

Conservation of wetlands in Ķemeri National Park, Latvia

Project LIFE2002/NAT/LV/8496



PROGRESS REPORT WITHOUT PAYMENT REQUEST
Covering period 1 April 2004 – 30 November 2004



Picture: cattle released in Slampe river meadows, 15th October 2004

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Section 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the project

Ķemeri National Park is a newly-established (1997) nature conservation area in Latvia, comprising 380 km² of diverse habitats of EU priority such as mire woods, black alder swamps, raised bogs, rich fens etc. About a half of the territory (19,500 ha) is directly targeted by the project. The territory of the park and the project area host rich populations of species listed in the Bern Convention and EC Birds and Habitats Directives, e.g., *Crex crex*, *Aquila pomarina*, *Porzana porzana*, *Cyripedium calceolus*, *Lynx lynx*, *Canis lupus* etc. The lake Kaņieris is designated as an internationally important wetland under Ramsar Convention and is an important site for migratory and nesting bird species. Ķemeri National Park is an Important Bird Area and CORINE site. The area holds about 30 habitats of Community importance listed in the Bern Convention and EC Habitats Directive. Due to such a high biodiversity, Ķemeri National Park is proposed for designation as a potential NATURA 2000 site because it meets all its criteria. Whole area of Ķemeri National Park would be proposed for designation as internationally important wetland under Ramsar convention.

In 2000-2001, with the support from the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, the nature protection (management) plan for the park was elaborated and its practical implementation was necessary. This LIFE project will be the first step toward implementation of the management plan through specific management measures related to the on-site protection of valuable wetland areas within the park. At the same time should be recognised that the nature protection plan is not detailed and numerous issues have to be developed while implementing this project.

Section 2. SUMMARY

2.1. Summary of the activities during report period

The complicated activities under the activity A have well progressed. Project managed to overcome most problems of the project preparation stage. Short overview of these actions:

- Investigations under the action C.1. are well progressing. Project met with extremely complex situation around the former hydrological monitoring system (the new system should continue the work of the previous monitoring system), but consistent work with the assistance of external consultants has created basis for efficient Greater Kemeris bog hydrological monitoring system.
- The design and tendering activities for two of the most complex activities – Slampe river renaturalisation project (C.3.) and Kanieris Lake sluice gate reconstruction (C.4.) – have been completed and the works can start. Tendering for C.3. has been completed, contract concluded, works will start in 5th January 2005. Tendering for C.4. has been completed, contract negotiations on-going.
- The design of Greater Kemeris bog renaturalisation project (C.2.) has been completed, approvals from municipalities received, final approvals from Regional Environmental Protection boards pending. The tendering for two components of this action will start in December 2004 – January 2005.

Action C.6. – natural grazing in flood-plain meadows – to large extent has been implemented – there have been reached agreements about management of the areas, made fences, released 15 wild cattle in Slampe meadows. Kemeris National park, project partner *WWF Latvia* and the former project partner *Stichting Ark* have agreed, that *Stichting Ark* is leaving the project and *WWF Latvia* takes the responsibilities of *Stichting Ark*. The cooperation with *Stichting Ark* involved high consultancy costs and *WWF Latvia* was in a position to offer cheaper assistance for us. The supplementary documentation has been attached to this report.

Land purchase under the activity B.1. has been completed – the land in Slampe river project area has been purchased. Further purchases within the borders of market prices are nearly impossible. With the introduction of agro-environmental subsidies there is no need to purchase the meadows. The forest land inside Kemeris National Park currently has good protection by legislation. Part of recurring actions – mowing the meadows (D.2.) – would not be further supported by project due to the introduction of the agro-environmental subsidies.

This report includes the request for modifications. The development of project has lead to need to exclude several activities, to revise the names and content of some other activities. The total price of the project has been decreased.

2.2. Summary table of activities

Number of action	Action	Initial time plan	Revised time plan	Status
A.1.	Hydrological and engineering investigations	Sep 2002 – Jun 2003	Dec 2002 - Mar 2005	In progress
A.2.	Call for tender for construction works	Apr 2003 – Jun 2003	May 2004 – May 2005	In progress
B.1.	Land purchase	Sep 2002 – Mar 2005	Dec 2002 – August 2005	Completed, to be registered
C.1.	Restoration of meteorological (hydrological) field station for monitoring purposes	Mar 2004 – Dec 2004	Apr 2005 – Dec 2006	Not started
C.2.	Blocking drainage ditches and ensuring access to the bog surroundings after raising water level	Mar 2004 – Sep 2005	Apr 2005 – Sep 2006	Not started
C.3.	Restoring natural riverbed of the Slampe River	Mar 2004 – Sep 2004	Aug 2005 – Nov 2005	Not started
C.4.	Building the fish migration way at the sluice by the lake Kanieris	Jun 2003 – Dec 2003	Feb 2005 – Oct 2005	Not started
C.5.	Lowering the level of dry land of 4 artificial islands on lake Kanieris	Jun 2004 – Sep 2004	Jul 2005 – Sep 2005	Not started
C.6.	Natural grazing of the floodplain meadows by the Lielupe and Slampe rivers	Apr 2003 – Dec 2005	Mar 2004 – Jul 2006	On-going, 15 animals arrived
C.7.	Aerial photography of the territory	Mar 2003 – Sep 2005	Mar 2003 – Apr 2006	Aerial photographs made and supplied
D.1.	Removing reed and scrubs in the area of 66 ha of meadows and calcareous fens	Each year Jul – Oct	Each year Jul - Oct	In year 2004 done in Aug – Sep
D.2.	Mowing the hay in the area of 140 ha of meadow	Each year Aug – Sep	2003 Aug – Sep	Done
D.3.	Remove reed and scrubs from the islands on the lake Kanieris	Each year Aug – Sep	Dec 2002 – Apr 2006	On-going since Dec 2002
D.4.	Water level and regulation by the sluice at the lake Kanieris	Oct 2003 – Dec 2005	-	Not necessary
E.1.	Creating a home page of the park and the project	Sep 2002 – Dec 2005	Jul 2003 – Sep 2006	On-going, project homepage prepared
E.2.	Preparing the layman's report	Oct 2005 – Dec 2005	Oct 2006 – Dec 2006	Not started
E.3.	Producing a video for visitors of the information centre about nature conservation and rare and endangered species in the park	Jan 2003 – Sep 2005	Jan 2003 – Sep 2006	On-going, company contracted
E.4.	Producing CD with info on the park and the project	Jun 2005 – Dec 2005	May 2006 – Dec 2006	Not started
E.5.	Establishing a management center at the lake Kanieris	Mar 2003 – Dec 2003	-	Activity needs to be refused, unsolved land issues
E.6.	Establishing a field station near river Lielupe	Mar 2003 – Dec 2003	May 2005 – Nov 2005	Not started
E.7.	Media work	Sep 2002 – Dec 2005	Dec 2002 – Dec 2006	On-going
F.1.	Establishment of project office and administration	Sep 2002 – Dec 2002	Sep 2002 – Aug 2003	Done
F.2.	Project administration	Sep 2002 – Dec 2005	Sep 2002 – Dec 2006	On-going

F.3.	Project monitoring	Sep 2002 – Dec 2005	Jan 2003 – Dec 2006	On-going
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2.3. Milestones during report period and checklist of identifiable products

2.3.1. SUMMARY OF PROJECT MILESTONES

Milestone	Number of action	Initially planned	Accomplished
Project office arranged	F1	September 2002	Yes, December 2002
Project staff contracted	F1	December 2002	Yes, December 2002
Technical investigations finished	A1	April 2003	Planned in March 2005
Call for Tender announced	A2	May 2003	May 2004 – May 2005
Meadows fenced	C6	September 2003	May 2004
Management centre at the lake established	E5	December 2003	Will not be accomplished
Sluice reconstructed	C4	December 2003	Planned in August 2005
Slampe River meandered	C3	September 2004	Planned in May 2005
Level of 4 artificial islands on the lake Kanieris is decreased	C5	September 2004	Planned in September 2005
Meteorological station renovated	C1	December 2004	Changed scope of the works, monitoring system established by August 2005
Field station by river Lielupe built	E6	December 2004	Planned in November 2005
Purchase of land completed	B1	March 2005	Stopped in December 2004
Drainage ditches blocked; culverts road repaired	C2	September 2005	September 2006
Aerial photos of the territory taken	C7	September 2005	April 2006 First shots made in March 2003
Free-ranging horses and cows released	C6	December 2005	15 wild cows in Slampe – October 2004 10 horses - July 2005
Meadows and fens cleaned from reeds and scrubs	D1	Continuous, 22 ha/year	In 2004 the planned area was cleared
Typical hay meadow vegetation maintained	D2	Continuous, 100 ha/year	In 2004 support from the project discontinued after introduction of agro-environmental subsidies
Reeds and scrubs removed from islands of Kanieris	D3	Continuous, 12 ha/year	After cutting in February 2004 no cutting was needed
Water level control and regulation at the sluice	D4	Continuous	Would not be needed
Media work	E7	Continuous	Started in December 2002, ongoing
Administration of the project	F2	Continuous	Started in December 2002, ongoing
Project monitoring	F3	Continuous	Started in January 2003, ongoing

2.3.2. SUMMARY OF DELIVERABLE PRODUCTS

Product	Number of action	Initial	Proposed	Accomplished
Ķemeri NP home page with highlights on the project established	E1	June 2004	June 2004	Project homepage made in August 2003
Layman's report	E2	December 2005	December 2006	-
Two movies of different length and movie clip about nature conservation in the Ķemeri NP	E3	September 2005	September 2006	-
CD produced	E4	December 2005	December 2006	-
Final report	F2	December 2005	December 2006	-

2.4. Problems or difficulties expected

Main difficulties over the 2004 have been the following:

- Land owners ask for their land a price which considerably exceeds the market price.
- Landowner of "Jaunbrigi" land located close to Slampe river renaturalisation site (Action C.3.) asks very high price for her land. When project refuses to buy it, she prohibits any influence on her land, including the change of groundwater level from Slampe River renaturalisation project, grazing activities. This requires replanning and another turn of approval for the project.
- Changes in legislation require public hearings even for comparatively small projects. This leads to serious delays for several activities, f.e. Restoration of sluice by the Lake Kanieris C.4.
- Inconsistent, changing requirements from the authorities before issuing building permits – create long delays for implementing of the project actions.
- Court system over the last years has not been able to solve the land issue in Andersala, Lake Kanieris. As a result project has to exclude the realisation of action E.5 – establishment of management center.
- Insecurity about the long-term management of Lielupe field station (E.6.) which could be accessed only through private lands. Finally project chooses another site for field station – public lands at Slampe River, where the same values are present as well as the unique Slampe river renaturalisation project site.

As a result there have happened serious delays in the project, resulting in request for modifications, including extension of the project for 12 months, i.e. – additional year.

Section 3. TECHNICAL REPORT (BY ACTIVITY)

A. Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or of action plans

ACTION A.1. Hydrological and engineering investigations:

Overall progress:

Project proposal envisaged that this activity is covering all the investigation and designing needs for the following seven activities of current project: C.1., C.2., C.3., C.4., C.5., E.5., E.6. Each of these activities is planned separately and is having each its own time schedule. This has resulted in separate timing for each of the hydrological and engineering investigations.

Restoration of the meteorological field station for monitoring purposes (C1)

Progress:

The aim to develop sound, cheap and efficient groundwater monitoring system in Kemeris Great bog met with problems of past monitoring system. Long history of hydrological monitoring left enormous amount of rather chaotic information as well as unknown amount of existing monitoring boreholes in bog. The numerous unattended boreholes as potential channels of pollution are dangerous for the unique sulphuric water genesis process in Greater Kemeris bog. Project set the following aim – before the development of new monitoring system to bring in order the information about the former monitoring system as well as to check the current condition of boreholes. Part of the existing boreholes after some repair works could be used for the new monitoring system.

Kemeris National Park has ordered the design of Kemeris Great Bog visitor information centre. Design has been completed at the end of November 2004. Design covers all the needs of the future visitor centre, including toilets, car parking, visitor service center, exposition stands in renovated building, pathways. The planning of all these facilities was needed to have comprehensive solution for all the technical problems in this site. Planned investment project here exceeds the framework of initial LIFE project proposal – as a part of LIFE project would be considered the exposition stands only.

November 2003 – December 2004	Compilation of existing hydrological information about Greater Kemeris bog from various sources (Geology Library, Hydrometeorological Agency, private enterprises), preparation of MS Access database of information sources – done by project hydrogeologist and external expert.
November 2003 – May 2004	Compilation and digitisation of data from the former hydrological monitoring station (years 1946 – 1996) – done by project hydrologist
November 2003 – December 2004	Creation of Kemeris National Park borehole database. Currently in GIS system database included information about 970 boreholes. Done by project hydrologist.
January – December 2004	Search of old monitoring boreholes in Kemeris Great bog, preliminary assessment of the state of boreholes, inclusion of information in GIS system. 207 old boreholes found and assessed so far. Done by project hydrologist.
4 June 2004	Kemeris Greater bog visitor centre design contract with company “Velve-AE” concluded

October – November 2004	Technical assessment of the existing monitoring boreholes in Greater Kemeris bog, technical conclusions about each borehole. Done by “Firma L4” – external assistance.
29 November 2004	Design works of visitor centre completed, necessary permits to start the works received.

Time plan:

November 2004 – February 2005	Elaboration of project for the new hydrological monitoring system, inclusion of the information about the usable existing boreholes. Approval of the project in Resource Committee, Latvian Geology Service
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Variations/complications/delays:

Additional information:

- Appendix 3 – Map of old monitoring boreholes assessed in October – November 2004;
- Appendix 4 – Map of preliminary proposal, Great Kemeris bog hydrological monitoring system;
- Appendix 5 – Design of Greater Kemeris Bog information centre, description and map.

Renovation of hydrological regime in Greater Kemeris Bog (C2)

Progress:

Before the period of this report, in 2003 done the following: made topographical measuring, elaborated technical project, started approval. In middle December 2004 the final approvals for the project received, tendering procedure has been started.

December 2003 – January 2004	Preliminary approval from Valgunde, Sala, Slampe, Dzukste municipalities for design works
January – March 2004	Elaborated conditions for the design, Riga, Ventpils and Jelgava Regional Environmental Boards
March – June 2004	Changes of design in accordance with the conditions, external assistance, company “Meliorprojekts”
June – September 2004	Public hearings about the project in Sala, Slampe, Valgunde municipalities
September – October 2004	Receiving of construction permits from municipalities
September – December 2004	Debates with Riga, Ventpils and Jelgava Regional Boards, receiving of conclusions from the boards

Variations/complications/delays:

Project has two parts:

- 1) restoration of wetland conditions in the former peat extraction quarries;
- 2) restoration of Greater Kemeris bog through closing of melioration ditches.

Project has been delayed due to the low experience of authorities in dealing with such projects and large number of authorities involved. The requirements from municipalities and Regional environmental boards have been inconsistent, numerous meetings were required to elaborate common stance. As a result there has been elaborated well agreed project.

Additional information:

- Appendix 6 – Map of planned activities in the eastern part of Greater Kemeris Bog, description

Restoration of natural riverbed in Slampe River (C3)

Progress:

May 2004 – August 2004	Elaboration of hydrological monitoring system in Slampe River meandering site
17. August 2004	North Kurzeme Regional Agriculture Board rises additional requirements for the project to be approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - groundwater monitoring system to be developed in project site. In November 2004 this requirement is implemented. - Approval from all the land owners around the project site. The consultations with several landowners have been done in August - September. In all cases landowners required state paid long-term investigations of groundwater changes in their land, in one case (Jaunbrigi land) the idea of the project on neighbouring land was not supported at all. In October North Kurzeme Regional Agriculture Board lifted this requirement after receiving repeated calculations showing that groundwater change will not affect neighbouring lands.
February – October 2004	Unsuccessful conversations with the owner of neighbouring land parcel "Jaunbrigi"
October – November 2004	Changes in the design of project to avoid the influence on "Jaunbrigi" land. The estuary of Slampe river is moved to the east.
November – December 2004	Final approvals from municipalities and Ventspils Regional Environmental Board. Project handed over to Kemeru National Park for further tendering.

Variations/complications/delays: There have been numerous reasons for delays:

- inconsistent requirements from authorities requiring several reshapes of the project;
- non-cooperation of the owners of neighbouring land. This resulted in serious delay of the project, the lack of agreement required reshaping of the the project and new turn of approvals;
- creation of complex monitoring for the groundwater system as required by Ventspils Regional Environmental Board.

All these complex obstacles have been overcome and in December 2004 the final project document has been transferred to Kemeru National Park. There are no formal obstacles to implement the project.

Additional information:

- Appendix 8 – Copy of project document, Slampe River renaturalisation;
- Appendix 16 – Map of the fenced area around Slampe River and Slampe River meandering project

Building the fish migration way at the sluice by the lake Kanieris (C4)**Progress:**

In winter 2003/2004 there was made technical assessment of sluice gates. As a result of this work there was taken the decision to reconstruct the two sluice gates and not to build new fish migration way.

15 th June 2004	Lapmežciems municipality takes decision to transfer the land around sluice gates to Kemeru National Park
April – June 2004	Kemeru Park prepares documents and Lapmežciems municipality announces public hearings about the reconstruction of sluice gate. No negative replies received.
March 2004 – June 2004	Elaboration of project documents. Due to the complex nature of the project there is taken decision to split the project in two parts: construction and supply of mechanical equipment.

Variations/complications/delays:

Initial project document envisaged two sub-activities – 1) reconstruction of the sluice gate and 2) building of fish migration way. In 1964 here were built two sluice gates with distance of some 200 meters between them – alternate opening of both sluice gates secured the migration of species between the sea and Lake Kanieris. Nowadays both sluice gates are insecure, there is no possibility to move the shields.

The report of the external consultant (December 2003) showed that the reconstruction of the initial two sluice gate system is the most feasible environmental solution in project site. Alternate opening of two sluice gates will secure migration of all fish and water insect species – this is not possible to achieve in fish path. The current experience with fish paths in Latvia has not been very successful thus far. The two sluice gate system at Lake Kanieris has been very successful in securing the species migration 20 years ago.

Project will not construct separate fish path, there would be reconstructed two sluice gates and installed mobile electronic control system over the shields of the sluice gates. The aim of the project would be fully achieved and exceeded by this reduced amount of construction works.

Additional information:

- Appendix 9 – Map, overview of Lake Kanieris sluice system;
- Appendix 10 – Copy of the winning bid, supply of mechanical equipment for the sluice gates;
- Appendix 11 – Copy of the winning bid, design and construction works of the sluice gates.

Lowering the level of dry land of 4 artificial islands on the lake Kanieris (C5)

Progress:

November – December 2004	Public hearings in Lapmežciems municipality about the draft project
November – December 2004	Elaboration of design documents, technical solutions
August – September 2004	Repeated inventory of the habitats of EU importance on the islands

Time plan:

December 2004 – January 2005	Receiving of the necessary approval from municipality and Ventspils Regional Environmental Board
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Variations/complications/delays:

Closer investigations showed that the middle part of all 5 islands holds valuable habitat – alkaline fens (Habitats Directive Code 7230). Two employees of park – botanist and GIS specialist visited the islands and measured the extent of this habitat.

Happily this part of islands should not be touched by the project activities. There is need to level only the outer part of islands, where the valuable habitat is not represented. Designer has been informed about this and has included this restriction in the design documents.

Additional information:

- Appendix 12 - Map of the extent of habitat 7230 on islands in Kanieris Lake and the area of the islands to be levelled

Establishment of a management centre at the lake Kanieris (E5)**Progress:**

October 2002 – December 2004	Court process regarding the ownership of land in Andersala boating station
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Variations/complications/delays:

Shortly before the start of the LIFE project several private persons claimed the land in Andersala, the proposed site of management centre at Lake Kanieris. Kemeru National Park was involved in court cases regarding the ownership of this land (the costs and activities regarding these court cases are not part of current project). Unfortunately the last years have not brought any solution – there have been several appeals, next court case is expected in spring 2005. In this situation project can not give any promises regarding the implementation of this activity. Project would like exclude this activity from the current LIFE project.

Establishment of field station near river Lielupe (E6)**Progress:**

Park needs to establish the field station in site which would be suitable for development of long-term environmental education tradition. Unfortunately the Lielupe meadows were not suitable in this sense – the access to the potential project site goes through private owned lands and the owners were not giving warranties about long-term co-operation.

There is another, even more suitable place for field station selected – Slampe meadows.

January 2003 – August 2003	Conversations with the landowner in the southern part of Lielupe meadows (Gneiss dolostone quarry) about the access to the planned field station. The owner is not willing to give sufficient warranties for long-term support to environmental tourism through his land.
August 2004 – October 2004	Conversations with the landowner in the northern part of Lielupe meadows (Odini) about the establishment of field station at his land. Finally the owner rejected the idea about field station near his home and visitors passing through his land.
October – December 2004	Preliminary agreement about the development of field station in Slampe river meadows

Time plan:

January – March 2005	Design of watching tower and visitor facilities in Slampe meadows
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Variations/complications/delays:

Project has delayed the development of field station. Finally there is taken the decision to develop field station in Slampe River meadows. This place has several advantages over the Lielupe meadows:

- Land and access in the site is in public ownership;
- This is site of unique pilot project – Slampe River renaturalisation project;
- In Slampe meadows is started grazing of large wild herbivores – 15 wild cattle. There is planned to release 5 wild horses in 2005 in this site.

- There is farmer in this site willing to develop the site as environmental tourism attraction. This creates possibility for Kemeru National Park to develop field station with long-term program in this site.

If this modification is accepted, project is ready to develop all the facilities in this site.

We propose to rename the action: "Establishment of field station near River Slampe"

Additional information:

- Appendix 13 – Map with the location of the proposed Slampe river field station

ACTION A.2: Announcing Call for Tender works

Progress:

The tender process has been successfully completed for actions C3 and C4. Part of tendering has been done for action C1, there is expected one more large tender after the completion of design works. Design and tendering for the component E.6. will start after the approval of modifications.

Restoration of the meteorological field station for monitoring purposes (C1)

May – June 2004	Price quotation for design of Kemeru Great bog visitors centre
August – October 2004	Elaboration of tender documents, tendering procedure for the technical assessment of the existing Greater Kemeru bog hydrological monitoring system – checking the technical condition of 90 boreholes, measuring, sampling the water and giving conclusion about the state of each borehole. Done by project employees.
4 October 2004	Concluded agreement with the winner of tender – company "Firma L4"

Restoration of natural riverbed in Slampe River (C3)

23. August 2004	After price quotation concluded agreement with company "VentEko" about the development of hydrological monitoring system in Slampe river project site with 13 monitoring boreholes, analyses of the first samples.
November - December 2004	Organised price quotation for Slampe River meandering project. Winner – company "Visko Ltd."

Building the fish migration way at the sluice by the lake Kanieris (C4)

July 2004	Price quotation on construction and detailed design works of sluice gate. The bid from company "DHB" wins, price 33 626 EUR. Started contract negotiations, agreed to make the contract after contracting the supplier of mechanical equipment.
July 2004 – August 2004	Elaboration of tendering documents for the supply of mechanical equipment with assistance of consultants from "DHB"
August 2004 – October 2004	Open tendering procedure, supply of mechanical equipment for Kanieris sluice gate.
10 October 2004	Opening of the tender bid. Received one proposal, it complies with the requirements – Czech company "MVE technika". Price – 42 714 EUR.
October – December 2004	Contract negotiations with the companies.

Time plan:

Restoration of the meteorological field station for monitoring purposes (C1)

February – April 2005	Tendering to select the company which develops the Greater Kemeris bog hydrological monitoring system
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Renovation of hydrological regime in Greater Kemeris Bog (C2)

January – March 2005	Tendering to select the company for construction works in Eastern part (old peat quarries) of Greater Kemeris Bog
January – March 2005	Tendering to select the company for construction of small dams around the Greater Kemeris Bog

Lowering the level of dry land of 4 artificial islands on the lake Kanieris (C5)

February – April 2005	Tendering to select the company for implementation of the works
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Establishment of field station near river Lielupe (E6)

April – May 2005	Tendering to select the companies for the following works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - construction of watching tower; - construction of light visitor facilities
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Variations/complications/delays:

The activities have been delayed due to delayed design works, complicated and inconsistent procedures to get the building permit under action A.1 . No complications for A.2. met so far.

Total budget, activity A:

The costs of activity A do not change. The costs in project proposal have turned out to be realistic.

Action A.1. Hydrological and engineering investigations:	76 178 EUR
Action A.2: Announcing Call for Tender works	6 000 EUR
Total:	82 178 EUR

B. Purchase/lease of land and/or rights

ACTION B.1: Land purchase

Progress:

March 2004	In former correspondence with European Commission agreed the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approved purchase of land parcels (map IV-1, IV-6, IV-2); - included purchase of land parcel IV-4 (Jaunbrigi); - purchase of land on Odini polder excluded from the project (map XII); - land purchase price should stay in margin foreseen in the project/and or substantiated by independent real estate valuation.
23 July 2004 – 1 September 2004	Independent evaluation of land parcels (IV-3 (Parslas), XI-21 (Lurini), IV-4 (Jaunbrigi), X-8 (Pikji), VII-4 and VII-8 (Lejassauši))
February – October 2004	Conversations with owner of Jaunbrigi at Slampe River area.

Project has purchased the necessary land in Slampe River meandering site. Here have been purchased four land parcels:

- „Dunduri” (map IV-1) – 95,8 ha, 67 060 EUR

- „Dunduri” (map IV-6) – 41,8 ha, 29 260 EUR
- „Parupes” (map IV-2) – 21,7 ha, 15 190 EUR
- „Parslas” (map IV-3) – 3,9 ha, 1 911 EUR (purchase process on-going, purchase price agreed)

In total have been purchased 163,2 ha of land per 113 421 EUR.

There is also transferred to the state 73,5 ha of land in Lielupe meadows without any payments involved.

For successful meandering of Slampe river project tried to purchase the neighbouring land parcel „Jaunbrigi”(map IV-4, area 6,1 ha). Independent evaluation showed that the market price of this land parcel is 390 EUR per ha. Unfortunately the land owner repeatedly asked price which considerably exceeded the market price – 1480 EUR. Project refused this purchase. Owner did not agree to any changes in hydrological regime on his land as well. To avoid influence on this land the Slampe River meandering project was redesigned and approved during September – December 2004.

Several other owners did not agree to sell their land on market price as well, f.e. owner of „Lejassausi” (map VII - 8) asked 2 090 EUR per ha, although the evaluated market price is 607 EUR.

During the project period it has become clear that there is no direct threat to biodiversity values in privately owned land inside Kemeru National Park. The maintenance of biologically valuable grasslands since summer 2004 is covered by agro-environmental subsidies. The owners are informed about this by the responsible agencies of Ministry of Agriculture. Kemeru National park in 21st September 2004 has organised meeting of Lielupe meadow landowners about this issue.

The valuable forest habitats in Kemeru National park are included in nature reserves or microreserves. The national legislation does not allow any actions which degrade biodiversity in these areas. Therefore, there is not expected loss of biodiversity values in the land which is not purchased, i.e. owned by Kemeru National Park.

Time plan:

December 2004 – June 2005	Registration of purchased and transferred land
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Variations/complications/delays:

- Project would like to stop further purchase of land. There is no direct threat to biodiversity values of the land which is not purchased. Owners in many cases refuse to sell their land or ask price which exceeds the market price.
- The total price of the activity is decreased to 118 200 EUR. This price includes the purchase of land mentioned above as well as independent evaluation and registration costs.

Additional information:

- Appendix 14 – Map, overview of the purchased land.

Total budget, activity B:

The costs of activity B decrease considerably due to the decrease of purchased land area. This figure includes the costs of purchased land, independent evaluation, registration costs

Total:	118 200 EUR
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C. Non-recurring management

ACTION C.1: Restoring the meteorological field station for monitoring purposes

Progress:

The complex preparation for the monitoring activities has delayed the start of activity.

Time plan:

April 2005 – April 2006	Development of the new Greater Kemeru bog monitoring system, first sampling
May 2005 – October 2005	Development of Greater Kemeru bog visitor centre
August 2005 – December 2006	Start of routine monitoring
October 2006	Preparation of Monitoring report

Variations/complications/delays:

There would be no meteorological field station. Here would be developed hydrological monitoring system and visitor centre in Greater Kemeru Bog. Please see 1st Progress report and Supplementary progress report for more details.

ACTION C.2: Blocking drainage ditches and ensuring access to the bog surroundings after raising water level

Time plan:

April – November 2005	Implementation of works in the eastern part of Greater Kemeru Bog, former peat quarries. Reconstruction of road to turn it into dam, construction of dams from concrete
April 2005 – September 2006	Construction of 22 smaller dams on the dikes around Greater Kemeru Bog

Variations/complications/delays:

The detailed design shows that there is no necessity for 57 dams for successful damming of all the ditches around Greater Kemeru Bog. The most efficient and approved solution requires construction of 22 wooden dams. The initial figure 57 was the number estimated when using the methodics of similar project in Teicu Bog. Detailed investigations and design showed that Kemeru bog has more beneficial situation than initially planned – many ditches turn out to be made shallower than planned, overgrown and/or dammed by the beavers.

The works in the other site under this activity – Lielupe meadows (filling up 20 ditches) can not take place. The hydrological system here is extremely complex and before any interference here is needed expensive long-term investigation, which is not part of this project. Behind the meadows, further away from Lielupe there is located very valuable habitat – Alluvial forest with *Alnus glutinosa* (code 91E0). Interference into the hydrology of Lielupe meadows may lead to the degradation of this valuable habitat. Non-fulfilment of this activity does not lead to further degradation of meadow biotopes, current situation in this habitat is stable.

The total costs of the activity are lower than planned initially.

ACTION C.3: Restoring natural riverbed of the river Slampe

Progress:

There was installed the groundwater monitoring system in the project area as required by Ventspils Regional Environmental Board. Initial monitoring data has been collected.

August – November 2004	Development of Slampe river hydrological monitoring system (10 shallow monitoring boreholes and 3 deeper boreholes), first sampling and analyse.
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Time plan:

January – May 2005	Meandering of the Slampe river according to the technical project, external assistance, company “Visko Ltd.”
January – May 2005	Technical supervision of the works, external assistance, company “Meliorprojekts”

Variations/complications/delays:

Project has been delayed by numerous formal problems. Detailed design and outcome of tender shows that the full costs of activity are considerably higher than planned in the project document. The reason – during the project preparation period the amount works and soil to be moved have not been calculated properly.

Additional information:

- Appendix 15 – Map of the Slampe River hydrological monitoring system

ACTION C.4: Building the fish migration way at the sluice by the lake Kanieris

Time plan:

February 2005 – July 2005	Production of the mechanical and electronic equipment in “MVE tehnika” factory, Czech Republic
February 2005 – May 2005	Detailed design of sluice gates, external assistance, company “DHB” in cooperation with “MVE tehnika”
May 2005 – July 2005	Preparation of the sluice gate for installation of the new equipment, external assistance, company “DHB”
July 2005	Supply of the sluice gate mechanical equipment from Czech Republic to Kanieris Lake, installation
July – October 2005	Final works, run-in of the new equipment, instructions

Variations/complications/delays:

The project has been delayed and modified. Main modification – changed the scope of works to be done. Instead of repair of one sluice gate and construction of fish path here would be reconstructed two existing sluice gates, added mechanical and electronic equipment for automatic action of sluice gates. This system will ensure efficient migration of different kinds of fishes and other species of water fauna.

The project costs have significantly decreased.

ACTION C.5: Lowering the level of dry land of 4 artificial islands on the lake Kanieris

Time plan:

Technical design of the project is ready, on-going public hearings and approval. Theoretically the start of the works would be possible in January – February 2005. Ventspils Regional Environmental Board requires to make the works on islands at the end of summer, when breeding season for birds is over and fish migration is not taking place.

July – September 2005	Lowering the islands in Lake Kanieris
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Variations/complications/delays:

The activity has been delayed. The costs of this activity are considerably higher than planned initially – before the detailed design there was not enough knowledge about the amount of soil to be moved.

ACTION C.6: Natural grazing of the floodplain meadows by the rivers Lielupe and Slampe

Progress:

This activity is on-going successfully. Built 8 500 m of fence, in nature released 15 wild cattle.

May 2004	Experience exchange trip to Lake Pape area, WWF wild animals grazing area. Farmers - future managers of the grazing sites in Kemeru National Park participate.
May – June 2004	Correspondence between Kemeru National Park and project partners <i>WWF Latvia</i> and <i>Stichting Ark</i> about the terms of further cooperation. Kemeru National Park is interested in cooperation which does not involve high fee for consultancy. Reached agreement, which envisages that <i>WWF Latvia</i> takes over the obligations of <i>Stichting Ark</i> regarding the supply of animals to Kemeru National Park. <i>Stichting Ark</i> is not partner to the project anymore, this is agreed by official letter (2. July 2004).
May – August 2004	After price quotation selected external assistant, made contract about the construction of fence. Built fence in Slampe river area which includes 161 ha of grazing area, length 6 300 m.
4 – 10 October 2004	Experience exchange trip to Netherlands together with the future managers of grazing sites. Visited wild animal grazing sites in Oostvaardersplassen, Blauwe Kamer and several more places. With local managers discussed numerous technical and financial matters, agreed transportation of animals to Kemeru National Park.
March – May 2004	Construction of fence in Lielupe meadows, included 27 ha of land, length 2 200 m, done by park employees
July – September 2004	Conversations, preparation of draft agreement about the grazing of animals in Jaunbrigi land – shrub area next to Slampe meadows. Initial positive agreement fails and owners is against the animals on his land. See description at B.1. – the intent to buy this land fails as well. The fence is reconstructed to exclude this land from the grazing area. Now the area inside the fence – 158 ha.
August 2004 – December 2005	Preparation of agreements with WWF Latvia about supply of animals to Kemeru National Park, Slampe meadows and Lielupe meadows. The agreements involve also the managers – farmers.
June 2004 – August 2004	Establishment of fenced monitoring plots in Slampe meadows, collection of initial data
21.09.2004	Seminar for the landowners of Lielupe meadows about the agro-environmental funds, biological values of their land and the plans of Kemeru National Park to develop here grazing area. Participate owners of 8 land parcels, the other owners of 4 parcels are not found. Some agree to let the animals on their land, others ask for time to analyse the situation.
October 2004	Release of 15 wild cows in Slampe meadows
October – December 2004	Maintenance of fence, supervision of animals by farmer and park employees. So far no problems reported.

Time plan:

July 2005	Release of 5 wild horses in Lielupe meadows
July 2005	Release of 5 wild horses in Slampe meadows

January 2005 – July 2006	Conversations and agreements with the landowners in Lielupe meadows about the extension of grazing area to the south
December 2004 – December 2005	Time of action of Kemeru NP – WWF Latvia cooperation agreement. WWF Latvia in this time provides consulting assistance to Kemeru NP and managers of the grazers.
December 2004 – December 2006	Maintenance of fence, supervision of animals by farmer and park employees.

Variations/complications/delays:

Excluded project partner – *Sticthing Ark*, his obligations are taken by *WWF Latvia*.

Additional information:

- Appendix 7 – Confirmation letter about the partnership, WWF Latvia;
- Appendix 16 – Map of the fenced area around Slampe River;
- Appendix 17 – Map of the fenced area at Lielupe River.

ACTION C.7: Aerial photography of the territory

Progress:

This activity is on-going successfully.

March 2003	Air photographing over the area of Kemeru National Park, external assistance, State Land Service
June 2003 – July 2004	Postprocessing of photographs
August 2004	Handing over the aerophotographs to Kemeru National Park

Time plan:

March – April 2006	Repeated photographing in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Western part of Greater Kemeru bog - Slampe meadows - Lielupe meadows - Kanieris islands
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Variations/complications/delays:

None

Total proposed revised budget, activity C:

Action C.1: Restoring the meteorological field station for monitoring purposes	102 930 EUR
Action C.2: Blocking drainage ditches and ensuring access to the bog surroundings after raising water level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renaturalisation of former peat quarries, renovations of roads, external assistance; - Construction of 22 smaller dams on drainage ditches, external assistance 	128 000 EUR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 78 000 EUR - 50 000 EUR
Action C.3: Restoring natural riverbed of the river Slampe	53 000 EUR
Action C.4: Building the fish migration way at the sluice by the lake Kanieris <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - detailed design and construction works, external assistance; - production and installation of mechanical equipment, external assistance; - running expenses, unexpected costs 	90 000 EUR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 33 626 EUR - 42 714 EUR - 13 660 EUR

Action C.5: Lowering the level of dry land of 4 artificial islands on the lake Kanieris	30 753 EUR
Action C.6: Natural grazing of the floodplain meadows by the rivers Lielupe and Slampe	75 013 EUR
Action C.7: Aerial photography of the territory	40 715 EUR
Total:	520 411 EUR

D. Recurring management

ACTION D.1: Removing reed and scrubs in the area of 66 ha of meadows and calcareous fens

Progress:

October – November 2004	Cutting bushes in south-eastern part of Lake Kanieris, area 10 ha
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Time plan:

August – September 2005	Cutting the reed in eastern part of Lake Kanieris, area 56 ha
August – September 2006	Cutting bushes in south-eastern part of Lake Kanieris, area 10 ha

Variations/complications/delays: None

ACTION D.2: Mowing the hay in the area of 140 ha of meadows

Variations/complications/delays:

Since the summer 2004 farmers have agro-environmental subsidies available to maintain the biodiversity in biologically valuable grasslands. With advice from Kemeru National Park the valuable meadows inside the park have been enlisted for subsidies. Park and other responsible authorities have informed local farmers about their new possibilities.

In order to avoid potential double financing and excess use of finances project would like to stop this activity. Already in 2004 project did not pay for mowing the hay but major part of valuable meadows were mowed anyway, including approximately 160 ha of meadows around Slampe River.

This decision decreases the costs of this activity.

ACTION D.3: Removing reed and scrubs from the islands on the lake Kanieris

Time plan:

February – April 2006	Removing of scrubs from the islands
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Variations/complications/delays:

After intense cutting over the last years and February this year there was no need to cut the bushes in remaining part of year 2004 and there is no such need envisaged in 2005. Repeated cutting would be done in 2006.

ACTION D.4: Water level control and regulation by the sluice at the lake Kanieris

Variations/complications/delays:

As the water level control and regulation of sluice gates would be done in automatic regime and will not imply any additional expenses, project would like to exclude this activity.

Total proposed revised budget, activity D:

Action D.1: Removing reed and scrubs in the area of 66 ha of meadows and calcareous fens	18 620 EUR
Action D.2: Mowing the hay in the area of 140 ha of meadows	4 000 EUR
Action D.3: Removing reed and scrubs from the islands on the lake Kanieris	17 960 EUR
Action D.4: Water level control and regulation by the sluice at the lake Kanieris	0
Total:	40 580 EUR

E. Public awareness and dissemination of results

ACTION E.1: Creating a home page of the park and the project

Progress:

June – December 2004	Preparation of the new Kemeris National Park homepage with updated LIFE project homepage
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Time plan:

June – September 2006	Update of LIFE project homepage
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Variations/complications/delays: none

ACTION E.2: Preparing the layman's report

Time plan:

September – December 2006	Creation of layman's report
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Variations/complications/delays: none

ACTION E.3: Producing a video for visitors of the information centre about nature conservation and rare and endangered species in the park

Progress:

September 2003 - now	Casting crew has been fixing the important events in the life of project and National Park
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Time plan:

September 2003 – September 2006	Casting and producing movies
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Variations/complications/delays: none, extension per one year

ACTION E.4: Producing CD with info on the park and the project

Time plan:

May – June 2006	Price quotation, contracting
July – November 2006	Producing the DVD

Variations/complications/delays: Changed the format – instead of CD would be produced DVD. Activity delayed per one year.

ACTION E.5: Establish a management centre at the Lake Kanieris

Variations/complications/delays: As described at activity A.1. – due to the unsettled land issues project would like to refuse from this activity. The problems with the land property were unexpected – the claim from private persons appeared short time before the start of the project. Non-fulfilment of this action will not create direct threat or degradation of any biodiversity values in Lake Kanieris. Current infrastructure around Lake Kanieris does not allow development of similar management centre elsewhere without loss of biodiversity values.

ACTION E.6: Establish a field station near river Lielupe

Time plan:

May 2005 – November 2005	Construction of facilities in the field station
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Variations/complications/delays: There is need to rename this action: “Establish a field station near river Slampe” due to the change of the project site. See also description under the action A.1. The content of the action is not changing.

ACTION E.7: Media work

Time plan:

February – April 2005	Project seminar “Slampe River renaturalisation”
October 2006	Project gala presentation
Whole project time	Work with media

Variations/complications/delays: Project considers that it is important to inform wider public about unique action – Slampe river renaturalisation. For this reason there would be organised seminar during the time of the works.

Total proposed revised budget, activity E:

Action E.1: Creating a home page of the park and the project	17 630 EUR
Action E.2: Preparing the layman’s report	10 000 EUR
Action E.3: Producing a video for visitors of the information centre about nature conservation and rare and endangered species in the park	41 890 EUR
Action E.4: Producing CD with info on the park and the project	12 500 EUR
Action E.5: Establish a management centre at the lake Kanieris	0
Action E.6: Establish a field station near river Slampe	31 030 EUR
Action E.7: Media work	37 630 EUR
Total:	150 680 EUR

F. Overall project operation

ACTION F.1: Establishment of project office and administration

Progress:

The necessary activities were done before this reporting period.

Variations/complications/delays: No

ACTION F.2: Project administration

Variations/complications/delays:

Since May 2004 land purchase manager is not working for the project. The reason – low amount of work. His tasks are taken over by joint work of project manager, project co-ordinator and Director of Kemer National Park.

The contracts of other project employees would be extended per one year, until December 2006, if the prolongation is accepted from the EC side. There have been made savings in salaries – the extension would be possible without increasing the total financing for the salaries.

In the report from March 2004 there was stated that the auditing of the project will require 37 500 EUR. Preliminary meeting with auditing company in October 2004 assured us that initial project sum of 15 000 EUR is justified and realistic. Thus we leave the initial costs of the auditing – 15 000 EUR.

ACTION F.3: Project monitoring

Progress:

The monitoring systems have been set up under other actions. Employees of Kemer National Park during 2004 have been collecting the initial information about the biology and hydrology before the start of the actions.

Time plan:

Further monitoring activities would be done according to the corresponding plans for hydrological and biological monitoring. There is elaborated comprehensive biological monitoring plan, Slampe river project hydrology monitoring plan. In spring 2005 there is expected the completion of Greater Kemer Bog hydrological monitoring plan.

Variations/complications/delays: None

Total budget, activity F:

Action F.1: Establishment of project office and administration	13 534 EUR
Action F.2: Project administration	378 322 EUR
Action F.3: Project monitoring	38 997 EUR
Total:	430 853 EUR

Proposed revised project costs:

A. Preparatory actions, elaboration of management plans and/or of action plans	82 178 EUR
B. Purchase/lease of land and/or rights	118 200 EUR
C. Non-recurring management	520 411 EUR
D. Recurring management	40 580 EUR
E. Public awareness and dissemination of results	150 680 EUR
F. Overall project operation	430 853 EUR
Total:	1 342 902 EUR