



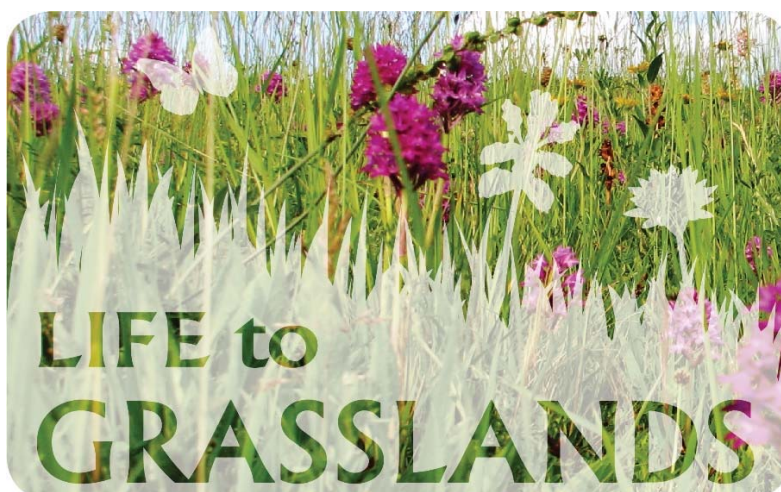
<LIFE14 NAT/SI/000005>

Progress Report

Covering the project activities from 01/11/2015 to 30/06/2016

<01/07/2016>

<LIFE TO GRASSLANDS>





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Data Project

Project location:	Slovenia (4 project sub-areas)
Project start date:	01/11/2015
Project end date:	31/10/2020 Extension date: /
Total budget:	€ 3.898.582
EU contribution:	€ 2.923.936
(%) of eligible costs:	75

Data Beneficiary

Name Beneficiary:	Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation
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2. List of key-words and abbreviations

- AB - Associated beneficiary
- CB - Coordinating beneficiary
- EC - European Commission
- EU - European Union
- ZRSVN - Zavod Republike Slovenije za varstvo narave (Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation)
- KGZ Ptuj - Kmetijsko gozdarski zavod Ptuj (Agriculture and Forestry Institute Ptuj)
- PRJ Halo - Podeželsko razvojno jedro (Rural development centre PRJ Halo)
- KS Dobovec - Krajevna skupnost Dobovec (Local community Dobovec)
- Društvo GK - Društvo Gorjanske košenice (Society Gorjanske košenice)
- MOP - Ministrstvo za okolje in prostor (Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning)
- MKGP - Ministrstvo za kmetijstvo, gozdarstvo in prehrano (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food)
- PSA - project sub-area
- LC - local coordinators

3. Executive summary (max 2 pages)

3.1. General progress

General progress of the project is good and the work on all the project actions is according to the time plan (refer to chapter 5.1 for the detailed description of the general progress by the action).

The overall project coordination and administration started with the nomination of the project staff and organization of the kick off meeting for the project partnership. We have signed partnership agreements with all four associated beneficiaries (AB) (refer to Annex 7.1) and co-financer (Annex). The project coordinator is being in regular contact with ABs coordinators as well as four project sub-area coordinators (LC). The project Steering comity was established. The project team members are working together and/or independently on their actions according to plan. The partnership is well defined and working together well. Management organigrams are in Annex 7.3.

All Deliverables and Milestones that were due to be completed by this reporting date are completed (list below). The entire list of Deliverable and Milestones and their achievement is in Annex 7.2.

Name of the Deliverable	Number of the associated action	Deadline	Fulfilment
1 project identity guide	E 5	30/04/2016	Completed.
Name of the Milestone	Number of the associated action	Deadline	
Project management established	F 1	30/04/2016	Completed.
Project web page accessible in internet	E 5	30/04/2016	Completed.

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

So far, there are no obvious signs that the objectives cannot be reached. We plan to achieve the set goals as proposed in the project proposal. We estimate that the proposed work plan is viable.

3.3. Identified deviations, problems and corrective actions taken in the period

We do not anticipate any problems in purchasing technical equipment.

Action A4 – Permit procedure: in Haloze project subarea there is a problem of a great land fragmentation. Presently 85% of the land is privately owned. A great threat of lend abonnement in connection with depopulation of the area is present. We hope that

preparatory A - actions will bring together farmers and other stakeholders and get them interested in participating in the project and land owners to sign written consents for the C - actions to be carried out. We anticipate that since the project is a 5-year project we will manage to obtain needed written consents from land owners and land tenants. In addition we asked the external subcontractor carrying our survey of the initial situation of the HT 6210(*) on Haloze (University of Maribor, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics) to produce, according to their best expert opinion, a map of potential suitable areas of for the HT6210 (*) in Haloze. We will primarily seek consensus for works on areas where the survey of the initial situation of the HT 6210(*) in Haloze will show the presence of the habitat HT6210(*) in bad status in addition we will seek owners consensus in adjoin areas but still inside the area of the potential suitable areas of for the HT6210(*) in Haloze. All with the aim of assuring long-term suitable future management of the area for the HT6210(*). The associated beneficiary PRH Halo will play a very important role in networking with local people.

Action C3 - the restoration and maintenance of traditional orchards: purchase of tree seedling: Initial check of available traditional orchards tree seedling in tree nurseries showed that there are not enough seedling in nurseries in Slovenia. The development of a chosen specific traditional meadow orchards seedling needs two seasons. To avoid possible delays we therefor already prepared a public tender for the purchase of tree seedlings so that the chosen external subcontractor has enough time to develop (grow and produce specific seedling) of traditional meadow orchards trees). The external subcontractor would have enough time to prepare seedlings till autumn 2017 (which is according to the timetable).

Partnership has well defined roles of each of the project partners. All project partners are very keen and work actively in achieving all set goals. For now, no evident change in organization of the partnership is anticipated. If such instance does emerge, we will actively approach in slowing the problem either through changing the partnership structure or through redistribution of activities within the partnership.

It does not seem likely that the project would stay behind schedule in this stage.

4. Administrative part

The project team consists of a CB and four ASs. The overall project management started with the nomination of the project staff (CB: project manager, project sub-area coordinators (4), financial coordinator, co-workers for specific fields, administration) in November 2015. The project is organized as shown on the organigrams (Annex 7.3). In addition, ABs' nominated AB coordinators, one per each partner organization and other staff working on the project.

For the easier management and coordination of work between four sub-areas, four project sub-are coordinators (from CB) were nominated, one for each project sub-area. They coordinate the work of project local teams consisting from CB staff, AB staff and some representatives of target groups. The project manager is in regular contact with sub-area coordinators as well as with AB coordinators and other project staff.

On the 21st of December 2015 an internal meeting of the CB project staff was organized. Internal instructions were given on how to fill in timetables, travel reports and other reports foreseen in the project.

A kick off meeting of the project partnership was held in Rimske terme on the 20th - 21st of February 2016. The event was attended by CB and all AB, co-financers and some other stakeholders of the project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS (Table of events Annex 7.4). The project sub-areas and project activities was presented in detail. In addition, project partnership as well as LIFE mechanism and its relevant rules from the General conditions were presented. Obligation of the internal reporting of the monthly activities together with the internal financial reporting to the CB was presented as well as reporting obligation to the European commission. Detailed involvement and responsibilities of each of the beneficiaries were discussed and assigned in relation to the time plan, through a set of workshops. The kick off meeting was attended by the representative of NEEMO external monitoring team, Mr. Nikolaj Pečenko, who presented technical and financial revision rules for the project.

The Supervisory board committee was formed at the Kick off meeting 20th - 21st of February 2016. Representatives of all project beneficiaries were nominated as members of the named Supervisory board. On the 22nd of April 2016 the 1st Supervisory board meeting was held for project partners at the headquarters of CB ZRSVN. Financial and administrative rules were discussed in depth and project actions discussed and planned.

The partnership is well balanced and working together well. By the end of December 2015 all partnership agreements with all four AB have been signed (refer to Annex 7.1.). While preparing the partnership agreement the project coordinator has taken in into consideration the Commissions' Provisions and Guidelines (Annex 7.1). A co-financers agreement was signed in June 2016 (Annex 7.1).

5. Technical part

5.1 Progress per action

Dry grasslands - Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco- Brometalia) ((* important orchid sites) (EU_6210(*))) and Species-rich Nardus grasslands, on silicious substrates in mountain areas (and sub-mountain areas in Continental Europe) (EU_6230(*)) have in view of results reported according to the Habitats Directive 2013 an bad/unfavorable (U2-, U1-) conservation status in Slovenia. This project will focus on developing, optimization and improving the conservation status of HT 6210(*), HT 6230(*) in eastern Slovenia. The project area consists of four project sub-areas: Haloze, Gorjanci-Radoha, Kum and Pohorje.

Below are short descriptions of project actions and the activities undertaken during project implementation in the period between 01/11/2015 to 30/06/2016.

5.1.1 Action A.1: Analysis of the initial situation of the agricultural use of dry grasslands

Foreseen start date: IV/2015

Actual start date: December 2015

Foreseen end date: III/2016

Actual (or anticipated) end date: September 2016

Status: in progress

An introductory workshop was organised for the partners on the 22th of December 2015 by the ZRSVN. The purpose of the workshop was to assign and coordinate the tasks involved in the action.

AB KGZ Ptuj obtained data for recent (2006-2015) agricultural management history from the Agency for Agricultural Markets and Rural Development (Agencije za kmetijske trge in razvoj podeželja RS). Following data were obtained: actual land and their change for land categories: fields, meadows, pastures, and the rest), data for inclusion of farmers into agricultural policy measures and data on areas eligible for agricultural payments (GERK).

AB KGZ Ptuj subcontracted Geodetski Zavod Celje to conduct the analysis and prepare the report of the obtained data for on the recent agricultural management history of the four project sub-areas. The subcontractor prepared the Analysis, which includes: areas eligible for agricultural payments (GERK), involvement of farmers in agricultural policy measures and data the state of overgrowth (Annex 7.5). Data on the stocking rates, stock types, grazing periods and feeding regimes (start and finishing dates), fertilizer use, agricultural equipment suitability (fences, electric fence controllers, livestock, mowers are still being collected).

KGZ Ptuj and ZRSVN jointly made an application to the Surveying and Mapping Authority (Geodetsko upravo RS) to obtain information land ownership, which will serve the implementation of project tasks on the land. Data were not obtained yet.

The database is under construction by the external subcontractor Geodetski Zavod Celje and will be produce according to the time plan. Data is being gathered for all four project sub areas e.g. 7 Natura 2000 sites.

Several field visits to all for project subareas were carried each partner separately or jointly. Two different questioners were prepared. First one – a general questioner regarding current agricultural practice on a farm, future perspectives of a farm and potential to be involved in a project LIEF TO GRASSLAND (Annex 7.6). The questioners are being filled by the KGZ Ptuj during the entry of farmers form Haloze into the Agri-environmental measures of the Rural development program or when a farmer comes to get advice from a farming advisor. 178 questioners were filled until now.

The second questioner is concerning the past agricultural practice on a farm (Annex 7.6). Both CB ZRSVN and KGZ Ptuj personnel are filling the questioners during filed visits to farms. 9 questioners were filled until now.

5.1.2 Action A.2: Elaboration of the Conservation guidelines for sustainable management of HT 6210(*) / 6230(*) in the project sub-areas

Foreseen start date: IV/2015

Actual start date: December 2015

Foreseen end date: IV/2017

Actual (or anticipated) end date: December 2017

Status: in progress

A joint Public tender with action D.1 prepared and concluded for the detailed analyses of the HT 6210(*) and HT 6230(*) initial situation on all four project subareas. The contract with the subcontractor University of Maribor, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (Univerza v Mariboru, Fakulteta za naravoslovje in matematiko) was signed on the 25.04.2016 (Annex 7.7). The analysis is in progress in the field and will be conclude by the end of September 2016.

On the 13th of May 2016, AB ZRSVN representatives organized four workshop with project partners and external contractor (Fakulteta za matematiko in naravoslovje, Univerza v Mariboru) (one for each project subarea). Project partner and external subcontractor exchanged knowledge on habitat types and local species of the project subareas. External subcontractor also presented working methods and work specifications for each of the project sub-area.

After reviewing the report of the detailed analysis of the HT 6210(*) and HT 6230(*) initial situation we plan to identify areas for the implementation of concrete actions through a set of workshops involving project partner and external experts (autumn 2016).

A meeting was organized by ZRSVN where Conservation guidelines prepared in previous projects (e.g. LIFE09 NAT/SI/000374 - WETMAN) were discussed in a view of adjusting them to this project and their potential improvement.

CB ZRSVN plans to organize a training trip to one of the EU member states that successfully manage their Natura 2000 areas with dry grasslands in autumn 2016.

Following equipment necessary to carry out this action was purchased: by CB ZRSVN: two personal computers with software, two mobile phones, three pairs of binoculars, one digital camera and personal protection equipment (four boots for four employees).

5.1.3 Action A.3: Involvement of landowners in the project and identification of areas for action implementation

Foreseen start date: I/2016

Actual start date: January 2016

Foreseen end date: IV/2017

Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2017

Status: in progress

This is a crucial action to get enough farmer / land owners interested in being involved in the project so we can carry out all plant field activities. The aim of the initial activities was to get information about the project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS, financial mechanism LIFE and Natura 2000 to as wide local public as possible. We prepared a simple pamphlet with information regarding the project (Annex 7.8). Project partners presented the project at many events (Annex 7.4), to get as many people interested and involved in the project. Initial information was sent to 2063 addresses (either home or e-mail at various occasions).

CB and ABs already started with the field visits, farm visits and farmer consultations. While visiting the farm questionnaires prepared in the Action A1 are being filled. We plan to organize local workshops when conservation guidelines for management of dry grasslands will be prepared and farmer have more time to participate on such events (winter 2016/2017).

Following equipment necessary to carry out this action was purchased: by AB KGZ Ptuj: one laptop computer with software.

5.1.4 Action A.4: Permit procedures

Foreseen start date: I/2016

Actual start date: March 2016

Foreseen end date: IV/2017
Status: started

Actual (or anticipated) end date: December 2017

During the field visit - analysis the current status of the area and in connection with the initial field analysis of the status of the habitat, potential location to carry out removal of overgrowth are being identified. Exact location are needed to be able to obtain Permits for deforestation obtained from the Slovenian Forest Service for individual locations, Nature conservation consents and consents of land owners. We plan to obtain the majority of the consents in late Autumn/Winter 2016.

5.1.5 Action B.1: Purchase and lease of land in the Haloze project sub-area

Foreseen start date: III/2016

Actual start date: /

Foreseen end date: II/2018

Actual (or anticipated) end date: June 2018

Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.6 Action B.2: Purchase of land in Gorjanci-Radoha project sub-area

Foreseen start date: III/2016

Actual start date: June 2016

Foreseen end date: II/2018

Actual (or anticipated) end date: June 2018

Status: started

Potential areas (land plats) in the interest of the project to be purchased were identified (Annex 7.9). Currently CB ZRSVN and AB Društvo Gorjanske košenice are carrying out communication with targeted landowners.

5.1.7 Action C.1: Removal of overgrowth

Foreseen start date: III/2016

Actual start date: June 2016

Foreseen end date: II/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: June 2020

Status: started

During the field visit - analysis the current status of the area and in connection with the initial field analysis of the status of the habitat, potential location to carry out removal of overgrowth are being identified.

Following equipment necessary to carry out this action was purchased: by CB ZRSVN: four compact digital cameras.

5.1.8 Action C.2: Ensuring the appropriate long-term use of dry grasslands

Foreseen start date: IV/2016

Actual start date: /

Foreseen end date: III/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: September 2020

Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.9 Action C.3: The restoration and maintenance of traditional orchards

Foreseen start date: I/2016, IV/2016

Actual start date: January 2015

Foreseen end date: I/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: March 2020

Status: started

Public tender for the purchase of the project car was prepared and concluded. A car: Suzuki Vitara was purchased in March 2016 (Annex 7.10 public tender, picture).

Initial check of available traditional orchards tree seedling in tree nurseries showed that there are not enough seedling in nurseries in Slovenia. The development of a chosen specific traditional meadow orchards seedling needs two seasons. To avoid possible delays we already prepared a public tender for the purchase of tree seedlings so that the chosen external subcontractor has enough time to develop specific seedlings. The public tender is underway (Annex 7.11).

From the existing KGZ Ptuj database the list of farmers already owning a traditional orchards for the project sub area Haloze was prepared. CB ZRSVN and AB Društvo GK and KS Dobovec gathered similar data for the sub areas Kum and Gorjanci.

These were the farmers which were invited to participate at the practical workshops to educate landowners on the methods and importance of pruning. At project sub area Haloze a workshop was held in Kočice on the 29th of February 2016, on the project sub area Gorjanci in Miklavž 31st of March 2016 and Javorovica 1st of April 2016 and on the project sub area Kum in Škofja Riža on the 6th of April 2016. Project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS objectives and financial mechanism LIFE were also presented at the workshop. The AB KGZ Ptuj, CB ZRSVN, AB KS Dobovec and AB Društvo GK jointly organized workshops. An external subcontracted was sub contracted by the AB KGZ Ptuj for presentation of the actual demonstration of the traditional orchard tree pruning method.

5.1.10 Action C.4: Networking of owners and users of dry grassland plots in the Haloze project sub-area

Foreseen start date: IV/2017 Actual start date: /
Foreseen end date: III/2020 Actual (or anticipated) end date: September 2020
Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.11 Action C.5: Preparation of farm management plans for improving dry grasslands management

Foreseen start date: IV/2017 Actual start date: /
Foreseen end date: III/2020 Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020
Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.12 Action C.6: Preparation of an Expert Proposal of AEP measures related to the preservation of the HT 6210(*) and 6230(*) for integration into the 2021–2027 Rural development programme of the Republic of Slovenia

Foreseen start date: IV/2017 Actual start date: /
Foreseen end date: II/2020 Actual (or anticipated) end date: June 2020
Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.13 Action C.7: Development and Economics study of Dry Grasslands Preservation in the Haloze project sub-area

Foreseen start date: II/2018 Actual start date: /

Foreseen end date: IV/2019 Actual (or anticipated) end date: December 2019
Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.14 Action D.1: Monitoring of the impact of project actions success

Foreseen start and end dates: II/2017 - III/2017 and II/2018 – III/2018 and II/2019 – III/2019 and II/2020 – III/2020

Actual start date: March 2016 Actual (or anticipated) end date: September 2020
Status: started in advance

A joint Public tender with action A.2 was prepared and concluded for the Monitoring of the impact of the concrete project actions on to the HT 6210(*) and HT 6230(*). The contract with the subcontractor University of Maribor, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (Univerza v Mariboru, Fakulteta za naravoslovje in matematiko) was signed (Annex 7.7).

5.1.15 Action D.2: Assessment of the socio-economic impact of the project actions on local economy and population

Foreseen start and end dates: I/2016 – IV/2016 and I/2020 – III/2020

Actual start date: January 2016 Actual (or anticipated) end date: September 2016
Status: started

We started with the preparation of the expert basis for the public tender. We plan to publish the public tender in Jun/July 2016.

5.1.16 Action D.3: Assessment of the project's impact on the ecosystem functions

Foreseen start and end dates: I/2016 – IV/2016 and I/2020 – III/2020

Actual start date: January 2016 Actual (or anticipated) end date: September 2020
Status: started

We reviewed the accessible literature and EU guidelines. We plan to carry out initial survey with project personnel and the second part through the public tender. We started with the preparation of the expert basis for the Assessment of the project's impact on the ecosystem functions and a public tender.

5.1.17 Action E.1: National and local authority education and information project

Foreseen start date: IV/2016

Actual start date: January 2016

Foreseen end date: IV/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020

Status: started in advance

The project communication manual was prepared covering all awareness raising activities and other communication activities connected to all possible stakeholders (Annex 7.12). Approaches for specific stakeholder groups were identified together with the targeted message for each stakeholder. A workshop was organized for all partners to develop the communication strategies.

The project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS, LIFE mechanism and Natura 2000 network were already presented at 34 events (Annex 7.4)

- municipalities: Šentjernej, Novo mesto, Kostanjevica na Krki, Trbovlje, Hrastnik, Zagorje ob Savi, Radeče, Videm, Makole, Cirkulane, Majšperk, Podlehnik, Poljčane, Žetale, Zavrč, Mislinja, Vitanje, Zreče, Lovrenc na Pohorju, Ribnica na Pohorju
- National authorities: Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning (co-financer), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Slovenia forest service, Regional Development Agency for Koroška
- Local associations: Pasture community Rogla (Zreče), hunting association Šentjernej, Inter-associatory committee of the Mountaineering associations of Zasavje - Zasavje (MDO Planinskih društev Zasavja), Association of winegrowers and fruit growers Haloze.

Other events:

Green week event: Natura 2000 day at Kum. More than 100 attendants.

<http://www.greenweek2016.eu/partner-event/natura-2000-day-landscape-park-kum-20-years-anniversary>

5.1.18 Action E.2: General public and local community awareness campaign

Foreseen start date: IV/2015

Actual start date: December 2015

Foreseen end date: IV/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020

Status: in progress

A press conference at the beginning of the project was organized in Rimske toplice on the 21st of January 2016.

The project was presented at the Presentation of the conclusions of the Government Working Group for Haloze, organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, on the 25th of January 2016 in Podlehnik.

On 20th of May 2016, AB ZRSVN, Mountaineering Association Kum Trbovlje, TRD KP Kum and Municipality Trbovlje jointly organized an event celebrating Green week and Natura 2000 day. The event was published on site Green week (link to the site: <http://www.greenweek2016.eu/partner-event/natura-2000-day-landscape-park-kum-20-years-anniversary>).

The project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS, LIFE mechanism and Natura 2000 network was presented at 18 events for general public and local community (Annex 7.4).

The project was also presented in 8 national and local newspapers and 17 internet articles, and 6 radio and TV broadcasts (Annex 13).

In order to be able to record press conferences, lectures and other events during the whole project a digital camera was bought by CB ZRSVN.

5.1.19 Action E.3: Promotion material

Foreseen start date: I/2016

Actual start date: January 2016

Foreseen end date: IV/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020

Status: started

Public tender was prepared covering all printed promotional materials. A subcontractor Birografika Bori was (Annex 14). Texts are in preparation.

5.1.20 Action E.4: Information and interpretation tools

Foreseen start date: III/2017 Actual start date: May 2016
Foreseen end date: IV/2019 Actual (or anticipated) end date: December 2019
Status: started

CB ZRVSN subcontractor Birografika Bori produced small project info plates (8) describing the project and LIFE. They were distributed to all partners. The boards were placed at visible location at all partner organisations (Annex 7.15).

5.1.21 Action E.5: The project's web page and project graphic identity

Foreseen start date: IV/2015 Actual start date: December 2015
Foreseen end date: II/2016 Actual (or anticipated) end date: June 2020
Status: in progress

Project graphic identity was prepared by ZRSVN (Annex 7.16).
CB ZRVSN prepared conceptual design together with most of the text for the web page. The subcontractor Novi splet (Atribut d.o.o.) was chosen on a tender. The web page is up and running www.lifetograsslands.si and www.travisca.si in Slovene language. The texts are being filled. Abstracts will be translated into English and Croatian in coming month. Up to date 1416 unique visitors visited the project webpage.

5.1.22 Action E.6: Grassland classroom

Foreseen start date: IV/2015 Actual start date: January 2016
Foreseen end date: II/2020 Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020
Status: started

Targeted kindergartens and schools were identified. A partnership workshop was held on the 18th of March 2016 where the action was planned in depth. 2 events were organized till now (36 children from kindergarten, primary school and university students).

5.1.23 Action E.7: Equipment for setting up project info rooms in Haloze, Pohorje, Gorjanci-Radoha and Kum project sub-areas

Foreseen start date: I/2016 Actual start date: February 2016
Foreseen end date: I/2019 Actual (or anticipated) end date: March 2019
Status: started

Premises for the info room in Dobovec were visited. CB ZRSVN and AB KS Dobovec draw up a plan and an inventory of equipment for the purpose of purchasing equipment. Due to new development in technology and multifunctional use the AB KS Dobovec proposes to buy a big screen TV instead of a screen and projector (within the same financial frame).

5.1.24 Action E.8: Layman's report

Foreseen start date: I/2020 Actual start date: January 2020

Foreseen end date: IV/2020 Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020
Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.25 Action F.1: Project co-ordination and management

Foreseen start date: IV/2015 Actual start date: November 2015
Foreseen end date: IV/2020 Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020
Status: in progress

At the beginning of the project a Project manager, Project sub-area coordinators (4) and a financial coordinator were nominated by CB ZRSVN. In addition associated beneficiary nominated their coordinators (4 - one for each associated beneficiary and other staff working on the project. Altogether 29 personnel is assigned to the project partnership.

Partnership agreements with all (4) associated beneficiaries as well as the co-financers agreement were signed (see chapter 4 and Annex 7.1). The co-financers agreement was signed with the Ministry for environment and spatial planning (see chapter 4 and Annex 7.1).

All partners prepares written monthly reports on progress of the activities. A written reports on progress of the project are monthly submitted to the project monitoring team (NEEMO, Mr. Nikolaj Pečenko) by the CB ZRSVN. In addition CBs prepare financial reports to the CB every 3 months (time sheets, expenditure reports and copies of all receipts/invoices that are all labelled with the project number). The reports are being checked by the CB ZRSVN and a joint project expenditure is calculated by CB ZRSVN.

A handbook "Management plan of the project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS" was produced by the CB (refer to Annex 7.17). It covers contents of the Annex X to the Model LIFE Grant Agreement, General conditions and reporting requirement of the EC and internal reporting rules.

On the 21st of December 2015 an internal meeting of the CB project staff was organized. Internal instructions were given on how to fill in timetables, travel reports and other reports foreseen in the project.

A kick off meeting of the project partnership was organized by CB - ZRSVN in Rimske terme on the 20th - 21st of February 2016. The event was attended by CB and all AB, co-financers and some other stakeholders of the project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS. The project sub-areas and project activities was presented in detail. In addition, project partnership as well as LIFE mechanism and its relevant rules from the General conditions were presented. Obligation of the internal reporting of the monthly activities together with the internal financial reporting to the CB was presented as well as reporting obligation to the European commission. Detailed involvement and responsibilities of each of the beneficiaries were discussed and assigned in relation to the time plan, through a set of workshops. The kick off meeting was attended by the representative of NEEMO external monitoring team, Mr. Nikolaj Pečenko, who presented technical and financial revision rules for the project.

The Supervisory board committee was formed at the Kick off meeting 20th - 21st of February 2016. Representatives of all project beneficiaries were nominated as members of the named Supervisory board (namely CB ZRSVN: Nika Debeljak Šabec, Maruša Danev, AB Društvo: GK

Franci Bratkovič, AB KGZ Ptuj; Peter Pribožič, AB PRJ Haloze; Jernej Golc, KS Dobovec; Marjan Jamšek). A representative of the co-financer (Ministry environment and spatial planning, also a LIFE focal point for Slovenia, Ms. Julijana Lebez Lozej is invited to attend all meetings). On the 22nd of April 2016 the 1st Supervisory board meeting was at the headquarters of CB ZRSVN. Financial and administrative rules were discussed in depth and project actions discussed and planned.

The project manager is in regular contact with AB coordinators as well as project sub area coordinators. CB ZRSVN also carries out regularly internal meeting where all activities are planned well ahead.

Following equipment necessary to carry out this action was purchased: by CB ZRSVN: one laptop and personal computer with software for the project manager.

5.1.26 Action F.2: Networking with other projects

Foreseen start date: I/2016

Actual start date: February 2015

Foreseen end date: I/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: March 2020

Status: in progress

A field visit to results of the project Goričko travniki (Goričko meadows; EEA Grants) was organized by the CB ZRSVN on the 1st of June 2016 for all the project partners.

Cooperation and talks with Kozjansko regional park was established. Their knowledge from the project (Maintaining high dry grasslands Vetrnik and lake - LIFE00 NAT / SLO / 007223) were discussed. In addition they cooperated at tree pruning workshop for farmers organized by the project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS since the Kozjansko regional park also has an extensive knowledge in traditional orchard tree growing.

Collaboration with the project LIFE Kočevsko (Conservation of Natura 2000 sites in Kočevsko, LIFE13 NAT/SI/000314) was also established.

5.1.27 Action F.3: Audit

Foreseen start date: I/2018

Actual start date: /

Foreseen end date: III/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020

Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.1.28 Action F.4: After-life conservation plan

Foreseen start date: I/2020

Actual start date: November 2015

Foreseen end date: IV/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: October 2020

Status: not due yet. No problems are anticipated at this moment.

5.2 Envisaged progress until next report

Conservation guidelines for sustainable management (action A.2) of HT 6210(*) and 6230(*) and project subareas will be prepared. According to results of the Initial analysis (Action C.2) of the status of the habitat types and willingness of landowners to participate in the project activities (action A.3). Locations of all concrete action on the field will be identified. We will

start with the overgrowth removal activities (Action C.1), assurance of appropriate long-term use of dry grasslands (Action C.2), Restoration of the traditional orchards (C.3). We will start with the monitoring of the success of the project actions on the areas where project activities will be carried out till then. All public awareness activities will be in full swing (actions E) as well as management and networking activities of the project (action F1 and F2). The project progress and planned activities show on the chart (Annex 7.18).

5.3 Impact

Nature & Biodiversity: The impact of the project on the species/habitats targeted; on the other species/habitats present on site (with descriptions)

Site	Species/habitats targeted	Other species/habitats present on site(s)
PSA Haloze	HT 6210(*) Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites).	Plants: <i>Mesobromion</i> - <i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i> , <i>Arabis hirsuta</i> , <i>Brachypodium pinnatum</i> , <i>Bromus inermis</i> , <i>Campanula glomerata</i> , <i>Carex caryophyllea</i> , <i>Carlina vulgaris</i> , <i>Centaurea scabiosa</i> , <i>Dianthus carthusianorum</i> , <i>Eryngium campestre</i> , <i>Koeleria pyramidata</i> , <i>Leontodon hispidus</i> , <i>Medicago sativa</i> ssp. <i>falcata</i> , <i>Ophrys apifera</i> , <i>O. insectifera</i> , <i>Orchis mascula</i> , <i>O. militaris</i> , <i>O. morio</i> , <i>O. purpurea</i> , <i>O. ustulata</i> , <i>O. mascula</i> , <i>Polygala comosa</i> , <i>Primula veris</i> , <i>Sanguisorba minor</i> , <i>Scabiosa columbaria</i> , <i>Veronica prostrata</i> , <i>V. teucrium</i> . <i>Xerobromion</i> - <i>Bromus erectus</i> , <i>Fumana procumbens</i> , <i>Globularia elongata</i> , <i>Hippocrepis comosa</i> . <i>Festucetalia valesiaca</i> : <i>Adonis vernalis</i> , <i>Euphorbia seguierana</i> , <i>Festuca valesiaca</i> , <i>Silene otites</i> , <i>Stipa capillata</i> , <i>S. joannis</i> . Animals: <i>Papilio machaon</i> , <i>Iphiclides podalirius</i> ; <i>Libelloides</i> spp., <i>Mantis religiosa</i> .
PSA Kum		
PSA Gorjanci		
PSA Pohorje	HT 6230(*) Species-rich <i>Nardus</i> grasslands, on silicious substrates in mountain areas (and submountain areas in Continental Europe).	Plants: <i>Agrostis tenuis</i> , <i>Antennaria dioica</i> , <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> , <i>Arnica montana</i> , <i>Campanula barbata</i> , <i>Carex pallescens</i> , <i>Danthonia decumbens</i> , <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> , <i>Festuca filiformis</i> , <i>F. rubra</i> , <i>Gentiana pannonica</i> , <i>Hieracium aurantiacum</i> , <i>Homogyne alpina</i> , <i>Hypochoeris radicata</i> , <i>H. uniflora</i> , <i>Jasione montana</i> , <i>Leontodon helveticus</i> , <i>Nardus stricta</i> , <i>Polygala. amara</i> , <i>P. amarella</i> , <i>P. vulgaris</i> , <i>Potentilla aurea</i> , <i>Pseudorchis albida</i> , <i>Scorzonera rosea</i> . Animals: <i>Tetrao tetrix</i> , <i>T. urogallus</i> , <i>Anthus spinoletta</i> , <i>Miramella alpina</i> .
Overall	HT 6210(*), HT 6230(*)	See section above

Concrete conservation action (section C) have not started yet. The prepared draft “Analysis of the initial situation of the agricultural use of dry grasslands” (Action A.1) and their incorporation into ongoing action A.2 “Elaboration of the Conservation guidelines for sustainable management of HT 6210(*) / 6230(*) in the project sub-areas», is in progress and will have an overall positive effect onto the harmonized inter-sectorial management of the PSA. Conservation conditions of the targeted habitats (and other species/habitats present on all the PSAs) shall be improved.

Several events which were organized for national and local authorities, targeted audience, general public and local community as well as new and internet articles and radio broadcasts

raised the awareness of the public about the Natura 2000 sites, grasslands, their importance and functions and threats as well as the LIEF + mechanism.

Environment & Resource Efficiency: The project does not address environmental/climate problems (LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance) directly.

The impact of the project so far on the environmental issues tackled: The project is searching the possibilities of using biomass as a resource for energy production that can be one way to contribute to sustainable development and to reduce greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions.

The project is gathering good practices/examples in order to maintain grasslands roles: ecological functions (carbon storage, soil protection, biodiversity) and social functions (food, energy, forage, tourism) after the project ends. Results of replication efforts: No results have been reached yet.

Climate Action: The project does not address environmental/climate problems (LIFE+ Climate Action) directly.

The impact of the project so far on the climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation issues tackled: The project is searching the possibilities of using biomass as a resource for energy production that can be one way to contribute to sustainable development and to reduce greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions.

Environmental Governance & Information: Local people, farmers, national and local authorities have been in focus of our efforts to promote and present the project in the early stage. Many events/meeting were prepared by the project, several traditional local events were also attended. These events were used to present the project, including the main environmental problems (land abandonment, loss of traditional orchards, impacts of mass tourism...) and importance of Natura 2000. Since the project is in preparatory phase, no concrete impact on the environmental problems directly has been achieved yet.

The response of local farmers associations, local communities, local media is in line with our expectations, in some cases the response is better than expected. We were invited to several local events by local people, especially farmers associations to present them the project activities. The impact on environmental problems is also in line with the early phase of the project.

Indirect impacts: The discussion about key project environmental problems like land abandonment, intensive farming, loss of traditional meadows is being in recent months intensively debated also in local communities surrounding project sub-areas.

Table of indicators: Updated table of the Project Specific Indicators is in Annex 7.19.

Policy implications: Actions related to regional, national or European legislation are foreseen in the later stages of the project.

Unintended impact of intensive project presentation in early months of the project to local farmer communities is also the inspiration and encouragement of local farmer associations in Haloze project sub-area which prepared a proposal of changes of AEP measures in the existing

Rural development program and sent it to the government. In spring 2016 some changes of AEP measures, that are more suited for farming in project sub-areas were adopted by the governmental level.

5.4 Outside LIFE

The project was presented at the Presentation of the conclusions of the Government Working Group for Haloze, organized and financed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, on the 25th of January 2016 in Podlehnik. Guidelines of the socio economic development was presented and discussed by the Government Working Group, which also took into account the LIFE TO GRASSLAND project activities.

The project was presented at the event »Knowledge and operation for a sustainable future: environmental aspects» organized and financed by the Ministry of the environment and spatial planning on the 3rd of June 2016.

6. Financial part

At the beginning of the project in November 2015 the coordinating beneficiary has set up the financial management scheme of the project. CB ZSRVN transferred the first EC financial payment to ABs according to the proposed budget.

ABs are made responsible for their budget with the ABs' agreements. They prepare financial reports to the CB every 3 months (time sheets, expenditure reports and copies of all receipts/invoices that are all labelled with the project number). At the end of each financial reporting joint project expenditure is calculated. Each AB has established separate cost sheet in their accounting system:

- ZRSVN: SM: 103 LIFE TO GRASSLANDS
- PRJ Halo: SM 217 - LIFE TO GRASSLANDS
- Društvo GK SM: LIFE TO GRASSLANDS.
- KGZ Ptuj: SM: 010104 PROJEKT-LIFE TO GRASSLANDS
- KS Dobovec: LIFE14 NAT/SI/000005.

6.1 Costs incurred (summary by cost category and relevant comments)

Budget breakdown categories	Budgeted costs in €*	Costs incurred from the start date to 20/06/2016 in €	% of Budget**
1. Personnel	1,590,288	131,258.57	8.00 %
2. Travel and subsistence	163,416	7,021.32	4.00 %
3. External assistance	1,022,776	5,926.14	1.00 %
4. Durable goods			
Infrastructure	0	0	0.00 %
Equipment	578,974	26,445.11	5.00 %
Prototype	0	0	0.00 %

5. Land purchase / long-term lease	117,000	0	0.00 %
6. Consumables	90,285	219.01	0.00 %
7. Other Costs	88,450	2,662.63	3.00 %
8. Overheads	247,393	4,510.55	2.00 %
TOTAL	3,898,582	178,003.33	5.00 %

Action number and name	Budgeted costs	Budgeted hours	% of Budget spent	% of hours spent
Action A.1 " Analysis of the initial situation of the agricultural use of dry grasslands"	47,232	2,192	69.07 %	101.12 %
Action A.2 " Elaboration of the Conservation guidelines for sustainable management of HT 6210(*) / 6230(*) in the project sub-areas"	62,208	2,880	27.53 %	43.96 %
Action A.3 " Involvement of landowners in the project and identification of areas for action implementation"	104,144	5,024	9.93 %	15.21 %
Action A.4 " Permit procedures"	76,776	3,816	3.22 %	4.59 %
Action B.1 " Purchase and lease of land in the Haloze project sub-area"	63,664	3,440	0.00 %	0.00 %
Action B.2 " Purchase of land in Gorjanci-Radoha project sub-area"	9,864	528	2.01 %	3.03 %
Action C.1 " Removal of overgrowth"	100,184	4,792	0.50 %	0.61 %
Action C.2 " Ensuring the appropriate long-term use of dry grasslands"	105,744	5,272	0.06 %	0.10 %
Action C.3 " The restoration and maintenance of traditional orchards"	114,504	5,536	6.57 %	9.66 %
Action C.4 " Networking of owners and users of dry grassland plots in the Haloze project sub-area"	38,424	1,896	2.71 %	4.46 %
Action C.5 " Preparation of farm management plans for improving dry grasslands management"	88,784	4,280	0.00 %	0.00 %
Action C.6 " Preparation of an Expert Proposal of AEP measures related to the preservation of the HT 6210(*) and 6230(*) for integration into the 2021–2027 Rural	38,048	1,728	0.00 %	0.00 %

development programme of the Republic of Slovenia"				
Action C.7 " Development and Economics study of Dry Grasslands Preservation in the Haloze project sub-area"	48,152	2,248	0.00 %	0.00 %
Action D.1 " Monitoring of the impact of project actions success"	36,080	1,592	6.34 %	8.86 %
Action D.2 " Assessment of the socio-economic impact of the project actions on local economy and population"	5,568	248	3.81 %	4.44 %
Action D.3 " Assessment of the project's impact on the ecosystem functions"	11,576	520	5.39 %	6.92 %
Action E.1 " National and local authority education and information project"	42,256	1,912	6.53 %	11.01 %
Action E.2 " General public and local community awareness campaign"	21,736	960	11.26 %	15.94 %
Action E.3 " Promotion material"	22,984	1,000	5.14 %	9.00 %
Action E.4 " Information and interpretation tools"	21,816	976	4.44 %	7.33 %
Action E.5 " The project's web page and project graphic identity"	14,288	616	68.86 %	96.67 %
Action E.6 " Grassland classroom"	52,000	2,320	2.60 %	3.90 %
Action E.7 " Equipment for setting up project info rooms in Haloze, Pohorje, Gorjanci-Radoha and Kum project sub-areas"	8,824	424	5.05 %	7.78 %
Action E.8 " Layman's report"	8,008	344	0.00 %	0.00 %
Action F.1 " Project co-ordination and management"	421,336	16,712	8.65 %	12.54 %
Action F.2 " Networking with other projects"	16,600	688	4.72 %	8.50 %
Action F.3 " Audit"	9,488	368	0.00 %	0.00 %
Action F.4 " After-life conservation plan"	0	0	0.00 %	0.00 %
TOTAL	1,590,288	72,312	8.00 %	12.00 %

7. Annexes

- 7.1 Partnership and Co-financers agreements
- 7.2 Table of Milestones and Deliverables
- 7.3 Project management organigrams
- 7.4 Table of events
- 7.5 Initial analysis of recent (2006-2015) agricultural management history
- 7.6 Questioners under Action A1
- 7.7 Contract for the initial survey of the pilot areas and monitoring of the effect of the project actions
- 7.8 Project pamphlet
- 7.9 Potential areas (land plats) in the interest of the project to be purchased at project subarea Gorjanci
- 7.10 Public tender for the field car purchase and pictures
- 7.11 Public tender for purchasing traditional orchards tree seedlings
- 7.12 The project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS communication manual
- 7.13 List of published Articles, TV and radio broadcasts
- 7.14 Promotion printed material contract
- 7.15 Pictures of installed notice boards at all partners locations
- 7.16 Project graphic identity
- 7.17 “Management plan of the project LIFE TO GRASSLANDS”
- 7.18 Project progress show on the chart
- 7.19 Updated table of the Project Specific Indicators
- 7.20 Timesheet ZRSVN