



LIFE Project Number
<LIFE11/ NAT/HU/000926>

Progress Report
Covering the project activities from 01/09/2012 to 31/12/2014

Reporting Date
<01/04/2015>

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym
<REDOOT - Conservation of *Falco vespertinus* in the Carpathian Basin>

Data Project

Project location	Hungary and Slovakia
Project start date	<01/09/2012>
Project end date	<31/03/2018>
Total budget	€3,625,649
EC contribution	€2,601,760
(%) of eligible costs	74,8

Data Beneficiary

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2. Executive Summary

The main objectives of the project REDFOOT are to:

- Establish the long term sustainable conservation management of the Red-footed Falcon nesting sites and feeding habitats through implementing, testing and demonstrating new or unfamiliar management practices.
- Prevent the extinction of the species in Slovakia by improving nesting and feeding opportunities and reducing the impact of negative factors.
- Create suitable conditions in Slovakia for the species to spread from Hungary and enable the connection of the populations.
- Strengthen the European core population in the Carpathian basin and ensure its conservation by implementation of suitable conservation measures.
- Identify endangered migratory and roosting sites, make the first steps for their conservation through networking.

The main achievements of the reporting period are as follows:

A series of preparatory actions have been executed to establish the conservation and dissemination actions of the project.

The surveys of historical Red-footed Falcon breeding sites and detailed management plans of the selected sites ensure the most effective implementation of the conservation measures in Slovakia.

In both countries one specific agro-environmental scheme (AES) for *F. vespertinus* was prepared and promoted to be included in the Rural Development Programme (RDP) for the period 2014 – 2020. Although there is not the final version of the RDP available these days, according to the EC comments the measures for *F. vespertinus* will be a part of the final version.

Project beneficiaries created 100 new artificial nesting sites in Hungary (HUBN10004), where due to the increased number of nest and the optimal condition on nearby feeding site the local population of red-footed falcon increased significantly (see the description of actions C1, C4, C5). In Slovakia altogether 270 nest boxes were installed in project areas in 2014. No Red-footed Falcon nesting was recorded in these box so far, but in the first year 23 out of 100 installed nest boxes has been occupied immediately by other species. Even more promising, that falcons have returned to Slovakia. In 2013 and 2014 we ensured the guarding and the protection of 1 and 4 active red-footed falcon nests respectively. Altogether 19 juveniles fledged from the guarded nests.

The long term existence of the falcon nest sites depends mainly on Corvid species, especially the Rook and their colonies. In cooperation with farmers, vineyard owners and municipalities we provided natural nest material for Rooks to develop a sustainable methodology to help the colony formation of these later species.

The other key environmental factor of the breeding sites in the open landscape where falcons breed are trees. In Hungary 2 patches of native trees were planted, in Slovakia in the 1st phase of the restoration works altogether 240 trees were planted.

Nest predation by Pine martens (*Martes foina*) can decrease the breeding success of falcons and rarely also cause high mortality rate of incubating adults in artificial colonies. To establish and promote the prevention, we tested several commercially available repellents and traditional methods in cooperation with Szeged ZOO on six captive predators. The most effective repellent method was the hair – pet fur combination, the tests in natural conditions (red-footed falcon breeding sites) are underway.

Sustainable habitat management are crucial factors of the conservation. To restore regionally key habitats of the species and to develop new and sustainable management technics we started the grazing experiment of the project in HUBN10004 with 96 and 108 grey cattles in 2013 and in 2014 respectively. The significant reduction of reed coverage is already achieved. To test the different farming types the grazing and mowing regime has been implemented on altogether 360 hectares. The arable farming test are implemented on 177,8 hectares in HUKM10004, where the traditional, mosaic structure of the habitat combined with fallow stripes was restored. The combination of commercially less cultivated plants (eg. perennial rye) and the environmental friendly harvest technics and timing will hopefully harmonize the needs of agricultural production and the biodiversity function of the treated parcels.

A follow up scientific monitoring of key animal taxa has been set up and running on both treatment sites.

The migratory loss can be a serious factor in the population limitation of long-term migrants.

To reveal the migratory routes and hotspots of Red-footed Falcons and to establish a network of experts we individually marked 821 Falcons from which 10 adult red-footed falcons of different breeding populations were deployed with satellite transmitters. The migration route of birds can be followed in real time on satellitetracking.eu. We externalized the in situ research and conservation works to five NGOs along the flyways in Europe, and we organized an expedition to Southern African wintering grounds where we conducted a research and also built a network of experts.

The communication and dissemination of the project results are key elements of our activities. We developed the trilingual webpage (www.falcoproject.eu), the facebook-site (facebook.com/falcoproject) and the youtube channel of the project. We reached altogether 5 399 680 persons with the online media contents and 3 276 066 persons through traditional media network only in Hungary.

All planned notice boards (in total 7) of the project have been installed in the project SPAs.

Demonstrative events have been organized to show the conservation works to stakeholders and special PR sets were produced for this purposes. Altogether 314 registered stakeholders participated in 4 project demonstrative workshops in Hungary. Moreover on two regional open day event we reached 4000 more local habitant with the exhibition of the project. In Slovakia 301 registered stakeholder participated in 39 events.

The project generated altogether 21 different scientific appearances from a peer-reviewed publication, to presentations/posters on international conferences and several student theses.

The overall execution of project is managed according to the revised project proposal, only small delays or minor changes have been occurred as it is usual with a large complex project with numerous beneficiaries. In the period covered by the mid-term report no significant delay in the implementation of the preparatory or the concrete conservation action occurred. Only one dissemination action (E5) with minor budget has to be postponed.

We believe that the changes do not affect the overall objectives of the project, and all the important original indicators will be achieved.

List of key deliverables:

Submitted together with the inception report:

- A2. Agricultural practices plan and monitoring scheme for the project sites in Hungary
- E3. Communications Plan

Submitted together with the progress report 2014:

- A1. Management plans - output of A1 activity
- E4. PR sets

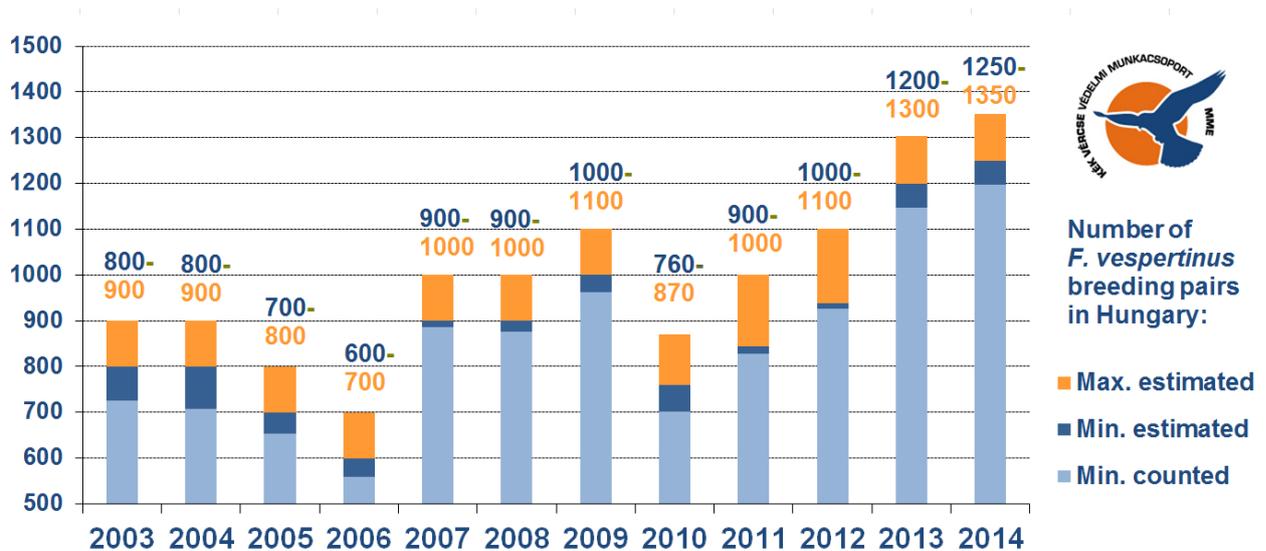
Attached to the current mid-term report:

- C6./D5. Monitoring and evaluation of nest predation by *Martes foina*
- C7. Regulation of shooting *Corvids* in key nesting sites within the project SPAs in Slovakia
- D3. Summary of Action D3
- D4. Summary of Action D4

3. Introduction

The Carpathian Basin holds the largest population of red-footed falcon in the European Union. Therefore the conservation status of the species in the region is also directly affecting the whole EU population. Our previous project (LIFE05/NAT/HU/000122) stabilized the breeding population and turned the decrease experienced in the last decades of the XX. century to slight increase in Hungary /Figure 1/. and Western Romania.

Figure 1. Breeding population trend of Red-footed Falcon in Hungary



Source: The data are provided by the members of the Hungarian Red-footed Falcon Workgroup, MME BirdLife Hungary, BNPD, DINPD, HNPD, KMNPD, KNPD

The success of previous projects gave the background for a viable Red-footed Falcon population in the Carpathian Basin, however in the long term the actions and means involved to save this species listed in Annex I. of EU Birds Directive made the falcons highly dependent from the conservation efforts. For example more than 70% of the core population of Hungary breeds in artificial nests, and these are mainly 8-15 years old. The yearly maintenance of several thousands of nest boxes requires an increasing effort from the members of the national workgroup.

Meantime due to the lack of nest sites and unfavourable habitat changes in the last decade the red-footed falcon has almost extinct from Slovakia.

4. Administrative part

4.1. Description of project management

In the Inception Report we reported about the kick-off meeting (13/12/2012) and the first Steering Committee meeting (21-22/02/2013). The Inception Report was submitted in April, 2013 and was accepted by the EC in May 2013.

In the first Progress Report we reported about the second Steering Committee meeting (01-02/03/2014). The Progress Report was submitted in April, 2014 and was accepted by the EC in August 2014. The External Monitoring Team Astrale GEIE visited the CB on two missions (28/02/2013 and 02/04/2014).

According to the approved proposal the Project Management was selected through a competitive tender process; the tender was held on 20/03/2013, decision was made on the same day and contract was signed with the Consulex Ltd. on 27/03/2013. Project Manager, Peter Palatitz, (Consulex Ltd.) has coordinated the technical implementation of the project, working in close relation with the administrative and financial staff of MME BirdLife Hungary represented by Lilla Barabás. From November 2014 Zsófia Sümegi (project consultant Consulex Ltd.) and junior project assistant Eszter Gombos (MME) help the work of the management team. The management tasks are detailed in the organigramme of the project team under point 4.2.

Technical coordination and communication

Planning: Annual working plan (prepared by the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the external company (Consulex Ltd.), final version accepted by the Director of CB). The plans are prepared in form of excel tables for internal use and helps the fluent implementation and follow up of the project.

Monitoring: Monthly task report (prepared by the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by Consulex Ltd, the final consolidated version is accepted by the Director of CB forming the base of the monthly payment of CB to Consulex Ltd.

Reporting: Annual report (prepared by the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the external company (Consulex Ltd), final version accepted by the Director of CB. This internal document is used to inform the beneficiaries on the project main achievements and a short summary is accepted by the Steering Committee)

Communication: Communication plan and annual agenda of tasks (prepared by the Communication officer and/or the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by Consulex Ltd., final version accepted by the Communication director of CB) (Annex E3_1).

Financial coordination and book keeping

Planning: Annual financial plan (prepared by the Project assistant and the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs in accordance with the technical plans, revised by the Project Assistant of the CB and the external company, final version accepted by the Director of CB)

Monitoring: Monthly financial reports (prepared by the Project assistant of the CB and ABs, sent to the Project Assistant of the CB.)

Reporting and payment process: Annual Report and payment request (prepared by the Project assistant and the Project coordinator of the CB and ABs, revised by the Project Assistant of the CB and the external company, final version accepted by the Director of CB). If deemed necessary the payment request is also accepted quarterly with the related financial report.

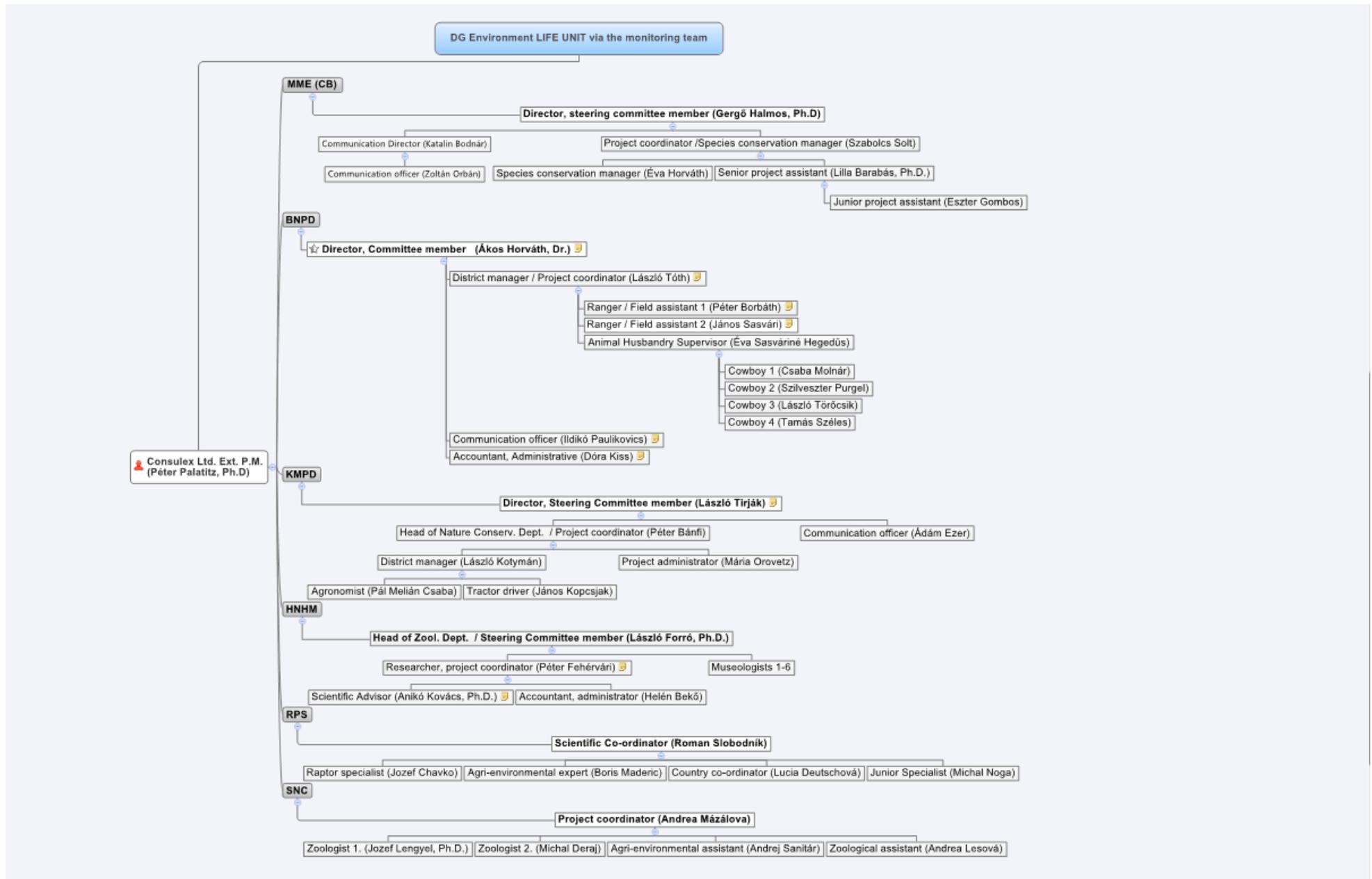
Partnership Agreements (PA) had been signed between CB and each ABs on 17/10/2012 (also a new, modified PA with BNPD was signed on 04/02/2013) and submitted together with the Inception Report. Following the original PAs two amendments were added with the same content, one with each Slovakian ABs. These PA Amendments were attached to the Progress Report. The reason behind the Amendments is purely a formal supplement to clarify that the Grant Agreement – that forms an integral part of the PA – is annexed only in electronic version for the ABs.

The up-to date monitoring of the administrative requirements and technical advancements based on the approval system of unified Annual Working Plans (AWP).

A monthly reporting system was set up and both financial and technical progress reports are required from Beneficiaries at the end of every month. If deemed necessary the payment request is also accepted quarterly with the related financial report.

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

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



5. Technical part

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.1. Technical progress, per task

A.1 Elaboration of detailed management plans for key habitats of the *F. vespertinus* in Slovakia

Status: ongoing, in time

GIS training of project staff was held in 2013. Simplified baseline survey was carried out in 19 historical sites. On the basis of the selected parameters (breeding of RFF in last 3 seasons, occurrence in breeding season RFF in last 3 years, percentage of pastures, grasslands and fodder plants, distance from rook colony, mosaic of land and percentage of forests) each of the 19 sites was evaluated. Five sites with the most favourable results were selected for detailed survey as the key sites.

For each key site a detailed management (mitigation) plan was prepared (Annex A1_1). In each key site there is information about natural nesting opportunities, crop structure, threatening factors (for example electric poles or the occurrence of predators like Stone marten (*Martes foina*)). Also for all key sites has been developed a methodology (Annex A1_2a and Annex A1_2b) and selected sites for monitoring of prey offer (small mammals and orthopteras). The baseline monitoring of prey offer was carried out in 2014, results are being processed in a study which will be compared with the results gathered under Action D1. Based on the management (mitigation) plans, the final version of the management plans will be prepared using the data of C1, C2 and D1 action before the end of the project.

Dangerous power lines have been identified during a specialised survey undertaken in the SKCHVU005, SKCHVU012, SKCHVU019 and SKCHVU023 (Annex A1_3). A map of priority areas for insulation was submitted to responsible electric company. The Company declared to insulate at least 400 dangerous poles in SKCHVU005 and SKCHVU019 until 2017. (Annex A1_4 and A1_5).

Minor modifications: although the approved project document foresaw 28/02/2014 for the end date of action A1, the final results of actions C1, C2 and D1 would significantly contribute to the final version of the management plans. If the Commission kindly approve to prolong the action until 31.12.2017, as indicated in the consolidated Gantt chart attached under Annex_5 to the Mid-term report, we will finalize the current version of the management (mitigation) plans and resubmit with the final report of the project.

A.2 Promotion and enforcement of an agri-environmental scheme for *F. vespertinus*

Status: ongoing, small delay

In consequence of the late CAP approval in 2013 the national negotiations on the technical development of specific AES are progressing slowly. The official start of the new AES is expected to delay with one year to 01.09.2015 in both Member State.

In both countries one specific agro-environmental scheme (AES) for *F. vespertinus* was prepared and promoted to be included in the Rural Development Programme (RDP) for the period 2014 – 2020. RPS was taking part on preparation of RDP via two platforms – an e-mail platform „Agroekoforum“, and work-group of SNC and MoE, we participated in both groups. Altogether 6 meetings were organised on different levels (Annex A2_1a and_1b). The last meeting was held on 4th February 2014. On this meeting suggestions were presented and final version of RDP proposal was discussed, this meeting was crucial for preparation of the final version of RDP (Annex A2_2). The measures suggested in the special AES for *F. vespertinus* were integrated in the proposal of RDP approved in May 2014 by the Ministry of agriculture and rural development of the Slovak Republic for the next programming period (page 296, Operation title: Multifunctional edges of fields – biostrips on arable land and page 298 Operation title: Great Bustard protection, Submeasure: Payments for agrienvironmental-climatic obligations, Measure: Agrienvironmental-climatic measure). This proposal of RDP has been sent to EC for comments. The EC had 6 months to deliver the comments and approve the RDP. The comments has been sent in September 2014 and are being integrated by the Ministry of agriculture and rural development of the Slovak Republic.

Referring to your letter sent for the progress report (Annex/1.Technical issues/A2/2.2), although there is not the final version of the RDP available these days, according to the EC comments the measures for *F. vespertinus* will be a part of the final version. The final version of the RDP should be known in the first months of 2015. The Statement of the Slovak Government about approval of the proposed RDP and stating the MoA to coordinate the process of preparation is also attached (Annex A2_3).

In Hungary the project staff closed the technical communication with the staff of the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) by the end of 2013. We submitted the updated version of the specific Red-footed Falcon scheme for further consultation. Please find attached the related letter (copy of e-mail) where Mr. Bertalan Balczó, Deputy Head of Department of National Parks and Landscape Conservation acknowledge our work (Annex A2_4). This RDP proposal has been sent to EC for comments (Annex A2_5), the consultation process is still under way. The Ministry of agriculture informed us in the same letter that although many changes are expected in the system, the priority species as the red-footed falcon will remain in the focus of the Agri-environmental measures.

Milestone “Evaluation of action based on the data of MRD” planned by 31.12.2014 is in delay due to the delay of starting the AES.

A.3 Elaborate agricultural practices plan and monitoring scheme for the project sites in Hungary

Status: ongoing, in time

The Agricultural practices plan and monitoring scheme (Annex A3_1) concerning C4., C5., D3. and D4. actions are discussed yearly by the beneficiaries. This procedure allows the beneficiaries to harmonize their activities and achieve both the goal of the site restorations and the scientific monitoring. *Please note that due to the common practice in agriculture both the yearly planning and implementation period of these actions are different. A ‘grazing and*

‘mowing year treatment’ is planned and implemented between 01.April-31.March (Action C4.) however the ‘arable farming year’ extends from 01.September to 31.August (Action C5.) according to the timing of main agricultural works.

A.4 Preparation of a red-footed falcon book

Status: not relevant, start: 2016

A.5 Elaboration and submitting of the National Action Plan in Hungary and Rescue Program in Slovakia for *F. vespertinus*

Status: not relevant, start: 2016

C.1 Creating artificial nesting opportunities

Status: ongoing, in time

BNPD produced 100 nestboxes in Hungary and the nests have been installed in the project SPA (HUBN10004) by 30.04.2014 (Annex C1_1, C1_2, C1_3). Due to the increased number of nest and the optimal condition on nearby feeding site the local population of red-footed falcon increased from 2013 (baseline data) to 2014. In 2013 6 occupying pairs were recorded in the treated area (C4), with only 1 successfully breeding pair (3 chicks fledged).

In 2014 altogether 14 occupying pairs were recorded in the treated area (C4), 13 pairs started to breed, the success rate was 84% (n=11), and 37 red-footed falcon chicks fledged successfully (Annex C1_4).

In Slovakia sites for installation of nest boxes were selected under Action A1 in 2013/2014, negotiations with land users and land owners were undertaken at all selected sites under Action E4 and agreements were signed with them and approvals were received. Altogether 270 wooden nest boxes were installed in project areas in 2014 (Table 1, Annex C1_5, C1_6). The occupancy of nest boxes was verified under C9. 23 out of 100 installed nest boxes has been occupied immediately in SKCHVU012 and SKCHVU019 before the breeding season by *Falco tinnunculus*, *Asio otus* and *Columba palumbus*. These results demonstrate the lack of breeding opportunities in the project areas and importance of project action. A special database for evidence of the nest boxes was developed and is being updated. The GPS coordinates of every installed nest box was used and recorded in this database together with many other important parameters of the nest boxes (Annex C1_7).

Aluminium nest-boxes and imitations of Rook nests will be installed in 2015 in Slovakia.

	Wooden nest boxes			Aluminium nest boxes			Imitation of Rook nests		
	Plan	Installed in 2014	Remaining to be installed in 2015	Plan	Installed in 2014	Remaining to be installed in 2015	Plan	Installed in 2014	Remaining to be installed in 2015
SPA									
SKCHVU012 Lehnice	60	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SKCHVU019 Ostrovné lúky	40	40	0	10	0	10	5	0	5
SKCHVU029 Sysľovské polia	50	50	0	5	0	50	10	0	10
SKCHVU005 Dolné Považie	70	70	0	15	0	70	10	0	10
SKCHVU023 Úľanská mokraď	50	50	0	0	0	50	5	0	5
Total	270	270	0	30	0	30	30	0	30

Table 1. Overview of nesting opportunities created within the REDFOOT project in Slovakia

C.2 Creating conditions for natural nesting opportunities by planting and restoration of forest patches and windbreaks in project SPAs

Status: ongoing, in time

In Hungary 2 patches of native trees were planted in 2013 at Hevesi-sík (HUBN10004) as planned in the proposal (Annex C2_1). The maintenance period of the saplings has started. We provide necessary cultivation works and watering.

In Slovakia a public procurement was done in order to select the subcontractor for delivery and planting of the 900 trees and to ensure care about the trees for 3 years. A contract was signed with the selected subcontractor in October, 2014.

Particular sites for planting of the trees were selected under action A1, a proposal of planting for all sites was prepared (Annex C2_2), negotiations with land users and land owners were undertaken at all selected sites and agreements were signed with them.

1st phase of planting was carried out in December 2014 in SPA Ostrovnélúky (60 trees) and Lehnice (180 trees).

Minor modifications: 3 of 4 known breeding pairs of *F. vespertinus* in 2014 were recorded in SKCHVU029 Sysľovsképolia (also project SPA), therefore we decided to implement Action C2 also in this site concerning it crucial for the population of the species in Slovakia.

C.3 Implement and demonstrate conservation techniques to improve Rook colony formation

Status: ongoing, in time

In Slovakia the suitable material to improve Rook colony formation was ensured in early spring 2013 and 2014 with cooperation of farmers and vineyard owners in SKCHVU005 (Annex C3_1 to_3). This action was being evaluated under Action D2.

In Hungary two municipalities (Székkutas, Kardoskút) were contacted to provide "green waste" for testing the methods of supplying branches and sticks for rooks. We started the action in 2013 with one treated colony, but due to the severe weather in March, the rookeries in HUKM10004 were inaccessible. In consequence the performance of the action in 2013 was less than expected previously. However in 2014 the suitable material to improve Rook colony formation was ensured in two colonies of HUKM10004. We cutted, colour painted the sticks for the better monitoring and placed nearby the colonies (Annex C3_4 to_6). First results are very promising, rooks used the material widely. One month after the placement (in May, 2013) only few sticks were remaining near the treated colonies (Annex C3_7, C3_8).

The evaluation of the following indicators: the quality (height, dimension, stability) of rook nests in treated colonies vs. control colonies is in progress under action D2 and will be finished by 31.12.2015. A short status report of the Hungarian results is available (Annex C3_9).

Minor modifications: Later in 2015 we plan to produce a communication material to help the negotiation with other municipalities in SPAs, where rook colonies could be treated the same way. This A4 leaflet printed in 1000 pcs. could be distributed by the volunteers of MME in Hungary. If the EC kindly approves the modification we can cover the related expenses (approx. 2000 EUR) from the same budget categories of Action E4.

C.4 Implement, test and demonstrate grazing and mowing practices at the Heves project site (HUBN10004)

Status: ongoing, in time

BNPD successfully set up the personal and technical background of the planned treatment. 4 cowboys and one animal husbandry supervisor is working continuously for the project. The supervision of animal health and the related necessary assistance is provided by a contracted veterinarian. All necessary major procurements were completed in the progress report period (Annex C4_1). BNPD built a summer night refugee in the project treatment site for the 96 cattle in 2013 (Annex C4_2) and rent the nearby farm buildings from November 2013 as winter refugee for the herd (Annex C4_3).

In the spring of 2013 we started the treatments on 226 ha in favour of red-footed falcon. The extent of the area and technical details fulfilled our previous goals (211 ha was planned in the proposal (see Annex C4_4). The main aim of the treatment in 2013 was achieved by the considerable reduction of the area of reed in the eastern corner of the project site (see Annex C4_5).

In 2014, according to the Agricultural practice plan of the project (Action A3) the treatment started in late April with 96 cattle (age class: over 24 month, (animal unit (AU, see definition under 7.2. List of abbreviations and keywords used) =96) and 7 calves born within the project period (AU=4,2), but only 6 remained alive during the period of lactation. In June 2014, BNPD purchased an additional 12 cattle, therefore the grazing herd used for the treatment was equivalent to cca. 112 AU in 2014. The procurement of more aged animals caused that the previously planned 123 animals and 75 AU in the second year (2014), was realized with 114 animals (112 AU).

For one day of every week we grazed each of the 3 different grazing units to simulate the planned grazing pressures (0,35 AU/ha, 0,75 AU/ha and 1,5 AU/ha). For the rest of days the herd was used to reduce the reed cover of the remaining area. The success of this later became obvious at the end of the vegetation period (Annex C4_6).

The planned mowing regime has been also implemented.

During the year straw and fodder was also produced for the winter feeding of the herd. This resulted in 430 bales of hay, 400 bales of alfalfa and 200 q of grain maize at the livestock farm.

The effect of the habitat management, the increased number of nest sites (Action C1) and the outbreak of field voles (*Microtus arvalis*) resulted in the increase of the local red-footed falcon population by more than 200%. At least 3 and 37 red-footed falcon chicks fledged successfully in 2013 and 2014 respectively (see Action C1 for details).

C.5 Implement, test and demonstrate agricultural practices at the Vásárhelyi project site (HUKM10004)

Status: ongoing, in time

The treatment of the project area in 2013 and 2014 was implemented according to the Agricultural practice plan and monitoring scheme. All planned equipments were purchased. (Annex C5_1 to_4)

In 2013 KMNP started the first arable farming treatments on 177,8 ha as scheduled in the APPMS. The extent of the area and technical details fulfilled our previous goals (172,5 ha

was planned in the proposal Supplement, see the table Annex C5_5).The main aim of the diverse farming system is to raise the natural value of the treated sites, meanwhile provide abundant and available food source for the red-footed falcons.

In 2014 in KMNPD the initiated nature friendly farming (in total on 177,8 ha) completely changed the parcel sizes and the general habitat composition of the treated area.

The exact timing and description of the treatment can be checked in the table Annex C5_5, however we give a short summary to facilitate the better understanding of the project implementation:

“TYPE 1” treatment – 1st and 2nd blocks (“Fecskés”)

Crop was sown on the parcels in autumn, 2013, therefore no soil preparation works and sowing happened there in 2014. Alfalfa was mowed in May and August, 2014. Winter wheat was also mowed but only in May, 2014. Soil preparation occurred on these parcels in autumn. The parcels of perennial rye were mowed once. In the second half of July, 2014 fallow land stripes (between parcels) were also mowed. (See maps in annexes C5_6 and C5_7)

“TYPE 2” treatment – 1st and 2nd blocks (“Rabatin field and Búcsú-halmi field”)

After the spring soil preparation works spring barley, oat and maize were sown on the treated parcels. Unharvested blocks (1,33 ha, 2,56 ha) were designated on two parcels of spring barley. In the second half of July, 2014 fallow land stripes (between parcels) were mowed. (See maps of Rabatin in annexes C5_8, C5_9 and of Búcsú-halom in C5_10, C5_11 and C5_12)

“TYPE 2” treatment –demonstrating alfalfa cultures following AES (“Tanyaszél”)

Half of the relevant field (12,21 ha) had been broken up last autumn after harvesting alfalfa. After that winter wheat was grown and harvested here. Soil preparation works started after harvest for this years’ alfalfa sowing.

The other half (11,07 ha) was ploughed after mowing alfalfa two times. (See maps in annexes C5_13 and C5_14)

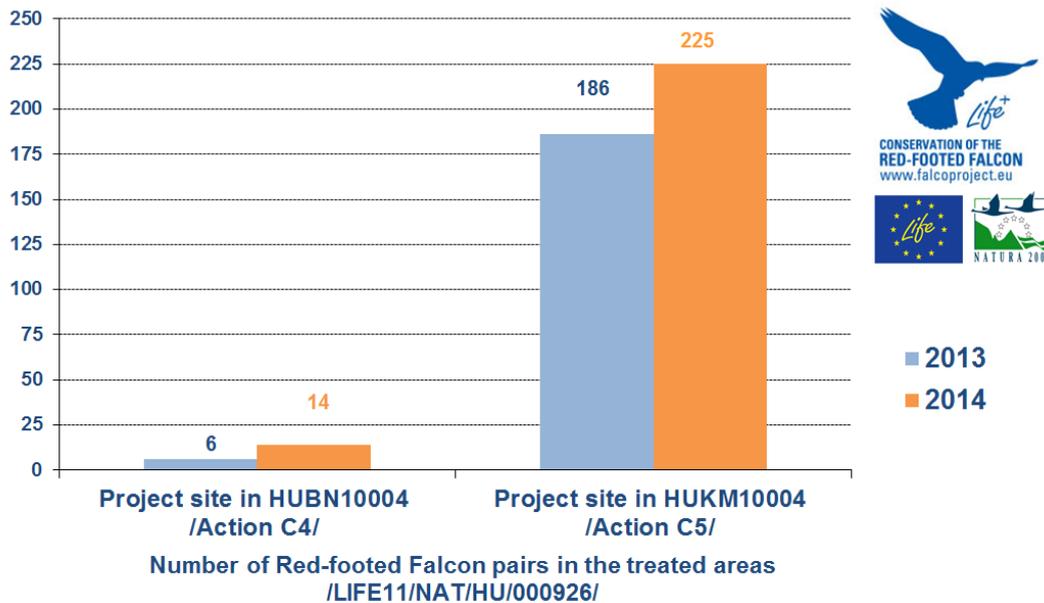
“TYPE 3” treatment

After spring soil preparation works maize was sown on 1,8 ha in April as planned.

The harvested agricultural products have been used as winter food of the grey cattle herd of the National Park Directorate. The direct effect of the habitat management on the species community of the treated parcels was monitored under action D4.

The number of Red-footed falcon pairs of the treated area was 186 in 2013 and 225 in 2014 respectively. Thanks to mainly to the ideal breeding conditions the local population increased by more than 120% from 2013 to 2014.

Please find below the summary diagram of change in the number of red-footed falcon pairs during the project period.



C.6 Test and demonstrate methods to prevent *M. foina* predation of artificial nesting sites in Hungary

Status: ongoing, in time

The goal of the action is to prevent or reducing *Martes foina* predation in treated artificial Red-footed Falcon colonies, to find the best and most effective method to hinder *M. foina* predation.

In cooperation with Szeged Zoo we built 3 test cages for Martens (Annex C6_1 to_4) for ex situ testing of the following methods: A. ultrasound repellents, B. vibrating repellents, C. foreign odors (a. pheromones from collected urine samples, b. geraniol extract spray, c. human hair and pet fur placement), D. mechanical obstacles (Annex C6_5 to_18).

We used 6 martens in the ex situ test phase (2013-2014). We video recorded the behaviour of the animals again with the repellents (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n242tHgSBaE> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQY7SBGyHFo>) (for the detailed methodology please see Annex C6_19).

The most effective method was the hair – pet fur combination. The in situ test near solitary and colonial RFF nests under way will prove if the efficiency of the repellent techniques in natural conditions will be at least 95% as expected previously. Continuation: only geraniol extract spray and human hair - pet fur placement and the mechanical obstacles will be tested in situ. The in situ test in HUKM10004 are started in 2014 under Action D5, based on the results the final report will be delivered by 31.12.2015.

C.7 Regulation of shooting *Corvids* in key nesting sites within the project SPAs in Slovakia

Status: ongoing, small delay

Since January 2014 an amended Act on conservation of Nature and Landscape is valid in Slovakia. In the new version of the Act the modifications in certain Regulations need to be approved by the Government. The Regulations for SPAs fall under this condition. Besides that the organisation structure of Nature Protection Authorities and competences of the newly established Authorities were modified by the amendment of the Act. We contacted several District Nature Conservation Authorities to consult possible actions but no proper solution

was suggested. According to the amended Act it is not in the competence of the District Authority to ensure such restrictive measures as previously stated in the revised proposal. Based on consultations with representatives of hunting associations (HA) from SKCHVU012 Lehnice and SKCHVU029 Sysľovsképolia data were gathered and evaluated in order to prepare study about corvid species to ensure expert level of arguments for negotiations with hunters (Annex C7_1 and Annex C7_2).

During a series of meetings with MoE, the Hunting Chamber (HCh) (reported under Action E4) it was suggested to organise a special meeting for representatives of all respective local HAs. The date was proposed for October 2014. The Invitation and Programme of the meeting was prepared by RPS in cooperation with HCh and distributed among more than 80 local HAs by the HCh. Over 70 representatives of local HAs confirmed participation on the meeting but only six of them attended. As the most important conclusion of the meeting the representatives of the HCh declared to accept the requested measures (ban hunting of Rook and limit hunting of Crow and Magpie) and present these measures on meeting of Committee for hunting and environment of the HCh for approval. When approved, the measures were supposed to be submitted and recommended to the County Forest Authority to implement these in a special Regulation. Unfortunately the measures have not been supported by the Committee which recommended us to negotiate and sign contract with every concerned local HA separately (Annex C7_3). Based on our experience this solution is not applicable. Therefore we fixed another meeting for March, 2015 with the MoE, MoA and SNC in order to set concrete actions to achieve the expected result of the action as planned in the revised proposal.

C.8 Secure protection of the most endangered migratory and roosting areas

Status: ongoing, in time

The director of MME (Dr. Gergő Halmos) participated to "The BirdLife International Global Partnership Meeting and World Congress" 18 - 22 June 2013, Ottawa, Canada (Annex C8_1). Based on the initiated discussion we contracted 5 NGOs BirdLife Cyprus, BirdLife Ukraine, BirdLife Italy (LIPU), Milvus Group (Romania) and BSPB (Bulgaria) (Annex C8_2 to_6).

In 2013 we marked 360 red-footed falcons (349 juveniles, 10 adults, 1 recaptured adult) with individual colour rings (Annex C8_7 to_10).

Microwave Ltd. (US) is the only supplier of the 5 g PTTs worldwide, according to the approved minor change in the progress report we planned to buy 15 PTTs from the company. However the production schedule of the company is very strict, despite of the early order in 2013 our 7 PTTs arrived in late September when the migration of the red-footed falcons already started, therefore we couldn't deploy the devices in Hungary. We ordered 8 more PTTs in 2014.

In 2014 we ringed 455 red-footed falcons (388 juveniles and 67 adults).

Altogether 10 adult red-footed falcons of different breeding populations (annex C8_11 and_12) were deployed with PTTs. The migration route of 9 birds could be followed in 2014 on satellitetracking.eu. (One of the transmitters failed to send data immediately after the deployment). We sent the location data of the birds in near real time to Italy, Romania, Bulgaria and Cyprus where our partners monitored the migrating flocks of RFFs. Unfortunately the political situation in Ukraine hindered the implementation of the field works of this season therefore we postponed the planned actions to 2015. However outside the LIFE project budget we managed to deploy 3 birds from the eastern population (Kazakhstan). The reason behind that from our previous observation from the tagged individuals in 2009, we predicted that eastern birds use the European flyway during migration. We discovered a

fantastic scenario, namely that all RFFs use the eastern European steppes (probably including the Hungarian Great Plains) for autumn roosting. Finally 8 red-footed falcons arrived to the wintering ground (Annex C8_13). The analysis of data and the first technical report (deliverable 28.02.2015) falls in the next reporting period and will be delivered with the next report of the project.

The African trip of the project staff to Angola had to be modified. We didn't get research permits after one year of negotiation with Angolan ministry officials; even though Bruna Campos, a native Angolan expert working for BirdLife International helped us in the communication. To adapt to the situation, from 6th of February 2014 to 11th of March 2014 we organized an expedition to Botswana, Zambia, South-African Republic (BOZASA) targeting the known night roost locations of the red-footed falcons previously revealed with satellite tracking. The BOZASA trip could be followed 'near live' at satellitetracking.eu with regular 'live from the field communication' on both [facebook.com/falcoproject](https://www.facebook.com/falcoproject) and falcoproject.eu. We discovered previously unknown roosting areas of the red-footed falcon in Botswana. The full report from the expedition delivered in Annex C8_14.

C.9 Guarding and protection of active *F. vespertinus* nests in Slovakia

Status: ongoing, in time

The monitoring of breeding pairs was carried out in order to record all breeding attempts of the species. In 2013 RPS has ensured the guarding and the protection of the only active nest known in SKCHVU029 Sysľovsképolia (Annex C9_1). Altogether 4 juveniles flew successfully.

In 2014 the occupancy of nest boxes installed under Action C1 was verified. 4 pairs have been identified in breeding period and guarded (3 pairs in SKCHVU029 Sysľovsképolia, 1 pair outside the project area in municipality Špačince). The breeding of pairs in SKCHVU029 was successful: 11 fledglings flew out in total (4+4+3 juveniles). Two pairs were breeding in a Magpie nest, one in a wooden nest box. This is the highest number of juveniles recorded since 2007. The fourth pair has been observed near a Magpie nest for over two months. After this period the pair left the site. The control of the Magpie nest did not provide evidence about breeding of this pair.

Minor modification in the implementation: In the proposal text we envisaged the legal protection of the nests in Slovakia. ("Legislative protection of every active *F. vespertinus* nest will be ensured by establishing a protected zone around the nest in the cooperation with the District Environment Office. The relevant article of Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on protection of landscape and nature will be used to ensure the optimal result. Strict conditions for the stakeholders will be given in the Statement prepared by the Environment Office, concerning the management of the site"). However the legislative protection of the nests was not necessary to be initiated during the implementation phase because in SKCHVU029 the Regulation does not allow actions which could possibly cause disturbance of the pair. Besides that RPS has ensured regular visits and guarding of the pair.

C.10 Implementation of an agri-environmental scheme to ensure optimal management of feeding territories in Slovakia

Status: ongoing, in time

The action will be implemented after the new specific AES is approved to be integrated in the RDP 2014 – 2020. Because of the external circumstances discussed earlier (Action A2.) most probably one year of delay is expected in the start of the new AES (01.09.2015).

At the current stage of negotiations, we believe that the original expected results (2000 ha of feeding sites managed under AES in Slovakia) can be achieved. Even if there will be probably changes in the system of AES, this scheme overall will improve significantly the habitat quality of RFF compared to the previous condition.

Additionally, the final output of this action is the total area of implementation of agricultural prescriptions in favour of *F. vespertinus*. Based on the previous experiences the number of participants depends mainly of the simplicity and cost/benefit conditions of such schemes. In certain conditions the specificity of the schemes therefore can decrease the participation rate of the voluntary applicants. One can expect however that a more general prescription will favour the number of participants, the area of application and finally the effect of the measures on the target species and the biodiversity overall.

D.1 Monitoring of impact of the project actions in Slovakia

Status: not relevant, start: 2017

D.2 Monitoring and evaluation of Rook colony formation

Status: ongoing, in time

We started the implementation of the action in parallel with Action C3 both in Hungary (MME) and in Slovakia (RPS, SNC) in 2013.

We monitored the nest building of rooks in one treated colony (Csajág) and one control colony (Vörös Ida erdő) in HUKM10004. From 2013 to 2014 the number of rook nests raised in both colonies significantly, but our painted branches and twigs were found in all of the collected fallen nests from Csajág. The final evaluation will be delivered as separate document by 31.12.2015, however a preliminary document is already available (Annex D2_1). The collected data show that nest material placement helps Rooks colony formation.

The quality of nests in Csajág colony was definitely better, the nests in Vörös Ida forest provided more nest materials but those were shorter, thinner, older and we found a lot of herbaceous twigs as building material. Studying nest materials showed that the most popular nest materials are branches with 1,5 cm or less diameter, but Rooks also use thicker ones (in 1,5-2 cm diameter range) in smaller number.

D.3 Monitoring and evaluation of the project sites' treatments in Hevesi-sík SPA (HUBN10004)

Status: ongoing, in time

2013

To evaluate the effectiveness of action C4 (Implement and demonstrate grazing at the Heves project site, HUBN10004) a baseline survey of potential prey taxa were carried out in 2013. Summaries available of results from both local and landscape level analyses in the technical report of the first year (Annex D3_1). The design of the survey was similar to what will be used when the experimental treatments of the area will be in place, thus allowing for direct before/after comparisons (see also Action A3 for details). A total of 81 sample stations were used (9 treatment sites x 9 stations) to assess the spatio-temporal variation potential prey items. Each station had a soil trap and 3 designated transect routes where Orthoptera

abundance and species composition was measured. Moreover vegetation structure and height was also estimated at these stations. Field work was initiated in May, and was carried out until October, soil traps were emptied every two weeks. A major difficulty in 2013 was the high soil water level, that hindered the usage of soil traps until June. A total of 506 valid soil trap samples and 366 sweep net samples were collected. Altogether 6694 Coleoptera individuals of 162 species were identified, together with 3974 Orthoptera individuals of 23 species. (Annex D3_2 to_4).

We also carried out the landscape scale survey of potential prey items on 15 distant grasslands within the region.

As planned in the proposal the bird monitoring was externalized to a local nature conservation organization (Üröm Környezet- és Természetvédő Egyesület was chosen from 3 price quotations).

The data was recorded using the protocol of MMM (<http://madarszamlalok.mme.hu/hu/content/mmm>).

Results: As expected, we found differences in species composition and abundance between future treatment sites, however the successful baseline survey allows us to precisely evaluate the effects of grazing and mowing treatments in 2015. The baseline survey of local treatment sites and control landscape scale sites carried out, data compiled and securely stored in a database. The evaluation of action C4 (before action is implemented) is secured.

2014

According to our monitoring plan developed under Action A3, we did not carry out major monitoring activities in 2014 at the Heves project site (only Common Bird Monitoring Scheme was carried out in 2014). However, we maintained a close nearly day-to-day collaboration with BNPD, whom are responsible for implementing Action C4. This was necessary, as all major treatments of the selected plots were initiated in 2014, therefore close inspection of treatment protocols from a monitoring point-of-view was deemed necessary.

Results: Common Bird Monitoring Scheme implemented, data securely stored and ready for analyses. The implementation of the farming design was regularly monitored to secure the sampling design of the Agricultural practices and monitoring scheme.

Further actions will entail the continuation of monitoring activities in 2015 and 2016.

D.4 Monitoring and evaluation of the project sites' treatments in Vásárhelyi- és Csanádi puszták SPA (HUKM10004)

Status: ongoing, in time

2013

To evaluate the effectiveness of action C5 (Implement test and demonstrate agricultural practices at the Vásárhelyi project site, HUKM10004) a baseline survey of potential prey taxa carried out prior to treatments in 2013. Summaries available of results from both local and landscape level analyses in the technical report of the first year (Annex D4_1). The design of the survey was similar to what will be used when the experimental treatments of the area will be in place, thus allowing for direct before/after comparisons (for details also see Action A3).

However, in case of agricultural fields, where prey composition is predominantly governed by the type of crop cultivated in a given year, pre-treatment monitoring was only possible at locations where crop types will not change between years. In 2013 alfalfa fields met (treatment TYPE 2.) this criteria, thus all field activities concentrated to these sites.

A total of 18 sample stations were used (2 treatment sites x 9 stations) to assess the spatio-temporal variation potential prey items. Each station had a soil trap and 3 designated transect routes where Orthoptera abundance and species composition was measured. Moreover vegetation structure and height was also estimated at these stations. Field work was initiated in May and was carried out until October, soil traps were emptied every two weeks. A major difficulty in 2013 was that by the second half of the field season field vole numbers plunged at the study sites. These small mammals often used the soil traps as burrowing holes, filling up the opening with soil. In these cases samples were either excluded from the analyses or data deriving from these samples were only used to assess species composition, and not for estimating prey abundance. A total of 156 valid soil trap samples and 108 sweep net samples were collected. Altogether 4406 Coleoptera individuals of 133 species were identified, together with 1171 individuals of Orthoptera individuals of 19 species. (Annex D4_2 and D4_3)

The bird monitoring data was collected by MME volunteers, with the protocol of MMM (<http://madarszamlalok.mme.hu/hu/content/mmm>).

Results: As expected, we found differences in species composition and abundance between future treatment sites, however the successful baseline survey allows us to precisely evaluate the effects of grazing and mowing treatments in 2014. The baseline survey of local treatment sites and control landscape scale sites carried out, data compiled and securely stored in a database. The evaluation of action C5 (before action is implemented) is secured.

2014

We initiated all planned monitoring activities in May 2014. Sampling stations were placed at all treatment plots and previously selected control plots (total of 108 stations). The first round of data collection in May yielded 2 valid samples out of the possible 108, the second round yielded 0 valid samples. This large scale destruction of samples was predominantly caused by a never before seen massive field vole gradation. These small mammals clogged the entrances of our soil traps, making samples useless for analyses. In the third round of data collection we tried to visit each trap daily, cleaning it from earth and plant remnants. During these two weeks, we found that over 85% of the traps were clogged from one day to another. We also visited a small selection of traps every 2-3 hours to establish whether circadian activity of voles may help time cleaning activities. However, substantial portion of these intensively visited traps were clogged within the first cleaning activity. Therefore, from the second half of June, after careful evaluation with all project partners and the project management, we decided to declare a vis major situation for the monitoring of this year in this project area and stopped soil sampling invertebrates. This is particularly problematic as the bulk of invertebrate data derived from soil traps in case of arable fields (see mid-term report Annex of Action D4). However the biological interpretation of the results didn't failed, as in high vole years the good hunting yield for Red-footed falcons are not characterised by the abundance of insects, but mainly by the abundance of the more profitable vertebrate prey, in this case the field vole. Evidence for the importance of voles in the nestling diet and the effect of the vole availability on the hunting success of the falcons have been described before. (P. Palatitz Phd. dissertation: <http://falconproject.eu/sites/default/files/26.pdf> chapter 4.2).

The data collected during the previous life project (LIFE05/NAT/HU/000122 helped us to restructure the monitoring design of 2014, obstructed by the vis maior situation. From early July, we concentrated on understanding the spatial dynamics of voles in the project area,

especially concentrating on treated plots. We adapted a non-invasive method that quickly allows to estimate previous (i.e. prior to sampling) and current (i.e. at the exact day of sampling) densities of field voles, one of the most important prey items of Red-footed falcons. A total of 65 plots were sampled (treatment and control plots), and our results indicate that up to 300 active burrows/ 10m² may have been present at certain treated plots. Our results may also provide helpful insight in how the treated plots act as reservoirs for field voles in following years after this massive eruption. We also carried out all, non-sampling station based monitoring activities that entailed vegetation cover and foraging efficiency of the target species. In case of the later parameter, we found that providing scientifically sound evidence on the effect of treatments of foraging efficiency may prove to be more challenging than previously anticipated. The treated plots are relatively distant from the colonies (except Block 2, Type 2 alfalfa, which is directly adjacent to a large colony), and birds probably optimize for foraging site distance more than anything else. Therefore, despite the relatively large foraging efficiency sample collected in 2014, we believe that the results may be biased, even though certain foraging efficiency parameters reflect a positive effect of treatments, confirming our anticipated expectations. Nonetheless, we will continue collecting data as in previous years as analyses on larger sample sizes may prove to be adequate to handle methodological constraints. It has to be noted that even in case the foraging efficiency cannot be measured with rigorous scientifically sound parameters, all other indicator variables measured within the scope of the studies will provide ample evidence to evaluate treatment effects. This is also supplemented by the analyses conducted during the previous life project (LIFE05/NAT/HU/000122).

Results: Detailed habitat maps, prey availability, and data on spatial patterns of field vole densities available and securely stored.

Further actions will entail the continuation of monitoring activities in 2015 and 2016.

D.5 Monitoring and evaluation of nest predation by *Martes foina*

Status: ongoing, in time

2013 was a control year: signs of *M. foina* presence and predation were recorded. Discussing with other conservation specialists it's clear that *M. foina* predation was recorded previously in every colony.

As a result of action C6 two methods were selected for in situ testing in 2014: KEMO Z100 spray and hair-pet fur combination package. Test nestbox colonies were chosen with accordance of specialists who work at the project site.

A more detailed preliminary study is available (Annex D5_1). In summary each test sites were divided into two halves that were tested with different repellents. Minimum 20 nestboxes were tested in every colony with both methods. Testing started in the end of May, 2014. Nestboxes were inspected weekly while signs of *M. foina* were studied. Repellents were removed in September to preserve efficiency. Previous studies showed that leaving the bags with hair and pet fur in the whole year reduces the effectiveness of this repellent.

As a result of the field monitoring no signs of *M. foina* presence or predation was found in 2014 in the tested colonies. However this does not mean that the methods are 100% effective. Presence of *M. foina* depends on many factors (e.g. presence of other potential prey species). We plan to continue testing in 2015 and apply the methods elsewhere in the project area where any sign of Marten predation arise.

D.6 Assess the socioeconomic impact of the project actions

Status: ongoing, in time

We externalized the monitoring and assessment of the socioeconomic impact of the project actions. The questionnaires from action E4 were submitted for analysis to the expert. (Geologika Bt. was chosen from 3 price quotations)

5.2. Dissemination actions

Objectives

- E1. Develop and maintain project websites and maintain the continuous information flow
- E2. Produce and erect notice boards in project area
- E3. Ensure the project communication
- E4. Communication with stakeholders throughout demonstrative events
- E5. Transportable exhibition for schools
- E6. Exhibition in the Museum of Kardoskút (HUKM10004)
- E7. Layman's report
- E8. Technical communication of project results

The number of reaches by specific actions and by planned communication tools are included to the project output indicator table (Annex folder 7.4 (Final table of indicators)).

Dissemination: overview per activity

E.1 Develop project website

Status: ongoing, in time

The trilingual project website (falcoproject.eu) is developed and the facebook site (www.facebook.com/pages/Falcoproject/) is also online since 28.02.2013. The basic communication languages are English, Hungarian and Slovakian. Both products are refreshed and updated according to the rules of the Communication Plan of the project (see action E3. in this document). All beneficiaries prepared one page on their own sites to show their role in the REDFOOT project:

<http://mme.hu/termeszetvedelem/kiemelt-fajvedelmi-programok/kek-vercse/kek-vercse-life-2012-2018.html>

<http://bnpi.hu/oldal/kekvercse-life-335.html>

http://www.kmnp.hu/user/browser/File/falcoproject_eu_kmnp.pdf

<http://www.nhmus.hu/hu/intezmeny/uvegzseb/life%20>

http://www.dravce.sk/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=886&Itemid=615&lang=sk

<http://www.sopsr.sk/web/?cl=10008>

Major achievements and statistics up to the reporting date:

WEBSITE /www.falcoproject.eu/

52 project news (average 1,9 news/month)

17 636 viewer (4 continents, 10 countries)

37 544 page downloads (2 pages/user)

FACEBOOK (www.facebook.com/falcoproject)

200 uploaded news, timeline photo or photo gallery

Likes: 1078

Active users: 586 139

Talking about: 287 850

YOUTUBE (<https://www.youtube.com/user/falcoproject>)

18 new video

4 806 downloads (5 continents, 60 countries)

WWW.SATELLITETRACKING.EU

Project page prepared

Both archive red-footed falcon and live Amur falcon data can be viewed

We use this tool in the real time communication of project field trips (see Action C8)

E.2 Produce and erect notice boards in project area

Status: accomplished

As planned in the revised proposal two project notice boards with identical design (Annex E2_1) has been erected in Hungary, in HUKM10004 (Annex E2_2) and HUBN10004 (Annex E2_3) in 18th April, 2014. Responsible: MME and KMNPD/BNPD respectively.

In Slovakia five equal notice boards have been installed on visible places in municipalities with the historical or contemporary occurrence of RFFs in SKCHVU005, SKCHVU012, SKCHVU019 and SKCHVU023 (Annex E2_4, Annex E2_5) with agreement of relevant Authorities (Annex E2_6).

Modifications: Instead of production of two different types of notice boards we decided to produce five identical because the importance of Rook and other Corvid species for *F. vespertinus* was necessary to emphasize at all places.

The notice boards include all necessary project information and respect the CP communication rules.

E.3 Project communication

Status: ongoing, in time

Based on the goals and targeted indicators, in the first year of the project we developed a Communication plan to help the work of the Beneficiaries (Annex E3_1). We prepare the annual update of the Calendar of events for every specific year (Annex E3_2)

The project achieved the goals planned in the Communication Plan for the reporting period.

Major achievements and statistics up to the reporting date:

In the revised output indicator table (table 5.) of the project we planned 370 press appearances. The collection of altogether 366 press appearances reflects the current stage of implementation, the list can be found in Annex E3_3.

We reached altogether 5 399 680 persons with the online media contents and 3 276 066 persons through traditional media network in Hungary. For details please see Annex folder 7.4 (Final table of indicators).

We externalized the production of project films, the first footages are already provided by the sub-contractor. (Beszélő Szem Produkciós Iroda Ltd. was chosen from 3 price quotations).

To ensure the proper internal communication monthly internal meetings of the project management company and the beneficiaries were organized.

Several pictures have been annexed to prove the technical implementation of each action (Annex folder 7.2 (Technical actions) and an additional photo and video collection has been created under Annex folder 7.3 (Dissemination actions).

E.4 Communication with stakeholders

Status: ongoing, in time

In Hungary:

MME produced 900 PR sets planned for the budget of KMNPD in the revised proposal. The budget has been revised accordingly. The PR materials respect the CP communication rules (leaflet, bag, T-shirts, cup, visibility vest, stickers, booklet, (Annex E4_1) and we provided a proportional quantity for all beneficiaries. We decided to produce the other 900 sets in the second half of the project when the actual sets will run out. We already used the PR sets on Hungarian project events (*Table 2.*).

Data of events planned in the revised proposal under action E.4					
partner	year - planned	number of participants - planned	number of participants - realized	duration (days)	date
BNPD	2013	100	148	1	held on 24 th April 2014
BNPD	2013	60	62	2	5-6.07.2013
BNPD	2014	50	49	1	26.09.2014
KMNPD	2013	100	55	1	21-22.09.2013
KMNPD	2014	60	100+ expected	2	postponed to 28 February-01 March 2015 (X. Solyomcsalagató)

Table 2. Data of events planned in the revised proposal under action E.4

Brief description of the events in order of occurrence:

BNPD stakeholder meeting (Tarnaszentmiklós - HUBN10004)–5-6.07.2013 – 62 participants: We demonstrated in the field to nature conservation specialists the farming practices and monitoring scheme of the project. Dr. Szabolcs Lengyel presented the experiences of Egyek-Pusztakócs Life project.

<http://falconproject.eu/en/content/i-workshop-red-footed-falcon-life-program>

<http://falconproject.eu/en/content/i-workshop-tarnaszentmiklos>

For more details see Annex E4_2 to_5.

KMNPD stakeholder meeting (Kardoskút - HUKM10004) – 21.09.2013 – 55registered participants (20 for two days): The aim of the meeting was to inform local farmers, Slovakian partners and farmers about the necessity and experiences of the EU's agro-environmental schemes. The KMNPD demonstrated red-footed falcon friendly agricultural

methods, along with the meadow and grazing management and the traditional pasturage of the native grey cattle and sheep stock of the national parks. Questionnaires were prepared and filled out by the participants to monitor the success of the action. The event was held together with the "Fehér-tó Napja" ("Day of Lake Fehér"). The later event is a traditional festival of local nature enthusiasts, municipalities and the KMNPD. More than 2000 participants visited the REDFOOT LIFE+ project stand and received the project leaflet.

<http://falconproject.eu/en/content/project-meeting-and-informative-event-xiv-feherto-day>

For more details see Annex E4_6 to_18.

BNPD organized a forum for approximately 200 landowners in HUKM10004 (Tarnaszentmiklós), on the Betyár-páskom area on the 29th April 2014. Both the press and exhibitors of local products were invited and participated on the event. The project staff demonstrated the grassland management methods (nature friendly mowing techniques, grazing). To sample the attitude of participants altogether 32 questionnaires was filled by the targeted farmers. Data will be evaluated under action D6 by the end of the project.

Both radio/TV reports and internet article was created:

<http://falconproject.eu/en/content/successful-red-footed-falcon-forum-agricultural-entrepreneurs-hevesi-plain-29th-april-2014>

For more details on the moments of the event see Annex E4_19 to_24.

BNPD stakeholder meeting (Tarnaszentmiklós - HUBN10004)–26.09.2014– 49 participants: We discussed the project achievements with nature conservation specialists. We presented the farming practices and the results of the related monitoring in HUBN10004.

For more details on the moments of the event see Annex E4_25 to_27.

In Slovakia:

- One workshop - excursion to Hungary was organised for landusers in September 2013. The aim was the exchange of experiences mostly in the area of farming on the locations of the RFF's occurrence (Annex E4_6 to 18): KMNPD stakeholder meeting (Kardoskút - HUKM10004) 21.09.2013 – 55 registered participants (20 for two days) with 11 participants from Slovakia.
- PR set was prepared and distributed – brochures, stickers, magnets, thermobags and T-shirts (Annex E4_1 and E4_28) in 800 pcs each, a calendar was published for 2014 in 200 pcs,
- 3 workshops were held for landusers and land owners (35 participants)
- 36 meetings were held with different stakeholders (landusers, landowners, hunters, decision makers) in order to promote different project actions (C1, C2, C3, C7, C10) and achieve cooperation (for invitations and list of participants see annex E4_29 and E4_30). (266 participants)

Modifications: Two of the events has been postponed, but none each has been already organized and/or held. During the reporting period the project achieved the number of planned participants (using the formulation from the project proposal: „At least 20 meetings with stakeholders (hunters, land users, decision makers, representatives of Municipal Offices) will be held“). The outcome of the effort will be measured by the end of the project under action D6.

E.5 Transportable exhibition for schools

Status: delayed

The plans for the mobile exhibition to schools have been prepared (Annex E5_1). However due to the controversies in the procurement process HNHM didn't started the printing of the plans. Unfortunately the situation hasn't changed since our last information provided in the Progress Report. The PM forwarded the special question of the EC addressed in the reply to the progress report (07.08.2014) to the Beneficiary. The coordinator of HNHM, Mr. Peter Fehérvári is aware of the situation and apologize for the delayed performance of the action, and ensured the PM that the implementation is expected at latest until summer of 2015.

E.6 Exhibition at the Museum of Kardoskút (HUKM10004)

Status: not relevant, start: in 2015

KMNPD prepared the preparatory documents for the refurbishment of the Museum building. The work will be subcontracted by 30.06.2015.

E.7 Layman's report

Status: not relevant, start: from 2017

E.8 Technical communication of the project results

Status: ongoing, in time

Previous research results on Red-footed Falcon were submitted in 3 different BSc. theses at St. Stephen University Faculty of Veterinary Sciences. One of this (Bence Lázár) wins the OTDK (National Scientific Students' Associations Conference) Conservation Biology section.

Three new MSc. students were recruited to join the project. All three have initiated their designated topics and have participated in the field work of 2013 and the planning of studies for 2014. A total of 6 presentations were held in the topic at the Biology Institute of the Szent István University, Faculty of Veterinarian Sciences.

During the conference "ZOO dny 2014" in Ostrava (Czech Republic), the results from the nest lining of the nesting pair were presented in the form of a poster (5.2.2014)

Several workshop presentation (Annex E8_1_to_5) was held with the participation of the project staff or research associates:

André Botha (EWT) – April 2014, Namibia

Péter Palatitz (Consulex/MME)– September 2014, Szeged, Hungary

Sándor Imre Piross (HNHM-SZIE)– September 2014, Budapest, Hungary

Péter Fehérvári (HNHM)- April 2014, Izsák, Hungary

Péter Palatitz (Consulex/MME)– November, 2014, Budapest, Hungary

Szabolcs Solt (MME), November, 2014, Tata, Hungary

Péter Palatitz (Consulex/MME)–November, 2014, Budapest, Hungary

One peer-reviewed publication appeared in 2014 in *Ornis hungarica* (Annex E8_6).

One workshop MTBK poster by Sándor Imre Piross (HNHM-SZIE)– November 2014 (Annex E8_7)

One publication in the periodica of MME (Madártávlat – Annex E8_8).

Microwave Tracker News 2014 (Palatitz et al.) (Annex E8_9)

Due to the lack of meaningful results we decided not to attend the INTECOL 18 London, UK conference, rather two scientists from HNHM (Anikó Kovács, PhD and Péter Fehérvári) participated to the International Ornithological Congress Tokyo, Rikkio 18-24 August 2014. (Annex E8_10)

5.3. Evaluation of Project Implementation

A detailed Gantt chart analysing the recent status and implementation of the project is attached in Annex 5.

The overall planned methodology fulfilled the previous expectations, within the frame of the usual unpredictability of all actions or processes taken place in natural environment.

Overview of main achievements of the project in the reporting period

Name of the Milestone	Action code	Deadline (planned)	Deadline (accomplished)	Deliverable/ Milestone/ Report
Management plans SK	A.1	28.02.2014	28.02.2014	Deliverable
Special AES for F. vespertinus prepared	A.2	01.09.2013	30.11.2013 –HU 04.02.2014-SK	Deliverable
Evaluation of action based on the data of MRD	A.2	31.12.2014	<i>planned by 31.12.2015</i>	Milestone
Agricultural practices plan and monitoring scheme elaborated	A.3	28.02.2013	28.02.2014	Milestone
100 artificial nestboxes installed in Hevesi-sík	C.1	30.04.2014	30.04.2014	Milestone
Plantation of forest patches at Hevesi-sík (HUBN10004) project site	C.2	01.11.2013	31.12.2013	Milestone
Nest material placed by the project staff near Rook colonies	C.3	01.03.2014	April 2013 and February 2014	Milestone
Beginning of grazing treatments at Hevesi-sík (HUBN10004) project site	C.4	30.04.2013	30.04.2013	Milestone
Beginning of demonstrative arable farming on the Vásárhelyi Project site (HUKM10004)	C.5	01.09.2013	01.09.2013	Milestone
Technical document on the Marten predation	C.6	01.04.2014	01.04.2014	Deliverable
Installation of best M. foina repellents	C.6	30.04.2014	30.04.2014	Milestone
Regulation of shooting Corvidae is active	C.7	31.03.2014	<i>expected in 2015</i>	Deliverable
Protection of F. vespertinus pairs ensured	C.9	31.08.2013	31.08.2013	Milestone
Protection of F. vespertinus pairs ensured	C.9	31.08.2014	31.08.2014	Milestone
Monitoring report of the 1 st year	D.3	31.12.2014	31.12.2014	Deliverable
Monitoring report of the 1 st year	D.4	31.12.2014	31.12.2014	Deliverable
Project website on-line	E.1	28.02.2013	28.02.2013	Deliverable
Notice boards erected	E.2	30.09.2013	18.04.2014	Milestone
Rook notice boards erected	E.2	30.11.2013	30.11.2013	Milestone
Communication Plan, logo	E.3	31.12.2012	31.12.2012	Milestone

First farmer and stakeholder meeting (joined) and official opening ceremony at Hevesi-sík (HUBN10004) project site	E.4	30.04.2013	29.04.2014	Milestone
PR set for farmers produced (Hevesi-sík (HUBN10004) project site)	E.4	30.04.2013	<i>postponed to 2015, see the description of the action</i>	Deliverable
PR set for stakeholders produced in Slovakia	E.4	30.06.2013	29.04.2014	Deliverable
Excursion in Hungary for 50 stakeholders from Slovakia	E.4	30.06.2013	21.09.2013	Milestone
PR set for farmers produced (Vásárhelyi-project site HUKM10004)	E.4	30.08.2013	30.08.2013	Deliverable
First farmer and stakeholder meeting (joined) and official opening ceremony at Vásárhelyi (HUKM10004) project site	E.4	30.09.2013	21.09.2013	Milestone
Yearly meetings organized, questionnaires filled	E.4	31.12.2014	One meeting postponed to 1 st of March 2015	Milestone
Transportable exhibition is ready	E.5	01.04.2014	delayed, expected until 31.05. 2015	Deliverable
Partnership agreements and staff contracts	F.1	30.09.2012	15.10.2012	Milestone
Project staff training	F.1	31.12.2012	13.12.2012	Milestone
Inception report	F.1	01.04.2013	approved in May 2013	Report
Progress report	F.1	25.04.2013	approved in August 2014	Report
Mid-term report	F.1	01.04.2014	06.03.2015	Report
Project Start up Meeting	F.2	10.09.2012	13.12.2012	Milestone
Project manager nominated and contract signed	F.2	10.09.2012	10.09.2012	Milestone
Steering committee Meeting	F.2	31.03.2014	31.03.2014	Milestone

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

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

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

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

"Status: ongoing, small delay"= the action is delayed, but the implementation is underway and this do not affect the expected results

"Status: delayed"=the action is delayed, the achievement of expected results is uncertain

"Status: accomplished"= the action is finished and achieved the expected results

5.4. Analysis of long-term benefits

1. Environmental benefits

a, Direct / quantitative environmental benefits:

The Carpathian Basin holds the largest population of red-footed falcon in the European Union. Therefore the conservation status of the species in the region is also directly affecting the whole western population. In the first two years of the project, red footed falcons returned to Slovakia and there was a significant increase in the local population of the target species in both Hungarian treatment sites. The project directly improves 530 hectares of Natura 2000 key habitat (1530 "Pannonic salt steppes and salt marshes) and indirectly the other habitats surrounding. Moreover the management plans prepared for the Slovakian SPA and the sustainable management of Rook population may have direct effect on the habitat of more than 600000 hectares of Natura 2000 sites.

b, Policy

Red-footed falcons are top predators of small vertebrates and various invertebrate taxa. The viability of falcon population can be used as general indicators of agro-biodiversity of these habitats. The project prepared special AES for the species and aims to develop and demonstrate further sustainable agricultural methods to conserve a semi natural agricultural landscape. These objectives serve the benefit of several other sympatric species of international conservation concern of the Pannon-ecoregion. The targeted habitat restorations and management also provide example for the sustainable farming and a more natural human living and the lessons learned can be used for the EU Environmental Action Programmes.

2. Long-term benefits and sustainability

a. Long-term / qualitative environmental benefits

Red-footed Falcons are easily accepted by citizens and stakeholders as target species of conservation efforts. Contrarily Rook is widely regarded as pest and persecuted or just negatively judged by humans. The dependence of the first species from the second easily demonstrate even to laymans the complexity of nature and the increasing need to reform the place of modern human society in the nature. The migratory behaviour of Red-footed Falcons helps to build the network of conservationists working together in daily basis. This later may have an outmost importance in the future to make further concrete steps on the way designated by international policies, acts and climate mitigation processes.

b. Long-term / qualitative economic benefits

Natural value of economically less developed regions is usually higher. Red-footed falcons inhabit this unfavourable regions where industry, commerce and profit oriented sectors are less active. The restoration of biodiversity function of such habitats and the development of the traditional agriculture through agricultural policies may help to stabilize the economic viability of these regions.

c. Long-term / qualitative social benefits

The project itself gives work to local workers (all ethnics), however as usually nature conservation initiatives, we try to spend the money in an efficient way. Therefore this minor direct effect is much more outbalanced by the fact that we aim to develop a sustainable agricultural method and incorporate to policies to help local people to maintain their farming in a more natural way and meantime secure the income necessary to manage the expenses of their family.

We are especially proud to give work to a high number of woman, not only as administrative/office staff but also as field worker.

d. Continuation of the project actions by the beneficiary or by other stakeholders:

The beneficiaries are committed to continue the project actions. To help this goal we built most of the actions to achieve a self-sustainable stage at the end of the project period. All necessary commitment will be provided in the After-life conservation plan annexed to the final report of the project.

3. Replicability, demonstration, transferability, cooperation:

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

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

- The delay of the preparation of national RDPs result in the delay of the implementation of AES (Action A2). This tool however is very important to maintain the control of large scale habitat processes of the target species and help the conservation work with farmers and local stakeholders.
- The result of action C1 shows the continuous need for artificial nest creation, as the lack of breeding opportunities is the main limiting factor for several bird species.
- Action C3/D2 proved that nest material placement helps Rooks colony formation. This can help to reduce the human-rook conflict and help the conservation management of the species.
- The traditional grazing can be used effectively to control reed in the Pannon grasslands. The grey cattle of the project reduced the reed coverage of the project area.
- National Park Directorates in Hungary are able to adapt their arable farming system to create a more patchy farm habitat (Action C5).
- The most effective method to prevent Marten predation was the hair – pet fur combination (Action C6/D5). This cheap method will be tested in natural conditions and demonstrated in the second half of the project.
- Changes in the relevant regulation needs extra effort from the beneficiaries to achieve the planned goals, however stakeholders are generally open to the initiated hunting regulations (Action C7).
- The importance of Europe is higher in the pre-migratory period of the red-footed falcon as previously anticipated (Action C8).
- Even relatively far from stable breeding populations nest guarding (Action C9) and active conservation measures (eg. nest box installation Action C1) can be effective tools to assure the successful breeding of the red-footed falcons.

5. Demonstration value of the project:

In this early stage of the project, even if the demonstration actions are started, they are expected to reach their full performance only in the second half of the project period.

- Local farmers are interested to learn more from nature friendly farming tools and related agricultural treatments (Action C4, C5, E4).
- People are always fascinated by the nature, especially bird migration and new technologies making the demonstration of the results easier (Action C8, E1, E8).

6. Long term direct indicators of the project success are the number of breeding pairs of red-footed falcon in the project area, and the Carpathian Basin. In the special case of the red-footed falcon the indirect indicators of Rook conservation management (eg. population size and trend, nr. of colonies, nr. of colonies with RFF pairs, stakeholder attitude change etc.) can be also used to evaluate the long term success and the sustainability of the results achieved.

6. Comments on the financial report

6.1. Summary of Costs Incurred

The planned project duration is 67 months, out of which 28 months have gone until the end of 2014, meaning that cc. 40% of the project timespan is over.

As shown in the expenditure summary table, the overall project expenditure from 01/09/2012 to 31/12/2014 is €1 332 432 that is 37% of total budget, consisting of EC and own contributions. The overall spending is equal to 130 % of the first pre-financing payment.

Both the Hungarian and Slovakian beneficiaries cannot reclaim VAT, therefore their total costs were accounted on the project. The National Parks succeeded in obtaining verifications from the Hungarian Tax Authority, however these documents are also based on self-declarations. The VAT declarations are attached in Annex 6 as required in the reply to our Progress Report.

PROJECT COSTS INCURRED			
Cost category	Budget according to the grant agreement*	Costs incurred within the project duration	%**
1.Personnel	€1 377 489,00	€444 518,75	32,27%
2.Travel	€224 913,00	€78 347,91	34,83%
3.External assistance	€676 682,00	€138 111,66	20,41%
4.Durables: total <u>non-depreciated cost</u>	€503 487,00	€413 649,94	82,16%
- Infrastructure sub-tot.	€ 54 815,00	€ 11 487,39	20,96%
- Equipment sub-tot.	€ 448 672,00	€ 402 162,55	89,63%
- Prototypes sub-tot.	€ 0,00	€ 0,00	-
5.Consumables	€608 782,00	€177 795,66	29,21%
6.Other costs	€37 088,00	€9 817,64	26,47%
7. Overheads	€197 208,00	€70 190,73	35,59%
TOTAL	€3 625 649,00	€1 332 432,30	36,75%

(See the electronic version as annex 6_1)

The overall spending per cost category corresponds well with the current state of the project and is according to the original budgetary plans. However, there is a significant delay resulting from some public procurement process (and recent changes in the connected legislation) at the State Nature Conservancy of Slovakia (SNC). For this reason, some of their equipment (car, binoculars) have not been purchased till the end of this reporting period, although the process has started in the first year of the project. According to the information provided by the beneficiary, the mentioned procurements will be finished before the field season of 2015, therefore the equipment will be used in significant part for the project purpose (3 seasons from the total planned 5 seasons).

6.2. Accounting system

A Financial Guideline (both in English and Hungarian) was prepared and presented to the ABs at the beginning of the project. In the early phase of the project the project manager held a lecture about the administrative requirements to the project staff at the kick-off meeting in Vácrátót, Hungary. Most partners are not new to LIFE projects and have employed satisfactory practices in their book keeping systems.

Incurred costs of a project partner are approved when all relevant documentation has been provided. An excel file, containing all important information about cost items, is regularly updated with approved costs. Partners request reimbursements according to the partnership agreement – normally on a 3-months basis. Next payment can only be transferred if the last quarterly report is approved.

Timesheets are signed and dated by employees and validated by the supervisor during the first week following the month of registration. All the beneficiaries are using the model timesheet which is available on the LIFE website. Original signed copies of the time sheets are collected from the ABs together with the financial documentation.

Following the progress report we stressed the partners to ask the service providers to write the project reference code in all relevant contracts, invoices etc. Each partners got a project stamp with the ID code that is also applied on the project documents in case the invoice provider should fail to fulfil this requirement for some reason – mainly on low cost invoices. (In most cases stamps are used additionally now just to be on the safe side.)

6.3. Partnership arrangements (if relevant)

The associated beneficiaries send the coordinating beneficiary a monthly financial report (along with their technical progress report, which is sent to the project management). The documentation justifying the costs are either sent by post or uploaded as scanned files to a common drive.

The project administrator position at the coordinating beneficiary was split into two half-time arrangements. The formal control of the documentation and the financial table is done by the junior project assistant of the CB. The crosscheck with the approved budget and verifying the corresponding actions are done by the senior project assistant, who is also responsible for communicating with the partners' administrative staff, approving the payment requests from the financial side, and supervising the junior assistant's work.

6.4. Auditor's report/declaration

Auditor's data:

Name : *Dr. Nagy, László*

Address: *4033 Debrecen, Kisfaludy u 11*

Licence No.: *002691*

Tax registration number: *47794391-2-29*

e-mail: *nagyfaludy@freemail.hu*

phone: *+36209734352*

6.5. Summary of costs per action

Action no.	Short name of action	1. Personnel	2. Travel and subsistence	3. External assistance	4.a Infrastructure	4.b Equipment	4.c Prototype	5. Purchase or lease of land	6. Consumables	7. Other costs	8. Overheads	TOTAL
A1	Slovakian habitat management	24 185	2 345	3 073		807				2 200		32 610
A2	AES	7 301	880									8 181
A3	Hungarian habitat management plan	8 084	2 120									10 204
A4	Book											0
A5	Action Plan											0
C1	Nest boxes	14 270	3 741	2 119		6 773			24 579	680		52 163
C2	Planting	5 381	783		1 084					100		7 348
C3	Rook colony	10 266	3 290			3 078			1 021	66		17 720
C4	Heves site management	81 515	8 597	28 961	10 403	213 543			79 393	770		423 181
C5	Vásárhelyi site management	6 517	7 191	13 368		37 184			1 366			65 627
C6	Marten predation	16 957	5 733			7 785			2 803			33 279
C7	Slovakian rook shooting	5 220	134									5 354
C8	Migration	8 340	16 296			49 904			20 117	837		95 494
C9	Nest guarding in Slovakia	8 678	1 398	1 820		9 954			530			22 379
C10	AES in Slovakia	76				1 025						1 101
D1	Project action monitoring in SK											0
D2	Rook colony monitoring	7 778	1 900									9 678
D3	Heves monitoring	27 161	4 235	1 995		31 307			4 782			69 480
D4	Vásárhelyi monitoring	24 392	6 067			11 013			7 917			49 388
D5	Marten monitoring	1 090										1 090
D6	Socioeconomic effects											0
E1	Website	10 200	67	1 133								11 399
E2	Notice boards	1 888	131	2 500		519						5 038
E3	General communication	17 073	506	2 460								20 039
E4	Stakeholders	23 203	2 412	2 650					33 185	661		62 111
E5	Transportable exhibition	10 321										10 321
E6	Museum exhibition								201			201
E7	Layman											0
E8	Conferences	2 642	2 667						9	828		6 146
F1	Project management	116 448	4 814	70 539		1 872				2 674		196 346
F2	SC	681	115									797
F3	Networking	4 855	2 928	6 226		27 398			1 894	1 002		44 302
F4	Audit			1 267								1 267
F5	After-LIFE											0
Ov	Overheads										70 191	70 191
	TOTAL	444 519	78 348	138 112	11 487	402 163	0	0	177 796	9 818	70 191	1 332 432

(See the electronic version as annex 6_2)

Minor budget changes were approved in the previous progress report – the acquisition of these equipment is detailed below as requested in the reply to our previous report:

Action C3 (MME)

- A GroPro camera was purchased for motion picture documentation under action C3 for the planned 628 euros.
- A Nikon camera was purchased for photo documentation under action C3 for 841 euros (plan was €853).

Action C6 (MME)

- An archiving system was bought to store the huge amount of data on Marten repellent tests originated from cameras and photo traps. Blu Ray writer (€135)+NAS synology (€97)+ HDDs (€96)

Action C8 (MME)

- We asked to substitute geolocators/GPS bugs with PTTs instead. However, the acquirement of the planned amount of PTTs was somewhat more expensive than

originally planned in the budget. Also, the more PTTs would result in increased data fees – so, for the time being we wait to see how the current PTTs work and would buy additional ones only if these ones are lost or go wrong.

Action C9 (RPS)

- Purchase of 4 photo-traps was approved to monitor RFF nest and Rook colony in Slovakia. The cost of €1684 was saved instead of buying the distance measuring optical tool.

We wish to propose some other budget minor modifications that would improve the project implementation:

Organization	Action	Cost type	Planned budget	Allocated budget	Item	Reason
BNPD	C4	Equipment	€859	Saved money in equipment cost category	Binocular	The planned budget for binoculars could be optimized for buying 3 cheaper ones instead of the originally planned 2 binoculars, as it serves the project purposes better - shared among 3 rangers working for the project.
BNPD	C4	Equipment	€9 982	Co-financing	4x4 car	One full-time agronomist is employed on the project to oversee the grey cattle husbandry at the National Park. She had worked using her own car that was totally amortised during frequent visits to the pastures. There was no other option than to buy a 4x4 car as it is absolutely essential for implementing the project. The car is used 100% on the project, so the BNPD requests it to be considered as eligible equipment, notwithstanding it was not foreseen in the project approved budget.
RPS	C1	Equipment	€288	Saved money in equipment cost category	Computer	Purchase of one notebook was planned in the budget of RPS. Besides one notebook we have also purchased another computer – a PC, without increasing the budget category. The PC was purchased for the use by the Scientific Coordinator, especially to record and evaluate data from installation of nest boxes, updating of the database etc.
RPS	E4	External assistance	€4 900	We would like to use these 4900 euro from the budget of C1 – External assistance – Creating a special database system – 7800 euro and reduce this budget subcategory to 2900 euro. The database will be created for this amount and will be maintained by project staff.	We would like to increase the budget of E4 and create a new subcategory – External assistance – Production of a special film for target groups in Slovakia – in the amount of 4900 euro.	The film should bring message especially to stakeholders as land-users, land-owners, hunters, municipalities and decision-making authorities. Based on our experience and meetings with stakeholders that are being held we can say that the film will be a very motivating way to promote the species status in Slovakia and the project results.

Annexes

Our list of annexes attached in electronic format:

- Annex 5: Gantt chart;
- Annex 6: VAT declarations of CB and ABs; electronic version of table “Project costs incurred” (6_1) and the electronic version of table “Summary of costs per action” (6_2)
- Annex 7.1 Administrative annexes
Partnership Agreements (PA) had been signed between CB and each ABs and submitted together with the Inception Report in April 2013.
- Annex 7.2: Technical annexes (referred in the description of each action)
in separate folders for actions A1, A2, A3, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9, D2, D3, D4, D5
and the list of abbreviation used in 7_2;
- Annex 7.3: Dissemination annexes (referred in the description of each action)
in separate folders for actions E2, E3, E4, E5 and E8.
and one folder with pictures/videos
- Annex 7.4. Final table of indicators
- Annex 8: financial tables of CB and ABs and the copies of the signed tables (Annex 8/signed documents)
- Annex 8_1: financial table of BNPD
- Annex 8_2: financial table of KMNPD
- Annex 8_3: financial table of HNHM
- Annex 8_4: financial table of MME
- Annex 8_5: financial table of RPS
- Annex 8_6: financial table of SNC