



LIFE Project Number

LIFE10 NAT/LV/000159

Inception Report

Covering the project activities from 01/09/2011 to 30/04/2012

Reporting Date

30/04/2012

LIFE+ PROJECT NAME or Acronym

FOR-REST

Data Project

Project location	Gauja National Park, Latvia
Project start date:	01/09/2011
Project end date:	31/08/2015
Total budget	€ 823,243
EC contribution:	€ 493,946
(%) of eligible costs	60

Data Beneficiary

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1. List of abbreviations

EC – European Commission
IncR – Inception Report
PMU – Project Management Unit
NCA – Nature Conservation Agency
Associated beneficiaries:
IES – Institute for Environmental Solutions
LFN – Latvian Fund for Nature
EM – ELM MEDIA

2. Executive summary

2.1. General progress

The LIFE+ project FOR-REST has started and is continuing accordingly to the Grant Agreement. During the IncR period the project management structure has been established and the partnership agreements with the associated beneficiaries have been concluded (Annex 6.1.). Project partners are communicating on a regular basis, negotiating progression of the project and coordinating actions. Work on all project actions that were planned within the reporting period have been started and actions are being implemented. The proposed milestones for this period of the project have been fulfilled in time:

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline	Actual date
Project manager contracted	E.1	30/09/2011	28/09/2011
Partner contracts signed	E.1	30/11/2011	29/11/2011
PMU established	E.1	30/11/2011	29/11/2011
Project website set up	D.1	28/02/2012	01/02/2012
Steering Group established	E.2	30/03/2012	29/03/2012

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

Project objectives remain entirely viable. No significant changes for implementation of the project actions and achieving project objectives will be needed.

2.3. Problems encountered

No significant problems have been encountered during the reporting period. The project is being implemented according to what is planned and there are no significant changes or delays foreseen. Though some insignificant uncertainties in the project proposal's description or time-planning of several actions have been encountered therefore slight changes or clarifications on several actions are described further in the Technical and Financial parts of the IncR (Sections 4., 5.).

3. Administrative part

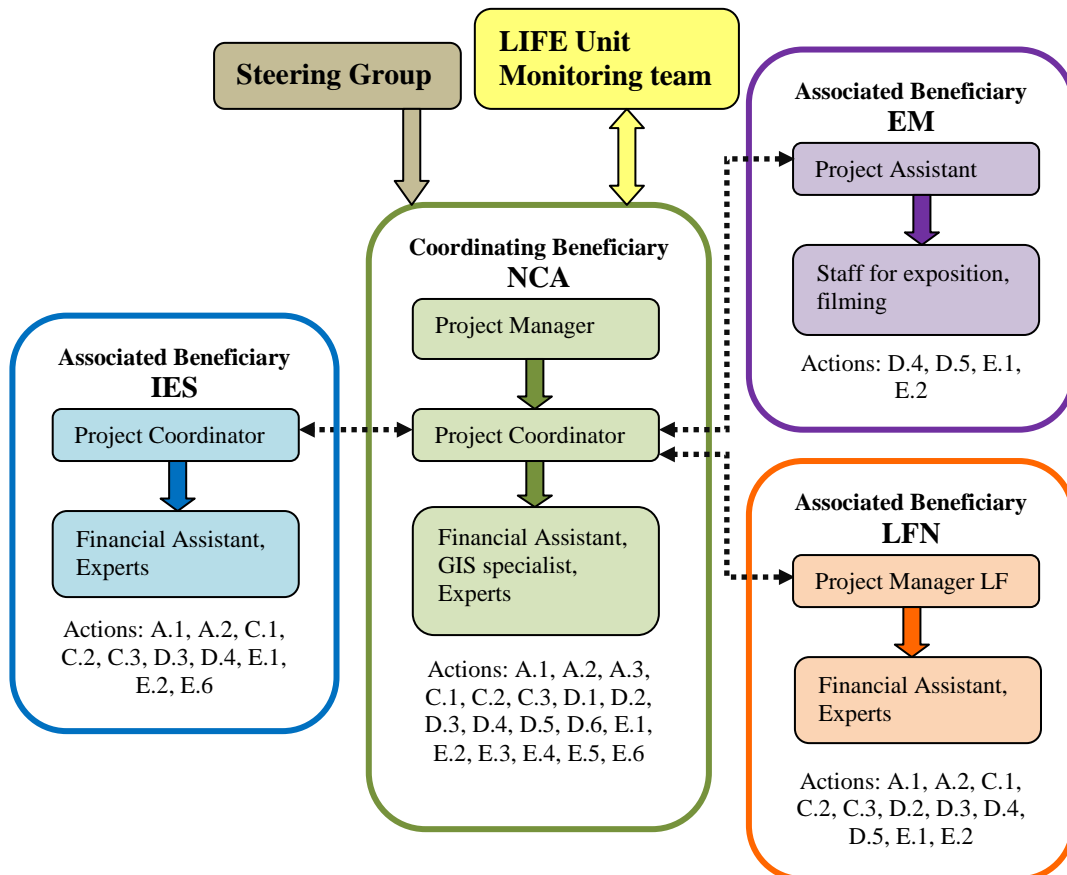
3.1. Description of project management

The coordinating beneficiary NCA has established the project team by contracting project manager, project coordinator and financial assistant of the project. Project team started working in the beginning of the project. Within the first three months the partnership agreements were prepared, negotiated and signed with all the associated beneficiaries. Terms of reporting on expenditures and implementation of the actions have been agreed and incorporated within the partnership agreements. Reports on expenditure and implementation of the actions have to be submitted to the coordinating beneficiary every three months.

The PMU is formed by project manager, project coordinator and financial assistant of NCA and the responsible employees (associated coordinators) of the associated beneficiaries. Since the beginning of the project regular communication between the beneficiaries is being organized by holding regular meetings of the PMU and individual meetings as well as communicating via phone, mails and internet. PMU meetings are organized in order to discuss the implementation of the actions and the potential threats and problems and plan the future activities.

The Steering Group was established by NCA in March 2012. The task of the Steering Group is to monitor project activities and give high level advice on nature conservation issues by the key project stakeholders (action E.2). The Steering Group consists of representatives from Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Ministry of Agriculture, State Forest Service and associated beneficiaries (Annex 6.4.1.). It is foreseen that further meetings will be held once a year or more often if necessary.

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



3.3. Partnership agreements status and key content

The partnership agreements have been signed between the coordinating beneficiary and each associated beneficiary on 29th of November 2011.

The key content and structure of the partnership agreements was prepared according to the Common Provisions 2010 and the LIFE+ Guidelines to Partnership agreements.

The partnership agreements include provisions for cooperation between the coordinating beneficiary (NCA) and the associated beneficiaries (IES, LFN, EM), as a basis for project implementation in accordance with the Grant Agreement, the obligations and responsibilities in carrying out implementation of the actions, financial responsibilities, reporting and funding schemes. The project actions are defined for each beneficiary according to the project proposal. Copies of the partnership agreements are attached to the IncR as Annex 6.1.

4. Technical part

Gauja National Park (Natura 2000 site) has a particular importance not only on national, but also on regional and EU level. The territory includes large areas of natural, still relatively untouched forest habitats which are extremely important in order to protect the functions of natural ecosystems. Forests are ecosystems with long regeneration cycle, demanding long-term planning for restoration and management measures. The most important threat to forest nature values in the Gauja National Park is a lack of long-term planning vision and data for forest management.

The main objectives of the project are:

- Establishment of a long-term forest habitat restoration and management programmes for selected priority species and habitat types – Hermit beetle (*Osmoderma eremita*), Western taiga and Bog woodland;
- Testing and demonstrating innovative habitat inventory methods;
- Implementing the best practice habitat restoration measures in the Gauja National Park.

4.1. Actions

4.1.1. Preparatory actions

Action A.1: Acquisition of data for forest habitat assessment

Timetable: 1st quarter of 2012 – 3rd quarter of 2013.

The objective of the action is acquisition of data on distribution and conservation status of *Osmoderma eremita*, Western Taiga and Bog woodland habitats necessary for elaboration of long-term management programmes (Action A.2.) – remote sensing data for approximately 27500 ha forests and reports on surveyed 8 000–10 000 ha forest habitats and habitats suitable for *Osmoderma eremita*.

The implementation of the action is started on time. During the IncR period information on previous researches on forest habitats of Gauja National Park has been gathered, analysis of the maps, forest databases and other data sources has been initiated to select sites where field inventories will be carried out within the first field season planned for 2012 and questionnaire for field inventories has been elaborated in close collaboration with other forest experts in Latvia.

In the table of the Milestones of the project proposal there was a mistake encountered – the deadline of the milestone “Field work data gathering finished (action A.1)” was proposed 31st of March 2013. The correct deadline for this activity is 30th of September 2013 as it is indicated in the project timetable and described in a description of activity. As remote sensing data will be available only after the field season of 2012, it is crucial to carry out field inventories in the spring and summer of 2013 to supplement remote forest habitat data.

Milestones of the project proposal:

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Remote sensing data obtained	A.1	30/11/2012
Field work for data gathering finished	A.1	31/03/2013

Action A.2: Elaboration of long-term forest habitat restoration and management programmes

Timetable: 3rd quarter of 2012 – 1st quarter of 2014.

The action foresees elaboration of three restoration and management programmes based on the data gathered within action A.1. – a hydrology restoration programme for 130–170 ha large Bog woodland habitat site and restoration and management programmes for Western Taiga habitats and habitats suitable for *Osmoderma eremita* within whole area of Gauja National Park.

These programmes will analyse conditions, structures and threats for Bog woodland site and each forest compartment of Western Taiga habitat and habitats suitable for *Osmoderma eremita*. Besides they will outline priority regions for forest habitat restoration and management measures that will be implemented within the project (Actions C.) and describe the most appropriate restoration and management methods both on long and short-term scale.

Although the activity will be launched in 3rd quarter of 2012, when first results of field inventories will be available, planning of elaboration of management programmes has already been started – obtaining the information on the best practice and problems encountered during management and restoration of Western Taiga, Bog Woodland and habitats suitable for *Osmoderma eremita* in Latvia and North Europe has been started and first discussions with forest and invertebrate experts on proposed activities have taken place.

Milestones and Deliverables of the project proposal:

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Long-term forest management programme finalized	A.2	31/03/2014
Name of the Deliverable	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Three restoration and management programmes elaborated - Hermit beetle habitat restoration programme for Gauja NP - Hydrology restoration programme for Bog woodland habitat - Restoration and management programme for priority habitat type Western Taiga	A.2	31/03/2014
English summary of forest management programme on website	A.2	30/06/2015

Action A.3: Preparatory works for restoration of natural hydrological regime

Timetable: 1st quarter of 2013 – 2nd quarter of 2014.

The action foresees elaboration and approval of technical project for engineering works related to restoration of hydrological regime of bog woodland habitat (Action C.2) and obtaining of construction work permits.

During the IncR period experience from other LIFE projects with similar actions have been obtained.

Milestones of the project proposal:

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Land registration in the Land Register finalized	A.3	31/01/2014
Technical project prepared	A.3	31/03/2014

4.1.2. Concrete conservation actions

Action C.1: Management of broad-leaved forests of slopes, screes and ravines

Timetable: 4th quarter of 2013 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

In the timetable of the project proposal there was a small mistake encountered – interruption of the action in 1st quarter of 2014. Implementation of the action will proceed without interruption in 1st quarter of 2014.

The objective of the action is to restore and ensure future favourable habitat conditions for the *Osmoderma eremita* by restoring 60 – 80 ha of forest habitats.

Milestones of the project proposal:

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Habitat management actions started	C.1	01/10/2013
Habitat management actions finalized	C.1	31/08/2015

Action C.2: Restoration of hydrology of bog woodland

Timetable: 2nd quarter of 2014 – 4th quarter of 2014.

Taking into account discussions within the PMU and with the nature experts we propose to prolong duration of the action until the end of the project in order to continue restoration works for two seasons if there will be such necessity (according to the monitoring results – Action E.6). In this case it would be possible to analyse effect of restoration works in the first season and make improvements if such will be necessary. The total budget of this action will not be increased as the initially proposed sum will be used in a longer period if necessary.

The prolonged duration of the action is 2nd quarter of 2014 – end of the project.

The action foresees restoration of natural hydrological regime in 130 – 170 ha of deteriorated bog woodland (91D0*).

Milestones of the project proposal:

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Restoration of hydrology started	C.2	01/04/2014

Restoration of hydrology finalized	C.2	31/08/2015
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Action C.3: Management of Western Taiga

Timetable: 4th quarter of 2013 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

The objective of the action is to restore and maintain 280 – 300 ha of threatened habitats of Western taiga (9010*).

Milestones of the project proposal:

Name of the Milestone	Code of the associated action	Deadline
Management works of western taiga started	C.3	01/10/2013
Management works of western taiga finalized	C.3	31/08/2015

4.1.3. Public awareness and dissemination of results

Action D.1: Creation and maintenance of project’s website

Timetable: September 2011 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

At the beginning of the LIFE+ project general information was published on the official website of NCA (http://www.daba.gov.lv/public/lat/projekti/life_nature1/). Project’s website was elaborated within the first months of the project and it was launched on February 2012. Internet address of the project’s website is <http://for-rest.daba.gov.lv>.

The website contains main information on the project – general information of duration of the project, funding and project partners as well as information on project staff and contact-details. It includes also description of the project, its objectives and project actions. The current activities are reflected in the “News” section and photos of the events are published in the “Galleries”. Current publications of the project are available on the website and links to other related websites are shown (such as LIFE+ programme, project beneficiaries, co-financers, environmental protection websites, laws and normative acts, other LIFE+ projects etc.)

Publicity of the project’s website is ensured by indicating address on the project leaflet (see Action D.5 below), it was presented in the introductory seminar and links to the website are indicated in the official websites of the project beneficiaries.

Action D.2: Preparation of information boards and signs

Timetable: 1st quarter of 2013 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

Information boards and signs will be prepared and set up according to the timetable starting with the 1st quarter of 2013 until the end of the project. In the timetable of the project proposal there was a small mistake encountered – interruption of the action in 1st quarter of 2014. Implementation of the action will proceed without interruption in 1st quarter of 2014.

The information signs (altogether 50) and information boards (altogether 14) will be set up at the sites where Actions C.1, C.2 and C.3 will be applied. At the beginning of these actions only a part of the information signs and information boards will be set up, the others will be set up continuously or towards the end of concrete conservation actions thereby replacing broken signs and adding supplementary information if necessary.

Action D.3: Organization of seminars

Timetable: 4th quarter of 2011, 3rd quarter of 2013, 3rd quarter of 2014 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

The Introductory seminar was organized on 28th of February 2012 in the premises of NCA, in Sigulda – next to the Gauja National Park. Although initial provisional number of participants was calculated up to 50, the interest about the project was higher and there were 67 participants in the seminar. Among participants there were representatives of various nature conservation organizations and associations, nature experts, tourism companies, University of Latvia, students of nature sciences and others. The lecturers of the seminar (representatives of beneficiaries – NCA, IES, LFN) had prepared interesting and useful presentations on the project, its objectives, proposed actions and relevant information on target species and habitats and ecological aspects of the restoration activities within the project. A representative of the Ministry of Environmental protection and Regional Development, introduced participants with the LIFE+ programme and the meaning of 20 years with LIFE and EC Habitats Directive. Team leader for nature conservation planning in the LIFE+ project EREMITA MEADOWS (LIFE09 NAT/LV/000240) presented various aspects of the target species – *Osmoderma eremita*. The agenda and list of participants are attached to the IncR as Annex 6.3. Relevant photos of the seminar are included in Annex 6.5.

Photos, press release and the presentations are available at the project website. Links: <http://for-rest.daba.gov.lv/public/eng/galleries>

http://for-rest.daba.gov.lv/public/lat/publikacijas_un_dokumenti/

<http://for-rest.daba.gov.lv/public/lat/jaunumi/1012/>

There was a slight change of the date of the seminar comparing with the project proposal. In the timetable it was foreseen to organize the introductory seminar within the 4th quarter of 2011 but in the table of Milestones of the project deadline for this activity was set 30th of November 2012. Due to multiple considerations – the partnership agreements were signed at the end of November 2011 and the 4th quarter of 2011 was spent on completing PMU and other starting activities, project website was planned to be launched in February 2011, it was decided to organize the introductory seminar in the 1st quarter of 2012.

Action D.4: Production of audio-visual materials

Timetable: 1st quarter of 2012 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

During the reporting period the director and scriptwriter of the film (employees of EM) have started gathering and exploring materials for the script of the film. Director together with cinematographers has worked on planning different technical solutions for filming (aero shoots, camera moves, etc.) and necessary equipment (i.e. tripod and tripod head for video camera, video camera for aerial filming) has been procured. The first activities of the project (Introductory seminar) have been filmed.

A small mistake was found in the table of deliverable products of the project in the project proposal – although there are mentioned that 5 short films will be produced, there will be 4 short films produced within the project. The 5th film was planned to be produced in relation to one concrete conservation action (regarding elimination of the Hogweed) which was deleted during the revision phase of the project. The technical description of this action foresees only 4 short films and the project budget is planned accordingly.

In reply to the EC DG ENV.E.3-Life Nature 14/03/2012 letter on first visit to the project an explanation on discrepancies of interactive information materials within the action D.4 is provided below:

Another part of this action is visual demonstration – exposition, which is missing from the approved project proposal. There has been a mistake encountered in the project proposal – it is foreseen to purchase equipment (i.e. PC for touch screen, LCD monitor with optical touch screen overlay) for visual demonstrations – exposition that would be set up in the visitors centre in Sigulda. Notwithstanding there is missing the technical description of this activity. Therefore we provide the missing description within the IncR:

Interactive information materials: visual demonstration – exposition about targeted forest habitats' restoration and management within the Gauja National Park (permanent exposition) will be prepared and set up in the visitors centre in Sigulda (in the Gauja National Park). Such exposition will be attractive for a wide target group (students, tourists, land-owners, nature experts) thereby it will be useful in public awareness rising on forest restoration issues as well as nature values. It is planned to prepare the exposition towards the end of the project in 2015.

Action D.5: Production of printed materials

Timetable: 4th quarter of 2011 – 1st quarter of 2012, 2nd quarter of 2013 – 2nd quarter of 2014, 1st quarter of 2015 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

A printed leaflet with information on project objectives was prepared in February 2012. The leaflet contains information also on target species and habitats and highlights the key project actions. The leaflet is well illustrated in order to introduce society with the target species and habitats of the project in a friendly manner. The target group is local society and visitors of the Gauja National Park as well as nature conservationists. The leaflet is prepared in Latvian and English languages – it is printed on environmentally friendly paper, in A4 format, in 1000 copies (700 copies in Latvian, 300 copies in English).

The leaflet has been disseminated in the Introductory seminar and other meetings, it is available in the partner organizations and elsewhere. It will be disseminated through project publicity events also further. The leaflet is freely available on project's website. Both versions (Latvian and English) of the leaflet are attached to the IncR as Annex 6.2.

There was a slight delay in printing of the leaflet comparing to the table of deliverable products of the project in the proposal, as the deadline was set 31st of January 2012. Due to simultaneous preparing of the website, Introductory seminar and the leaflet, we did not manage to print it on January hence it was printed on February. The leaflet was printed before the initial publicity event of the project (Introductory seminar) and this delay has no impact on other actions or to further dissemination activities.

In the EC DG ENV.E.3-Life Nature 14.03.2012 letter on first visit to the project we were asked to clarify the exact number of leaflets planned to be produced. As there are discrepancies in the description of this action that regard the number of leaflets, we provide an explanation – within the project there will be produced:

- One leaflet with information on project goals and planned activities – produced in the IncR period (1000 copies) – accordingly to the project proposal.
- One leaflet with information on forest habitats of the Gauja National park, planned to be produced by 30/09/2014 (2500 copies). In the project proposal's description of action D.5 there has been a mistake encountered – initially there was planned one leaflet on forest habitats and another one – on concrete conservation action regarding

elimination of the Hogweed which was deleted during the revision phase of the project. Thereby due to a mistake in some sentences two leaflets on forest habitats are indicated. Though there will be one qualitative leaflet/brochure in 2500 copies produced, with no changes in the budget of this action.

- One printed report on forest habitat restoration and management, planned to be completed by 31/05/2015 (1000 copies) – accordingly to the project proposal.

Action D.6: Production of the layman's report

Timetable: 2nd and 3rd quarter of 2015.

A layman's report will be prepared and produced at the end of the project both in paper (750 copies) and in electronic format, in about 8-10 pages, in Latvian and in English. It will present project objectives, actions and results.

4.1.4. Overall project operation and monitoring

Action E.1: Project management

Timetable: September 2011 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

The PMU has been established and overall project management is being ensured accordingly to what was planned in the project proposal. Milestones regarding initial project management that have been set in the project proposal have been achieved in time (i.e. Project manager contracted, partner contracts signed, PMU established). During the reporting period partnership agreements have been signed, regular communication between beneficiaries is ensured by meetings, phone, mails and internet. Financial management has been set along with negotiations on partnership agreements.

Description of project management:

Coordinating beneficiary Nature Conservation Agency

NCA has established the project team by contracting the project manager – Mārtiņš Zīverts, the project coordinator – Inga Kabanova and the financial assistant – Baiba Pavloviča. Project manager and financial assistant are permanent employees of the NCA and are assigned as part-time employees in the project; project coordinator is a temporary employee and is working full-time in the project.

Project Manager has been assigned to the project at the beginning of the project. He is responsible for overall coordination and leadership of the project (Action E.1), coordination of meetings and reporting to the Steering Group (Action E.2) and the European Commission, supervising implementation of the project activities and work of the PMU, organising networking with other LIFE Nature projects (Action E.3).

Project Coordinator was hired at the beginning of the project. Project coordinator combines duties of Deputy Project manager and Communication manager thus compiling a full-time employment. Thereby project coordinator is in charge of the project content coordination, the interlink between all actions and actors, practical preparation of technical reports and performing of project secretariat functions (Actions A.2, A.3, C.1, C.2, C.3, D.6, and E.4) as well as is responsible for communication with media, development of the project website (Action D.1), production of printed materials (Action D.5) and communication with associated beneficiaries (Actions E.1, D.4), information dissemination to media, key stakeholders and wider public, preparation of information boards and signs (Action D.2), organisation of seminars (Action D.3).

Financial Assistant is in charge of keeping the accounts of the project, control of accounts and expenditures at partners', preparing of financial reports, coordinating the Action E.8 (Audit of the project).

GIS Specialist is responsible for GIS data (e.g. data bases, digital maps, digital terrain and surface models) produced within Actions A.1, A.2, A.3, C.1, C.2, C.3 and E.6 maintenance at the NCA. GIS specialist will start working on the project in the end of April / beginning of May 2012.

Lawyer, procurement expertise has been sub-contracted for the project life time (initially public tender procedure was organized).

Travels of the project management team to the project area, meetings, partner's offices, subcontractor's offices etc. for overall project management purposes are included in this action.

Associated beneficiary Institute for Environmental Solutions

To carry out implementation of the FOR-REST Project four employees of the Institute for Environmental Solutions were appointed (according to assignment No.VRI.25-05/6/2 from 03.10.2011.):

- Associated Beneficiary administrative coordinator (Action E.1.) – Ms. Inese Suija-Markova;
- technical coordinator responsible for implementation of the Actions A.1., C.1., C.2., C.3. and E.6.(Action E.1. and Action E.6.) – Mr. Gatis Eriņš;
- technical coordinator responsible for legal issues (e.g. contracts) and procurement procedures (Action E.1.) – Mr. Valts Līcis;
- financial assistant (Action E.1) – Ms. Linda Avena.

Gatis Erins is responsible for daily communication with project management from Coordinating Beneficiary.

Within Action E.1 during the reporting period technical as well as practical arrangements were carried out: project management unit within IES was established, procedures on procurement and contracting were adapted, necessary external services (rent of the car) were contracted. Active communication with Coordinating Beneficiary was implemented to put in order management arrangements and procedures on financial planning and reporting. IES has participated in elaboration of the project leaflet and took part in the Introductory seminar of the project.

To prepare specifications for Remote Sensing data acquisition and establish system for ground truth data collection as well as to start elaboration of the monitoring procedures project areas within the Gauja NP were visited.

Associated beneficiary Latvian Fund for Nature

LFN has established the FOR-REST project management team by appointing with relevant assignments employees of LFN:

- Project Manager – Baiba Strazdiņa;
- Project Financial Assistant – Ilze Danefelde;
- Forest expert – Viesturs Lārmanis.

Project Manager and financial assistant were hired on 01.12.2011. Project Manager is responsible for management of the project from the side of the associated beneficiary – coordination and supervision of expert’s work involved in implementation of the Action A.1, A.2. and D.5., regular communication with the Coordinating Beneficiary and the Associated Beneficiaries and preparation of activity reports to the coordinating beneficiary. Financial Assistant is responsible for control of financial aspects and for preparing financial reports of the project from the side of the associated beneficiary (Action E.1).

Forest expert was hired on 16.01.2012. He is responsible for planning of field inventories, elaboration and approbation of methodology for forest habitat inventory, preparation a report on conservation status of Western Taiga and Bog woodland habitats (Action A.1) and for preparation the theoretical background for restoration and management programme of Western Taiga habitats (Action A.2). Besides he will provide forest expert advice during restoration and management activities (Actions C), prepare presentations on forest management and restoration issues for project seminars (Action D.3) and will ensure forest expert advice during preparation of project leaflets and publications (Action D.5).

Associated beneficiary ELM MEDIA

Foundation EM has formed a project team and made respective changes to employment contracts with project assistant/scriptwriter, director and two cinematographers. Project’s staff is working temporary – part-time in this project. Project assistant/scriptwriter – Ieva Ūbele – is responsible for partner’s project management, financial management and cooperation with the coordinating beneficiary and also for scriptwriting of the short films.

Information about project start was published on the website <http://www.elmmedia.lv>. Representative of the foundation took part in the first meeting of the Steering Group.

Action E.2: Steering Group

Timetable: 1st quarter of 2012, 1st quarter of 2013, 2nd quarter of 2014, 3rd quarter of 2015.

The project Steering Group is established in order to monitor the progress of project implementation. The task of the Steering Group is to monitor project activities and give high level advice on nature conservation issues by the key project stakeholders. At the end of the project, Steering Group will approve the final progress report and project’s After-LIFE Conservation Plan.

The Steering Group consists of representatives from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Latvian State Forest Service and representatives from the project beneficiaries – NCA, IES, LFN and EM (Annex 6.4.1). The Steering Group meetings will take place at least once every year or more / less often according to the group’s decisions.

First meeting of the Steering Group was conducted on 29th March 2012. Representative of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development Zane Brice was chosen as the chairman of the Steering Group. The aim of the first meeting was to introduce participants with the project, its objectives and actions. Members of the PMU gave presentations on activities of each beneficiary in the project. List of participants, list of the Steering Group members and minutes of the first meeting of the Steering Group are attached to the IncR as Annex 6.4. Relevant photos of the meeting are included in Annex 6.5.

Action E.3: Networking with other related projects

Timetable: 3rd quarter of 2012 – 1st quarter of 2013, 4th quarter of 2013, 3rd quarter of 2014 – 1st quarter of 2015.

Some contacts with other LIFE projects have been already established. According to the timetable first field visits will be organized in 2nd part of 2012.

The project management team of NCA is regularly communicating with staff of LIFE+ project HYDROPLAN (LIFE10 NAT/LV/000160). As for both projects coordinating beneficiary is NCA there have been harmonized several documentation regarding LIFE.

Team leader for nature conservation planning in the LIFE+ project EREMITA MEADOWS (LIFE09 NAT/LV/000240) – Uldis Valainis – presented various aspects of the target species – the Hermit Beetle on the Introductory seminar on 28th of February. It is also discussed to continue networking in further implementation of the project.

Negotiations on future collaboration (e.g. harmonizing data acquisition and processing, information exchange etc.) have been started also with staff of EU38806 project “Green Corridor”.

Action E.4: After-LIFE Conservation Plan

Timetable: 1st quarter of 2015 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

After-LIFE Conservation Plan will be elaborated by the Project Management Unit as a separate chapter of the final report at the end of the project; it will be presented both in Latvian and in English, available in paper and electronic format.

Action E.5: Audit of the project

Timetable: 3rd quarter of 2015.

At the end of the project, an independent auditor will verify the financial statements provided to the Commission in the final report.

Action E.6: Monitoring of restoration and management measures

Timetable: 2nd quarter of 2013 – end of the project (3rd quarter of 2015).

According to the timetable of the project proposal it is planned to start monitoring activities in the 2nd quarter of 2013 – before starting concrete conservation actions, during two last seasons of the project. Though during the PMU meetings this action was discussed and it was decided to start monitoring activities earlier – starting with the 3rd quarter of 2012. Such prolongation of the time period is necessary for elaboration of the monitoring plans for each of the concrete conservation actions that will provide coordinated monitoring approach. The total budget of this action will not be increased and the same amount consequently will be used in a longer period than initially planned.

Monitoring plan for activities on restoration and management of habitats for *Osmoderma eremita* will be elaborated in cooperation with experts that will be involved in elaboration of the long-term forest habitat restoration and management programme for *Osmoderma eremita* (Action A.2). Monitoring plan for management and restoration activities of habitat type Western Taiga will be elaborated taking into account information on conditions of habitat type Western Taiga (9010*) collected within Action A.1. Specific plan for hydrology monitoring – location of the monitoring transects and technical solution of the groundwater observation wells will be elaborated by the end of 2012.

4.2. Availability of appropriate licences and authorisations

During the reporting period there has been no necessity for licences and authorisations. In further implementation of the project relevant permissions will be necessary.

For hydrology restoration activities (Action C.2) a construction permit is necessary. Thereby within the preparatory works for restoration of natural hydrological regime (Action A.3) the following stages will be implemented:

- Obtaining the architectural planning assignment;
- Obtaining technical conditions from relevant institutions;
- Integration of the technical conditions in the technical project;
- Agreement of the technical project with institutions that issued the conditions;
- Decision of State Environmental Service concerning environmental impact assessment;
- Obtaining the construction permit issued by the relevant local municipality.

NCA will sub-contract a company for preparation of the technical documentation. The relevant activities will be started at the beginning of 2013. According to the project proposal the technical project has to be prepared until 31/03/2014.

Felling confirmations (issued by Latvian State Forest Service) that are necessary for forest habitat management and restoration activities (Actions C.1 and C.3) will be obtained before starting the management and restoration works – towards end of 2013.

4.3. Envisaged progress until next report

The next is Mid-term report to be submitted by 31st of October 2013 according to the project proposal. The envisaged progress for the next reporting period is provided below:

Action A.1. Acquisition of data for forest habitat assessment

It is foreseen that during the field season of 2012 Remote Sensing data (LiDAR data and Hyperspectral imagery) covering at least 27'500 hectares of the forests of the Gauja NP will be obtained. Data processing will be started already in July – August 2012 and will be finalized by March 2013. Forest data analysis (classification of the forest vegetation, segmentation of forest types and forest structures, identification of habitats of EU importance and assessment of the quality of those forest sites) will be finalised by the end of 2013. Maps, data bases and three dimensional models necessary for restoration and management planning (Action A.2.) will be elaborated by the end of 2013.

During the first field season of 2012 field inventories covering at least 3 000 ha of the forests habitats and habitats suitable for Hermit Beetle *Osmoderma eremita* of Gauja NP will be proceeded. Other 5000 to 7000 ha will be surveyed during the second field season in 2013, when the methodology for forest habitat inventory will be approved and first results of remote sensing data will be available. Field inventories of the forest habitats will be finalized and a report on conservation status of Western Taiga habitats, Bog woodland habitats on particular forest site and habitats suitable for Hermit Beetle *Osmoderma eremita* will be prepared by the end of 3rd quarter of 2013.

Action A.2. Elaboration of long-term forest habitat restoration and management programmes

During the next reporting period Action A.2 will proceed. In the end of 2012 work on elaboration of the programmes will be started. A series of meetings with experts and stakeholders on management and restoration programmes will be organized in 2013. It is planned to finalize Hydrology restoration programme in 2013 as it will be necessary for implementation of Action A.3. Remote sensing data and data from ground surveys of forest habitats will be used for establishing of digital databases and detailed maps for forest habitat

restoration and management that will be necessary for the forest habitat restoration and management programme – until the end of 2013. Restoration and management programme for Western Taiga habitats and habitats suitable for Hermit Beetle *Osmoderma eremita* will be elaborated by the end of 1st quarter of 2014 as indicated in the project proposal.

Action A.3. Preparatory works for restoration of natural hydrological regime

Implementation of this action will be started during the next planning period according to the project proposal – 1st quarter of 2013. The public tender procedure will be carried out for contracting a licensed organization for preparation of the technical documentation for reconstruction of drainage systems. The documentation that needs to be prepared include obtaining the architectural planning assignment, technical conditions from relevant institutions, making agreements on technical project with relevant institutions, gaining decision of State Environmental Service concerning environmental impact assessment, obtaining construction permit from the respective local municipality. All the necessary documentation will be prepared in 2013 in order to gain a construction permit before the foreseen beginning of Action C.2 at 2nd quarter of 2014.

Actions C.1, C.2, C.3. Concrete conservation actions

The concrete conservation actions are foreseen to be started according to the timetable – after the next reporting period. Though planning, discussing and preparing for these actions will proceed during the preparatory actions. Actions C.1 and C.3 will start in the autumn 2013. Remote sensing data and data from ground surveys of forest habitats collected within Action A.1 and the elaborated long-term habitat restoration and management programmes (action A.2.) during the next reporting period will form the basis for the restoration actions.

Action D.1. Creation and maintenance of project's website

The website will be updated on a regular basis, providing the most actual information and photos on project activities and other relevant information. It is also planned to supplement sections of the website with extra information on target species and habitats and other aspects of the project.

Action D.2. Preparation of information boards and signs

Preparation of information, text and layout of the information signs and boards will be started at 1st quarter of 2013 accordingly to the project proposal. Setting up is foreseen after the next reporting period.

Action D.3. Organization of seminars

One seminar will be organized during the next reporting period – in the 3rd quarter of 2013. The target group of this seminar will be nature experts, nature protection organizations (state institutions and NGOs, staff of other LIFE+ projects), up to 40 participants. The focus of the seminar will be on various forest management and planning aspects, accordingly to Action A.2.

Action D.4. Production of audio-visual materials

During the next reporting period work on the script development will continue and filming team will document project activities such as acquisition of remote sensing data, ground survey of forest habitats as well as film different habitats in the project areas throughout the year.

Action D.5. Production of printed materials

Information and illustrations for the leaflet on forest habitats of the Gauja National Park will be prepared in 2013. Printing and dissemination of the leaflet is proposed after the next reporting period.

Action E.1. Project management

Project management will be implemented by NCA, IES, LFN and EM throughout the next reporting period accordingly to the project proposal and necessities of the project actions.

Action E.2. Steering Group

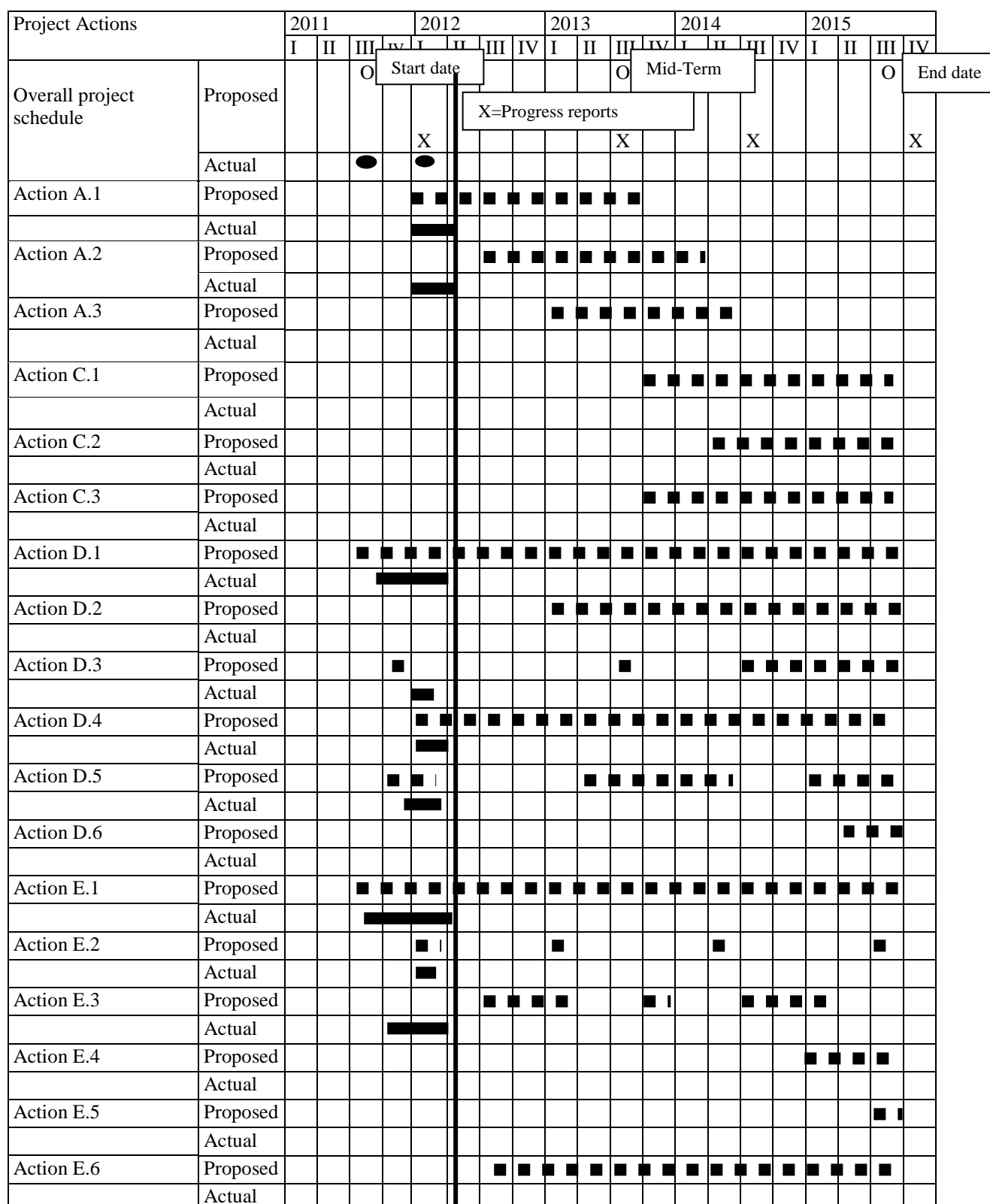
At least one meeting of the Steering Group will be held during the next period. It is proposed to be held in 1st quarter 2013. If the Steering Group will decide that it is necessary, extra meeting will be organized (e.g. during summer season organizing a field visit to the project territory).

Action E.3. Networking with other related projects

Local experience exchange Study Tour to several Natura 2000 sites in Latvia will be organized for nature conservation specialists and habitat restoration and management experts from national nature conservation NGOs. During the Study Tour several sites where forest habitat restoration and/or management measures were carried out will be visited, the results of previous activities will be discussed. 1st Study Tour will be organized according to the project proposal – until 30th of September 2012.

Action E.6. Monitoring of restoration and management measures

It is planned that monitoring plans and procedures will be elaborated during the next reporting period. Specific plan for hydrology monitoring – location of the monitoring transects and technical solution of the groundwater observation wells will be elaborated at by the end of 2012 and hydrology monitoring for Action C.2 will be started at the spring of 2013.



Changes that have been proposed for future time planning of several actions (as described in the technical part of the IncR – section 4.1. Actions) are incorporated in the Gantt chart as the proposed time.

5. Financial part

5.1. Putting in place of the accounting system

The accounting system of the project has been set. All documents (e.g. agreements, acts) and invoices of all beneficiaries have a clear reference to the project.

As for the coordinating beneficiary NCA there is a separate bank account opened specially for funding of this particular LIFE+ project. All of the project's payments are made from this bank account. Thereby the project's accounting system and funding is separated from other NCA's accounts.

The associated beneficiaries have opened sub-accounts particularly for this project. In this way the coordinating beneficiary can ascertain on finances of this project.

5.2. Continued availability of co financing

Partnership agreements are signed with all beneficiaries thus confirming contribution of the beneficiaries accordingly to the project proposal. Contribution from the co-financer is being received accordingly to the project proposal. The first report to the Latvian Environmental Protection Fund was submitted by 20th of April 2012.

5.3. Costs incurred

Budget breakdown categories	Total cost in €	Costs incurred from the start date to 31.03.2012 in €	% of total costs
1. Personnel	402 394	32 221,07	8,01
2. Travel and subsistence	69 388	966,50	1,39
3. External assistance	230 876	2992,12	1,30
4. Durable goods			
Infrastructure			
Equipment	19 842	2497,27	12,59
Prototype			
5. Land purchase / long-term lease			
6. Consumables	46 886	691,24	1,47
7. Other Costs			
8. Overheads	53 857	2715,24	5,04
TOTAL	823 243	42 083,44	5,11

Action number and name	Foreseen costs	Spent so far	Remaining	Projected final cost
Action A.1 Acquisition of data	100 000	2537,48	97 462,52	100 000
Action A.2 Forest restoration and management programme	30 000	148,95	29 851,05	30 000
Action A.3 Preparatory works for restoration	23 032	0,00	23 032	23 032
Action C.1 Management of broad-leaved forest	49 440	0,00	49 440	49 440

Action C.2 Hydrology restoration	78 880	0,00	78 880	78 880
Action C.3 Management of Western taiga	62 280	0,00	62 280	62 280
Action D.1 Project's website	5 059	516	4543	5 059
Action D.2 Information boards and signs	15 116	0,00	15 116	15 116
Action D.3 Seminars	8 152	1377,08	6774,92	8 152
Action D.4 Audio-visual materials	48 806	5567,38	43 238,62	48 806
Action D.5 Printed materials	20 406	1066,75	19 339,25	20 406
Action D.6 Layman's report	2 445	0,00	2445	2 445
Action E.1 Project management	250 014	28 118,12	221 895,88	250 014
Action E.2 Steering Group	2 000	36,44	1963,56	2 000
Action E.3 Networking with other projects	31 000	0,00	31 000	31 000
Action E.4 After-LIFE Conservation plan	0	0,00	0	0
Action E.5 Audit of the project	9 000	0,00	9 000	9 000
Action E.6 Monitoring	33 756	0,00	33 756	33 756
TOTAL	769 386	39 368,20	730 017,80	769 386

Costs incurred are relevant to what was planned and budget posts are even.

150% of the EC pre-financing payment is expected to be consumed in the 3rd quarter of 2013.

Actions C.1, C.3. In the financial forms of the project proposal – Direct Personnel costs of associated beneficiary LFN a small mistake has been encountered. All budget for expert consultation on nature issues in management of forest habitats is lined in Action C.3. Instead, some part of it will be paid for consultation on nature issues in restoration and management of habitats in Action C.1. The total amount of personnel costs will not change.

Action D.2. There is an insignificant mistake in calculation of information signs – in the project proposal it was foreseen as 80 EUR per sign (35 signs). But in the text it was proposed to prepare 50 information signs. By proceeding cost survey it was found out that the cost of one information sign would be less than 80 EUR thereby we will be able to print and set up 50 signs.

Action D.3. During organization of the Introductory seminar there was a necessity for experts of the associated beneficiary LFN to take part in the organizational works although this was not planned in the project proposal. Thereby part of the LFN personnel costs will be redistributed also for the Action D.3 (the sum currently is 170,23 EUR). This will have no effect on the project budget and the total amount of personnel costs will not change.

Action D.4. There has been a mistake encountered in the project proposal – it is foreseen to purchase equipment for visual demonstrations – exposition that would be set up in visitors centre in Sigulda. Though there was missing the technical description of this activity (it is provided now in section 4.1.3.). Also budget for elaboration of the exposition was missing in the project proposal. As it is decided to implement this activity an extra budget of 1500 EUR will be added for action D.4. Due to the reason that this activity will be implemented towards the end of the project the necessary budget lines will be changed subsequently.

In the EC DG ENV.E.3-Life Nature 14/03/2012 letter on first visit to the project it was noted that in some cases the timesheets include only time dedicated to the LIFE+ project and not the time dedicated to other activities. We have taken this note into account and all timesheets will include time dedicated to this LIFE+ project as well as time dedicated to other LIFE/LIFE+ projects and other activities where appropriate.

5.4. Output indicators. Definition.

Explanations of the completed appropriate LIFE+ Nature Project output indicators' tables are provided below:

Part 1 – Preparatory actions (A)

All actions are foreseen to be implemented in one Natura 2000 site – Gauja National Park.

Management plans: within the Action A.2 it is proposed to elaborate three long-term forest habitat restoration and management programmes:

- 1) *Osmoderma eremita* and its habitats and its crucial habitat *Tilio Acerion forests of slopes, scree and ravines* (9180*) – with the estimated surface 1845,2 ha in the Gauja National Park;
- 2) *Western taiga* (9010*) – with the estimated surface 1845,2 ha in the Gauja National Park;
- 3) *Bog woodland* (91D0*) – a plan for a particular site with the estimated surface 130 ha.

The total estimated cost for elaboration of the long-term restoration and management programmes is 30 000 EUR.

Inventories & Studies: within the Action A.1 two kinds of the target species and habitat inventories are foreseen – remote sensing data acquisition (for ~27 500 ha) and ground survey of forest habitats (for ~8000 ha). The surveyed surface is overlapping. The total estimated cost of this action is 100 000 EUR.

Permit procedures: within preparatory actions one permit procedure is foreseen in Action A.3 – a construction permit for hydrology restoration in 130 ha area. The estimated cost is 23 032 EUR.

Part 2 – Concrete actions (C)

Natura 2000 site restoration/improvement: within the Gauja National Park:

- 1) Action C.1. Restoration and management of suitable habitats for *Osmoderma eremita* and *Tilio Acerion forests of slopes, scree and ravines* (9180*) in 60 ha for 49440 EUR;
- 2) Action C.2. Restoration of hydrology of *Bog woodland* (91D0*) in 130 ha for 78880 EUR;
- 3) Action C.3. Restoration and management of *Western taiga* (9010*) in 280 ha for 62280 EUR.

Part 3 – Awareness raising and communication

Table 4 – Workshops, seminars and conferences: according to the project proposal there will be at least 7 seminars organized within Action D.3 for various target groups (two seminars for local society and land-owners and 5 seminars for nature protection organizations). The foreseen cost is 8152 EUR. Within the Action A.2 about 10 workshops for nature experts will be organized where cost of consumables and personnel compiles 2000 EUR.

Table 5 - Media and other communication and dissemination work: the table includes outputs of the following actions – Action D.1 (project website) for 5059 EUR and Action D.4 (4 short films and 1 visual demonstration exposition) for 50306 EUR; Action D.2 (preparation of 14 information boards and 50 information signs) for 15116 EUR; Action E.1 (press releases, TV and radio reportages) with estimated cost about 4000 EUR.

Table 6 – Publications: outputs of the following actions – Action D.6 (production of the layman’s report, 2445 EUR), Action D.5 (production of 3500 copies of two different leaflets and 1000 copies of report on forest habitat restoration and management, 20406 EUR).

Table 3 and Table 7 are not applicable to the project actions.

Project output indicator tables are attached to the IncR as Annex 6.6.

6. Annexes

6.1. Partnership agreements with the associated beneficiaries (Action E.1)

6.1.1. Partnership agreement with IES

6.1.2. Partnership agreement with LFN

6.1.3. Partnership agreement with EM

6.2. Deliverables (Action D.5)

6.2.1. Project leaflet in Latvian

6.2.2. Project leaflet in English

6.3. Documentation of the Introductory seminar (Action D.3)

6.3.1. Seminar Agenda

6.3.2. List of participants

6.4. Documentation of the Steering Group (Action E.2)

6.4.1. List of the Steering Group members

6.4.2. List of participants

6.4.3. Minutes of the first meeting of the Steering Group

6.5. Photos of the project activities

6.6. Project output indicators