



LIFE ENERGY - Energy in the land - power lines and conservation of priority bird species in Natura 2000 sites

LIFE13 NAT/SK/001272



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Project description:

Background

The problem of collisions with electricity power lines has been identified as a significantly negative threat to endangered bird species, including the lesser white-fronted goose (*Anser erythropus*), eastern imperial eagle (*Aquila heliaca*) and Saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*), in Slovakia. Prevention of such collisions has not been part of any conservation effort in the country to date. It is therefore extremely important to take action, especially in the breeding and feeding habitats of the EU Birds Directive Annex 1 species, as well as in their wintering and roosting areas and migration routes.

Objectives

The LIFE ENERGY project targets 10 bird species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, all of which breed in the 13 Natura 2000 project areas. These areas include highly important migration routes, feeding habitats and roosting places. Prevention of collisions of birds with electricity power wires is the most important part of the project, through the installation of bird flight diverters, restoration of windbreaks and other measures, though other bird population supporting activities will also be performed, such as increasing food resources.

The project's main objectives are:

- To reinforce conservation measures focused on the 10 priority bird species

and their habitats;

- To formulate a conceptual solution to the problem of bird collisions with power lines and to prepare a strategic document;
- To strengthen cooperation with electric companies through the implementation of project activities; and
- To increase the number of European ground squirrel or suslik (*Spermophilus citellus*) in three areas. This species, listed in Annex II of the Habitats Directive, is a fundamental prey to some of the targeted bird species.

Expected results:

- The most dangerous power lines (7 177 km of 22 kV and 685 km of 110 kV) are surveyed;
- At least 37 km of 22 kV power lines are protected against bird collisions in Western Slovakia, with flight diverters installed on at least 19 km of 22 kV power lines and 18 km of 110 kV power lines in Eastern Slovakia;
- 500 trees are planted to restore suitable windbreaks and forest patches to ensure higher visibility of the power lines to birds;
- At least 250 individuals of different endangered bird species are protected from collisions with power lines yearly, resulting in safe areas for nesting, feeding, roosting and wintering of the target species;
- 60 aluminium nest boxes for *Falco cherrug* are installed on high voltage pylons to replace the wooden nest boxes, and 40 artificial nests are installed on trees for *Falco cherrug* and *Aquila heliaca*;
- Nesting populations of *Falco cherrug* and *Aquila heliaca* to reach at least 40 pairs each in Slovakia by 2019;
- Population number of the prey species *Spermophilus citellus*, as well as the area of its colonies, is tripled at two sites and doubled at one site;
- Professional care is ensured for at least 250 disabled birds of protected species;
- A strategic document concerning birds and power lines is agreed with all responsible authorities, companies and organisations; and
- At least 2 000 people visit the mobile exhibition during the project period and at least 4 000 people visit the project web page yearly.

Results

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Environmental issues addressed:

Themes

Species - Birds

Keywords

endangered species, nature conservation, environmental impact of energy,

preventive measure

Target species

Anser erythropus Aquila heliaca Aquila pomarina Aythya nyroca Botaurus stellaris Coracias garrulus Crex crex Falco cherrug Falco vespertinus Phalacrocorax pygmeus Spermophilus citellus

Natura 2000 sites

SPA	SKCHVU005	Dolné Považie
SPA	SKCHVU007	Dunajské luhy
SPA	SKCHVU009	Košická kotlina
SPA	SKCHVU010	Kráľová
SPA	SKCHVU012	Lehnice
SPA	SKCHVU015	Medzibodrožie
SPA	SKCHVU016	Záhorské Pomoravie
SPA	SKCHVU019	Ostrovné lúky
SPA	SKCHVU020	Parížske močiare
SPA	SKCHVU021	Poiplie
SPA	SKCHVU024	Senianske rybníky
SPA	SKCHVU027	Slovenský kras
SPA	SKCHVU037	Ondavská rovina

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Beneficiaries:

Coordinator	Raptor Protection of Slovakia
Type of organisation	NGO-Foundation
Description	The coordinating beneficiary is the Raptor Protection of Slovakia (RPS), a non-profit, non-governmental organisation dedicated to the conservation of birds of prey and owls and their habitats. Founded in 1974, it has over 200 members in Slovakia. Since 2011, RPS has been increasingly active in providing solutions to the problem of bird collisions with power lines in Slovakia.
Partners	VSD(Východoslovenská distribučná, a.s.), Slovakia ZSDIS(Západoslovenská distribučná, a.s.), Slovakia UVLF(Univerzita veterinárskeho lekárstva a farmácie v Košiciach), Slovakia SNC SR(The State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic), Slovakia

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Administrative data:

Project reference	LIFE13 NAT/SK/001272
Duration	01-SEP-2014 to 31-DEC -2019
Total budget	1,884,205.00 €
EU contribution	1,412,258.00 €
Project location	Zapadne Slovensko(Slovakia Slovensko), Vychodne Slovensko(Slovakia Slovensko)

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