (ha)</i>			<i>Area of abandoned grasslands under restoration in 2004 – 2006</i>	<i>Additional management information</i>
		<i>Year 2004</i>	<i>Year 2005</i>	<i>Year 2006</i>		
Jevše	23,9	(no data)	12,0	13,1	4,5	Regular bird friendly late mowing
Mali deli	14,4	(no	0,0	4,5	1,5	Bird friendly late

		data)				mowing (high possibility of unfavourable ground water conditions)
Vrbovke	23,9	(no data)	16,4	18,3	8,0	Bird friendly late mowing (medium high possibility of unfavourable ground water conditions)
Želodc	0,5	(no data)	0,4	0,4	0,0	Regular bird friendly late mowing
TOTAL AREA (ha)	62,7	25,0	28,8	36,3	14,0	

*Total Area = total area of management unit including grasslands and overgrowing areas

**Area of wet extensive grasslands under active management = total area of managed grasslands in Vrbovski deli including management performed by DOPPS and local farmers with supervision of DOPPS

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
Habitats to be restored and active habitat management undertaken in the area, preventing aforestation due to abandonment, intensification of agriculture and draining of this area. This should lead to an increase in the <i>Crex crex</i> population.	14,0 ha of land under different phases of restoration and app. 25 – 37 ha of land per year managed according to the management guidelines under A.2 Control on farming intensification and draining established. The Area is subject to designation as Nature Reserve by the Municipality of Ig (Action E.1). Limited cleaning of existing melioration channels allowed.
Improved knowledge of Barje habitats and the flora and fauna species present therein, with a focus on bird species. The habitat management should bring additional results through its educational, demonstration and testing function resulting in improved knowledge of directly involved local stakeholders, authorities and farming advisors and raised awareness of general public.	Link to Action E.2 and other Actions E as well as to Action A.3 and C.3 – Visitor infrastructure
Increased diversity of habitat types in the area.	Done.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

The Project Team faced the problem of extremely wet seasons which appeared in summer 2005. Most of the wet extensive grasslands in Ljubljansko barje project area were under water for the whole period that represented a serious problem in performing regular grasslands management. Some parts of the Area were hardly or even not accessible by the project machinery and could not be managed at the time. Comparing to a normal summer season, approximately 15,0 ha of land could not be managed.

At this point the Project Team identified some complications and problems related to the future management of wet grasslands. Some parts of the project area are becoming very wet due to recent melioration channels abandonment. We are not considering cleaning of all channels in this area but we are sure that some channels will have to be cleaned in a way to guarantee the minimum conditions for

machinery access. In opposite way, some parts of project area will not be accessible for management any more and consequently this would result in a loss of suitable Corncrake habitat. Detailed actions to be taken in Nature reserve are subject of the Management Plan for Iški Morost Nature Reserve elaborated under Action A.3.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Map of habitat management on Ljubljansko barje project area 2004	22 nd September 2005 (Second Interim Activity Report)	/
Ljubljansko barje project area: management activities in 2005	28 th February 2006 (Technical Interim Report)	/
Management Units in in Ljubljansko barje Project area	28 th February 2006 (Technical Interim Report)	/
Map of restoration land and regularly bird friendly managed land in the Vrbovski deli area in 2006 (Annex 15)		YES
Photos (CD)		YES

C.2 Maintain habitats for *Crex crex* and other grassland species in Nanoštica and Cerknjško jezero project areas

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007	
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	
C.2 Maintain habitats in Cerknica and Nanoštica area														

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
August 2004 (Mowing in Nanoštica project area)	September 2006 (Mowing in Nanoštica and Cerknjško jezero project areas completed)

Activities and Results

From the natural conditions point of view the Cerknjško jezero project area represented a very specific case especially in comparison with other two project areas. During the project implementation, the whole area was subject to intensive flooding in summer 2004 and 2005, which resulted in absolute limited possibilities for any kind of Corncrake habitat management.

Grassland habitat management in Cerknjško jezero. The Cerknjško jezero area is known as the largest typical "Karst polje" in Slovenia. At the highest water level "the polje" becomes a lake with the total surface of approximately 26 square kilometres. Depending on the yearly natural conditions, the farmers usually perform the late mowing of grasslands in the middle or late August.

Due to unfavourable natural conditions in summer 2004, the partner could not perform any mowing at all. Because of the relatively high water level during the whole season also the local farmers were forced to perform the mowing on alternative parcels outside the polje area. In some cases, the farmers had to purchase the litter and straw to maintain the livestock status on the farms.

Same situation happened in 2005. No activities could be carried out to maintain appropriate habitat for Corncrake in Cerknjško jezero project area, particularly mowing, due to extremely wet weather conditions. For the first time after more than thirty years, all the lake area was flooded in summer and autumn period as well. The partner acquired the official data on lake water levels from the responsible Agency for the Environment to prove the case which were sent to the EC within the Technical Interim Report on 28th February 2006.

Finally in 2006, the partner managed to perform management activities in Cerknica Project area. In summer 2006 approximately 104 ha of grasslands were mowed and managed according to the bird friendly management guidelines elaborated under Action A.2. The Partner has additionally purchased its proper machinery and mulched approximately 18 ha of abandoned land which was turned into phase of restoration. Restoration experiences and knowledge from the Ljubljansko barje project area were used when planning the restoration process in Cerknjško jezero project area. The cooperation and communication with the partner Municipality of Cerknica – Notranjski Regional park could be estimated as outstanding.

Grassland habitat management in Nanoščica area. The surrounding area of Nanoščica River is flooded regularly. Because of natural conditions and consequent land unsuitability for intensive farming, most of the land was left unfarmed. In the last years some local farmers have taken the initiative to reintroduce low input farming along the river. Nearly 30,0 hectares of wet grasslands were managed in 2004 (18,0 ha within the project area) according to the bird friendly management guidelines prepared under Action A.2. Also some parts nearby but outside the project area were managed according to the same management guidelines. The grasslands management was performed entirely by local farmers in cooperation with the Project Team. Following that the Management Agreement between the Beneficiary and Mr. Albin Otoničar from village Hrašče near Nanoščica project area was signed in May 2005.

According to the Management Agreement, Mr. Otoničar has mowed part of the meadows in project area in period August-September 2005 and 2006. Due to unfavourable weather conditions, resulting in high ground water levels only 19,5 ha of wet grasslands were mowed in the period between August and October 2005 but approximately 22,5 ha in 2006.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
Habitat management – mowing in Nanoščica project area in 2004 – 18 ha	September 2004
Habitat management – mowing in Nanoščica project area in 2005 – 19,5 ha	September 2005
Habitat management – mowing in Nanoščica project area in 2006 – 22,5 ha	September 2006
Habitat management – mowing in Cerknjško jezero project area in 2006 – 104 ha	September 2006

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
Active habitat management will be implemented on a minimum of 125 hectares of <i>Crex crex</i> breeding area, which will result in return of the species to Nanoščica project area	Active habitat management was carried out on 164 hectares of <i>Crex crex</i> breeding area, if we deduct the annual repetitions, the total

	managed surface is 126,5 ha 2 calling Corncrake males were recorded in the Nanoščica project area in 2005 and 2006 counts which confirms the come back of the species.
Observations and results of habitat management will be used to develop management guidelines under A.2	Done.
Habitat management will be periodically presented to local stakeholders, improved knowledge and raised awareness	Done under E.2
A model case for other local authorities in Slovenia will be established through co-operation with the Municipality of Cerknica	Done and further developed in their own new LIFE project.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

The case of Nanoščica Project area management and problems related to land lease were presented in previous Reports. Additionally, the variations and complications were widely presented in two explanation Letters to EC with additional information sent to Commission on 8th June 2005 and 12th September 2005.

The problem of land lease in Nanoščica project area was one of the most relevant project challenges. The good communication and stewardship skills used with the local farmer Mr Otoničar from the nearby Hrašče village resulted in the positive solution reached by the Project Team in Autumn 2004. All the targets related to bird friendly management were reached by the Management Agreement between the beneficiary and the farmer. Finally, the elaboration of the Spatial Plan for the Nature Reserve in Nanoščica project area under action A.3 represented a vision for the local communities on how to use biodiversity as development potential.

In Cerknjiško jezero project area, the Project Team met with the absolute unpredictability of natural weather conditions. This was foreseen in the expected constraints chapter of the project proposal. Finally, in summer 2006 the natural conditions allowed the partner to carry out the grassland management.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Map of regularly bird friendly managed land in Cerknica Lake Project area in 2006 (Annex 16)	/	YES
Map of regularly bird friendly managed land in Nanoščica Project area in 2006 (Annex 17)	/	YES
Copy of the Management Agreement with local farmer Mr Otoničar in Nanoščica Project Area and Annex signed in 2006 (Annex 17)	/	YES
Photos (CD)	/	YES

C.3 Set up visitors infrastructure in Ljubljansko barje reserve

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007		
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I		
(name of Action)															

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
January 2007 (Public tendering documentation being prepared including the Tender Project, prepared by the sub-contractor of techn. Blue-prints under A.3)	March 2007 (Building up of the visitor facilities in the project area - Nature Reserve)

Activities and Results

The implementation of this action was strongly linked to Action A3 and Action C.1. The aim of the action was to create a small nature reserve with basic visitor facilities in the Ljubljansko barje project area. The Action included the construction of following infrastructure elements:

- birdwatching observatory,
- interpretation boards for presentation of typical Barje habitats, fauna and flora (shown on specially prepared illustrations and photos) and
- footpaths and boardwalks.

The implementation of this action started upon the completed action A.3 (the hydrological conditions acquired by the Agency for the Environment of Republic of Slovenia on 8th January 2007 and obtained Planning information). The issued conditions represented the basis for the start of the field work. In less than 3 months, all planned infrastructure was constructed including interpretation boards and so the action targets achieved. All the subcontractors were selected upon the national public tendering legislation.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
Footpath along river Iška established	February 2007
Illustrations and interpretation boards realised	February – March 2007
Birdwatching observatory and boardwalk constructed	March 2007

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
Bird observatory and a number of interpretation boards to be created as well as footpaths.	Included in the Final Spatial Plan (Action A.3) and performed at the Nature Reserve. Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observatory = 35 m² - Boardwalk to the Observatory = 165 m - Footpath along river Iška = 1600 m² - 14 interpretation boards (different sizes) and 39 small orientation boards

Public attendance at the Reserve should lead to a better informed public and their awareness.	Done - Link to A.3 (Management Plan) and Actions E
The Reserve should bring a positive effect in supporting the designation of Ljubljansko barje Landscape Park.	Done - Link to E.1

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

The Project Action represented the implementation phase of the Action A.3. Due to intensive analysis of the visitor infrastructure to be established in the Nature reserve under Action A.3 and Modification Request approved in November 2006 the activities were postponed to the last period of the Project duration.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reporting Activities</i>	<i>Included with Final Report</i>
Interpretation Boards prepared within the Nature Reserve – prints in reduced sizes (Annex 18)	/	YES
Photos (CD)		YES

D. Reccuring management

D.1 Purchase and maintain machinery for habitat maintenance

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I
D.1 purchase machinery													

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
November 2004 <i>(tractor purchasing procedure started)</i>	March 2007 <i>(Machinery maintained until the end of the Project)</i>

Activities and Results

The aim of this Action was the purchase of all machinery needed to assure effective corncrake habitat management in Project Areas. The composition of the machinery needed for grassland management was generally represented by a tractor and its attachments. The Action started to be implemented in November 2004 when the Project Team made the first demand on tractor machinery suppliers. The Project Team visited the biggest farming fair in Slovenia – The Farming Fair in Gornja Radgona on 2nd September 2004 and made a very detailed market research on tractors and other attachments availability, their technical specifications and prices.

The first machinery – Tractor New Holland was purchased in April 2005. Purchasing details for other machinery is given in the summary table of Results and Outputs.

During the Project implementation period all machinery was maintained regularly to enable effective grasslands management when needed. The Machinery was kept safely in village Iška Loka close to the Nature Reserve Area at the farm of Mr Anton Uršič (address: Iška Loka 68, 1292 Ig).

Summary Table Results and Outputs

List of all machinery purchased and other details about purchasing process:

Invoice / Receipt		Date of payment	Supplier	Additional Machinery Type description
No. ID	Date			
A05000085-0101	18.04.05	5.4.-20.4.05	Itro d.o.o.	Tractor New Holand TN75DA
01-562-05/4984	30.06.05	30.06.05	Agrometal d.o.o.	Tedder

01-560-05/4984	30.06.05	30.06.05	Agrometal d.o.o.	Mower BCS Duplex Gold 212
00022/05	27.07.05	19.07.05	Edvard Bajc s.p.	Square baler John Deer 332A
1286	29.12.05	13.12.,21.12.05,5.1.06	Inudstria Falconero Srl	Shredder
6200027	27.02.06	27.02.06	T center d.o.o.	Motor saw Husqva.364XP-15"
06000338-0102	02.03.06	02.03.06	ITRO d.o.o.	Tractor TND weights
56	06.03.06	06.03.06	Kardanske gredi Cerjak	Cardan for tractor
01-172-06	24.05.06	30.05.06	Agrometal d.o.o.	Spinning tedder
229/208104	02.08.06	25.07.06	Merkur-trgovina in storitve,d.d.	Motor-scythe

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
Appropriate <i>Crex crex</i> habitat management in the project areas to be assured through the project period and after its termination (secured in long term).	Done.

Project Problems and Drawbacks

According to the project proposal also a loader had to be purchased during the project period. Based on many discussions with local farmers and experience gained in the first year of the project the Project Team decided to produce a list of urgently needed machinery to fulfil the overall project targets and especially Action C.1 and C.2 targets. The final list was composed by: Tractor, Mower, Tedder, Spinning tedder, Square baler and Shredder. All these 5 tractor attachments were essential to manage the corncrake grasslands in Project Areas. Loader was not subject to purchase due to agreement with farmers to take away the litter by themselves.

During project implementation the Project Team realised the essential need of a flail shredder. This tractor attachment was essential for moving meadows in early stages of overgrowing and for removing first year offshoots, which grew from roots next few years after removal of large bushes. The shredder was identified as very useful attachment for grassland restoration process, for limiting further afforestation and for cleaning out the foot path within the visitor infrastructure in Nature reserve area when established.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Photos (CD)		YES

E. Public awareness and dissemination of results

E.1 Encourage and promote policies at national and local level that benefit *Crex crex*, including encouraging maximum legal protection of key sites

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007			
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
E.1 Promote policies																

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
January 2004 <i>(Start of Project)</i>	March 2007 <i>(End of Project)</i>

Activities and Results

The main aim of this project action was lobbying and educating the applicable representatives and officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food on bird friendly agriculture and rural development policy. The implementation of the project action matched exactly with the ending of EU strategic and programming period 2004 – 2006 (for new EU member states) and starting of the new coming period 2007 – 2013. The project happened in the absolute appropriate time. From this point of view most of the activities and outputs were subject of Project Team integration into current programming period and further participation within the new policy framework 2007 – 2013. In the whole process, the Project Team concentrated its efforts on following targeted institutions:

- *European Commission – DG Agriculture*
- *Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food of Republic of Slovenia - Directorate for Agriculture*
- *Chamber for Farming and Forestry of Republic of Slovenia*
- *Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning of Republic of Slovenia – Department for Nature Conservation Policy*
- *Institute for Nature Conservation of Republic of Slovenia*
- *Landscape park Ljubljansko barje Project Group*
- *Municipality of Ig*
- *Coalition of NGOs for Sustainable Rural Development*

European Commission – DG Agriculture. The Beneficiary is a national partner of BirdLife Int. network with central EU office based in Brussels. In acquiring up to date information in the field of rural development the Project Team took part in the internal working groups as well as in formal meetings at EC – DG Agriculture organised by BirdLife staff in Brussels. The meetings were crucial in presenting the beneficiary's position on current situation in Slovenia (biodiversity, nature conservation) as well as future possible improvements in the field of bird friendly farming and rural development policies. Within this activity, part of the Project Team assisted meetings as Agricultural conferences, Seminar on EU Cohesion and Structural Funds Policy, Internal BirdLife Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Development, Advocacy Seminar and Meetings at EC DG Agriculture.

Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food of the Republic of Slovenia (MAFF). At the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Food some relevant contacts were established and maintained during the

period 2004 - 2007. Special attention was addressed to the activities of the Department for Sustainable Farming which was responsible (under the MAFF) for the targeted part of rural development policy especially Rural Development Programme – the Agri – environmental Schemes. Contacts were kept regularly with the representatives from Department for Structural Policy and Rural Development as well regarding the drafting process of the new European Regulation on support for Rural Development 2007 – 2013 and the following National Rural Development Strategy. Agricultural specialist of the Project Team managed to become a formal member of the Monitoring Committee for Rural Development Plan of Republic of Slovenia for the period 2004 – 2006 and of Project Group for new Strategic and Programming documents within the Rural Development Policy 2007 – 2013 preparation. The Agriculture Specialist took part in all related meetings and briefings organised by MAFF. One of the main results within the Monitoring Committee was achieved in November 2005 when the final decision of the Committee was to keep further financial support to organic farming and grassland management scheme in 2006. This was an outstanding results in the situation of limited amount of money and with most of the Committee members against further financing. Within the Rural Development Programme 2004 – 2006 those two schemes were identified as the only Agri – environmental schemes to stimulate farmers on Corncrake areas to perform bird friendly farming practices.

The membership of the Beneficiary within the Project Group for new Strategic and Programming documents within the Rural Development Policy 2007 – 2013 preparation was essential for the final output of the Project. Within this Group the Project Team representative managed to promote intensively the main aim of the project and further development of the new Agri – Environmental scheme for Corncrake in Natura 2000 sites (VTR Scheme) which was finally included in the Rural Development Programme for Republic of Slovenia 2007 – 2013. The Scheme VTR represents a crucial management tool for establishing long term protection of Corncrake in Natura 2000 core areas in Slovenia. The technical part of the Scheme is annexed to Final Report (Annex 19) as well as the section from the new RDP 2007 – 2013 including description of the Scheme (Annex 20) (http://www.mkgp.gov.si/si/o_ministrstvu/direktorati/direktorat_za_kmetijstvo/sektor_za_strukturno_politiko_in_podezelje)

Chamber for Farming and Forestry of Republic of Slovenia. By the end of the year 2004 the Agricultural specialist Andrej Medved became a national coordinator of Special grassland habitat management Scheme promotion under the Slovene Agri-Environmental Programme for 2005. The presentation of grassland bird friendly farming practices (mainly for corncrake – *Crex crex*) was included in the Catalogue published by the MAFF. The Catalogue represented the main source of information for all Farmer Advisors in Slovenia. Linked with presentations of the scheme to farmers and farming advisors, an outstanding results were achieved in up-take of the scheme (see E.2 for details).

Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning of Republic of Slovenia (MESP). In lobbying for more friendly rural development policy at the MAFF the Project Team needed to harmonise its proposals with other relevant institutions as MESP. During the project period, the MESP started with preparation of the National Natura 2000 Management Programme which was discussed intensively with the beneficiary especially from the bird conservation point of view. Action Plan and management guidelines both elaborated in Action A.1 and A.2 were confirmed by the MESP to be integrated into the mentioned document (Annex 2).

Institute for Nature Conservation of Republic of Slovenia – LIFE Project. The Project Team kept regular contacts with Institute for Nature Conservation especially related to their LIFE Project »Natura 2000 in Slovenia – management models in information system«. Within this project management guidelines are planned to be produced for specific habitats as well for wet grassland habitats which were subject of this project. The Project Team established intensive communication, knowledge and experience exchange on the issue of wet grasslands conservation.

Landscape park Ljubljansko barje designation (LPLB).

During the Project the Project Team supported the Partner - Municipality of Ljubljana in achieving LPLB designation. The Project Team was invited to take part in the Project Group for Landscape Park designation. The representative of the Project Partner was elected as the coordinator of the whole designation process. In 2006, the National Institute for Nature Conservation started with the preparation of the management plan for the planned LPLB. Beneficiary was invited to deliver the project outputs: Action Plan for Corncrake 2005 – 2015 (Action A.1) and Management Guidelines (Action A.2) to the responsible body. The letter of conformation issued by the Institute is annexed to the Final Report (Annex 4).

Municipality of Ig and Nature Reserve designation. The local community of Ig was not formally involved in the project but invited to take part in project activities related to the establishment of the Nature Reserve in the project area. The Municipality demonstrated absolute willingness to cooperate on the issue of the long term protection of Corncrake on the local level. Based on the Spatial Plan and Management Plan for Nature Reserve produced under Action A.3 discussion were started on formal Nature reserve designation within the possible Municipality Formal Act and according to the national Nature Conservation Act. DOPPS sent the legal protection proposal to the Municipality of Ig on 9th January 2007 and the draft Decree is annexed to the report (Annex 21). Following to that, the Municipality included the area of Nature Reserve in the Municipality Spatial Plan which is planned to be adopted by the end of 2007.

Coalition of NGOs for Sustainable Rural Development (Coalition SRD). For the purpose of more successful lobbying at the MAFF within the preparation of the new strategic and programming documents on rural development policy in Slovenia for period 2007 – 2013 a Coalition of NGOs was established in 2006. The Coalition was basically founded by DOPPS, the Institute for Sustainable Development and the Union of Slovenian Organic Farmers Association (USOFA). During the project implementation the Project Team developed good cooperation with USOFA. The organic farming was identified as the baseline management standard in Natura 2000 sites which are important for farmland birds conservation. Further on, Natura 2000 issue was fairly accepted by the USOFA and common promotional programmes were initiated. As a result of this cooperation, some farmers from Ljubljansko barje Natura 2000 site converted from intensive to organic farming during the project period.

Other complementary Outputs:

Farmland Bird Index (FBI) methodology elaboration. Before the end of the Project in autumn 2006 the Beneficiary was invited to prepare methodology for FBI Monitoring in Slovenia by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning. The methodology preparation was initiated by DOPPS as an important tool in farmland birds population and trends monitoring and following the application of the new VTR Agri – Environmental Scheme within the new Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013. The actual Monitoring of FBI is planned to be started in Slovenia in 2007 based on the methodology prepared by the beneficiary. Brief summary of the FBI methodology is annexed in Annex 22.

New LIFE Project started by Notranjski Regional Park in Cerknical Lake Project Area.

Experience, recommendations and all materials that were produced under Project "Establishing long – term protection of *Crex crex* in Slovenia", no. LIFE03NAT/SLO/000077 was confirmed to be used during the implementation of the new LIFE project "Intermittent Cerknica lake", no. LIFE06NAT/SLO/000069 at Cerkniško jezero Natura 2000 site. Action Plan for Corncrake *Crex crex* and management guidelines for qualification species are considered at implementation of all actions during new LIFE project. Management guidelines for qualification species are confirmed to be used within the management plan for the Cerknica Lake preparation. Additionally, a member of the DOPPS Project Team was elected in the Steering Committee of the LIFE Project "Intermittent Cerknica lake" based on the letter issued by the Notranjski regional Park (Annex 23).

Organisation of a Conference on Natura 2000 in Slovenia and wet grassland management guidelines promotion. In September 2005, the Project Team together with other DOPPS staff

organised a large scale Conference “*Natura 2000 and Rural Development – Outlook for Agriculture, Forestry and Biodiversity*” as major opportunity to influence and lobbying the representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food as well as other interested stakeholders. The aim of the event was to facilitate inter – ministerial communication in a time, when new strategic and programming documents were drafted on a national level. As one of the preparatory activities to the Conference was the elaboration of *Special recommendations for integrating bird friendly habitat management guidelines in the National Rural Development Plan 2007 – 2013* (Document already delivered within the Technical Interim Report sent to the EC on 28th February 2006).

Planinsko polje designation Initiative. Planinsko polje is identified as one of the 8 most important SPAs for Corncrake in Slovenia. During the project period a local initiative from Laze village applied for support from the Project Team in the process of Planinsko polje Landscape park designation. The area was subject to several threats especially bigger infrastructure investments. The Project Team decided to support the local initiative which resulted in several meetings, presentations and other contacts on local level.

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
Dialogue established with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food regarding <i>Crex crex</i> issues, resulting in changes in agriculture subsidy policies to subsidise low input management practices. Meetings with Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food and Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning to further support of the agriculture policy improvements.	Evident uptake of the HAB Scheme in priority Natura 2000 sites within RDP 2004 – 2006 in years 2005 and 2006 (see E.2 for details). New Agri – Env Scheme VTR prepared by Beneficiary and included within the new RDP 2007 – 2013.
The designation of 3 SPAs during the project combined with production of management guidelines for SPA qualification species to give basis for the prevention of <i>Crex crex</i> harmful land use in these areas.	Designation of 3 SPAs in May 2004. Management guidelines elaborated under Action A.2
Support to the designation process of Ljubljansko barje Landscape park and incorporation assured of <i>Crex crex</i> conservation measures in the potential designation official documents and acts.	Representative confirmed in the Landscape park Project Team Cooperation with Municipality of Ig Confirmation Letter by the Institute for Nature Conservation (Action A.2)

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

Relatively poor inter – ministerial cooperation between Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Environment. Since the beginning of the project, the project team was facing the problem of a relatively poor information exchange and limited cooperation between both ministries. This problem was evident especially when integrating bird friendly guidelines into rural development policy. The reasons for that could be explained as a limited understanding of Natura 2000 within the Agriculture Sector. In many cases, the designation of Natura 2000 sites was characterised only as a nature conservation project and not as a multi ministerial one. The Project Team lobbying within the Agriculture Sector was of extreme importance particularly in a time, when new agriculture and rural development strategic and programming documents were being drafted on a national level. Taking an active membership in strategic project teams within the MAFF gave us the opportunity to represent the biodiversity conservation interests and prepare good basis for future conservation work.

Fairly limited knowledge about Natura 2000 issue among public institutions and general public.

The Natura 2000 issue in Slovenia could be identified as a relatively freshly baked project. As a consequence, not many organisations are aware about the importance and commitments of Republic of Slovenia to EU. The Natura 2000 is often perceived in a negative way what needed to be improved significantly in a medium term period. The beneficiary took every opportunity to give a positive impulse about Natura 2000 network in Slovenia to the general public. In most cases, the result was very positive as many people understand the Natura 2000 issue when explained in a practical and simple way.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Technical description of the New Corncrake friendly VTR Agri – Environmental scheme prepared by the beneficiary (Annex 19)	/	YES
VTR Scheme description taken from the Rural Development Programme for Republic of Slovenia 2007 – 2013 (2 nd Draft) (Annex 20)	/	YES
Proposal for the Nature Reserve Iški Morost designation in process within the Municipality of Ig (Annex 21)	/	YES
Description of <i>Crex crex</i> monitoring methodology within the FBI Project (Annex 22)	/	YES
Letter of Invitation to take part in the LIFE project LIFE06NAT/SLO/000069 Steering Committee in Cerknica Lake Natura 2000 area (Annex 23)	/	YES
Photos (CD)		YES

E.2 Consulting, educating and informing farmers, land owners, farming advisors and local authorities

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I
E.2 Consulting with farmers, ..., local authorities													

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
January 2004 <i>(Start of Project)</i>	March 2007 <i>(End of Project)</i>

Activities and Results

At the beginning of the project, very limited knowledge about specific grassland habitat management practices was available. The Project team performed a series of interviews with representatives of the local self-government in the project areas, farmer's advisors and local farmers to obtain a general overview of the situation. The main stakeholders in this activity were:

- **The Slovene Farming and Forestry Chamber** as the central Slovenian organization in providing farming advisory services.
- **Experts from the University of Ljubljana** as useful source of scientific information on grasslands management
- **Farmers.** In achieving the expected grassland habitat management special attention was given to farmers in the project areas. Farmers were used as an important source of technical and practical information directly on the field. The most important thing was the fact, that they were regularly involved in relevant project actions.
- **Local authorities.** We regularly informed local authorities about the project and its progress especially regarding the involvement of the local farmers and other stakeholders.

Based on the experiences gained in the first phase of the project implementation, the Action E.2 was followed up through specific sub-actions as follows:

- meeting farmer advisors in project areas,
- meeting farmers in project areas,
- lectures for farmers and farmer advisors and field demonstrations of bird friendly mowing,
- articles published in agriculture and other magazines.

Summary of activities for sub-actions completed under action E.2 in Project period

<i>Sub-action (contacts)</i>	<i>Year</i>			<i>Deliverables</i>
	2004	2005	2006 / 2007	
Meeting farmer advisors (Workshops)	5 Meetings	4 Meetings	3 Meetings	12 Meetings
Expert Workshop for Farming Advisors	1	/	1	2 Workshops
Lectures for farmers and farmer advisors	3	5	4	12 Lectures
Field demonstration of bird friendly mowing	/	2	2	4 Field demonstrations
Articles published in agriculture and other magazines	2	7	2	11 Articles

Important low input grassland management Agri-environmental Schemes uptake in project period 2004 – 2007 (HAB Scheme and new VTR Scheme available in 2007 with the new RDP 2007 – 2013)

<i>Grasslands habitat conservation (HAB scheme)</i>	<i>Year</i>		
	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006 / 2007</i>
No. of farmers (KMG) that applied to HAB scheme	122	365	310
Total size of grasslands under HAB applications	354,32	908,4	715

Wet grasslands management in priority Natura 2000 sites (the new VTR Scheme)			
No. of farmers (KMG) that applied to VTR scheme	/	/	23
Total size of grasslands under VTR applications	/	/	326

* all data presented in the table are estimates (the responsible state institution is the Agency of Republic of Slovenia for Agriculture Markets and Rural Development)

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
Increased knowledge of farmers, other land owners, advisors and local authorities about the <i>Crex crex</i> conservation measures and appropriate management.	Done.
Increased awareness and participation in the Slovene AE Programme by farmers and their advisors. Increased uptake of AE measures by 15% to be as a result of this action, additionally supported by other promotional and educational project actions.	Great uptake in bird friendly scheme HAB in 2005 (nearly 3x-300% increase).
A change in grassland management practices to less intensive techniques.	Done.
Printed / Published project information and disseminated results, resulting in improved knowledge and raised awareness of directly involved local stakeholders.	Done.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

Within the implementation of the action E.2 some evident problems were identified especially related to the fact of very limited knowledge on Natura 2000 issue among all involved stakeholders. The Project Team identified two main examples which improved significantly as a result of intensive project activities:

Existing incentives and schemes at national level unfavourable to bird friendly farming practices in Natura 2000 sites and project Areas. The Agri - Environmental Schemes (especially specific Schemes for grasslands management – HAB scheme and ETA scheme) available under the Rural Development Programme for Republic of Slovenia 2004 – 2006 were identified as currently the most important incentive to farmers in project areas and other important *Crex crex* areas in Slovenia. Based on discussions and meetings with farmers and farming advisors, the Project Team concluded that existing scheme conditions do not always fit with the *Crex crex* friendly habitat management guidelines proposed by the Project Team. From this point of view, the Action A.2 implementation was facing difficulties when convincing the farmers to respect additional management guidelines that were not yet integrated into the existing Schemes (for example: the grassland bird friendly type of mowing, set aside, low input farming, management of solitary bushes). The project team started to work on new Scheme preparation to fulfil the *Crex crex* habitat management guidelines conditions. The target was achieved by preparation and integration of the new Scheme VTR (Link to Action E.1) within the new Rural development Programme 2007 – 2013.

Poor promotion of nature conservation schemes and poor knowledge of farmer advisors about *Crex crex* friendly habitat management. The Chamber is the main institution in Republic in Slovenia in supplying the farming advisory service. In many cases the farmers were not sufficiently informed about most suitable farming practices for *Crex crex* habitat management. The reasons for that were related to poor knowledge of farming advisors about nature conservation issues that were from the Project Team point of view intentionally ignored for many years following the Common Agriculture Policy directions. The Chamber did recently start with some nature conservation activities. The lectures given by project team within the Chamber national programme for 2005 was an evident result of cooperation. The Project Team estimates that the general knowledge of Farmer advisors at

least within the Project Areas improved significantly. In establishing long term protection, a nationally wide programme on Natura 2000 farming should be prepared by the responsible Ministry.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Photos (CD)		YES

E.3 Brochure on *Crex crex* and proper grassland management

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007	
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	
(name of Action)														

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
November 2006 (Final Version of SAP elaborated)	March 2007 (Brochure published)

Activities and Results

The Brochure was published in March 2007, describing the project results. Summary of Action Plan (Action A.1) and management guidelines (Action A.2) as well as other knowledge and experience about Corncrake and its habitat management is included in the publication. Special chapter is dedicated to the presentation of the new Agri – Environmental Scheme VTR that was prepared by the beneficiary. The aim of the brochure is to educate general public, farmers and other interested people about the importance of Corncrake protection. It was distributed to various target groups mainly after the project end.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

<i>Results / Outputs</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
Brochure on Corncrake published.	March 2007

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
Increased knowledge of all stakeholders and other interested groups about the <i>Crex crex</i> conservation measures and appropriate management.	The Brochure supported other publications published within the project. Valuation could be done in a long – term period.
Awareness of all Stakeholders, decision makers on national and local level as well as of general public to be raised.	Valuation could be done in a long – term period.

Further conservation actions for <i>Crex crex</i> being supported in the whole country.	
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Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

A circulation of 20.000 copies was foreseen according to the original Project. In the period of text and graphic material preparation, the Project Team realised that the size of the brochure should significantly increase due to the amount of data to be presented about Corncrake and its habitat management. Upon this, the Project Team decided reduce the circulation to 14.000 copies instead of 20.000.

Deliverables

Deliverables	Status	
	Already delivered in previous Reports	Annexed to the Final Report
Brochure on Corncrake and proper grassland management (Annex 24)	/	YES

E.4 Species and project promotion on national level

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007			
Number/name	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I			
E.4 Promotion on national level																

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
January 2004 (Start of Project)	March 2007 (End of Project)

Activities and Results

Different activities were performed on national level to inform interested people and to increase the general public awareness about the Corncrake, its habitat and about the importance and steps needed for effective corncrake protection. For this purpose, the beneficiary carried out more than 15 attractive lectures and exploring night excursions mostly in project areas with the focus on general public from all parts of Slovenia. The friendly leaflet was published with the first demonstration of a Corncrake friendly type of mowing and finally more than 50 articles were published in national media including DOPPS Magazine "Svet ptic".

Project purpose and targets were promoted generally during the whole project period within:

- Traditional lectures in 6 different regions in Slovenia organised by the beneficiary
- Traditional "Crex night" survey organised by the Notranjski Regional Park
- The lectures about the project carried out at "Young ornithological researchers' camp" organised by the beneficiary
- Articles in DOPPS Magazine "Svet ptic"

- Different events in Cerknjško jezero Project area organised by the Notranjski Regional Park (workshop in Rakov Škocjan in 2004 “Memory of Cerknjško jezero “)
- Traditional Kozjansko jabolko Fair in Kozjanski Regional Park (in 2004 and 2005)
- Other events on a national level

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Activities under Action A.4 accomplished under reporting dates with summary for the whole Project duration

Objectives foreseen for the whole project period	Activities accomplished in 2004	Activities accomplished from January till July 2005	Activities accomplished from August till December 2005	Activities accomplished from January 2006 till March 2007	Activities accomplished during the whole project period
12 lectures in 6 locations	7	2	2	4	15
5 night excursions	1	2	0	4	7
2 lectures on the camp	1	1	0	0	2
leaflet about the project	printed 10.000 copies	disseminated	disseminated	disseminated	printed 10.000 copies
6 articles in national media	8	4	8	6	26
3 articles in Svet ptic	1	2	7	15	25

Activities under Action A.4 accomplished and sorted by 3 project areas

Objectives foreseen for the whole project period	Activities accomplished on Ljubljansko barje	Activities accomplished on Cerknjško jezero	Activities accomplished on Nanošćica	Activities accomplished over whole Slovenia	All activities accomplished during the project
12 lectures in 6 locations	1	1	0	13	15
5 night excursions	2	3	1	1	7
2 lectures on the camp	0	0	0	2	2
6 articles in national media	0	0	0	26	26
3 articles in Svet ptic	0	0	0	25	25
All activities accomplished in the area	3	5	1	67	76

All of the activities foreseen in the project were carried out in high quality manner by the Project Team and as demonstrated in the tables, the majority was implemented in larger extent as planned.

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
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14 lectures and 5 excursions to be performed.	17 lectures and 7 excursions realised.
6 Articles in national media to be published.	26 Articles realised.
3 Articles in magazine "Svet ptic" published.	25 Articles realised.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

During the project duration, no problems or drawbacks were identified.

Deliverables

Deliverables	Status	
	Already delivered in previous Reports	Annexed to the Final Report
Leaflet on Corncrake friendly grassland management published in 10.000 copies	Second Interim Activity Report (22 nd September 2005)	/
Press cuttings from 2006-07 (CD with written media analyses) – Annex 25	/	YES
Photos (CD)	/	YES

E.5 Species and project promotion on local level

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007		
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I		
E.5 Promotion on local level															

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
January 2004 (Start of Project)	March 2007 (End of Project)

Activities and Results

Within this Action the Project Team performed the following activities:

- *Lectures about Corncrake and the project for local people in the project areas*
- *Night excursions to present Corncrake to the local people in project areas*
- *Lectures for elementary school children*
- *Excursions for local school children*
- *Colouring book for younger children and lectures to kindergartens*
- *Articles in local media*

Additionally, The Partner – Municipality of Ljubljana organised three excellent workshops (1 per project year) for local people from Ljubljansko barje area. The workshops were well accepted by the local people.

- **Workshop no.1 in 2004:** Rural development and new farming opportunity within the Rural Development Programme (The activity was focussed on farmers from Ljubljansko barje area)
- **Workshop no.2 in 2005:** Field Excursion to Natural Reserves in Italy - Foce d'Isonzo (Isonzo Rivermouth) Nature Reserve and Lake Doberdo and Pietrarossa Nature Reserve (The activity

was organized for decision makers from 5 Municipalities and other public institutions covering the area of Ljubljansko barje)

- **Workshop no.3 in 2006:** Nature values interpretation with emphasize on the Ljubljansko barje Landscape park in designation (additional working day was organized individually with the Beneficiary for interpretation of the Nature Reserve Iški Morost in Ljubljansko barje Project area – Action C.3). The workshop was facilitated by recognized American expert John Veverka.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Activities under Action A.5 accomplished under reporting dates with summary for the whole Project duration (The Activity realised by the project Partner is not subject to this table)

Objectives foreseen for the whole project period	Activities accomplished in 2004	Activities accomplished from January till July 2005	Activities accomplished from August till December 2005	Activities accomplished from January 2006 till March 2007	Activities accomplished during the whole project period
7 lectures	1	1	1	6	9
3 night excursions	2	0	0	2	4
20 lectures for elementary school children	0	29	0	0	29
5 excursions for children	0	1	1	6	8
Coloring book for children	printed 2.000 copies	disseminated	disseminated	reprinted 2.000 copies	printed 4.000 copies
5 lectures in kindergartens	0	1	0	4	5
10 articles in local media	9	2	6	5	22

Activities under Action A.5 accomplished and sorted by 3 Project Areas (The Activity realised by the project Partner is not subject to this table)

Objectives foreseen for the whole project period	Activities accomplished on Ljubljansko barje	Activities accomplished on Cerkniško jezero	Activities accomplished on Nanoščica	Activities accomplished over whole Slovenia	All activities accomplished during the project
7 lectures	6	2	1	0	9
3 night excursions	3	0	1	0	4
20 lectures for elementary school children	13	16	0	0	29
5 excursions for children	3	4	0	1	8
5 lectures in kindergartens	4	0	0	1	5
10 articles in local media	0	2	0	20	22

All activities accomplished in the area	29	24	2	22	77
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All of the activities foreseen in the project were carried out in high quality manner by the Project Team and as demonstrated in the tables, the majority was implemented in larger extent as planned.

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
7 lectures and 3 night excursions for the local public to be realised and implemented.	9 lectures and 4 night excursions realised.
20 lectures and 5 excursions for local school children to be conducted	29 lectures and 8 excursions realised.
3 workshops to be organised for inhabitants and stakeholders from the Ljubljansko barje area by the project Partner, Municipality of Ljubljana	Done.
Information about the lectures and excursions to be published in 8 local newspapers and in DOPPS magazine Svet ptic	22 information and articles published.
Special leaflet for children to be published and distributed. 5 short lectures to be undertaken in kindergartens at the leaflet release.	The Colouring Book published and 5 short lectures realised.
Articles for newspapers to be prepared and published.	22 information and articles published.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

Due to unexpected positive acceptance of the Corncrake Colouring Book the Project Team decided to reprint the deliverable. After the first printing of 2.000 copies in 2004 another 2.000 copies were reprinted in 2006.

No problems or drawbacks were identified during the project duration.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Corncrake Colouring Book published in 4.000 copies	Second Interim Activity Report (22 nd September 2005)	/
Press cuttings from 2006-07 (CD with written media analyses) – Annex 25	/	YES
Photos (CD)	/	YES

E.6 Reserve promotion

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007	
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II
(name of Action)														

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
March 2007 (Nature Reserve leaflet published)	March 2007 (Action to be carried out further on)

Activities and Results

Special leaflet was published to promote the Iški Morost Nature Reserve and wider area of Ljubljansko barje Natura 2000 site with emphasize on specific habitats, fauna and flora characteristics. The Corncrake Trial is presented as the main element of the Nature Reserve with landscape features and bird friendly grassland management needed for long – term protection explained. The leaflet represented a very good tool for wider promotion of the Ljubljansko barje area.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
Nature Reserve Special Leaflet published.	March 2007

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
Wide distribution of the published leaflet throughout the Ljubljansko barje area.	Partially done. To be carry out further on after the end of the Project.
A better informed general public regarding the habitat needs of <i>Crex crex</i> . Awareness of all the stakeholders and public to be raised. Project as well as further conservation actions for <i>Crex crex</i> should gain better support.	Done.
Increasing visitor levels to the reserve, giving better possibility for public awareness and knowledge raising.	Done.
The designation of Ljubljansko barje Landscape Park to be supported.	Done.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

During the project duration no Problems or Drawbacks were identified.

Deliverables

Deliverables	Status	
	Already delivered in previous Reports	Annexed to the Final Report
Nature Reserve Leaflet (Annex 26)	/	YES

E.7 WEB site of the project

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007
Number/name	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I

Number/name	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I			
E.8 Notice boards																

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
April 2004 <i>(Notice Boards conceived)</i>	August 2004 <i>(Notice boards placed in 3 Project Areas)</i>

Activities and Results

The concept of notice boards was prepared in April 2004 following by designing in May 2004 and printing in June. Notice boards were finally placed in 3 Project Areas in July (Ljubljansko barje and Nanoščica) and in August 2004 (Cerkniško jezero).

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Results / Outputs	Completion Date
Notice boards produced and placed in 3 Project Areas.	April – August 2004

Indicators valuation

Expected Results (quantitative when possible)	Valuation
Notice boards to be placed in strategic places where they could be easily accessible and visible to public.	Done.
Public awareness raised and knowledge on <i>Crex crex</i> and Natura 2000 improved.	Done.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

During the project duration no Problems or Drawbacks were identified.

Deliverables

Deliverables	Status	
	Already delivered in previous Reports	Annexed to the Final Report
Notice Boards	Progress Report (10 th March 2005)	/
Photos (CD)		YES

F. Overall project operation and monitoring

F.1 Project coordination

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007
Number/name	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I
F.1 Project Co-ordination													

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
1st January 2004 <i>(Formal starting date of the Project)</i>	31st March 2007 <i>(Formal ending date of the Project)</i>

Note: The details of all the activities are described under Overall Project Management chapter.

Summary Table Results and Outputs

<i>Results / Outputs</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
Project Team in place	January 2004
3 lap top computers HP Compaq purchased	19.4.2004
2 telescopes Carl Zeiss and 1 ocular 30x purchased	28.5.2004
1 HP LaserJet printer purchased	28.5.2004
5 GPS devices with accessories purchased	6.7.2004
1 Digital Camera, 1 objective for digital camera purchased	18.8.2004, 25.11.2005
3 binoculars Pentax purchased	17.11.2004
1 Multimedia LCD projector purchased	21.12.2004
1 car Renault Kangoo 4x4 purchased	15.6.2005
All the project activities completed	31.3.2007
Audit certificate obtained	15.6.2007

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
Prompt and good implementation of the project, according to the project proposal	Done.
All the foreseen equipment necessary for project implementation purchased	Done.
Positive audit report/ certificate	Obtained.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables, including reports</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Progress Report for reporting period between 1 st January – 31 st December	Sent to EC on 10 th March 2005	

2004		
Interim activity Report for reporting period between 1 st January 2005 – 31 st July 2005	Sent to EC on 22 nd September 2005	
Interim Report for reporting period between 1 st August – 31 st December 2005	Sent to EC on 28 th February 2006	
Project Final Report covering whole project period (Technical and Financial)	/	YES
Audit Certificate issued by the authorised auditor Plus Revizija d.o.o.		YES
VAT Certificates – DOPPS and Municipality of Cerknica		YES
Photos (CD)		YES

Overall project management

As foreseen in the project proposal, the expected result of overall project management is good and prompt implementation of the project, which was successfully accomplished.

(0) Project Team

In accordance with the original project and its modification, the Project Team was created by the staff on 13 job positions (12 at beneficiary's and one at the City Municipality of Ljubljana). Each of the job positions was covered by one or several people during the project duration, as follows:

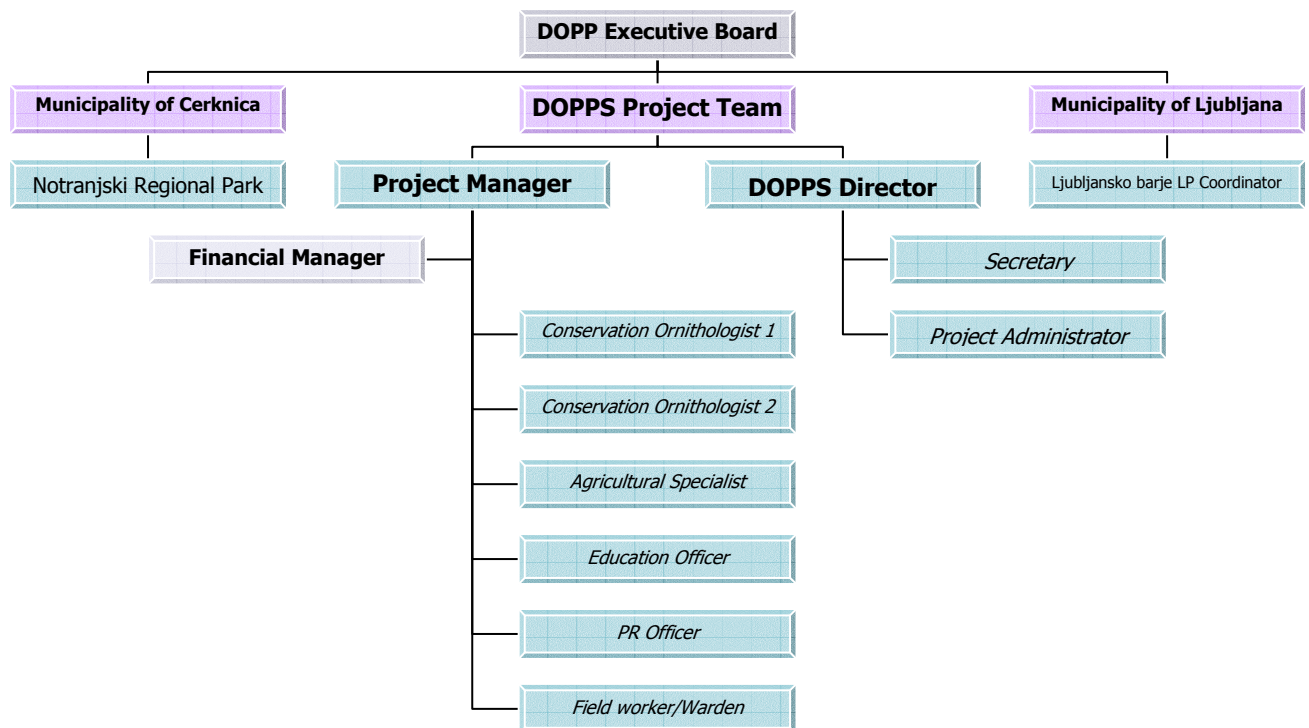
- Project Manager: Nada Bele (from January to June 2004), Polona Sladič (from June 2004 to May 2005), Tomaž Jančar (May to December 2005), Andrej Medved (January 2006 to March 2007)
- Financial Manager: Nataša Šalaja (January 2006 to March 2007)
- Conservation Ornithologist 1: Luka Božič (January 2004 to March 2007)
- Conservation Ornithologist 2: Primož Kmecl (December 2005 to March 2007)
- Agricultural Specialist: Andrej Medved (January 2004 to March 2007)
- Education Officer: Mateja Nose (January to December 2004), Eva Vukelič (January 2005 to March 2007)
- PR Officer: Mateja Nose (January to December 2004), Andrej Medved (January 2004 to April 2006), Marjana Ahačič (May 2006 to March 2007)
- Field worker/Warden: Željko Šalamun (February 2005 to March 2007)
- Warden Assistant: Andrej Figelj (January 2004 to March 2007)
- Director: Tomaž Jančar (January 2004 to April 2005), Marijan Logar (April 2005 to May 2006), Andrej Medved (June 2006 to March 2007)
- Secretary: Nevenka Pfajfar (January 2004 to March 2007)
- Project Administrator: Petra Vrh (March 2006 to March 2007)
- Ljubljansko barje Landscape Park Co-ordinator at City Municipality of Ljubljana: Barbara Zupanc (January 2004 to March 2007)

Staff changes, particularly on the position of project manager, were one of the problems we encountered during this project implementation. However, the lesson we have learned from this is that good project managers in Slovenia are hard to find. The final decision to split the management work between the existing experienced staff in the beginning of 2006 was the right decision, which helped us to complete the project in time and achieve all the project goals.

At this stage we also need to mention the employees of Notranjski Regional Park, who were authorised to carry out the project activities on behalf of the Municipality of Cerknica (Valentin Schein, Director and Leon Kebe, Park Conservation Manager). According to their decision during the project proposal preparation, their salaries were not financed from the project funds but from the

municipal budget. On the other hand, they were equally involved in the Project Team and regularly co-operated with DOPPS and other partners and stake-holders.

The informative organigram of the project team is enclosed below. The team members relations were not very hierarchical, though the responsibilities were clearly established and monitored by DOPPS director as well as the Board, acting as the Steering Committee.



(1) Project management

In course of the project, we have developed a system of planning, communicating, supervising and reporting activities, which enables us to manage and control the project and ensure successful implementation of the foreseen activities.

(1.1) Planning and organising

At the beginning of the project implementation, we prepared detailed work plan in which we elaborated every action, breaking it down to separate activities and tasks. For each task in work plan we identified timeframe and member of project team responsible for it. The work plan was revised on a regular basis, in order to adjust it to the changing environment and to solve potential problems and drawbacks as well as staff changes. At the same time, the project managers and from 2006 on, the financial manager have regularly checked the project's financial plan and occurred costs as well as the cash-flow.

(1.2) Meetings, supervising and trainings

Throughout the project, the regular staff meetings with director took place once per week. At this meeting, every staff member reported on work carried out in past week and on plans for the next week.

To co-ordinate our work on project activities project manager organised ad hoc team meetings, where either whole team or only relevant members of team were present. There was roughly one such meeting per week, while during the peaks of project implementation, particularly during the last months, they were even more frequent. If necessary, those meetings were carried out on project areas, where the field progress could have been controlled. Additionally, once per month the whole project team meeting was carried out to review the progress of all actions within the project.

In order to make sure that new project team members would get familiar with the project and the project managers with the ways of managing LIFE projects, regular internal training and advice was available from the manager of other DOPPS' LIFE project Nataša Šalaja, director and later also by other experienced project staff. Additionally, in certain cases, we have used the opportunity of a free-of-charge trainings within BirdLife partnership, particularly experienced partners, such as RSPB (BirdLife in the UK). One of the project managers, Polona Sladič, has attended such specialised training, carried out from 28.7.-6.8.2004. Agricultural specialist Andrej Medved was the one most involved in BirdLife seminars, task force workshops and other meetings at European level due to the fact, that the project was significantly dealing with abolishing agricultural threats and that lobbying at EU level was necessary to support the national activities (see Action E.1 for details).

(1.3) Financial management and administration

Every member of team was responsible to keep up-to-date archive of activities and tasks he/she was responsible for. Documents for each action and for more complex activities were archived in separate binders.

Every member of project team was also obliged to fill the timesheet forms on a regular basis. After the end of the month, all forms were checked and signed by project manager and archived in special binder. We paid special attention to financial documentation such as invoices, pay rolls etc. All the sub-contractors and suppliers of durable goods were asked to add a reference to the project to the financial documents and herewith we can confirm, that the invoices contain the suitable reference. All the sub-contractors and suppliers were selected upon national public tendering legislation.

Additionally, the invoices were checked by the responsible project team member, then signed by the project manager and finally by director or financial manager. Only after such approval the payment was settled. The copies of all the invoices and other financial documents were archived and also forwarded to the company Aktiva Saldo d.o.o., which is external bookkeeping service for DOPPS. In the accounting books, special cost centres were designated for the project, ranging from number 956. 29 such detailed cost centres cover all the foreseen actions and the salaries of all the project full-time staff. In such way, we could make sure that the project costs were transparent and easy to examine by the Commission, monitoring team or external auditors.

(1.4) Steering Committee

Due to the scale and importance of the project in frame of overall society's activity, DOPPS' Executive board decided to act as a Steering Committee. This means that the progress of the project was a subject of every regular Board's meeting. The standard project progress report to the Board was given by the director or project manager, while in cases of other problems which we encountered during the project implementation, particularly the staff changes, those were discussed to details and the Board actively participated in finding the suitable solutions.

(1.5) Reporting

During the project period, three reports were prepared and delivered to the Commission and monitoring team, as follows:

- Progress Report for the period between 1st January – 31st December 2004 was sent on 10th March 2005;
- Interim Report for the period between 1st January 2005 – 31st July 2005 was sent on 22nd September 2005;
- Interim Report for reporting period between 1st August – 31st December 2005 was sent on 28th February 2006.

Within the period of 3 months after the project end, the Final Report was completed, covering the whole project period from 1st January 2004 to 31th March 2007 and sent to the Commission on 30th June 2007.

The reporting work of the partners was co-ordinated in order to prepare a good quality report. When further questions were sent by the Commission, additional information was prepared and delivered to clarify certain issues.

(1.6) Co-financers

The co-operation with partners, including their duties and financial consequences was specified in partnership contracts, which are annexed to this report. Communication with partners was regular, while the supervising of the progress of their work took place periodically. Their reporting duty was also included in the partnership contracts.

At the project start, the contracts were signed with other co-financers, therefore the Ministry for the Environment and Spatial Planning and the Municipality of Postojna (both annexed to this report). We have regularly reported about the implementation of the project to both co-financers, including the written reports and periodical visits. As reported in our second Interim Report, in October 2005 the Municipality of Postojna suggested to diminish their co-financing share from 30.000 to 10.000 EUR due to the fact that less funding was necessary for activities in the Nanoščica project area, which is located in the municipality, comparing to other project areas and co-financing shares of both other municipalities, who act as project partners. As they were aware of the complete project from the proposal in 2003, we found this stroke very unprofessional and this was also one of the reasons for the modification request. An annex with the Municipality of Postojna was signed after the Additional Clause was sent by the Commission, stating that the amount of co-financing is 10.000 EUR.

(1.7) Modification request

The modification request was prepared by the Project Team and sent to the Commission on 28th September 2006. Particularly the minimal 3-month extension of the project was necessary and the financial modifications, due to the change of co-financing share of the Municipality of Postojna and over 10% change of costs in some of the categories. Technical modifications were not necessary upon the letters from the Commission, but as the modification request was prepared we included them to have more consistent project after the signing of Additional Clause.

Some of the necessary modifications were the consequence of the expected constraints as foreseen in the project proposal. One of the reasons for the extension were difficulties with land purchase and more time was needed to achieve the project goals. Additionally, changes in the political structures in the Municipality of Postojna in the end of 2003 finally resulted in the reduction of their co-financing in 2005.

The project modifications haven't negatively affected the objective and expected results of the project. Additional time was sufficient to enable good and high quality implementation of the project.

F.2 Monitoring of *Crex crex* in Slovenia

Project Activity Timetable

Action	2004				2005				2006				2007
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I
(name of Action)													

Actual start / end date of action

Start date	End date
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January 2004 <i>(Monitoring Scheme started in 2004)</i>	December 2006 <i>(Last Monitoring Scheme ended in 2006)</i>
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Activities and Results

The first activity in 2004 under this action was to set up a reliable network of DOPPS volunteers – ornithologists to ensure optimal coverage of most important Corncrake sites in Slovenia within the National Monitoring Scheme. We strived to establish a regular long-term surveillance of local Corncrake populations, so preferably enthusiastic people ready to take responsibility for a longer survey period than 3 years. Additionally, DOPPS volunteers – ornithologists with at least some previous experience with Corncrake counting were included in the monitoring scheme. For those with limited experience but strong will to participate in the Monitoring scheme, short introductory courses were organized by Project team experts.

The basic Corncrake monitoring scheme included

- Annual counts on 8 most important sites (all designated as Natura 2000 sites in 2004) and
- Complete national census of corncrake to be carried out every 5 years.

In 2004, exactly 5 years have passed since the last complete national Corncrake census, so it was the turn to organize it again. Standard method for counting Corncrakes was used, very similar to those used in previous counts. Counts were carried out exclusively at night, mostly between 23.00 PM and 03.00 AM. Unless the survey area was well known to the volunteers – ornithologists, daytime visit was performed prior to the census. Large areas were divided into several census plots (up to 43 – e.g. Ljubljansko barje). Major improvements in 2004 included shorter census period (15 May – 15 June, instead of 15 May – 30 June), compulsory two visits and increased overall effort investment. Total census accuracy increased by approximately 20% compared to previous surveys.

Monitoring Scheme report for 2004. 82 volunteers – ornithologists took part in Corncrake census in 2004. The highest number of volunteers – ornithologists was active on Ljubljansko barje and Cerknjsko jezero (36 and 29, respectively). Altogether, 196 single-night counts were performed. In 2004, 8 major Corncrake sites and additional 79 smaller localities throughout the country were surveyed. The total number of Corncrakes counted was 391, more than 85% on just 8 major sites. Further 50 Corncrakes were found on 21 localities with most of them holding just 1 or 2 birds. Corncrakes were recorded in 33 10-km squares in all major regions of Slovenia. However, vast majority of them was in Dinaric and Alpine regions (240 and 110 Corncrakes, respectively), with single noteworthy sites in Pannonian and Mediterranean regions. Detailed 2004 census results are given in the table and maps on the next page.

Monitoring Scheme report for 2005. Between 15 May and 15 June 2005 we carried out Corncrake counts on 7 priority Natura 2000 sites in Slovenia including the three project areas. In 2005, all census plots (altogether 62) were digitalised for the first time. This was necessary to provide the best possible accuracy and repeatability of the method. Additionally, detailed written instructions for volunteers – ornithologists were prepared to provide high level of method standardisation. The Project Team distributed the complete census documentation (including instructions for volunteers – ornithologists, maps of the area, aerial photography of the census plot and special monitoring form for Corncrake census) to all 82 volunteers – ornithologists activated. After the counting period 57 reports were collected that allowed the further data analysis. In 2005, the Project Team and volunteers – ornithologists managed to count Corncrakes on 7 Natura 2000 sites with Corncrake as a qualifying specie (Ljubljansko barje, Lake Cerknica, Breginjski Stol and Planja, Planina polje, Nanoščica river basin, Snežnik plateau and Kozjansko-Jovski). The Reka valley area as one of the 8 priority Corncrakes area was left out.

Monitoring Scheme report for 2006. According to the standard census method Corncrake counts were carried out on 6 major sites, including all three project areas. 89 volunteers took part in the census, constituting the highest participation up to date. The project team took over census

coordination and collected the reports after accomplishment of the field work. Data were digitalised and analysed. In 2006, Corncrake counts were carried out on 6 Natura 2000 sites with Corncrake as a qualifying specie (Ljubljansko barje, Lake Cerknica, Reka valley, Breginjski Stol and Planja, Nanoščica river basin and Kozjansko-Jovski).

Summary Table Results and Outputs

Organisation of Corncrake counts in Slovenia in project period 2004 - 2006.

Area	Number of census plots	Number of fieldworkers			Number of census nights		
		2004	2005	2006	2004	2005	2006
<i>Ljubljansko barje</i>	43	36	37	38	82	82	81
<i>Cerkniško jezero</i>	6	29	30	22	4	2	1
<i>Dolina Reke</i>	1	1	0	3	4	0	1
<i>Planinsko polje</i>	1	2	3	0	1	1	0
<i>Breginjski Stol-Planja</i>	2	4	4	3	2	2	1
<i>Porečje Nanoščice</i>	3	2	3	3	6	4	2
<i>Snežnik-Pivka</i>	4	2	2	0	4	6	0
<i>Kozjansko-Jovski</i>	1	6	3	20	1	1	2
Total	61	82	82	89	104	98	88

Scientific Article “Breeding distribution and population size of Corncrake *Crex crex* in Slovenia in 2004” was published in the Scientific Journal *Acrocephalus* Volume 26 (127): 171 – 179 by ornithologist Luka Božič – member of the Project Team.

Indicators valuation

<i>Expected Results (quantitative when possible)</i>	<i>Valuation</i>
The <i>Crex crex</i> population in Slovenia has to be regularly monitored.	Monitoring report included within the Final Project Report.
At the same time, intensity and trends of all existing and potential new threats have to be monitored, giving overall insight to the conservation status of species throughout the country.	Done.
Monitoring reports have to be published on yearly basis. At the end of project a final monitoring report with an English summary has to be published.	Done.

Project Problems, Drawbacks and Variations

Due to technical problems in 2005, the Project Team didn't manage to carry out the Corncrake monitoring Scheme in Reka valley area as one of the 8 priority Natura 2000 areas in Slovenia.

Deliverables

<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Status</i>	
	<i>Already delivered in previous Reports</i>	<i>Annexed to the Final Report</i>
Final Monitoring Report 2004 – 2006 (Annex 27)	/	YES
Photos (CD)		YES