

LIFE Project Number  
**LIFE12NAT/LT/000965**

**Inception Report**  
Covering the project activities from 01/07/2013 to 31/03/2014

Reporting Date  
**31/03/2014**

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym  
**LIFEAUKSTUMALA Restoration of Aukstumala Raised Bog in  
Nemunas Delta Regional Park**

Data Project

<b>Project location</b>	Silute distr. Klaipeda county, Lithuania
<b>Project start date:</b>	01/07/2013
<b>Project end date:</b>	30/06/2017 <b>Extension date:</b>
<b>Total budget</b>	733 077 €
<b>EC contribution:</b>	549 807 €
<b>(%) of eligible costs</b>	75

Data Beneficiary

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## **1. List of abbreviations**

LFN – Lithuanian Fund for Nature  
NDRP – Nemunas Delta Regional Park  
AC – Amphi Consult  
EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment  
MP – Management plan (Natura 2000 site)  
MoE- Ministry of Environment  
FES – Forest Enterprise of Silute  
AB – Associated Beneficiary  
CB – Coordinating Beneficiary  
EPA - Environment Protection Agency

## **2. Executive summary**

### *2.1. General progress*

Generally implementation of project actions is progressing as foreseen in timetable. Partnership agreements were signed with associated beneficiaries. Kick-off meeting with AB and other stakeholders was organised in 2013. Preparatory actions started: *Natura 2000* site management plan (A1) and planning for restoration of natural hydrological regime (A2) is in implementation phase since tender procedures are completed and the subcontractors were selected. Detailed inventory of ditches and evaluation of hydrological situation in the high moor started. Contacting wetland experts and organisation of workshop in the raised bog of Auskumala and 1<sup>st</sup> study tour are in progress.

Leaflet and website about Aukstumala and the project has been published.

Monitoring actions started. Hydrological monitoring was started in 2013; methodologies for other indicator groups are prepared.

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

The project has begun as was foreseen in the project proposal. All actions planned for 2013 and 2014 are under way and we expect no obstacles in implementing them. Based on what has been done already and after having analyzed the goals set in the project proposal as well as the schedule, volume and budgets of actions, we assure that achieving the objectives outlined in the project proposal in the volume and on the conditions set out in the proposal is realistic and feasible.

However after having thoroughly reviewed the application we found out some discrepancies between action descriptions, planned volume of results, and deadlines set up under deliverable, milestones and timetable. Therefore with this report we submit the revised deadlines and clarification on expected results. It won't affect the overall goal of the project and its objectives.

Also, we expect completing all actions of the project before the end of 2016 with the submission of final report by 31/12/2016; therefor 1 progress report, which was supposed to be delivered by 30/09/2016, should be eliminated. The project completion date remains the same – 30/06/2017.

### ***2.3. Problems encountered***

We did not discover major problems so far. They might appear after having announced tenders for purchase of materials and dam construction. The prices for such services and materials are changing because of influence of external factors, e.g. market, available work power, emigration etc.

If main actions C1, C2, and C3 are implemented without unforeseen obstacles in getting permissions, disturbance by hard weather conditions, we assume to complete them in autumn-winter of 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, and complete the overall project by the end of 2016.

## **3. Administrative part**

### ***3.1. Description of project management***

Project started as foreseen in the application on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2013. Nerijus Zableckis was appointed as project's manager on 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2013 by the order No.LGF-13-09B (attached in the Annex No. 1). Later in November 2013 scientific assistant dr.Jurate Sendzikaite was employed at LFN, and in March, 2014, another technical assistant Leonas Jarasius was employed to support project manager.

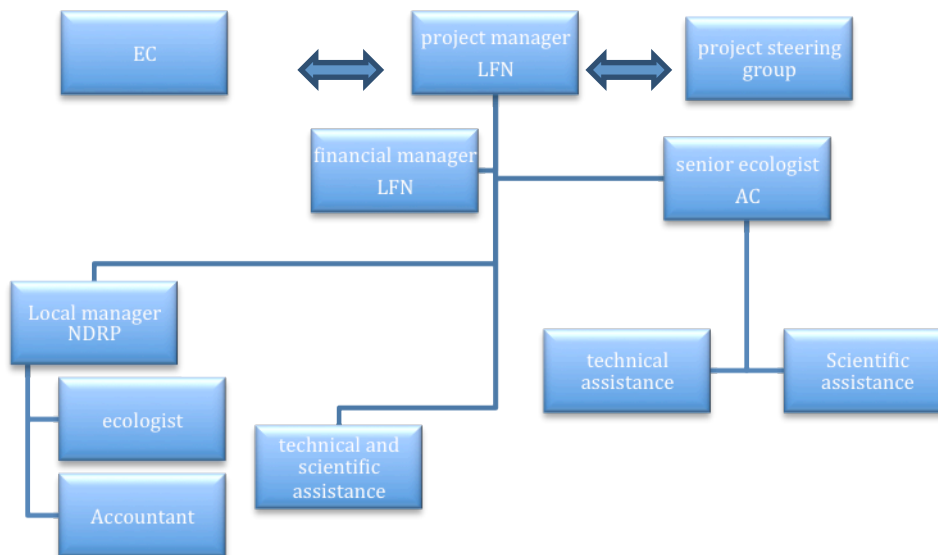
In order to set up the management and discuss overall project several meetings with partners in Lithuania and Denmark have been done. The first meeting took place in Denmark on 11-12<sup>th</sup> September, 2013, where LFN and AC met and discussed the project (notes attached as annex No 2.). First meeting with project partner NDRP took place in July 2013 visiting project site. LFN, NDRP and other project stakeholders: Forest Enterprise of Silute and Ltd.company Klasmann-Deilmann Silute met in meeting in Silute on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013 to discuss partnership possibilities and kick-off meeting (notes and list of participants attached in the Annex No 3).

Kick off seminar was held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013 in cooperation with project partners and stakeholders. The project was presented during the seminar, which was followed by extravagant trip to the project site by train, used by peat extraction company.

On 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2014 International day of Wetlands was celebrated in Aukstumala by the excursion to frozen high moor, organised by NDRP.

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

The project manager is Nerijus Zableckis, employed as projects manager at LFN. He is working 70-80% of his work time in this Life project. Project manager is responsible for general coordination, the project's general accountancy and compilation of project reports and coordination of actions in Lithuania. The actions are also organized by the project manager; his tasks include finding the people and companies for implementing project actions (finding the possible candidates, preparing tenders and price requests, etc.), preparing contracts and other documentation, making the necessary arrangements for carrying out actions, accepting the completed work, subscribing receipts, ensuring that the actions are implemented in accordance with Lithuanian legislation and LIFE rules, organizing the project's promotion in the media, etc. The project manager also takes part in concrete project actions.



The project manager is assisted with 2 project assistants: dr.Jurate Sendzikaite and PhD student Leonas Jarasius, both employed part time in this Life project. Both assistants also work at Nature Research Centre, where they specialize in wetland research. The tasks of dr.Jurate Sendzikaite include professional scientific advices on wetland issues and performance of project actions where high level scientific assistance is needed: monitoring performance, advices in preparatory actions, supervision of dam instalment quality and control. Leonas Jarasius is technical assistant employed for daily assistance to project manager to help in daily performance in project actions. Project accountant Lina Meskauskiene performs accountancy and prepares financial reports of this project.

Nemunus Delta regional Park (NDRP) has the following team: local manager Aurelija Jakstaite (the chief officer for recreation of NDRP). Her task is to communicate to Project manager about project progress, implement local tasks, assist manager in providing needed information, help in getting permissions for C actions etc. The ecologist Robertas Kubilius (the chief officer for ecology of NDRP) will assist local manager on various project related tasks, commenting on management and hydrological projects, monitoring, supervision and control of C actions. Project accountancy will be performed by Grasiina Silinskiene (the accountant of NDRP).

AC has set up the team of management in different way since they do not have any project sites in Denmark. AC will provide expertise on wetland restoration and perform other tasks of the project under supervision of LFN and NDRP. The senior expert was nominated Lars Briggs, his team will assist him: Florian Biebelriether, Marzenna Rasmussen, and Lars Iversen. The responsibilities are divided between these persons. Project accountancy will be performed by Margrethe Voigt (the accountant of AmphiConsult).

### ***3.3. Partnership agreements status (incl. date of signature) and key content***

Agreements with Project Beneficiaries were signed by 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014. The template has been used as recommended in Life+ website. The key content includes obligation to provide reports before the submission of main project reports; regular updates sending financial and technical

reports every quarter. However taking the note from the EC letter of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014, the partnership agreements will be adjusted by extending duration 5 years after the date of last payment, and adding requirement to report to CB quarterly. Also, the English and Lithuanian versions will be checked to make them coherent.

So far we do not have any agreements with project stakeholders, but in near future we plan to issue such agreements for the projects period.

Partnership agreements are attached as annex 4.

## 4. Technical part

The aim of the project is to restore active raised bog habitat (7110\*) in the Aukstumala raised bog by restoring natural hydrological regime and removal of unwanted vegetation. The further objectives include monitoring of impacts, raise of public awareness and knowledge about wetlands by renovating and updating infrastructure for visitors, producing publications, training nature guides and other activities.

### 4.1. Actions

#### 4.1.1. Action A1. Nature management plan and action plan preparation

Start 01/07/2013; end 30/09/2014

Deliverable/milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>Deliverable</b>			
Management and action plan	30/09/2014	30/09/2014	Draft made
<b>Milestone</b>			
Management and action plan completed and approved by ministry	30/09/2014	30/11/2014	In progress

#### What has been done

The draft action plan has been prepared (annex 5) after discussion with project partners and stakeholders. So far it includes description of the project site, status of target species and habitats, planned restoration activities (from application). It will be updated when more data about high moor, number of ditches and their impact (A2) will be available.

Preparation of management plan (MP) is in progress. Tender procedures for preparation of management plan were done within 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014. The winner is VsI Nature Heritage Fund. The contract has to be signed by the end of March 2014; works (inventory, data analysis) to be started soon. The management plan and action plan for the project will be ready by 30/09/2014, while the approval of management plan will take additionally 1-2 months. Expected approval date is 30/11/2014.

#### Envisaged progress before mid term report

Complete the action plan. Proposals on restoration activities under the MP are expected by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2014. They will be discussed during 1<sup>st</sup> workshop and experts meeting (E4).

#### 4.1.2. Action A2. Technical preparation of the concrete conservation actions

Start 01/07/2013; end 30/09/2014

Deliverables/milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>Deliverable</b>			
Technical dam construction project	30/06/2014	30/09/2014	In progress
<b>Milestone</b>			
Technical preparation completed	30/09/2014	30/11/2014	In progress

##### What has been done

Preparation of simplified project for restoration of natural hydrological regime within Aukstumala telmological reserve (further – technical project) is in progress. Tender procedures are completed and contract with the subcontractor signed in February 2014. Technical project will be made according to Lithuanian legislation on simplified constructions. It will include inventory of draining ditches, evaluation of current hydrological situation and feasibility to change it, proposals for dam construction, their costs, technical specifications and permissions. Inventory of draining ditches already started after ice melt.

The subcontractor will acquire all needed permissions for dam building in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2014 after having completed and agreed the technical project with CB and AB. Permissions will be issued by Silute municipality, Klaipeda Regional Environment Department, Silute Road Authority. Usually permissions take about 1-1,5 months. Therefor we expect to have them by the middle of November before the frost when the dam instalment works are supposed to be started.

Technical project will be prepared by the 30/09/2014, however approvals will require additional time, therefor we expect the deadline for final approval of the project by 30/11/2014.

##### Envisaged progress before mid term report

Present and discuss the initial assessment of hydrological situation and draft proposals for restoration of natural hydrological regime in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014 during experts meeting (E4).

#### 4.1.3. Action A3. Environmental impact assessment of the project's conservation actions

Start 01/07/2013; end 30/09/2014

Deliverable/milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>Delivarable</b>			
EIA screening document	30/09/2014	30/09/2014	In progress
<b>Milestone</b>			
Permission issued by responsible EIA authorities	31/10/2014	31/10/2014	In progress

##### What has been done

Foreseen restoration activities have to pass the procedure under the legislation of EIA since construction of dams will be done in Natura 2000 site. The foreseen C 1 and C2 actions fall under the II Annex of EIA because flooded area will cover more than 10 ha. Therefor screening procedure and estimation of impact significance of planned project activities on Natura 2000 are obligatory according to EIA legal act (Official journal, 2006, No. 61-2214).

The application for evaluation of significance will be filled in September 2014 when actions under technical project will be completed. This evaluation will respect foreseen dams and

their impact on Natura 2000 habitats. Directorate of Protected Areas will evaluate the significance within 20 days after the submission of request. MoE already expressed their support during preparation of the application (A8 form) supporting dam instalment and clearing of vegetation. This A8 form will be submitted together with the application.

The screening procedure will be performed after the evaluation of significance because conclusion will be adjusted to screening document. It will be submitted in October 2014 to the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), which will evaluate and provide answer within 20 days. The EIA procedure will ensure that no damage is done to private ownership, roads and other features. The screening document will reflect solutions and proposals on hydrological regulation from technical project (A2), which will ensure that rising of water level won't cause external impacts outside the project site.

#### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Go through all needed EIA procedures. Estimation of volume of restoration activities (number of dams, impact on water regime) is needed to fulfil the application. We plan to receive this information in the in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014.

#### **4.1.4. Action A4. Establishing international highmoor expert group**

Start 01/07/2013; end 31/12/2016

Milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
Initial Expert group meeting held	10/09/2013	30/06/2014	In progress

#### **What has been done**

The meeting of international expert group was not held so far, but contacts to different experts are developed. We met Lithuanian experts during initial meetings with project partners and stakeholders since July 2013. Also during other Life+ project seminars, e.g. Aquatic warbler conference in Vilnius, Nov. 2013. We have experts from Belorussia, Denmark, Germany, Scotland, and Latvia who expressed their willingness to belong to such expert group.

#### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

The initial expert group meeting is planned in the beginning of June 2014 as approved by EC letter dated 24/03/2014 when the 1<sup>st</sup> worksop (E4) will take place in Aukstumala high moor. For this time we will have the proposals for restoration activities (dam construction), which will be discussed at the workshop.

#### **4.1.5. Action C1. Blocking of small ditches**

Start 01/01/2014; end 30/09/2016

Milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
250 dams installed	01/01/2015	28/02/2015	Not started
500 dams installed	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	

#### **What has been done**

During the first meeting with the subcontractor for technical dam construction project (A2) we informed about project targets and foreseen activities. Target of this action is 70 km blocked



draining ditches. However detailed ditches inventory and measurements will define needed number of dams. Also, subcontractor advised to use only plastic materials for dams, especially where water level is high. The plastic holds much better than wood dams, which are destroyed after some time according to subcontractor's (VsI Nature Heritage Fund) long-standing experience in dam building and observations of dams in different types of wetlands. In the budget we planned purchase of plastic for 250 dams, therefore we have to keep the number of plastic dams around this number.

The start date in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014 of the action was wrongly indicated in timetable because C actions cannot start before preparatory actions are not completed. Also, we'd like to shift the completion of 250dams to 28/02/2015 because installation work will be performed mainly in wintertime on frozen surface. The works must be stopped by the 1<sup>st</sup> of March because of disturbance, which might be caused to birds. The completion date of all C1 actions is envisaged on 30/09/2016. Technical mistake was made in timetable, as the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2016 was not indicated as final deadline for the action.

#### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Keep updated with the preparation of hydrological project. Prepare tender for purchase of plastic materials and dam instalment service in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2014.

#### **4.1.6. Action C2. Blocking of main ditches**

Start 01/01/2014; end 30/09/2016

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
10 dams installed	01/01/2015	28/02/2015	Not started
20 dams installed	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	

#### **What has been done**

The same situation as described under action C1. The subcontractor must measure ditches and define the needed number and type of dams to block 10 km of main ditches.

The start date in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014 of the action was wrongly indicated in timetable because C actions cannot start before preparatory actions are not completed. Also, we'd like to shift the completion of 10 dams to 28/02/2015 because installation work will be performed mainly in wintertime on frozen surface. The works must be stopped by the 1<sup>st</sup> of March because of disturbance, which might be caused to birds. The completion date of all C2 actions is envisaged on 30/09/2016. Technical mistake was made in timetable as the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2016 was not indicated as final deadline for the action.

#### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Keep updated with the preparation of hydrological project. Prepare tender for purchase of plastic materials and dam instalment service in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2014.

#### **4.1.7. Action C3. Removal of vegetation**

Start 01/01/2014; end 29/02/2016

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
50 ha of vegetation cleared	31/03/2015	28/02/2015	Not started
100 ha of vegetation cleared	31/03/2016	29/02/2016	

#### **What has been done**

It is foreseen to clear 100 ha of vegetation. Exact places for clearing will be defined and agreed in MP of Aukstumala.

The start date in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014 of the action was wrongly indicated in timetable because C actions cannot start before preparatory actions are not completed. Completion of 50 ha of vegetation must be done by the 28/02/2015 and 100 ha must be cleared by the 29/02/2016 because of disturbance to birds, which might be caused if works are performed in March.

#### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Discuss clearing places with the Forestry Enterprise of Silute.

#### **4.1.8. Action D1. Monitoring of biodiversity indicators in the project area**

Start 01/04/2015; end 30/09/2016

<b>Deliverable/milestone</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
<b>Deliverable</b>			
First monitoring report prepared	30/09/2015	30/09/2015	
second monitoring report prepared	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	
<b>Milestones</b>			
First monitoring schedule completed	01/09/2015	01/09/2015	In progress
Second monitoring schedule completed	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	

#### **What has been done**

Monitoring was discussed with project management team. Preparation is on going, draft methodology for macro-invertebrates is ready (annex 6), and other biodiversity indicators methodologies will be ready by the end of 2014. Timetable deadlines are corrected since they were wrongly distributed per quarters of the year.

#### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Macro-invertebrate inventory will start in April 2014. These data will be adjusted to MP.

#### **4.1.9. Action D2. Hydrological monitoring at the targeted sites**

Start 01/07/2013; end 30/09/2016

<b>Deliverable/milestone</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
<b>Deliverable</b>			
Hydrological monitoring report prepared	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	In progress, report for 2013 done
<b>Milestones</b>			
hydrological monitoring performed	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	

#### **What has been done**

Hydrological monitoring has started in 2013. Hydrological monitoring methodology together with data from 114 wells, installed in 12 profiles in the highmoor is reported (annex 7). The measurements of water level are done regularly every 1-2 months.

The methodologies for the monitoring of impact of water level on vegetation (sphagnum incremental growth and coverage of *Calluna vulgaris*) are in preparation.

Timetable deadlines are corrected since they were wrongly distributed per quarters of the year.

### Envisaged progress before mid term report

Complete the methodologies for the monitoring of impact of water level on vegetation in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2014. Start vegetation monitoring in 2014 by recording the situation before raise of water level. Continue measurements in water wells.

#### 4.1.10. Action D3. Assessment of the project's socio-economic effect and impact on ecosystem functions

Start 01/01/2016; end 31/08/2016

Deliverable/milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>Deliverables</b>			
Report "Evaluation of the project's socio-economic and ecological effects" completed	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	Not started
<b>Milestones</b>			
Evaluation of the project's socio-economic and ecological effects	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	--

#### Not started yet.

Timetable deadlines are corrected since they were wrongly distributed per quarters of the year.

#### 4.1.11. Action E1. Project website

Start 01/01/2016; end 31/08/2016

Deliverable/milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>Deliverables</b>			
Project webpage	31/07/2014	28/02/2014	Done
<b>Milestones</b>			
Project webpage online	31/07/2014	28/02/2014	Done

#### What has been done

Webpage has been created in February 2014. Its address is [www.aukstumala.lt](http://www.aukstumala.lt). It will be constantly updated with information and news until the end of the project (changed deadline in milestones table).

Presentation about project can be found by NDRP on main page [www.nemunodelta.lt](http://www.nemunodelta.lt) and also here <http://www.nemunodelta.lt/27804/projektai.html>.

### Envisaged progress before mid term report

Update the news and other information.

#### 4.1.12. Action E2. Notice boards

Start 01/01/2016; end 31/08/2016

Milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
Notice board installed	31/12/2013	31/03/2014	Done

#### What has been done

3 notice boards were installed in March 2014 (pictures attached as annex 8, map of area with notice boards attached as annex 9). They are placed in 3 locations along the main road bypassing the project site. The boards contain Life+ logo, project name and website's name.

### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

More detailed information boards about project and high moor will be installed in education path. There will be one main board. It will be installed when action E6 starts.

#### **4.1.13 Action E3. Study tours**

Start 01/07/2013; end 15/07/2015

<b>Milestone/deliverable</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
<b>Deliverable</b>			
1st Presentation of preliminary results	15/07/2015	15/07/2015	
2nd Presentation of preliminary results	15/08/2016	15/08/2016	
<b>Milestones</b>			
1st study tour realized	31/12/2013	30/06/2014	In progress
2nd study tour realized	31/12/2014	30/06/2015	

### **What has been done**

Organisation of the 1<sup>st</sup> study tour is in progress. It will take place on 12-17<sup>th</sup> of May in Scotland with the group of 13 persons (attached programme and list of participants as annex 10). We decided to go for the first study tour to Scotland instead to Baltic states and Finland as foreseen in the application. Hereby we kindly ask to accept such decision because we made good contacts to Scottish high moor specialists and Life project managers, especially that Scottish high moors are close to Baltic highmoors in their origin and situation, where active peat excavation was on-going in the past and restoration done afterwards. Also, 2 implemented LIFE projects will be visited: Restoration of Scottish raised bogs (LIFE00 NAT/UK/007078) and Border Mires (Kielder Butterburn) (LIFE98 NAT/UK/005432).

### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Go to the 1<sup>st</sup> study tour. The second study tour we will be organised to Life project sites in Northern Germany and Denmark as foreseen in the application. It will be organised in in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2015. The last quarters of 2014 will be fully occupied with C actions, therefor study tour can be made after having completed C actions in 2015.

#### **4.1.14. Action E4. Kick-off meeting, workshops and final seminar**

Start 01/07/2013; end 31/11/2016

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
Kick off meeting held	30/09/2013	30/10/2013	Done
1st workshop held	31/12/2014	31/12/2014	In progress
2nd workshop held	31/12/2015	31/12/2015	
Final seminar held	31/05/2016	31/11/2016	

### **What has been done**

Kick-off meeting was organised on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2013. It gathered more than 30 participants (programme and list of participants attached in the Annex 11). Articles about project were printed in local newspapers (2 articles, annex 15). Pictures from the event are attached in the folder of annex 16.

The 1<sup>st</sup> workshop will be organised in the beginning of June 2014 together with initial expert meeting. This change has been accepted with the EC letter dated 24/03/2014. It will focus on high moor restoration activities.

The date of final seminar we plan to shift to autumn of 2016 instead of spring 2016. The reason is that second monitoring report will be ready by autumn 2016, therefore impact of high moor restoration activities could be presented there together with best practices guidelines and Layman report.

**Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Organise 1<sup>st</sup> workshop.

**4.1.15. Action E5. Informational material & exhibition**

Start 01/07/2013; end 31/05/2016

Deliverable/milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>Deliverable</b>			
Leaflet Aukstumala	02/12/2014	30/04/2014	Done (Lithuanian Version)
Poster Aukstumala	02/12/2014	02/12/2014	In progress
Lithuanian translation of WEBER (1902): „Über die Vegetation .."	30/10/2015	30/10/2015	In progress
Book about Aukstumala	31/05/2016	31/05/2016	
<b>Milestones</b>			
Leaflet and poster printed	02/12/2014	02/12/2014	In Progress
WEBER translated and published	30/10/2015	30/10/2015	In Progress
Exhibition installed	01/07/2015	01/07/2015	
Aukstumala Book published	31/05/2016	31/05/2016	

**What has been done**

The leaflet about Aukstumala highmoor, its' habitats and project has been published in Lithuanian. It was produced for the kick-off meeting in October 2013. Updated version will be printed 1500 copies, and English version in 500 copies. Lithuanian leaflets are attached as annex 12. Poster ideas are discussed and the texts are in preparation phase.

Translation of Monography of the professor C.A.Weber is in progress. The copies of old German book have been made, and the contract with the translator Dr.Dalyte Matuleviciute (professional botanist) issued.

Exhibition about ecosystem of high moor has been discussed with the NDRP. They are going to build a new administration building, which is supposed to be finished in 2015. However constructions in Lithuania are delayed usually by several years. Another option for exhibition is the old building of NDRP, which is open in summer time. We will inform about the construction of new administration building and find best solution for this action.

**Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Prepare and print the poster.

**4.1.16. Action E6. Restoration and renovation of educational trail**

Start 01/04/2014; end 30/06/2016

Deliverable/milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
Educational trail ready	01/11/2015	30/06/2016	In progress

### What has been done

We discussed the education path renovation and prolongation with the FES and peat company Klasmann-Deilmann. Both stakeholders express interest in contribution for the path reconstruction in kind (timber, workers, equipment). The problem is that budget of the action was substantially reduced during revision of application. However foreseen amount (36 809 000 eur) will not be enough for reconstruction of the path and watching tower because work and materials for such conditions cost more.

There were 2 deadlines in application: milestones indicated the 01/11/2015 while the timetable was 30/06/2016. We'd like to set up the final deadline in milestones the 30/06/2016 as it was technical mistake in the application.

### Envisaged progress before mid term report

Sign the agreements for contribution to the educational path reconstruction.

#### 4.1.17. Action E7. Training of Nature guides

Start 01/01/2014; end 31/05/2016

Milestone	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
15 nature guides trained	01/12/2014	01/12/2014	In progress
4 excursions carried out	31/05/2016	31/05/2016	

### What has been done

Discussion about trainings and initial assessment of costs of organising the nature guides has been done. Qualified company must train nature guides and issue guide certificates. Persons with such certificates have a right to guide excursions. Such persons will help to achieve the aim of the project as they can organise excursions.

The costs per person for trainings vary from 200 to 300 EUR depending upon extra requirements, e.g. to include wetland experts.

There is discrepancy in project application about number of guides. According to milestones it was promised to train 30 guides, however at least 10 guides were foreseen in action description. We assume that final number can be 15 nature guides. 30 guides is too high number of persons in this area. It will be impossible to gather such number of persons interested in guidance in Nemunas Delta region.

The responsible beneficiaries have changed under this action. NDRP is taking over the full responsibility for this action because they will organise the trainings and excursions locally. LFN will supervise the action.

### Envisaged progress before mid term report

Organise trainings in 2014.

#### 4.1.18. Action E8. Preparation of educational film about Aukštumala raised-bog, its restoration and conservation

Start 01/07/2013; end 31/08/2016

Milestone/ deliverable	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>deliverable</b>			
DVD documentary movie Aukstumala	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	Not started
<b>Milestone</b>			
1st showing of Aukstumala documentary	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	

**What has been done**

So far, tender documentation for movie creation is under preparation.

**Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Select subcontractor in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014.

**4.1.19. Action E9. Best practice guidelines**

Start 01/07/2016; end 31/12/2016

Milestone/ deliverable	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>Deliverable</b>			
Best practice guidelines about protection of raised peat bogs	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	
<b>Milestone</b>			
Publishment of best practices guidelines	28/02/2017	31/12/2016	

Not started yet.

**4.1.20. Action E10. Layman's report**

Start 01/07/2016; end 31/12/2016

Milestone/ deliverable	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
<b>deliverable</b>			
Project's Layman's report published	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	
<b>Milestone</b>			
Publishment of Layman's report	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	

Not started yet.

**4.1.21. Action F1. Project management**

Start 01/07/2013; end 31/12/2016

Milestone/ deliverable	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
project management team set up	30/09/2013	30/09/2013	Done
Steering committee set up	30/09/2013	30/09/2013	Done

**What has been done**

Project management team was set up by all partners (described under Sections 3.1. and 3.2.).

Members of Steering committee were selected and nominated in October 2013 (order of LFN attached as annex 13). The members include representatives of partner organisations, representative from MoE of Lithuania, experts from other protected high moor sites.

The co-financing agreement with the MoE is under preparation. Draft agreements are prepared by MoE and sent for LFN in March for corrections.

**Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Organise steering committee meeting in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014.

#### **4.1.22. Action F2. Audit**

Start 01/10/2014; end 31/12/2016

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
Project midterm audit performed	31/01/2015	31/01/2015	Not started
Final audit performed	31/10/2016	31/12/2016	

##### **Clarification**

The audit will be performed twice: in the middle of the project (needed for co-financier), and the second audit covering entire projects period to be finalised by the end of project. There was no deadline in timetable, therefore we set it by the end of 2016.

#### **4.1.23. Action F3. After life strategy**

Start 01/04/2016; end 31/12/2016

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
After Life strategy	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	

Not started yet.

#### **4.1.24. Action F4. Networking with other projects**

Start 01/01/2014; end 31/12/2016

<b>Milestone/</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
No milestones			

##### **What has been done**

The first networking meeting with other Life projects was made in January 2014 in Regional kick-off meeting, where project manager and assistant took part.

##### **Envisaged progress before mid term report**

Increase efforts in contacting other LIFE projects. The study tours (E3) and expert group (A4) will include experts and experiences from other Life projects.

#### **4.2. Overview of current achievement of project deliverables and milestones, modifications requested**

Tables below illustrates overview of deliverables and milestones achievements of all technical actions implementation. Where relevant, it is also indicated revised deadlines kindly requested for approval from EC.



## DELIVERABLE PRODUCTS OF THE PROJECT

<b>Name of the deliverable</b>	<b>Number of the associated action</b>	Original deadline	Revised deadline	Implementation status
Technical dam construction project	A2	30/06/2014	30/09/2014	In progress
Project webpage	E1	31/07/2014	28/02/2014	Done
EIA screening document	A3	30/09/2014	30/09/2014	In progress
Management & action plan	A1	30/09/2014	30/09/2014	In progress
Leaflet Aukstumala	E5	02/12/2014	30/04/2014	Done (Lithuanian version)
Poster Aukstumala	E5	02/12/2014	02/12/2014	In progress
1st Presentation of preliminary results	E3	15/07/2015	15/07/2015	
First monitoring report prepared	D1	30/09/2015	30/09/2015	In progress
Lithuanian translation of WEBER (1902): „Über die Vegetation .."	E5	30/10/2015	30/10/2015	In progress
Book about Aukstumala	E5	31/05/2016	31/05/2016	
2nd Presentation of preliminary results	E3	15/08/2016	15/08/2016	
DVD documentary movie Aukstumala	E8	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	
Report "Evaluation of the project's socio-economic and ecological effects" completed	D3	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	
hydrological monitoring report prepared	D2	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	In Progress, report for 2013 done
second monitoring report prepared	D1	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	
After Life strategy	F3	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	
Project's Layman's report published	E10	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	
Best practice guidelines t protection of raised bogs	E9	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	

## MILESTONES OF THE PROJECT

<b>Name of the milestone</b>	<b>Number of the associated action</b>	<b>Original deadline</b>	<b>Revised deadline</b>	<b>Implementation status</b>
Initial Expert group meeting held	A4	10/09/2013	30/06/2014	In progress
Kick off meeting held	E4	30/09/2013	30/10/2013	Done
project management team set up	F1	30/09/2013	30/09/2013	Done
Steering committee set up	F1	30/09/2013	30/09/2013	Done
1st study tour realized	E3	31/12/2013	30/06/2014	In progress
Notice board installed	E2	31/12/2013	31/03/2014	Done
Project webpage online	E1	31/07/2014	28/02/2014	Done
Management & action plan completed and approved by ministry	A1	30/09/2014	30/11/2014	In progress
Technical preparation completed	A2	30/09/2014	30/11/2014	In progress
Permission issued by responsible EIA authorities	A3	31/10/2014	31/10/2014	In progress
15* nature guides trained	E7	01/12/2014	01/12/2014	In progress
Leavlet an poster printed	E5	02/12/2014	02/12/2014	In Progress
2nd study tour realized	E3	31/12/2014	30/06/2015	
1st workshop held	E4	31/12/2014	31/12/2014	
250 damms installed	C1	01/01/2015	28/02/2015	
10 composite dams installed	C2	01/01/2015	28/02/2015	
Project midterm audit performed	F2	31/01/2015	31/01/2015	
50 ha of vegetation removed	C3	31/03/2015	28/02/2015	
Exhibition installed	E5	01/07/2015	01/07/2015	
First monitoring schedule completed	D1	01/09/2015	01/09/2015	
WEBER translated and published	E5	30/10/2015	30/10/2015	In progress
Educational trail ready	E6	01/11/2015	30/06/2016	In progress
2nd workshop held	E4	31/12/2015	31/12/2015	
100 ha of vegetation removed	C3	31/03/2016	29/02/2016	
Final seminar held	E4	31/05/2016	31/11/2016	
4 excursions carried out	E7	31/05/2016		
Aukstumala Book published	E5	31/05/2016	31/05/2016	
1st showing of Aukstumala documentary	E8	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	
Evaluation of the project's socio-economic and ecological effects	D3	31/08/2016	31/08/2016	
hydrological monitoring performed	D2	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	
Second monitoring schedule completed	D1	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	
500 damms installed	C1	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	
20 composite dams installed	C2	30/09/2016	30/09/2016	
Publishment of best practices	E9	28/02/2017	31/12/2016	

guidelines				
Final audit performed	F2	31/10/2016	31/12/2016	
Publishment of Layman's report	E10	31/12/2016	31/12/2016	

\* instead of 30 guides.

#### ***4.2. Availability of appropriate licences and authorisations***

Environment Protection Agency and NDRP has to issue permission to work in project site for expert of AC Lars Iversen. It will be issued in first week of April 2014. The high moor is a Telmological Reserve, where visitors are prohibited from 1<sup>st</sup> of April until 1<sup>st</sup> of October.

**Action A.2.** obtaining planning and construction permissions from the competent authorities will be issued in 3 and 4th quarters of 2014 when proposals for hydrological regime will be issued.

#### ***4.3. Envisaged progress until next report***

The table bellow shows the envisaged progress.

<b>TASKS/ ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>Envisaged progress until next report (18 months)</b>
A1	Complete Management plan and action plan
A2	Complete technical project for restoration of hydrological regime
A3	Carry out necessary EIA procedures
A4	Gather experts for 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting
C1	Install ½ of all dams
C2	Install ½ of all dams
C3	Clear ½ of vegetation
D1	Prepare methodologies for monitoring, start insect inventory, prepare transects
D2	Continue hydrological monitoring, prepare methodologies for vegetation monitoring, select research areas etc.
D3	none
E1	Update website
E2	None
E3	Go for 1 <sup>st</sup> study tour, organise 2 <sup>nd</sup> study tour
E4	Organise 1 <sup>st</sup> workshop and start preparation of 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop
E5	Produce poster
E6	Sign agreements with stakeholders for contribution for education path, prepare technical project fro education path
E7	Train 15 nature guides
E8	Complete translation, organise layout
E9	None
E10	None
F1	Carry out project management, sign agreement with project co-financier, organise Steering committee meeting
F2	Perform 1 <sup>st</sup> audit
F3	None
F4	Develop contacts to other LIFE+ projects

## Time table

Table bellow indicates the original planned and revised timetable. The deadlines correspond to the deadlines in deliverables and milestones.

tasks/ activities		2013		2014				2015				2016				2017	
		III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II
a1	original	x	x	x	x	x											
	revised																
a2	original		x	x	x	x											
	revised																
a3	original		x	x	x	x											
	revised																
a4	original		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
	revised																
c1	original			x		x	x	x		x	x	x					
	revised																
c2	original			x		x	x	x		x	x	x					
	revised																
c3	original			x		x	x	x		x	x	x					
	revised																
d1	original								x	x	x		x				
	revised																
d2	original	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x				
	revised																
d3	original											x	x				
	revised																
e1	original	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	revised																
e2	original	x	x														
	revised																
e3	original	x	x				x		x				x				
	revised																
e4	original	x	x			x	x			x	x	x	x				
	revised																
e5	original	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x				
	revised																
e6	original				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	revised																
e7	original			x	x	x		x	x			x	x				
	revised																
e8	original	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	revised																

e9	original													x	x	x	
	revised																
e10	original													x	x		
	revised																
f1	original	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
	revised																
f2	original						x	x						x	x		
	revised																
f3	original													x	x		
	revised																
f4	original			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
	revised																

## 5. Financial part

### 5.1. Putting in place of the accounting system.

The accounting system in LFN is based on special project account number, used in internal book keeping. All costs related to this project are registered under this account. LFN has separate bank account for this project. However some costs, e.g. salaries are paid from main account, and later divided in internal book keeping system into different projects.

NDRP uses similar system, when all costs of the project have a special account number in internal book keeping.

AC has cost center, where all costs are prescribed to this project.

The instruction on time sheet filling and validations will be sent as advised in the EC letter of 24/03/2014. The note on having the project number within the requisites of ABs will be adjusted. The car log books will bear the number of the actions, under which the travel should be reported.

### 5.2. Continued availability of co financing.

Co-financing agreement will be signed in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2014. MoE sent in the end of March the draft agreement for revision. The amount of co-financing remains the same as indicated in application

### 5.3. Costs incurred

Incurred costs are reported until 28/02/2014.

Table No 3. Summary by cost category.

Budget breakdown categories	Total cost in €	Costs incurred from the start date to 28/02/2014 in €	% of total costs
<b>1. Personnel</b>	201355	7041.36	3,5
<b>2. Travel and subsistence</b>	111965	2732.10	2,4
<b>3. External assistance</b>	282850	10347.08	3,7
<b>4. Durable goods</b>			
<b>Infrastructure</b>	81890	0	0
<b>Equipment</b>	2300	0	0
<b>Prototype</b>			
<b>5. Land purchase / long-term lease</b>			
<b>6. Consumables</b>			
<b>7. Other Costs</b>	4750	0	0
<b>8. Overheads</b>	47958	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	733077	20120.54	2,7

The 30 % threshold value of total costs is expected to be reached by the beginning of 2015 when planned external works (C1, C2, C3) will be performed and materials purchased.

Costs per action are indicated below in table No.4.

Table No 4. Costs per action.

Action number and name		Foreseen costs	Spent so far	Remaining	Projected final cost
A1	Nature management plan and action plan preparation	30387,00	10713,66	28673,34	30387,00
A2	Technical preparation of the concrete conservation actions	35868,00	10083,04	34784,96	35868,00
A3	Environmental impact assessment of the project's conservation actions	2489,00	26,74	2462,26	2489,00
A4	Establishing international high moor expert group	7322,00	26,74	7295,26	7322,00
C1	Blocking of small ditches	93409,00		93409,00	93409,00
C2	Blocking of main ditches	82009,00		82009,00	82009,00
C3	Removal of vegetation	111610,00		111610,00	111610,00
D1	Monitoring of biodiversity indicators in the project area	23444,00		23444,00	23444,00
D2	Hydrological monitoring at the targeted sites	14754,00		14754,00	14754,00
D3	Assessment of the project's socio-economic effect and impact on ecosystem functions	5650,00		5650,00	5650,00
E1	Project website	3450,00	1664,77	1785,23	3450,00
E2	notice boards	2390,00		2390,00	2390,00
E3	Study tours	32439,00	152,59	32286,41	32439,00
E4	Kick-off meeting, workshops and final seminar	45831,00	2455,41	43375,59	45831,00
E5	Informational material & exhibition	24992,00	43,79	24948,21	24992,00
E6	Restoration and renovation of educational trail	36809,00		36809,00	36809,00
E7	Trainin of nature gides	8145,00		8145,00	8145,00
E8	Preparation of educational film about Aukštumala raised-bog, its restoration and conservation	24420,00		24420,00	24420,00
E9	Best practice guidelines	6524,00		6524,00	6524,00
E10	Layman's report	3392,00		3392,00	3392,00
F1	Project management	69922,00	3714,43	66207,57	69922,00
F2	audit	14015,00		14015,00	14015,00
F4	Networking with other LIFE-projects	5848,00	278,84	5569,16	5848,00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>685119,00</b>	<b>20120,54</b>	<b>664998,46</b>	<b>685119,00</b>

**Comments:**

So far there are no comments for spending since not much has been spent. Incurred spending correspond to planned budget.

There are no indications about changes in planned budget. Usually bigger changes under purchase of external and goods occur after tender procedures.

## **Annexes**

Annex No1 – Appointment of project manager (E1)

Annex No 2 – Notes from meeting on 11-12<sup>th</sup> September, 2013, where LFN and AC met and discussed the project (E1)

Annex No 3 - Notes from meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013 to discuss partnership possibilities and kick-off meeting (E1)

Annex 4 - Partnership agreements (2 agreements) (E1)

Annex 5 - Draft action plan (A1)

Annex 6 - Draft methodology for macro-invertebrates (D1)

Annex 7 - Hydrological monitoring methodology (D2)

Annex 8 - Pictures of notice boards

Annex 9 - Map of project site with notice boards

Annex 10 - Programme and list of participants of 1<sup>st</sup> study tour (E3)

Annex 11 – Kick-off meeting programme and list of participants (E4)

Annex 12 – Lithuanian leaflets about the project

Annex 13 – List of Members of Steering committee

Annex 14 – Output indicators

Annex 15 – Press articles

Annex 16 – Folder with pictures