LIFE Project number / title:

**LIFE10 NAT/SK/000079**
Protection of Common Swift (*Apus apus*)
and bats in buildings in Slovakia

**Inception Report**
Covering the project activities from: **01/01/2012** to **31/08/2012**

Reporting Date: **15/10/2012**

---

**Data Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project location</th>
<th>Slovak Republic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project start date:</td>
<td><strong>01/01/2012</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project end date:</td>
<td><strong>31/12/2015</strong> Extension date: <strong>not applicable</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total budget</td>
<td>€ 1 481 248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC contribution:</td>
<td>€ 740 624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%) of eligible costs</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Beneficiary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name Beneficiary</th>
<th>BROZ – Regional Association for Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact person</td>
<td>Dr. Jaromír Šíbl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal address</td>
<td>Na Riviere 19/a, 841 04 Bratislava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>+421 2 555 626 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax:</td>
<td>+421 2 555 626 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sibl@broz.sk">sibl@broz.sk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Website</td>
<td>[<a href="http://www.dazdovniky">http://www.dazdovniky</a> vtaky.sk](<a href="http://www.dazdovniky">http://www.dazdovniky</a> vtaky.sk)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Table of contents

3. General summary 4
4. Administrative part 6
5. Technical part 7
   5.1. Actions 8
      5.1.1. Action A1 8
      5.1.2. Action A2 8
      5.1.3. Action A3 11
      5.1.4. Action A4 11
      5.1.5. Action A5 13
      5.1.6. Action C1 13
      5.1.7. Action C2 15
      5.1.8. Action C3 15
      5.1.9. Action D1 16
      5.1.10. Action D2 17
      5.1.11. Action D3 17
      5.1.12. Action D4 18
      5.1.13. Action E1 20
      5.1.14. Action E2 21
      5.1.15. Action E3 21
      5.1.16. Action E4 21
   5.2. Availability of appropriate licences and authorisations 21
   5.3. Envisaged progress until next report 22
6. Financial part 25
7. Annexes 28
2. List of abbreviations

**BROZ** – Regional Association for Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development
**SOS/BL Slovakia** – Slovak Ornithological Society / BirdLife Slovakia
**SON** – Slovak Bat Conservation Society
**MoE** – Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic
**MoTCRD** – Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic
**SNC** – State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
**TSUS** – Technical Testing and Construction Institute
3. Executive summary

3.1. General progress

Over the reported period all obligatory requirements were fulfilled. Partnership agreements between the Coordinating Beneficiary and Associated Beneficiaries have been signed in October 2011, before the official start of the project. It needed to be done prior to submission of request for co-financing to MoE with deadline in October 2011. Respective share of the 1st instalment has been transferred to the partners according to the partnership agreements.

At the beginning of the inception period project management team has been established and regional project coordinators (assistants of project manager) appointed. There has been a regular communication between the beneficiaries and within the project management team, mostly via e-mail or Skype. In addition 6 meetings of the management team have been carried on so far, in order to develop the project work plan for 2012, inform each other about the project progress and discuss the problems and difficulties related to the implementation of the project actions. In accordance with national legislation, permission to interfere with the protected species and their habitats has been obtained for the project staff from the state authority. In addition trainings on work safety (BOZP) have been organized and relevant certificates provided for the project staff. Since the practical conservation measures are implemented during on-going construction works, it is necessary to be aware of all potential risks and safety rules.

In March 2012 first meeting of the project team, including volunteers, was organized in Zvolen. Participants were informed about the topics and existing solutions and legal aspects of the conservation of the target species. They were trained on how to apply the proper conservation measures, how to communicate with stakeholders and on the methods of monitoring of the target species.

By the end of March 2012 the project web site (www.dazdovniky.vtaky.sk) was established and since then it has been regularly updated. To support communication and exchange of information / experience within the project team, the project intranet web site (http://dazdovniky.dms4u.cz/) has been established, available only for the members of the project team. On the web site legal documents, guidelines, working documents (drafts), links to media outputs, photos, maps, etc. have been available to the team members. In addition all collected data on distribution of swifts and bats have been stored and processed in a special module APUS/BAT that has been developed within the existing on-line database AVES Symfony (http://aves.vtaky.sk/sk/apusbat). The data are regularly updated and available also for the public.

Before the beginning of breeding season of Common Swifts (April), a methodology for monitoring of swifts was elaborated and reviewed by experts. Later on also the methodology for monitoring of bats in buildings was developed. During the season the main focus was given to gathering data on distribution of nesting sites of the species and on the solution of urgent emergency cases, including implementation of practical conservation measures. Project staff has communicated with stakeholders and collected information on the planned construction and thermal insulation works to be done in 2012. Based on these data, priority localities have been selected and monitoring focused on these localities. Effectiveness of implementation of “Principles of protection of species in buildings” that were
elaborated and approved by MoE and MoTCRD in 2011, has been closely monitored and arising problems communicated with the responsible authorities. Several personal meetings with top management representatives of TSUS have been carried on during the inception period. TSUS is the key stakeholder responsible for certification of thermal insulation technologies and their components in Slovakia. The priority is to find a common agreement on installation of special nest boxes for swifts and bats on thermally insulated buildings.

Intensive PR' campaign has started since the very beginning of the project implementation. It is obvious that support from the national authorities, stakeholders and public is necessary in order to achieve the project goals. On the occasion of the International Day of Migratory Birds a press conference was organized to inform about the project and point out the existing threats to migratory bird species and bats in cities. During the reporting period at least 30 media outputs (TV, radio, press, e-newsletters) have been published and 5 excursions for public (mostly students) were organized. Information about the importance of protection of the species in buildings along with the description of possible technical measures has been published also in the professional magazines focused on construction works, architecture and design.

Representatives of the project management team have presented the project and its achievements at the international workshop on conservation of swifts, held in April 2012 in Berlin, Germany.

SNC is the state institution responsible for nature conservation in Slovakia. Although SNC is not the project Associated Beneficiary its representatives have been regularly informed about the project and its progress. The project team closely cooperates with professionals from SNC, particularly on the implementation of conservation measures and communication with stakeholders. The SNC staff has been participating also in mapping and monitoring of the species in cities.

An overview on selected quantity indicators achieved during the reporting period is given in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>registered nesting sites of Swifts</td>
<td>1366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>registered roots of bats</td>
<td>975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>checked buildings</td>
<td>4852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protection of species and their nesting sites / roots during thermal insulation - number of cases</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special plastic grids (with openings) installed on the ventilation openings allowing species to enter their nesting sites</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication with stakeholders (incl. written communication and personal meetings)</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentations</td>
<td>24 (960+ participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excursions</td>
<td>5 (40+ participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>media outputs</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of professional expert statements elaborated by the project staff</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of cities where mapping of species was carried out</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trainings and seminars</td>
<td>3 (100+ participants)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2. Assessment as to whether the project objectives and work plan are still viable

In general the project implementation has been smooth and it is feasible to achieve the project objectives according to the timetable. However, slight amendments to the project timetable need to be done. Due to suitable weather conditions construction works are still on-going and the project personnel is occupied with securing that the appropriate conservation measures are applied on a recently reconstructed / insulated buildings. Also bats are still active and changing the roosts. Therefore mapping and monitoring of bats roosts is still on-going. There have been certain delays in preparation of the promotional materials because the complicated new legislation on the public procurement as described below.

Besides the above mentioned issues, all project activities have been carried out according to the project timetable.

3.3. Problems encountered.

Project’s co-financing
The co-financing of the project has not been fully secured yet. Discussions with MoE as the potential provider of the funds have been carried out and the final decision is expected to be made by the end of 2012. In the meantime the project beneficiaries are actively looking for additional sources of the financing (e.g. small grants, private companies, etc.).

Public procurement
There have been amendments to the legislation related to the public procurement. The procedure is now more complicated and requires more time and personal capacities. Because of these changes it will be not feasible to prepare and distribute all the promotional materials (leaflets, booklets, posters, etc.) by the end of 2012 as planned in the project proposal. Requested documents have been prepared and the public procurement procedure will be launched as soon as possible.

Implementation of practical conservation measures
Common agreement between the project beneficiaries and the key stakeholder (TSUS) has not been achieved yet. It is crucial that the key stakeholders accept installation of special nest boxes for swifts and bats into the thermal insulation or on the facades of the buildings. At the moment it is the only available compensation measure if the existing nesting / roosting sites cannot be preserved. If the agreement is not found, some of the project milestones (e.g. number of installed boxes) may not be fully achieved.

4. Administrative part

4.1. Description of project management

During the reporting period 6 meetings of the project management team were held (January 27, February 15, March 22, April 18, May 21, and August 10). At the beginning of the project implementation main focus was given to preparation of the project work plan for 2012 and terms of references for the project staff. Later on the
project progress and preliminary results were discussed. The project management team and staff have been in touch via e-mails and the project intranet web site in order to discuss arising issues related to the implementation of practical measures, communication with stakeholders and to exchange experience between the regions. Project partners elaborated their progress reports according to the partnership agreements.

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

The project management team was fully established in February 2012, consisting of the Project Manager, Financial Manager and representatives of the Associated Beneficiaries. Taking into account the amount of the work to be done in the field and the fact that majority of the work needs to be done in a short time, it was decided to establish a structure of assistants to project manager and regional coordinators for each of the 8 regions (Bratislavský, Trnavský, Trenčiansky, Nitriansky, Banskobystrický, Žilinský, Prešovský, and Košický). These personnel coordinate project activities in the regions, in particular mapping/monitoring and implementation of practical conservation measures. In addition many external staff and volunteers have been participating in the monitoring of the species during the breeding season.

The project office was established at BROZ’s office in Bratislava. The partners’ offices are in Bratislava (SOS/BirdLife Slovakia) and Bardejov (SON), respectively.

Organigramme of the project management team:
4.3. Partnership agreements status (incl. date of signature) and key content

The partnership agreements between the coordinating beneficiary and SOS/BirdLife Slovakia and SON, respectively, were signed on October 6th, 2011. In addition to general terms, the specification of the project budget share, activities to be coordinated by the partner and indicative timetable are stated in the agreements.

5. Technical part

Over the last decades the Common Swift and bats, in particular Common Noctule have lost many of their natural breeding habitats, e.g. old forest stands with large tall trees providing suitable tree-hollows. On the contrary appropriate artificial breeding sites have been created in buildings in human settlements. As a result a gradual shift of roosting strategy of both species has been recorded. At the present nearly 99% of the Slovak swift population breeds in man-made structures, e.g. ventilation shafts,
attic roofs, crevices on buildings, etc. Also most of Common Noctule bats population use crevices and hollows in prefabricated houses as roosting sites. Recently the greatest threat to Common Swift and Common Noctule bats is reconstruction and thermal insulation of buildings. The intensity of these works is increasing due to the applied policies subsidizing energy saving measures. Since these negative trends are to continue and even accelerate, the swift population would collapse within the next 10-20 years in most of the country if no appropriate measures are taken.

The project aims to halt the recent decline of the species’ populations in cities in Slovakia, protect the existing nesting and roosting sites and create new sites through installation of special boxes for swifts and bats. It also focuses on establishment and strengthening the institutional conditions for systematic solutions concerning protection of nesting and roosting sites of the species and raising public awareness on protection of biodiversity in urban areas.

5.1. Actions

5.1.1. Action A1: Elaboration of methodology for the protection of Common Swift, bats and other species during reconstructions and insulations of buildings

The structure of the methodology has been elaborated by the project beneficiaries. The methodology will include:
- General information on birds (including Common Swift, swallow, house martins, kestrel) and bats (biology, ecology, description of nesting/roosting sites in urban areas, etc.) occurring in urban areas
- Information on methods of monitoring of the species in urban areas
- Legislation
- Main threats to the species
- Main types of prefabricated houses preferred by the species, including the description of the roosting/nesting sites
- Description of special boxes for swifts and bats
- Information on what steps should be taken to protect the species and their habitats during insulation and reconstruction of buildings, including practical examples
- Contacts on experts and list of links to information on the topic
- Photo-documentation

External experts have been contracted to work on the text. It is foreseen the first draft to be ready by the end of 2012 and at the beginning of 2013 the draft will be given to project management team and consultants for comments. During the reporting period several unforeseen technical issues related to the installation of nest boxes emerged, in particular the methods of installation. Therefore it is necessary to give experts and consultants more space to elaborate the respective parts of the methodology. There will be a slight delay in finalization of the methodology comparing to the project timetable. The methodology will be finalized by the end of March 2013 (instead of the end of 2012) and will be disseminated to the target audience prior to the beginning of the nesting season in 2013. However, this delay will not jeopardize the achievement of the project goals.
5.1.2. Action A2: Monitoring of populations of Common Swift on selected urban areas

Monitoring of Common Swift was carried out mainly during the nesting season and apart of the project staff many external experts (e.g. professionals from SNC) and volunteers (students) had participated. The monitoring was carried out in all 8 regional capitals and 55 out of 70 district cities. In total more than **4850 buildings** in more than **100 cities** in the country were checked during the reporting period. On the buildings **1366 nesting sites** of Common Swift had been recorded during the nesting season.

Besides the nesting season, the project staff carried out the inventory of buildings suitable for nesting also before and after the season. With the experienced project staff this method has been found as particularly useful. In almost 100% of the buildings that were preliminary identified as suitable for nesting, it was later confirmed that they were really used by Common Swift and other birds during the breeding season. At the beginning of the season the main focus was given to buildings on which construction works were foreseen to begin in 2012. For each region a list of key building keepers / managers (Annex A2.1) was elaborated that is being regularly updated. During the monitoring the nesting sites were checked also with micro-cameras which allow checking not-easy accessible spaces such as ventilation shafts and crevices in the buildings. There are 8 micro-cameras used by the project staff, one micro-camera for each of the eight regions. The purchase of the micro-cameras was not foreseen in the project budget but has been additionally accepted by the European Commission upon request.

SOS/BirdLife Slovakia developed a methodology for monitoring of Common Swift in cities (Annex A2.2). The methodology is available also on the project web site and has been used by the project staff during the monitoring. Data are gathered and processed in a special APUS/BATS module of the online database AVES Symfony which is available for the public. When gathering the data the following obligatory information is recorded: locality (city and street name, street No.), geographical coordinates, date of the record, weather, number of floors in the building, contact details of the respective manager, name of the species and number of registered individuals, and species behaviour characteristics (e.g. nesting, bringing food or materials to build nest, etc.). Based on this data the distribution maps of nesting sites of swifts and bats will be prepared for each of the regional capitals and district cities. An example of such a map is attached to this report (Annex A2.3).
Based on the recorded data the key localities / buildings with a high density of nesting birds or localities important for the local populations of the birds have been selected. The protection of such important localities is considered to be a top priority and it is being negotiated with respective state institutions, buildings owners and managers in order to preserve the existing sites or to create new ones. For civil servants and stakeholders the reports from the monitoring and lists of priority localities are being elaborated in a more simple way that will be disseminated at the beginning of 2013 along with the report from monitoring of bats. If the situation requires, the necessary information on occurrence of the species in buildings is provided to the stakeholders also upon request.

Besides the cities the monitoring was carried out also in natural and semi-natural habitats such as cliffs, rocks and ruins of castles. These are important not only for swifts but also for other birds’ species, e.g. kestrels. Around 17 flying swifts were recorded in the area of Beckovské skalice Nature Reserve. In the ruins of the Vršatecký hrad Castle 6 pairs of Common Swifts were nesting in 2012. One of the most important semi-natural localities for Common Swift in Slovakia is Beckovský hrad Castle where around 60 pairs of swifts were recorded nesting in the ruins of the castle as well as in the castle cliff. Potential threats to the nesting birds due to climbing activities have been communicated with relevant state institutions.

Another important locality is Čachtický hrad Castle with around 40 pairs of swifts nesting in its walls. The reconstruction of the castle has started in 2012, however it should not negatively affect the nesting sites. Nevertheless, the project staff closely monitors the works and is ready to take necessary steps to protect the nesting sites, if necessary.
The action has been carried out in the line with the project timetable and no special problems have been encountered so far. In the upcoming project period the focus will be given to buildings where the reconstruction works are planned for 2013 as well as the buildings where practical conservation measures have been already implemented in 2012, in order to monitor the effectiveness of these measures.

5.1.3. Action A3: Education and training of key stakeholders and decision makers

In April 2012 first training was organized for civil servants and key stakeholders from the region of Banská Bystrica. Besides the project, its activities and goals, also the biology and ecology of species occurring in urban areas, main threats, practical conservation measures as well as legal aspects of the protection were presented to 25 participants from regional and district environmental offices, construction administrations, as well as to professional conservationists, environmental inspectors, architects and designers.

Second training for 80 voluntary members of Nature guard from the Košice region focused on protection of birds and bats during insulation and reconstruction of buildings was held in Jelšava in April 2012.

This activity will be continued especially during the autumn-winter season when the construction works on buildings are temporarily slowed-down due to unsuitable weather conditions. This season of the year the project staff should have more time to organize trainings and similar events. The best examples of the practical conservation measures that were implemented during previous season (2012) will be presented on the trainings as well.

5.1.4. Action A4: Monitoring of populations of Common Noctule on selected sites
The activity will be implemented mainly in autumn when the bats are active and it is easy to record them. Nevertheless, during the monitoring of swifts the buildings were evaluated also as potential sites for bats since these species often use the same ventilation shafts and crevices in the buildings. When construction and insulation works were due to start occurrence of bats in the buildings was checked as well. During the monitoring **975 roosting sites** of bats were recorded in the total number of **4582** checked buildings. Similarly to the Action A2 also during implementation of the Action A4 the micro-cameras were used to check not-easy accessible places in buildings that were often occupied by bats.

SON developed a methodology for monitoring of bats in buildings in cities (Annex A4.1). The methodology is available on the project web site and has been used by the project staff during the monitoring. Also the data on occurrence of bats in buildings are gathered and processed in a special APUS/BATS module of the online database AVES Symfony, which is available for the public.

Although the project mainly focuses on bats in urban areas, summer colonies of bats were monitored in old sacral buildings (churches) where the reconstruction of roof is planned. If the reconstruction is done during the mating season of bats (summer) and in an inappropriate way (e.g. with using of chemicals) it may have a significant negative impact on the bat colonies. The project management team has established cooperation with regional offices in charge of cultural and historical monuments, including old historical buildings in order to secure that the suitable roosting and mating sites for bats are preserved also after the reconstruction of the buildings. During the summer churches in the following cities/villages were monitored:

- Dolná Mariková - *Myotis myotis* (830 ex.), *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (69 ex.), *Myotis emarginatus* (1 ex.)
- Konská near Rajec – *Plecotus* sp. (3 ex.), *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (34 ex.)
- Kamenná Poruba – *Myotis myotis* (300 ex.)
- Rajec – *Myotis myotis* (950 ex.)
- Fačkov – *Myotis myotis* (320 ex.)
- Višňové – *Myotis myotis* (800 ex.)
- Lysá pod Makytnou - *Myotis myotis* (850 ex.)

![Image 6: Myotis myotis – summer colony](image6)

![Image 7: Common Noctule bats in a crevice between panels in a prefabricated house](image7)
Annual report from the monitoring of bats will be elaborated during the winter and disseminated to the stakeholders at the beginning of 2013. So far no problems have been encountered during the implementation of this action and it is foreseen that the action will be carried out according to the project timetable.

5.1.5. Action A5: Elaboration of guideline for protection of birds and bats during insulation and reconstruction works in the buildings

General “Principles of protection of species in buildings” were elaborated and approved jointly by MoE and MoTCRD already in 2011. Since then the principles has been applied by the authorities concerned, in particular by environmental and construction authorities. Effectiveness of its application differs between the regions and districts. It is obvious that more intensive communication with and trainings for civil servants and building companies are necessary to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of the principles in the regions.

Based on these principles and experience gathered since the beginning of the project the first draft text of the guideline has been developed that has been sent to the project beneficiaries and external expert for comments. In the following months the experience gathered during first year of the project will be analysed in more detail and the guideline text will be improved accordingly. In addition technical part of the guideline needs to be developed in more detail in order to make the document easily understandable for all stakeholders.

As a result of intensive communication with representatives of the city of Púchov and thanks to support from the local citizens the representatives of the city adopted its own document – The Principles for protection of Common Swifts in the city of Púchov. The city council officially committed itself to provide financial support to protection of existing nesting sites and installation of swift boxes on the buildings. The Principles can serve as a positive example also for the other communities.

5.1.6. Action C1: Implementation of practical model measures for the protection of Common Swift and other bird species during reconstructions and insulations of buildings

As indicated above (Action A2) more than 1360 nesting sites of Common Swift were recorded during the nesting season of 2012. Significant number of these sites was/is threatened by planned/on-going insulation and reconstruction works. During the reporting period such cases were dealt with by the project staff on 282 buildings. Each individual case was discussed with the stakeholders concerned – environmental and construction authorities, building managers, construction companies, and home-owners. Upon request from the stakeholders an expert written opinion (statement) concerning the occurrence of protected species in the respective building was elaborated by the project staff or by the external experts. In total 98 expert statements, including proposals of specific conservation measures (the protection of existing or creation of new nesting/roosting sites), were elaborated during the reporting period. Also the cooperation with designers and architects has
been established to promote practical conservation measures as a part of the city architecture planning process.

Whenever possible, we try to preserve existing nesting sites, particularly those within the attic ventilation shafts. It can be done by installation of modified protection grids (instead of “normal” ones) which protect the insulation against the water but also allow the species to enter their nesting sites. During the inception period in total 1992 modified grids were installed on buildings; it means that 1992 existing nesting sites were preserved for the future. It is necessary to check whether the grids are modified and installed appropriately.

![Picture 9: Modified protection grids installed on ventilation shafts on thermally insulated building](image)

There are substantial differences between the regions and districts concerning the implementation of the conservation principles and practical conservation measures by relevant authorities. Therefore in some cities the cooperation between
authorities and the project management team is relatively smooth and successful (e.g. Bratislava, Banská Bystrica, Nitra), while in the other regions (e.g. Košice) the cooperation is rather difficult and it is very time-consuming to achieve positive results. In order to achieve comparable level of the effectiveness of the implementation of this action in all regions it is necessary to secure the willingness of relevant state authorities to deal with this issue according to the national legislation. This will be achieved through more intensive communication with the authorities and further trainings organized within the project.

![Prefabricated house with modified protection grids (Bardejov). In total 48 modified grids were installed on this building.](image10.png)

![Picture 10: Prefabricated house with modified protection grids (Bardejov). In total 48 modified grids were installed on this building.](image10.png)

![Picture 11: Modified grids installed on the attic ventilation shafts (Zvolen)](image11.png)

![Picture 11: Modified grids installed on the attic ventilation shafts (Zvolen)](image11.png)

![Picture 12: Installation of barriers to protect Swifts eggs from falling out of the nest (Zvolen)](image12.png)

![Picture 12: Installation of barriers to protect Swifts eggs from falling out of the nest (Zvolen)](image12.png)
5.1.7. Action C2: Installation of special nest boxes for Common Swift

During the inception period the obligatory documentation necessary to carry out the public procurement procedure was elaborated. The public procurement procedure has been successfully completed and the provider to supply the nest boxes was selected. The nest boxes will be delivered to the project office in Bratislava by the end of October 2012 and immediately distributed to the regions upon request from the regional coordinators. Installation of nest boxes on buildings will start since October – November 2012.

5.1.8. Action C3: Implementation of practical model measures for the protection of bats during reconstructions and insulations of buildings

Practical measures for the protection of bats has been implemented usually along with the measures primarily focused on swifts since the species often use the same types of nesting / roosting sites. Modified protection grids were used in the same way as described above (Action C2). Although the bats occur in buildings throughout the whole year, the main period when the bats are threatened by insulation and construction works starts usually at the beginning of September, when many bats, particularly Common Noctule moved to the roosting sites in buildings. This period overlaps with still on-going season of construction and insulation works. These works are carried out in daylight when bats are resting in their sites in buildings. In many cases the workers are not aware of the presence of the protected bats in buildings and carry on the work without any protection measures.

Project staff members have regularly monitored the buildings that were identified / supposed as important sites for the species and have been in touch with the relevant authorities. As soon as the works are due to start and the roosting sites are accessible by scaffold, our experts check the sites with micro-cameras and inform the stakeholders. The presence of bats in ventilation shafts or crevices between panels can be recognized also by visible excrement (guano). Next steps are similar to those applied within the Action C1 and Action C2. In addition the special measures aiming to evacuate bats from the roosting sites threatened by the construction works and from those that cannot be preserved after insulation of buildings (in particular crevices between panels) are being applied to minimize the mortality of bats during construction works.

To compensate the loss of roosting sites, special nest boxes for bats will be installed. The public procurement procedure has been successfully completed, the provider to supply the nest boxes for bats was selected and the installation of boxes will start at the end of October 2012.
5.1.9. Action D1: Promotional materials and project presentation in media

During the reporting period 1 press conference was organized (May 15, 2012) and 1 press release disseminated to the media. Next press release will be issued on the occasion of the forthcoming international conference in October. The project and its activities were presented to a wide public via at least 30 media outputs - articles in printed and electronic media, interviews on radio and TV (both national and regional; e.g. TV JOJ, TV Markíza, Radio Junior, Radio Slovensko, RTV Púchov, RTV Bratislava, etc.).

Particularly the project overall objectives and the implementation of specific protection measures were presented in media. The members of project management team have provided several interviews on importance of protection of biodiversity (including swifts and bats) in urban areas and its benefits for the public. Articles on these topics were published not only in magazines focused on biology and ecology (e.g. Vtáky / Birds) but also in specific magazines addressed to construction companies (e.g. the catalogue of company WEBER TERRANOVA – information about nest boxes for swifts and bats) and magazines for architects and designers (Dom a byvanie / House and Living). List of selected media outcomes, including respective web links is attached to this report (Annex D1.1).

Project web site (www.dazdovniky.vtaky.sk) was established in February 2012 and since then it has been regularly updated. General information about the project as well as links to the online database, web site with information about boxes and contacts on the project management team members is available for the public. In addition to the project web site an intranet web site (http://dazdovniky.dms4u.cz/) was established to share internal working documents within the project staff. The intranet web site is recently available only for the members of the project team. However, it is foreseen that by the end of 2012 part of the web site will be available also for public.

Public procurement concerning production of promotional materials has not been finished yet. Therefore it was not possible to produce and disseminate the new promotional materials by the end of the inception period. It is foreseen that subcontractor will be selected soon and materials finalized and disseminated during the first half of 2013. In the meantime, we have been using the available existing

Picture 13: Guano in a crevice between panels – sign of presence of a colony of bats in the building
promotional materials (leaflets, booklets, stickers) from which we have still sufficient supply from the previous years.

Other promotional materials and activities anticipated within the Action D1 will be dealt with in the next period of the project implementation.

5.1.10. Action D2: Meetings with stakeholders

During the inception period more than 100 personal meetings were held with representatives of construction companies, building keepers and managers, state environmental and construction authorities and other stakeholders (for list of meetings see Annex D2.1). Our experts informed about project objectives, the monitoring methods and practical conservation measures. During the meetings also legal aspects of protection of birds and bats in buildings and implementation of the existing legislation were discussed. In addition to personal meetings the project management team regularly communicate with stakeholders via e-mails and by phone. If requested, specific advice on how to implement conservation measures has been provided. In total more than 350 communications (personal as well as written) were carried on during the reporting period.

One of the key stakeholders is TSUS. This institution is in charge of providing certificates for thermal insulation technologies and components in Slovakia. In total 3 personal meetings with representatives of TSUS were held in order to discuss in particular the issues related to installation of boxes on buildings with ongoing / finished thermal insulation. First meeting was held during CONECO Conference on March 28, 2012. Consecutively the project partners and representatives of TSUS met on April 19, 2012 at the premises of TSUS. The last meeting (September 12, 2012) was initiated by MoE and representatives of the project beneficiaries, SNC, MoE, MoTCRD and TSUS discussed possibilities for further cooperation. It was agreed that a common agreement on the way of implementation of conservation measures acceptable for all concerned needs to be find. Next meeting will be held on 22 October 2012 at the premises of MoE in Bratislava.

It is foreseen that more intensive communication and more personal meetings with stakeholders will be needed to achieve positive results and to build their capacities on the topic. Our staff members are well-trained and experienced to implement this task effectively and successfully.

5.1.11. Action D3: Excursions in the cities and lectures on the schools

In order to raise public awareness on importance of conservation of biodiversity in urban areas, in particular protection of birds and bats 24 presentations for more than 960 participants were organized during the reporting period. The presentations were focused on school kids and teenagers and were organized on primary and secondary schools, including those with recorded nesting sites of birds and bats, in several cities in Slovakia, e.g. Žilina, Prievidza, Banská Bystrica, Nitra. There was one presentation for students of natural sciences at the University of Matej Bel in Banská Bystrica. The project was presented also within the Pecha Kucha Night organized in Žilina and at several events organized within the European Bat Night.

In addition to the public presentations 5 outdoor excursions for more than 40 participants were organized to visit important nesting sites of birds, especially
Common Swifts, and implemented practical conservation measures in Zvolen, Bratislava and other cities (for list of events see Annex D3.1).

The action will be further implemented mainly during the breeding season of swifts as a part of bird-watching activities in cities in order to educate public about the ecology and biology of the birds and their behavior during the nesting. It is also important to show public where the species occur in buildings. Similar activities focused on bats will be organized in autumn.

5.1.12.  Action D4: Workshops, national and international meetings for experts and stakeholders

In March 22.-23., 2012 a national workshop on protection of Common Swifts and bats in buildings attended by 25 participants was held in Zvolen. The workshop was
primarily addressed to new members of the project team and volunteers. The main goal was to inform them about the project and its goals, about biology and ecology of birds and bats, the species habitats in urban areas and most importantly about the methods of monitoring of the species and existing practical conservation measures. Participants were informed also about the legal aspects of the protection of species in cities and about the existing legislation. It is very positive that majority of the participants has been further participating at the project implementation, especially on the activities related to the monitoring of species, implementation of practical conservation measures and public awareness activities.

On 24-26 October 2012 1st international Conference on Protection of Birds and Bats during insulation and reconstruction of buildings will be held in Zvolen. Till the date of this report more than 120 participants from Slovakia and abroad were registered. Next international conference is foreseen at the end of the project.

![Participants of the national workshop in Zvolen](image)

5.1.13. **Action E1: Project management, accounting, monitoring of project progress and monitoring of effectiveness of project actions**

**Project management and accounting**

The partnership agreements between the coordinating beneficiary and SOS/BirdLife Slovakia and SON, respectively, were signed already in October 2011 (see Annexes E.1.1 and E1.2).

The project management team was fully established in February 2012, consisting of the Project Manager, Financial Manager and representatives of the partners. Taking into account the large amount of the work to be done in the field and the fact that majority of the work needs to be done in a short time, it was decided to appoint an assistants to project manager (regional coordinators) for each of the 8 administrative regions of Slovakia (Bratislavský, Trnavský, Trenčiansky, Nitriansky, Banskobystrický, Žilinsky, Prešovský, and Košický). These personnel coordinate
project activities in the regions, in particular the species inventories and monitoring and the implementation of practical conservation measures. In addition many volunteers have been participating in the species’ inventories during the breeding season. All employees report their work monthly via time sheets. Time sheets are checked and approved by the project manager.

Communication with partners is done mainly via e-mails. During the reporting period 6 meetings of the project management team were held (January 27, February 15, March 22, April 18, May 21, and August 10) to set up work plan for 2012 and discuss the project issues.

For the project a specific cost center has been established in the accounting system of beneficiaries in order to secure traceability and transparent evidence of the project expenditures.

The project office was established at BROZ’s office in Bratislava. The partners’ offices are in Bratislava (SOS/BirdLife Slovakia) and Bardejov (SON), respectively.

Monitoring of the project progress

On 18-19 April 2012 the 1st monitoring mission took place. Project progress and potential risks in regard to the achievement of the project goals were presented to the monitor, Dr. P. Bezák. An excursion to the nesting sites of Common Swift in Bratislava and Zvolen were organized to present practical conservation measures applied in the field. The monitor participated at the regional workshop on protection of birds and bats in buildings, held in Zvolen.

On 24 September 2012 the 1st Steering Committee Meeting was held in Bratislava at the premises of MoE. Representatives of MoE, SNC and the project beneficiaries discussed the project progress and problems which have aroused during the reporting period. It was agreed that the project beneficiaries will closely cooperate with the MoE and SNC in order to achieve the project goals.

Monitoring of effectiveness of project actions (C1, C2 and C3)

During the reporting period mainly the data on number of insulated/reconstructed buildings and non-insulated buildings were recorded. The data will be analysed and evaluated in regard to the abundance of the swifts and bats populations. It is expected that if appropriate measures are taken the populations should be stable or even increasing despite the increasing number of insulated and reconstructed buildings.

The monitoring of effectiveness of the practical conservation measures implemented will start in the next breeding season.


The action has not been implemented yet.

5.1.15. Action E3: After-LIFE Communication Plan

The action has not been implemented yet.

5.1.16. Action E4: Networking with other projects
On April 10-12, 2012, five members of the project team participated at international workshop on protection of swifts in Berlin, Germany. During the workshop the project as well as practical conservation measures applied in Slovakia were presented to a wide audience of experts from several European and non-European countries.Contacts with experts from U.K., Germany, Spain, the Czech Republic, Poland, Israel and other countries have been established. Some of the experts will participate at the forthcoming international conference in Zvolen.

On April 15-17, 2012 a statutory representative of SON presented the project at the meeting of Advisory Committee of EUROBATS in Dublin, Ireland.

Project beneficiaries have been for long time cooperating especially with colleagues from the Czech Republic (both with ornithologists and chiropterologists). General situation (types of buildings occupied by swifts and bats, intensity of insulation and construction works over the last years, etc.) as well as the legislation in the Czech Republic are very similar to those in Slovakia. Czech partners have wide experience on the monitoring of species and implementation of conservation measures. It is expected that next year exchange study visits for experts from the Czech Republic and Slovakia will be organized in order to present specific conservation measures, exchange experience and strengthen mutual cooperation.

Picture 17: International workshop on protection of Swifts in Berlin, Germany
5.2. Availability of appropriate licences and authorisations

Not applicable.

5.3. Envisaged progress until next report.

In the coming reporting period the work will be primarily focused on monitoring of birds and bats during the breeding season and implementation of conservation measures, including installation of nest boxes. Intensive communication with stakeholders will continue in order to raise their awareness on the topic. Trainings and seminars will be organized for stakeholders to present conservation measures and share experiences concerning their implementation.

To report the project progress steering committee meetings will be organized twice a year. In 2013 national workshops and meetings will be organized for stakeholders and project staff members and volunteers.

At the beginning of 2013 reports from monitoring of swifts and bats in 2012 will be finalized and disseminated. Also the methodology for protection of birds and bats during reconstruction and insulation of buildings will be finalized and disseminated.

In 2013 promotional materials will be prepared and disseminated to public. The planned exhibition “Return of Swifts” will be designed. Project outcomes will be intensively promoted via media, regularly updated project web site, public presentations, excursions, etc.

The next report is due on January 31, 2014.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks/Activities</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1T</td>
<td>2T</td>
<td>3T</td>
<td>4T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall project schedule</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1 Methodology for protection of birds and bats in buildings</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 Monitoring of Common Swift</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Trainings for stakeholders</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4 Monitoring of Common Noctule</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5 Guideline for protection of birds and bats during insulation and reconstruction of buildings</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 Practical measures for Common Swifts</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 Installation of boxes for Common Swifts</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3 Practical measures and boxes for bats</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1 Promo materials and presentation in media</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2 Meetings with stakeholders</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3 Excursions and lectures</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D4 Workshops and meetings for experts and stakeholders</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1 Project management, accounting and monitoring</td>
<td>Propose</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2 External audit</td>
<td>Proposed</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3 After-LIFE Communication Plan</td>
<td>Proposed</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4 Networking with other projects</td>
<td>Proposed</td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Financial part

6.1. Putting in place of the accounting system.

The coordinating beneficiary BROZ and associated beneficiaries keep an analytic system of accounting. The accounting system is in line with the national legislation as well as LIFE+ Common Provisions.

For the project a specific cost center has been established in the accounting system of beneficiaries in order to secure traceability and transparent evidence of the project expenditures. This cost centre based system enables to follow the financing of each project (including project LIFE+) separately, and trace each project’s cost, expenditures and income. All expenses included in the financial report were paid and duly booked in the accounting system of the coordinating beneficiary BROZ or associated beneficiaries of the LIFE+ project.

6.2. Continued availability of co-financing.

The request for the project co-financing was submitted to MoE in 2011. MoE has not confirmed financial support to the project yet. However, it is believed that the final decision will be made by the end of 2012 or beginning 2013 at the latest.

6.3. Costs incurred.

In the following table there are costs of project beneficiary and partners incurred since 01/01/2012 till 31/08/2012. The total project budget is **1 481 248** EUR. From this 117 772 EUR has been incurred by 31/08/2012. This represents 7,95 % of the total project budget. First instalment was received from the Commission (equivalent to 40% of the maximum Community financial contribution) that equals to 296 249,30 EUR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget breakdown categories</th>
<th>Total cost in €</th>
<th>Costs incurred from the start date to 31.08.2012 in €</th>
<th>% of total costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Personnel</td>
<td>752 822</td>
<td>68 692</td>
<td>9,12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Travel and subsistence</td>
<td>134 216</td>
<td>18 059</td>
<td>14,94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. External assistance</td>
<td>296 974</td>
<td>6 437</td>
<td>2,17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Durable goods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>176 062</td>
<td>12 453</td>
<td>7,07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prototype</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Land purchase / long-term lease</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Consumables</td>
<td>24 270</td>
<td>2 649</td>
<td>10,91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other Costs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Overheads</td>
<td>96 904</td>
<td>9 482</td>
<td>9,78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1 481 248</td>
<td>117 772</td>
<td>7,95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Action number and name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Foreseen costs</th>
<th>Spent so far</th>
<th>Remaining</th>
<th>Projected final cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.1</strong></td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>13 584</td>
<td>5 867</td>
<td>7 717</td>
<td>13 584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.2</strong></td>
<td>Monitoring –swifts</td>
<td>112 928</td>
<td>14 523</td>
<td>98 405</td>
<td>112 928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.3</strong></td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>41 134</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>40 414</td>
<td>41 134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.4</strong></td>
<td>Monitoring - bats</td>
<td>79 504</td>
<td>10 142</td>
<td>69 362</td>
<td>79 504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A.5</strong></td>
<td>Guideline</td>
<td>6 600</td>
<td>1 632</td>
<td>4 968</td>
<td>6 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.1</strong></td>
<td>Protection measures - swifts</td>
<td>264 676</td>
<td>28 451</td>
<td>236 225</td>
<td>264 676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.2</strong></td>
<td>Nest boxes for swifts</td>
<td>291 652</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>291 652</td>
<td>291 652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C.3</strong></td>
<td>Protection measures – bats</td>
<td>171 048</td>
<td>15 480</td>
<td>155 568</td>
<td>171 048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.1</strong></td>
<td>Promotional materials</td>
<td>107 156</td>
<td>4 318</td>
<td>102 838</td>
<td>107 156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.2</strong></td>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>18 286</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>17 396</td>
<td>18 268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.3</strong></td>
<td>Excursions</td>
<td>49 731</td>
<td>2 520</td>
<td>47 211</td>
<td>49 731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D.4</strong></td>
<td>Workshops, national and international meetings</td>
<td>31 175</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>30 873</td>
<td>31 175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.1</strong></td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>166 414</td>
<td>21 460</td>
<td>144 954</td>
<td>166 414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.2</strong></td>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>12 474</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12 474</td>
<td>12 474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.3</strong></td>
<td>After-LIFE Communication Plan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E.4</strong></td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>18 000</td>
<td>2 003</td>
<td>15 997</td>
<td>18 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 384 344</td>
<td>108 290</td>
<td>1 276 054</td>
<td>1 384 344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Personnel**

Standard timesheets were used to register the time actually worked for the project (monthly timesheets with “hour” as a time unit) for all persons employed for the project. They were used on daily basis for recording of working hours devoted to LIFE+ project, other projects, public holiday, annual holiday, sick leave or other absence.

Timesheets have been printed and signed by authorised persons on the last working day of the month they concern or at the beginning of the following month at the latest.

Part time personnel (working part time for the project and part time for other activities) distinguish the hours worked for the LIFE+ project and other activities in timesheets. According to timesheets eligible costs for each project were determined and registered in appropriate cost centre in analytical accounting evidence.

Eligible personnel costs were calculated on the basis of average annual hourly rate and real amount of working hours spent on the project was recorded in timesheets.
Average annual hourly rate comes out from annual personnel costs (annual gross salary plus obligatory social charges, but excluding any other costs) and annual number of working time units (excluding non-productive time such as weekends, holiday, sick leave etc.).

Only real costs related to the project are reported in budget category “Personnel”.

**Travel**

Travel and subsistence costs were charged in accordance with the internal rules of the coordinating beneficiary or associated beneficiaries.

Public tender for car purchase has been recently prepared. During the reporting period mostly private cars of the project team members were used to carry on the project tasks. In such case costs for each trip are calculated according to national legislation and internal rules of BROZ.

By reporting of travel we distinguish the cost item – e.g. travel expenses for private car, per diems, air tickets - different cost items are reported separately.

**External Assistance**

Tenders were administered in accordance with the Slovak law on public procurement and internal rules of the coordinating beneficiary or associated beneficiaries.

By purchasing procedures for services (competitive tenders from potential subcontractors) rule "best value for money" was always respected.

Invoices issued by subcontractors bear a clear reference to the LIFE+ project – code of the project, project, title / acronym or a specific number.

**Equipment**

Purchasing procedures were administered in accordance with the Slovak law on public procurement and internal rules of the coordinating beneficiary or associated beneficiaries. All equipment was purchased in accordance with the approved project budget. Prior to purchasing of micro-cameras (not foreseen in the project) an approval from the European Commission was obtained. Concerning the boxes for swifts and bats public procurement procedure has been finished and subcontractor has been selected.

**Consumables**

All expenses in the budget category “Consumables” were incurred in accordance with the approved project budget.
7. Annexes

**Annex A2.1:** List of key keepers / managers of buildings

**Annex A2.2:** Methodology for monitoring of Common Swift in cities

**Annex A2.3:** Map of sites of Swifts and bats in Bratislava-Petržalka

(Legend:
blue + yellow – buildings suitable for nesting/roosting;
red – insulated / reconstructed buildings not suitable for nesting/roosting;
green – insulated/reconstructed buildings suitable for nesting/roosting (following the implementation of specific conservation measures);
brown – not insulated / reconstructed buildings that are not suitable for nesting/roosting)

**Annex A4.1:** Methodology for monitoring of bats in cities

**Annex D1.1:** List of selected media outputs

**Annex D2.1:** List of meetings with stakeholders

**Annex D3.1:** List of presentations and excursions

**Annex E.1.1:** Partnership agreement between BROZ and SOS/BirdLife Slovakia

**Annex E.1.2:** Partnership agreement between BROZ and SON