



LIFE10 NAT/CY/000716

FINAL Report

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

Reporting Date

31/12/2014

**Restoration and Management of Oroklini lake SPA (CY6000010) in
Larnaka, Cyprus**

Project Data

Project location	Oroklini Lake SPA, CYPRUS
Project start date:	01/01/2012
Project end date:	31/12/2014 Extension date: -
Total Project duration (in months)	36 months
Total budget	€ 797,070
Total eligible budget	€ 398,535
EU contribution:	€ 398,535
(%) of total costs	50%
(%) of eligible costs	50%

Beneficiary Data

Name Beneficiary	Game and Fauna Service (former Game Fund), Ministry of Interior
Contact person	Mr Nikolaos Kassinis
Postal address	1453, Nicosia, Cyprus
Visit address	Ministry of Interior, Demostheni Severi avenue, 1453, Nicosia, Cyprus
Telephone	(+357) 25 351614
Fax:	(+357) 25 351617
E-mail	lemesos.thira@cytanet.com.cy
Project Website	www.orokliniproject.org

List of contents

1. Executive summary	5
2. Introduction	10
3. Administrative part	11
3.1 Description of the management system	11
3.2 Evaluation of the management system	14
4. Technical part	17
4.1. Technical progress, per task	17
4.1.1. Action A1, Workshop on setting FRVs	21
4.1.2. Action A2, A report published on FRVs	22
4.1.3. Action A3, Determine lake contours and delineation of SPA on site	24
4.1.4. Action A4, Determine important hydrological features of the site	28
4.1.5. Action A5, Elaborate an Action Plan for the birds for Oroklini Lake SPA	30
4.1.6. Action A6, Get fencing permission for lake	31
4.1.7. Action A7, Report on the impact of predation on target species	33
4.1.8. Action C1, Fencing the lake	37
4.1.9. Action C2, Restoration of the area where the market area was placed	37
4.1.10. Action C3, Restoration and Management of the water level in the lake	39
4.1.11. Action C4, Removal of Invasive Alien Species	42
4.1.12. Action C5, Planting for improvement and restoration of habitats	43
4.1.13. Action E2, Project Monitoring	46
4.1.14. Action E3, Networking with other projects	51
4.1.15. Action E4, External Audit	55
4.1.16. Action E5, After LIFE Conservation Plan	56
4.2. Dissemination actions	57
4.2.1. Objectives	57
4.2.2. Dissemination: overview per activity	58
4.2.2.1. Action D1, Erection of notice boards of the project	59
4.2.2.2. Action D2, Project website	60
4.2.2.3. Action D3, Layman's report	61
4.2.2.4. Action D4, Erection of one hide for nature observation with information panels inside	63
4.2.2.5. Action D5, Construction of footpath to lead to the hide	64
4.2.2.6. Action D6, Information point near or under the observation hide	65
4.2.2.7. Action D7, Photo competition, photo exhibition and publication of Oroklini album	68
4.2.2.8. Action D8, Information and consultation meetings with local community and visits to the site	70
4.2.2.9. Action D9, Volunteer 'Clean Oroklini Day'	72
4.2.2.10. Action D10, Awareness raising material for Oroklini Lake (leaflet, sticker, video)	73
4.2.2.11. Action D11, An educational pack for schools	76
4.2.2.12. Action D12, A workshop for teachers about Oroklini Lake and the benefits of Natura 2000	78
4.2.2.13. Other & Outside-LIFE dissemination actions	79
4.3. Evaluation of Project Implementation	82
4.4 Analysis of long-term benefits	91

5. Comments on the financial report	96
5.1. Summary of Costs Incurred	96
5.2. Accounting system	101
5.3. Partnership arrangements (if relevant)	102
5.4. Auditor's report/declaration	103
5.5. Summary of costs per action	103
6. Annexes	108
Administrative annexes	108
Annex 1 Minutes from the last PSC meeting on 30 October 2014	108
Annex 2 Revised list of project staff	108
Technical annexes	108
Annex 3 List of keywords and abbreviations used	108
Annex 4 Project Deliverables	108
Annex 4.1 Action A5 deliverable, Action Plan	108
Annex 4.2 Action A7 deliverable - Predation report	108
Annex 4.3 Action D3 deliverable – Layman’s report	108
Annex 4.4. Action E2 deliverable – Monitoring Protocol	108
Annex 4.5. Action E3 deliverable – Workshop report	108
Annex 4.6 Action E4 deliverable – Audit report	108
Annex 4.7 Action E5 deliverable - After-LIFE Conservation Plan	108
Annex 4.8 Action A1 deliverable – Workshop report (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 4.9 (a) Action A2 deliverable – FRV technical report in English (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 4.9 (b) Action A2 deliverable – FRV brochure report in Greek (in electronic form only)	108
Action 4.10 Action A3 deliverable – Topography survey (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 4.11 (a) Action A4 deliverable - Hydrology report (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 4.11 (b) Action A4 deliverable - Ichthyological study (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 4.11 (c) Action A4 deliverable - Catchment water quality study (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 4.12 Action A6 deliverable – Fencing permit (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 4.13 Action C3 deliverable - Water Management Regime (in electronic form only)	108
Annex 5 Photos illustrating actions	108
Annex 6 (a) Ministerial Decree for Action Plan – Article 13, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment	108
Annex 6 (b) Document proving the progress of Ministerial Decree - Article 15, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment	108
Annex 6 (c) Draft Ministerial Decree, Game and Fauna Service, Ministry of Interior	108
Annex 7 Water level data	108
Annex 8 Vegetation map	108
Dissemination annexes	108
Annex 9 Information Kiosk logbook	108
Annex 10 Press Releases	108
Annex 11 Newspaper clippings	108
Annex 12 Radio interviews and TV covers (in electronic form)	108
Annex 13 Copy of the notice boards	108
Annex 14 Copy of the Information panels in birdwatching hide	108

Annex 15 Action D7 deliverable - Photo album (in electronic form)	108
Annex 16 Action D10 deliverable – Leaflet, sticker and video (in electronic form)	108
Annex 17 Action D11 deliverable – Education pack (in electronic form)	108
Annex 18 Copy of the Information panels in Information Kiosk	108
Annex 19 Brochure for visitors	108
Annex 20 Distribution list for the photo album	108
Annex 21 Supporting documents for Action D8 (presentations, invitation, questionnaires)	108
Annex 22 Supporting documents for Action D12	108
Annex 23 Distribution list for the brochure for visitors	108
Annex 24 Final output indicators tables	108
Financial annexes	110
Annex 25 (a) GFS car logbook (in electronic form only)	110
Annex 25 (b) GFS curriculum on fuel rate for daily travels	110
Annex 26 (a) Document on the procedure for calculating fuel expenses	110
Annex 26 (b) BirdLife Cyprus' car logbook (in electronic form only)	110
Annex 27 List of the equipment purchased by each partner as part of the project	110
Annex 28 "Beneficiary's Certificate for Nature Projects" for all beneficiaries	110
Annex 29 Supporting documents for the purchase of plants from the DF nursery	110
Annex 30 Standard Payment Request	110
Annex 31 Consolidated Cost Statement and Cost Statement for each beneficiary	110
Annex 32 Reply to the financial issues described in letter ARES (2013) 3532909 & requested supporting documents	110
Annex 33 Reply to ARES (2014) 3411259	110
Annex 34 Certificates for depreciation of equipment	110
Annex 35 Updated Standard Data Form	110
Annex 36 Allocation of the costs incurred per action (excel table in electronic form)	110

1. Executive Summary

The present report is the Final report of the project 'Restoration and Management of Oroklini Lake SPA in Larnaka, Cyprus' (reference code LIFE10 NAT/CY/000716 with the acronym Oroklini). The project was implemented during the period 1/1/2012 – 31/12/2014 (duration 36 months) and was implemented in Oroklini Lake SPA in Cyprus. The total budget was €797,070 of which 50% was contributed through the LIFE instrument of the European Union. The five implementing partners in Cyprus were the Game and Fauna Service, (GFS), (coordinating beneficiary), BirdLife Cyprus (BC), Department of Forests (DF), Environment Department (ED) and Voroklini Community Council (VCC).

The main objective of the project 'Restoration and Management of Oroklini Lake SPA in Larnaka, Cyprus' (with the acronym Oroklini) was to bring the Oroklini SPA to a Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) in relation to the species for which the site was selected. The main target species were the Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*, and Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, both criterion species for the site, as well as another four Birds Directive Annex I species that regularly nest or have nested at the site (Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicephalus*, Little Tern *Sternula albifrons* while Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* and Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* have nested in 2007 only (before the start of the LIFE Oroklini project)). To achieve its aim both on site conservation actions (C actions) and dissemination (D actions) were implemented. Preparatory actions (A actions), management and networking actions (E actions) were also implemented.

The key deliverable products of the project were as foreseen, a report on the workshop on Favourable Reference Values for Cyprus (Action A1), a report on Favourable Reference Values (Action A2), a topography survey (Action A3), a hydrological study (Action A4), an Action Plan for the birds of Oroklini Lake (Action A5), a Predation report (Action A7), a Water Management Regime for the site (Action C3), on-site information panels (Action D1), a project website (Action D2), a layman's report (Action D3), a birdwatching hide with information signs (Action D4), a short footpath (Action D5), an information kiosk (Action D6), a photo album with photos of the site (Action D7), a leaflet, a sticker and a documentary for the site (Action D10), an education pack for schools (Action D11), a Monitoring Protocol (Action E2), a report on the networking workshop on 'managing wetlands for birds' (Action E3), a financial audit (Action E4) and an after-LIFE conservation plan (Action E5). Some more deliverables that were agreed with the European Commission after the start of the project and were produced successfully are: a project logo, more on-site information signs (big banner visible from the road, signs for the Information kiosk), a brochure for visitors, a pedestrian crossing on the main road next to the site, fireflies on the powerlines over the site, an ichthyological study and a study on 'Analysis of Pressures and impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment'.

- The *preparatory actions (Actions A1-A7)* were valuable to gather important scientific information about the site for initiating the project and mainly for providing the means to design and produce a comprehensive and useful Action Plan (Action A5) which outlines clear conservation objectives, monitoring and management actions for the future sustainable management of Oroklini wetland. Information was also used in the after-LIFE Conservation Plan. All actions achieved their expected results and objectives providing benefits for the management of the site:

Action A1, FRV workshop: The workshop was valuable for determining the methodology on setting Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) for the two target species of Oroklini Lake and for four other Annex I species that have nested on site.

Action A2, FRV report: Presented in the report are the FRVs that have been set for the aforementioned six breeding Annex I species. Having FRVs is important, as they represent clear, numerical conservation targets for populations. The FRVs provided a baseline and point-of-reference for all actions aimed at bringing Oroklini Lake Special Protection Area (SPA) to favourable conservation status which was the aim of the project. Moreover, the methodology can be used to define FRVs for other important species in Cyprus and also this report can be the guidance necessary in order to manage all SPAs on the island that are important for the same species. The FRV for the *Vanellus spinosus* was set at 15 pairs and the FRV for the *Himantopus himantopus* was set at 60 pairs.

Action A3, Contours and Delineation: This action provided important information to implemented conservation actions C1 (Fencing) and C3 (Water Management Works) as well as the hydrology study (Action A4).

Action A4, Hydrology study, Ichthyological study, study on 'Analysis of Pressures and impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment': These three studies provided important scientific information to understand the biotic and abiotic characteristics of the site that would help scientists identify possible future threats but most importantly the studies helped project partners design management prescriptions and achieve optimum results.

Action A5, Action Plan: This is perhaps one of the most valuable tools produced as part of the LIFE Oroklini project. The Action Plan is a practical guide for the future management of the site, highlighting threats which may potentially have an impact on the key breeding species, listing all conservation objectives and giving practical management actions which can be carried out to enable the site to attain and maintain the Oroklini SPA in Favourable Conservation Status. It was also important that this Action Plan was adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and the Environment (Environment Department) and by the Ministry of Interior (Game and Fauna Service) through Ministerial Decrees.

Action A6, Fencing permit: Through this action we managed to get a fencing permit in order for Action C1 (Fencing) to be lawful according to Cyprus' laws.

Action A7, Predation report: Gathering data on nest predation during the three breeding seasons of project implementation was crucial to assess the predator impact on key breeding species. The data analysed in the predation report were incorporated in the Action Plan and helped design management actions for controlling predator impact. During breeding season 2014 the study showed a significant impact of predators on key species.

- The *conservation actions (Actions C1-C5)* were targeted on tackling the threats to the site. These actions have improved nesting conditions for key species and this way have contributed towards achieving the aim of the project. All actions achieved their expected results and objectives and their success is evident from the bird records. The output and benefit of each action is outlined below:

Action C1, Fencing: Fencing the site along its perimeter has contributed significantly to reducing disturbance to species, therefore achieving its objective. Reducing disturbance to birds –in combination with other management actions, enhances their breeding success.

Action C2, Restoration of the flea market area: The area was restored and has become again an integral and important part of the site. The return of Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus* was achieved (the species nested on the restored area in the following spring of the restoration) and also another Annex I species, the Stone curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* nested on the same field on the same year. This record was the first breeding record for that area.

Action C3, Water Management Works: Through managing water levels and creating new nesting and feeding features (nesting islets and ditches) we managed to improve nesting conditions for target species and therefore contribute to reaching the FRV targets. Also, by repairing the dam we managed to hold water in the north compartment of the site for a longer period, especially through summer and early autumn. Already the success of this action is indicated through bird records and we expect that the impact will continue to show in the years to come as it takes some time for species to reach the FRVs.

Action C4, Removal of Invasive Alien Species (IAS): Eliminating IAS from the site contributed towards restoring local vegetation as foreseen. An area of approximately 4.5 decares (4500m²) of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) has been removed.

Action C5, Planting trees and shrubs: In combination with the action above this action also contributed in improving and restoring local vegetation and typical habitat types. Moreover, by planting local trees in the perimeter of the wetland we created natural screening and we minimised disturbance from outside sources. This also contributed in improving the nesting and cover conditions for target species. In total, 1555 plants were planted.

- Through the dissemination and awareness raising actions (Actions D1-D12) the LIFE Oroklini project managed to reach a wide variety of target audiences and engage the community and the public in general. The actions and produced deliverables contributed towards building support for the project from local people, local decision makers as well as the general public. The project also provided a great example of involving the local community in conservation efforts and therefore achieving better and long-term results.

Action D1, Erection of notice boards: The four information signs erected on site (also the additional information sign visible from the road and the signs in the Information Kiosk, which were approved after the start of the project) contributed towards raising awareness for the wetland, the LIFE Oroklini project and the Natura 2000 network. The project logo –which was also approved after the start of the project, was used in all produced material making the LIFE Oroklini project more identifiable. The information signs were also useful in the sense that if people are interested in getting in touch with the project partners they know who to contact for further information.

Action D2, Website: The project website was used extensively to promote all the information related to the project and also to reach an audience beyond Cyprus. For example, other LIFE projects or organisations implementing projects with similar targets contacted us for exchanging information after they had read the project website. A total of around 176653 clicks were counted by the end of the project.

Action D3, Layman's report: This report in brochure format with colour photos has helped us communicate the results of the project to the public and we expect that it will continue to do so in the future as it will continue to be distributed. It was also useful in communicating the methodology of the restoration in simple words to other people implementing similar projects and also it can be used as a communication tool for stakeholders at other sites, to show the benefits of a Natura 2000 site management. The report was produced in both English-80 copies and Greek-210 copies and was distributed in a targeted manner.

Action D4, Hide and interpretation panels: The birdwatching hide has provided opportunities for the public to enjoy Oroklini Lake. This was also important in order to give alternatives to people to see the birds without disturbing them, especially since access to the site was prohibited with the fence (Action C1). The interpretation panels are useful for providing information to the

general public and birdwatchers about what species can be seen all through the year and also to highlight the bird diversity which Oroklini Lake hosts.

Action D5, Footpath to the hide: The footpath provided guided access to the hide from the parking place and even if it rains the footpath material does not get muddy. The footpath was constructed at the south side of the site leading visitors from the parking place to the birdwatching hide. The total length of the footpath is 25 meters and width 1.3 meters.

Action D6, Information Point/Kiosk: The Information Kiosk was constructed at the north side of the site providing a view to the south part of the site which is the one that holds water for a longer period. There has been an increase in visitors and we started to receive many positive comments from the public. We believe that this was because of the location of the Information Kiosk which makes it visible from the main road, the presence of the Information Kiosk Officer during 2014 who welcomed visitors and provided information and organised school visits and its attractive and visitor friendly wooden structure.

Action D7, Photo competition, exhibition and Oroklini photo album: Through this action we managed to reach a different audience, that of photographers and at the same time communicate the wetland's importance and biodiversity to more people through the exhibition and the photo album. The photo album –produced in 500 copies- was used as a promotion for the site with decision makers, visitors, nearby communities and other high level visitors to the site or the community. We had 42 entries to the photo competition, over 100 guests to the award event and a good coverage of the action from the media, with around 6 clippings.

Action D8, Information and consultation meetings with the community: In total three events were organised with the community, and they were valuable to engage the local community, build support and understanding for the project, the site and the Natura 2000 network in general. The local community had been supportive throughout the whole project duration and the comments received had been in their vast majority very positive which is quite rare for Cyprus standards. On average, around 60 people attended the events.

Action D9, Volunteer 'Clean Oroklini Day': An opportunity like this for active involvement of the public to the protection of Oroklini Lake contributed greatly in making Oroklini Lake better known to the wider public as the participation of volunteers (over 190 people) was beyond our expectations. This event was also well covered by the press, both newspapers and TV channels reaching an even greater audience in Cyprus.

Action D10, Awareness raising material for Oroklini Lake: The leaflet, the sticker and the video provided the means to easily and directly communicate with the public the project and its objectives, and helped in raising awareness about the site and the project. Moreover, the short documentary was useful in spreading the message of the need to protect the site and explain the project actions in a more interesting way through beautiful images of the Lake and a layman's narration. The documentary was also included in the education pack.

Action D11, educational pack for schools: Teaching children conservation issues with experiential means such as the education material included in the education pack contributes towards creating citizens with environmental consciousness. This is really important in creating long-term benefits for Oroklini Lake. In total, 200 education packs were produced and distributed to Cyprus schools.

Action D12, Workshop for teachers: The workshop gave the opportunity to teachers to learn how to use the education pack (Action D11). It also helped in making the site known to teachers with this having a multiplication effect as many of those teachers either visited the site with their pupils, practised the education pack in their classroom, or told other teachers who then visited

the site and used the education material in the education pack. Two workshops were organised with 58 participants at the first workshop and 15 at the second.

The management actions (Actions E1-E5) of the project enabled the appropriate communication, cooperation and coordination among project partners, as well as the involvement of relevant stakeholders, and networking with other LIFE and non-LIFE projects in Europe. Through frequent meetings and communication we achieved good project management, an efficient and effective implementation of the project with clear monitoring indicators. More analytically:

Action E1, Project operation and management: The Project Steering Committee (PSC) was the main body responsible for the coordination between partners. In total, six meetings took place during the project. The PSC included also the Water Development Department (WDD) which proved to be extremely useful as in 2014, Oroklini Lake was included in the water bodies monitored under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) by the WDD (monitoring started in early 2015). The active involvement of project partners contributed in achieving the timely and successful completion of the project. Having dedicated finance persons was also important for the good financial management of the project.

Action E2, Project Monitoring: The indicators set under this action contributed towards monitoring and evaluating project implementation and success. The monitoring protocol produced under this action was also an important tool that outlines the factors/features that need to be monitored at Oroklini Lake. Data from this protocol were also used in the Action Plan (Action A5).

Action E3, Networking with other projects: Through networking trips in Europe and a networking workshop in Cyprus, this action provided many opportunities for networking mostly with other LIFE projects as well as some non-LIFE projects. This enabled the exchange of knowledge, experience and best practice between projects. . In total, around 45 people participated at the two-day workshop.

Action E4, External Audit: The external audit derives from the LIFE obligations and was important in order to verify by an independent auditor that the financial documents and expenses were respecting national legislation and accounting rules and that costs incurred respect the LIFE Common Provisions.

Action E5, After-LIFE Conservation Plan: This plan is a fundamental tool (along with the Action Plan-Action A5) to provide details on how the implemented actions as part of the LIFE Oroklini project are planned to continue in order to maintain the project's impact and to ensure the long-term management of the site.

The three years of project implementation proved to be fruitful, efficient and effective, achieving the project aims and creating tools that will enable the sustainable management of Oroklini Lake long-term. The LIFE Oroklini project has been completed successfully without any significant problems affecting project implementation or results.

The LIFE Oroklini project is leaving behind long term benefits that can also be used for other Natura 2000 sites in Cyprus and other important species. For example the establishment of the FRV methodology means that this methodology can be used for other sites in Cyprus as well as for other important species. Also, through the project, clear conservation targets have been set as well as monitoring indicators to evaluate the impact of conservation actions. Moreover, the Action Plan for the Oroklini Special Protection Area (SPA) is a valuable tool that can be used for the sustainable and long-term management of the site that can also enable the continuation of work done as part of the project both in terms of conservation as well as public engagement. In

combination with the Action Plan, the after-LIFE conservation plan has also a key role in providing long-term benefits for the site and its important species. The plan includes details regarding which management activities should be carried out, with data on when, for how long and by which beneficiary these activities should be implemented, in order to ensure the sustainable conservation of the target species. Finally, the project's conservation actions managed to initiate improvement of the site's conservation status and move bird population numbers towards the FRV targets. However, in the future potential threats may arise such as the global problem of climate change which could possibly have an effect on precipitation –on which water supply at the site depends, as well as on bird population trends.

Beyond the direct conservation results, one of the greatest achievements of the project has been the engagement of the local community and the increase of awareness among the public for the importance of Oroklini wetland. This is a vital step in ensuring the long-term survival of the site. The project foresaw actions that promoted public participation (i.e. the volunteer clean-up day, information days, photo competition, workshops etc.), significantly increased visitors to the site and also involved children in education activities. As a result, the project has long-term social and economic benefits, also because it can act as a model project demonstrating an effective approach in local community engagement regarding Natura 2000 sites. Finally, through project implementation (i.e. visitor infrastructure, brochure for visitors, communication with tour guides, students and other stakeholders) we have managed to create opportunities for eco-tourism that could bring more benefits to the local community.

The project budget was €797,070. The actual spending was €731,286.60. The underspending derives mainly from categories of 'Infrastructure' and 'External Assistance' that involved contract award procedures. These procedures provided that the contract should be awarded to bidder offering the lower price. Some budget transfers are proposed, which in their majority are minor. These transfers do not exceed the 10% - 30,000 EUR (per budget category) threshold so no official modification request was required.

2. Introduction

The LIFE Oroklini project (LIFE10 NAT/CY/000716) was implemented with the contribution of the LIFE program under the Nature and Biodiversity strand. The project was implemented as foreseen during the period 1/1/2012 – 31/12/2014 (duration 36 months) and was implemented in Oroklini Lake Special Protection Area (SPA), (CY6000010) in Larnaka, Cyprus.

Oroklini Lake is an SPA (CY6000010) and SCI (CY6000011) in the Larnaka district of Cyprus. The site is classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA) mainly for two nesting species the Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* and the Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus (Hoplopterus) spinosus*, both Birds Directive Annex I species. The site is a Site of Community Importance (SCI) for its halophytic marsh vegetation.

Oroklini Lake is one of only few natural wetlands in Cyprus, and one of only three in the area of Cyprus where the Community Acquis applies at present, according to protocol 10 of the Accession Treaty of Cyprus. Oroklini Lake, like all the natural wetlands in Cyprus had been suffering from a lot of pressures.

The main conservation issues targeted by the project had been (1) threats arising from human disturbance, (2) the lack of water management and drainage of the site during the breeding season, (3) the damage caused by the illegal flea-market, (4) invasive alien species (mostly acacias) established at the site. (5) The project also addressed the lack of awareness of the value

of the site amongst the public, the community and schools through a number of dissemination actions. Around 1300 pupils visited the site during project implementation.

Through the project's preparatory studies, the monitoring protocol and the water management regime we have identified future likely threats to the site. These threats are also listed in the Action Plan (Action A5).

The site is at the heart of Voroklini Community and is surrounded by housing development as well as farmland. This can result in future pressure for further development around the site. However, this can be controlled and prevented through management actions described in the Action Plan, the engagement and involvement of relevant authorities and stakeholders to the protection of the site through the project including the engagement of the local community and also through the site's conservation status as a Natura 2000 site and the provisions deriving from Article 6 of the Habitats Directive.

The LIFE Oroklini project has achieved a number of long term results. The project has achieved the transformation of Oroklini Lake to a haven for the Spur-winged Lapwing and the Black-winged Stilt, both qualifying species for the site, the effective protection of Oroklini Lake SPA (57 hectares), the increase of Spur-winged Lapwing pairs from eight pairs in spring 2012 to 11 pairs in spring 2014 despite the exceptionally low rainfall in Cyprus in the winter of 2013, improved nesting conditions for target species, created the appropriate tools and set the foundation through the implementation of the management actions that will help towards establishing a favourable conservation status in the long term. The Action Plan (Action A5) for the management of the site for the birds will be used in the short to medium term to bring and maintain the SPA at Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) through the sustainable and long-term management of the site. In combination with the Action Plan, the after-LIFE conservation plan has also a key role in providing long-term benefits for the site and its important species. Moreover, the establishment of the FRV methodology provides that this methodology can be used for other sites in Cyprus as well as for other important species. Finally, achieving the engagement of the local community and the increase of awareness among the public for the importance of Oroklini wetland will contribute towards achieving the long term protection of Oroklini Lake. Due to project success it can act as a model project demonstrating an effective approach in local community engagement regarding Natura 2000 sites.

Finally, through project implementation (i.e. visitor infrastructure, brochure for visitors, communication with tour guides, students and other stakeholders) we have managed to create opportunities for eco-tourism that could bring more benefits to the local community and therefore long term support for the protection of the site.

3. Administrative part

3.1 Description of the management system

The implementation of the LIFE Oroklini project followed the organigram submitted with the project proposal (please see Chart 1 below) throughout the project duration. This structure aimed at the effective administrative, scientific and financial management of the project. The coordinating beneficiary was the **Game and Fauna Service (GFS, former Game Fund)**, which assigned the **Project Director (PD)**. The GFS is the competent authority for birds under the Ministry of Interior. The PD is an official of the GFS and he is the Head of the Research Section. The PD initiated a *kick-off meeting* at the start of the project, on 31/01/2012 where representatives from the five beneficiaries were present. Moreover, the PD invited the Water

Development Department (WDD) to participate in the **Project Steering Committee (PSC)**, even though it wasn't a project partner.

The PSC was set up early on in the project and consisted of the five project partners and the Water Development Department (WDD) as in the proposal. The WDD named a Hydrologist from the Division of Hydrology & Hydrogeology (Mr Costas Aristeidou) for this purpose. The PSC agreed its 'Terms of Reference' which have been submitted with our Midterm report, Annex 5.5. The primary function of the PSC was to monitor the implementation of the project, assess the project's progress and achieve good cooperation and communication between the partners. The PSC met twice every year, so six times in total during the project. The minutes from the PSC meetings have been submitted with our previous reports while the minutes from the last PSC meeting that took place on 30 October 2014 can be found in Annex 1.

Beyond PSC meetings, other meetings between partners and site visits occurred when necessary, to plan actions ahead and to monitor action implementation. The composition of the PSC is the following:

Game and Fauna Service (GFS): Nicolaos Kassinis-Project Director and GFS's Head of the Research Section. When needed and if relevant other officers from the GFS participate.

BirdLife Cyprus: Claire Papazoglou-Senior Project Coordinator and BC's Executive Director, Melpo Apostolidou-Project Coordinator

Environment Department (ED): Marina Xenofontos-Project Officer and ED's Environment Officer. When needed and if relevant other officers from the ED participated also.

Department of Forests (DF): Minas Papadopoulos-Project Officer and Conservator of Forests A. When needed and if relevant other officers from the DF participated also.

Voroklini Community Council (VCC): Andreas Theodosiou-Project Officer and VCC's Secretary. When needed and if relevant other VCC staff members participated also.

The **Project Coordination Unit (PCU)** consisted of the **Senior Project Coordinator (SPC)** and the **Project Coordinator (PC)** based in BirdLife Cyprus (BC) and their role was the overall coordination of the project. The SPC was BirdLife Cyprus's Executive Director that worked part time on the project and was responsible for the overall overview of BC's part of project implementation and also responsible for managing all other BC staff working on the project. The PC worked full time on the project and was responsible for the full coordination of the project and the implementation of BC's actions while provided support to other partners. The PD and the PCU had regular meetings and communication through emails and telephone for the coordination, management and monitoring of the project. Moreover, the PC was in continuous communication with all project partners through emails and telephone.

BC is a registered non-profit, non-governmental organisation (NGO) that works to conserve wild birds, their habitats and wider biodiversity in Cyprus, through research, monitoring, lobbying and conservation and awareness-raising actions.

Finally, all five beneficiaries (GFS, BC, Environment Department, Department of Forests, and Voroklini Community Council) were responsible for implementing specific project actions. The **Environment Department (ED)** is the competent authority for Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment. The **Department of Forests (DF)**, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, is the competent authority for Natura 2000 areas within state forest. The **Voroklini Community Council (VCC)** is the local authority within whose boundaries is Oroklini Lake.

The revised list of staff members that work on the project can be found in Annex 2 of this report. Not all the staff members found on this list were included in the project proposal, but as they had been working on some actions of the project they had been filling in timesheets. Please note

here that the DF which is responsible for actions C4-Acacia removal and C5-Tree and shrub planting has carried out the works using seasonal staff. These staff work for only six months a year for the DF and has filled in timesheets for the two months they worked on C4 and C5 implementation.

The **main staff** that have worked on the project are:

Game and Fauna Service – Coordinating Beneficiary:

- a) Mr Nikolaos Kassinis, Project Director (PD) (Head of the Research Section)
- b) Mr Panicos Panayides, Project Officer 1 (Game and Fauna Service Officer)
- c) Mr Andreas Lyssandrou, Finance Officer 1 (Senior Game Warden)
- d) Mrs Panayiota Stavrou, Finance Officer 3 (Game Warden)

BirdLife Cyprus – Associated Beneficiary 2

- e) Dr Foteini (Clairie) Papazoglou, Senior Project Coordinator (SPC) (Executive Director)
- f) Mrs Melpo Apostolidou, Project Coordinator (PC) (full time on the project)
- g) Mrs Myria Achilleos Finance Officer 2 (Accountant) has replaced Mrs Anastasia Patsalis, Finance Officer 2 (Administration Officer) from June 2014 onwards.

Environment Department – Associated Beneficiary 3

- h) Mrs Marina Xenophontos, Project Officer 4 (Environment Officer)

Department of Forests - Associated Beneficiary 4

- i) Mr Minas Papadopoulos, Forester (Conservator of Forests A)

Voroklini Community Council - Associated Beneficiary 5

- j) Mr Andreas Theodosiou, Project Officer 5 (Secretary, Voroklini Community Council)
- k) Mrs Margarita Agathokleous, Information Kiosk Office (full time)
- l) Mrs Eleni Michael, Project Assistant 2 (Administration Officer)

Cooperation between the project team members was smooth and productive and all members worked towards the achievement of the project's objectives.

The **financial management** of the project was shared between the coordinating beneficiary (GFS) and BC. Specifically, the financial reporting of the project was handled by the BC finance person who collated the receipts with the help of the PC from all beneficiaries and prepared the financial reports for the European Commission (EC). Furthermore, the GFS had a finance person (Andreas Lyssandrou) who worked on coordinating the finance of the GFS, coordinated the contracts for all the personnel, collected the receipts for the GFS, etc. The coordinating beneficiary retains copies of all supporting documents of all the associated beneficiaries. These copies were collected every three months or when requested by the GFS. The GFS as the coordinating beneficiary had full knowledge of the project's financial management, which was ensured through regular communication between the SPC who overviewed the work of the BC finance officer and the PC. Moreover, meetings on project management (both technical and financial part) occur regularly between the GFS and BC.

The working method of the LIFE Oroklini project was based on the organigram described above. A detailed workplan was designed at the start of each calendar year and this was assessed during the PSC meetings. Action points were listed in the meeting's minutes and these were followed up by the PCU. The PD chaired the meetings and each of the partners was responsible for reporting on their part of project implementation. Regular meetings, site visits and communication was vital for the effective management of the project. Furthermore, project partners contributed to the preparation of monthly reports that were forwarded to the External Monitoring team (EMoT) and this has helped the project co-ordination and the monitoring of action implementation. Progress reports submitted to the EC were treated similarly, i.e. each partner contributed their part in the report, the PC compiled all contributions and the PD

forwarded the report to the European Commission. The **partnership agreements** (copies have been submitted to the EC with our Inception report, Annex 1 in September 2012.) also helped in listing the obligations of each partner, as well as the allocation of EU funding for each partner, on the basis of which the GFS has made the payments for the first two instalments.

The project could be described as having two implementation phases. The preparatory phase and the conservation phase. The preparatory phase included preparations for initiating the project such as the set-up of the PSC, the preparation of the Committee's 'Terms of Reference', preparation of partnership agreements and project officer's secondment contracts, hiring the Project Coordinator, kick-off meeting, setting up procedures for the project's financial management, purchasing foreseen equipment and the implementation of most of the preparatory actions, i.e. A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A7 as well as preparations for the implementation of other actions that would start early on in the project, i.e. C2, C3, C4, D1, D2, D7, D8, E1, E2. The conservation phase included the implementation of on-site conservation actions (C1-C5), the completion of some A actions, i.e. A5 and A7, the implementation of the D actions (D1-D12) and the implementation of E actions (E1-E5).

No amendments to the Grant Agreement were made. Copies of our Partnership agreements were submitted to the EC with our Inception report (Annex 1) submitted in September 2012.

Mention that some amounts transferred between categories and that some extra actions approved.

Please note that a list of abbreviations used in this report is included in Annex 3.

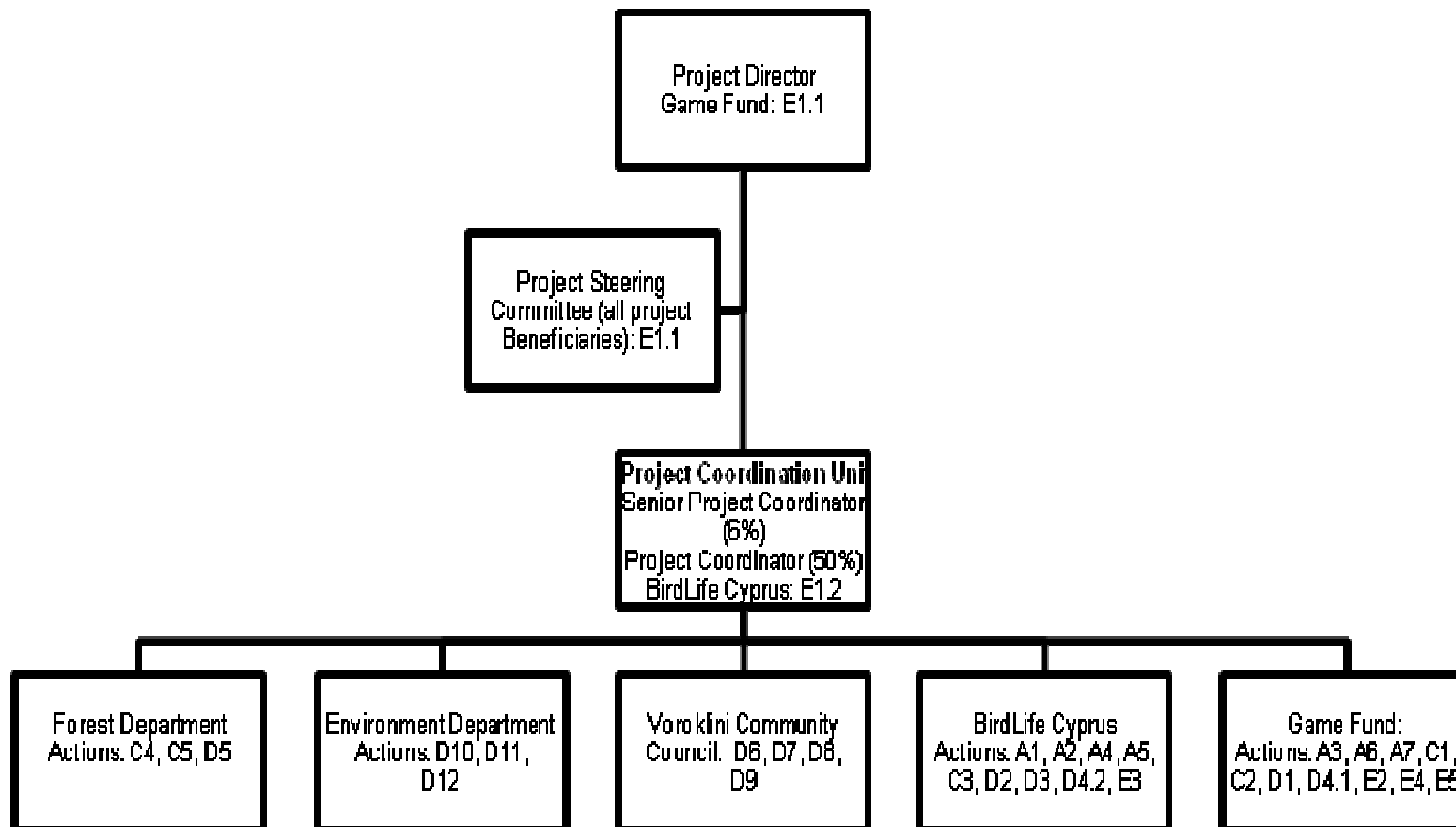
3.2 Evaluation of the management system

The management system of the LIFE Oroklini project as described in detail above played a key role in the efficient and effective project implementation. The most vital elements for the successful management of the project have been: (1) the role of the Project Director (PD), the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and the Project Steering Committee (PSC), and their establishment early on in the project, (2) the involvement and good cooperation between the specific five partners i.e. the three government authorities (Game and Fauna Service, Environment Department, Department of Forests), the non-governmental organisation (BirdLife Cyprus) and the local authority (Voroklini Community Council), (3) the involvement to the project of devoted people with relevant knowledge i.e. on birds and habitat management as well as people from the community who embraced and supported the project throughout its duration, (4) the careful planning ahead of actions which was communicated efficiently between project partners. The allocation of a dedicated officer from BirdLife Cyprus in the role of Project Coordinator (PC) played a really important role in ensuring timely implementation of the project, good planning ahead, good coordination and communication between partners, and enabled the building of good working relationships with the partners and other actors. The PC frequently assisted other partners too in the implementation of their actions. Additionally, the careful, informed and realistic planning at the proposal stage meant that the project implementation deadlines, deliverables, and actions were realistic and implementable. No major problems were encountered during the project that affected the project implementation and objectives. Few actions had some delays though without affecting overall project success. However, the project managed to implement a number of additional actions that were not initially foreseen, i.e. two more studies, more information material, more infrastructure, more networking trips, participation in events (LIFE 20 years anniversary), workshops etc.

No deviations from the arrangements contained in the partnership agreements occurred.

The communication with the European Commission (EC) and the External Monitoring Team (EMoT) also contributed significantly to the successful and timely completion of the project. The EMoT was always available for day-to-day queries and was an efficient link between the project and the EC. Project visits from both the EC and the EMoT also provided an opportunity for project partners to meet and take care of pending issues on time.

Chart 1: Management of the project OROKLINI:



4. Technical part

4.1. Technical progress, per task

Table 1 below summarises the overall project's progress per action and illustrates a comparison of the progress made with the established time schedule.

Table 1: Overall progress of the project per action (*red shows actions completed by Final report*)

Action name with code	Progress made (by when)	Proposed deadline	Actual date	Notes	Deliverable (output)
A1, Report workshop Favourable Reference Values for Cyprus	Completed by Midterm report	30/09/2012	15/09/2012	-	Submitted with Midterm report
A2, Report Favourable Reference Values	Completed by Progress report	15/12/2012 Proposed in Inception report: 21/01/2013	30/04/2013	By Progress report the FRV technical report was approved and adopted by the GFS and the FRV brochure was prepared in Greek	<i>FRV technical report in English</i> submitted with Midterm report <i>FRV brochure report & adoption by the GFS</i> submitted with Progress report
A3, Delineation of lake and contours	Completed by Midterm report	30/11/2012	17/10/2012	-	Submitted with Midterm report & in high quality with Progress report
A4, Hydrological Study	Completed by Midterm report	30/11/2012	21/11/2012	-	Submitted with Midterm report
A4, Ichthyological Study	Completed by Progress report	30/04/2014	27/05/2014	Carrying out the study was approved with letter Ares(2013) 2026313	Submitted with Progress report
A4, Catchment water quality study	Completed by Progress report	26/05/2014	16/06/2014	Carrying out the study was approved with letter ENV.E.3/MD/PT/bp ARES (2013) 3532909- Midterm report	Submitted with Progress report

Action name	Progress made (by when)	Proposed deadline	Actual date	Notes	Deliverable (output)
A5, Action Plan for the birds of Oroklini Lake	Completed by Final report	31/07/2014	14/11/2014	The report was printed in December as it took some time to translate from English to Greek	Submitted with this report, Annex 4.1
A6, Fencing Permission for site	Completed by Midterm report	31/07/2012	18/10/2012	-	Submitted with Midterm report
A7, Predation impact report	Completed by Final report	30/07/2014	22/09/2014	-	Submitted with this report, Annex 4.2
C1, Fencing of the Site	Completed by Progress report	30/11/2013	23/12/2013	-	N/A
C2, Restoration of Flea Market Area	Completed by Midterm report	15/12/2012	21/01/2013	-	N/A
C3, Water Management of the Site	Completed by Final report	30/06/2013 Proposed in Inception report: 30/11/2013 Proposed in Progress report: 31/10/2014	05/10/2014	Works were completed in two phases. One in autumn 2013 and in autumn 2014. [The second phase works were approved with letter ARES (2014) 3411259]	Submitted with Progress report
C4, Removal Invasive Alien Species	Completed by Final report	30/11/2013	27/10/2014	IAS were initially removed by Midterm report. Actual date reported 27/10/2014 is relevant to additional removal of re-sprouted acacias.	N/A
C5, Planting of trees and shrubs	Completed by Final report	30/06/2014	31/10/2014	Trees and shrubs were planted by Midterm report. Some more were planted in October 2014. The actual date reported (31/10/2014) is relevant to watering the planted vegetation.	N/A
D1, Erection of project signs	Completed by Midterm report	30/09/2012	05/10/2012	-	N/A
D2, Project website	Completed by Inception report	30/06/2012	30/06/2012	Project website was updated regularly throughout the three years	N/A
D3, Layman's report	Completed by Final report	31/12/2014	12/01/2015	-	Submitted with this report, Annex 4.3

Action name	Progress made (by when)	Proposed deadline	Actual date	Notes	Deliverable (output)
D4.1, Erection of Hide	Completed by Progress report	31/03/2014	20/12/2014	-	N/A
D4.1, Information panels inside the hide	Completed by Progress report	31/03/2014	04/05/2014	-	N/A
D5, Construction of footpath	Completed by Progress report	31/03/2014	16/04/2014	-	N/A
D6, Erection and operation of Information Point	Completed by Progress report	31/01/2014	Erection: 28/02/2014 Operation: 17/03/2014	Operation continued throughout the project	N/A
D7, Photo exhibition event and awards	Completed by Progress report	30/11/2013	27/11/2013	-	Submitted with Progress report
D8, Meetings with local community	Completed by Final report	30/06/2014 Proposed with our Progress report: 22/07/2014	22/07/2014	-	N/A
D9, Volunteer Clean Oroklini	Completed by Progress report	30/11/2013	13/10/2013	-	N/A
D10, Awareness raising material (video)	Completed by Progress report	30/09/2013	19/11/2013	-	Submitted with Progress report
D10, Awareness raising material (leaflet and sticker)	Completed by Midterm report	28/02/2013	Leaflet: 29/03/2013 Sticker: 28/02/2013	-	Submitted with Midterm report
D11, Educational pack for schools	Completed by Progress report	30/09/2013 Proposed in Midterm report: 31/12/2013	31/03/2014	-	Submitted with Progress report
D12, Workshop for teachers	Completed by Progress report	30/11/2013 Proposed in Midterm report: 28/02/2014	11/04/2014 & 04/12/2014	A second workshop took place as additional action on 04/12/2014	N/A
E1, Project operation and management	Completed by Final report	31/12/2014	31/12/2014	-	N/A
E2, Project monitoring	Completed by Final report	31/12/2014	31/12/2014 (for the action) 14/11/2014 (for the deliverable)	-	Submitted with this report, Annex 4.4
E3, Networking	Completed by	Workshop:	Workshop:	Networking with other	Workshop

	Final report	30/06/2013 Proposed in Midterm report: 30/11/2013	01/11/13 Networking trip to the UK:18/08/13 Networking trip to Slovenia: 05/10/2014 Networking trip to Tour de Valat: 25/10/2014	progress was achieved throughout project implementation.	report Submitted with this report, Annex 4.5
E4, Financial audit	Completed by Final report	31/01/2015	02/07/2015	-	Audit report Submitted with this report, Annex 4.6
E5, After Life Report	Completed by Final report	31/01/2015	30/04/2015	-	After-LIFE Conservation Plan. Submitted with this report, Annex 4.7
ADDITIONAL ACTIONS					
Pedestrian crossing with hump, warning signs and lights	Completed by Final report	End December 2014	22/12/2014	Additional action accepted with letter ARES (2014) 1808155	N/A
Fireflies on electricity wires passing over the Lake.	Completed by Final report	End December 2014	31/12/2014	Additional action accepted with letter ARES (2014) 1808155	N/A
Project brochure	Completed by Final report	End December 2014	19/12/2014	Additional action accepted with letter ARES (2014) 3411259	Copy of the brochure in Annex 19 - Final Report
Signs for Information Kiosk	Completed by Final report	End December 2014	02/12/2014	Additional action accepted with letter ARES (2014) 1808155	Copy of the information panels in Annex 18 - Final Report
Action name	Progress made (by when)	Proposed deadline	Actual date	Notes	Deliverable (output)

The technical progress per task is given below. All deliverables are submitted again in electronic form in Annex 4. For the deliverables that have already been submitted we indicate with which report. The new deliverables are included in both electronic and paper format. The Inception report was submitted on 30/09/2012, the Midterm report on 31/05/2013 and the Progress report on 30/06/2014. Photos illustrating actions are included in Annex 5.

4.1.1. Action A1, Workshop on setting Favourable Reference Values (FRVs).

This action has been completed successfully. The workshop on FRVs took place according to the project proposal and within the established time schedule of the project. BirdLife Cyprus (BC) was responsible for this action. The 2-day workshop was held on 21 and 22 June 2012, at Lordos Beach Hotel, Larnaca. Twenty-three (23) people participated on the first day and twenty (20) people on the second day, close to the 25 people proposed. The workshop agenda also included a site visit to Oroklini Lake. Expert speakers were invited from BirdLife International in Belgium-3 people, one from LIPU/BirdLife Italy and one from Greece. The selection of speakers was based upon their experience and knowledge on the subject, as well as the methodology for setting the FRVs. Participants to the workshop were from the project partners, other Cyprus NGOs, the Environment Department of the British Bases in Cyprus, the Nature Conservation Unit of Frederick University and I.A.CO Ltd consultancy office. The Project Director (PD) from the Game and Fauna Service (GFS) opened the workshop and chaired the workshop on one of the two days.

The workshop results and report were vital in designing the methodology for calculating Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) and hence, in producing the FRV report (Action A2). At the workshop participants discussed the pros and cons of the different methodologies available and decided that BirdLife Cyprus (BC) should adopt a slightly modified methodology depending on the species distribution and ecology and data availability, as has been done in Italy. The deliverable from this action, which is a report from the workshop, was circulated to all the workshop participants and to the partners of a LIFE project in Greece ACCOLAGOONS [LIFE 09 NAT/GR – 000343]. For the workshop's list of participants and copies of workshop presentations please see Inception report. The workshop report was submitted with our Midterm report; please find the electronic deliverable in Annex 4.8 of this report.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: BirdLife Cyprus

Summary of outputs achieved: Determination of the methodology on setting FRVs

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid February 2012 - Actual end date: 15/9/2012
(Proposed start date: mid February 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/9/2012)

Performance indicators: Achievement of output

Technical modifications: One speaker was invited from HOS/BirdLife Greece and three from BirdLife International as it was more appropriate

Financial modifications: N/A

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Workshop report, submitted with Midterm report

Expected result: The expected result was met (**workshop and workshop report**).

4.1.2. Action A2, A report published on Favourable Reference Values (FRVs).

The output of this action, which was the FRV report, sets the conservation objectives for the important bird species of Oroklini marsh thus contributing significantly to the project's objective. The selected methodology for determining the FRVs for the Annex I species of Oroklini Lake followed the findings of the FRV workshop (Action A1). The FRV report was approved and adopted by the Game and Fauna Service (GFS), the letter of approval was submitted in Annex 8 with our Progress report. The FRV for the *Vanellus spinosus* was set at 15 pairs, for the *Himantopus himantopus* at 60 pairs, for the *Burhinus oedicnemus* at 1-2 pairs (maintain it as regular breeding bird at Oroklini Lake), for the *Charadrius alexandrinus* at 4 pairs, for the *Sterna hirundo* and the *Sternula albifrons* it was not able to set FRVs for these species at site or national level. Defining clear targets through the FRVs is essential in order to determine the effectiveness of conservation efforts and also to monitor the feature of interest (status of the habitat or population) against the target.

As foreseen, we produced one FRV technical report in English and one in brochure format in Greek. The FRV technical report in English was submitted with our Midterm report and the FRV brochure report and the adoption letter by the GFS were submitted with our Progress report. Please see Annex 4.9 for the electronic deliverables.

Deviations from the proposal: In the approved proposal the amount of €20.000 was allocated to 'External Assistance' for this action. However, since the approval of the project, there had been some staff changes in BirdLife Cyprus (BC) and the new staff that was hired to work full time for BC as 'Research Coordinator' (Mr. Alan Tye) was very skilled and could work on this action. Also, there was the need to offer the 'Research Coordinator' some assistance in terms of collecting the info, doing some preliminary analysis, etc. So, we proposed to transfer 6.000 euro for the 'Research Coordinator' and 4.862 euro for a Project Assistant (Mr. Christian Christodoulou-Davies) that was hired. Please note that these changes were accepted by the European Commission (EC) with the letter ENV.E.3/MD/jv ARES (2012) 1366975. Therefore, this action was implemented by BCs' staff and the total amount of €10.862 was transferred from 'External Assistance' to 'Personnel' under Action A2. After the approval from the EC, BC hired a Project Assistant (his contract was submitted with our Inception report) on a full time basis and with a temporary contract of four months. The Project Assistant worked closely and under the supervision of BC's Research Coordinator producing the Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) report for the six important species of Oroklini Lake (the two qualifying species and the four Annex I species). The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) submitted to BC comments on the report which were adopted and then the report was approved by the GFS and later adopted.

The deliverable (technical report in English) was completed in end April 2013 with three months delay from the proposed date in the Inception report, which was 21 January 2013. The reason for this unforeseen delay was the various but valuable informal comments BC received from stakeholders (i.e. the GFS and Department of Forests) and the time needed for adopting them. Some of the comments were on the methodology and adopting them or discussing them with experts needed more time than originally estimated as this work on FRVs is pioneering at EU level. However, this delay did not affect the overall implementation of the project and has met its objectives.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: BirdLife Cyprus

Summary of outputs achieved: Setting FRVs for six Annex I species of Oroklini Lake, FRV report produced, approved and adopted by the competent authority

Time schedule: Actual start date: 15 June 2012 – Actual end date: 30/06/2014

(Proposed start date: March 2012 - Proposed end date in Inception report: 21/01/2013)

Performance indicators: Achievement of output

Technical modifications: Action implemented with BC's staff and not external assistance approved with letter ENV.E.3/MD/jv ARES (2012) ARES 1366975

Financial modifications: Total amount of €10,862 was transferred from 'External Assistance' (budget €20,000) to 'Personnel' under action A2, for BC. Foreseen 'Personnel' budget was €14,427; however €28,065 was actually incurred as more staff time was needed to complete the action.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: (i) FRV technical report in English, submitted with Midterm report and revised with Progress report, (ii) FRV brochure report in Greek, submitted with Progress report

Expected result: The expected result was met (**FRV report, in English technical format and Greek brochure format**).

4.1.3. Action A3, Determine lake contours and delineation of SPA on site.

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS), responsible for this action awarded the contract to a topographer following the appropriate procedures and according to the rules on public tendering. The tender was awarded on 17/5/2012 and the topographer started working a week later. The topographer prepared a detailed contour map of the lake with accuracy 0,1 m as foreseen. The contour map was used by the sub-contractor of Action A4 in order to produce a Water Operation Study and by the RSPB expert under Action C3 in order to produce the Water Management Regime.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: Production of a topography survey

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid February 2012 - Actual end date: 17/10/2012

(Proposed start date: October 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2012). *Please note that the difference between the actual start date and the proposed start date is because the actual start date is estimated as the date when the beneficiary first started working on the action, i.e. preparation of tender documents, while the proposed date did not take into consideration this. The same is for all actions that present this difference.*

Performance indicators: Achievement of output

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: More staff time was needed to overview the work of the topographer and provide support as the sub-contractor was not familiar with the area. Moreover, the work was conducted during the breeding season and therefore close supervision was needed. The underspending in 'External Assistance' derives from the procedures of public procurement that foresees the award of contract to the bidder offering the lowest price as explained in §5.1.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Topography survey, submitted with our Progress report and in electronic form in the final report, Annex 4.10

Expected result: The expected result was met (**lake contour map with accuracy 0.1m and on site delineation of the lake**).

4.1.4. Action A4, Determine important hydrological features of the site

This action included the elaboration of three studies: (1) Hydrology study foreseen in the project proposal and two more that were proposed by BirdLife Cyprus after the start of the project, to be carried out with the underspending of the same action. (2) Ichthyological study and (3) Study on 'Analysis of Pressures and Impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment'.

(1) Hydrology study: Determination of important hydrological features for Oroklini Lake

BirdLife Cyprus (BC), which was responsible for this action, awarded the contract to the selected sub-contractor, I.A.CO Water and Environmental Consultants Ltd. The contract between BC and the sub-contractor was signed on 25 May 2012. A kick-off meeting to plan step-by-step actions took place on 8 June 2012 at BCs' office. The sub-contractor followed the agreed work-plan. The sub-contractor carried out the test borehole on 14 June 2012 after agreement on the location with BC and the Project Director (PD) and collected the first number samples of ground and surface water for analysis in June. A second series of number ground and surface water samples were collected in October 2012. The parameters studied were two heavy metals (Pb and Hg) and other parameters like total nitrogen, nitrites, total ammonium, total phosphorus etc. The full list of parameters are given in table 2 of the Hydrology study. The water-level recorder was installed on site on 13 November 2012 on a location suggested by the sub-contractor and the RSPB expert of Action C3. Moreover, the clearing of the dense vegetation around the dam enabled sub-contractors to test the integrity of the dam and bank as per the contract's terms. The dense vegetation, linked also to the high rainfall, made it impossible for someone to approach the dam. The vegetation surrounding the dam was cleared (a sub-contractor was hired by BC under action C3, Water management works) on 10 October 2012, so as to allow the subcontractor to complete his work, but also to allow the weir to work efficiently as a spillway. The final deliverable, which was the Hydrology study, included the results of the above-mentioned activities and a water operation model for the lake as well as proposals for the water management of the lake.

Briefly the most important results of the hydrology study are:

Groundwater and surface water analysis:

- There is no sea intrusion in the area and the chemical composition of the groundwater which is hypersaline is affected directly by the presence of sediment deposits, which are very rich in salts.
- There is indication of increased pollution possibly caused by inflow from the urbanized catchment area without undergoing much dilution with rainwater.
- Low NO₃-N (Nitrates) and P (Phosphorus), both in both GW & SW which indicates an absence of agricultural activities and suggest minimal pollution from sewage.
- Hg (Mercury) was below detection limit (<1 µg/l) in both GW & SW.
- Pb (Lead) in both GW & SW is 9.9 and 2.9 µg/l respectively. These values are below the EU drinking Water Standards (10µg/l).
- The significant increase of BOD (from 12 to 118 mg/l – June to October) and COD (25 to 188 mg/l – June to October) indicates increased pollution possibly caused by inflow from the urbanized catchment area without undergoing much dilution with rain water, the decay of vegetation and increased presence of faeces.

Water level recorder:

- The water level recorder should be placed just upstream of the weir this being the optimum location with access via the bank of the dam and where the deepest part of the lake can be reached.

Test of integrity of the dam and bank:

- Generally the embankment is found in good condition but there are some areas that show signs of erosion and subsidence and these should be reinstated.

Water operation model:

- The monthly water operation study has shown that due to the small capacity of the lake compared to the annual runoff of the Oroklini stream, the lake collects water every year exhibiting spills in most months. The months with the highest frequency at which the lake appears to be totally dry are August followed by July, September and June.

The sub-contractors identified the need for some more studies for the Lake, one of them being the 'Analysis of Pressures and Impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment'.

(2) Ichthyological Study for Oroklini Lake, Cyprus

This study was proposed after the start of the project and after the completion of the hydrology study. Therefore, this was an unforeseen study which was approved with letter ARES (2013) 2026313. This study was deemed necessary as it would contribute towards better understanding of the lake's functions and biological features and therefore the better design of management. The ichthyofauna of the Oroklini wetland area was a largely unknown issue directly related to the ecosystem conservation and the biotic integrity of local food webs. This issue is also linked to serious concerns regarding chemical mosquito control since fish may act as a natural bio-control of mosquito larvae. Moreover, investigating the presence of the Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) and of grey-mullets (Mugilidae) in the lake and proposing restoration measures concerning the fish community can contribute to the restoration of aquatic biotic communities. Allowing entry to the elvers in the lake is also important as a food source and for the restoration of the lake.

External assistance was used to carry out the study. The contract started on 1 August 2013 and the final deliverable (Ichthyological study for Oroklini Lake) was completed in end May 2014. The ichthyological study is an important tool for the conservation of the site and has provided significant information to be used in the management of the area, as fish are an integral part of the lake's ecosystem and an important source of food for birds.

The Ichthyological study is the first of its kind for the site and has provided valuable information on the current ichthyofauna of the lake, what can be done to help restore natural integrity for fish assemblages in the lake, the habitat needs of those fishes, what can be done to protect the globally threatened (IUCN Critical) European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) and how to approach the re-establishment of the native Mediterranean Killifish (*Aphanius fasciatus*) fish. It has also established that based on current knowledge Oroklini Lake is the most important wetland in Cyprus for the globally threatened European Eel. Other results were that the lake canals, which are semi-natural waterways, are an important component of the habitat for fish. These canals serve as refuges for eels. Moreover, the study recorded four species of fish at Oroklini Lake Wetland (European Eel *Anguilla Anguilla*, 2 species of Grey-mullet, Mosquito fish *Gambusia holbrooki*) with the European Eel and the Mosquito fish being the most abundant.

(3) Analysis of Pressures and Impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment

This study was proposed after the start of the project which was approved with letter ARES (2013) 3532909. This study was deemed necessary as it would complement the existing project actions and contribute towards the project's objective, and also contribute to better designing an appropriate management regime.

External assistance was used to carry out the study. The contract started on 26 February 2014 and the final deliverable was completed in mid-June 2014. BirdLife Cyprus (BC) had a meeting with the sub-contractors and the expert that has been preparing the Action Plan (Action A5) on 30 June 2014. During the meeting the sub-contractors presented the main results of this study. This study was another important element for understanding the site and for deciding on

prescriptions for its management, as the main source of water for the lake is the mostly built-up catchment area.

This study has provided an inventory of potential sources of pollution in the catchment area and measures to prevent pollution, has identified the source of water contributing to the run-off observed during summer months and has assessed the quality of catchment water before it enters the lake.

The main results and conclusions of this study were/are:

- ✓ According to the external assistance, in general and considering the location of the lake among an urbanized area, the quality of the water on the basis of the analytical results appears to be acceptable which means it is good enough to support the targeted species and their habitats.

Eutrophication in late spring and summer months is normal and expected in a shallow, Mediterranean, seasonal wetland like Oroklini Lake. This is a result of a combination of the presence of some organic matter in the lake and high levels of water evaporation under conditions of high temperature. The reason of the European eel deaths in summer/autumn 2013 was that the eels were stranded as the wetland's waters began to evaporate and shrink in late spring. The eels could not find adequate aquatic refugia when the site was naturally drying. The installed eel passes, the repair of the weir, which will allow S3 compartment to hold water for longer period, and the creation of deep water areas will prevent another massive eel death. The main findings of the chemical analysis in summer-autumn 2012 as part of the hydrology study found low nitrates and phosphorus (main contributors to eutrophication) in both groundwater and surface water samples which suggests an absence of agriculture activities and minimal pollution from sewage.

The conclusion of the study indicates that despite the location of the site among an urbanised area and the high risk of pollution, Oroklini Lake has an acceptable water quality which can support wildlife. This conclusion is also enhanced by the fact that the site is rich in bird diversity and that no incidents of bird deaths have been recorded.

- ✓ Potential sources of pollution have been identified and may need some addressing in the future. Such sources include seven restaurants (Potential release of Fats, Oils and Greases (FOG) that result from kitchen waste, in the storm-water network), the Highway and road from coast to village (Potential pollution from storm water runoff, or a car accident with spills), uncontrolled storage plot for petroleum and other products (threat to the Lake especially since the full type of products stored is not known. Runoff ends to the lake.)
- ✓ There is concern regarding possible future water regime changes that may affect the available water quantity and quality that flows into the lake (expansion of storm-runoff network, establishment of sewage network and likely reduction of domestic supply "losses"). For example, currently there are losses in the domestic supply water of the Oroklini village. This water ends up in Oroklini Lake. If the domestic supply network is fixed in the future, the inflow volume into the site will be reduced. Also, by expanding the storm-runoff network less water will flow into the site; however, the water quality will be improved.

- ✓ The storm runoff and potential spills from an accident on the highway and the public road need to be considered and protect the lake from such eventualities. A speed hump on the main road will contribute in minimising this risk.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: BirdLife Cyprus

Summary of outputs achieved:

Hydrology study: Assessed condition of hydrological features, provided basic and valuable information that was used to design the site's water management regime and implement water management actions under Action C3.

Ichthyological study: Provided important information on other biotic factors of Oroklini Lake, which play an important role in the ecosystem's balance. The study was complementary to the existing project actions and has contributed to better designing an appropriate management regime for the site.

Analysis of Pressures and Impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment: Provided significant data on the aspect of water quality. The study contributed towards identifying possible future threats and list monitoring actions to be included in the monitoring protocol and Action Plan.

Time schedule:

Hydrology study: Actual start date: mid February 2012 - Actual end date: 17/10/2012

(Proposed start date: October 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2012). *Please note that the difference between the actual start date and the proposed start date is because the actual start date is estimated as the date when the beneficiary first started working on the action, i.e. preparation of tender documents, while the proposed date did not take into consideration this. The same is for all actions that present this difference.*

Ichthyological study: August 2013 – May 2014

Analysis of Pressures and Impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment: 26 February 2014 – June 2014

Performance indicators: Achievement of outputs

Technical modifications: BirdLife Cyprus had proposed to do two more studies on Oroklini Lake with the underspending derived from the external assistance in this category. The Ichthyological study was approved with letter ARES (2013) 2026313 and the 'Analysis of Pressures and Impacts on runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment' was approved with letter ARES (2013) 3532909.

Financial modifications: Foreseen budget (external assistance) for the hydrology study was €20.000. For the hydrology study we spend only a part of this, i.e. €9.945. The total amount of €8.927 from this underspend (€10.055) was used to produce the aforementioned two studies after EC's approval. More staff time was needed than originally foreseen as BC conducted two additional studies as approved by the EC. The overspending in 'Equipment' derives from the purchase of the water level logger which cost more than foreseen.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: (i) Determination of important hydrological features for Oroklini Lake submitted with our Midterm report and electronically in the Final report in Annex 4.11 (a), (ii) Ichthyological Study for Oroklini Lake, Cyprus, submitted with our Progress report and electronically in the Final report in Annex 4.11 (b) (iii) Analysis of Pressures and Impacts on

runoff water quality for the Oroklini Lake catchment, submitted with our Progress report and electronically in the Final report in Annex 4.11 (c).

Expected results: Expected results have been met, (**Integrity of dam in sector S3 tested and further planning actions enabled, test borehole and awareness about quality of groundwater- results of quality of groundwater, automatic water level recorder installed and working, Hydromorphological study of the Lake**).

4.1.5. Action A5, Elaborate an Action Plan for the birds for Oroklini Lake SPA

BirdLife Cyprus (BC) carried out this action in collaboration with the BirdLife partner in the UK, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) as RSPB has extensive experience in reserves management-RSPB manages 210 reserves that cover 130,000 ha. RSPB allocated a person who would carry out the work. This person was RSPB's site manager in Gloucestershire Reserves, Mrs Hannah Morton. Mrs Morton had experience in preparing Management Plans for nature reserves as she has managed wetlands in Scotland and has written several management plans for RSPB's nature reserves. The site manager was in constant communication with BC from the early stages of preparing the Action Plan. Mrs Morton visited Cyprus (16 June – 1 July 2014) for site visits and meetings with project partners, stakeholders and the competent authorities in order to gather information for the site and receive feedback on the first draft of the Action Plan. After the feedback, a draft was prepared around mid-July and circulated among project partners for further comments. The procedure for finalising the Action Plan took longer than expected and the deliverable was completed around mid-November. The delay was caused by procedures in agreeing between partners the target for main factors affecting features (i.e. species) and management actions on site. Moreover, August is a difficult time to get tasks completed as most of the people are on holidays. However, this delay did not affect project objectives neither the preparation of the Ministerial Decrees as the final draft with the basic information that would be included in the Ministerial Decrees was ready on time, i.e. mid-July. The Action Plan was written in English by RSPB's site manager and it was then translated in Greek using external assistance in Cyprus.

This Action Plan is complementary to the existing Management Plan (which focuses primarily on the SCI features) and provides current management guidance incorporating recommendations from reports completed through the LIFE Oroklini project, which weren't available when the Management Plan was written. Management actions described in this Action Plan took into consideration the SCI features. The Action Plan highlights threats, which may potentially have an impact on the key breeding species and provide clear, concise, practical management objectives which can be carried out to enable the site to attain and maintain the SPA in Favourable Conservation Status whilst taking into account other important species and communities. The Action Plan lists management actions, monitoring actions, public awareness actions as well as research elements. Management actions are mostly relevant to water level management, vegetation management and maintenance of fence and nesting islets in good condition. Monitoring actions include breeding birds, waterbirds, predators, fish, water level and water quality, vegetation, visitors and infrastructure. Awareness raising actions include work with neighbouring farmers to ensure complementary management and engagement with schools and visitors. Examples of research actions include study on the potential to import treated water to the catchment, impact from surrounding agriculture land, understand how the current system responds to rainfall and drought to ensure system can be resilient, develop suitable Emergency Action Plan to avoid pollution incident and some more studies.

The Action Plan has been agreed by the project partners (Game and Fauna Service, Birdlife Cyprus, Environment Department, Department of Forests and Vorklini Community Council) and the details of the plan have been discussed with and approved by all project partners as well as the Water Development Department (WDD). Unfortunately, there are no official approvals. However, both Ministerial Decrees prepared by the GFS and the ED adopt the Action Plan. The Action Plan is a key document for the sustainable management of Oroklini Lake in the long-term.

The preparations of the Action Plan and the procedure for issuing the relevant Ministerial Decree were done parallel. The Environment Department has issued a Ministerial Decree

according to article 13 of the Habitats Directive. With this Ministerial Decree the Oroklini Lake Site of Community Importance (SCI) is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Ministerial Decree mentions the Action Plan produced as part of the LIFE Oroklini project as well as the conservation of the habitats that Special Protection Area (SPA) qualifying species need. The Ministerial Decree declaring the SCI of Oroklini Lake as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and setting the conservation objectives and measures was issued on 19.12.2014 (Ref. No. ΚΔΠ 572/2015 & ΚΔΠ 573/2015). This Ministerial Decree can be found in Annex 6 (a).

Moreover, the Environment Department has prepared another Ministerial Decree according to article 15 of the Habitats Directive. This Ministerial Decree will set the specific management plans and actions for the site, along with the specific prohibitions and restrictions. This Ministerial Decree was published in the local newspapers and at the Voroklini Community Council website on 3 January 2015 leaving a month for objections. No objections were received and currently the Ministerial Decree is at the final stage of its issue, going through a final check by the Legal Services. A copy of the newspaper clipping can be found in Annex 6 (b). On 3 March 2015, the Decree was submitted to the Legal Services for a legal check as it is required by the relevant procedures. When the legal check is complete, the Decree will be submitted to the Minister for approval and issuance. This procedure is expected to take 2 months. When this check is done the Ministerial Decree will be signed by the Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment. Please see Annex 6 (b), Document proving the progress of Ministerial Decree which is the letter submitted with the draft of the Ministerial Decree to the Legal Services for check.

At the same time, the Game and Fauna Service has prepared a Ministerial Decree according to the equivalent article 13 of the Birds Directive. The opinion on the Ministerial Decree was approved by the Scientific Committee and has been submitted to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior who submitted it to the Legal Services (Attorney General) of the Republic of Cyprus for a final legal check before it is signed and issued by the Minister of Interior. This Ministerial Decree was an obligation according to the A8 form (Declaration of support by the competent authority) submitted with the project proposal. Please find in Annex 6 (c) the draft Ministerial Decree as it was submitted to the Permanent Secretary by the Head of Game and Fauna Service and as submitted to the Legal Services. Please note that this is the draft Decree and it might change after the check of the Legal Services.

The check done by the Law Office of the Republic of Cyprus could take months to be completed due to bureaucracy reasons and this is why these two Ministerial Decrees are not submitted with our Final report. However, the Ministerial Decree issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment under article 13 of the Habitats Directive is sufficient for the effective protection of the site as it explicitly mentions the Action Plan and the protection of the habitats for the SPA qualifying species and other Annex I species that breed on the site. Therefore, the Action Plan can be considered legally operational with this Ministerial Decree. Moreover, the two other procedures, one by the ED and one by the GFS, are well underway and just one step before issuing the Ministerial Decrees.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: BirdLife Cyprus

Summary of outputs achieved: Production of a useful management tool that ensures sustainable management of Oroklini Lake in the long-term.

Time schedule: Actual start date: March 2014 - Actual end date: 14/11/2014
(Proposed start date: March 2013 - Proposed end date: 31/07/2014)

Performance indicators: Putting the plan into law through Ministerial Decrees and achievement of output.

Technical modifications: For the production of the Action Plan BirdLife Cyprus used an expert from RSPB, the BirdLife partner in the UK, RSPB. Then a translator (external assistance) was needed to translate the document from English to Greek due to limited time of project staff. This changes were needed to produce a high quality document. The changes resulted mainly in financial modifications described below.

Financial modifications: Project proposal foresaw €10,000 for external assistance and some funding (shared with action C3) for travel of an expert from the UK to assist in this action. BirdLife Cyprus (BC) re-evaluated the circumstances, and after discussing it with the European Commission (EC) and the External Monitoring Team (EMoT) during their visit on 6 May 2014 decided that the best way to carry out this action was in collaboration with the RSPB for the following reasons:

- RSPB has the expertise and extensive experience in producing management plans for nature reserves across the UK. Therefore, it is expected that the deliverable will be a high standard document for Oroklini Lake's birds which could be a model Action Plan for future sites in Cyprus. This expertise does not exist in Cyprus nor the concept of a user-friendly and practical Action Plan.

- The person from RSPB was able to work closely with RSPB staff members who were already familiar with the site like Matt Self (Nature reserves ecologist, involved with the water management works and regime of the site, Action C3) and Graham White (Senior Wetland Ecologist, participant to the Networking Workshop in October/November 2013).

Therefore, the best value for money option was to assign this to an expert from RSPB and cover travel and subsistence expenses as well as some basic living costs.

The amount of €1,000 was used from the foreseen €10,000 for external assistance to translate the Action Plan in Greek. Also, a part of the underspending from this action in category 'Consumables' was used to produce the Layman's report which had an overspending of €1,177.70 (budget for Layman's under Consumables was €1,000).

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Action Plan for Oroklini Lake Special Protection Area (SPA), please find it in Annex 4.1.

Expected results: Expected results have been met, **(Action Plan for Oroklini Lake SPA, expert on reserve management and management for birds from the RSPB, adopted water management regime to be incorporated into the Oroklini Action Plan, expert for preparing the action plan for Oroklini Lake, doing the consultations, talking to experts, organising meetings nationally).**

4.1.6. Action A6, Get fencing permission for lake

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) obtained the fencing permit to fence the government land of the site. Despite the three months delay in the issuing of the fencing permit the permit was finally issued with no problems while this delay did not affect the linked action in fencing the lake (Action C1) since the fencing would start in 2013. This delay was due to the fact that the topographer did not start working on site for the delineation of the government land in time to complete the delineation map of the government land and submit it for a fencing permit. The delineation map was necessary to apply for the fencing permit. The topographer could not start working on site in time for two reasons, one being the fact that 2012 was an unusually wet year making access to some parts of the lake very difficult and therefore postponing the field work of the topographer. The second reason was the unforeseen delay by the Department of Lands and Surveys to issue the official cadastral plans of Oroklini lake Special Protection Area (SPA), which covers both government and private land, needed for the topographer to start the field work on the site. This delay meant more staff time was needed than foreseen in the proposal since project officers needed to communicate with the Department of Lands and Survey and provide support to the topographer.

This was an important preparatory action for the linked action C1, Fencing the site. Under Cyprus law anyone wanting to erect a fence has to apply for a permission to do it from the local District Officer.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: Obtaining a fencing permit for the site which enabled implementation of Action C1, Fencing the wetland.

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid March 2012 - Actual end date: 18/10/2012
(Proposed start date: March 2012 - Proposed end date: 31/07/2012)

Performance indicators: Achievement of output

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: More staff time than foreseen was needed for this action which has resulted in overspending under 'Personnel'.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Fencing permit, submitted with our Midterm report electronically with Final report, Annex 4.12.

Expected results: Expected results have been met, **(Permission to erect a fence around the perimeter of the lake to close off the government owned land).**

4.1.7. Action A7, Report on the impact of predation on target species

To meet the objective of this action we had to collect breeding data during the three breeding seasons of each project year. To achieve this, the Game and Fauna Service (GFS), responsible for this action, had placed eight wildlife cameras (trap cameras) on site. The cameras, purchased as part of the project, were placed at the beginning of each breeding season and were removed at the end of the breeding season to be stored for the next breeding season. The cameras were monitored regularly; approximately every week or every two weeks, and the pictures taken were downloaded on a regular basis.

Moreover, to gather more breeding data, the GFS conducted detailed breeding bird counts on a monthly basis (during the breeding period, i.e. March until August). Nesting sites for the two target species and other breeding Annex I species were being plotted on a map and these data were then uploaded on a GPS/ArcMap base purchased as part of the project. Breeding maps for the three breeding seasons (2012, 2013, and 2014) were created. Unfortunately, two of the installed wildlife cameras had been stolen from the site during April 2013. After EC's approval, in early 2014 with letter Ares (2013) 3532909, the GFS purchased two additional wildlife cameras and placed them on site to replace the ones that were stolen.

During the first two years of monitoring predation the GFS did not consider predators a serious threat. However, during breeding season 2014, an increase in predation was recorded. Predators recorded were: Fox *Vulpes vulpes*, feral/domestic cats *Felis familiaris*, Rats *Rattus rattus* and Hooded Crows *Corvus corone cornix*. Data from 2014 showed a high presence of foxes (even during daylight hours) and Hooded crows, the principal predators of wader nests. Evidence from failed nests showed signs of fox / crow predation. It is important to note that no predators were recorded on the created nesting islets as part of Action C3.

Collected data from the three years were analysed and the GFS produced a predation report. Monitoring showed poor breeding success of Black-winged Stilt in 2013 and 2014 mainly due to decrease water during nesting period that left many nests exposed and vulnerable, but also due to increased predation in 2014. Spur-winged Lapwing nesting numbers were less variable; 8 pairs/7 chicks in 2012, 6 pairs/6 chicks in 2013 and 8-12 pairs/10 chicks in 2014. The predation report suggests management options for predator control on fox, hooded crows and rats. The control will be done with use of live traps, removing the animals and releasing them elsewhere. The monitoring of nests with wildlife cameras will be repeated for at least 1 more nesting season (2015) in order to evaluate nesting success after the control on predators, which will be on a trial basis for 1-2 years. The objective is to achieve a favourable conservation status of the designation species, and this can only be achieved through the proper water level management combined by limiting the negative impact of the above predators, through a rigorous population management project.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: Quantifying the impact of predators on important species at Oroklini Lake and producing management options to control predators and achieve Favourable Reference Values (FRVs). Management options were incorporated in the Action Plan (Action A5).

Time schedule: Actual start date: March 2012 - Actual end date: 22/09/2014
(Proposed start date: March 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/07/2014)

Performance indicators: Achievement of output

Technical modifications: As foreseen by our Inception report, the deadline for the deliverable was pushed back for 30/09/2014. This gave us more time to evaluate the data from the breeding season of 2014 and predation impact. This delay did not cause any problems to the linked action E2, Monitoring Protocol or A5, Action Plan as management options for predator control were incorporated in the aforementioned two deliverables on time.

Financial modifications: As accepted by the EC in its letter ARES (2012) 1366975 the GFS did not purchase a spotting scope as this was purchased as part of another EU-funded project, i.e. project GYPAS of the Cross Border Cooperation Programme Greece - Cyprus 2007 – 2013, which was approved during the same period with the LIFE Oroklini project. Part of the money (€1,500) that meant to be spent on the spotting scope was used for the purchase of better value binoculars. Also, the field software GPS was not purchased separately from the handheld PDAs as the Game and Fauna Service had bought the software as part of another project.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Predation report in Greek with an English summary, please find it in Annex 4.2.

Expected results: Expected results have been met, (**report on the impact of predators on the target species of the lake, predator management proposals included in the predation report**).

4.1.8. Action C1, Fencing the lake

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) responsible for this action hired external assistance as foreseen following the appropriate procedures and according to the rules on public tendering. The perimeter of the fence followed the boundaries of the government land according to the topography survey produced under Action A3. The fencing to sensitive areas was done during autumn 2013 so any disturbance to birds during the breeding season was avoided.

After discussion between project partners (during the third Project Steering Committee (PSC), in April 2013) it was agreed that different types of fencing should be erected at different parts of the lake. In the areas near the visitors' facilities a wooden fence that is attractive and looks friendlier to visitors was erected. The rest of the fence was a wildlife friendly fence (metal mesh type fence/deer fence) to allow animal movements. This type of fence is different to the one foreseen (metal poles with 2-3 lines of wire) because at the time of submitting the proposal this type of fence was not available in Cyprus and also the deer type fence is more wildlife friendly and at the same time more prohibitive for trespassers.

The fence area of the lake included three gates to permit access to authorised personnel only. The proposal foresaw only two gates but a third gate was needed at the area of the weir to create access to a digger for future maintenance works at the weir as well as access to the water level logger. The other two gates provide access for authorised personnel for research and monitoring purposes. The fence is 3, 200 meters and stands at 1,20meters. The change in fence type did not affect significantly the costs for this action. The fencing permission under action A6 was necessary to complete this action.

GFS attached signs on the fence every 100-200 meters informing the general public on the protection/importance status of the site (Natura 2000 site) and warning that entrance is not allowed.

Preliminary results show that human presence within the lake has been almost eliminated during the first year of the fence's operation. This was evidenced by the fact that the trap cameras did not record as much as human access within the site as before and also checks done by the GFS did not show unauthorised access within the site. We aim to maintain the fence in a good condition in order to maintain the results of this action. The GFS will continue to conduct regular checks and in case of vandalism or other damage the GFS will repair the damages. Already the GFS had to do some repair work because there had been some damages from a passing car that hit the fence. The GFS will allocate funds in their annual budget under the Natura 2000 areas article. The site, as all other SPAs, will be patrolled regularly.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: The benefit to birds by this action was obvious during the 2014 breeding season as disturbance was significantly reduced. Minimising disturbance was evident through bird records:

- We recorded nests of Little-ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* on the canal roads that otherwise would have been destroyed or disturbed by visitors, their pets or vehicles.
- Annex I species Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* nested in 2014 while the last breeding record of this species was in 2007! The GFS recorded at least 2 pairs nesting in 2014. The water management works (Action C3) also contributed to this action by creating muddy edges suitable for feeding through the creation of shallow ditches.

- Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* nested in 2014 for the first time. GFS has recorded around 45 nests in S3. The water management works (Action C3) also contributed to this action by enabling a part of the lake to hold water for a longer period.

Time schedule: Actual start date: March 2013 - Actual end date: 23/12/2013
(Proposed start date: March 2013 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2013)

Performance indicators: Number of people entering the site. Only a few incidents of people entering the site were recorded after the fence was erected. No incidents of people walking their dogs or entering the site with vehicles were recorded after the erection of the fence in contrast to the situation before the fence when such incidents were regularly recorded. Data of human disturbance within the site are given in Annex IV of the Monitoring Protocol. Also, no vandalism to the fence was recorded. Moreover, bird records mentioned above prove the great success of this action. Pet dogs have created problems in the past, mostly related with disturbing nesting birds; since fencing the lake in December 2013, we have not seen a dog inside the fenced area.

Technical modifications: As described above a different type of fence than the one proposed was erected. Also, three gates were created instead of two.

Financial modifications: The foreseen budget for this action under 'Infrastructure' was €126.600 while only €81,534.25 were incurred for fencing due to the procedures of public procurement. Part of the underspend (€45.065,75) was used for some additional management actions proposed during the EC's visit on 6 May 2014 and with our Progress report and approved with letter Ares (2014) 1808155. The implemented additional actions were the pedestrian crossing with hump, warning signs and lights and fireflies on powerlines passing over the Lake. Details for these actions are given in §4.1.13.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: N/A

Expected results: Expected results have been met – a minor modification in type of fence as explained above, **(fence of the site in the perimeter of the government land. Signs on fence every around 200 meters with logos. Fence is 1.2 m high but it is a deer type fence which is wildlife friendly and more prohibitive to trespassers. Part of cost of 2 handheld PDAs (shared with C2)).**

4.1.9. Action C2, Restoration of the area where the market area was placed

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS), beneficiary responsible for this action hired external assistance as foreseen following the appropriate procedures and according to the rules on public tendering. The action was implemented as foreseen; large amounts of earth, gravel, concrete and premix were removed. A total area of about 3 hectares once occupied by the flea-market was restored. The depth of digging varied and after removing dumber material the field was ploughed. No other landscaping works, i.e. scrapes of planting trees, were done there as it was not deemed necessary and experts suggested that efforts should concentrate in the already wet area of the site. Moreover, that area is a private owned land making it difficult to ensure that landscaping works would be maintained. The landscaping works performed as part of Action C3 were adequate to meet the needs of the qualifying species.

This action was completed with a small delay (around a week) due to heavy rainfall during December 2012. Due to bad weather conditions restoration works and ploughing of the field had to be postponed for some days causing a delay in completing the restoration works. However, this minor delay did not affect the objective of the action.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: The benefit to birds of this action was obvious, especially during the 2013 breeding season:

- A pair of Spur-winged Lapwings –a target species, was recorded on the restored field during breeding season 2013.
- A pair of Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicanus*, an Annex I species, recorded during March 2013. This was the first time that Stone-curlews had been recorded on that field.
- Only some days after the completion of the restoration works a wintering flock of about 70 Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* was recorded on site.
- The presence of other important species (i.e. Crested Larks *Galerida cristata*, Sky Larks *Alauda arvensis* Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis*, Chukar partridge *Alectoris chukar*) reinforces the notion that the restored site will be an important part of the wetland's ecosystem.

Time schedule: Actual start date: early June 2012 - Actual end date: 21/01/2013
(Proposed start date: March 2012 - Proposed end date: 15/12/2012)

Performance indicators: Species using the site. Target species Spur-winged lapwing nested on the restored field and first breeding record of Annex I species Stone curlew on the restored field.

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: There is some underspending in this action mainly due to the fact that the government departments following the rules on awarding contracts, award contracts to the bidder offering the lowest price. The foreseen budget for this action under 'External Assistance' was €45,000 while only €23,600 were used.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: N/A

Expected results: Expected results have been met (**Large amounts of earth from the northern part of the lake removed so this has become an important part of the lake. *Vanellus spinosus* as well as *Burhinus oedicanus* nested on the restored field in spring 2013. No extra landscaping was done as the experts did not suggest it.**)

4.1.10. Action C3, Restoration and Management of the water level in the lake

BirdLife Cyprus, responsible for this action, awarded the contract to their partner organisation in the UK, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), in order to provide an expert on reserve management and management for birds. Given the fact that expertise on water reserve management for birds does not exist in Cyprus, BC did not follow its procurement policy but with the approval of the European Commission (EC) and with a BC Council decision as derogation from normal procurement policy awarded the contract to RSPB. We should note here that BirdLife partners will always give priority to the BirdLife network, when the required expertise doesn't exist in their country, given that they meet the requirements, due to the common action program and mission of the organisations. To complete this action, RSPB's Senior Technical Ecologist, Matt Self visited the site three times, one in July 2012, one in May 2013 and one in April 2014. The design of the water management works was based on the Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) report, the species requirements, the hydrology study and the topography survey. The works were agreed among project partners and the Project Steering Committee (PSC).

The deliverable of this action, which is the Water Management Regime, was delayed due to some family issues of key people involved. This delay was also a result of the delay in completing the Favourable Reference Value (FRV) report, Action A2, as the FRVs were necessary for the designing of water management proposals. This unforeseen delay in completing the Water Management Regime did not affect the objectives of the action since water management works, the design of which was based on the Water Management Regime, started after the breeding season in order to avoid disturbance to birds, i.e. in September – November 2013.

One water management action had to be carried out before the first rains, in October 2012, in order to allow I.A.CO Ltd to complete Action A4, Hydrology and features of the lake. This action was necessary to clear the dense vegetation from the dam, which was blocking the weir. To deal with this urgency BirdLife Cyprus (BC) hired a sub-contractor who carried out the works at the weir in mid-October 2012. The weir was unblocked in time and before the lake's overflow. Then the water management works were implemented in two phases. One phase was in 2013: The water management works that affect the hydrology of the lake were completed around mid-December 2013. These works included creating five nesting islets and eight new shallow ditches in S7, improving connection of the site with the sea by opening new ditches and adding culverts and repairing the dam wall.

Due to an exceptionally strong rain in November 2013 that filled the S3 compartment (north part) of the lake, some minor works had to be postponed for the next dry period, i.e. September – October 2014. This was the second phase of works. These works included the removal of reeds in a small area of the lake, the repair of some cracks on the dam's weir and the installation of an eel pass on the repaired weir. The postponement of these minor works did not affect the overall implementation of the project or the effectiveness of this specific action since the key works that control the hydrological regime of the lake and control the water levels have been completed. Moreover, after the feedback given by Matt Self who designed the works and visited the site for the third time in April 2014 it was evident that some improvements and some more works needed to be carried out. These works were completed in early October 2014 and included, installation of an eel pass and improvement of the outflow channel between the road culvert and the existing large concrete culverts by reinforcing the sides with concrete, creating an islet in S3. Creating nesting habitat and managing water levels in S3 is expected to be very beneficial for the target species Black-winged Stilt, especially during dry years with wet springs like 2014.

Although a third visit of the expert was not foreseen in the proposal, this was deemed necessary and extremely useful in order for the expert to see the implemented works and provide

feedback. After Dr Matt Self's visit in April 2014 the Water Management Regime was revised and was submitted again with our Progress report.

The change in the time schedule of this action was proved to be beneficial as it allowed more time to properly design and implement the water management works.

BirdLife Cyprus (BC) will monitor the operation of water management works and the water levels after the project's end-date. BC conducts wetland counts every month and Oroklini is one of the wetland sites being surveyed. The Water Management Regime and the water management works have been designed in a way that minimum operation is needed and therefore monthly visits to the site are enough. Managing water levels will be done in collaboration with the Game and Fauna Service (GFS) that also visits the site every month and will be aware of the appropriate water levels for the breeding season so if needed the Game and Fauna Service (GFS) will inform BirdLife Cyprus (BC) for any abnormal change in water levels. The Voroklini Community Council (VCC) can also contribute to this by informing BC for any storm events or other events.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: BirdLife Cyprus

Summary of outputs achieved:

- The Water Management Regime which explains things like how to manage the water in the lake during breeding season, and the levels of water required for the target populations. Finally, the water management regime also gives details on what needs to be monitored and maintained.
- Oroklini Lake has become more resistant to droughts and the effects of climate change as it is now able to hold water for longer periods.
- The new water management regime has been improved, benefiting qualifying species in time for the breeding season but also passage migrants and wintering birds.
- Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis* nested for the first time at Oroklini Lake in spring 2014. This was a result of minimising disturbance through fencing (Action C1), fixing weir and removal of old structures near the south end of the main ditch and holding more water in S3 (Action C3). Due to the repair of the weir we've managed to hold water in S3 (north and deepest part of the lake) during spring 2014 after an exceptionally dry winter 2013-14 (worst in last 100 years for Cyprus). This, in combination with minimising disturbance (Action C1), resulted in a new species breeding record for Oroklini Lake, a colony of 45 pairs of Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis*.
- Due to the creation of nesting islets and connecting ditches we extended the habitat available for both target species and improved nesting and feeding conditions for them. Target species Spur-winged Lapwing (*Vanellus spinosus*) nested in 2014 in 4 out of 5 new islets and Oroklini Lake was the best breeding site in Cyprus for this species in 2014.
- The breeding pairs of Spur-winged Lapwing show an increase in spring 2014 with 8-12 pairs, moving towards the FRV target which is 15 pairs. Action C1, fencing the site also contributed towards this result.
- The abundance of Spur-winged Lapwing recorded in November 2014 (85 individuals) was the highest ever recorded at the site and it has been the highest on the island for the 3-year project duration.

The numbers for the Black-winged Stilt were quite low in spring 2014 as the species relies on a minimum level of water for successful breeding, especially at key times of year. Oroklini Lake did not have adequate water for this species during the key time in 2014 due to unsuitable rainfall

conditions. For example, there was no rainfall during winter to ensure even minimum water levels at the start of the breeding season when Black-winged Stilts chose their nesting spots and there was heavy rainfall in early May when birds are already on the nests. The water management works cannot influence the inflow within the site but what they can do is to control water levels when there is sufficient water supply. On the other hand the Spur-winged Lapwing is more tolerant of dry conditions and the created nesting islets benefited this species. The improvement works (i.e. nesting islet in S3 and valve to control water levels in S3) implemented during 2014 were designed to favor the Black-winged Stilt at years when rainfall is unsuitable for this species.

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid May 2012 - Actual end date: 05/10/2014 (Proposed start date: July 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2013 as revised within Inception report). Please see description above that explains the late completion of water management works.

Performance indicators: Numbers of target species, new nesting species on site.

Technical modifications: As mentioned above, the water management proposals were based on the expert's advice (RSPB, Dr Matt Self) therefore the management actions described in the project proposal were influenced by the result of the contours (A3), hydrological features (A4), FRV report (A2) and expert advice on site.

Financial modifications: N/A

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Water Management Protocol/Regime submitted with our Progress report, and electronically with our Final report in Annex 4.13.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Landscape features and water regime can be at optimum for qualifying species in time for the breeding season but also optimal conditions for passage migrants and wintering birds. Management regime has strengthened lake against climate change events, especially persistent drought and hotter summers.**

Expert on reserve management and management for birds from the RSPB in the UK visited Cyprus three times to support action C3. The adopted water management regime was incorporated in the Oroklini Action Plan.

Water management works of Actions C3, and with the targets set through actions A2 enabled extending the habitat available for both *Vanellus spinosus* and *Himantopus himantopus*, augmented the existing nesting habitat also for other Annex I species, ensured the availability of habitat regardless of climatic factors and reduced disturbance and predation risk.

4.1.11. Action C4, Removal of Invasive Alien Species

This action started in October 2012 by removing acacias and *Parkinsonia aculeate* trees from the site through cutting and injecting chemicals. This was repeated in October 2013 and October 2014 in order to remove new acacias that grew due to re-sprouting or new germinations of acacia seeds. This is why the actual end date is 30/11/2014.

An area of approximately 4.5 decares (4500m²) of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) has been removed. In the proposal we had estimated an area of 3.8 decares (3800m²). The small difference of 700 m² incurred is because since 2010 when we submitted the proposal, acacia trees that are very aggressive have been expanded. The DF also removed some *Atriplex semibaccata* locally to the extent possible.

The Action Plan includes management and monitoring actions for the long-term eradication of re-sprouting acacias and IAS of plants in general. The eradication of IAS is a long-term action. For some plant species such as acacias re-sprouting can last for more than 15 years. However, as the big trees have been removed as part of the project, maintaining the site free of IAS will be a simple action to continue in the long term. The Environment Department will continue the vegetation monitoring and the two departments have good collaboration in order to coordinate management actions when appropriate.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Department of Forests

Summary of outputs achieved: Acacias are currently eliminated from the site and will be more confined in the future after the implementation of this action. Therefore re-sprouting acacias will be easy to remove after the end of the project.

Time schedule: Actual start date: early October 2012 - Actual end date: 27/10/2014
(Proposed start date: February 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2013)

Performance indicators: No presence of Invasive Alien Species on site.

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: Originally we had foreseen two chemical injection systems (Powerful Petrol engine wood drill) however only one was purchased. The reason for this is that after submitting the LIFE Oroklini proposal the Research Sector of the DF purchased a chemical injection system, which was borrowed from the Research Sector and for use together with the injection system bought through the Oroklini project, during the removal of acacias at Oroklini Lake. The remaining money was used to buy a rugged computer as approved by Inception report, which was more expensive than the foreseen laptop. This new computer covered both the planning and monitoring needs of action C5 (as originally foreseen for the laptop).

Also the foreseen budget under 'External Assistance' for hiring truck for removing of acacias was not used. Instead it was used under the same budget category under Action C5 to rent machinery that would open the holes to plant trees. The DF has used its own trucks for the acacia removal with no cost for the project and without affecting the action implementation.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: N/A

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Removal of all acacia trees from Oroklini Lake, mainly from 2 two patches. Removal of Parkinsonia trees. Removal of Atriplex semibaccata locally to the extent possible. Area of IAS cleared was approximately 0.5 hectares.**

4.1.12. Action C5, Planting for improvement and restoration of habitats

The implementation of this action started a few months earlier than foreseen due to favourable planting conditions. In November 2012 the Department of Forests (DF) responsible for this action started digging holes on site in order to plant Tamarisk trees. The DF had to rent specialised machinery (external assistance) to open the holes (around 1500 holes) for planting. Unfortunately, the cost for this external assistance was not foreseen in the proposal and renting machinery to open the holes for planting Tamarix trees was deemed necessary for the efficient implementation of the action. To avoid budget problems we reallocated the foreseen amount of €2.250 (external assistance) of action C4 for renting truck for acacias removal to external assistance of this action for renting machinery that would open the holes for planting. The cost for opening 1500 holes was around €1,500.

During November and December 2012 the DF planted local trees and bushes (i.e. Tamarix, Lentisc bushes *Pistacia lentiscus* and *Pistacia atlantica*, Jujube bushes *Ziziphus lotus* and a few Pine trees) on site. The number of plants that survived the first year was higher than expected therefore it was not necessary to plant the foreseen 2000 trees. In October 2014 the DF planted 55 more trees mainly in the parking area and some at the west of the site to replace few that had not survived. So in the end 1555 plants were used for planting.

The DF was tending and watering plants for two years during summer/autumn 2013 and summer/autumn 2014 with around 6-7 watering each year. For this purpose a water truck was rented. The two years (2013 and 2014) of watering the plants will ensure that the planted vegetation will survive, and no more watering is needed. This is a common practise of the DF and the two first years of watering after the planting are enough. In addition, considering the high soil humidity of the environment at Oroklini wetland provide good environmental conditions for the planted trees.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Department of Forests

Summary of outputs achieved: Planted trees at a certain location at the perimeter of the site can provide natural screening and therefore the disturbance from outside sources is expected to be minimised. The existing trees at the site's perimeter were left to grow to enhance the natural screening and provide natural cover. This action contributed towards restoration and re-establishment, of the typical habitat types. Also, tree nesting species can benefit from the re-establishment of typical habitats types. Some Tamarisk trees were planted in areas where the acacias were removed (Action C4) and this will prevent acacia trees from re-establishing in those areas.

Time schedule: Actual start date: early December 2012 - Actual end date: 31/10/2014
(Proposed start date: February 2013 - Proposed end date: 30/07/2014)

Performance indicators: High survival of planted trees, minimise disturbance from surroundings, attract other heron species.

Technical modifications: Specialised machinery was used (external assistance) to open the holes for the trees to be planted.

Financial modifications: Originally we had foreseen two chemical injection systems (Powerful Petrol engine wood drill) however only one was purchased. The reason for this is that after submitting the LIFE Oroklini proposal the Research Sector of the DF purchased a chemical injection system, which was borrowed from the Research Sector and for use together with the injection system bought through the Oroklini project, during the removal of acacias at Oroklini Lake. The remaining money was used to buy a Rugged computer as approved by Inception

report, which was more expensive than the foreseen laptop. This new computer covered both the planning and monitoring needs of action C5 (as originally foreseen for the laptop).

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: N/A

Expected results: Expected results have been met with fewer trees than original planned. **1555 native plants planted, providing screening. Total area planted was around 2 hectares, in a pattern of rows and small patches. One rugged laptop.**

4.1.13. Additional Management actions approved with EC's letter Ares (2014) 1808155

Some additional management actions were proposed during the EC's visit on 6 May 2014 and with our Progress report and approved with letter Ares (2014) 1808155. The costs for the additional actions were implemented with underspending budget in category 'Infrastructure' from Action C1, Fencing the site.

Pedestrian crossing with hump, warning signs and lights

The works started and were completed in December 2014. The Public Works Authority and the Department of Electromechanical Services carried out the works and the Game and Fauna Service (GFS) transferred the invoiced amount (total of €14,465.80) to these Departments. The funds were sent from the GFS to Larnaca district offices via interdepartmental transfers. The amount of €6,681.80 was paid to the Department of Electromechanical Services District Office of Larnaca and the amount of €7.784 was paid to the Public Works District Office of Larnaca.

The works included a pedestrian crossing on a hump, warning signs, warning lights and a small pavement on each site of the crossing. The partner responsible for this action was the Coordinating beneficiary i.e. the GFS.

This action contributed towards ensuring the safety of the public as there is an increase in visitors' numbers to the site, especially at the area of the Information Kiosk. The speed hump also reduced the speed of passing cars and especially trucks, thus minimising the risk of an oil spill accident. We also expect that collisions with crossing birds will be minimised.

Fireflies on electricity wires passing over the Lake.

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS), responsible for this action, placed an order for the fireflies from Sweden as they cannot be found in the market in Cyprus. The cost of fireflies was €2,293 and the GFS transferred additional funds (€581.7) to the Electricity Authority of Cyprus to place the firefly markers on the powerlines crossing over the site. In December 2014, the Electricity Authority placed around ten firefly markers out of the 50 purchased in areas that were accessible. Due to the presence of water in the wetland making access impossible and also increasing the risk of electrocution the Electricity Authority could not place all firefly markers; this will be done in autumn 2015 when the site will normally be dry. We expect that this action will significantly reduce the risk of collision for birds. This is a common practice followed across Europe to mark powerlines and prevent bird collision.

4.1.14. Action E2, Project Monitoring

As shown by the results we got so far, the time available for monitoring the impact of actions was sufficient to get some reliable preliminary results. Conservation actions were completed in a way that one –and in the case of action C2, two- breeding seasons occurred within the project duration after the completion the actions. Since the actions were focused on generating a positive impact during the breeding season, this timing of the actions allowed for a preliminary assessment of their impact. Moreover, awareness raising actions started early on in the project (i.e. website, information signs, consultation meeting with community, photo competition, project leaflet and sticker) allowing more time to influence public opinion while the assessment of all D actions was ongoing. So far, bird numbers are moving towards the FRV target (i.e. Spur-winged Lapwing), new species have nested on site (i.e. Cattle Egrets), species that hadn't bred for years have returned on site (i.e. Kentish Plover), other Annex I species that do not regularly breed on site, have recorded nesting on site during 2014 and 2015 (i.e. Little Terns), important species have nested on the restored area (i.e. Spur-winged Lapwing and Stone curlew) and important species are nesting on the nesting islets we created (i.e. Black-winged Stilt, Little Tern, Spur-winged Lapwing). Apparently, these are all positive indications showing the success of project actions. However, we understand that more time is needed to give us a clearer idea on the impact of actions and this is why project partners commit to continue monitoring the site and continue the management.

To evaluate the success and impact of the conservation measures taken as part of the project, partners were monitoring a number of factors throughout the entire project duration.

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) had been **monitoring numbers of birds** on a monthly basis with a focus on the target species (Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus* and Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*). This was achieved through site visits and thorough checks especially during the breeding season. Monitoring also included counting nests and breeding pairs and plotting them on a map. Numbers of selected waterbirds are included in Appendix V of the Monitoring Protocol, which can be found in Annex 4.4 of the Final report. Target species breeding pairs were recorded and compared to the Favourable Reference Value (FRV) numbers.

Year	Number of pairs		FRV	
	Spur-winged Lapwing <i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	<i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
2012	8	21-23	15	60
2013	6	36		
2014	8-12	12-14		
2015 [preliminary results according to April and mid-May counts]	9-11	19 – 20		

The bird monitoring was carried out in combination with the monitoring of the fence for vandalism/trespassing to evaluate success of Action C1 so during site visits for the bird counts included also general patrols around the site.

Moreover, since the completion of the restoration works at the area where the flea-market used to operate (Action C2), the GFS had been specifically counting birds on the restored field to see how birds responded to habitat restoration.

Success of on-the ground conservation actions have been evident from bird numbers:

- Little-ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius* nested on the canal roads. Without a fence (Action C1) those nests would have been destroyed or disturbed by visitors, their pets or vehicles.
- Annex I species Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* nested in 2014 while the last breeding record of this species was in 2007. The GFS recorded at least 2 pairs nesting in 2014. The fencing (Action C1) minimised disturbance and the water management works (Action C3) helped this species by creating muddy edges suitable for feeding through the creation of shallow ditches.
- Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* nested in 2014 for the first time. GFS has recorded around 45 nests in S3. Fencing (Action C1) significantly minimised disturbance and the water management works (Action C3) also contributed to this action by enabling a part of the lake to hold water for a longer period.
- A pair of Spur-winged Lapwings –a target species, was recorded on the restored field (Action C2) during breeding season 2013.
- A pair of Stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*, an Annex I species, recorded during March 2013 in the restored field (Action C2). This was the first time that Stone-curlews had been recorded on that field.
- Only some days after the completion of the restoration works a wintering flock of about 70 Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* was recorded on the restored area (Action C2).
- The presence of other important species (i.e. Crested Larks *Galerida cristata*, Sky Larks *Alauda arvensis* Cattle Egrets *Bubulcus ibis*, Chukar partridge *Alectoris chukar*) reinforces the notion that the restored area (Action C2) will be an important part of the wetland's ecosystem.
- Due to the creation of nesting islets and connecting ditches (Action C3) we extended the habitat available for both target species and improved nesting and feeding conditions for them. Target species Spur-winged Lapwing (*Vanellus spinosus*) nested in 4 out of 5 new islets and Oroklini Lake was the best breeding site in Cyprus for this species in 2014.
- The breeding pairs of Spur-winged Lapwing show an increase in spring 2014 with 8-12 pairs, moving towards the FRV target which is 15 pairs. Action C1 and Action C3 both contributed towards this result.
- The abundance of Spur-winged Lapwing (winter flock) recorded in November 2014 (85 individuals) was the highest ever recorded at the site and it has been the highest on the island for the 3-year project duration.

Please note that the numbers for the Black-winged Stilt were quite low in spring 2014 as the species relies on a minimum level of water for successful breeding, especially at key times of year. Oroklini Lake did not have adequate water for this species during the key time in 2014 and there were also some strong rainfall events during the middle of breeding season, which resulted in the loss of a couple of nests in S3. In summary, the rainfall in winter 2013-14 was enough to fill in compartment S3 but not enough to provide sufficient water levels at the rest of

the site (compartments S6 and S7) which are ideal for the Black-winged Stilt and is also a much larger area. For these conditions the water management works in 2013 were not sufficient for the Black-winged Stilt. A water control structure to control water levels in S3 was omitted from the original design of the water management works and the water management regime in fear of vandalism. However, this was reconsidered and a valve was installed to allow the drawing down water levels in S3 to avoid flooding of nests in the future. The installation of a water control structure for S3 in autumn 2014 will prevent this from happening again in the future. Moreover, the Black-winged Stilt is sensitive to sudden water fluctuations while the Spur-winged Lapwing is more tolerant of dry conditions and the created nesting islets benefited this species.

BirdLife Cyprus (BC) responsible for implementing actions related to the water management of the lake (Action A4-Hydrology report and Action C3-Restore and manage water) had been monitoring water levels on site during the project and had been also recording the changes in water levels. Moreover, the **water level data** from the water level logger were retrieved on a regular basis (monthly). These data will contribute towards better understanding of the system response in relation to rainfall and drought events and also give information on evaporation rate. This information will continue contributing in the future water management of the wetland. Please see Annex 7 for the retrieved water level data.

Please note that due to a malfunction of the water level logger the logger stopped recording in September 2013 and this was discovered in early March 2014. The water level logger had been removed from the lake in October 2013 to avoid vandalism as the lake was dry and access to it was easy. The water level logger was reinstalled in the lake in mid-May, when the problem was fixed. The gap between September 2013 and May 2014 when the logger was reinstalled is not a problem because BC was keeping a diary of the water levels, supported by photos. Besides, there were only a couple of rainfall events during that time and the water levels were quite stable and generally low.

Project officers were also monitoring the implementation of project actions. The GFS had been recording signs of entrance within the site before the erection of the fence and after the fencing GFS patrolled the site in order to record damages to the fence and signs of human presence in the site. Wildlife cameras recorded several incidents of people within the site before the erection of the fence. Appendix IV of the Monitoring Protocol gives presence within the site between 2012 and 2014. No signs of entrance of people with their dogs or vehicles within the site were recorded after the erection of the fence. Fencing was completed in December 2013. Since then, only a few (four) isolated trespassing events were recorded. These, as witnessed by the Information Kiosk, were (1) a group of young boys that jumped the fence for fun, (2) a birdwatcher who was photographed by the trap cameras, (3) a young man out of curiosity to see the birds and (4) a man who wanted to set his goldfish free. There were also some signs of damage to the wooden fence but this did not indicate attempt to enter the site. The damage was fixed by the GFS. Other than these few incidents the fence has contributed significantly to minimising disturbance to birds. The success of this action is evident from the bird records as mentioned in §5.1.8.

The Department of Forests (DF) had been monitoring the site for re-sprouted acacias and to check on planted vegetation success rate and needs in water. The vegetation has been plotted on a map to assess the success of actions C4 and C5. Please find the map in Annex 8.

To assess the success of dissemination actions we have recorded:

Visits to the project website (Action D2): By the end of the project the website has had 176,653 visits. This is estimated automatically and is visible at the bottom right end on the project website.

Visits to the site (Action D6): Since the operation of the information kiosk and the presence of the Information Kiosk Officer in mid-March 2014 we were able to record visits on site. According to the Officer's logbook 1477 people visited the Information Kiosk during operating hours (08:30 and 12:00 and 14:00 – 14:45). Please find the logbook in Annex 9. Occasional visits of project officers to the site during weekends as well as reports from birdwatchers it is assumed that on average around 120 people visit the site every month and we believe that this is a conservative estimate.

Attendance to the photo exhibition event (Action D7): Around 100 guests attended the photo inauguration and award event.

The number of people attending the consultation meetings and number of questions made (Action D8): The first consultation meeting on 23 May 2012 attracted around 60 people, the second on 27 November 2013 around 70 people and the third one on 22 July 2014 around 60 for the birdwatching activity at the lake and 40 people for the talks at the amphitheatre.

The number of people attending the volunteer clean up (Action D9): Over 170 people participated.

The number of people attending the teacher workshop (Action D12): Around 58 teachers participated in the workshop organised on 11 April 2014 at Oroklini and around 15 during the second workshop organised on December 2014 at Limassol.

Number of articles in the newspapers, during the project: The proposed target was to send around 10 press releases to media by the end of the project, 30 articles to appear in media and 2 times in TV. From the start of the project until its completion, 16 press releases were sent reaching the target set. The project appeared in the newspapers around 50 times exceeding the target. There have been around five radio interviews and three TV covers. Please find the Press Releases in Annex 10, the newspaper clippings in Annex 11, the radio interviews and TV covers in Annex 12 (in electronic form).

To monitor project implementation the Project Director (PD) overviewed project implementation with the help of the Project Coordination Unit (PCU). In terms of monitoring concrete conservation actions the PD and the PC conducted joint visits on site to see action progress on the spot and to ensure actions were implemented as foreseen and also to coordinate and plan actions ahead. Moreover, joint site visits with project partners also occurred during Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings.

Finally, PSC meetings played an important role in evaluating project progress and in achieving good cooperation and communication between the partners. During PSC meetings each project partner reported on the progress of each action by giving information on milestones, deliverables and timeline, information on next actions and reporting any outstanding issues.

The GFS produced a Monitoring Protocol as foreseen. This document set the basis for management work that needs to be continued after the LIFE project. The Monitoring Protocol provides the guidelines to estimate if the site reaches the target of Favourable Reference Values (FRVs). This is estimated through the number of birds that need to be monitored. The Monitoring Protocol also lists all the rest of the factors that need to be monitored. These factors are the means to achieve the FRV targets, i.e. monitoring infrastructure, water levels, predation,

invasive alien species etc. and also things related to visitors and public engagement. The content of the Monitoring Protocol has been incorporated in the Action Plan for the site (Action A5).

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: all project partners

Summary of outputs achieved: Project monitoring enabled the assessment of the effectiveness of implemented actions. The Monitoring Protocol sets the basis for management work that needs to be continued after the LIFE project.

Time schedule: Actual start date: 1/1/2012 - Actual end date: 1/1/2015
(Proposed start date: 1/1/2012 - Proposed end date: 1/1/2015)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: Regarding the equipment the GFS did not purchase the spotting scope as explained in §5.1.7 and part of the money that meant to be spent on the spotting scope was used for the purchase of better value binoculars. Also the Environment Department purchased a camera instead of the foreseen pair of binoculars.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Monitoring Protocol, Annex 4.4.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Clear information on results of actions on Favourable Conservation Status of site and ability to assess further management measures needed. Monitoring protocol agreed and adopted, monitoring Indicators agreed.**

4.1.15. Action E3, Networking with other projects

This action included a variety of elements, i.e. (i) communication with other LIFE projects during the project and establishment of an informal network of contacts, (ii) travelling abroad (United Kingdom, France, Slovenia, Greece) to other LIFE and non-LIFE projects for networking purposes, (iii) networking workshop on 'Managing wetlands for birds' organised in Cyprus with invited speakers from abroad, (iv) participation to the 19th International Conference of the European Bird Census Council (EBCC) (<http://www.ebcc.info/index.php?ID=478>) that was held in September 2013 in Cluj, Romania, (v) various presentations of the project in workshops and other events in Cyprus as complementary actions beyond LIFE.

(i) Communication with other LIFE projects during the project:

The project has been in communication with other LIFE Nature projects implemented in Cyprus and abroad, i.e. LIFE10 NAT/BG/000152, LIFE10 NAT/GR/000638, LIFE10 NAT/CY/000717, LIFE09 NAT/CY/000247, LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453 and LIFE09 NAT/GR/000343. The first five projects have helped especially at the beginning of the OROKLINI project as they provided advice on how to put the best procedures in place and shared experiences. The later project (LIFE09 NAT/GR/000343, ACCOLAGOONS) is a project dealing with the protection of two lagoons in Greece and the actions target the Black-winged Stilt which is one of the target species of the LIFE Oroklini project. Relevant deliverables, i.e. the FRV workshop report, Action A1 and the FRV report, Action A2 were sent to the contact person of this project. Moreover, after invitation by the ACCOLAGOONS project, the LIFE Oroklini project participated in the ACCOLAGOONS project networking committee.

Other LIFE projects the LIFE Oroklini project had communication are the BIOforLife (LIFE11 INF/CY/00863), and LIFE sodic wetlands - LIFE12 NAT/HU/001188. More specifically, the BIOforLife project and the LIFE Oroklini project collaborated for a common live link of a radio show during the third consultation meeting (Action D8) organised on 22 July 2014 at the Oroklini Lake Information Kiosk. Also, officers from LIFE sodic wetlands visited Oroklini Lake on 13 March 2014 and met with the Project Coordinator (PC) on site to discuss project actions and see management work being done at Oroklini Lake.

The website addresses of most of the aforementioned projects are included in the section 'links' of the LIFE Oroklini project website.

(ii) Travelling abroad (United Kingdom, France, Slovenia, Greece) to other LIFE and non-LIFE projects for networking purposes:

Travelling to nature reserves in the UK and to Tour du Valat in France were foreseen by the project proposal. The other two trips in Slovenia and Greece were additional networking trips. The networking trip to Slovenia was officially approved by EC with letter ARES (2014) 3411259.

Networking trip to nature reserves in United Kingdom: The Project Coordinator (PC) and Project Officer 3 from BirdLife Cyprus travelled to the UK between 7 - 13 August 2013 and visited seven wetland reserves: Minsmere RSPB, Snape RSPB, Boyton and Hollesley marshes RSPB, Titchwell marsh RSPB, Rainham marshes RSPB and WWT London Wetlands Centre. The project officers saw first-hand how wetland restoration and management works are done abroad. The basic principles of wetland management are the same for all wetlands, and seeing management work implemented by organisations with extensive experience in this area was important for the management of Oroklini Lake. Besides, the RSPB is involved in designing the Water Management Protocol for Oroklini Lake, and the visit was a great opportunity for networking, and exchanging

experiences and management practices for conservation and especially birds, as well as an inspiration on how to engage the public with such projects.

Networking trip to Tour du Valat, France: A Project Officer from the Game and Fauna Service visited Tour du Valat, France as foreseen by the project, on 20 – 25 October 2014 to exchange experience and gain knowledge on wetland restoration and management. The officer visited several sites that are implementing two LIFE projects involving among others wader management. These LIFE projects were LIFE+ ENVOLL and LIFE+ MCSalt. The proposal foresaw two people but due to heavy workload only one person could make it.

Networking trip to nature reserves in Slovenia: This was an additional trip approved by EC with letter ARES (2014) 3411259. During the networking workshop ‘Managing wetlands for birds’ a similar case to Oroklini Lake (restoration of an urban brackish wetland) was presented by BirdLife Slovenia (DOPPS). BirdLife Slovenia invited the Project Coordinator (PC) from BirdLife Cyprus (BC) to visit Slovenia and see the management work being done there, also in terms of visitor management and communication. In order to exchange experience and gain knowledge on wetland restoration and management, the LIFE Oroklini PC from BC visited the BirdLife partner in Slovenia (DOPPS) during 27 September – 5 October 2014. The PC visited three Slovenian LIFE projects (LIFE03 NAT/SLO/000077, LIFE00 NAT/SLO/7226 & LIFE11 NAT/SI/000882) taking place in three Nature Reserves and saw at first-hand the management works carried out there such as creating nesting islets, managing water levels, removing invasive alien species, and removing expanding reeds. All these management actions are similar to those implemented at Oroklini Lake. The visit was planned in such a way in order to allow the PC to participate in a workshop on ‘Planning and Implementing Management’ facilitated by an experienced officer of RSPB (BirdLife UK). The workshop was relevant to the finalisation of the Action Plan prepared for Oroklini Lake. The networking trip proved to be very useful as similar work to what is being done for Oroklini Lake, is also being done by DOPPS and was also very informative for continuing management at Oroklini Lake beyond the LIFE Oroklini project.

Networking trip to Crete, Greece for participation at a workshop: A project on “Wetland protection on Aegean islands” (<http://www.oikoskopio.gr/ygrotopio/general/article.php?id=10&lang=el>) implemented by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Greece invited the PC from BC to a workshop organised in Crete, Greece in April 2013. This wetland project aims to record the current status of wetlands in Aegean islands, to promote their importance and take action for their protection. BC accepted the invitation and the LIFE Oroklini project was presented as a ‘good example’ of wetland restoration and management, taking into account the fact that the Oroklini project is being implemented in a nearby country with similar culture and environmental conditions. This was a great opportunity to exchange information on best practice and lessons learnt. WWF is proposing similar actions to LIFE Oroklini to protect the Malia wetland in Crete. The PC participated as guest speaker at the workshop organised on 25 April 2013 in Crete. The invitation to the workshop and presentation given by the PC was submitted with our Midterm report, in Annex 15. The costs for the flight ticket (€301.64) can be covered from underspending in category ‘Travel’ from the same action. The accommodation costs were covered by WWF.

(iii) Networking workshop on ‘Managing wetlands for birds’ organised in Cyprus with invited speakers from abroad:

The workshop on ‘Managing Wetlands for Birds’ was organised on 31/10/2013 and not 30/06/2013 as proposed. This delay was foreseen by our Midterm report. The reason for this delay was because of heavy workload of BC staff members that would work on this action. Pushing the deadline four months back gave BC more time to better organise and implement the

workshop and also to attract participants. This delay did not have an impact on other actions since there was no action whose implementation depended on this action.

This was a two-day workshop with six invited experts from five BirdLife partners (two experts from RSPB-BirdLife UK, one from HOS-BirdLife Greece, one from DOPPS-BirdLife Slovenia, one from LPO-BirdLife France and one from SEO-BirdLife Spain), who presented case studies on wetland management restoration funded by the LIFE project in their countries. There are many examples of wetland restoration and management in Europe and all share similar aspects to those faced by the project team at Oroklini and this workshop was all about enhancing the exchange of know-how, experience and best practice between projects and experts. All the experts based their experience and findings, on current or previous projects funded by LIFE. In total, around 45 people participated at the workshop, from the Cyprus authorities, such as the Water Development Department, the Town Planning and Housing Department, the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research, LIFE Oroklini project partners (Game and Fauna Service, Environment Department, Department of Forests, Voroklini Community Council), as well as other NGOs, other LIFE projects implemented in Cyprus, the SBA Environment Department and other stakeholders. The participants' list, invitation and agenda, attendance sheet and presentations from the workshop have been submitted with our Progress report. The workshop report is submitted with this report, Final report in Annex 4.5.

(iv) Participation to the 19th International Conference of the European Bird Census Council (EBCC), held in September 2013 in Cluj, Romania:

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) participated to the 19th International Conference of the European Bird Census Council (EBCC) (<http://www.ebcc.info/index.php?ID=478>) that was held in September 2013 in Cluj, Romania. The LIFE Oroklini project was presented with a poster and the paper generated from the poster was sent for publication in the conference proceedings that will be published during 2014. The paper and the poster have been submitted with our Progress report.

(v) Various presentations of the project in workshops and other events in Cyprus as complementary actions beyond LIFE:

The LIFE Oroklini project has been presented in a workshop of the Mediteraves Project funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme, on 28 June 2013 in Cyprus (Governor's Beach). The workshop was entitled 'Birdwatching Tourism in Cyprus: Principles and Potential' and the LIFE Oroklini project was presented as an example of transforming an important site in a way which also attracts tourists (beyond its management for conservation). The LIFE Oroklini project was also presented in a workshop organised by another nongovernmental organisation in Cyprus on 'Inventory of the Cyprus Wetlands' project funded by the MAVA Foundation, on 13 February 2014 in Limassol. Copies of project presentations given were submitted with our Progress report (in electronic format only, Annex 17).

It should be noted here that in various talks/presentations regarding conservation work in Cyprus, the LIFE Oroklini project is always presented as an example of efficient and effective management of an important site with specific conservation objectives, which can be used as a management model for other areas in Cyprus that need protection. It is also presented as a good example of effective use of resources and a cooperation model between government bodies, non-governmental organisations and local community.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: all project partners

Summary of outputs achieved: Exchange of knowledge, experience and best practise techniques.

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid April - Actual end date: 31/12/2014
(Proposed start date: March 2012 - Proposed end date: 31/12/2014)

Performance indicators: Creation of an informal network of contacts, knowledge gained on the subject of wetland management for conservation and birds.

Technical modifications: Some additional networking trips to Crete, Greece, Romania and Slovenia

Financial modifications: N/A

Complementary action outside LIFE: Presentation of the LIFE Oroklini project in workshops and other events in Cyprus

Deliverable: Networking workshop report submitted with this report, Final report, Annex 4.5.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **1 workshop with around 45 participants on restoration of brackish wetlands for the benefit of birds with invited participants 2 UK, 1 Slovenia, 1 France, 1 Greece, 1 Spain and 39 from Cyprus. Visits to France by GFS, visit to Greece, UK and Slovenia by BirdLife Cyprus. 1 Report of the Workshop outcomes.**

4.1.16. Action E4, External Audit

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) has awarded the contract to an external auditor following the appropriate procedures and according to the rules on public tendering. The auditor's data were given in our Midterm report as requested. The auditor has audited the financial reports of the project and checked whether the financial report is in compliance with the LIFE+ Programme Common Provisions, the national legislation and accounting rules. Please find the financial audit report in Annex 4.6 of this Final report.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: Audit of the LIFE Oroklini financial report

Time schedule: Projected start date: January 2013 - Actual end date: 02/07/2015
(Proposed start date: October 2014 - Proposed end date: 31/01/2015)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: There is an underspending in this action due to the fact that the GFS following the rules on awarding contracts awarded the contract to the bidder offering the lowest price. The foreseen budget for this action under 'External assistance' was €13000 while only €5842 were used.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Financial audit report, Final report, Annex 4.6.

Expected output: Expected result has been met. **1 External audit of the final Financial Statements.**

4.1.17. Action E5, After LIFE Conservation Plan

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) carried out the production of the after-LIFE Conservation Plan. The deliverable was produced in English, with summary in Greek, in electronic and paper format and it was distributed to all stakeholders and relevant state agencies. The document was based mainly on the Action Plan (Action A5) and includes details on how the actions taken through the LIFE project are planned to continue in order ensure the long term management of the site. The plan also outlines who will undertake which action with a timeline, what the cost will be and who will cover that cost. The report contains a particular chapter related to Climate Change adaptation strategy, especially in relation to wetland habitats in Cyprus and an evaluation of the objectives of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) for the site. Finally, the report includes an evaluation of the project's contribution to the Natura 2000 network of Cyprus.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: Production of a document that ensures the continuation of the LIFE Oroklini project actions in the long term so as to maintain the Favourable Conservation Status of the site

Time schedule: Projected start date: July 2014 - Actual end date: 30/04/2015
(Proposed start date: January 2015 - Proposed end date: 31/03/2015)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: N/A

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: After-LIFE Conservation Plan, Annex 4.7.

Expected output: Expected result has been met. **An After-LIFE Conservation Plan in electronic and paper format, 10-15 pages long.**

4.2. Dissemination actions

4.2.1. Objectives

It is widely accepted among conservationists that the impact of on-the-ground conservation actions is enhanced when the actions are combined with dissemination and awareness raising actions. One of the main objectives of the LIFE Oroklini project dissemination actions was to raise awareness among the public about the importance of this unique wetland and the need to preserve it. Another important aim was to engage the local community and through the project make them 'ambassadors' for the protection of Oroklini Lake. Based on this approach, the project developed a number of activities, which provided the public's active involvement in the protection of Oroklini Lake and their engagement in project activities and dissemination of results.

Through dissemination actions like the website, the notice boards, the layman's report, the infrastructure for visitors, the photo competition, the volunteer clean-up, the production of information material (leaflet, sticker, documentary, brochure for visitors), the education pack, the information events, the project managed to reach a wide variety of target audiences. Target groups included among others the general public, the local community, photographers, nature enthusiasts, young people, pupils, government authorities, non-government organisations, people implementing projects in other EU countries and other stakeholders. The engagement of the local community (Voroklini Community Council) played a key role in its success and this can bring long-term benefits for the sustainable future of the site. The LIFE Oroklini project provided the means to spread the word among the public about the need to safeguard nature in general and Natura 2000 sites, wetlands and Oroklini Lake in particular.

During project implementation several opportunities for more dissemination actions came up the cost of which can be covered from underspending of other actions. The revised project proposal included the following dissemination activities:

- Participation of the LIFE Oroklini project in the LIFE 20-years celebration event – 23 May 2012
- Production of a portable banner used in all project related events – relevant image submitted with our Inception report – June 2012
- Production of a project logo used in all produced project material together with the LIFE and Natura 2000 logo – May 2012
- Production of a big banner on site, visible from the main road – December 2012
- Inauguration event for the Information Kiosk – 6 May 2014
- Erection of more information signs erected at the Information Kiosk – May & November 2014
- Production of a brochure for visitors. The leaflet was distributed in key locations to attract visitors to the site – December 2014
- Organisation of a second workshop for teachers (Action D12) to promote the education pack in Limassol – 4 December 2014

Beyond contractual obligations, project beneficiaries have disseminated project's actions and results through a number of other activities. Details for these activities are given in §4.2.2.13 'Other and Outside LIFE- dissemination actions'.

4.2.2. Dissemination: overview per activity

Table 2: List of dissemination deliverables. All dissemination material produced as part of the project bare the project logo, the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos as well as an explicit reference to the European Union’s support with the phrase ‘With the financial support of the LIFE financial instrument of the EU’.

Deliverable	Action	Submitted with
Three notice boards on site	D1	Final report, Annex 13
Project website www.orokliniproject.org	D2	Inception report
Layman’s report	D3	Final report, Annex 4.3
Birdwatching hide	D4.1	N/A (photos in Final report, Annex X)
Information panels in hide	D4.2	Final report, Annex 14
Footpath	D5	N/A (photos in Final report, Annex 5)
Information Kiosk	D6	N/A (photos in Final report, Annex 5)
Photo album	D7	Progress report, Annex 6.6 Electronically in Final report, Annex 15
Leaflet	D10	Midterm report, Annex 8.6 Electronically in Final report, Annex 16
Sticker	D10	Midterm report, Annex 8.6 Electronically in Final report, Annex 16
Video	D10	Progress report, Annex 6.7 Electronically in Final report, Annex 16
Education pack	D11	Progress report, Annex 6. Electronically in Final report, Annex 17
Deliverables from revised project proposal		
Posters for LIFE 20years event	N/A	Progress report, Annex 3.2
Portable banner	N/A	Midterm report, Annex 13
Project logo	N/A	Midterm report, Annex 13
Big banner on site	N/A	Midterm report, Annex 13
Information signs for Information Kiosk	N/A	Final report, Annex 18
Brochure for visitors	N/A	Final report, Annex 19

Dissemination deliverables such as layman’s report, leaflet, sticker, video, brochure for visitors and photo album were distributed in a targeted manner to promote project’s objectives through key centres such as the Information Kiosk, the Voroklini Community Council, project events, and environmental centres and in some cases to stakeholders. Please see section below for details on distribution.

4.2.2.1. Action D1, Erection of notice boards of the project

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) responsible for this action with the help of the Project Coordinator (PC) prepared the information material that was printed on the signs. The location of the three notice boards was decided during the Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting that took place on 10 September 2012 in consultation with Voroklini Community Council (VCC) and the other partners. The notice boards were erected at three sides of the lake (north, east and south side) at easily visible locations by passers-by and visitors and in consideration of where the boundaries of the government land are. These information signs provide basic information on the site, the two target species and the Natura 2000 network. Project logo, LIFE and Natura 2000 logos, partners' logos as well as the project website with a QR code were used on the signs. People view the signs often to receive information about the site.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service

Summary of outputs achieved: Three notice boards on site with information about the site, the species and the Natura 2000 network.

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid April 2012 - Actual end date: 05/10/2012
(Proposed start date: March 2012- Proposed end date: 30/09/2012)

Performance indicators: Visitors read the signs to receive information.

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: The costs for the creation of the large sign on site were covered under this action. Please see §4.2.2.13, Big sign on site for technical details.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Three notice boards (same design), Annex 13.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Three notice boards erected, one near birdwatching hide, one near the Information Kiosk, one at the west side by the road.**

4.2.2.2. Action D2, Project website

The project website www.orokliniproject.org was created according to the LIFE Common Provisions, guidelines and advice received by the external monitoring team. The website was ready and fully functional by 30 June 2012 according to the approved timeframe and the website address is www.orokliniproject.org, available in two languages, English and Greek. The website had been updated on a regular basis by the Project Coordinator (PC) and it will be kept for at least five years after the project end.

The project website includes information about the site, the species, the project summary, project objective, project actions, the press releases and deliverables produced during the project, contact details, useful links, information about the Natura 2000 network, latest news which were uploaded every month as well as a map for visitors. The website had been an extremely valuable communication tool which enabled dissemination of project activities and results. The website also provided the means for other projects to contact us for information, i.e. the LIFE sodic wetlands in Hungary and WWF Greece who invited BirdLife Cyprus at a workshop in Greece to present the LIFE Oroklini project (please see §4.1.15 for full details on this). A link to the project website was made available at the coordinating beneficiary's [website](#) and also on [BirdLife Cyprus](#)' and [VCC's](#) websites. A project summary is also available on BC's and VCC's website.

Under section '[Project Progress](#)' on website BirdLife Cyprus (BC) added a paragraph describing the project's progress and also some important results of project's success. This was done after the European Commission's suggestion in letter Ares 1808155.

The visits on the project website were approximately 10000 per month while a total of around 176653 clicks were counted by the end of the project.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: BirdLife Cyprus

Summary of outputs achieved: A user friendly project website contributing towards public awareness raising and dissemination of project results

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid March 2012 - Actual end date: 30/06/2012

(Proposed start date: March 2012 - Proposed end date: 2015)

Performance indicators: Number of visits to the website, i.e. 176653

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: N/A

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Project website www.orokliniproject.org

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Project website live on by 30 June 2012**

4.2.2.3. Action D3, Layman's report

BirdLife Cyprus (BC) responsible for this action followed the EC's guidelines to prepare the layman's report. The report informs the reader with an attractive layout on the project objective, the actions undertaken, success stories, achievements and dissemination deliverables. The report also includes an introduction with information about the site and target species, as well as the LIFE programme and the Natura 2000 network. This 12-pages document was produced in both English-80 copies and Greek-210 copies. The agreement with the printers was for 200 copies in total but it is common that they print more copies without charging the cost for the extra copies. The report is also available in electronic format on the project website. The layman's report has been promoted through the project FB page and articles in BC's publications. So far, copies have been distributed to project partners, stakeholders, the Water Development Department (WDD), collaborators and the photographer's whose photos were included in the report. The layman's report can be used in the future with decision makers and other communities to present the project and its many benefits to show what can be done in other areas that need protection. Already, the layman's report has been promoted through contacts to Paralimni Community, which has a marsh similar to Oroklini Lake, and needs protection. Please find below the (so far) distribution list for the layman's report. The feedback received so far from people who received the report have been very positive.

The small delay in producing the report did not affect the objectives of this action as the report was already distributed to key stakeholders as soon as it was ready.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: BirdLife Cyprus

Summary of outputs achieved: Production of a Layman's report which makes easily available of project methodology and outcomes. A useful document for stakeholders, who want to follow similar techniques to achieve similar results.

Time schedule: Projected start date: October 2014 - Actual end date: 13/1/2015
(Proposed start date: October 2014 - Proposed end date: 31/12/2014)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: The foreseen budget for the production of the report under category 'Consumables' was €1,000. However, this was an underestimate of cost as a graphic designer was necessary to produce an attractive report for the non-technical public. Also the cost for a 12-page colourful report is quite high. The cost for producing the report was around €2,177. This overspend (€1,177) can be covered from underspend of Action A5 under the same budget category.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Layman's report, Annex 4.3.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Layman's report, 12 pages, in English and Greek, in electronic and paper version, in 290 copies (extra copies provided free from printers). Dissemination of project objectives and results in a better manner.**

LAYMANS REPORT DISTRIBUTION LIST, BirdLife Cyprus		
Who	GR	EN
Minister of Interior	3	
Head of Game and Fauna Service	1	
BC Office staff	10	2
Akrotiri Environmental Centre	10	8
GFS	10	1
ED	15	1
DF	6	1
VCC	10	5
WDD	4	
Photographers	7	7
Panicos Panayides	1	1
IACO	2	
Journalist (radio Astra) and members of the public	3	
Contact to promote in Paralimni Community	3	1
RSPB		3
Vulture Conservation Foundation		1
BC volunteer (Larnaca sewage treatment plant)	1	
Terra Cypria	1	
Total given	87	31

4.2.2.4. Action D4, Erection of one hide for nature observation with information panels inside

The Game and Fauna Service (GFS) erected the birdwatching hide at the south side of the lake, at the location where the defunct pumping station was, near the notice board. The original thought was to use the pumping station as the base for the wooden birdwatching hide but following inspection by a civil engineer the pumping station was considered unsuitable and dangerous. Therefore, the GFS using external assistance demolished the pumping station and erected the birdwatching hide in its place. The specific spot provides good view of the canal area and of the shallow water where waders can be seen. This spot was also chosen because birds would not be disturbed as they were already familiar with the structure of the pumping station on that location that was well screened by the existing tamarisk trees. During usage of the hide, we realised that the stairs, even though within the tender's specifications were too steep for usage especially by schoolchildren and elderly visitors. Also the stair handle grip was not smooth making it difficult for someone to hold on it to climb the stairs. It was decided to remove the stairs and to replace them along with the handles by new ones, constructed by the Department of Forests (DF), free of charge. However, there was a cost for the timber, which was paid by the GFS as project funds (225.93 euro, please see GFS cost statement).

Interpretation signs were placed inside the hide in early May (2014) featuring 51 of the most important and common bird species that can be seen at Oroklini Lake during different times of year. A sign was also placed outside the hide, welcoming visitors and with credits to the European Commission's support featuring the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos.

The visits to the birdwatching hide were hard to count as there was no person there to take records. To attract people to the birdwatching hide we included a sketch of this facility in the map we created for the site. One of the signs on the Information Kiosk illustrates a site map. The site map was also included in the brochure for visitors created as part of the project.

In autumn 2014 one of the two benches was stolen from the inside of the birdwatching hide. The GFS replaced it with a new at a cost of €59.76. To avoid similar incidents in the future, the GFS requested from the Oroklini police to patrol the area especially during night, when there is a higher risk of vandalism. The GFS is committed to continue maintenance work to infrastructure created as part of the LIFE Oroklini project.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Game and Fauna Service for the hide and BirdLife Cyprus for the information panels

Summary of outputs achieved: Provided opportunities to the public to enjoy the wetland and learn more and appreciate the birds found there without disturbing them. This action was important because fencing prohibits access to the public and therefore alternative options for people to enjoy the site were needed.

Time schedule: Actual start date: October 2013 – Actual end date: 20/12/2013

(Proposed start date: October 2013 - Proposed end date: 31/03/2014)

Performance indicators: People using the hide

Technical modifications: The proposal did not foresee demolition of the pumping station. However, due to health and safety reasons the defunct pumping station had to be demolished.

Financial modifications: N/A

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Birdwatching hide with information panels, please see Annex 14 for copies of the panels

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Erection of one nature observation hide with information panels inside. Press release was sent when both hide and information kiosk were erected.**

4.2.2.5. Action D5, Construction of footpath leading to the hide

The footpath was constructed at the south side of the site leading visitors from the parking place to the birdwatching hide as foreseen. The total length of the footpath is 25meters and width 1,3meters. The proposal foresaw 50 meters length; however the available distance from the parking area to the hide was only 25 meters. The material used was wooden poles enriched with wood conservative to resist extreme environmental conditions and kentish rag gravel. We didn't use the usual crashed gravel as proposed because Kentish rag gravel was evaluated as a better material. Kentish rag gravel can be compacted producing more stable and safe substrate for walking.

The exact location and length of the footpath was examined during the site visit of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) in October 2013. The material and length were decided based on the foreseen budget, the available space and the safety of the visitors.

The footpath provided easy and guided access to the hide; however, the footpath cannot ensure that the parking area -where people will park and walk a short distance to reach the footpath- does not get muddy when it is raining. For this reason, the Voroklini Community Council with its own funds has put gravel in the parking area to prevent people from walking in the mud before reaching the footpath. In case of more than one cars present in the parking area or a bus it is not possible for all visitors to park right in front of the footpath. After a rainfall event, the parking area becomes very muddy causing difficulties to both pedestrians as well as motorists. The gravel was a solution to make the area friendlier to visitors. The footpath itself is elevated and it doesn't get muddy allowing people to reach the hide with no problem.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Department of Forests

Summary of outputs achieved: Footpath leading to the hide

Time schedule: Actual start date: early November 2013 - Actual end date: 16/04/2014
(Proposed start date: September 2013 - Proposed end date: 31/03/2014)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: A 25meters long footpath instead of 50meters, details for this are given above.

Financial modifications: N/A

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Footpath leading to the hide

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Construction of footpath leading to the hide, 25 meters long and 1,3meters wide.**

4.2.2.6. Action D6, Information point near or under the observation hide

The information point/kiosk was erected around end-February and the Information Kiosk Officer was hired on 17 March 2014. This minor delay was because of heavy workload of the Voroklini Community Council (VCC) which caused a delay in preparing the documents for the job opening. However, this delay did not affect the action's objective because BirdLife Cyprus (BC) responded to requests from schools for visits to the site and had arranged school visits for the Information Kiosk Officer to have as soon as the Officer was hired. Moreover, the time of about 2 weeks that the Information Kiosk was operating without an Officer was quite short.

The Information Kiosk was erected on the north side of the site (S3 compartment) where there is plenty of parking space, especially for buses and also because the Information Kiosk would be prominent and attractive to visitors as well as passers-by. It was also decided to be erected there because it would be visible from the road, thus attractive to visitors but less prone to vandalism. Another main reason for choosing that location was the fact that the north part of the site (S3 compartment) holds water for longer period, sometimes throughout summer depending on the rainfall. So visitors find this part more interesting and worth visiting.

Material available at the Information kiosk has been the project leaflet, the photo album, the documentary produced, leaflets from other LIFE projects, leaflet about the Natura 2000 network etc. Later in 2014, in May 2014 some information panels/signs were placed on the walls of the kiosk and some more were placed later in November 2014. These panels help visitors receive more information about the site especially when the Information Kiosk Officer was/is not working. The brochures for visitors were also placed in boxes at the information kiosk, and are available at all times.

Although, we tried to keep costs to the minimum by assigning the design of the kiosk to a volunteer architect, by creating the concrete base with VCC's own resources and also by using some wooden poles donated to the VCC (limited amount), the actual cost for the Information Kiosk was €9.394 while the proposed cost was €3,000. This was clearly an underestimation of costs at the time of preparing the proposal.

However, at this cost of €9.394 the Information Kiosk has proved to be really good value for money that can host sizable numbers of visitors –including pupils - at once, can act as a viewing point and also will last in time. The Information Kiosk includes an enclosed part where the Information Kiosk Officer could work protected from weather conditions. This enclosed part was insulated from humidity to prevent wearing in the lake's aggressive conditions (humidity and salt). The reason of this overspent was also the fact that we used durable wooden material (marine plywood), which gives the facility more years of life. The original plan for the Information Kiosk did not provide for the use of such durable, weather resistant wood. However on closer examination of the issue and in consultation with the architect, carpenter and local community we decided that it would be wiser to use marine plywood despite the higher cost because this would give a longer life to the facility (approximately 20 years). Indicatively, a marine plywood panel (dimensions 1.20 * 2.40 and 18mm thick) costs 50 euro while the same panel of a conventional wood, which would have a shorter life span (estimated life span of conventional wood given the conditions at Oroklini Lake is around 2 years), i.e. OSB is 20 euro. The facility also includes an observation platform from which visitors can view the S3 compartment (north side) of the lake and this also raised the costs a bit, (approximately €1000) however it gave a greater value to the facility in terms of visitor attraction and usability as well as experiential learning for children. Creating an Information Kiosk with €3,000 would mean that it would be a very small structure with little space for visitors and with less years of life.

The steep increase in visitors was striking from the first weekend the Information Kiosk was erected (in early March) where over 40 people were observed. This specific observation was reported to BirdLife Cyprus by a birdwatcher that was there at the time. Organised tourist groups were also observed stopping at the Information Kiosk every week. The Information Kiosk Officer keeps a log book of visitors and visits are then registered in an excel sheet and forwarded to the project partners at the end of each month. In total, from mid-March to the end of the project 1477 people were recorded by the Information Kiosk Officer. This number is quite satisfactory especially given the fact that the site had few visitor before. Please find the visitors' log book in Annex 9. Unfortunately, it was not possible to record visits during evening hours and weekends when the Information Kiosk Officer was not working. In addition to these visitors, around 800 pupils visited the Information Kiosk from 16 schools and also around 40 University students. The log of school visits is included in Annex 9 and photos from some of the school visits are included in Annex 5 'Photographs illustrating project activities photos'.

Project partners do not have data on visitors during the same time of the day and period of the year for previous years. However, the Game and Fauna Service and BirdLife Cyprus had been visiting the site regularly (minimum once per month each) in previous years, before the erection of the Information Kiosk and the difference in the number of visitors was more than notable. Indicatively, for every forty minutes someone would spend counting the birds from the location of where the Information Kiosk stands today, project officers would not observe a single visitor. Since the erection of the Information Kiosk, for every forty minutes someone would spend counting the birds from the Information Kiosk, project officers would observe at least four visitors. From conversations having with visitors, for most of the visitors that was the first time they visited the site and all of them gave very positive feedback on the transformation of the site credited to the LIFE Oroklini project.

Information Kiosk Officer:

The Information Kiosk Officer worked on a full time basis on the project at the same working hours as all Voroklini Community Council's (VCC) officers, i.e. 07:30 – 15:00 on week days. The Information Kiosk Officer was at the Information Kiosk between 08:30 and 12:00 and 14:00 – 14:45 however a note was available on the kiosk's door with a phone number in case visitors came. She spent the rest of the time at VCC's offices, doing office work related to her duties (writing invitation letters for schools, organising visits for groups etc.). The schedule was erected on the Information Kiosk door, including contact details. Beyond that, the Information Kiosk Officer responded to requests of interested groups for guided visits during weekends. The Officer's main duty was to welcome visitors at the Information Kiosk and provide information about the lake, its birds and the LIFE Oroklini project. She was also responsible for organising school visits to the lake and coordinating education activities, i.e. birdwatching, experiential games and using education material from the educational pack (Action D11). The Officer was also responsible to carry out short everyday inspections to the site and inform the project partners for any events (trespassing in the lake, illegal dumping, damages on infrastructure etc.). The Officer also assisted the VCC with preparing Press Releases relevant to events at the lake like the Information Kiosk inauguration event and the consultation meeting (Action D8). Moreover, the Information Kiosk Officer prepared and sent an invitation letter to all Cyprus public schools about the operation of the Information Kiosk and the opportunity to implement education activities (from the educational pack of Action D11) on site.

With the end of the project on 31 December 2014, the duties of the Information Kiosk Officer ended. Efforts to maintain her duties were made but given the financial crisis this was quite difficult. However, these efforts will continue until some funding is found for this purpose. In the

meantime the phone on which interested groups can call to book a visit is still available and the person who worked as an Information Kiosk Officer voluntarily accepted these requests for some time with support from BirdLife Cyprus so that number of visits was shared between them. Later in May, as the previous Information Officer found another job and could no longer take over this task, the Voroklini Community Council made an agreement with another person to accompany schools at the Information Kiosk in return for payment for each visit. BirdLife Cyprus provided support for training this person.

We had considered modifying the work schedule of the Information Kiosk Officer to also include in it afternoons and weekends, however this was not possible due to personal obligations of that person. However, in the future, if the duties of the Information Kiosk Officer are continued we will revise the working schedule to cover afternoons and weekends. The Information Kiosk will be maintained beyond the project end as also suggested in the Action Plan and after-LIFE Conservation Plan.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Voroklini Community Council

Summary of outputs achieved: Creating a main point for visitors to receive information

Time schedule: Actual start date: early November 2013 – Actual end date: 17/03/2014
(Proposed start date: February 2014- Proposed end date: 31/01/2014)

Performance indicators: Number of visitors to the Information Kiosk

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: The actual cost for the Information Kiosk was €9,394 while the proposed cost was €3,000. Justification for this overspending is given above.

Complementary action outside LIFE: BirdLife Cyprus accepts request fro schools to accompany visits on site

Deliverable: Hiring Information Kiosk Officer & erection of the Information Kiosks

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Information kiosk giving awareness raising material for the site available for the visitors**

4.2.2.7. Action D7, Photo competition, photo exhibition and Oroklini photo album

This action included several stages of preparation and sub-tasks, i.e. the organisation of the photo competition, the photo exhibition, the award events and the production of the photo album with selected photos.

Photo competition: The implementation of this action started around mid-April 2012 with the preparation of the photo competition invitation and rules. This was necessary in order to enable nature photographers to take photos of the lake during the whole year and cover every phase of the lake (i.e. breeding season in spring and bird migration in autumn/winter). For the preparation of the rules we advised experts from the Cyprus Photography Society (CPS), Limassol Chapter who regularly organise photo competitions. The CPS also helped with providing two judges to participate in the panel of judges and also with promoting the competition and later the exhibition to all the photography societies and clubs in Cyprus. The invitation for the photo competition was also sent (around in mid-June 2012) to a network of contacts through the project partners. The photo competition was also promoted through the project website and Facebook page, Voroklini Community Council's (VCC) website and BirdLife Cyprus' (BC) website and publications. Finally, a press release about the photo competition was sent to the media on 18 June 2012. The deadline for submitting photos was set for 31 May 2013. The best photos were selected around end June 2013 by a panel of judges. In this judging committee two members of the Cyprus Photography Society (CPS) participated while the other three members were the Project Coordinator (PC), the VCC Secretary (Mr Andreas Theodosiou) and a bird photographer. In total, 192 photos out of 200 photographs were selected and used for the photo exhibition and the photo album. The photo album (coffee table book) was produced in 500 copies. The photo album also includes 20 more photos of birds that were not captured by the photographers of the competition to showcase the bird diversity of the lake. The photo album is being distributed in a targeted matter to people who show real interest about the site during their visit at the Information Kiosk, to high profile guests of the Voroklini Community Council, to schools that were represented during the first teacher's workshop (Action D12), to schools that visit the Information Kiosk, to the Cyprus University of Technology, to the Akrotiri Environmental Centre for their library, to the photographers whose photographs were included in the album, to journalists showing an interest or to whom project officers have given interviews, to collaborators who have contributed in the implementation of the project, to officers of the DG Environment in Brussels and to nature enthusiasts who requested a copy. All copies were distributed by hand. The remaining copies (around 294) will continue to be distributed in a targeted manner and some copies will be saved to be used with decision makers in the future. The photo album will also be used to highlight the biodiversity of the site, its beauty and its importance for wildlife. Please find a full list of distribution in Annex 20 of our Final report.

Photo exhibition: The proposal did not foresee any costs for printing the photographs for the exhibition, or the label for each photograph, or the invitations for the inauguration and award event. However, this cost (€1316.2) was covered from the underspending in consumables (catering) foreseen for this action. In total, 92 photographs were exhibited while some of the photos remained on the walls of the Voroklini Community Council (VCC) building. Although the project banner was in the exhibition room with the photos we omitted adding mention to the LIFE program and project in the label under each photo. This was corrected after the comment of the EC during their visit in May 2014. The photo exhibition was inaugurated by the Director of the Environment Department, Mr Costas Hadjipanayiotou. More than 100 guests highlighted the celebrative atmosphere of the event. The event also included the award of the prizes of the photo competition.

The printed photographs have been saved and they can be exhibited again in the future in an event for the promotion of Oroklini Lake and wetlands in general.

Award event: The mailing list for the invitation to the award event, the invitation as well as proofs of the invitation to the event from the Cyprus Photographic Society's publications, were submitted with our Progress report, in Annex 9. The winner of the photo competition who received the €1000 cash prize was Mr Albert Stoecker with the photo of a Black-winged Stilt at Oroklini Lake. In addition, BirdLife Cyprus (BC) gave a second and third prize (€500 in total) from its own resources and four hotels located in Voroklini donated accommodation for one night for 2 persons as a second and third prize (along with the BC money prize) and to two people receiving a commendation. So, five people in total received a prize for participating in the photo competition. A Press Release was sent to the media about the award event and exhibition (please see Annex 10 for all press releases produced as part of the project).

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Voroklini Community Council

Summary of outputs achieved: Promoting Oroklini Lake to a wide audience and building support from local people, 42 entries to the photo competition, over 100 guests to the award event, good coverage of the action from the media, with around 6 clippings.

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid April 2012 - Actual end date: 27/11/2013
(Proposed start date: May 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2013)

Performance indicators: Number of people participating in the photo competition and award event.

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: Printing submitted photos and labels was not foreseen by the proposal. This cost (€1,316.2) was covered from the underspending in consumables (catering) foreseen for this action.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Photo album (coffee table book), submitted with our Progress report, Annex 6.6 and with this report in electronic format in Annex 15.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Photo competition and award. 500 photo albums. Around 120 people at the event. No relevant Ministers were available to inaugurate the event, the photo exhibition was inaugurated by the Director of the Department of Environment. Press Release sent, 6 newspapers clippings.**

4.2.2.8. Action D8, Information and consultation meetings with local community and visits to the site

During the project three information meetings were organised with the local community as foreseen by the project. The invitations to the events were promoted through Community Council boards, project website, partner's websites and contacts and local newspaper, (the project website was not ready for the first meeting) while a press release was sent. The invitation was sent to all the residents of Voroklini, local hunter and farmer groups, NGOs, local development companies, teachers, local politicians and local municipalities

The first consultation meeting took place on 23 May 2012 was a combination of an open day for the project and a celebration of the 20th anniversary of LIFE. The event which was open to the public included a site visit and featured the Natura 2000 network. The target for the number of participants was 30-40 people while the event was attended by 62 people. All project partners were represented. During the event, participants first visited the lake with project officers and then they visited VCC building for presentations about the project and the LIFE program. The Chairman of Voroklini Community Council (VCC) opened the meeting. After the talks, around 15 questions were submitted to the project officers who fully answered the questions. The general feeling was that people were interested in the project and very positive about the protection of the lake. The press release sent for the event, the invitation, the mailing list, copies of relevant publications, and photographs from the day and the presentations given (presentations in electronic form only) were submitted with our Inception report, in Annex 11.

The second consultation meeting took place on 27 November 2013. The event was attended by 70 people exceeding the objective of 30-40 people. All project partners were represented. The event included a welcome talk by the VCC President, a talk about Natura 2000 in Cyprus and Oroklini Lake by the Project Director (PD) and a talk about the project and its progress by the Project Coordinator (PC). After the talks, around 10 questions were submitted to the project officers who answered the questions. The outcome of the event was positive with people showing support for the project. Before the end of the event, the video produced under Action D10 was presented. The invitation, the mailing list and the presentations given (the presentations are in electronic form only) were submitted with our Progress report, Annex 11. Participants to the event were from organised groups (political parties, unions, people from nearby villages, former members of the VCC council, parent's association and teachers of the Oroklini Primary school and residents from the Voroklini Community. Please note that we did not keep a participants' list to submit it with our report. In the morning of the same day we organised a site visit with pupils of the Voroklini Primary school for birdwatching. A Press Release was sent to the media about the event.

The third consultation meeting took place on 22 July 2014, with three weeks delay than proposed. This small delay was because of heavy workload of project officers. Around 50 people joined this last Open Day for the LIFE Oroklini project (40 at the birdwatching event and 60 at the amphitheatre). The event included a birdwatching event at Oroklini Lake. A radio station (Radio Proto) covered the event with a two-hour live link at Oroklini Lake. The live link was organised together with another LIFE project implemented in Cyprus, BIOforLife. The live link gave information on Oroklini Lake, its birds, as well as information on the threats migratory birds face, with a focus on the bird trapping issue which BIOforLife project deals with. Please find the radio show in Annex 12.

The event continued with short talks at the Voroklini Community Council amphitheatre, where the Project Director (PD) gave a talk on the Natura 2000 network and the need for management of sites, while the Project Coordinator (PC), presented the project progress, successes with a

special mention on the future of Oroklini Lake. This third consultation meeting was interactive and gave more space to the participants to give feedback on the project and express their opinion and vision for the lake. Participants filled in a questionnaire which showed a very positive feedback. Specifically, the 32 questionnaires received showed that:

- 100% of those questioned believe that the LIFE Oroklini project has addressed the conservation issues Oroklini Lake was facing (human disturbance to birds, lack of water management, expanding of acacia trees, and lack of awareness raising for the importance of the wetland). Half of them believe that the issues were addressed to a high level.
- 100% of those questioned believe that as a result of the LIFE Oroklini project, Oroklini Lake can contribute in raising public awareness in the future. 71% of them believe that the project can contribute to a high level.
- 100% of those questioned believe that the LIFE Oroklini project has transformed the area to a point where Oroklini Lake adds significant value to the wider area. 74% of them believe that the project has added value to a high level.
- Only 6% have never used any of the visitor facilities created as part of the LIFE Oroklini project (birdwatching hide, information kiosk, information boards).
- 97% of those who had visited Oroklini Lake before would definitely recommend a visit at Oroklini Lake to others.

In general, the project received very good comments and people seem to enjoy the site. Please find copies of the completed questionnaires in Annex 21.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Voroklini Community Council

Summary of outputs achieved: Three consultation meetings with the local community to raise awareness about the project and the Natura 2000 network and engage them. On average, around 60 people attended the events.

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid March 2012 - Actual end date: 22/07/2014
(Proposed start date: October 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/06/2014)

Performance indicators: Number of participants to the events, support of the public to the project.

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: Foreseen budget in 'Consumables' was €3,000 while only €1,037 were used for catering. A small amount from this underspending was used to print invitations for the consultation meetings and for some other consumables for the Information Kiosk Inauguration event. We also propose to transfer the rest of the underspending in category 'Infrastructure' to cover the extra cost of Action D6, Information Kiosk.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: N/A

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **3 consultation meetings. Local Community has supported the project. Invitations were sent according to the proposal (i.e. all residents, farmers, NGOs, local Development companies, teachers, local municipalities etc.). Most of the groups were represented at the events. At the 2012 event 62 people attended the talks and 40 for birdwatching, in 2013, in 2014 70 people at the talks and Oroklini Primary school for a site visit and in 2014 60 people at the room and 40 at the birdwatching event.**

4.2.2.9. Action D9, Volunteer 'Clean Oroklini Day'

The volunteer clean-up day took place on 13 October 2013 with great success, evident from the over 170 participants. We didn't keep a registration list but we know that organised groups, schools from Larnaca district, the Oroklini primary school, groups from companies i.e. the petrol station and individuals from other districts attended the event. Members and an MP (Member of Parliament) from the Green Party also attended the clean-up. The event was announced through invitations to schools, the general public, people that have shown support to their project so far and other groups and interested parties. The mailing list and invitation was submitted with our Progress report, Annex 12. Before the clean-up, the Voroklini Community Council (VCC) removed large rubbish from site that couldn't be removed by volunteers with its own funds.

A Press Release (submitted with our Progress report, Annex 10.1) was sent before the event and during the event two big local TV channels covered the event and played it in the main evening news on the same day. Another Press release was sent after the event to a newspaper who requested it. The video clips were submitted with our Progress report, Annex 13. One of the videos is also available online here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzBRAYz2OAK>.

Voroklini Community Council (VCC) is the responsible authority for rubbish collection and like all partners is committed to ensuring the site remains clean after the end of the project. Moreover, VCC has placed waste bins near the Information Kiosk and the Department of Forests near the hide and VCC has been collecting the rubbish. The VCC is responsible for cleaning rubbish and will continue to do so, as it has a department and personnel allocated for this. However, litter accumulates quite fast because drivers in Cyprus have the habit to litter while driving.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Voroklini Community Council

Summary of outputs achieved: A clean-up event with the public's involvement-around 170 people, good coverage by the media-5 newspaper clippings

Time schedule: Actual start date: mid September 2013 - Actual end date: 13/10/2013
(Proposed start date: September 2013 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2013)

Performance indicators: Number of participants to the clean-up

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: There is overspending from 'Personnel' (€1,254). The unforeseen €194 under 'Travel' were incurred in order to transfer the groups of volunteers with a bus from the meeting point to other parts of the site where they would clean and then bring them back to the meeting point. Some underspend from 'Consumables' (€312) is proposed to be used to cover some of the overspending for action D6-'Infrastructure' (Information Kiosk).

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: N/A

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Volunteer 'Clean Oroklini Day' event -around 170 volunteers. 5 newspaper clippings before and after the event. Also two covers in TV.**

4.2.2.10. Action D10, Awareness raising material for Oroklini Lake (leaflet, sticker, video)

To produce the leaflet and sticker, the Environment Department (ED) awarded the contract to a contractor following the appropriate procedures and according to the rules on public tendering.

The sticker was prepared according to the established time schedule. It features the project logo and bears the project website, the LIFE, Natura 2000 logos and the partners' logos. We produced 3000 stickers in total as foreseen, i.e. 2000 stickers in a bigger size (10 cm diameter) and 1000 in a smaller size (7 cm diameter). Around 300 stickers have been distributed to the Game and Fauna Service (GFS), Voroklini Community Council (VCC) and to BirdLife Cyprus (BC) to distribute them to contacts and events etc. For example, BC distributed some stickers to pupils when giving school talks and during site visits to Oroklini Lake. Stickers are also available at the VCC building. Moreover, around 400 stickers have been sent to the Pedagogical Institute and the Department of Forests (DF) to distribute them to Environmental centres of Cyprus.

The leaflet was completed with a small delay (around a month). This was because more time than estimated was needed to agree on the text that would go into the leaflet. A further delay was caused because the final design of the leaflet had been sent to the printers just before the bank crisis hit Cyprus when all transactions were stopped. Unfortunately, the printers would not proceed to printing unless the payment was settled. Finally, the payment was settled in early April when we received the leaflet from the printers. This small delay did not affect any other actions as there were no events planned where we would disseminate the leaflets for the first time. We produced 2000 leaflets in total as foreseen and in two languages, i.e. 1200 leaflets in Greek and 800 in English. Leaflets were distributed to all project partners to give during their public and other activities. Leaflets were also made available in a stand at the VCC building. Finally, leaflets have been distributed to key environmental centres of Cyprus through the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute and the Department of Forests (DF). The leaflet gives information about the site, the target species and the management actions undertaken.

For the video, the ED awarded the contract for the video to a sub-contractor following the appropriate procedures and according to the rules on public tendering. The sub-contractor started filming in October 2012 and the filming continued until August 2013. Project partners had been in communication with the filming team to help them film a variety of bird species and also project activities. The video was completed with a minor delay as the producer needed some more time to capture better images of some species that were mentioned in the scenario. This delay did not affect other actions since the video was ready to be presented at the consultation meeting, which took place on 20 November 2013. The ED produced 500 copies of the DVD as foreseen. A Press Release (submitted with our Progress report, Annex 10.1) was sent announcing the completion of the video and publishing the link where the public can view the documentary online (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrMUrTwqY4A>). The video presents Oroklini Lake and the LIFE Oroklini project in 17 minutes instead of 10 because more time was needed to show images of the site in different times of the year. This difference did not have a financial impact on the action.

All the material has been available at the Information Kiosk at Oroklini Lake and also during project events such as consultation meeting, clean-up event, exhibition and award event, networking workshop, workshop with teachers etc. During the teacher's workshop we distributed around 33 copies of the video and at the Information Kiosk around 110, most of which were given to visiting schools, to nature enthusiasts and others. More have been distributed during environmental awareness events. The remaining copies will continue to be distributed in a targeted manner.

The table below shows the distribution list for each of the awareness raising material produced as part of this action:

Awareness raising material	Number of copies produced	Distribution list (with numbers)
Leaflet	<p>2000</p> <p>[1960 leaflets have been distributed so far]</p> <p>* BC and VCC still have some reserves of leaflets.</p> <p>BC: 18 English, no Greek</p> <p>VCC: 18 English and 45 Greek</p>	<p>Project partners - 400</p> <p>Information Kiosk - 600</p> <p>Environmental centres - 450</p> <p>During project events like the clean-up day, the photo exhibition and award event, information and consultation meeting, the networking workshop, and the workshop for teachers. - 370</p> <p>During ICOSTACY and CY Adapt projects events (seminar and workshop) - 90</p> <p>During financing Natura 2000 seminar - 50</p>
Sticker	<p>3000</p> <p>[2725 stickers have been distributed so far]</p> <p>* BC and VCC still have some reserves of stickers.</p> <p>BC: 100</p> <p>VCC: 192</p>	<p>Project Partners - 300</p> <p>Schools where BirdLife Cyprus gives talks - 200</p> <p>Information Kiosk - 400</p> <p>400 to the Pedagogical Institute and the Department of Forests (DF) to distribute them to Environmental centres of Cyprus.</p> <p>During ICOSTACY and CY Adapt projects events (seminar and workshop) - 70</p> <p>During financing Natura 2000 seminar - 30</p> <p>During Information meetings (Action D8) - 80</p>
Video	<p>500</p> <p>* BC, VCC and ED still have some reserves of videos.</p> <p>BC: 27</p> <p>VCC: 102</p> <p>ED: 80 (they will be distributed through BIOforLife project)</p>	<p>Information Kiosk (to schools, organised groups visiting the Information Kiosk, nature enthusiasts) - 110</p> <p>Teachers workshop – electronically and 33 copies</p> <p>High level visitors of the Voroklini Community Council, i.e. MPs, Director of the Environment Department etc. – 22</p> <p>During other events organised in Cyprus with an environmental context. - 120</p>

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Environment Department

Summary of outputs achieved: Promotion of Oroklini Lake and the LIFE Oroklini actions through awareness raising material, i.e. Leaflet sticker, video.

Time schedule: Video: Actual start date: mid March 2012 - Actual end date: 19/11/2013

(Video: Proposed start date: July 2012 - Proposed end date: 30/9/2013)

Leaflet: Actual start date early December 2012 – Actual end date: 29/03/2013

(Leaflet: Proposed start date: November 2012 – Proposed end date: 28/02/2013)

Sticker: Actual start date: early December 2012 – Actual end date 28/02/2013)

(Sticker: Proposed start date: November 2012 – Proposed end date: 28/02/2013)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: The video is longer in duration than expected. However, this did not affect the cost of the action.

Financial modifications: There was underspending in this action under category external assistance of € 5,463.23. We propose to use this amount for action D11, education pack under the same category, i.e. 'External Assistance', (please see also §4.2.2.11 and § 5.2).

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Video-submitted with our Progress report, Please find in Annex 6.7, Leaflet & Sticker-submitted with our Midterm report in Annex 8.6. Please find electronic copies in this report, Annex 16.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **Project leaflet and sticker. A 17' video of the site on digital format for promotion to environmental and educational centres and local schools. Video is also available online and in the education pack.**

4.2.2.11. Action D11, An educational pack for schools

The Environment Department (ED) awarded the contract to external assistance as foreseen, following the appropriate procedures and according to the rules of public tendering. The educational pack has been completed three (3) months later than foreseen with the Midterm report and six (6) months later than originally foreseen. This was due to the fact that the necessary procedures for the package to be approved by the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) had taken longer than originally estimated. The Pedagogical institute was involved for the design, writing up and completion of educational pack.

The CPI needed to be involved from the start in the preparations of the educational pack and this took longer time than originally estimated. The CPI is the competent authority responsible for the school's curriculum. However, it was really important that the Oroklini educational pack was done in collaboration with the (CPI) because this way the material included in the educational pack (story, games, worksheets) were linked with the Curriculum of Environmental Education for Sustainable Development which officially applies in primary education and can also be applied in natural environments like Oroklini Lake. We consider this to be an important achievement of the project – to connect the education pack with the educational systems of Cyprus. Moreover, the deliverable is of high quality, covers a variety of issues and all levels of primary education. The delay didn't have any significant impact on the action's objective since most of the education packs were distributed in April 2014 during the first teacher's workshop.

The educational pack "Education material for Oroklini Lake" that was produced in 200 copies as foreseen is aimed at primary school pupils (6 - 12 year old) to raise awareness on the importance of Oroklini Lake as well as other conservation issues. The educational pack aims to give the opportunity to teachers and pupils to gain knowledge, experience and skills on Oroklini Lake and its wildlife. The educational packs has been distributed to public schools of Cyprus, giving priority to the schools of Larnaca and Famagusta district so each school has an educational pack.

Around seventy-five (75) educational packs were distributed during the first teachers' workshop (Action D12). The teachers represented the schools of the districts of Larnaca and Ammochostos. In a second phase, twenty (20) educational packs were sent to schools through the CPI so each school received one copy of the education pack. Around fifteen (15) education packs were distributed to the participants of the second workshop that took place in Akrotiri Environmental Centre, at Akrotiri, Limassol. Around fifty (50) packs were left to the Environmental Centre and were distributed to schools of all districts visiting the Environmental Centre. Eight (8) were given to project partners, the EC and the EMoT and to twelve (12) more schools through the ED. Around ten (10) remain at the Environment Department. The workshop participants list form both events and a distribution list of the education pack to schools is given in Annex 22 of this report. Moreover, the educational pack is available in electronic format on the CPI website (http://www.moec.gov.cy/dkpe/synedria_seminaria_2013_14.html) as well as on the project website under deliverables. Therefore, the educational pack can be used by any school in Cyprus when they choose to use it and it can be applied in combination with site visit to Oroklini Lake or as a lesson in the classroom.

The delay in completing this action caused a delay in Action D12 – Teacher's workshop because in order for the workshop to take place it was necessary that the educational pack was completed.

The education pack was submitted with our Progress report, Annex 6.8. Please find it in this report, in electronic form only in Annex 17.

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Environment Department

Summary of outputs achieved: 200 education packs that when implemented can have a multiply effect and raise awareness among pupils about the importance of Oroklini Lake and wetlands in general.

Time schedule: Actual start date: early May 2013 - Actual end date: 31/03/2014
(Proposed start date: May 2013 - Proposed end date: 30/9/2013)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: N/A

Financial modifications: The foreseen budget to produce the education pack was €2,000 under 'External Assistance' and €6,000 under 'Consumables'. The actual cost was €13,865 under 'External Assistance'. The overspending in 'External Assistance' (€11,865) is proposed to be covered from the underspending of Action D10 in the same category and also the ED used the foreseen €6,000 from 'Consumables' as 'External assistance' for the same action, (please see also §5.2).

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: Education pack for schools (200 copies), submitted with our Progress report, Annex 6 and electronically with our Final report, Annex 17.

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **200 education packs for middle schools targeted in the broader area of Oroklini, for use by teachers to raise awareness.**

4.2.2.12. Action D12, A workshop for teachers about Oroklini Lake and the benefits of Natura 2000

This action was completed with a delay because it was linked to the delayed Action D11. The workshop took place on 11 April 2014 at the Voroklini Community Council building and was organised by the Environment Department (ED) in collaboration with the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI). A second workshop was organised on 4 December 2014, at Akrotiri Environmental Centre, in Limassol because schools from Limassol had expressed interest in the workshop.

For the first workshop, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (CPI) published a curriculum (submitted with our Progress report, Annex 14) on 02/04/2014 inviting teachers to participate to the workshop. This participation to the workshop was compulsory for all Primary schools of Larnaca and Famagusta district. For the second workshop the CPI published a curriculum (please find it in Annex 22) on 24/11/2014.

During the workshop several presentations were given by project partners. The ED gave presentations on the importance of LIFE projects for Cyprus biodiversity and the importance of the Natura 2000 network. Project Director (PD) gave a presentation on Cyprus waterbirds and the Project Coordinator (PC) gave a presentation on the LIFE Oroklini project. The presentations were submitted with our Progress report, Annex 14 in electronic form only to save paper. Finally, the content of the educational pack was presented in detail with guidance on how to use it. The same program was followed for the second workshop in Limassol. Please note that the presentations given were the same as the first workshop with some updates on project results. During the first workshop, the Minister of Education, Dr Costas Kadis, also attended the workshop and gave a short talk on biodiversity and its importance for Cyprus. Around 58 teachers attended the first workshop from 42 schools of Larnaca and Famagusta district. Around 15 teachers attended the second workshop from 12 schools of Limassol district.

For the first workshop, a Press Release was sent announcing the production of the educational pack and the organisation of the workshop (submitted with our Progress report, Annex 10.1).

Beneficiary responsible for implementation: Environment Department

Summary of outputs achieved: Organising two workshops for teachers, promoting the education pack and raising awareness about Oroklini Lake and the benefits of the Natura 2000 network. 58 participants at the first workshop and 15 at the second.

Time schedule: Actual start date: early March 2014 - Actual end date: 11/04/2014 (first workshop) and 04/12/2014 (second workshop)

(Proposed start date: October 2013 - Proposed end date: 30/11/2013)

Performance indicators: N/A

Technical modifications: The Environment Department did not need a projector so a camera was purchased instead. A second workshop was organised as additional action not foreseen in the project proposal to enhance promotion of the education pack.

Financial modifications: The costs for catering were less than foreseen. Therefore the underspending under 'Consumables' can be used to cover overspending under 'External Assistance' for Action D11.

Complementary action outside LIFE: N/A

Deliverable: N/A

Expected results: Expected results have been met. **A two day workshop for teachers about Oroklini Lake and the benefits of Natura 2000.**

Other and Outside-LIFE dissemination actions

Media: During project implementation the project released 15 Press Releases and the project has been covered in the press around 50 times, (please see Annex 11 of our Final report for all the newspaper clippings). Press Releases were sent for the launch of the project, three for each of the three consultation meetings (Action D8), one for the photo competition (Action D7), for erecting the first notice boards on site (Action D1), for the restoration of the flea-market (Action C2), two for the Volunteer clean-up, (Action D9), (one before and one after), one for the photo exhibition and award event (Action D7), one for the documentary (Action D10), one for the education pack (Action D11) and the workshop (Action D12), one for the visitor facilities and Information Kiosk Inauguration event (D6), one regarding the normal drying of the site during summer and one for the project completion.

Moreover, the project (Volunteer clean-up day) has been presented in national TV two times (submitted with our Progress report, Annex 13) and another TV show made a five minute video/interview for Oroklini Lake, please find it in Annex 12 of the Final report. The LIFE Oroklini project was also mentioned by the Project Director (PD) during a show on birdwatching on a local TV channel, Η Κύπρος κοντά σας (Cyprus with you), (submitted with our Progress report, Annex 13).

The project was also covered around five times in radio shows. Four are given in Annex 12 as the one of them could not be obtained. The radio broadcasts, were in Greek only. The first radio interview was given on 22/02/2012 on channel CYBC2 during which the Project Coordinator (PC) presented the project. The radio broadcast on 08/01/2013 was a one hour show devoted entirely on the LIFE OROKLINI project and the PC was invited. The radio broadcast on 14/03/2013 hosted three BirdLife Cyprus' staff members -among them the PC- to interview them on the basis of how the young people are involved in nature conservation. The PC gave much information about the project and acknowledged the financial support of the LIFE program. The radio show on 22/07/2014 was a two-hour live link at Oroklini Lake in cooperation with another LIFE project, BIOforLife. Finally, the radio show on 29/01/2015 was a one-hour interview dedicated to Oroklini Lake and the LIFE Oroklini project.

Big sign on site: In October (2012) an opportunity to place a big sign (3 x 1.60 meters) on site that would feature the lake and the LIFE OROKLINI project came up. The sign is next to the lake and is visible from the road. The opportunity to make this sign came up now because the garden centre 'Oups' that had been operating there closed and donated the metal frame they were using for a sign for their business to the project. Although this sign was not foreseen and was beyond our contractual obligations we considered that this was a great opportunity for us to use the existing frame for the benefit of Oroklini Lake and the LIFE Oroklini project. The sign was designed in a way that highlights the importance of the area on a European level and its importance for birds. The expenses for the sign (€1,673 for designing and printing) can be covered from the underspending (around €10,000) of action C2, Restoration market area under 'external assistance' category.

Participation in LIFE 20 years anniversary event: Moreover, beyond the contractual obligations the project partners have been involved in other dissemination activities. The project participated in the 20 years of LIFE program celebration event organised by all LIFE Nature projects (including LIFE Oroklini project) currently being implemented in Cyprus. The event was held on 29 May 2012 at Athalassa Park, Nicosia. The press release sent, invitations, photographs from the day and publicity material had been submitted with our Inception report.

Project logo: Since the start of the project, we realised that a project logo would be an important communication and promotion tool, and following the advice of the External Monitoring Team (EMoT) we decided to subcontract the creation of a project logo to a designer, using some remaining funds from the website budget. BirdLife Cyprus was responsible for contracting the creation of the logo. The project logo was presented for the first time to the participants at the open day event under action D8, on 23 May 2012. The logo is a colourful design featuring three key features of Oroklini Lake, the Spur-winged Lapwing, the Black-winged Stilt and the lake.

Project banner: A banner for the project was also created for use in workshops, events, meetings etc. This was also not included in the project proposal however since the cost for the production of the banner was quite low we proceeded with the production. The banner has the project logo on it, the project website address, the project title, attractive photos from Oroklini Lake and an explicit acknowledgement of EU financial support, i.e. the phrase 'with the financial contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the EU'. A copy of the banner's design was submitted with our Midterm report. The project banner featuring the project logo was a valuable tool in providing an identity for project related events.

Inauguration event for the Information Kiosk: Taking the opportunity of the European Commission's visit, we organised an inauguration event of the Information Kiosk, The Desk Officer of the LIFE Unit, Mrs Muriel Drukman, was invited to inaugurate the Information Kiosk. Despite the rainy weather, around 60 people attended the event and enjoyed the birds, from the observation platform of the Information Kiosk. The event took place in a celebrative atmosphere and the guests had the opportunity to experience birdwatching. The inauguration event took place on 6 May 2014.

Information panels for the Information Kiosk: After European Commission's (EC) approval of this request with letter Ares 1808155, BirdLife Cyprus (BC) produced twelve Information panels for the Information kiosk. These additional panels include images of species and information on the season someone can see them on site, information about the history of Oroklini Lake, interesting facts about the site as well as a map with the site's characteristics. Four signs were placed in May 2014 and the rest in November 2014. The cost for this was around €1,940.2 and this cost is proposed to be covered from BC's underspending in category 'external assistance' from Action A5-Action Plan.

Brochure for visitors: A brochure for visitors was created by BirdLife Cyprus (BC). This was an unforeseen action which was proposed with our Progress report and was accepted by the EC with the letter ARES (2014) 3411259. This brochure includes information about Oroklini Lake, what someone can see there, information on visitor infrastructure, other nature sites close to Oroklini Lake as well as a site map. The brochure has been distributed to key locations with the aim to attract visitors to this wonderful wetland. This is an important tool for the promotion of Oroklini Lake and has been distributed to key locations, i.e. hotels of the area, tourist operators, the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) in Larnaca and the airport, Agrotourism hotels etc. Please find in Annex 23 the distribution list for the brochure and photos of the brochure displayed on the CTO information stand at the Larnaca airport. The 'External Assistance' cost for this action was €1,785 which can be covered from underspending of the same category in Action A5.

Facebook: Beyond the contractual obligations described in the project proposal, the project also created a space for the project in Facebook in order to promote the project and its actions to a wider audience in a more interactive way through social media. The project's page on Facebook had 77 'likes' in its two first months of operation and upon project completion the page had 640 'likes'. Also, through this page, links between other groups, like Voroklini Community Council's (VCC) and Game and Fauna Service's (GFS) as well as with other LIFE projects and conservation organisations are created.

Education activities: Before the start of the duties of the Information Kiosk Officer, BirdLife Cyprus (BC) was often invited to give talks and accompany schools at Oroklini Lake for birdwatching. Around 500 pupils from early 2012 until mid-March 2014, mainly from schools of the area (Larnaca and Oroklini) visited the site with BC. Photos from these visits were included in Annex 13.5 of our Midterm report. It should also be noted that through the LIFE Oroklini project, Oroklini Lake has been transformed in a nature site where people can enjoy nature. It is therefore ideal for education and other awareness raising activities. BirdLife Cyprus 'uses' Oroklini Lake for its events like the Eurobirdwatch, World Wetlands Day, nest building events, fieldtrips with interested groups, birdwatching field trips, etc.

The Voroklini Community Council (VCC) has been also using Oroklini Lake for other activities as well. For example 'Drawing Oroklini Lake' was one of the activities during the Festival for Children organised by the cultural club of the VCC. The three winners of this activity received the Oroklini documentary on DVD and a project sticker. Photos for photos of the activity were submitted with our Progress report, in Annex 19.

Moreover, a football team based in Oroklini included on its new logo the figure of the Black-winged Stilt to give the team a local character. The logo was submitted with our Progress report, in Annex 19. The photo can also be found in Annex 5 of our Final report (photo 100). This is another indication of the project's success in engaging the community and gaining their support.

4.3. Evaluation of Project Implementation

The LIFE Oroklini project followed the principles of wetland management. Managing wetlands effectively involves an understanding of basic ecosystem processes and species needs. The involvement of partners and people who were already familiar with the site, the involvement of experts on ecology, wetland management, birds and conservation issues in general, and the gathering of information through the project's preparatory actions (A1-A7) were vital in understanding the basic ecosystem processes and the species needs. This was used in better designing and implementing the restoration and management of Oroklini Lake.

Focusing on target species, i.e. Spur-winged Lapwing and Black-winged Stilt, with consideration on the four breeding Annex I species at Oroklini, we were able to identify which techniques were most appropriate in order for Oroklini Lake to accommodate the needs of the target species and also help the other four breeding Annex I species. The conservation actions implemented as part of the LIFE Oroklini project, i.e. minimising disturbance through fencing (Action C1) and natural screening (Action C5), managing water levels and creating nesting and feeding habitat (Action C3), restoring vegetation (Action C4) and restoring an important part of the wetland (Action C2), were targeted to create high quality habitat for target wildlife taking also into consideration the Site of Community Importance (SCI) features. The Action Plan (Action A5) followed the same principles to ensure the continuation of management work and monitoring for the long-term protection of Oroklini Lake.

Another principle of wildlife management is being able to assess the effectiveness of implemented conservation efforts. To achieve that, it is essential to define a clear target, or "favourable conservation status" (FCS) for habitats or population. To evaluate if a species or habitat is at a FCS or not one needs to identify the level at which the populations of a species or a habitat can be considered as having FCS. This level is called Favourable Reference Values (FRVs). Setting FRVs (under Action A1 and A2) allowed the quantification of conservation objectives, and the measurement of progress towards them. Population numbers need some time to reach their FRVs. The Spur-winged Lapwing population at Oroklini Lake has started moving towards the FRV target while for the Black-winged Stilt which is more sensitive to water level fluctuations we estimate that it will take more time to see the impact of the conservation actions.

On-the-ground conservation actions were combined with a number of dissemination and awareness raising actions reaching a wide variety of audiences and engaging the local community and the public in general. The actions and produced deliverables contributed towards building support for the project from local people, local decision makers as well as the general public and thus contributing to the project's objective. The support from the local community was evident throughout the project, by the large participation to the Volunteer clean-up, the public's demand for more photo competitions, the visitors' increase at the site, the public's positive comments on the project and the increase of interest by organised groups and schools.

The fact that the Community Council was part of the project helped to raise the awareness about the lake and its importance locally. And their support means that the local administration has become more aware, sensitive and caring about the site, which is significant for the long term protection of the site.

The management actions (Actions E1-E5) of the project allowed good communication and coordination between project partners and other stakeholders as well the exchange of knowledge and experience with other LIFE and non-LIFE projects in Europe. Through often

meetings and communication we achieved a good project management, an efficient and effective implementation of the project with clear monitoring indicators like bird numbers, participants in events etc.

Beyond species needs and other socio-economic factors, the available funds and resources were taken into consideration for the implementation of the project to avoid overspending and waste of resources. For the purchase of equipment, durables, services and for subcontracting, project partners followed appropriate procedures and in the case of governmental authorities the guidelines on public tendering to ensure the cost-efficiency of actions.

The three years of project implementation proved to be fruitful, efficient and effective, achieving the project aims and creating tools that will enable the sustainable management of Oroklini Lake long-term.

The table below gives a comparison of the results achieved against the objectives set for each action.

Table 3: Comparison of results achieved against objectives, per task

Task	Foreseen in the revised proposal	Achieved	Evaluation
A1, FRV workshop	The workshop and workshop report. The workshop report to be in English so that it can be checked with the visiting experts for their views.	Workshop and workshop report in English.	Achieved
A2, FRV report	FRV report, in English technical format and Greek brochure format, for Oroklini Annex I species and report adopted by GFS.	FRV report, in English technical format and Greek brochure format, for Oroklini Annex I species and report adopted by GFS.	Achieved
A3, Determine lake contours and delineation of SPA on site	A lake contour map with accuracy 0.1m and on site delineation of the lake.	A lake contour map with accuracy 0.1m and on site delineation of the lake.	Achieved
A4, Determine important hydrological features of the site	Integrity of dam in sector S3 tested and further planning actions enabled (C3) A test borehole and awareness about quality of groundwater- results of quality of groundwater An automatic water level recorder installed and working (in S3) Hydromorphological study of the Lake.	Integrity of dam in sector S3 tested and further planning actions enabled (C3) Borehole tested giving data on quality of groundwater Automatic water level recorder installed and working (in S3) Hydromorphological study of the Lake.	Achieved
A5, Elaborate an Action Plan for the birds for Oroklini Lake SPA	An Action Plan for Oroklini Lake SPA. An expert on reserve management and management for birds from the RSPB in the UK to be invited to visit Cyprus twice to support actions A5 and C3. The adopted water management regime to be incorporated into the Oroklini Action Plan. The expert to be hired for a lump sum for preparing the action plan for Oroklini lake, doing the consultations, talking to experts, organising meetings nationally.	An Action Plan for Oroklini Lake SPA. An expert on reserve management and management for birds from the RSPB, UK supported Action A5. A different RSPB expert supported Action C3. Water management regime adopted and incorporated into the Action Plan. The expert (for Action A5) carried out the work for the Action Plan during her sabbatical. Only costs for travel and subsistence were covered.	Achieved
A6, Get fencing permission for lake	Permission to erect a fence around the perimeter of the lake to close off the government owned land.	Fencing permit obtained.	Achieved

A7, Report on the impact of predation on target species	A report on the impact of predators on the target species of the lake. Possibly –if needed-, a predator management proposal. The car that is charged partly under this action.	Report on the impact of predators on target species Predator management proposal was not necessary but some predator management proposals were included in the predation report Car, part of its cost under this action	Achieved
C1, Fencing the lake	The area of the lake to be fenced perimetrically (around the boundaries of the government owned land of the lake), signs to be attached to the fence every 100-200 metres explaining why the site is fenced and with the LIFE and Natura 2000 logos on them. 1.2m high fence, with metal poles with 2-3 lines of wire (so not a mesh) to allow animal crossing. Part of cost of 2 handheld PDAs with software ArcPad (shared with C2).	Fence of the site in the perimeter of the government land. Signs on fence every around 200 meters with logos. Fence is 1.2 m high but it is a deer type fence which is wildlife friendly and more prohibitive to trespassers. Part of cost of 2 handheld PDAs (shared with C2)	Achieved
C2, Restoration flea-market area	Removal of large amounts of earth from the northern part of the lake. The area to become again an integral and important part of the lake, where we aim to see the return of <i>Vanellus spinosus</i> (2 pairs) as well as other Annex I species. Depending on the result of the FRV analysis and the advice on water management (C3) there might be some extra landscaping done to encourage other species too.	Large amounts of earth from the northern part of the lake removed so this has become an important part of the lake. <i>Vanellus spinosus</i> as well as <i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i> nested on the restored field in spring 2013. No extra landscaping was done as the experts did not suggest it.	Achieved
Task	Foreseen in the revised proposal	Achieved	Evaluation

C3, Restoration and Management of the water level in the lake	<p>Lake landscape features and water regime to be at optimum for qualifying species in time for the breeding season but also optimal conditions for passage migrants and wintering birds. Management regime to strengthen lake against climate change events, especially persistent drought and hotter summers.</p> <p>An expert on reserve management and management for birds from the RSPB in the UK to be invited to visit Cyprus twice to support actions A5 and C3. The adopted water management regime to be incorporated in the Oroklini Action Plan.</p> <p>The actions of C3, and with the targets set through actions A2 to enable extending the habitat available for both <i>Vanellus spinosus</i> and <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>, augment the existing nesting habitat also for other Annex I species, ensure the availability of habitat regardless of climatic factors and reduce disturbance and predation risk.</p>	<p>Landscape features and water regime can be at optimum for qualifying species in time for the breeding season but also optimal conditions for passage migrants and wintering birds. Management regime has strengthened lake against climate change events, especially persistent drought and hotter summers.</p> <p>Expert on reserve management and management for birds from the RSPB in the UK visited Cyprus three times to support action C3. The adopted water management regime was incorporated in the Oroklini Action Plan.</p> <p>Water management works of Actions C3, and with the targets set through actions A2 enabled extending the habitat available for both <i>Vanellus spinosus</i> and <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>, augmented the existing nesting habitat also for other Annex I species, ensured the availability of habitat regardless of climatic factors and reduced disturbance and predation risk.</p>	Achieved
C4, Removal of Invasive Alien Species	<p>Removal of Acacia species from Oroklini Lake from the two patches where it is confined in the South East corner. Removal of <i>Atriplex semibaccata</i> to the extent possible. The expected area of IAS that to be cleared estimated at approx. 3.8 decares, so approx. 0.38 hectares.</p>	<p>Removal of all acacia trees from Oroklini Lake, mainly from 2 two patches.</p> <p>Removal of Parkinsonia trees.</p> <p>Removal of <i>Atriplex semibaccata</i> locally to the extent possible.</p> <p>Area of IAS cleared was approximately 0.5 hectares</p>	Achieved <i>(area cleared from acacias a bit larger than foreseen)</i>
Task	Foreseen in the revised proposal	Achieved	Evaluation

C5, Planting for improvement and restoration of habitats	Around 2000 native plants to be planted around the lake to act as screening to prevent disturbance and nesting trees for tree nesting species. The total area that will be planted is 0.5 hectares but in a pattern of rows and small patches. One laptop.	1555 native plants planted, providing screening Total area planted was around 2 hectares, in a pattern of rows and small patches. One rugged laptop.	Achieved <i>(number of plants planted a bit less than foreseen)</i>
D1, Erection of notice boards of the project	Three notice boards erected around the site, near the hide/parking places.	Three notice boards erected, one near birdwatching hide, one near the Information Kiosk, one at the west side by the road.	Achieved
D2, Project website	A website dedicated to the project operational by September 2012.	Project website live on by 30 June 2012	Achieved
D3, Layman's report	One Layman's report in English and Greek in electronic and paper version (150 copies). Expected results include the better information availability about the project results among local stakeholders, land managers and decision makers. Availability of info, especially through the LIFE website for other projects abroad with similar climatic conditions and habitats and species.	Layman's report, 12 pages, in English and Greek, in electronic and paper version, in 290 copies (extra copies provided free from printers) Dissemination of project objectives and results in a better manner	Achieved
D4, Erection of one hide for nature observation with information panels inside	Erection of one nature observation hide with information panels inside. Press release when hide erected.	Erection of one nature observation hide with information panels inside. Press release was sent when both hide and information kiosk were erected.	Achieved
D5, Construction of footpath to lead to the hide	Construction of footpath leading to the hide.	Construction of footpath leading to the hide.	Achieved
D6, Information point near or under one of the observation hides	An information point which will give have awareness raising material for the site available for the visitors.	Information kiosk giving awareness raising material for the site available for the visitors	Achieved

D7, Photo competition, photo exhibition and publication of Oroklini album	Photo competition and award Album (coffee table book) about Oroklini (500 copies) High level event, awards for Photo Competition, 100 guests Press releases, articles in the press, coverage in the media (TV and newspapers).	Photo competition and award 500 photo album Around 120 at the event. No relevant Ministers were available to inaugurate the event, the photo exhibition was inaugurated by the Director of the Department of Environment Press Release sent, 6 newspapers clippings	Achieved <i>(No relevant Ministers were available to inaugurate the event)</i>
D8, Information and consultation meetings with local community and visits to site	A minimum of three consultation meetings with the local community at the Community building in Oroklini, with visits to the site. The local community supports the project and understands the benefits of Natura 2000. We anticipate the following groups of people to attend consultation meetings: owners of land surrounding the lake, residents of the area, farmers, especially those farming in adjoining land, local hunters group, NGOs, local Development companies, teachers, participants from other government departments, local politicians and local municipalities. In total between 30-40 people. For field visits we expect representatives from the above groups but possibly a diminished number (maybe 20 people each time), although things like the weather might play a role also.	3 consultation meetings at VCC building. In two out of three meetings field meetings were organised. Local Community has supported the project Invitations were sent to all residents of the community, farmers, local hunters group, NGOs, local Development companies, teachers, other government departments, local politicians and local municipalities. Most of the groups were represented at the events. 2012 Event: 62 people at the talks and 40 at the birdwatching event 2013 Event: 70 people at the talks and Oroklini Primary school for a site visit 2014 Event: 60 people at the room and 40 people at the birdwatching event	Achieved
D9, Volunteer Clean Oroklini Day	Volunteer 'Clean Oroklini Day' event Press Release in Media before event and after event, coverage in the media (TV and newspapers).	Volunteer 'Clean Oroklini Day' event -around 170 volunteers 5 newspaper clippings before and after the event Also two covers in TV	Achieved
Task	Foreseen in the revised proposal	Achieved	Evaluation

D10, Awareness raising material for Oroklini Lake	A leaflet A sticker A 10' video of the site on digital format for promotion to environmental and educational centres and local schools.	Project leaflet and sticker A 17' video of the site on digital format for promotion to environmental and educational centres and local schools. Video is also available online and in the education pack	Achieved
D11, An educational pack for schools	200 packs of the education pack will be produced for middle schools for use by teachers in order to raise awareness of school kids of the broader area.	200 education packs for middle schools targeted in the broader area of Oroklini, for use by teachers to raise awareness	Achieved
D12, A workshop for teachers about Oroklini Lake and the benefits of Natura 2000	A two day workshop for teachers about Oroklini Lake and the benefits of Natura 2000.	Two workshops for teachers about Oroklini Lake and the benefits of Natura 2000. One day each workshop	Achieved
E1, Project Operation and Management	Effective and efficient management of the project. Regular coverage of the project in the media (TV and newspapers) through press releases, invitations of journalists to the site, to project events etc. More than 20 stories in media and similar mentions on TV.	Effective and efficient management of the project. Regular coverage of the project in the media (TV and newspapers) through 15 press releases, 7 invitations of journalists to the site and to project events etc. Project was covered 50 times in the newspapers, 4 times in TV and 5 times in radio.	Achieved
E2, Project Monitoring	Clear information on results of actions on Favourable Conservation Status of site and ability to assess further management measures needed. Monitoring protocol agreed and adopted, monitoring Indicators agreed.	Clear information on results of actions on Favourable Conservation Status of site and ability to assess further management measures needed. Monitoring protocol agreed and adopted, monitoring Indicators agreed.	Achieved
Task	Foreseen in the revised proposal	Achieved	Evaluation

E3, Networking with other projects	1 workshop with around 20 participants on restoration of brackish wetlands for the benefit of birds with invited participants: 1 UK, 1 Slovenia, 2 France, 1 Belgium, 1 Greece, 1 Spain and 10 from Cyprus. Visits to France and the UK by Game Fund and BirdLife Cyprus. 1 Report of the Workshop outcomes.	1 workshop with around 45 participants on restoration of brackish wetlands for the benefit of birds with invited participants 2 UK, 1 Slovenia, 1 France, 1 Greece, 1 Spain and 39 from Cyprus. Visits to France by GFS, visit to Greece, UK and Slovenia by BirdLife Cyprus. 1 Report of the Workshop outcomes.	Achieved <i>(with some more additional networking trips & various presentations of the project in workshops and other events in Cyprus)</i>
E4, External Audit	1 External audit of the final Financial Statements.	1 External audit of the final Financial Statements.	Achieved
E5, After LIFE Conservation Plan	An After LIFE Conservation Plan (a report in electronic and paper format about 10-15 pages long).	An After LIFE Conservation Plan in electronic and paper format, 10-15 pages long.	Achieved
Task	Foreseen in the revised proposal	Achieved	Evaluation
ADDITIONAL ACTIONS AUTHORISED DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION			
Pedestrian crossing with hump, warning signs and lights	A Pedestrian crossing with hump, warning signs and lights near the bus station and the Information Kiosk	A Pedestrian crossing with hump, warning signs and lights near the bus station and the Information Kiosk	Achieved
Fireflies on electricity wires passing over the Lake.	Fireflies on electricity wires passing over the Lake to reduce the risk of collision for birds	Fireflies on electricity wires passing over the Lake to reduce the risk of collision for birds. Around 10 out of 50 firefly markers were installed due to unsuitable conditions on site.	Achieved
Project brochure	A brochure to raise awareness about the site and promote Oroklini Lake to a wider audience. 5,000 copies to be distributed in a targeted manner	A brochure to raise awareness about the site and promote Oroklini Lake to a wider audience. 5,000 copies distributed in a targeted manner	Achieved
Signs for Information Kiosk	Information panels to be erected at the information kiosk	Twelve (12) Information panels erected at the Information kiosk featuring images of species and information on the season someone can see them on site, information about the history of Oroklini Lake, interesting facts about the site as well as a map with the site's characteristics	Achieved

4.4. Analysis of long-term benefits

Direct and long-term environmental benefits and sustainability

The methodology followed by the LIFE Oroklini project which combined on-the-ground conservation actions with awareness raising actions, contributed greatly in setting the foundations for Oroklini Lake to reach a Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) which is the objective of the Birds (2009/147/EU) and Habitats Directives (92/43/EEC). This is mainly because the actions addressed the main and most significant threats to the site that were resulting in the site's degradation and were having an impact on target species conservation status on site level. More time is needed to assess if bird numbers of qualifying species are reaching the Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) set. Please see table 4 below for the number of breeding pairs of *Vanellus spinosus* and *Himantopus himantopus* compared to the FRV targets.

Table 4: The table compares target species breeding pairs three years before project implementation, during the three years of project implementation, against the FRV targets.

Number of pairs	Spur-winged Lapwing <i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	Black-winged Stilt <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>	FRV <i>Vanellus spinosus</i>	FRV <i>Himantopus himantopus</i>
Year				
2009	8	55	15	60
2010	10	12		
2011	7-10	20		
2012	8	21-23		
2013	6	36		
2014	8-12	12-14		
2015 [preliminary results according to April and mid-May counts]	9-11	19 – 20		
<p><i>Comments: Black-winged Stilt pairs decreased during spring 2014 due to drought in early spring and unsuitable rainfall during nesting period. Corrective management works in 2014 are expected to improve nesting conditions for this species (i.e. installing water control structure and creating nesting islet in S3).</i></p>				

The main species targeted through the LIFE Oroklini project were the two qualifying species for the Special Protection Area (SPA). However the actions for the restoration and management of the site are expected to benefit other Annex I species that nest or have nested at the site, as well as Annex I species which use the lake especially during migration periods (spring and autumn) and during winter. Finally a great number of regularly occurring non-Annex I species will also

benefit. Currently a further four Birds Directive Annex I species have nested at the site (*Burhinus oedicnemus*, *Sterna albifrons*, *Sterna hirundo*, *Charadrius alexandrinus*) and a further 58 species belonging to Annex I of the Birds Directive have been recorded using the site during migration or winter. Finally, the site is used during migration, winter or for breeding by 36 regularly occurring non-Annex I species a great number of which we expect will benefit.

The main issue that was addressed by the project was how to achieve FCS for the site. The establishment of the Action Plan for Oroklini SPA, which is complementary to the Management Plan for the SCI can be used in the short to medium term to bring and maintain the site at FCS.

Since the project has enhanced the FCS of a rare type of wetland in Cyprus –Oroklini Lake is one of only few natural wetlands in Cyprus with brackish water- the value of this result is important on a Cyprus level as well. Also, the benefits to migratory birds are expected to be enhanced in view of climate change scenarios and the necessity for stopover sites in south-eastern Mediterranean for spring and autumn migrants.

The implemented actions as well as the actions prescribed as part of the Action Plan for the site will also benefit the Site of Community Importance (SCI) features. The restoration of the market area, the fencing, the control of invasive alien species, and the management of the hydrology of the site have also contributed in enhancing the conservation status of the halophytic vegetation of the site also.

Moreover, the fact that the project was implemented at a site which is close to the city of Larnaca and within a tourist area, can result in better dissemination of project results and can help continuation of the raising of awareness on the importance of wetlands and birds conservation and in particular Natura 2000 sites. Also, the engagement of the local community and their support to the project throughout its duration can ensure the protection of the site in the future.

The LIFE Oroklini project has already acted as model project for another important wetland that needs restoration and management. The Fassouri Marsh, a flagship wetland in the Cyprus Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs) will be restored and managed following the same principles as the LIFE Oroklini project, with a collaboration of government authorities, local community and non-governmental organisation as was the case for the LIFE Oroklini project. The project is funded by the Darwin Initiative of the UK Government. The knowledge gained, cooperation achieved among departments and local authorities through the LIFE Oroklini project, was essential for winning the grant, and will be put to good use during the new restoration project.

A recent indication of project's positive impact on Oroklini wetland, were the results from the mid-winter count (January counts) which is a count carried out simultaneously in all wetlands of the island and around the world, organised by Wetlands International. Despite the site's small size compared to most other wetlands in Cyprus, the count showed that Oroklini Lake came first in numbers of wetland species, having the highest bird diversity in January 2015. Moreover, Oroklini Lake was only one of the three sites that had Black-winged Stilts and only one of the five sites that had Spur-winged Lapwings (Oroklini Lake had 19 birds, Mia Milia sewage pools had 25 and the other three sites had one pair each). Out of 52 key wetland sites, Oroklini Lake comes fourth in numbers of waterbirds which is quite significant considering its small size, i.e. the 16th smallest.

Another aspect relevant to the long-term benefits of the LIFE Oroklini project is the fact that the Water Development Department (WDD), participating in the Project Steering Committee (PSC), has included Oroklini Lake in the list of water bodies monitored under the Water Framework

Directive (WFD). The monitoring will also include monitoring of water quality parameters suggested in the Action Plan for Oroklini SPA.

The project has managed to address the threats to the site leaving no remaining threats. However, possible threats may arise in the future in view of climate change, or possible changes to water supply system in the area, possible proposals for new building development in the catchment area or road improvement works or even changes in farm practices. To understand the impact of possible changes and prevent future threats, monitoring of the site will continue and relevant studies are proposed to be carried out in the future. The Action Plan proposes a list of studies to be carried out in the next five years and action will be taken if and when necessary.

The actions initiated in the LIFE Oroklini project will continue after the end of the project. Key tools in ensuring this are the Action Plan and the After-LIFE Conservation Plan (please find the latter in Annex 4.7) produced as part of the project. Both documents lay out the management actions, both on site concrete conservation actions as well as awareness raising actions that ensure the long term management of the site. On site management actions will continue to be carried out after the end of the project, i.e. the water management, the maintenance of the fence and water control structures, landscaping works to improve nesting habitat, the control of the invasive alien species, maintain screening, rubbish removal, monitoring birds, habitat and water quality, and some research to further investigate and identify possible future threats. Moreover, visitor and public related activities such as school visits, maintenance of visitor infrastructure (birdwatching hide, information kiosk, information signs) and awareness raising events will continue. The implementation of the aforementioned actions is ensured through the Action Plan which includes a five year work programme describing the actions needed to be carried out in the next five years. The Action Plan will be revised every five years. The Ministerial Decree prepared by the Ministry of Interior that will put into force the Action Plan is currently under procedures to be issued. Another Ministerial Decree (according to Article 15 of the Habitats Directive) by the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment is currently at the final stage of being issued. Another Ministerial Decree (according to Article 13 of the Habitats Directive) that mentions the Action Plan has already been issued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment. The After-LIFE Conservation Plan is complementary to the Action Plan and includes information on who will undertake which action, how often or by when, what the cost will be and who will cover that cost.

The responsible Departments (Game and Fauna Service, Department of Forests, Environment Department) will allocate funds in their budgets for the maintenance of the site to the desired conservation standards. BirdLife Cyprus can implement some of the monitoring actions, communication actions as well as provide support regarding the water management of the site. As mentioned above, the WDD will be monitoring the site under the WFD, checking water quality parameters and also using the borehole created as part of the project to monitor groundwater. Water level data will continue to be gathered and these are already forwarded to the WDD.

Finally, the Voroklini Community Council has an arrangement with a person to accompany schools at the Information Kiosk while it has also started procedures to find funds to continue the duties of the Information Kiosk Officer, and is committed to carry out maintenance works for the Information Kiosk and to monitor and take action on the issue of rubbish.

Best Practice lessons

This was a ground-breaking and innovative project for Cyprus following the principles of wildlife/site management. The project was based on best practice techniques. All concrete

conservation actions and awareness raising actions implemented are widely recommended in Habitat Conservation Manuals, and are the same techniques that have been used in other LIFE projects that worked on similar species and habitats in Europe. Furthermore, during project implementation we used advice by experienced reserve managers of the BirdLife International network in the UK, who recommended best practice techniques. The main techniques used which are best practice were the (1) Reduction of disturbance through fencing to prevent trespassing and trampling by humans and vehicles in sensitive areas, especially for such small sites that are surrounded by disturbance and development, (Action C1), (2) Water level management and abundance through using dams, bunds, canals, (Action C3), (3) Restoration of land and landscaping (creating suitable nesting habitat by removing reeds and creating nesting islets) so as to encourage the target species with features that best suit them (Action C2 and C3), (4) Removal of Invasive Alien Species to allow native vegetation to rebound (Action C4), (5) Planting local trees to provide screening and provide nesting areas for tree nesting species (Action C5, helps towards reducing disturbance).

Awareness raising and dissemination activities through events involving the public, exhibitions, awareness raising material, and visits to the sites for building support by the local community, as well as the erection of a birdwatching hide and an Information Kiosk are all best practice accepted techniques used across Europe and many match the recommendations given by LIFE's own Toolkit on communication activities (D1-D10). Targeting school children through actions D11-D12 is also an investment for the future and well known best practice techniques.

Long term indicators of the project success

To assess the project success in the future one should look the conservation status of the Oroklini Special Protection Area (SPA). In order for a site to attain favourable status, its qualifying species must also do so. The Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) for the two qualifying bird species of Oroklini Lake permit evaluation of whether or not these species are at Favourable Conservation Status (FCS). The FRVs are used to evaluate current population levels and be used as conservation targets. The FRVs set for the two Oroklini Lake Annex I SPA qualifying species are: Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus*, 15 breeding pairs at site level; Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, 60 breeding pairs at site level, please see FRV report in Annex 4.9.

However, the FRVs are not expected to be met every year for all species, as they are rather a long-term average target, or target to be met in most years. This applies particularly to national-level FRVs for wetland species, including those covered by the FRV report, where populations at artificial, semi-natural and natural wetlands depend heavily on both rainfall, while artificial wetlands will also be affected by abstraction levels.

Please find in Annex 24 the final output indicators tables.

Socio-economic benefits

Through project implementation (i.e. visitor infrastructure, brochure for visitors, communication with tour guides, students and other stakeholders and awareness raising) we have managed to create opportunities for eco-tourism that could bring more benefits to the local community and therefore long term support for the protection of the site. Moreover, the visitors attracted at the area can bring more economic benefits to the Community.

Policy implications of the project from the project

The policy that the project is relevant is the implementation of national policy transposing the EU Nature Directives, i.e. the Birds and Habitats Directives. The most significant contribution of

the LIFE Oroklini from a policy point of view is the adoption of the Favourable Reference Values (FRVs) as a basis of setting Conservation Objectives for a site. This was the first time this was done in Cyprus, in fact it's quite pioneering for the EU as a whole. The fact that this started with Oroklini, led to a bigger project tendered by the Game and Fauna Service (GFS), whereby they adopted the need to have FRVs for setting Conservation Objectives for sites and now the programme will be rolled over to all SPAs of Cyprus (all 30 of them) and create management plans for those sites. Setting conservation objectives for the management of sites is an obligation arising from the Birds and Habitats Directives. Defining conservation objectives after FRVs have been defined is a recommended approach which however, not many countries have followed.

Thanks to the LIFE Oroklini project, Oroklini Lake is quite pioneering also in the total package approach to management and conservation. First FRVs were set, then Conservation Objectives, then restoration was designed based on those values and objectives and success was judged on the basis of those. Those same values are the basis for continuing the management of the site into the future.

Finally, LIFE Oroklini project is well placed to work as an excellent example for other projects national or EU to follow.

5. Comments on the financial report

5.1. Summary of Costs Incurred

Table 5: Table comparing costs incurred against budget

PROJECT COSTS INCURRED			
Cost category	Budget according to the grant agreement	Costs incurred within the project duration	%*
1. Personnel	€253,066	€292,216	115.47%
2. Travel	€32,320	€24,283	75.13%
3. External assistance	€176,540	€112,179	63.54%
4. Durables: total <u>non-depreciated</u> cost			
- Infrastructure sub-tot.	€180,100	€158,637	88.08%
- Equipment sub-tot.	€67,950	€75,227	110.71%
- Prototypes sub-tot.	€0	€0	-
5. Land purchase/ long-term lease	€0	€0	-
6. Consumables	€30,150	€16,224	53.81%
7. Other costs	€4,800	€4,680	97.50%
8. Overheads	€52,144	€47,841	91.75%
TOTAL	€797,070	€731,286.60	91.75%

*) The percentages were calculated by budget lines

The costs incurred per budget category within the project duration are given in table 5. The total costs incurred for the LIFE Oroklini project are €731,286.60 which corresponds to 91.75% of the total budget (€797,070).

Personnel: Spending covers the costs of the personnel working on the project.

Taking into account the transfer of €10.862 that BirdLife Cyprus (BC) had requested at the early stages of the project (by Inception report) from 'External Assistance' to 'Personnel' to implement Action A2 using time instead of a sub-contractor, the personnel budget was modified to €253,066 + €10.862 = €263,928. This transfer was accepted by letter ARES (2012) 1366975, please see §4.1.2 for the details. This amount (€10.862) was deducted from the foreseen budget category 'External assistance' of Action A2.

These incurred costs under this budget category have exceeded the foreseen budget by €28,288. This is because some partners surpassed the foreseen personnel budget, i.e. the Game and Fauna Service (GFS) by €15,101.02, the Department of Forests (DF) by €7,945 and the Voroklini Community Council (VCC) by €5,291. For some actions more staff time than foreseen was needed to implement actions in agreement with the project's technical specifications to ensure achievement of project objectives.

Department of Forests: Please note here that the Department of Forests (DF) which was responsible for actions C4-Acacia removal and C5-Tree and shrub planting has carried out these tasks using seasonal staff. The seasonal staff works for only six months a year for the DF and has filled in timesheets for the two months they worked on C4 and C5 implementation. The seasonal

staff at the Department of Forests (DF) works full time but for only around six months per year for the Department. Seasonal staff completes a timebook from which the total hours of work per year is being calculated. This is why the annual number of productive time units of seasonal staff is less than the permanent staff. The working hours of permanent full-time personnel like Minas Papadopoulos and Stavros Mouchlis is calculated based on the timesheets they fill in.

The hourly rate for seasonal staff is calculated by dividing the cost for those months/hours worked (including social charges etc. plus the 13th salary) with the sum of the total hours worked (from the timebook).

Voroklini Community Council: The foreseen budget according to the project proposal for this temporary full time contract was €12,000 for one year. However, the actual annual personnel cost for this person was €11,473.35 because there was a delay in hiring this person of around 2.5 months. The duties of the Information Kiosk Officer started on 17 March.

Travel and subsistence: As foreseen with our Progress report we didn't reach the 100% of total foreseen costs of this budget category, with an underspending of €8,037. The fact that the Department of Forests (DF) did not claim travel costs has contributed to this underspending. The overspending of €188 in this category by the ED can be covered from their underspending under 'Consumables'.

Spending in this category mostly concerns fuel costs, as well as the costs of flight tickets and accommodation for the Favourable Reference Value (FRV) workshop (Action A1), the Networking workshop (Action E3), the visit of the site management expert under Action A5, the visit of the External Assistant expert under Action C3, the networking travel for the GFS to France, for BirdLife Cyprus to Crete, UK and Slovenia. A reminder on the explanation of the calculation of expenses on fuel for daily trips for government departments and for BirdLife Cyprus is given below.

Calculation of fuel cost for daily trips:

For government departments (i.e. Game and Fauna Service & Environment Department):

Each car has a log book where the driver, the date, the route and the purpose of travel are noted. To calculate the cost for each travel made for the project a specific rate is used according to the governmental circular on travel allowances, please see Annex 25 (a) for the GFS car logbook and Annex 25 (b) for the curriculums. Please note that there are two curriculums. The one issued in 2011 covers the period 2012 and 2013 while the other issued in 2014 covers the period after the date the curriculum was issued. Please also note that the car was not used for project purposes during November and December 2014.

For BirdLife Cyprus: For each travel made for the purposes of the LIFE project, the driver fills in a fuel claim form on which are detailed the destination, the distance travelled, the date and other passengers. The distance covered in kilometers is multiplied by the amount proposed in the LIFE project proposal and is 0.22euro/kilometer and thus becomes the 'amount' that is entered in the LIFE project report. A receipt for fuel for that amount is also submitted to aid logging in the accounting system as the claims form by itself is not an invoice. The claim form is processed once approved by the BirdLife Cyprus Director. Please see Annex 26 (a) for BirdLife Cyprus' Document on the procedure for calculating fuel expenses and Annex 26 (b) for BC's car logbook. Please note that on BirdLife Cyprus' cost statement for some entries the number of the accounting document (receipt) are the same and for some there are two different accounting documents. This is because in some cases the same receipt covers more than one trip or in other cases more than one receipt cover one trip.

External Assistance: There is an underspending in this action of €64,361 which represents 63.54% of the budgeted 'External Assistance'. The main reason for this underspending is that the government departments following the rules of public procurement, award contracts to the bidder offering the lowest price. Also, BC used only 70.18% of the budgeted 'External Assistance' despite the additional actions implemented using underspending from this category, i.e. the Information panels for the Information Kiosk, the brochure for visitors and the two additional studies under Action A4. Spending covers the costs for payments made for sub-contractors as foreseen by the project.

As mentioned above BC transferred €10,862 from 'External Assistance' to 'Personnel' to implement Action A2.

The Environment Department (ED) transferred part of the underspending in 'Consumables', i.e. €6,402 to 'External Assistance' in order to implement Action D11, Education pack.

Infrastructure: There is an underspending in this action of €21,463, representing 88.08% of the budgeted 'Infrastructure'. As was the case with underspending in 'External Assistance', the main reason for this underspending is that the government departments following the rules of public procurement, award contracts to the bidder offering the lowest price. Underspending derives mainly from the GFS (Actions C1). However, the Voroklini Community Council (VCC) surpassed the foreseen budgeted 'Infrastructure' by €6,394 for the Information Kiosk. The foreseen €3,000 for the Information Kiosk was an underestimate at the time of preparing the project proposal. To cover part of this overspending we propose to cover it from underspending deriving from 'External Assistance' -€272 and 'Consumables' - €2,137 from VCC's foreseen budget. The rest €3,985 can be covered from project's general underspending in 'Infrastructure'.

Spending under this category covers costs under action C1-Fencing, action C3- Water Management Works, action D4.1-Birdwatching hide and some of the costs for action D6- Information Kiosk as foreseen.

Regarding Action C3 - Water Management Works, BirdLife Cyprus collaborated with more than one sub-contractor as evident from the beneficiary's cost statement under 'Infrastructure'. An explanation for this is given here:

G. MALTEZOS & SONS LTD: This sub-contractor was hired in autumn 2012 to clear the dense vegetation from the existing weir. The vegetation was blocking the weir's function and also it did not allow assessment of the dam's condition. This was a one off task that would allow further planning of the water management works and also the completion of the hydrology report (Action A4).

S. HADJICHRISTOFI CONSTRUCTIONS LTD: This was the main sub-contractor who carried out the majority of the water management works (i.e. repair of dam, nesting islets, opening outlet ditches and installing culverts, installing eel passes) according to the tender documents. Due to unsuitable weather conditions some of the works had to be postponed (i.e. clearing the reeds from S3, repairing the cracks on dam wall and install of the eel pass) for next dry season (autumn 2014). Between autumn 2013 (first phase of works) and autumn 2014 (second phase of works) the RSPB expert had visited the site and had given feedback on the implemented management works and proposed some improvement works (i.e nesting islet in S3, install culverts at the last part of the site's outlet channel) to be implemented during the second phase of works. These works were accepted by the Project Steering Committee and the EC with their letter ARES (2014) 3411259. The sub-contractor gave a quote for the improvement works (except the installation of culverts at the last part of the site's outlet channel) and an agreement was made to complete those works. An amendment to the original agreement and tender documents was made and

the sub-contractor implemented the agreed improvement works except from cutting the reeds in S3. The corresponding amount for this task was of course deducted from the final payment.

P.K&C.K TRACTORS LTD: Due to wet conditions in S3 where the reeds meant to be removed S. HADJICHRISTOFI CONSTRUCTIONS LTD refused to remove the reeds in fear of their machinery getting stuck. Therefore, as the action was necessary, BirdLife Cyprus directly assigned the specific task to P.K&C.K TRACTORS LTD.

SPSE LTD: This is the company from where BirdLife Cyprus purchased the culverts that Voroklini Community Council with their own funds installed at the last part of the site's outlet channel during improvement works in autumn 2014.

All tasks described above are considered relevant to the water management of the site and therefore were considered infrastructure as proposed in the project document.

Equipment: In this budget category there is an overspending of €7,277. This is mainly because the car purchased by the GFS was more expensive than foreseen (by €7,686.30). The foreseen cost for the car was €15,000. The price of the car went up since the time the proposal was put together. Moreover, the water level logger purchased by BC was around €420 more than foreseen and needed housing that was not foreseen (€470). The total overspending of €6,490 in this category by the GFS can be covered from the underspending in 'Infrastructure'. The total overspending of €465 from BC can be covered from the underspending in 'Travel'. The total overspending in this category of €173 by the DF can be covered from their underspending in 'External Assistance'. The total overspending of €148 by the ED can be covered from their underspending in 'Consumables'.

All foreseen equipment has been purchased except for the Field software GPS/ArcMap which was bought as part of another project. Please find in Annex 27 a list of the equipment purchased by each partner as part of the project and a full list of all equipment purchased. The "Beneficiary's Certificate for Nature Projects" for all beneficiaries claiming cost for durable costs can be found in Annex 28. Please also note that the ED has purchased a camera instead of a projector.

Consumables: There is an underspending in this category of €13,926 representing 53.81% of the budgeted 'Consumables'. Part of this underspending is suggested to cover overspending from other categories as described above. Main transfers concern the ED (€188 to cover overspending in Travel, €6,402 to cover overspending in 'External Assistance' and €148 to cover overspending in 'Equipment') and VCC (€2,137 to cover overspending in 'Infrastructure').

Most of the spending covers catering costs under Action A1-FRV workshop, Action D8-Information and consultation meetings, Action E3-Networking workshop, also printing costs for Action A2, printing the FRV report, Action A5, printing the Action Plan, Action A7, printing the Predation report, Action D3, printing the layman's report and E3-printing the workshop report.

Other costs: There is small underspending of €120 in this category. Spending covers chemicals for acacia and cost of plants, by the FD, as foreseen. No other costs are foreseen under this category.

A reminder on the purchase of plants from the Department of Forests (DF) nursery is given here:

The best technical and financial option for the project was to purchase the plants that would be planted at Oroklini Lake from the DF nursery. We are aware of the Art.26 of the Common Provisions however, this was the best way to get the plants both in technical and financial terms. The main reasons for the provision of those plants from the DF nurseries are described here:

- Tamarisk (and many other forest tree species) are not produced by any private nurseries in Cyprus, so they can only be provided by the nurseries of the DF.
- Some private nurseries may provide some forest tree species (e.g. Cypress) but they are imported from other countries and sold at considerably higher prices.
- The plants cultivated at the nurseries of the Department of Forests (DF) are derived exclusively from local plants and therefore there is no risk of genetic pollution. Specifically, the production of Tamarisk plants will be done with the use of genetic material collected from plants found at Oroklini Lake.
- The plants produced by the Department of Forests (DF) nurseries are costed according to an official price list.
- VAT is not applied on plant prices sold within the DF. VAT is applied only for plants sold to the private sector.
- The prices of plants of the DF nurseries are considerably lower than those of the private nurseries. Many private nurseries buy forest plants from the DF nurseries and re-sell at considerably higher prices. The Director of the DF has issued an order to restrict the provision of plants to private nurseries.
- Plants used in national projects by the DF, are also paid for 'internally' by the DF. This is common practice as the amounts move between departments. This procedure was also followed during the implementation of the COMANACY LIFE Project (LIFE04 NAT/CY/000013), when *Alnus orientalis*, *Quercus infectoria* and *Pinus brutia*, were bought and paid for internally. The same procedure was recently followed by the DF during the LIFE ICOSTACY project (LIFE09 NAT/CY/000247).

For all the above reasons, the best technical, ecological and financial option for the project was for the DF to supply the plants from the DF nursery and issue an internal invoice. The inter-departmental documents that accompany the purchase of plants from the DF nursery are provided in Annex 29 of this report.

The standard procedure followed for the purchase of plants is explained here: The DF department responsible for the LIFE Oroklini project (Park and Environment Sector) placed an order using a certain form (G32B) to the DF nursery asking for the number and species of plants. The nursery will provide the plants and will issue a voucher for the cost of the plants (excluding VAT) to the internal buyer, according to the official price list of the DF. Finally, an adjustment notice was issued (form ΓΛ7), whereby the funds of the buyer (LIFE Oroklini project) are transferred to the account of the nursery.

Overheads: These are calculated as 7% over total actual incurred costs. Since there is an underspending in the total incurred costs there is also an underspending in this category.

Here is summary of the aforementioned proposed transfers from one category to the other:

- The total amount of €30,000 is proposed to be transferred from other categories to cover the overspending in 'Personnel'.

- The total amount of €6,490 is proposed to be transferred from 'Infrastructure' (to 'Equipment').
- The total amount of €11,307 is proposed to be transferred from 'External Assistance' (to 'Personnel', 'Equipment' and 'Infrastructure').
- The total amount of €465 is proposed to be transferred from 'Travel' (to 'Equipment').
- The total amount of €8,875 is proposed to be transferred from 'Consumables' (to 'Travel', 'External Assistance', 'Equipment' and 'Infrastructure').

Please find the signed "Standard Payment Request" in Annex 30.

Please find the signed "Consolidated Cost Statement for the Project" and the signed "Financial Statement of the Individual Beneficiary" for each project beneficiary in Annex 31.

In addition to all the above, please find in Annex 32 our reply to the financial issues described in letter ARES (2013) 3532909 along with the requested supporting documents (in electronic form only) of this letter and in Annex 33 our reply to letter ARES (2014) 3411259.

Please find the certificates for the depreciation of equipment, as requested during the EC's project visit in May 2014, in Annex 34.

Please find in Annex 35 the update of the Standard Data (table of Annex I of breeding species) Form for Oroklini Lake that includes *Vanellus spinosus (Hoplopterus spinosus)*. This was an obligation of the Game and Fauna Service, deriving from the declaration of support from the competent authority submitted with our project proposal.

5.2. Accounting system

Cost accounts for the management of the project

The costs incurred during the lifetime of the LIFE Oroklini project have been recorded in the coordinating beneficiary's and associated beneficiaries' accounts and are identifiable and verifiable.

For the Game and Fauna Service (GFS): There is a separate cost account for the management of the project. The number of the cost account is 50500011.

For BirdLife Cyprus (BC): The 2012 and 2013 incurred costs for the LIFE Oroklini project were entered under the code 'LIFE Oroklini' in the accounting system (SAGE) and can be tracked separately in BC's cost account system. Salaries can be tracked easily, and are costed according to the time sheets. Cost account number for (2012&2013) salaries is 7072. The 2014 incurred costs for the LIFE Oroklini project is a separated 'department' in BC's accounting system (SAGE) with the name LIFE 10 NAT/CY/716 – Oroklini and 'department' number is 3. All expenses (except permanent salaries) were entered under this 'department' and can be tracked separately in BC's cost account system. Salaries can be tracked easily, and are costed according to the timesheets. Cost account number for (2014) salaries is 5011. BC did some changes to its accounting system and this is why 2012&2013 and 2014 have a different cost account number.

For the Environment Department (ED): The Annual Budget of the ED, approved by the House of Representatives, includes a special chapter for the specific LIFE project.

For the Department of Forests (DF): A common account is used for all LIFE Projects of the FD. However, data regarding the payment of each project are kept separately by the Accounting Office of the DF.

For the Voroklini Community Council (VCC): The costs incurred under the LIFE Oroklini project that are the VCC's own contribution can be tracked in VCC's accounting system. The costs incurred under the LIFE Oroklini project that are EC's contribution, are entered in a separate account book (excel document).

Approval of expenses

The expenses for each beneficiary were approved internally. For the GFS, Mr. Pantelis Hadjigerou, Head of the Game and Fauna Service approved costs. The final check was being carried out by the Interior Ministry accountant. For BC, Mrs. Claire Papazoglou – Executive Director approved spending within the budget and Mr. Melis Charalambides – Council Chairman signed timesheets and agreements/contracts/purchases above 5,000 Euro, according to BC's procurement policy. BirdLife Cyprus' overall budget is approved by the Annual General Meeting every year and the LIFE Oroklini project spending has been a budget line those three years. For the ED, the Director, Mr. Costas Hadjipanagiotou, for the FD Coordinator –Mr. Minas Papadopoulos and the Accountant- Ms. Eleni Televantou and for the VCC Mr. Christostomos Parpounas – Chairman of the VCC and Mr. Andreas Theodosiou – Secretary of the VCC.

For major discrepancies to the foreseen budget the GFS was first consulted. For minor budget transfers covering incurred underspending-most of which is minor, the Project Director (PD) and Project Coordination Unit (PCU) were consulted.

Timesheets

To register hours devoted to the project, all project officers used the timesheet in the format proposed by the LIFE programme and according to the guidelines of letter ARES 917793. The timesheets were completed electronically, signed and dated by the project officer and the line manager. In cases where a project officer was devoting time to another EU funded project that was also registered in the project timesheet. The timesheets were completed and signed on a monthly basis. The timesheets were collected by the PC every three months and were then forwarded to the Coordinating beneficiary.

Project invoices

All invoices received as part of the LIFE Oroklini project mention the project. Sub-contractors were asked to mention the project when issuing an invoice, i.e. LIFE Oroklini project or LIFE10NATCY716 – Oroklini. In addition, invoices were stamped 'OROKLINI LIFE 10 NAT/CY/716'. In the cases where it was not possible for the sub-contractor to mention the project the stamp was used. For all costs incurred that were payable to third parties, invoices and receipts were received as appropriate. Where required by internal rules proposal/tender procedures were followed. Original invoices and receipts included in the cost statement of the project were marked accordingly and are maintained in the regular accounting books of the organisations. Copies of the invoice and receipt are kept at a separate project file to facilitate easy access and control. Finally, all documentation relevant to the costs incurred by the project was collected in a project specific file prepared by each organisation. Copies are maintained at the Coordinating beneficiary's office in accordance with the LIFE rules.

5.3. Partnership arrangements

All Associated beneficiaries have signed agreement with the Coordinating beneficiary at the early stages of the project. These agreements were submitted with our Inception report, Annex 1. Transfers of EC payments from the Coordinating beneficiary to the Associated beneficiaries were made in line with terms laid out in the partnership agreements. The amounts corresponding to the associated beneficiaries' participation in the project were distributed based on technical progress. The final amount distribution will be made after the project's financial and final activity report have been accepted by the European Commission and after the last payment is received by the Coordinating Beneficiary.

Each partner prepared their individual cost statement and cost related documentation with the support of BirdLife Cyprus. The Coordinating beneficiary inspected and approved the cost statements prior making the relevant payments. In addition, the Project Steering Committee meetings contributed towards informing the Coordinating beneficiary on project technical progress, problems encountered etc.

5.4. Auditor's report/declaration

The Coordinating beneficiary hired an external auditor as external assistance, as foreseen by the project (Action E4). The audit report was carried out by HMI & Partners Limited, the company's official registration number is HE197348, Address is Michalakis Hatzipantela, 22, Stasicratous, Nicosia, Post code 1065. Please find the auditor's report in Annex 4.6.

5.5. Summary of costs per action

The table below (Table 6) presents an allocation of the costs incurred per action. The table is also given in an excel format in Annex 36.

Comments on major discrepancies between Table 6 and the summary of costs per action set out in the grant agreement (form FB):

Action A2, FRV report: As explained in detail in §4.1.2 the budgeted 'External Assistance' was not incurred as it was proposed in our Inception report. Foreseen 'Personnel' budget was €14,427; however €28,247 was actually incurred as more staff time was needed to complete the action according to the technical specifications set out in the proposal.

Action A3, Contours and delineation: More staff time was needed to overview the work of the topographer and provide support as the sub-contractor was not familiar with the area. Moreover, the work was conducted during the breeding season and therefore close supervision was needed. The underspending in 'External Assistance' derives from the procedures of public procurement that foresees the award of contract to the bidder offering the lowest price as explained in §5.1.

Action A4, Hydrology and features of the lake: More staff time was needed than originally foreseen as BC conducted two additional studies as approved by the EC. This demanded more time to prepare the contracts, overview the work of sub-contractors, have meetings with them and disseminate results. The overspending in 'Equipment' derives from the purchase of the water level logger and its housing which cost more than foreseen.

Action A5, Action Plan for birds Oroklini: The underspending in 'External Assistance' is because the expert from RSPB who carried out the Action Plan was willing to conduct the work during her sabbatical (type of voluntary work) and therefore the foreseen costs were not incurred. Instead some amount was used to produce a brochure for visitors (additional action accepted by letter

ARES (2014) 3411259), produce information signs for the information kiosk (additional action accepted by letter ARES (2014) 1808155) and translate the Action Plan from English to Greek.

Action A6, Fencing Permission: More staff time than foreseen was needed for this action which has resulted in overspending under this action. A delay in completing this action (please see §4.1.6 for the technical details) meant more staff time was needed than foreseen in the proposal since project officers needed to communicate with the Department of Lands and Survey and provide support to the topographer.

Action C1, Fencing the Lake: More staff time than foreseen was needed for the implementation of this action, i.e. for preparing the tender documents, evaluating submitted offers and overseeing the work of sub-contractors. The underspending in 'Infrastructure' derives from the procedures of public procurement that foresees the award of contract to the bidder offering the lowest price as explained in §5.1.

Action C2, Restoration Market area: The underspending in 'External Assistance' derives from the procedures of public procurement that foresees the award of contract to the bidder offering the lowest price as explained in §5.1.

Action C4, Removal IAS: More staff time was needed to implement this action. The budgeted 'External Assistance' was not incurred as it was incurred under Action C5, please see §4.1.11 for the details. Regarding underspending in 'Equipment' only one engine wood drill was purchased rather than the two foreseen. The remaining money was used to buy a rugged computer as approved by Inception report, which was more expensive than the foreseen laptop. This new computer covered both the planning and monitoring needs of Action C5.

Action C5, Tree and shrub planting: More staff time was needed to implement this action. The underspending in 'External Assistance' derives from the procedures of public procurement that foresees the award of contract to the bidder offering the lowest price. For the overspending under 'Equipment' please see justification above (Action C4).

Action D1, Erection Notice Boards: The overspending in 'External Assistance' concerns additional cost deriving from the creation of a large sign for the site, which is visible from the road. Please see §4.2.2.13, Big sign on site for technical details.

Action D2, Website: The underspending in 'External Assistance' is because the contract for the website was awarded to the bidder offering the best value for money service which was less than the budgeted amount.

Action D3, Layman's report: The overspending under 'Consumables' is because a graphic designer was necessary to produce an attractive report for the non-technical public. Therefore the budgeted amount was an underestimate of costs. The overspending (€1,177) can be covered from underspend of Action A5 under the same budget category.

Action D4.2 Interpretation boards in hide: More staff time than foreseen was needed to implement this action in order to gather information on species per season seen at Oroklini Lake.

Action D6, Information Point: The overspending in 'Infrastructure' derives from the erection of the Information Kiosk which was more expensive than foreseen. The amount of €3,000 was clearly an underestimate at the time we were preparing the proposal. Please see §4.2.2.6 for the full technical justification of this overspending.

Action D7, Photo competition, exhibition and event: More staff time was needed to implement this action according to the technical specifications described in the project proposal.

Action D8, Information and consultation meetings: More staff time was needed to implement this action according to the technical specifications described in the project proposal. The unforeseen €171 under 'External Assistance' was incurred in order to distribute the invitations for the first information event from door to door. The catering cost were less than foreseen resulting in some underspending under 'Consumables'.

Action D9, Volunteer Clean Oroklini Day: More staff time was needed to implement this action according to the technical specifications described in the project proposal. The unforeseen €194 under 'Travel' were incurred in order to transfer the groups of volunteers with a bus from the meeting point to other parts of the site where they would clean and then bring them back to the meeting point. This was necessary as there is no safe passage, i.e. pavement for pedestrians to move from one place of the site to the other.

Action D10, Awareness Raising Material: More staff time was needed to implement this action according to the technical specifications described in the project proposal. The underspending under 'External Assistance' derives from the procedures of public procurement that foresees the award of contract to the bidder offering the lowest price. The remaining amount is proposed to cover overspending in Action D11 under the same budget category.

Action D11, Education pack for schools: The budgeted amount under 'Consumables' was used instead under 'External Assistance' in order to produce the education pack with a sub-contractor who would prepare and produce the deliverable.

Action D12, Teacher workshop: The costs for catering were less than foreseen. Therefore the underspending under 'Consumables' can be used to cover overspending under 'External Assistance' for Action D11.

Action E1.1, Project operation and management: More staff time was needed to implement this action according to the technical specifications described in the project proposal. The overspending under 'Equipment' derives from the car which was more expensive by €7,686.3 than foreseen (€10,000). The total foreseen cost for the car (€15,000) was shared between Actions A7, E1.1 and E2. The overspending was entered under Action E1.1 only on the GFS cost statement.

Action E2, Project Monitoring: More staff time was needed to implement this action according to the technical specifications described in the project proposal.

Action E4, External Audit: The underspending under 'External Assistance' derives from the procedures of public procurement that foresees the award of contract to the bidder offering the lowest price.

Overheads represent 7% over total actual incurred costs.

Table 6: Allocation of the costs incurred per action

Action no.	Short name of action	1. Personnel	2. Travel and subsistence	3. External assistance	4.a Infrastructure	4.b Equipment	4.c Prototype	5. Purchase or lease of land	6. Consumables	7. costs	Other	TOTAL
A1	FRV Workshop	6,392	3,347	0	0	0			1,434			11,173
A2	FRV Report	28,247	15	0	0	0			1,773			30,035
A3	Contours and Delineation	2,110	64	4,446	0	0			0			6,620
A4	Hydrology and features of the lake	1,144	0	18,872	0	3,381			0			23,397
A5	Action Plan for birds Oroklini	11,318	975	4,725	0	0			1,844			18,862
A6	Fencing Permission	2,302	0	0	0	0			0			2,302
A7	Predation study	7,008	683	0	0	8,139			607			16,436
C1	Fencing the Lake	1,817	213	0	100,957	1,275	0	0	0		0	104,262
C2	Restoration Market area	1,477	0	23,600	0	1,275	0	0	0		0	26,352
C3	Restore and manage water	17,839	2,405	15,000	36,169	0	0	0	0		0	71,413
C4	Removal IAS	12,991				1,400					473	14,864
C5	Tree and shrub planting	11,871		3,874		2,954					4,207	22,907
D1	Erection Notice Boards	2,784	104	3,276								6,164
D2	Project Website	4,059		4,309								8,368
D3	Layman's Report	2,214							2,178			4,392
D4.1	Erection 1 Hide and Interpretation boards	1,895	115	1,021	12,116				0			15,148

D4.2	Erection 3 Hides and Interpretation boards	1,354	53									1,407
D5	Construction footpath	1,631		535					1,065			3,231
D6	Information Point	14,847			9,394							24,241
D7	Photo competition, exhibition and event	3,949	104	4,557					4,086			12,697
D8	Information and consultation meetings	6,134	187	171					1,589			8,081
D9	Volunteer Clean Oroklini Day	1,886	194						388			2,468
D10	Awareness Raising Material	12,285	149	8,037								20,470
D11	Education pack for schools	8,544	199	13,865								22,608
D12	Teacher workshop	2,680				848			80			3,609
E1.1	Project operation and management	26,471	850			17,686						45,008
E1.2	Project operation and management	73,308	1,665			32,984						107,957
E2	Project Monitoring	14,330	1,473			5,284						21,087
E3	Networking other projects	9,330	11,487						1,181			21,998
E4	External Audit			5,891								5,891
E5	After LIFE Conservation Plan											0
Overheads	Overheads	20,455	1,700	7,853	11,105	5,266	0	0	1,136	328		47,841
	TOTAL	312,671	25,982	120,032	169,741	80,493	0	0	17,360	5,007		731,287
Action no.	Short name of action	1. Personnel	2. Travel and subsistence	3. External assistance	4.a Infrastructure	4.b Equipment	4.c Prototype	5. Purchase or lease of land	6. Consumables	7. costs	Other	TOTAL

6. Annexes

Administrative annexes

Annex 1 Minutes from the last PSC meeting on 30 October 2014

Annex 2 Revised list of project staff

Technical annexes

Annex 3 List of keywords and abbreviations used

Annex 4 Project Deliverables

Annex 4.1 Action A5 deliverable, Action Plan

Annex 4.2 Action A7 deliverable - Predation report

Annex 4.3 Action D3 deliverable – Layman’s report

Annex 4.4. Action E2 deliverable – Monitoring Protocol

Annex 4.5. Action E3 deliverable – Workshop report

Annex 4.6 Action E4 deliverable – Audit report

Annex 4.7 Action E5 deliverable - After-LIFE Conservation Plan

Annex 4.8 Action A1 deliverable – Workshop report (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.9 (a) Action A2 deliverable – FRV technical report in English (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.9 (b) Action A2 deliverable – FRV brochure report in Greek (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.10 Action A3 deliverable – Topography survey (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.11 (a) Action A4 deliverable - Hydrology report (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.11 (b) Action A4 deliverable - Ichthyological study (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.11 (c) Action A4 deliverable - Catchment water quality study (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.12 Action A6 deliverable – Fencing permit (in electronic form only)

Annex 4.13 Action C3 deliverable - Water Management Regime (in electronic form only)

Annex 5 Photos illustrating actions

Annex 6 (a) Ministerial Decree for Action Plan – Article 13, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment

Annex 6 (b) Document proving the progress of Ministerial Decree - Article 15, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment

Annex 6 (c) Draft Ministerial Decree, Game and Fauna Service, Ministry of Interior

Annex 7 Water level monitoring data

Annex 8 Vegetation map

Dissemination annexes

Annex 9 Information Kiosk logbook

Annex 10 Press Releases

Annex 11 Newspaper clippings

Annex 12 Radio interviews and TV covers (in electronic form)

Annex 13 Copy of the notice boards

Annex 14 Copy of the Information panels in birdwatching hide

Annex 15 Action D7 deliverable - Photo album (in electronic form)

Annex 16 Action D10 deliverable – Leaflet, sticker and video (in electronic form)

Annex 17 Action D11 deliverable – Education pack (in electronic form)

Annex 18 Copy of the Information panels in Information Kiosk

Annex 19 Brochure for visitors

Annex 20 Distribution list for the photo album

Annex 21 Supporting documents for Action D8 (presentations, invitation, questionnaires)

Annex 22 Supporting documents for Action D12

Annex 23 Distribution list for the brochure for visitors

Annex 24 Final output indicators tables

Financial annexes

Annex 25 (a) GFS car logbook

Annex 25 (b) GFS curriculum on fuel rate for daily travels

Annex 26 (a) Document on the procedure for calculating fuel expenses

Annex 26 (b) BirdLife Cyprus' car logbook

Annex 27 List of the equipment purchased by each partner as part of the project

Annex 28 "Beneficiary's Certificate for Nature Projects" for all beneficiaries

Annex 29 Supporting documents for the purchase of plants from the DF nursery

Annex 30 Standard Payment Request

Annex 31 Consolidated Cost Statement and Cost Statement for each beneficiary

Annex 32 Reply to the financial issues described in letter ARES (2013) 3532909 & requested supporting documents

Annex 33 Reply to ARES (2014) 3411259

Annex 34 Certificates for depreciation of equipment

Annex 35 Updated Standard Data Form

Annex 36 Allocation of the costs incurred per action (Excel)

CD ROM 1: Annexes of previously submitted reports

CD ROM 2: (1) All the photographs produced during the project, (2) Standard presentation illustrating the main actions and results of the project (set of slides / colour photographs, electronic images with captions)