

## Report

Covering the project activities from 01/09/2019 to 31/12/2021

### 1. Executive Summary

**The main objective of the project** is to improve the conservation status of 5 priority habitats \*6240, \*6250, \*6210, \*91H0 and \*91I0 and partly also 1 non-priority habitat 6210. These are located mainly on the northern edge of the Pannonian bioregion and on its border with the Carpathian and Continental bioregions, with 1 site also in the Continental bioregion. The project will be implemented mainly in the South Moravian Region in 6 SCIs (Děvín, Miroslavské kopce, Moravský kras, Pouzdřanská step-Kolby, Stránská skála, Stolová hora), in the Central Bohemia Region in 1 SCI (Žehuňsko). The project area is located in 2 protected landscape areas, 9 small special protected areas - mostly at the national level.

#### **Expected results:**

- Improvement of the state of protection in at least 7 SCIs

*Work is underway at 7 project sites within 7 SCIs. As part of the D action, we carry out monitoring of project impact on target habitats, LIFE performance indicators monitoring, assessment of project impact on ecosystem services and assessment of projects socio-economic impacts and impact of dissemination actions.*

- Ensuring recovery management on a minimum of 133 ha, ensuring sustainable grazing on a minimum of 44 ha. Eradication of *Isatis tinctoria* on a minimum of 23 ha

*Recovery management was carried out on 32 ha by the end of 2021 (17 ha of grassland and 15 ha of forest habitat), i.e. 25% of the planned area). As part of the recovery management, we carry out removal of shrubs and pioneer trees, as well as mowing of degraded areas and areas where we have removed shrubs (aftercare). Sustainable grazing has been implemented on 21 ha (47%). We plan to mulch and mosaic harrow in the second half of the project. We are using various methods to eradicate IAS: pulling, mowing, foliar spraying, mowing of the aboveground parts and application of herbicide on the stump. Eradication of *Isatis tinctoria* and other IAS is ongoing on a total of 51 ha. We will address the Early warning system in the second half of the project. At the moment we have defined the problematic IAS. We will create a summary methodology for both the reporting and monitoring of incidence and for the eradication process as such. We will create a manual for stakeholders where all disposal options will be reflected.*

- Involvement of at least 5 local entities in the care of the SCIs concerned.

*We have already involved 3 local entities (Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic, Administration of the Pálava Protected Landscape Area and Administration of the Moravský Kras Protected Landscape Area) in the care of the SCIs concerned. We are currently in the process of sharing experiences with local farmers, where individual shepherds from different project sites have been introduced and connected with each other. Now they are already contacting each other themselves and are involved in the planning of the grazing.*

- Creation of 1 volunteer system to support the implementation of habitat restoration and sustainable site management - at least 300 volunteers involved in the project, at least 3 non-project partners.

*A volunteer system has been set up and we cooperate with these 7 organisations who regularly send their volunteers to us: Petrklíč Help z.s., GasNet s.r.o., HaDivadlo Brno, Rezekvítek z.s., European solidarity corps (via Kapráluv mlýn), Masaryk and Mendel Universities in Brno, in total 63 volunteers have already participated in the management work.*

- At least 2 new sustainable jobs for nature conservation, friendly tourism.

*In total, 10,75 FTE jobs were created. Of these, 5,75 FTE jobs are directly employed by the project (ZO ČSOP ONYX 2,45 FTE, ZO ČSOP Vlašim 2,0 FTE, IBOT 1,1 FTE, Kapráluv mlýn 0,2 FTE). Other jobs were created indirectly through the project. At least 5 jobs were created in the field of sustainable agriculture (shepherds, animal keepers, maintenance of the grasslands).*

- Create 7 small infrastructure objects for gentle tourism and routing site visitors.

*Deadline is up to 05/2024, we are now discussing with site managers what type and location of objects would be most appropriate.*

- At least 7 local entities using the outputs of the ecological education project and friendly tourism, including the training of 7 local guides.

*Workshops for guides are planned up to 09/2023. Project leaflets and e-publications for each project site have been made available to communities in the area. We are also preparing leaflets and e-publications for IAS (to be ready by 05/2022).*

Overall, project management is proceeding without major problems.

We have not encountered any significant difficulties in the activities carried out in the field. Unfortunately, the outbreak of COVID 19 has affected the activities of E. Activities for stakeholders and schools, such as meetings, seminars, workshops and field trips, which had to be postponed due to the pandemic situation and will be implemented gradually in 2022. However, there are still almost 4 years left until the end of the project, so we are confident that all planned objectives and outputs will be achieved.

## 2. Introduction

### **Overall and specific objectives:**

The main objective of the project is to improve the conservation status of 5 priority habitats and partly also 1 non-priority habitat. The project will be implemented mainly in the South Moravian Region in 6 SCIs, in the Central Bohemia Region in 1 SCI.

The specific objectives of the project are:

- Improvement of the state of protection in at least 7 SCIs
- Ensuring recovery management on a minimum of 133 ha, ensuring sustainable grazing on a minimum of 44 ha. Eradication of *Isatis tinctoria* on a minimum of 23 ha
- Involvement of at least 5 local entities in the care of the SCIs concerned.
- Creation of 1 volunteer system to support the implementation of habitat restoration and sustainable site management - at least 300 volunteers involved in the project, at least 3 non-project partners.
- At least 2 new sustainable jobs for nature conservation, friendly tourism.
- Creation and distribution of printed outputs on the project, respectively the interpretation of management measures at the priority sites concerned, their natural significance, etc.
- Create 7 small infrastructure objects for gentle tourism and routing site visitors.
- At least 7 local entities using the outputs of the ecological education project and friendly tourism, including the training of 7 local guides.
- Replication of project outputs with at least 15 subjects in the region and beyond, including abroad.

**Which sites are involved:**

7 SCIs: CZ0624020 Stránská skála, CZ0624043 Stolová hora, CZ0624104 Děvín, CZ0624130 Moravský Kras, CZ0624060 Pouzdřanská step - Kolby, CZ0620147 - Miroslavské kopce and CZ0214050 Žehuňsko.

**Which habitat types and/or species are targeted:**

Project LIFE SouthMoravia will improve the conservation status of 5 priority and 1 non priority habitats of the Habitats Directive:

\*6240 Sub-Pannonic steppic grasslands

\*6250 Pannonic loess steppic grasslands

6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) - \*important orchid sites

\*6110 Rupicolous calcareous or basophilic grasslands of the Alysso-Sedion albi

\*91H0 Pannonian woods with *Quercus pubescens*

\*91I0 Euro-Siberian steppic woods with *Quercus* spp

**Main conservation issues being targeted (including threats):**

Threat 1: Overgrowing of target habitats due to abandonment from traditional land use (extensive farming or mowing)

The most significant threat to the target habitats and species is successional changes resulting from the abandonment of traditional management. Virtually all project sites have been used in the past as extensive pastures, small-scale meadows, and in some cases even as vineyards or extensive orchards. These management practices formed a dynamic mosaic of different microhabitats with diverse conditions, creating the prerequisite for very high biodiversity and diverse ecosystem services. Today, most sites have been abandoned for several decades (often more than 30 years). As a result, they are overgrown with dense and thick bush and tree cover and lack the important infrastructure needed for grazing and animals. The adverse impacts described above have already reached a level where such intervention is beyond the capacity of the responsible authorities, NGOs or local farmers.

Threat 2: Spreading of invasive alien plant species (IAS)

The threat of IAS is relevant at most project sites. Among others, the most problematic species are *Robinia pseudoacacia*, *Ailanthus altissima*, *Isatis tinctoria*, *Glycyrrhiza glabra* and *Asclepias syriaca*. IAS are spreading very rapidly, forming dense stands and changing site conditions to the point where the existence of target habitats is no longer possible (or their condition is unfavourable). IAS often spreads as a result of grassland abandonment in areas that have been disturbed or eutrophised in the past. Illegal waste dumps or unsuitable feeding grounds for wildlife are common sources of IAS.

Threat 3: Afforestation of grassland habitats, inappropriate forestry policies

There is almost no effective cooperation between key actors in the localities. Conservation objectives are not integrated into mainstream forest management or forest management plans (e.g. target habitat layers).

Threat 4: Lack of awareness of public and key stakeholders

Despite the exceptional natural values of the target habitats and the presence of unique species at the project sites, this special status is not well known among residents and local stakeholders. Conservation needs are not sufficiently integrated into local/regional policy and effective collaboration with local farmers.

Threat 5: Intensive grazing by wild animals

The forests in the Žehuňsko SCI are located directly in the game reserve, some parts are adjacent to the game reserve. The trees therefore suffer from bark damage and the growth of young trees is very limited. In the long term, the natural forest cycle is disturbed and open oak forests could disappear. In the past, SCI Děvín has also been affected by mouflon breeding,

whose hooves disturb the slopes and thus create conditions for the spread of IAS, especially *Isatis tinctoria*.

### **Socio-economic context**

Due to socio-economic changes, traditional land use was abandoned on most of the project sites. Presently, most of them have been abandoned already several decades (often more than 30 years). The project will introduce sustainable agriculture - extensive grazing on currently abandoned pastures. This will bring significant socio-economic benefits to local farmers and communities. The restoration of valuable grasslands and forests will increase not only their natural values, but also the attractiveness of the project sites - creating significant potential for tourism.

### **Expected longer term results**

The re-established grazing on the project sites and the established grazing infrastructure on the project sites to ensure a sustainable grazing regime will continue in the long term after the end of the project. Sustainable restoration management, implemented to maintain conditions for biodiversity and ecosystem functions, will prepare the sites for the long-term sustainability of their improved condition. The established volunteer system will also continue to be used, particularly for the continued eradication of *Isatis tinctoria*.

## **3. Administrative part**

The project implementation period is set at 5.5 years. Partnership agreements between the coordinating beneficiary and the associated beneficiaries were concluded at the beginning of the project. A project management team has also been established which includes a project manager, a site manager, a PR manager, a financial manager and representatives of the associated beneficiaries. Other project staff, particularly field workers, were recruited on a phased basis, according to the needs of the project.

The running of the project is based on timely and accurate management and administration, with consultations and project team meetings taking place on a regular basis, currently mostly online due to the Covid 19 situation. We also try to have a live meeting once a quarter.

The project team participates in various meetings with representatives of municipalities, stakeholders, key staff of organisations and government institutions and communicates all management activities on the spot with regional interest groups. The financial manager oversees the continued spending of funds by the associated beneficiaries and communicates with the project's associated beneficiaries' accountants.

The Project Steering Committee meets once a year. The members of the Steering Committee were nominated by the associated beneficiaries and institutions and organisations in the project area prior to the first meeting. The Steering Committee has 9 members representing the heads of the beneficiary and all associated beneficiaries, representatives of the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, the Agency for Nature Conservation and Nature Protection, the administrators of the sites and the South Moravian Region. The Steering Committee has met twice so far (the last meeting was held online).

Communication with the European Commission and the monitoring team is handled by ONYX through its project manager. A brief information on the progress of the work is prepared every quarter and provided to the representative of the monitoring team.

Two monitoring missions were organised during the project duration:

11 June 2020 - introduction of the project management team, work with documents, accounting system and presentation of the work already carried out, field visit to 4 project sites in South Moravia (Děvín, Stolová hora, Pouzdřanská step-Kolby, Stránská skála).

18th and 19th May 2020 - meeting was held online, administrative and financial part, presentation of the work already carried out.

The legal address of the coordinating beneficiary of the ČSOP ONYX project has been moved from Tichá to Brno, where we also have an office. The new address from 10 December 2020 is Panská 363/9, 60200 Brno. This information was communicated to EASME by email on 02/2021. At the same time, a change of contact person was duly announced, who is now Ms. Ivana Mariánková (project manager). We have changed the bank account and the currency in which it is held.

## 4. Technical part

### A. PREPARATORY ACTIONS, ELABORATION OF MANAGEMENT PLANS AND/OR OF ACTION PLANS

#### A1 Expert study on restoration management

The study was based mainly on data obtained from field observation prior start of the management interventions implemented in the LIFE project. We focused mainly on parts, where the management interventions were planned since it was not feasible to make such a survey for the whole locality. In each site and habitat type permanent plots 5x5 and/or 1x1m were established. The phytosociological relevés with species abundance were recorded on each plot and a list of occurring species on the whole project site was prepared. The data were supplemented by historical information about species occurrence and implemented management interventions.

Data on the abiotic conditions at the sites (soil properties, slope, orientation, shading, canopy openness, irradiation and microclimatic conditions) were also collected. For study purposes, we used only roughly evaluated data on shading (open – partly shaded – shaded), slope and exposure. Such information was sufficient for evaluation of current habitat quality and suggestion of suitable management.

The data on abiotic conditions will be evaluated in detail in following year and used as input data to assess the impact of the project on the target habitats

For each site the proposed management interventions were discussed with the state organs of nature protection as well as with owners to be able to guarantee their long-term sustainability. Additionally, management interventions were planned to be feasible and fundable from the standard sources, e.g. grazing, shrubs removal or mowing is proposed only on accessible parts of the area. The long-term sustainability of management interventions at each site is described in the Expert study.

### C. CONSERVATION ACTIONS

#### Extent of restoration interventions:

SCI	C1.1 (ha)	C1.2 (ha)	C2 (ha)	C3 (ha)
<b>Stránská skála</b>	1,48		4	
<b>Pouzdřanská step-Kolby</b>	0,52	11,05	5	
<b>Děvín</b>	0	40,2	5	
<b>Stolová hora</b>	0		0	
<b>Míroslavské kopce</b>	14,41		4	

Moravský kras	0,36		0,8	
Žehuňsko	0,50		2	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,27</b>	<b>51,25</b>	<b>20,8</b>	<b>15</b>

## C1 Restoration management of grassland habitats

Agreements have been signed with landowners to prevent activities that would jeopardise the restoration/investments made under the project for a minimum of 20 years. The implementation of the project started in April 2020 in SCI Děvín. We coordinated and carried out the eradication of the invasive species *Isatis tinctoria* on 23.73 hectares. In 2020, in agreement with the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic (NCA), we also carried out interventions against *Glycyrrhiza glabra* in SCI Pouzdřanská steppe (10.46 hectares) and eradication of *Ailanthus altissima* (sedge, total area is 1.8 hectares) in SCI Děvín. These were the first interventions in 2020. The first real and targeted activities under activity C1.1 we started in January 2021 in SCI Miroslavské kopce and SCI Stránská skála. These were cutting scrub. We continued with cutting of scrub until autumn 2021 at SCI Pouzdřanská step, SCI Stránská skála and SCI Moravský kras. In addition, in 2021 we carried out removal of shoots in pastures and mowing of degraded areas in SCI Miroslavské kopce. Eradication of the shoots consisted of spraying glyphosate on the leaf and after 2 weeks we cut it. In 2021 we expanded the IAS list by two species under C1.2: *Artemisia absinthium* (SCI Děvín) and *Asclepias syriaca* (SCI Pouzdřanská steppe). In addition, IAS eradication was carried out as of 2020.

At the moment we have carried out interventions under C1.1 on 17,27 hectares and C1.2 on 51,25 hectares. In C1.1 we do removal of shrubs and pioneer trees in the steppe areas, then it's mowing degraded areas and areas where we did removal of shrubs (that's aftercare). Mulching and mosaic harrowing we are planning in the second half of the project. This mainly concerns the SCI Miroslavské kopce and SCI Pouzdřanská step - Kolby. We use various methods to eradicate IAS (C1.2): pulling, mowing, foliar spraying with glyphosate-based products, cutting the above-ground part and applying herbicide to the stump.

We mainly focused on invasive plant eradication in the first two years. For aftercare we do mowing, foliar spraying. If IAS is still spreading, we continue in the following years. We work in the same area because there is less incidence, but there are still many outbreaks, or we change the area gradually. We did not start working on the SCI Stolová hora until 1/2022 because there is no problem with invasive species in this area. During 2022 we will start another new activity at SCI Děvín - removal of shrubs in rock steppes. There is no problem with IAS too. We wanted to start the work already in winter 2022. We are moving this activity to 9/2022.

We have bought new machines for field work. These were 9 professional brushcutters from Stihl and 10 powerful chainsaws also from Stihl. ČSOP ONYX and Kapráluv mlýn each bought 3 brushcutters and 3 chainsaws. ČSOP Vlašim bought 3 brushcutters and 4 chainsaws (no budget increase), and also uses the machines in the C3 activity.

The following restoration measures were implemented at each project site:

SCI Stránská skála: removal of trees and shrubs, application of glyphosate on the stump

SCI Pouzdřanská step-Kolby: removal of trees and shrubs, application of glyphosate on the stump, chemical spraying of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* and *Asclepias syriaca*

SCI Děvín: pulling of *Isatis tinctoria*, removal of *Ailanthus altissima* rejuvenation, mowing of *Artemisia absinthium*

SCI Stolová hora: implementation will start since 1/2022 (removal of trees and shrubs, mowing of expansive grasses)

SCI Miroslavské kopce: removal of trees and shrubs, mowing of degraded grassland, removal of scrub rejuvenation (mainly *Robinia pseudoacacia*), use of glyphosate.

SCI Moravian Karst: removal of trees and shrubs, mowing of expansive grasses (especially *Calamagrostis epigejos*)

SCI Žehuňsko: mowing and removal of shrubs in Kněžičky on 0.5 ha.

We will address the Early warning system in the second half of the project. At the moment we have defined the problematic IAS. We will create a summary methodology for both the reporting and monitoring of incidence and for the eradication process as such. We will create a manual for stakeholders where all disposal options will be reflected. This manual will be in the form of an e-publication, freely downloadable on the project website, and will be more technical in approach and will be of particular use to site administrators. In a shortened and less expert, easy-to-understand form, leaflets on IAS will be printed for the general public, especially small affected landowners and municipalities. Both deliverables will be completed by 6/2022 and will be funded (especially printing) from the budget for printing the english version of the project leaflets. Also detailed in the part of action E1.

## **C2 Restoration of grassland habitats by reintroduction of grazing**

Agreements have been signed with landowners to prevent activities that would jeopardise the restoration/investments made under the project for a minimum of 20 years. We have started planning grazing in advance in coordination with NCA and shepherds from February 2021. We have always identified suitable shepherds who live close to SCI or carry out grazing nearby. In total, we have four shepherds (one has grazed at two SCI sites) with their own herds. We started grazing at the SCI Miroslavské kopce, then continued to other SCI sites. So far, we have continued until November 2021 (SCI Děvín). In our project we grazed with a mixed herds of sheep and goats. We also tried a variant with only goats. It was just in SCI Miroslavské kopce, where we tried intensive grazing of goats to eliminate young tree shoots from the stump.

Communication with the shepherds and local farmers was important for us. Above all we do experience sharing and show the possibilities of how they should work with the herd. Grazing dates are a big topic. We have to graze some plant species later in the season. That has never been the case. We also discuss with the shepherders the use of medicines against parasites. We want these medicines to be used only in an integrated way, so called when necessary. Thanks to good cooperation we have a good network of quality and educated experts in the fields of: pasture ecology, animal ethology, veterinary care, entomology and parasitology. At the Floriánek site (Moravský kras SCI) we employed a shepherdess, Mrs. Patáková, who grazed there for part of the year 2021. After the project is finished, it is a realistic expectation that she will continue to be employed by NCA, so 1 sustainable job has been created.

In total, we have managed to start grazing almost 21 ha in five locations in 2021. Only in the SCI Stolová hora has grazing not been implemented. There, grazing will start in 2022.

Description of activities in each SCI:

SCI Stránská skála: We have started grazing since June 2021, after seeding of *Pulsatilla grandis*. Grazing was conducted in metal, mobile pens with 40 sheep. Gradually, animals were grazed over the entire project area. Where tree cutting took place in the winter of 2021, we grazed there.

SCI Pouzdřanská step-Kolby: We introduced continuous grazing. We were gradually replanting the fence.

SCI Děvín: In November 2021, we grazed for the first time. This was very challenging because we had to export water and animals in inaccessible terrain. We tested different approaches and finally found a way to make grazing in such terrain and conditions realistic. We plan to graze at two-year intervals. The animals were there until the first snow.

SCI Stolová hora: We have not grazed here yet.

SCI Miroslavské kopce: grazing was taking place in many places. We also used a separate herd of goats that ate the saplings of the trees. We experimented with grazing in a former forest where *Robinia pseudoacacia* grew.

SCI Moravský kras: We got a young shepherdess here. She has a small herd here and is gradually grazing the whole project area.

SCI Žehuňsko: Controlled grazing was implemented on 2 ha in the game reserve Kněžičky. Controlled grazing means that part of the game reserve was fenced. Wild animals are thus allowed to enter only for a certain period. This leads to reduction of overgrazing by animals. Implementation of standard grazing, e.g. by sheep, is not allowed since they can infect or be infected by wild animals.

### **C3 Restoration management of forest habitats**

Restoration of forest habitat started in Kněžičky national natural reservation (outside of game reserve) by mosaic tree cutting and removal of shrubs. Currently, restoration management is in place on 15 ha of forest habitats. Biomass was burnt on the spot because the terrain is not accessible for wood chipper. Some trees were girdled (girdling or ring-barking, the complete removal of the bark from around the entire circumference of the trunk of a woody plant. Girdling results in the death of the area above the girdle over time and the entire tree will die). Appr. 1000 acorns of *Quercus pubescens* were collected and transported to the arboreta of the Czech University of Life Sciences in Kostelec nad Černými lesy for germination. Appr. 300 seedlings were obtained from the acorns and they will be used for preparation of juvenile trees. The juvenile trees will be transplanted when they will be able to survive (appr. in 2024). Inside the game reserve there were established 9 fences in total length appr. 900 m (around the area of 3400 m<sup>2</sup>) for natural regeneration of forest.

## **D. MONITORING OF THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT ACTIONS**

### **D1 Monitoring of project impact on target habitats**

Evaluation of management impact of all interventions (C1, C2, C3) is based on annual recording of phytosociological relevés and selected abiotic conditions (e.g., canopy openness) on established permanent plots. The majority of plots was already established in A1 action. On the other part, permanent plots will be continuously established prior to the start of management interventions.

To evaluate the impact of mowing and grazing in Actions C1 and C2, totally 53 control cages were placed at the project sites. These control plots are placed in the cage of 1.5x1.5x1 m to allow us to compare mown/grazed and not mown/grazed parts. The vegetation relevés 1x1 m is recorded in the middle of each cage. For evaluation of impact of mowing, grazing, tree cutting and shrubs removal in Actions C1, C2 and C3 currently 80 non-caged monitoring plots of 5 x 5 m with nested 1x1 square were established. Other plots will be established prior implementation of management interventions after the concretization of intervention patches in cooperation with the owners and state organs of nature protection.

<b>Project site</b>	<b>monitoring plots</b>	<b>control plots</b>
Stránská skála	10	5
Pouzdránská step	9	5
Děvín	5	5
Stolová hora	6	5
Miroslavské kopce	6	8
Moravský Kras	5	5



Žehuňsko	39	20
<b>Total number of plots</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>53</b>

Concerning evaluation of Orchids ability to grow on restored sites, we selected 4 model sites with low Orchid's abundance and 2 control sites with high Orchid's abundance (one classified as a priority \*6210) in Žehuňsko SCI. The action will start in May 2022. Evaluation of orchids ability to grow on restored sites will be based on three methodological approaches:

- Isolation of symbiotic fungi from roots of adult plants occurring on control sites
- Germination of seeds in nylon nets on all sites
- Manual pollination of flowers and evaluation of seed quality

Additionally, abiotic and biotic conditions for orchids (vegetation records included) will be evaluated. We have already established 12 permanent plots 5x5 m with nested 1x1m squares on 2 control sites and on 3 model sites. Additional 6 monitoring plots will be established on model site 4. Monitoring plots on model sites are identical to the plots used for evaluation of management impact.

Project site	model/control site No.	Number of monitoring plots for orchids
Báň	Control site 1	6
	Control site 2	6
	Model site 1	12
Kněžičky	Model site 2	7
	Model site 3	6
	Model site 4	6

Specific number of nylon nets and number of pollinated plants will be specified during the vegetation season according to the current situation. The evaluation of Orchids will not be implemented in any other SCI areas since the Orchids are present neither in project sites nor in their neighbourhood.

Concerning establishment of monitoring plots for evaluation of removal of invasive species, we decided to focus on the following species: *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, *Isatis tinctoria* and *Robinia pseudoacacia*. We established plots 5x5 m with nested 1x1m to record phytosociological relevés and collect data about abiotic conditions. Number of monitoring plots is in the table below.

Project site	Intervention	monitoring plots
Pouzdránská step	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	6
Děvín	<i>Isatis tinctoria</i>	12
Mirolavské kopce	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	9

## D2 LIFE performance indicators monitoring

KPI monitoring has been carried out regularly since the beginning of the project. The KPI table was submitted via the web-based KPI tool in 12/2020 and subsequently revised in 02/2021 based on EASME requirements.

All indicators are expected to be met by the end of the project. Some indicators have already been achieved: IAS reduction (planned on 25 ha, implemented on 51 ha), audience of media outputs (planned 1,000,000, realised 9,882,500), access to websites and social networks (planned 5,000, realised 44,129).

### D3 Assessment of project impact on ecosystem services

Monitoring of ecosystem functions and services is ongoing in line with deadlines. Baseline data has been collected in the field and monitoring is now underway. This is based on studies (A1) and actual field results (C1-C3). We have identified key indicators and want to focus on the effectiveness of project procedures. The monitoring is performed by an environmental sociologist and his team (sociologist, anthropologist, economist). At the same time, communication with the experts and the project team is ongoing in order to optimise management methods if necessary.

Initial phase and ongoing monitoring have been initiated. A key activity in the initiation phase was the analysis and definition of stakeholders. Stakeholder identification was based on the previously developed stakeholder maps and power interest matrices, as well as our own knowledge of the study area and local representatives from various groups and institutions. To date, 14 stakeholders' groups have been identified and mapping the interrelationships between each stakeholder has helped us to redesign the methods and techniques of the research. Another important step was the mapping of individual ecosystem services, where the MAES (Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services) methodology was used. With the help of the international classification of ecosystem services (CICES), out of 90 ES, we mainly evaluated the provisioning, regulating and cultural ES as relevant.

The cultural ecosystem services monitored by the project LIFE SouthMoravia:

<b>Ecosystem service</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
Recreation, relaxation, health	provides areas to exercise and relax and therefore contributes to mental and physical health and well-being	Secondary data analyses, questionnaire, interview, "go-along"
Tourism	protected areas play an important role in supporting tourism (an important source of employment and income).	Secondary data analyses, questionnaire, interview, "go-along"
Aesthetic appreciation and cultural inspiration	protected areas play important role as source of inspiration	Interview, "go-along"
Spirituality and sense of place	protected areas contribute to a sense of place, social cohesion and belonging f.i. via traditional customs	Interview, "go-along"

All selected ES are linked to actions C and E. We are working to better quantify other ecosystem services. If we start from the fact that only provisioning ecosystem services are valued by the market, then for the LIFE SouthMoravia project the cultural ecosystem services are particularly important in terms of dry grassland and woodland restoration; on the other hand, it is also necessary to know what changes in supporting and regulating services and functions are brought about by maintaining a specific environment for the conservation of the target habitats.

In the initiation phase, socio-economic indicators of the municipalities in whose cadastres the sites of interest are located were further mapped. The Czech Statistical Office records the economic contribution of tourism to the individual municipalities on two items of tax revenue (the fee for a spa or recreational stay and the fee on accommodation capacity). During the project we will continue to monitor the development of economic indicators in the municipalities. The economic indicators obtained will then help us to interpret the findings of the sociological part of the research. In the subsequent phase of the research, in addition to the MAES methodology, the "go-along" (guided walk) methodological approach should be applied. We anticipate that conducting the interview directly at the sites will evoke more relevant statements and themes for the research, which will yield more information relevant to

the research. We expect that guided walks through a given landscape will allow for the identification of meanings that individual stakeholders ascribe to ecosystem services. A full assessment of the impact of the project on ecosystem services will be submitted at the end of the project.

#### **D4 Assessment of projects socio-economic impacts and impact of dissemination actions**

Monitoring of socio-economic impacts is ongoing in accordance with the timetable. At the same time, monitoring of the impacts of the project dissemination actions is ongoing. It was launched in 09/2019 with the first press release of the project. The quantitative results of the project dissemination actions are continuously monitored and compared with the overall expected results. The current status of progress on quantitative results under the relevant PR actions is presented in the Action E chapter. Communication with the experts and the project team is ongoing in order to optimise management methods where necessary.

The current socio-economic situation was mapped and the situation in the regions concerned was also assessed. Indicators for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the project, including dissemination of information, have been established. The indicators are now being further monitored and the results will be compiled into an evaluation study in the last quarter of 2025. In the initial phase, we selected appropriate indicators based on expert research and the nature of the project, which is focused on environmental protection. These indicators are:

- Changes in the tourism sector in terms of variations in the number of tourists, tourist facilities or tourist attractions in the project area
- Creation and disappearance of economic entities/businesses (jobs created within the project and in the wider economy)
- Changes in employment (creation/loss of jobs)
- Interventions in the infrastructure
- Collaborations developed as a result of the project activities
- Changing the behaviour of local people

#### **E. PUBLIC AWARENESS AND DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS**

To document the work visually, we have set up online photo galleries, from which we then draw images for posts on the website or Facebook and for the creation of PR materials.

One is 'working' and contains individual albums for each SCI, documenting interventions and management. Link here: <https://eu.zonerama.com/LIFESouthMoravia/863735>

The other is "artistic" where our talented colleague documents the landscape and rare or interesting species of plants and animals at the project sites. The albums for each site can be found here:

##### **Mirolavské kopce**

<https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/6173216?secret=n9aM6SIRe04E6WkGwjW36sM9W&fbclid=IwAR1wQbpB16S5dZVRsze4pje23Sk8HOVHTr6crBxX2-OaSyKPwg5VI8HZbYY>

##### **Moravský kras**

<https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7213207?secret=O3XRwri56654Cvk50p04jR2NF&fbclid=IwAR1oTSLWThEoUDA0ThNE8iZju070mzXQGvXcP-nM17e0a7Xday6vjRh2a1c>

##### **Stránská skála**

[https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7213217?secret=uPfrNDS31TSn35JF46w94h74j&fbclid=IwAR2KoI\\_W6nvh7eIOsvwRL\\_z-pkSXtOz9xKAutVV948ADIm0Qge1rnrWKZSo](https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7213217?secret=uPfrNDS31TSn35JF46w94h74j&fbclid=IwAR2KoI_W6nvh7eIOsvwRL_z-pkSXtOz9xKAutVV948ADIm0Qge1rnrWKZSo)

##### **Děvín**

[https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7194944?secret=Rc69JNEA7euSHc1P7673Nefi4&fbclid=IwAR2KoI\\_W6nvh7eIOsvwRL\\_z-pkSXtOz9xKAutVV948ADIm0Qge1rnrWKZSo](https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7194944?secret=Rc69JNEA7euSHc1P7673Nefi4&fbclid=IwAR2KoI_W6nvh7eIOsvwRL_z-pkSXtOz9xKAutVV948ADIm0Qge1rnrWKZSo)

##### **Stolová hora**

[https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7194945?secret=0QK3EUM9f4v9SYbyddii0xmRW&fbclid=IwAR3P7F0Hp-HNsZg85WLCUgOPguXiXK-v1fR\\_UmJvgvc96dxeO7P7AUI0HLI](https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7194945?secret=0QK3EUM9f4v9SYbyddii0xmRW&fbclid=IwAR3P7F0Hp-HNsZg85WLCUgOPguXiXK-v1fR_UmJvgvc96dxeO7P7AUI0HLI)

### **Pouzdřanská step-Kolby**

<https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7213802?secret=29smVfsHWO2TSV6cP9OEh0w1F&fbclid=IwAR3OM-zV-zu1O2-1YaDoTI31FjcoCboh9vlgc9wg7PcbmcXaX2-eJK9uK0>

### **Žehuňsko**

<https://www.zonerama.com/Fanouche2/Album/7289783?secret=cr1On20BHJj0TSA59BK3Xw901&fbclid=IwAR0-G3cLWQDmzVRuTixAhYcndr97-dyBcK854kyVGDXnZM5XwYI6-Eo7C28>

## **E1 Awareness raising - public**

### **Project communication plan**

The Project Communication Plan was created in accordance with the plan on 12/2019. It is subsequently updated as needed. It includes a strategy for maintaining appropriate communication and information channels necessary for dissemination of project outputs during and after the project.

### **Project website**

The project website at link <https://www.csoponyx.cz/projekt/48/life-southmoravia/> was created in accordance with the plan on 12/2019. It contains a summary of the project in English, other information is in Czech. Regularly, several times a month, news about the progress of the project work is added. Once a year, information about the progress of the project actions is updated (always before the monitoring team's visit). There are 653 unique accesses listed so far, 823 accesses in total. On the project news page was 352 accesses in total, 178 unique. Associated beneficiaries have information on their website that they are participating in the LIFE SouthMoravia project, with a link to the project website, see

<http://www.kapraluvmljn.cz/?idc=396>

<https://www.csopvlasim.cz/chranime-ohrozene-druhy/#aktualni>

<https://www.ibot.cas.cz/popekol/language/en/?projects=life-south-moravia>

We also regularly inform about the project on our Facebook page, where posts include hashtag #LIFE\_SouthMoravia and accompanied by a link to the project website, see [https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/LIFE\\_SouthMoravia](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/LIFE_SouthMoravia). Lifetime Post Total Reach and Lifetime Post organic reach has 43 476 audiences. Lifetime Post Total Impressions and Lifetime Post Organic Impressions has 47 593 audiences.

### **Promotion in media**

The first press release about the launch of the project was created in accordance with the plan in 9/2019.

Since then, we have been regularly monitoring the media, which is very rich. Thanks to the press releases we sent to many editorial offices, information about the project appeared in all South Moravian media. From public media such as the Czech Press Agency, Czech Television or Czech Radio to print media owned by private owners. Articles about our project have appeared both on professional servers dedicated to ecology and forestry. Articles based on press releases about our project have also appeared on news servers with a regional focus, but also with a national impact.

The project actions and results have already been presented in 2 national print newspapers and 8 national internet portals. In addition, 2 regional printed newspapers and 4 regional internet portals. The total readership of the print media is 311.300, the total reach of the internet media is 9.610.500 readers.

### **Notice Boards - installation of LIFE information panels**

Notice boards were installed at each of the seven project sites. A unique QR code will take the curious visitor to the project website with detailed information. We chose a format of 30x30 cm and agreed with the site managers to attach them to existing boundary markers with site information so as not to create additional structures unnecessarily.

### **Printed materials, promotional items**

All promotional items were made with the project motive (the project logo with *Adonis vernalis*, which grows in all 7 project sites, LIFE and Natura 2000 logos, the motive with sheep as a symbol of sustainable grazing, logos of the beneficiaries).

#### ***Leaflet on target species and habitats***

Leaflets were produced in the final number of 5.000 pcs in Czech version, English version is under consideration (international networking is not yet taking place due to Covid), distributed among partners, now distributed a total of about 1500 pcs especially during meetings with landowners and stakeholders. The leaflet can also be downloaded here:

<https://www.csoponyx.cz/projekt-stranka/48/LIFE%20SouthMoravia/232/ke-stazeni/>

However, under the same budget item, we are preparing a leaflet on invasive plant species found at the project sites, including instructions on how to eradicate them. This leaflet will be aimed at the general public - municipalities, schools, landowners. We are also preparing a more extensive material in the form of an e-publication, which will be more professionally focused and intended for stakeholders. We anticipate producing both types by 5/2022.

#### ***Layman report***

Work will not start until 2025.

#### ***7 e-publication CZ SCIs***

For all 7 SCIs we have prepared e-publications where you can read about the most interesting or typical representatives of both the plant and animal kingdoms. The text in Czech is accompanied by illustrations and photographs and always includes a map of the site, its detailed description and information about the project. The e-publications can also be downloaded here:

<https://www.csoponyx.cz/projekt-stranka/48/LIFE%20SouthMoravia/232/ke-stazeni/>

#### ***Printed publication***

A printed publication for all 7 SCIs is already ready, including photographs of sites and species and descriptions in Czech and English (bilingual version). It is currently undergoing graphic design and will go to print at the end of 3/2022.

#### ***Textile bags***

Bags were made from cotton, produced in the number of 500 pcs in the Czech version. The English version is under consideration (international networking is not yet underway due to Covid), distributed among partners, now distributed a total of about 200 pcs, especially in meetings with landowners and stakeholders.

#### ***T-shirts***

The T-shirts are made of two types of material - merino (again, as well as the graphic motive, a reference to the sheep's wool that is the basis for its production) and functional material. T-shirts were produced in the final number of 300 pcs in the Czech version, English version is under consideration (international networking is not yet underway due to Covid), distributed among partners, now distributed a total of about 200 pcs especially during meetings with landowners and stakeholders.

#### ***Pens***

The pens were made from recycled cartons, the final number of 5,000 pieces produced, distributed among partners, now a total of approx. 1,500 pieces distributed, especially in meetings with landowners and stakeholders.

#### ***Chocolates***

The chocolates were made in Fair Trade quality. Final 1,000 wrappers printed, 200 chocolates produced in 2020 (due to expiration), plan to produce approximately 200 more each year in future years. Already produced pieces have been distributed among partners and all have already been distributed, especially in negotiations with landowners and stakeholders.

#### ***Games: match-match***

We decided not to make games, we have enough from other projects with similar species (LIFE Subpannonic project). Instead, from the same budget line, we are going to make magnets, the upper side of which will be made of wood with engraved motives of species typical for the project sites (e.g. *Adonis versalis*, *Orchis purpurea*...). We expect to distribute them to the same target groups as the originally planned games, i.e. schools, municipalities, authorities, in the second half of 2022.

#### **Excursions for local schools and public, training of teachers, Presentations for specialists**

The excursions and presentations could not take place as scheduled due to the ban on events (Covid 19). It will take place in 2022, or we are considering an online format.

However, we managed to organise one excursion. On 3 October 2021, a public excursion to SCI Stránská skála took place in cooperation with the Administration of the Moravian Karst Protected Landscape Area. About twenty people took advantage of the extraordinary opportunity to see the otherwise inaccessible parts of the Stránská skála rock formation. A nature walk with expert commentary introduced them to life on the surface, but also underneath, in normally inaccessible caves.

We cooperate closely with the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, Department of International Programmes and Projects, among others in promoting LIFE projects and their financing. The Ministry of Regional Development is preparing a promotional leaflet for directly managed EU programmes, including the LIFE programme. The leaflet will include a brief presentation of three supported projects, among which our LIFE SouthMoravia project has been proposed.

#### **E2 Awareness raising - key stakeholders**

Several individual meetings were held with key stakeholders, with 3 to 6 people attending each meeting. In total, 12 meetings were held involving 46 people (officers, farmers, shepherds, experts, NGO representatives). From the project team, these meetings were mostly participated in by the Site Manager or also by the Project Manager. They were informal meetings, without attendance lists and photo documentation. Some meetings were also held in the field, directly at the project sites.

#### **E3 Replication toolkit**

##### ***Workshops for key stakeholders***

The stakeholder workshops could not take place on the scheduled dates due to the meeting and travel ban as a consequence of the Covid 19 pandemic. Following the relaxation of the restrictions, everyone was busy catching up on fieldwork and it was not always possible to find a suitable date. We are confident that we will catch up with the delay in 2022 and everything will work to the full satisfaction of all participants.

##### ***Individual communication with key stakeholders***

8 personal meetings with stakeholders were organised, each with 2-4 people, 25 participants in total. The first meeting was held, as scheduled, during 8/2020. The project team (most often the Site Manager in cooperation with the Project Manager) presented the results of the relevant methodologies and discussed solutions for their implementation adapted to the specific conditions of the stakeholder. These were always relatively short (1-2 hours) informal meetings

without attendance lists or photo documentation. Some of the meetings and demonstrations of methods took place on the field in the particular project area.

### ***Work groups for best practice methods***

4 working groups with a total of 33 members have been set up and are being used in accordance with schedule on 12/2020. They serve to share, develop and disseminate best practices of the project.

The topics of the working groups are:

- IAS plant eradication, including a comprehensive invasion prevention and mitigation strategy
- Restoring sustainable grazing on long abandoned stands
- Optimal management for target grassland habitats
- Optimal management for target forest habitats

### ***Information focal points***

2 information focal points have been created in accordance with schedule in 11/2020:

- South Moravia (ZO ČSOP ONYX office, Panská 363/9, Brno)
- Central Bohemia (ZO ČSOP Vlašim office, Pláteníkova 264, Vlašim)

A total of 12 consultations took place in the form of personal meetings or other forms of communication (online, telephone, e-mail). Topics were mostly methods and period of management on project areas, the LIFE programme conditions, IAS disposal, appropriate time for bush cutting, etc. Information about focal points is in a separate section on the main project website. It is also mentioned (including a link) in the background information and the project, including an English summary.

### ***Best practice/demonstrative methodology, presentation for specialists***

The results of the project are gradually published in scientific articles and at conferences focused on nature conservation.

1. Vilém Jurek, site manager of the LIFE SouthMoravia project, gave a lecture on plants you can find in the surroundings of Brno on 8 February 2020. He talked about *Camelina sativa*, *Anthyllis vulneraria*, *Verbena officinalis*, *Echium maculatum* and *Isatis tinctoria*. Participants learned what plants can be used as food, spices and medicine. The lecture was held as an accompanying programme to the exhibition "Plants and People: from Spices to Tyre".

2. On 24 November 2020, the 6th "Our Nature" conference took place, this time in the form of an online stream. It was a new experience for the organisers and the speakers, the jitters and fears were present, but everything went smoothly and the result was perfect. The theme of the 6th conference was "Meadows, pastures, grasslands...".

Our contribution covered all three LIFE projects currently running, including LIFE SouthMoravia. The presenters were project manager Ivana Mariánková and PR manager Roman Barták.

3. The first issue of 2021 of the environmental-cultural magazine "Veronica" was dedicated to Czech projects funded by the LIFE programme. Our LIFE SouthMoravia project was also featured in an article on invasive plants and volunteering, prepared by Vilém Jurek, site manager and project manager Ivana Mariánková.

4. Colleagues from the LIFE Drylands project, led by the University of Pavia (Italy), were asked to participate in a webinar held on 6 July 2021 to share and discuss concrete and practical habitat measures in order to exchange best practices and strengthen the results of our projects. As an outcome of this event, a report will be produced containing the main indications on best practices for the conservation and restoration of dry grasslands (which is the theme of our LIFE SouthMoravia project) and also heathland. PR manager Roman Barták was responsible for the presentation of our experience. Other participants were representatives of the projects LIFE OREKA MENDIAN (LIFE15 NAT/ES/000805), EUROMONTANA LIFE ČESKÉ STŘEDOHORÍ (LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000639), LIFE GRANATHA (LIFE15 NAT/IT/000837), LIFE GESTIRE 2020 (LIFE14 IPE/IT/000018)

## **E4 Increasing socio-economic benefits**

### ***Training local guides and enterprisers***

Workshops and model excursions are being prepared in accordance with the schedule for 9/2023.

### ***7 contact points for visitors***

At the local level, we have arranged all 7 visitor contact points, according to the schedule, i.e. from 10/2020. These are the following cities or villages (close to specific SCIs):

Pavlov - Děvín SCI

Klentnice - Stolová hora SCI

Mirotav - Mirotavské kopce SCI

Pouzdřany - Pouzdřanská step-Kolby SCI

Brno-Slatina - Stránská skála SCI

Jedovnice - Moravský Kras SCI

Hradčany - Žehuňsko SCI.

In this way we use municipal authorities or their information centres, to which we continuously provide information and promotional materials on the project. We anticipate that the contact points may still be modified or relocated in connection with the follow-up training for guides in 9/2023.

### ***Creating small scale visitor infrastructure***

Small scale infrastructure for visitors will be created at the project sites in accordance with the schedule by 4/2024. We are already consulting with representatives of nearby communities and site managers on the type and location of infrastructure elements.

### ***Increasing competitiveness of local farmers, meetings/consultations with local farmers***

So far, only informal meetings (without attendance lists and photo documentation) have been held with a few local farmers to identify their interests and needs, in the period 9/2020-10/2021. We will continue to initiate meetings on a more formal basis and together look for solutions to increase the potential of selling goods locally (customer acquisition, communication skills, etc.) and create sustainable jobs in local communities.

## **E5 Networking**

The 2019-2020 networking trips report was prepared on 4/2021 in accordance with schedule. It contains short summaries of all networking activities, which have also been posted on the project website where they are illustrated with photos. Links to news about the trips are provided in the text of the report. 9 of these networking meetings were held:

1. 11/2019, we are again part of the LIFE family. At the beginning of November, we attended the Welcome meeting of new LIFE projects in Brussels (Belgium) and presented our LIFE SouthMoravia project to colleagues from all over Europe.

2. 1/2020 - meeting with representatives of the LIFE Sub-pannonic - LIFE17 NAT/SK/000589 (BROZ) project and the staff of the Slovak State Nature Conservancy took place in Brzotín (Slovak Republic). The subject was networking, exchange of experience and a tour of Slovak sites in the Slovak Karst and eastern Slovakia, where management is already underway.

3. 1/2020 in Vrchlabí (East Bohemia), a meeting was held with representatives of the Krkonoše Mountains National Park, beneficiaries of the already completed LIFE Corcontica - LIFE11 NAT/CZ/000490 project and the ongoing projects LIFE for Minuartia - LIFE15 NAT/CZ/000818, CZ-SK South-Life - LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001 and LIFE Sub-Pannonic - LIFE17 NAT/SK/000589. It included networking, exchange of experience, visit to sites around Růžová Hora and Sněžka, i.e. places where the Krkonoše LIFE was implemented.



After that, unfortunately, the "covid era" began, meetings with colleagues from other organisations were limited or even prevented due to strict internal regulations. So, we exchanged experiences at least with colleagues who are co-beneficiaries in our LIFE SouthMoravia project and at the same time are working on other LIFE projects.

4. 7/2020, a meeting of all co-beneficiaries took place in Borovsko (Central Bohemia). The individual areas were discussed and appropriate settings for works (mowing, brush and tree reduction) and surveys were addressed. It also included an exchange of experience (networking) with the course of work in the projects CZ-SK South-LIFE - LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, LIFE Sub-Pannonic - LIFE17 NAT/SK/000589 and LIFE for Minuartia - LIFE15 NAT/CZ/000818, a tour of the site Hadce u Želivky - habitat of the Minuartia smejkalii.

5. 10/2020, the planned meeting of the Carpathian Convention stakeholders was held online due to the state of emergency, all presentations can be viewed on youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtXpHQdWpYQ> . All 3 LIFE-funded projects that our organisation is implementing as coordinating or associated beneficiary, including the LIFE SouthMoravia project, were presented by PR manager Roman Barták.

6. 10/2020, online meeting with LIFE Orchids, LIFE Xero-grazing, LIFE Magredi Grasslands, GrassLIFE, Military LIFE for nature, LIFE GREENCHANGE, LIFE Subpannonic, LIFE PALU QdP, CZ-SK SOUTH LIFE, LIFE České středohoří, LIFE TO GRASSLANDS, Life for Minuartia, LIFE-IP: N2K Revisited, LIFE for insects, LIFE IP GESTIRE 2020 (topics: grassland habitat restoration - critical points, good practices, legal barriers and climate change impacts. Prescribed fire, management of expansive grasses).

7. 1/2021 a meeting of all co-beneficiaries took place in Kobylí (South Moravia), partly in person, partly due to the quarantine online (colleagues from Kapráluv mlýn). It was also part of the exchange of experience (networking) with the course of work in the projects CZ-SK South-LIFE - LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000001, LIFE Sub-Pannonic - LIFE17 NAT/SK/000589 and LIFE for Minuartia - LIFE15 NAT/CZ/000818. All these projects are focused on the protection of nature, individual species and habitats, or specifically on the provision and care of protected areas of the Natura 2000. The main theme was the care of grassland habitats, which we have in common in our projects. We followed up with a discussion on PR strategy, techniques and cooperation with landowners.

8. 6/2021, we presented all our LIFE projects, including LIFE SouthMoravia, at an international youth activation meeting in Bytom, Poland, and arranged volunteer cooperation in nature conservation. In the framework of networking we presented our activities to the participants of the Erasmus+ funded project "With the Eye of Youth" and we were very pleased to see the interest of young volunteers, which we are happy to take advantage of.

9. On 7/2021 we participated in an online networking meeting within the LIFE Drylands project (LIFE18 NAT/IT/0. Other participants were representatives of the projects LIFE OREKA MENDIAN (LIFE15 NAT/ES/000805), EUROMONTANA LIFE ČESKÉ STREDOHOŘÍ (LIFE16 NAT/CZ/000639), LIFE GRANATHA (LIFE15 NAT/IT/000837), LIFE GESTIRE 2020 (LIFE14 IPE/IT/000018).

## **F. PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

### **F1 Project management and reporting**

Since the beginning of the project, Ms. Ivana Mariánková has been employed full-time as project manager. The Steering Committee has met twice so far. On 30.9.2020 the first meeting of the Steering Committee took place at the headquarters of the associated beneficiary Kapráluv mlýn. It was attended by the statutory representatives of all co-beneficiaries (ONYX - Mr. Marek Fügner. IBOT - Ms. Zuzana Münzbergová, Kapráluv mlýn - Mr. Tomáš Kozel, Vlašim

- Mr. Pavel Pešout), as well as the Director of the Department of the NCA, Regional Office South Moravia, Mr. Stanislav Koukal, representative of the Administration of the Moravský Kras Protected Landscape Area Mr. Zdeněk Musil. The other invitees - Mr. Michal Petrus from the Ministry of Environment, Mr. Petr Mach from the Regional Office of the South Moravian Region and Mr. Jiří Kmet from the Administration of the Pálava Protected Landscape Area - excused themselves for work or health reasons, the necessary information and presentation of the project results was sent to them by email. The 2021 project progress report was distributed electronically to Steering Committee members on 12/2021 and further questions and details were addressed online.

## **F2 Project bookkeeping, financial management and auditing**

A financial manager with experience in accounting and accounting practices at Member State and EU level was employed for the entire duration of the project (Ms Iveta Kopečná). She is responsible for the overall financial management of the project, including bookkeeping, cash flow planning, distribution of payments to associated beneficiaries, preparation of financial reports, preparation of financial statements, tendering for external contractors, etc. She also communicates with the accounting department of the associated beneficiaries.

An administrative assistant has also been employed (Ms Michaela Sklenářová) and is responsible for providing regular and timely financial documentation to the Finance Manager and preparing documents for the project's financial reports.

Regarding procurement issues, we apply the Green procurement rules which are already part of the national legislation in the Czech Republic. We prefer environmentally friendly suppliers, take into account emission limits when procuring machinery and vehicles, and prefer regional products/providers. We create promotional items from recycled or recyclable materials (e.g. carton pens, cotton bags, upcoming wooden magnets).

Brno, 20/05/2022

Ivana Mariánková, project manager