



Conservation of baltic raised bogs in Pomerania, Poland

**Klub Przyrodników (Naturalists Club), Poland
LIFE04NAT/PL/000208**



Progress report, 2005 January 30

1. Generals:

The project was started in 2003, November, 02, paralelly with the application to the LIFE-Nature 2004.

In period 2003.11.02-2004.12.31 the project was implemented by Klub Przyrodników and partners, and project actions were financed by Global Environment Fund - Small Grants Facility (non-EU funds, official project co-financer) and beneficiary & partners own funds, waiting for the LIFE-Nature decision on financing.

Waiting for the LIFE decision of financing was the main factor determinating project exexution in the period 203-2004. The decision of European Commission was given in August 2004, but till December it was not certain will it be finalised, as a result of problems with bank guarantee in Poland. Till the end of January 2005, we do not use any LIFE money, because we do not receive it before this report date.

As a result this uncertainty of project financing, project executing was concentrated on preparatory actions, which are possible using limited financial resources and sometimes using voluntary work. We concentrate on good preparation for main conservation activities, which will be executed in 2005 and 2006: site assessments & inventories and preparing of formal documentations for conservation actions, including necessary permissions. Therefore the degree of executing project budget is rather small, but all necessary preparatory work have been done. Details are described in the comment to the financial table.

2. Achieved results (in the light of project expected results)

Expected project result (= Application Form 15)	Achieved till end of 2004
Draining ditches on 13 peatbogs blocked everywhere when needed. Ca 2200 m of ditches filling. Ca 440 sluices blocking ditches built. As a result, hydrology of 13 sites importantly improving, with keeping the water level average no deeper than 0,3m under the ground level.	Action formally prepared on 3 bogs, for execution in 2005.
Trees degrading peatbogs removed from 9 sites. Trees removed or thinned on ca 650 ha. As a result, water balance of these bogs importantly improving, see above.	Action formally prepared on 2 bogs, for execution in 2005.
Full today's biodiversity (species list) of open bogs and bog forests on all sites preserved. 9 "hot points of threat" important for biodiversity on 3 bogs safe (light conditions improved for rare plants populations)	Needs revised.: Light conditions (important for biodiversity) improved in 10 places on 1 bogs. On next bog action execution in 2 places prepared, but impossible as a result of high water level; will be executed after water level decreasing in spring 2005.
Spruce removed from 2 bogs. As a result no important threat of spruce invasion anywhere.	-

<p>Natural values, stratygraphy and hydroecology of all 23 bogs recognized. Site management concept for all bogs prepared, and if necessary, formally established as site management plan.</p> <p>Necessary nature protection forms established, basing on prepared documentation. Established Site Management Plans, according to Polish law, for all Nature Reserves.</p>	<p>Recognised for 18 bogs (site management concept prepared).</p> <p>Documentations for establishing necessary nature protection form prepared for 9 (90%) bogs. Formal procedures have been started or will be started soon.</p> <p>Project of Site Management Plans for 4 (44%) nature reserves prepared, administration procedure of its formal establishing started.</p>
<p>Local public, local authorities, forest administration and water authorities aware of natural values of each site and aware of need of its conservation, including appropriate methods of its conservation.</p> <p>Popular brochures presenting each bog printed and disseminated.</p> <p>Website created and maintained</p> <p>Project of active raised bogs conservation propagated in public: layman's report printed and disseminated.</p>	<p>Public awareness increased: info about project disseminated among foresters and Polish conservationists.</p> <p>ca 15 meetings & negotiations with the local authorities conducted.</p> <p>Website initiated.</p>
<p>Group of ca 20 persons, nature management planners and nature conservation authority and administration, trained in raised bogs ecology and appropriate methods of its conservation.</p> <p>Handbook of raised bogs conservation in Polish conditions prepared, printed and disseminated.</p> <p>Report with technical and planning solution examples printed.</p>	<p>Group of ca 30 persons established.</p> <p>First workshop (with field visit) organised.</p> <p>Handbook writing started.</p>

3. Main problems

1. Problem of bank guarantee - after very long, 9 month guarantee application process, the project have been guaranting by the Polish National Fund for Environment and Water Management (official public guarantor for environmental projects in Poland, according the polish environment protection act) - as a result the problem have been solved.

2. Changing legislation in Poland - the new nature conservation act was established by Polish Parliament in May 2004. As a result, some regulations on nature conservatin, especially concerning with establishing of protected areas and establishing the Site Management Plans was changed. The ongoing administration procedures was stopped to the time of preparing new regulations. This generate some formal troubles, for example with

the formal status of prepared the Site Management Plans. But they do not block the project action, because formal procedures for this "changing situation" exists and works. As a result, getting obligatory permissions for conservation actions is more bureaucratic and takes more effort, but is still possible.

3. Gaps in knowledge about nature & ecology of particular bogs have been fulfilled as a result of actions A1-A3. But as a result, the site assessment, decision about appropriate conservation form, concepts of site management, and identification of conservation needs sometimes had to be revised.

4. According to our experience from the first year: project execution demand more bureaucracy then expected.

5. Extending time of waiting for NFfE decision about guarantee, and as a result extending time of waiting for final project confirmation, made impossible the full development of project team and full development coordination work.

4. Progress in project actions

ACTION A.1: Name of action: Sites assessment & Inventory.

For sites with general lack of knowledge about its nature, ecology and hydrology, inventory of natural values (flora, fauna, natural habitats map, peat deposit stratigraphy) have been prepared. Aerial photos and old maps were also completed. Elements of site management plans have been prepared. This inventory will be enough formal base for establishing appropriate form of protection – Ecological Ground or Nature & Landscape Area. For established EG or NLA, this inventory will be a confirmation of its natural values.

Paralelly with the assessment, monitoring transect have been established on the site 19 (Reptowo). On other bogs monitoring transects will be established in spring 2005.

According to the time schedule, the action is planned to be finished before 2005 Jan 30. For some sites action is finished and for some is little delayed. Detailed information about completing this action for particular bogs are below:

Site 7 (northern part): Łebskie Bagno - Action is finished. Nature inventory is prepared. It appears the site is more valuable then expected and should be protected as nature reserve, therefore documentation for nature reserve establishing have been also prepared. Also Standard Data Form for Natura 2000 was prepared. Habitats map for the site have been prepared (habitat 7110 is more abundant, when expected). Needs of conservation actions were assessed more detaily.

Site 13 (Zaleskie Bagno) - Action is finished. Nature inventory is prepared. The site is protected as "ecological area", and this formal form seems to be appropriated. During the inventory, locality of interesting flora species - *Rubus chamaemorus* - have been found (species very rare in Poland). Big resources of 7110 habitat was found. The site was assessed as being is in the good conservation status; no active conservation is necessary.

Site 17 (Klęcko) - Action is almost finished. Nature inventory is prepared. The conservation form of the site - "nature & landscape area" (according to Polish nature conservation law) was assessed as optimal. Also Standard Data Form for Natura 2000 was prepared. Needs of conservation actions were assessed, but they are now under discuss with the Forestry Unit, which is responsible for this site. Therefore the documentation is not completly closed.

Site 19 (Reptowo) - Action is finished. Nature inventory is prepared. Documentation for formal protection as "nature & landscape area" was prepared. The site was found as rather strongly degraded. There is not 7110 habitat, only degraded 91D0, which needs restoration. Needs of conservation actions were identified more precisely.

Site 20 (Łazy) - Action is finished. Nature inventory is prepared. It appears the site is more valuable than expected and should be protected as nature reserve, therefore documentation for nature reserve establishing have been also prepared. Also Standard Data Form for Natura 2000 (as part of bigger site Bukowo Lake) was prepared. Conservation needs was assessed more precisely. Some important for biodiversity localities of plants rare in Poland (*Myrica gale*, *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) was found.

Site 21 (Świdne Bagno) - Action is delayed. Inventory of flora and fauna have been made, but as a result of natural conditions: northern wind in October and November, which gives the water table growing up, there was impossible to finish habitat mapping and peat stratigraphy analysis before the winter. The site is protected as "nature & landscape area" and this formal form is probably optimal. The conservation needs will be assessed more precisely. The inventory will be finished in spring 2005, when the water level decrease.

Site 22 (Święta) - Action is finished. Nature inventory is prepared. Needs of conservation actions was assessed more precisely and corrected. It appears that 7110 habitat is less abundant when expected, the site is dominated by the 7120 and 91D0. The nature reserve area should be increased, formal procedure was started.

Site 23 (Wielkie Bagno) - Action is finished. Nature inventory is prepared. Formal documentation for conservation as "ecological area" have been prepared. Needs of conservation actions was assessed more precisely and corrected.

As a result of this action, 6 site nature inventory reports have been prepared, and the next 2 will be finished in some weeks. These reports contains:

- documentation appropriate for establishing formal conservation regulations, according to Polish law. Two sites was found more valuable than expected, as a result the documentation and application for Nature Reserve establishing was prepared. Two sites was found less valuable than expected, but they still are worth of conservation and - after restoration - including to Natura 2000.
- site management concept, with more precisely identification of conservation needs.

As a result of more precise inventory, in some cases Natura 2000 habitats was identified and assessed more precisely. Also in some cases the conservation needs was more precisely assessed and corrected.

As planned, action was partially subcontracted. Subcontractors were selected in "small public tender procedure", according to Polish tender regulations.

As a result of this action, the gap of insufficient knowledge about some sites nature (habitats, flora, fauna, basic stratigraphy and hydrology) was fulfilled. Summary of results are included to "Polish Baltic Bogs Catalog", which is a part of Baltic Raised Bogs Habitat Action Plan (see Action A5)



Photo: peat stratigraphy analysis using the peat borer

ACTION A.2: Name of action: Preparation of formal documentations for Nature Reserve establishing.

For sites proposed as Nature Reserves, more detailed inventory, containing about its nature, ecology and hydrology, inventory of natural values (flora, fauna, habitats detailed map) will be prepared. Analysis of the peat deposit stratigraphy, water and peat chemical composition, and peatbog history and ecology will be included. Old maps, historical aerial photographs and contemporary aerial photos will be used for site history analysis. Peat borer analysis will be used for peat stratigraphy. Necessary documents on ownership status, relations to the forest management plan, water management plan, land use plan will be included. This documentation will be presented in format appropriate and complete for nature Reserve establishing by competent authority.

First part of the action A2 is planned in January 2005, second part - in January 2006. First part is finished. For site 1 (Słowińskie Bagno), more detailed documentation appears to be necessary, therefore it will not be ready in the first part. Instead of this, documentations for sites 15 (Stramniczka) and 16 (Roby) will be ready in January 2005 (in first part), not in January 2006 (second part) as planned.

In details:

Site 1 (Słowińskie Bagno) - As described above, more detailed documentation appears to be necessary; it will be finished in November 2005.

Site 3 (Kusowskie Bagno) - Action is finished. The nature inventory and formal documentation for nature reserve establishing have been prepared. The official, administration procedure of reserve establishing was started by the competent nature conservation authority. Now the project is negotiated with the stakeholders (local community authority) and with forest officers.

Site 9 (Wierzchucińskie Bagno) - Action is finished. The nature inventory and formal documentation for nature reserve establishing have been prepared. The official, administration procedure of reserve establishing was started by the competent nature conservation authority. Now the project is negotiated with the stakeholders (local community authority) and with forest officers.

Site 15 (Stramniczka) - Action is finished. The nature inventory and formal documentation for nature reserve establishing have been prepared. The official, administration procedure of reserve establishing should be started soon by competent nature conservation authority.

Site 16 (Roby) will be finished in January 2005 - Action is finished. The nature inventory and formal documentation for nature reserve establishing have been prepared. The official, administration procedure of reserve establishing should be started soon by competent nature conservation authority.

Till now, 4 from 5 (planned before January 2006) documentations have been prepared. Administration procedures for nature reserves establishing was started or will be started soon. But the effectiveness of this procedures is partially out of our control. Competent nature conservation authority declare its intention to establish nature reserves, but this procedure is rather long time in Poland. But we hope it will be before the end of the project.

We also lobby for including needs of conservation actions, identified in 15 (Stramniczka) and 16 (Roby) sites, to management plan for Natura 2000 for "Trzebiatowsko-Kołobrzescki Pas Nadmorski". This management plan for Natura 2000 was prepared in 2004 r by Agrotec consortium for the Polish Ministry of Environment. This management plan was independent for our project, but we found it necessary to harmonise it with our planned actions. As a result of our lobbying, necessary actions for baltic bogs - sites 15 and 16 was - was included to project of prepared Natura 2000 management plan.

ACTION A.3:

Name of action: Preparation of site management plans for Nature Reserves.

First part of the action is planned to be finished in January 2005, next parts - in 2007 and 2007. First part contains the management plans for four sites 2, 4, 5 and 14.

The action is finished for sites 2 and 14. For sites 4 and 5 all field work is ready, but a little delay is expected with the office work, probably management plans will be finished in 2005, May, 30. This is result of executing this action under responsibility of partner - public administration body. Obligatory tender regulation and delay in Polish state budget resources planning in 2004, causes little delay in start of work for these sites, and as a result, in expected date of its finishing. This delay will be not significant for next work steps.

For Nature Reserves, detailed site management plans have been elaborated, according to obligatory Polish regulations. Necessary field inventory have been completed. Analysis of the peat deposit stratygraphy, water and peat chemical composition, and peatbog history and ecology have been included. Old maps, historical aerial photographs and contemporary aerial photos have been used for site history analysis. Peat borer analysis have been used for peat stratygraphy. Hydrogeological expertise will be included, as necessary. Documents on ownership status, relations to the forest management plan, water management plan, land use plan will be included

While all necessary documentation for sites 2 and 14 is completed, and for sites 4 and 5 will be completed in May, some formal problems with formal acceptance for the management plans may apperas, as a result of legislation changes in Poland (new nature conservation act, detail regulation for management plan format must also be renewed, but till now was not renewed by the Polish Ministry for Environment. This is a problem for all nature reserves in Poland. But it will be not significant for next work steps. From the formal point of view, formal authority decree on 'annual management actions' or formal nature conservation authority decision for conservation action executing is approprtaite formal base for conservation action in a field. This is the formal path in a situation when the full management plan is prepared but not formally accepted).

Prepared nature reserves management plans can be easily transformed to "site Natura 2000 management plan" in format demanded by Polish regulations.

ACTION A.4:

Name of action: Preparation of technical projects for water damming up and sluices building and permissions receiving.

According to Polish law regulations, for water damming up, so called "Water permission" is necessary. Application for that permission must contain detail technical project of action with its assessment for water resources.

In some cases (especially in nature reserve) also building permission is necessary. Application for that permission must contain detail technical project.

As a result, preparing of necessary technical project for water damming is necessary, some months before planned conservation action execution.

In 2004y we are concentrated on technical projects and formal permissions necessary for work (water damming up) in 2005. All necessary projects have been prepared and all necessary permissions have been given .

In details:

For site 1 (Słowińskie Bagno) - detail technical project of water damming up have been prepared. As a result of precise levelling, the detail localisation and number of sluices have been corrected for optimising the ecological effect and minimalising influence on adjoined forest grounds & meadows. The detail technical solutions was negotiated with the water authority. Necessary water permission was given.

For site 2 (Janiewickie Bagno) - detail technical project of water damming up have been prepared. As a result of precise levelling, the detail localisation and number of sluices have been corrected for optimising the ecological effect and minimalising influence on adjoined forest grounds & meadows. The detail technical solutions was negotiated with the water authority and with the forest office. Necessary water permission and building permission were given.

For site 19 (Reptowo) - detail technical project of water damming up have been prepared. Problem of possible influence on adjoined private property was identified, but it was solved by technical details. The detail technical solutions was negotiated with the water authority and the local authority. Necessary water permission and building permission were given.

ACTION A.5:

Name of action: Preparation of Regional Habitat Action Plan for baltic raised bogs conservation in Pomerania, Poland.

First version of Habitat Action Plan for baltic raised bogs in Poland have been prepared (in Polish language). It was presented during the workshop (see action E3) 15-16 Nov 2004 and discussed. Now the second draft version have been elaborated.

The Plan contains also the catalog of Polish baltic raised bogs, which is and will be continuously modified, according to increasing knowledge about particular sites.

In some weeks the Plan summary will be also translated to English and will be available on website.

ACTION D.1:

Name of action: Local improving light condition for rare plants localities.

In the provisional project the action was planned as below:

On the 3 peatbogs (site 10, 20, 21), when the "hot points of biodiversity threat" was recognized, and the rare plants populations are in danger of local extinction, the invasive plants will be reduced by cutting them. This will be repeated after 3 years.

This action concerns:

- *Osmunda regalis* population in site 21, shadowed by *Betula pendula*, *Alnus glutinosa* and *Frangula alnus*
- *Myrica gale* population in site 20, shadowed by *Frangula alnus*
- *Myrica gale* population in site 10, shadowed by *Betula pendula* and *Frangula alnus*.

First turnover of this action was planned for 2004 year on two sites (site 10 and site 20).

This action is necessary, because biodiversity is one of the "quality indicators" of Natura 2000 habitats.

As a result of nature inventory & assessment with elements of management plans (Action A1), and as a result of local assessment on the field before the action, it was identified:

- the action on site 21 was identified as NOT necessary, because population of *Osmunda* seems to be out of danger;

the area of action in site 20 (Łazy) should be little increased. The shrubs cutting is necessary in two points, not only in one.

Action in site 10 (Ciemieńskie Bagna) should be strongly increased, and action should be concentrated not on *Myrica gale*, but also on the *Erica tetralix* population and related habitat.

Assessment:

When executed. The shrubs and young *Betula* was cutted over and the light conditions for *Erica tetralix* and *Myrica gale* improved on the area ca 90 ha.

Planned, but as a result of weather conditions in autumn 2004 the water level on this site rapidly grow up. As a result this action became impossible. It will be executed in spring 2005, when the water level will decrease.



Erica locality before the action (spring 2004) ..



.....and after (autumn 2004) ..

ACTION E.3:

Name of action: Work with people responsible for nature management planning.

The working group of ca 30 people was created. This is mix of:

- nature conservation planners
- scientists, specialists on peatbog ecology (from the Agricultural University in Szczecin and Olsztyn, University in Gdańsk)

- regional nature conservation authority (Szczecin, Gdańsk)
- regional landscape parks
- forest administration (especially forest department; in Poland, in ca 80-90% of cases forest departments are land managers for bogs)
 - The first workshop (two days) is arranged for 15-16 November in Sulęczyno in Cassubians (Pomerania District). The workshop program was:
 - baltic raised bogs as ecological phenomena (lecture by prof. Maria Herbich)
 - conservation status of Polish raised bogs (presentation)
 - European experiences in raised bogs conservation (presentation by Pawel Pawlaczyk, based on materials from former study visits in GB and Latvia and from the Life workshop in Holland 2004)
 - Experiences of raised bogs conservation in Poland (lecture by prof. Jacek Herbich)
 - Draft Habitat Action Plan for baltic raised bogs in Poland: discussing
 - Field visit: bog Kurze Grzędy (site 4)
 - Field visit: bog Staniszewskie Błoto (site 5)
 - Field visit: bog Chośnickie Jezioro (site 8)
 - Field presentation of former conservation effort (ditches blocking)
- Field discuss of future conservation actions, with the aspect of its influence on the bog, but also on the adjanced forest ecosystems.



Field discussion during the workshop

ACTION E.4:

Name of action: **Handbook of Polish raised bogs conservation preparing and printing.** The work have been started. The handbook will be written by authors team directed by prof. Maria Herbich, the best Polish specialist on peatbog ecology and conservation. and is planned to be finished in November 2005.

ACTION E.5:

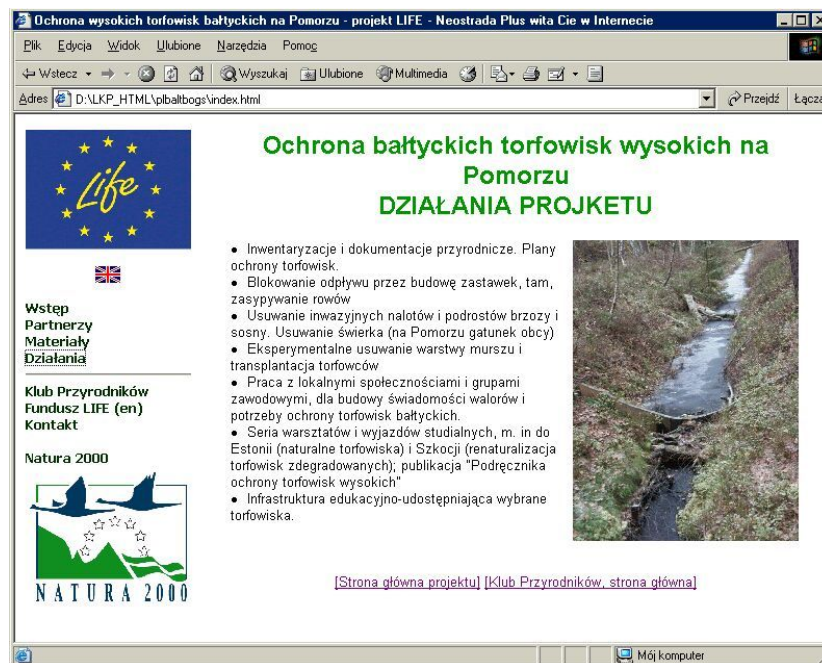
Name of action: **Project website.**

Project website have been initiated and is available on <http://www.kp.org.pl/plbaltbogs> or <http://www.kp.org.pl/life>. In this moment it contains general description of problem, list of project partners, list of main project actions and project matherials: detailed project description as pdf file, simple sluices building project kit for download, the cathalog of baltic

raised bogs in Poland, report about Polish baltic bogs including to Polish Natura 2000 proposal, links to LIFE website, to main Klub Przyrodników homepage and to Natura 2000 website in the Klub Przyrodników service.

The main elements of website are bi-lingual (Polish and English), but some detail materials are only in Polish language.

The webpage will be developed during the project. In February we are going to publish more detailed description of project sites, with photos if available.



ACTION F.1:

Name of action: Overall coordination and management of project actions.

The action is continuous. Because of uncertainty of project LIFE financing, in 2004 this action was not fully developed in 2004. The Klub Przyrodników activity in 2004 was based on voluntary work. The project leader was nominated in the starting point of the project, but till now he do not work in the project with the full time limit. Also new jobs concerning to the project was not created before the end of 2004. In January 2005 we have employed scientific coordinator, peatbog ecology specialist and water engineer; also the project manager job will be dedicated only to the project.

After the very long (9 month) application process, the guarantee was given to project by the Polish National Fund For Environment. The guarantee cost was much less then expected (NFfE use non-commercial ratio to our project).

First Project Steering Committee and Project Management Group meeting was during the workshop 15-16 November in Sulęczyño.

ACTION F.2

Name of action: Monitoring and documentation

Monitoring transect of piezometers have been established on the sites: Reptowo, Janiewickie Bagno, Bagno Ciemino, Jezioro Chońnickie. In the early spring of 2005 the transect of piezometers will be established also on Slowinskie Bagno bog, and in the summer 2005 - on the other bogs.

5. Progress in deliverable products & project milestones

SUMMARY OF DELIVERABLE PRODUCTS

Product	action	Deadline	
Regional Habitat Action Plan for baltic raised bogs in Pomerania Region – 1st draft	A5	31.08.2004	Draft of Polish version - ready. English version will be available soon
Site Nature Inventory Reports for sites: 7 (northern part), 13, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22	A1	31.01.2005	Ready for 7 sites (as planned + site 23). For site 21 delayed as a result of high water level.
Documentations for Nature Reserve establishing for sites: 1, 3, 9	A2	31.01.2005	For sites 3, 9 will be in time. For site 1 will be in the November 2005. But for sites 15, 16 (planned 2006) is ready yet
Site Management Plans for Nature Reserves: 2, 14, 4, 5	A3	31.01.2005	For sites 2 and 14 is ready. For sites 4 and 5 little delay in final elaboration is expected (will be ready in May 2005).

SUMMARY OF PROJECT MILESTONES

Milestone	action	Deadline	
Project leader nominated	F1	02.11.2003	done
Measuring equipment for bogs assessments and monitoring completed	A1, F2	30.04.2004	done
"Working group" of nature management planners and nature conservation administration completed	E3	30.06.2004	done
1st workshop arranged	E3	30.11.2004	done
Project website available in Internet	E5	30.11.2004	done
1st return of Action D1 done	D1	30.11.2004	done on site 10 on site 20 delayed as a result of weather and high water level
Technical projects for water damming up – first packet – done	A4	30.03.2005	done

Financial summary 2.11.2003 - 31.12.2004r.

Category →	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total costs, EURO
Budget item ↓							
1. Personnel	4604,82		270,00	200,00	3804,62	530,00	9409,44
2. Travel	2393,78		122,91		468,67	451,68	3437,04
3. External assistance	39045,43		3681,89	3685,50	165,19		46578,01
4. Durable goods	1266,12					3400,00	4666,12
5. Land purchase /							
6. Consumable	3479,17				1676,79		5155,96
7. Other costs					14,33	2924,92	2939,25
8. Overheads	96,94		18,35		198,33	60,93	374,55
TOTAL	50886,26		4093,15	3885,50	6327,93	7367,53	72560,37

Comments:

- Low cost F7: the cost of bank guarantee have been much lower than expected. This is because the guarantor - National Fund for Environment and Water Management, use non-commercial rate for our guarantee
- Low cost of personnel: in the first project period, waiting for the LIFE decision about financing, the project team was not fully developed. A lot of work have been done by voluntary effort, which is not a qualified cost.
- Very low overheads: in situation of uncertainty of LIFE financing and project future, in 2004 most of overheads was not dedicated to project, as a result they can not be shown as qualified costs in this budget summary.
- High A3: in the first project period this action have been financed from the GEF funds or from the public funds. GEF and public administration rules prefer external assistance. We are aware of need to control the external assistance rate in the LIFE project total budget