



LIFE Project Number
LIFE 14 CAP/EE/000009

Final Report
Covering the project activities from 01/01/2016 to 30/09/2018

Reporting Date
31/12/2018

LIFE PROJECT NAME or Acronym
AwaRaEst LIFE

Data Project

Project location:	Estonia
Project start date:	01/01/2016
Project end date:	31/12/2017 Extension date: 30/09/2018
Total budget:	347 444 €
EU contribution:	326 000 €

Data Beneficiary

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2. Glossary of keywords and abbreviations

CAP – Capacity Building Project

NCP – National Contact Point

KEMIT – IT Centre of the Ministry of the Environment

MoE – Ministry of the Environment

3. Executive summary

Estonian Capacity Building Project (CAP) lasted almost three years (01.01.2016-30.09.2018) and it had two general objectives: to make the LIFE programme more visible in Estonia among potential applicants and public sector officials, and; to educate potential applicants so that they would have a clearer idea of how to draw up the application in a correct way.

First of all, it was necessary to create a functioning team with necessary knowledge about different funding mechanisms and professional competence. With the project, it was foreseen that the CAP team will include Project Manager, Support Specialist and 5 NCP-s. Two NCP-s were already working in the Ministry of Environment (MoE) before the CAP and in the first months, the number of NCP-s was raised from 2 to 6, which was one official more than planned with the proposal. Salary of the extra NCP was covered by the MoE. To increase the competence of the NCP-s, a training was foreseen for 7 persons. Instead of 7 officials, 8 officials were trained, including one person from the management of the MoE. A functioning and competent LIFE Helpdesk was created, which was one of the key output of the project.

In order to raise the awareness of the officials, three study trips were organized to the Member States who have successfully implemented the LIFE programme. During the project we were able to visit different projects in Spain, Great Britain and Finland. The variety of projects gave us a better understanding which kind of projects can be financed from the programme. In 26 years, most of the Estonian projects have focused on nature conservation. We have had very few demonstration and pilot projects and thereof we are often in trouble explaining to the applicants what kind of pilot or demonstration projects are expected. Visiting other regions and Member States, we have learned that environmental problems are often very different and much more complicated than we could have imagined. There are also similarities which need to be solved in collaboration with other countries. Study trips are one of the options to create contacts which could foster collaboration in the future. In addition to the study trips abroad, one internal study trip was organized for 29 people.

Moving forward from the public officials to the general public and potential applicants, we have organized 16 information days around Estonia in 8 different cities. Before the CAP, Ministry of the Environment organized one information day per year. In addition to the LIFE information days, Ministry of the Environment has organized resource efficiency information days (funded from the European Regional Development Fund) and inter alia, the opportunities of the LIFE programme has been introduced. This has been a good practice as one of the target group was covered with that and they were able to get necessary information about different funding opportunities from one place. We have also organized joint information days in collaboration with Estonian Research Council who is responsible for the Horizon2020 programme in Estonia to create more synergy between the two programmes. As they have already developed a functioning network with the beneficiaries, this helped us to reach another target group. Together with resource efficiency information days, we have reached more than 550 people which makes 153% of the target (target: 360 people).

To improve the quality of the applications, we have organized six application writing workshops for 92 people (target: 5 workshops for 80 people). All workshops were carried out by external experts from Italy and Finland.

Different media channels were used to reach potential applicants – direct communication (every year about 1000 e-mails were sent), adverts and articles in the newspapers (399 509 editions of

the newspapers where we have published our adverts/articles), Ministry of the Environment Facebook page (5134 followers). To make the programme more visible and attractive, Estonian LIFE webpage was created, new booklet and video clip was created and roll-ups were ordered as foreseen in the project. In 2018 we outsourced a Facebook Campaign which can be considered very successful – during the 4 month period we were able to get 191 090 impressions of the LIFE adverts and thanks to that the number of visits to the Estonian LIFE webpage increased significantly. In addition to that, we have collaborated with the Environmental Investment Centre and during the call of proposals in 2018, information about the LIFE programme was promoted on their webpage. This is one of the main pages in Estonia, where people search information about different environmental funding opportunities.

During the project, LIFE helpdesk has consulted 62 different draft proposals, which is 124% from the target. Before the CAP, 3 proposals were submitted per year in 2014 and 2015 (success rate: 33% and 0%). In 2016, the number of applications didn't increase remarkably (4), but the success rate was 75%. In 2017, there were 5 proposals, which is not much, but positive aspect is that all of them were new applicants, who had never applied funding from LIFE. Four of them were environmental and one was climate project (climate project was financed). In 2018, when the system was changed and 2-stage approach was approved, 18 proposals were submitted from Estonia (11 environmental, 3 nature, 1 information and governance and 3 climate). One environmental project proposal out of 11 and all three nature project proposals were invited to the second stage and to submit the full proposal. When nature projects were written by experienced persons, who have been involved in preparation and implementation of LIFE projects in the past, then all applicants related to environmental projects were new ones and this might be the reason they failed. Also, most of them didn't involve any partners from other countries, which affected directly their score as the EU added value wasn't high enough.

In 2018, first Estonian IP (water) was financed with a budget of 16.7 million euros. Concept note of the Nature IP was also approved and Ministry of the Environment will submit the full proposal in the beginning of 2019.

In conclusion, the project team was able to implement the project 9 months longer than planned in the beginning and thanks to that, more was done without exceeding the budget. Results were mostly better than expected and objectives were achieved or even exceeded. Finally, 16% of the budget remained unused.

During the CAP, it has become clearer, that one of the main issues in Estonia is the co-financing question. It is also important to take into account, that Estonia is one of the countries who benefits from the European Union (Cohesion Fund, European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund) since 2004. Totally 3.4 billion euros for the period 2007-2013 and 4.4 billion euros for the period 2014-2020 was given to Estonia. LIFE programme has to compete with the other funds, which often have higher co-financing rate. In order to enhance the use of the LIFE programme, Ministry of the Environment is developing a national co-financing system. It is still an ongoing process, which needs further development, but the plans have turned into agreements and real actions (see paragraph 5.3).

4. General overview

4.1. Introduction

Estonian CAP proposal was submitted in 2014 and it started on 1st of January 2016. The main purpose of the Estonian CAP was to make the LIFE programme more visible among potential Estonian applicants and public sector officials. In 22 years (since 1992 till 2014) only 33 proposals, which were submitted by Estonian applicants, were financed from the LIFE programme. This makes average 1.5 project per year (Figure 1).

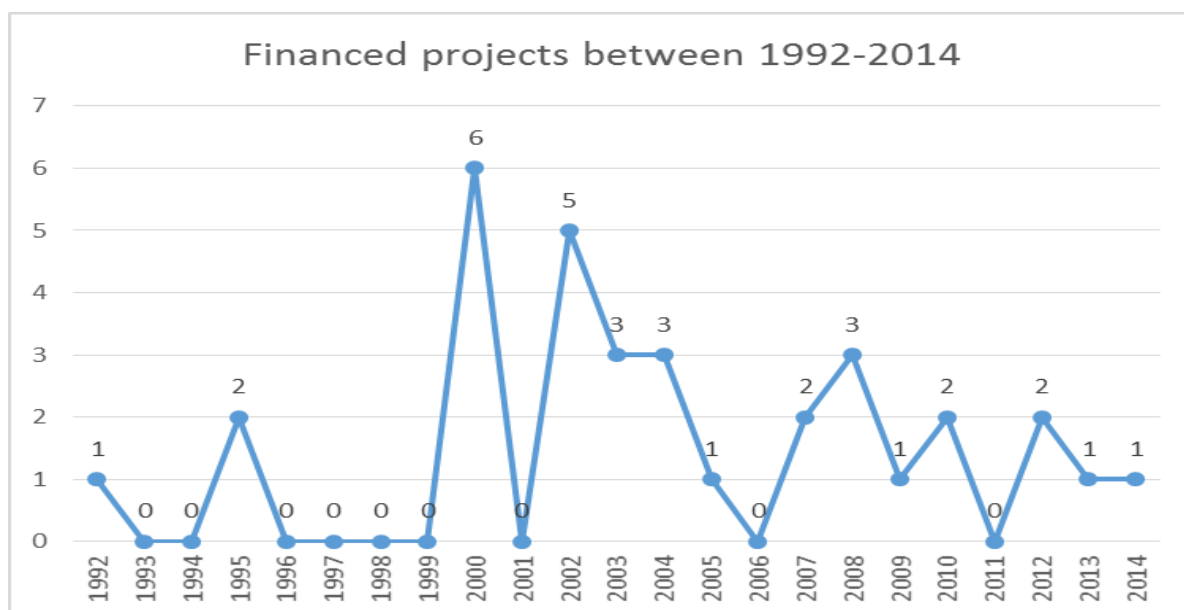


Figure 1. Financed projects between 1992-2014

As seen in the figure 1, there have been years (9!), where the number of successful proposals is 0. For years, applicants have considered LIFE programme as a funding for nature conservation and other fields have not been so recognised and this aspect needs more attention. Most of the successful proposals have been in the nature conservation field (55%) (Figure 2).

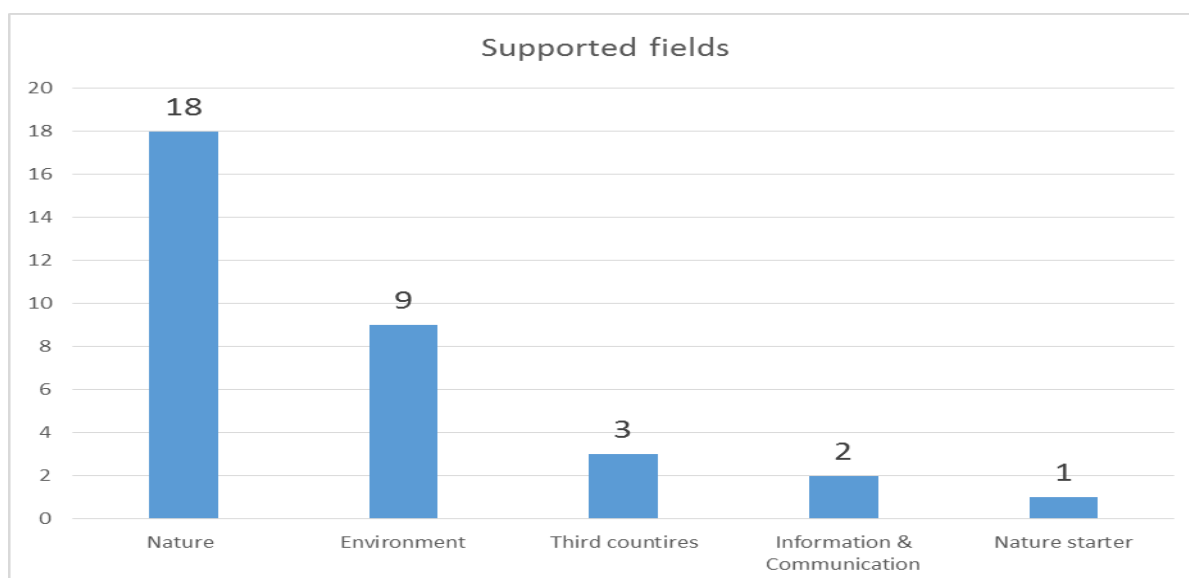


Figure 2. Supported fields

Secondly, Estonian CAP aimed to educate potential applicants so that they would have a clearer idea of how to draw up the application in a correct way. Even though the success rate has been rather high in the last 10 years, it still needs improvement as the CAP aimed to attract new applicants who don't know the rules of the programme.

During the period 2006-2015 Estonian applicants submitted 30 proposals and 11 of those were financed, which makes the success rate 36.7%. In 2015 the success rate was 0%, which also decreases the overall success rate, but despite of that, this is still high compared to the EU average. In 2016 the EU average success rate was 23% (Table 1).

Table 1. Submitted and financed proposals in 2006-2015

Year	Submitted	Financed	Success rate (%)
2006	0	0	-
2007	6	2	33,3%
2008	4	3	75,0%
2009	2	1	50,0%
2010	4	1	25,0%
2011	0	0	-
2012	6	2	33,3%
2013	2	1	50,0%
2014	3	1	33,3%
2015	3	0	0%
2006-2015	30	11	36,7%

There are two main reasons for the high success rate: most of the proposals were submitted in the nature conservation field, where it is much clearer what kind of projects are expected. In Estonia there are some applicants who know the rules of the LIFE programme and they know how to succeed. For example – one of the NGOs, who deals with fishes and freshwater bodies, have received funding for 3 projects; Environmental Board and Ministry of the Environment have got funding for several projects and most of the proposals have been written by the same persons; etc. Our experience has shown that new applicants usually fail on the first time applying grant from LIFE and this has also influenced the success rate in the last 2 years (2017 and 2018). As LIFE rules are complicated and the two-stage approach attracts more people, even with raw ideas and poor preparation, then the lower success rate in the last years is accepted and justified. This two-stage approach is a convenient system for the applicants as they get thorough feedback from the evaluators and 10 page concept note takes only day or two to prepare. Main problems are that the preparation of the application is left on the last minute and they don't delve into the guidelines. Applicants who had a good idea, but poor preparation, are encouraged to improve the proposal and try again next year.

In order to find and help potential applicants it was necessary to create a functioning team with necessary knowledge about different funding mechanisms and professional competence. LIFE Helpdesk was created, which included project manager, support specialist and 6 NCP-s from different departments.

As mentioned above, the number of different beneficiaries has been limited in the past, so the project team focused on the new potential applicants who could benefit from the programme. Totally 16 information days around Estonia were organized and most of them were targeted to new potential applicants. Participants were given a general overview of the programme, priorities, examples, main rules etc., and they were encouraged to read more by themselves.

Also, they were encouraged to contact with NCP-s if they found LIFE programme suitable for them.

LIFE programme is well-known among the nature conservation communities and therefore we focused more on enterprises, including industries, universities, scientific institutions and public authorities. We used different mailing lists and direct communication to reach them and for example we collaborated with the Estonian Research Council to reach scientific institutions and universities. As MoE is implementing resource efficiency measure, we used this opportunity to promote LIFE programme among industries. Together with resource efficiency information days, we have reached more than 550 people which makes 153% of the target (target: 360 people).

Also, other media channels were used to promote LIFE programme, information days and trainings – adverts and articles in the newspapers, Facebook (including a specific campaign), different websites (MoE, Environment Investment Centre, local governments, event calendars). In addition to that, LIFE team has participated in different external events.

Results were monitored during the project lifetime and changes were made if necessary. For example, feedback sheets were collected after each event and suggestions were taken into account when preparing next ones. Facebook Campaign was monitored during the whole period (4 months) to see what kind of pictures and messages work better and changes were made to achieve best results. Most appropriate and diverse media channels were used to promote information days, trainings and LIFE calls and the number of the publications were monitored to measure the possible impact of the adverts (see more chapter 5.2 “B. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions”).

Over the years, one of the main issues has been the high self-financing rate and lack of financial capacity of the applicants. Estonia is one of the countries who benefits from the European Union (Cohesion Fund, European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund) since 2004. Totally 3.4 billion euros for the period 2007-2013 and 4.4 billion euros for the period 2014-2020 was given. LIFE programme has to compete with the other funds, which often have higher co-financing rate. Also, enterprises have taken loans and made investments using other EU funds or their own budget and each additional investment might devalue the benefits of the previous investments. Therefore they think carefully before taking new responsibilities and making new investments. In order to mitigate the problem, Ministry of the Environment is developing a national co-financing system, to enhance the use of LIFE funding. It is clear, that the amount of the other EU funds will decrease in the future and due to that, the role of the LIFE programme becomes more important. Preparations we make today, most probably won't have an immediate impact, but its importance will increase in time.

4.2. Amendments and deviations

A formal amendment request was sent to EASME on 3rd of February 2017 in order to add two associated beneficiaries to the project and modify the budget. It was necessary to add IT Centre of the Ministry of the Environment (KEMIT) to the project as they are responsible for the IT systems (including the new LIFE webpage) in the Ministry. Also another subordinate (Environmental Agency) was added to the project due to the reason that one of the NCP-s (Mr Peep Siim) rotated to Environmental Agency for 2 years and we considered it important to keep competent official in the LIFE team. This was also helping us to reach more potential applicants

as the target groups of the authorities are often different. Both amendments were accepted by EASME.

In the end of 2017, coordinating beneficiary requested an extension of the project by 9 months. Aim of the prolongation was to implement some additional actions like Facebook Campaign, translation of the guidelines, 2 information days, one training, study trip to Finland, study tour within Estonia and networking with other projects and Member States. EU contribution wasn't increased. Prolongation of the project was approved by EASME on 21st of December 2017.

Implementation of the CAP was generally in schedule and was finished in time. There were minor deviations in the beginning due to the administrative reasons and this has caused delays in some actions, but the final results were not significantly affected. Budget of the project was well planned and it wasn't exceeded. Thanks to the prolongation we were able to implement more actions with the budget planned for two years. It was necessary to move amounts between budget categories, but this was less than 20% of the total eligible costs and official amendment was not needed.

5. Technical analyses of progress and impacts

5.1. Technical progress in terms of expected results - Quantitative indicators

Technical progress in terms of expected results has been successful as most of the targets have been achieved or even exceeded. Four indicators related to human resources were achieved and three of them were exceeded. Only target of the indicator “person days worked on project” was not met as most probably the target was wrongly calculated in the proposal. Taking into consideration the expected work load of the Project Manager, Support Specialist and 5 NCP-s, the target should have been maximum 860 days (6880 h), not 1500 days (12 000 h). Calculation in the proposal was done for two years and there had to be some kind of mistake. We have implemented the project 9 months longer and we have involved one extra NCP (up to 10% per year) and one IT specialist (up to 5%) to the project and the real result by the end of the project was 1108 days (8864 h), which makes 73.9% from the original target. On the bases of the possible contribution (860 days), we have exceeded the indicator by 248 days (Figure 3).

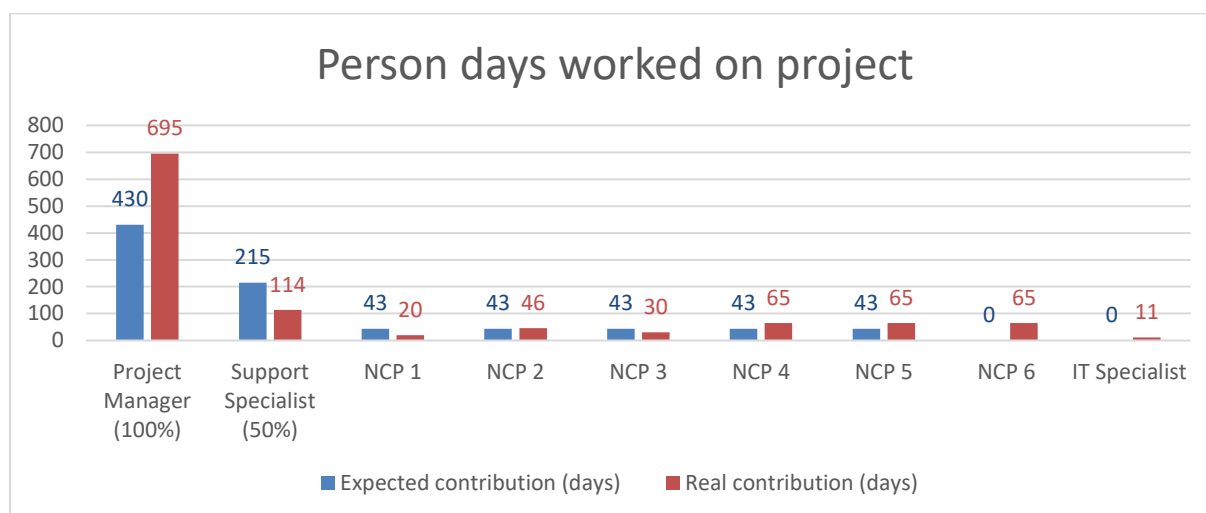


Figure 3. Expected workload of the project team and person days worked on project

All actions related to proposals were implemented as planned and most of the targets of the indicators were achieved or exceeded by the end of the project. There are some indicators which can't be influenced directly, but the beneficiaries are doing their best to meet the targets. It was planned that 8 proposals will be submitted per year, but only four (plus one IP concept note) was submitted in 2016 and this is rather good compared to the previous years. Success rate of the traditional projects was 75% and the IP also succeeded to the second round. In 2017, 5 proposals were submitted (plus one IP concept note was re-submitted). Success rate of the traditional projects was 20% and the IP also succeeded to the second round. In 2018, 15 concept notes and 3 full-proposals were submitted. Four concept notes out of 15 were selected to the second stage. Three climate projects are still being evaluated and the results are not known. Also, one new IP concept note was submitted in 2018 and this was approved by the evaluators (totally 18 proposals plus one IP concept note in 2018) (Figure 4).

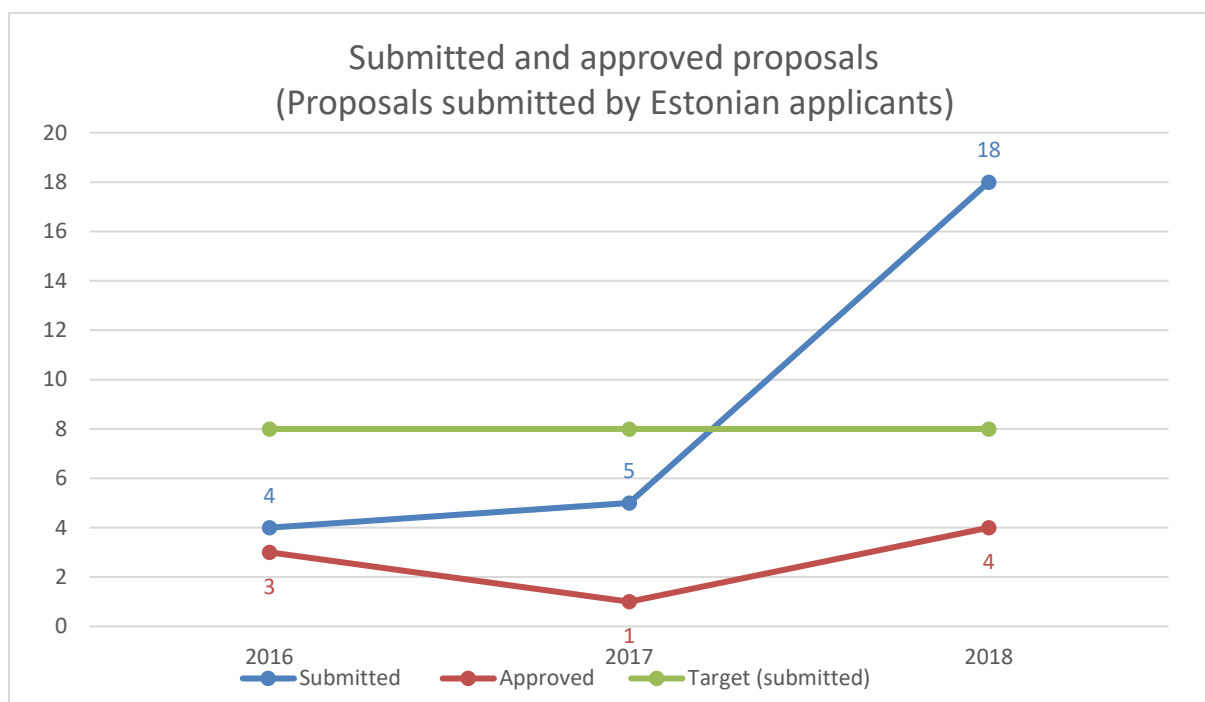


Figure 4. Submitted and approved “traditional” project proposals from 2016 till 2018¹

In addition to the proposals which were submitted by Estonian beneficiaries, there were also 3 proposals in 2016, 9 proposals in 2017 and 2 proposals in 2018, where Estonia was involved as an associated beneficiary. As a concession, this makes 7 proposals in 2016 (plus IP), 14 proposals in 2017 (plus IP) and 20 proposals in 2018 (plus IP) (Figure 5). Together, this makes average 13.7 proposals per year (plus IPs). Participating in the project as an associated beneficiary, is one option how to benefit from the programme. This affects directly the number of proposals submitted by Estonian applicants as these applicants are already involved in other projects.

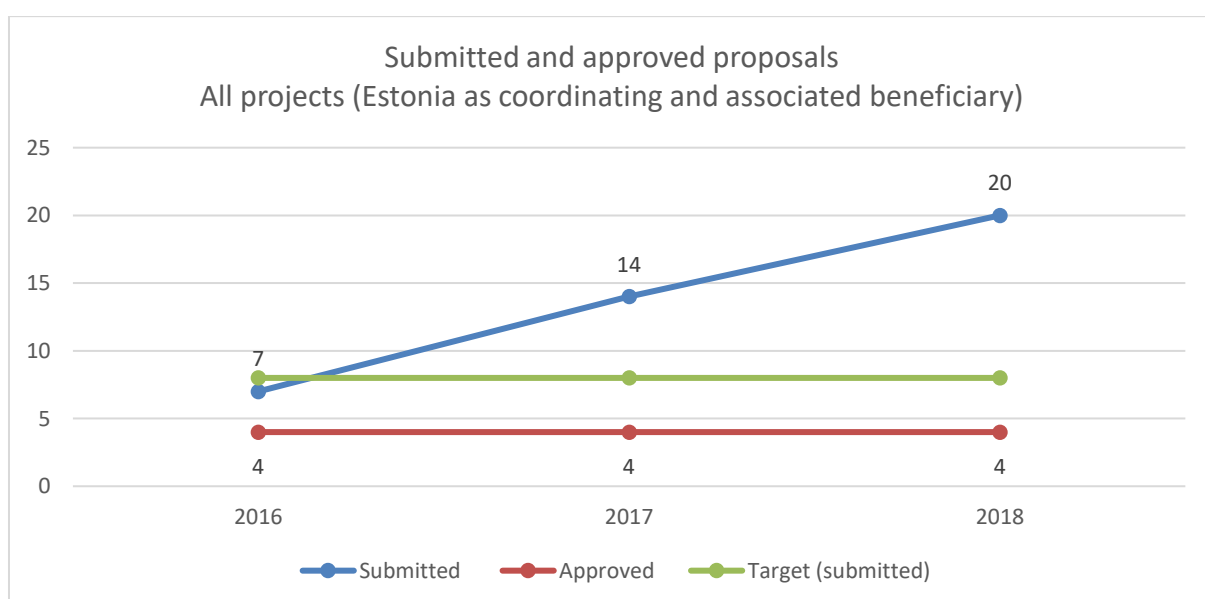


Figure 5. Submitted and approved “traditional” project proposals from 2016 till 2018

¹ Results of the call for proposals in 2018 is unknown, but 4 Estonian concept notes succeeded to the second stage – this number is presented in Figure 4 and 5. Also, Estonian applicants submitted 3 climate project proposals and these proposals are currently being evaluated. Most probably final result for 2018 will change.

Despite of the increase of the applications, the number of successful proposals hasn't changed in the last 3 years. In 2018, the number of successful applications might even decrease compared to 2016 and 2017 as the evaluation is still ongoing and final results are unknown at the moment. This is one of the issues that needs more attention in the future.

The dissemination actions and the work done by the Project Manager, Support Specialist and NCP-s can be considered very good and sufficient. Output of the indicators were remarkably exceeded. Instead of 10 media mentions/quotes, we had 21 different adverts and articles plus 3 media mentions in 2018. Besides that, special Facebook Campaign was outsourced and one interview was given in 2016 to Retro FM (EuroNews). The number of editions of the newspapers where we published the adverts and articles, was totally 399 509. In addition to that, Estonian LIFE webpage was visited 12 324 times during the project lifetime, created LIFE video clips were viewed 1046 times and more than 1000 e-mails were sent every year directly to the potential applicants to promote information days and call of the proposals in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Indicators related to integration, complementation, synergies and replicability is complicated to fulfill during the CAP project as there has been too few projects in previous years. At the moment 6 projects are being implemented and most of them are Estonian-based nature projects without any concrete transnational replication actions. Replication of the actions and results are mainly done on national level. For example, Pärnu was the first one to brought cows back to the city to maintain coastal meadows (LIFE Urbancows) and now animals are brought also to Kuressaare and Tallinn.

There are some actions which project teams have included in the projects to disseminate the actions and the results – Platform Meetings (HappyRiver, LIFE Mires Estonia), networking with similar projects and organizing or participating at seminars. LIFE to Alvars has introduced their technical solutions and methodologies, how to restore and manage alvars, to Finland and Latvia. CAP team doesn't have the power to influence already financed or finished projects and this should be each beneficiary's own interest and responsibility. However, it is emphasized to the new applicants that such activities are necessary and expected. Also, information about financed Estonian LIFE projects can be found on the LIFE website, best projects are introduced at information days and seminars, project managers are asked to present actions and results of their projects during LIFE information days, etc.

In 2018, implementation of the first climate project began and during the project, Viimsi county together with Tallinn city, will demonstrate different solutions how to deal with excessive water during heavy rains in urban areas. Most likely, if the results of the project prove to be effective, they will be replicated and integrated into policies. One of their object is that at least eight additional towns will embark on draw up a climate change adaptation strategy and action plan. Also, two transnational nature projects were financed in 2017 – “Flying squirrel LIFE” and “CoastNet LIFE”. Both projects will be implemented in collaboration with Finnish Metsähallitus Centre and Estonian Environmental Board. Estonia is participating as an associated beneficiary. LIFE funding is often combined with the national environmental fund, especially for nature projects. Other funds are not used (see Annex 1).

In long term, we aim to raise the number of applications and finally to achieve stability. As outlined above, we have had years (9), where the number of financed project is 0. In 26 years,

only 37 projects have been financed from LIFE, which makes 1.4 projects with an average support of 0.6 million euros per year (EU support). Each additional project has a positive environmental, social and economic impact, which help Estonia to implement EU legislation and achieve short and long-term objectives. LIFE helpdesk will continue its work and NCP-s will advise potential applicants also after the CAP, but created system needs strengthening. There are some issues that still need attention and in order to enhance the use of LIFE programme, we need to finalize the development of the national co-financing system as soon as possible. Estonia is one of the two Member States, who is eligible for the second CAP and this is a good opportunity to continue with the work already done and prepare for the next period (2021-2027). Project team has prepared the compulsory After-LIFE Plan, which sets out how the beneficiary/ies plan to continue to promote LIFE and follow the objectives set with the Capacity Building project (see Annex 2).

5.2. Progress per action

A. Implementation actions

All implementation actions are finished (Table 2).

Table 2. Deliverables and milestones

Deliverable/ Milestone name (self-explanatory)	Assoc iated actio n no	Quantification	Accessibil ity of deliverabl e	Foreseen month of completion	Date of completion
Completion of new recruitment	A.1	2 staff members recruited/ defined	N/A	February 2016	March 2016
Completion of the training	A.2	7 staff members trained	N/A	March 2016	May 2016
Completion of the awareness raising exchange events	A.3	12 public sector officials trained	N/A	September 2018	As of 30/09/2018 three study trips organized and 38 public sector officials trained. Also one study tour within Estonia organized for 29 civil servants
Completion of information days	A.4	360 participants in total	N/A	September 2018	As of 30/09/2018 550 participants in total
Completion of quality improvement workshops	A.5	80 participants in total	N/A	August 2018	As of 30/09/2018 92 participants in total
Helpdesk service	A.6	50 draft proposals	N/A	November 2018	As of 30/11/2018 62 draft proposals
Completion of data gathering	A.7	1 report produced	Internal	June 2016	December 2016

A.1. Recruitment of the Project Manager

Foreseen start date: 01.01.2016

Actual start date: 01.12.2015

Foreseen end date: 28.02.2016

Actual end date: 31.03.2016

In the proposal it was foreseen that the project will be managed by one person – the Project Manager (100%). The process for finding the project manager was announced before the start of the project (in the end of the year 2015) and the project manager (Mr Timo Kark) was hired on 24th of January 2016 (see Annex 3). The recruitment was implemented by the Human Resource Department of the Ministry of the Environment. Also one person within the Ministry

of the Environment was designated to work for the project part-timely (up to 50%) as a Support Specialist (Mrs Tiina Pedak) from 01.04.2016 till the end of 2017. Unofficially she was already involved in the project since January 2016.

Completion of new recruitment (Project Manager and Support Specialist) was finished by the end of March 2016, which is one month later than expected. Target of the indicator “Completion of new recruitment” was 100% achieved. After the end of the project there is no need for the positions of Project Manager and Support Specialist. The support specialist will continue to work for the Ministry and she will be given other tasks.

A.2. Training for the Project Manager and NCP-s.

Foreseen start date: 01.01.2016

Actual start date: 01.02.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.03.2016

Actual end date: 19.05.2016

With the present action, the number of National Contact Points (NCP) was raised from 2 to 6 (officials working in the different departments of the Ministry). In the application it was foreseen that there will be 5 NCP-s by the end of the project, but it was decided to raise the number of NCP-s from 5 to 6, which helps to cover different topics. The salary of the additional NCP was covered by the Ministry of the Environment and it didn't affect the European Union contribution.

New NCP-s and Support Specialist were designated to work for the project by the Secretary General (Mr Andres Taliärv) and a relevant internal decision was signed (see Annex 4). This decision was updated on 22nd of February 2018 after the prolongation request of the CAP was approved by EASME. This internal decision will be updated once again in the beginning of 2019 as Mr Ivo Krustok is now working as permanent representative in Brussels and Mrs Reeli Jakobi went to parental leave. Mrs Maris Arro will take over Mrs Reeli Jakobi's tasks and Mrs Jaana Merisaar will take over Mr Ivo Krustok's tasks.

Estonian NCP-s are/will be:

Mr Allan Tamme (Foreign Finance Department);

Mrs Maris Arro (Climate and Radiation Department);

Mrs Merike Linnamägi (Nature Conservation Department);

Mr Olav Ojala (Water Department, Projects Bureau, additional personnel);

Mr Peep Siim (Environmental Agency, additional personnel);

Mrs Jaana Merisaar (Environmental Management Department, additional personnel).

As foreseen in the application, two NCP-s, Project Manager and Support Specialist gave a lecture to the new 4 NCP-s about the LIFE programme (14th of April 2016). Also a training for the LIFE team was organized on 17th-19th of May 2016 in Belgium, Brussels. Three day mission also included a project visit (LIFE OZON) and a visit to EASME (see Annex 5). 8 people from Estonia participated in the mission, including one person from the management (Mr Margo Nõukas, previously Advisor to Secretary General, at the moment Head of the Budget and Planning Department). Instead of 7 persons, 8 persons were trained under the project and the target of the indicator “Completion of the training” was achieved 114%. The budget of the training wasn't exceeded.

The training was supposed to take place in March 2016, but it took place in May 2016 due to the delay in completion of the staff. Despite of the slight delay, the training took place on the right period as the call of 2016 was also launched in May.

Ministry of the Environment will maintain 5-6 NCP-s after the end of the project.

A.3. Awareness raising among public sector officials

Foreseen start date: 01.06.2016

Actual start date: 08.07.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.09.2018

Actual end date: 14.09.2018

To increase the competence and raise awareness of the Estonian officials, three study trips were organized during the project to countries who have successfully implemented LIFE programme. Planned group size was 12 people (total 3 trips and 36 people). In addition to the study trips abroad, one study tour within Estonia was organized for the public servants, who are working in the administration of the Ministry of the Environment.

The first study trip was organized to Spain from 26th till 31st of March 2017 and 12 people from the Ministry participated in the mission (see Annex 6). During the 6 day mission, Estonian officials met with the Spanish NCP-s and visited 5 different beneficiaries (totally 14 different projects in different fields were introduced). As other Member States have planned similar activities, a joint study trip was organized together with Lithuanian colleagues (8 persons from Lithuania) (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Study trip to Spain, meeting with the CARDIFF foundation

As a result of the study trip to Spain, we were able to create useful contacts with the NCP-s and project managers. On this period, Ministry of the Environment was preparing an Integrated Project application and after the study trip, one of the officials participating in the study trip, had several skype calls with the Spanish project manager to discuss the preparation of the IP. One thing we learned from Spain is that the scales are so much different compared to Estonia – for example, we visited several NGO-s and research centres with 100-200 of employees. In Estonia, our NGO-s are much smaller, usually less than 10 people. The capacity, including financial capacity, of the entities are significantly higher. Also, the competition in Spain for LIFE funding is much tighter – in 2018, Spanish applicants submitted 253 proposals, but Estonian applicants submitted 18. Their staff includes personnel responsible for preparing

different project proposals. Of course, there are several other aspects that needs to be taken into account when comparing the number of applications of different Member States (population, no of enterprises, other EU funding).

The second study trip, which in the beginning was supposed to take place in the end of 2016, took place from 21st till 26th of May 2017 (see Annex 7). The Spanish NCP-s were willing to host us, but not before 2017, because they were already hosting other Member States in 2016 and it was decided in Spain that they won't have more than 2 groups in one year. Thereof another agreement was necessary and finally the NCP-s from Great Britain agreed to host us, but it was complicated to make the agreements with local project managers. Also it was complicated to complete the Estonian group as the end of the year is one of the busiest period in the Ministry. Thereof the visit was postponed and enough time was reserved to make the necessary agreements with the project managers.

Even though the period between two trips was only 2 months, the objective of the trips were not affected. Public officials had the possibility to visit different beneficiaries and project sites, which helped to raise the awareness about the possibilities of the programme LIFE. Most of the people (7/12) participating in the second study trip, were new ones (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Study trip to UK, meeting at the Living Planet Centre

Like in Spain, useful contacts were made in UK and compared to the first study trip, the second study trip was more practical. The group visited 4 different projects and more time was spent with each beneficiary. One of the visited project was “MoorLIFE2020”, which is one of the largest (if not the largest) LIFE project in UK. Thanks to the visit to “MoorLIFE2020” project site, we understood that some of the environmental problems are unbelievably large and it's not recognized until you see the results with your own eyes. UK has put a lot of effort into restoration of the blanket bog which is one of the habitats that is not widespread in EU and UK has the responsibility to maintain this type of habitat. Due to the industry, for centuries acid rains have damaged the vegetation of the bog, which in turn has caused erosion. This also affects directly water companies who have to invest millions of pounds every year to clean the water reservoirs. Nature protectors together with water companies have tackled this problem for years

and still there is a lot to be done. But this is a good example of the collaboration between private enterprises (water companies in UK are managed by private enterprises) and public authorities. Visiting other projects (lake restoration, circular economy models) made us understand that this kind of projects should be implemented in Estonia as well. During the LIFE information days, we are always asked to give examples of projects which are funded from LIFE and thanks to the study trips our examples come from real experience.

The third study trip took place from 21st till 23rd of May 2018 in Finland, which focused on the nature conservation projects as the Estonian and Finnish nature and climate is similar (see Annex 8). Metsähallitus is one of the entities who benefits regularly from the LIFE programme and they have created effective system and competent personnel for preparing successful proposals. Totally 14 officials, including 6 officials from the Estonian Environmental Board were involved as they are responsible for the nature and species conservation in Estonia and they could use the LIFE funding much more in the future. They are already collaborating with Metsähallitus and from 2018 they started to implement 2 joint LIFE projects (CoastNet LIFE and Flying Squirrel LIFE). We were able to involve more people as we used ferry and the travel costs to Finland by ferry are quite low compared to the prices of the plane tickets (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Study trip to Finland

One of the memorable projects was “Light and Fire LIFE”, which main action is forest burning. We were able to visit project sites which were already burned and we managed to take part in real forest burning. It takes a lot of preparation, a large number of people and several days to burn a small area of forest and to ensure safety of the surrounding areas. In Estonia, forest burning has been a delicate topic and time to time, this topic is raised by someone. At the moment, forest burning is not allowed in Estonia, but it was a good opportunity to learn how it is done and we are very interested in the results.

In September (13.-14.) 2018 a study tour was organized for 29 officials to introduce financed Estonian LIFE projects and meet with the project managers (see Annex 9). In 2 days, the group visited 3 different projects which included mire restoration work at Soosaare bog (LIFE Mires Estonia). This experience taught how important is to finance nature conservation projects and

how time-consuming and hard some of the tasks might be as it can be done only manually. Also projects “LIFE Urbancows” and “LIFE to Alvars” were visited, which are/were implemented by the Environmental Board. Both of the projects have been awarded: Urbancows won the title “Best Project 2017” and this is a good example how to maintain the sustainability of the project actions and results. “LIFE to Alvars” was awarded in the “Natura 2000 Socio-economic benefits category” in 2018 as it has a positive impact on the local economy and employment (Figure 9).



Figure 9. National study trip (visiting LIFE Mires)

In addition to the site visits, project manager gave an overview about the LIFE programme, rules and objectives and he introduced some of the financed LIFE projects (Estonia and other Member States). After the study trip, head of the Climate Department organized a meeting to discuss some of the project ideas and the possibility to get funding from LIFE. Result of the meeting was that they will prepare and submit Climate Integrated Project proposal in 2019. This was added to their working plan.

Study trips also help to improve collaboration in the Ministry between different departments as people spend several days together in another environment and visiting different projects help to develop discussions on how we could benefit from the programme and what kind of actions could be funded from LIFE.

Target of the indicator “Completion of the awareness raising exchange events” was achieved. Budget of the study trips wasn’t exceeded even though one extra study trip to abroad and one study tour within Estonia was organized in agreement with EASME.

A.4. LIFE information days

Foreseen start date: 01.05.2016

Actual start date: 01.05.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.09.2018

Actual end date: 03.05.2018

In first two years the Ministry of the Environment has organized 16 LIFE programme information days in different cities around Estonia, including LIFE 25 anniversary event (target:

14 information days during the project lifetime) (see Annex 10). As foreseen in the proposal, we organized information days around Estonia in different cities (Figure 10). Still, most of the information days were held in Tallinn and Tartu as the population is higher and we have learned that most of the potential applicants are from Tallinn or Tartu. This is the reason why we organized only two information days in 2018 and in the future it's reasonable to keep the number of information days on the same level. Estonia is small enough that people are able to come to Tallinn or Tartu if they are really interested in the programme. And there are people who rather call, write or meet privately instead of coming to the information days.

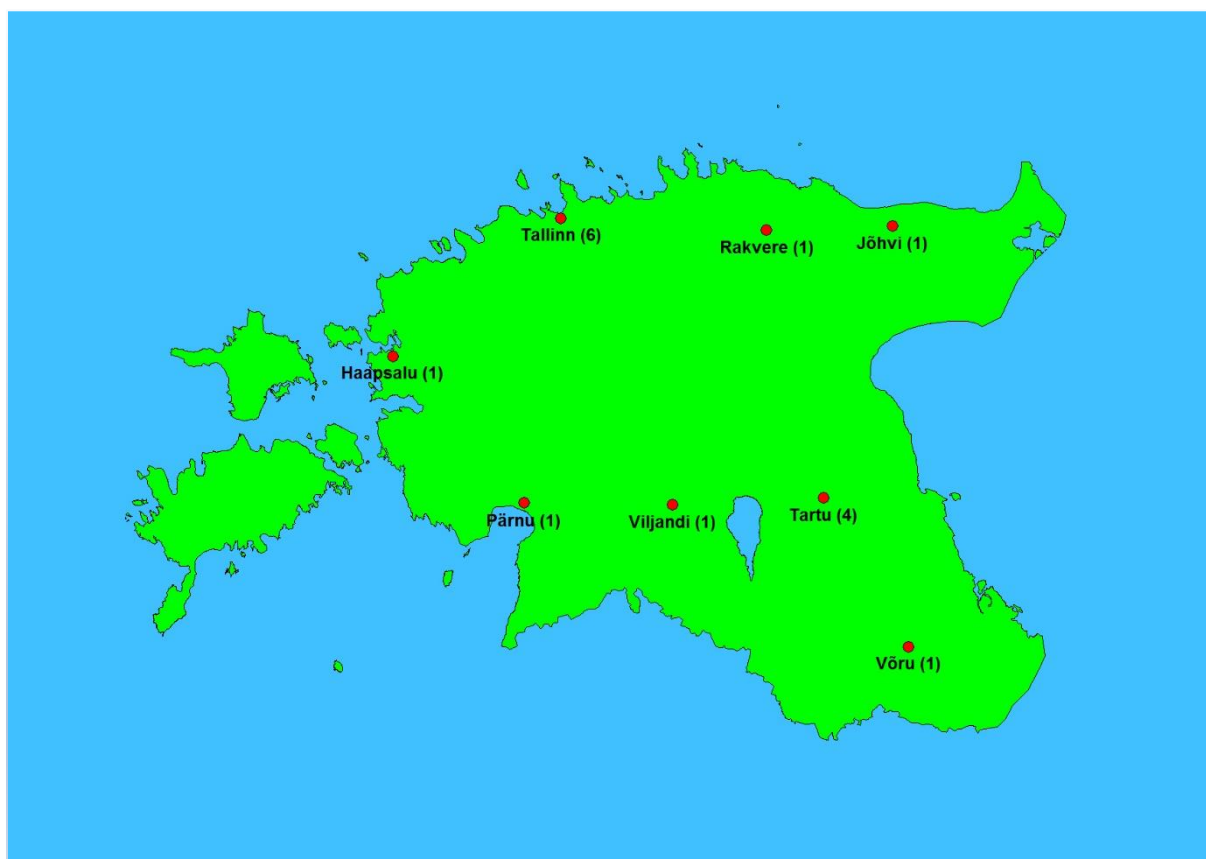


Figure 10. Cities where information days were held during 2016-2018

To make information days more attractive and diverse, we have collaborated with the Estonian Research Council who is responsible for the Horizon2020 programme in Estonia and they have developed a functioning network with the beneficiaries, which helped us to reach more people. We have got positive feedback as there are some touch points between LIFE and Horizon. Thanks to the joint information days, we have better collaboration with the Estonian Research Council and they directed several potential applicants to us as they have better understanding now which projects might be suitable for LIFE.

In addition to the collaboration with Estonian Research Council, we have asked project managers from Estonia and Finland to participate in the information days and to share their experience regarding the implementation of the LIFE projects. This has been a useful practice as thanks to the real examples, new applicants understand better, what is LIFE programme for and they have the chance to ask questions from the practitioners. For example – we have had project managers from the following projects: Mrs Arina Koroljova (LIFE OSAMAT), Mr Meelis Tambets (LIFE HAPPYFISH and LIFE HAPPYRIVER), Mr Jüri-Ott Salm (LIFE

MIRES), Mrs Annely Holm (LIFE TO ALVARS), Mr Bert Holm (LIFE URBANCOWS), Mr Mikko Tiira from Finland (several LIFE projects).

In three years, we have reached 384 people through information days which is 107% from the target (Table 4).

Table 3. LIFE information days

Date	Location	No of attendees	Target group
16.06.2016	Tallinn	65	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
04.10.2016	MoE	10	Public officials working in the Ministry of the Environment
18.10.2016	Tartu	21	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
19.10.2016	Haapsalu	8	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, enterprises)
20.10.2016	Jõhvi	5	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, enterprises)
02.02.2017	Tartu	16	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
08.02.2017	Rakvere	7	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, enterprises)
16.02.2017	Pärnu	11	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
05.05.2017	Tallinn	40	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
13.06.2017	Tallinn	75	Nature conservation organizations
01.11.2017	Viljandi	1	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
08.11.2017	Võru	3	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
15.11.2017	Tallinn	13	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
16.11.2017	Tartu	18	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
02.05.2018	Tallinn	63	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
03.05.2018	Tartu	28	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
Total	-	384	-

We have also involved well-known and popular people. For example, in 2018, the main information day, which was held in Tallinn, was opened by the Prime Minister Mr Jüri Ratas (Figure 11). Also Mr Manuel Montero-Ramirez from EASME participated in the same event, who introduced the LIFE Multiannual Working Programme for 2018-2020 and the new two-stage approach.

At the LIFE 25 Anniversary event, Mr Angelo Salsi from EASME (Head of Unit) and Mr Nicola Notaro from the European Commission (Head of the Nature Unit) participated.



Figure 11. Prime Minister Mr Jüri Ratas opening the LIFE information day on 2nd of May 2018

In addition to the LIFE information days, the Ministry of the Environment has organized resource-efficiency information days (funded from the European Regional Development Fund) and inter alia, the opportunities of the LIFE programme were introduced. One of the target group was covered with the resource efficiency measure and more than 150 people participated in the resource-efficiency information days.

Together with the resource-efficiency information days, the Ministry of the Environment have reached about 550 people which makes 153% of the target (target: 360 people). Target of the indicator “Completion of the information days” was exceeded.

A.5. LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshop

Foreseen start date: 01.05.2016

Actual start date: 01.06.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.08.2018

Actual end date: 16.08.2018

During the project, Ministry of the Environment organized four two-day trainings and two one-day trainings (see Annex 11). As foreseen in the proposal, the first trainings took place on two days, but we learned that it is complicated for the participants to take two days off from work and thereof some of the interested people were not able to participate. In 2018 we decided that instead of one 2 day-training, we will organize 2 one-day trainings in two main cities (Tallinn and Tartu) to attract more people. Two lecturers carried out the trainings and this way it was possible to divide the group into two smaller groups after the general session. More attention was paid to the consultation companies as they could also benefit from LIFE and they could play an important role between the programme and private enterprises who doesn't have the competence and time to prepare high quality proposals (Table 4).

Table 4. LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshops

Date(s)	Location	No of attendees	Lector(s)
15.-16.12.2016	Tallinn	18	Mr Mikko Tiira
06.-07.03.2017	Tallinn, MoE	12	Mr Mikko Tiira
08.-09.05.2017	Tallinn	15	Mr Mikko Tiira
13.-14.12.2017	Tallinn	17	Mr Diego Mattioli
15.08.2018	Tallinn, MoE	19	Mr Mikko Tiira Mr Diego Mattioli
16.08.2018	Tartu	11	Mr Mikko Tiira Mr Diego Mattioli
Total	-	92	-

Trainings were held by two external lecturers: Mr Diego Mattioli, who runs a consultation company in Italy and has a long-time experience with different EU funding mechanisms, and; Mr Mikko Tiira, who works in the Finnish Metsähallitus Centre as an expert. Previously he had worked as a LIFE monitoring expert and at the moment he is responsible for the quality of the LIFE proposals in Metsähallitus Centre.

Totally 92 people have been trained, which is 115% from the target (target: 80 people trained). Target of the indicator “Completion of quality improvement workshops” was exceeded.

A.6. Helpdesk service

Foreseen start date: 01.04.2016

Actual start date: 01.01.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.11.2018

Actual end date: 30.09.2018

Thanks to the activities which helped to increase the number of officials who are now involved with LIFE and the activities which helped to raise the competence and awareness about the LIFE programme, the Estonian Ministry of the Environment has a strong and competent LIFE helpdesk, who is able to support and advise potential applicants.

The foreseen starting date for the helpdesk was set April 2016, but actually the helpdesk was already working before the start of the project. 2 NCP-s who already worked in the Ministry before the project, advised potential applicants on general LIFE issues, they gave feedback about the project ideas and quality of the applications. More attention was paid to the nature conservation projects as one of the previous NCP-s works in the Nature Conservation Department. Thanks to the CAP, we are able to cover more topics and helpdesk has more capacity and competence to help potential applicants. Also LIFE webpage was created, which makes it easier for the potential applicants to find relevant information about the programme and also the contacts of the NCP-s. LIFE helpdesk will continue its work after the CAP and one of the NCP-s (Mr Allan Tamme) will be responsible for the Helpdesk.

Since the beginning of the CAP, LIFE helpdesk has consulted 62 different draft proposals, which makes 124% of the target (target: 50 draft proposals consulted). In addition to that, helpdesk has answered numerous phone calls and e-mails and NCP-s have met with the potential applicants to discuss their ideas and explain the rules of the LIFE programme. With some applicants, there has been more than one meeting and longer correspondence. So, the workload for the project manager and NCP-s has increased significantly during the project, which shows that we have reached more people and potential applicants.

To find a solution to the high self-financing rate issue, project team has turned to Estonian Enterprise Association (EAS) and Ministry of Finance. A letter was sent to EAS on 24th of January 2018, but it was never responded. Project team hoped that EAS might be interested in collaboration and perhaps to find some solutions and create more opportunities for enterprises. We had two objectives – to discuss the opportunities of combining different funding mechanisms, and; to promote LIFE programme on their webpage as this is one of the main websites for enterprises, where they search information about different funds. As the letter was never responded, project team started discussion with Environmental Investment Centre, who agreed to promote LIFE programme on their webpage. Call for 2018 was promoted on their webpage from April till September 2018 and hopefully this will be done also in the future. Also, new letter was sent to EAS in December 2018.

Discussions with the Ministry of Finance started in the beginning of February 2018 and by the end of April, it was decided that there is no need for several budgets for environmental projects and this should be solved using existing national environmental fund. It is necessary to develop a specific measure for LIFE projects with its own budget, criteria and deadlines. This would provide clarity and certainty for applicants. A strategy was developed and the idea was introduced to the Minister of the Environment in November 2018. The idea was approved by the Minister, but further development is needed to work out the evaluation and selection criteria, budget planning, etc. This is an ongoing action and Ministry of the Environment is hoping to finalize it by the end of April 2019 at the latest.

A.7. Specifying and analysing the data for LIFE project submission

Foreseen start date: 01.04.2016

Actual start date: 01.04.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.06.2016

Actual end date: 20.12.2016

In the first months it was foreseen that the NCP-s, Project Manager and Support Specialist will search for the proposals submitted in previous years to analyse how many proposals were rejected, what was the success rate, what was the sector and what were the main reasons for rejection. The deadline for the report was June 2016, but it was finished in December 2016. Start of the action was in schedule, but due to the busy schedule in the first year, the analysis was finalised by the end of the first year. Only proposals available for NCP-s were gathered and analysed.

The analysis covered 10 year period from 2006 till 2015. During this period, 31 proposals were submitted by the Estonian applicants and 12 of those were financed, which makes average 3.1 proposals per year and 1.2 financed projects per year. Success rate was rather high comparing to the EU average – 38.7%. EU average in 2016 was 23%.

10 projects were included in the analyses which were rejected during 2011-2015. Reasons for rejections were quite different, but there are some points which could be pointed out as very serious and common mistakes:

- The preparation of the proposals were insufficient and some actions which were planned with the project, were supposed to be done before the start of the project (environmental impact assessment, licences, agreements, evaluation of the current situation);
- Some of the actions were not sufficiently explained or the necessity was unclear. Often there were no money planned in the budget for the action and vice versa – the cost was planned, but no action was described;
- One and the same project was submitted three years in a row. The focus of the project was changed little bit every time, but the target species was the same (European mink).

The biggest problem of the proposal was that less than 25% of the proposal budget was allocated to concrete conservation activities. The focus was mainly on monitoring and research, which is not the focus of the LIFE programme;

- Mandatory actions like Layman report, After-Life plan, LIFE signs were missing;
- Mandatory indicators were missing or the indicators were badly phrased;
- Current situation was often insufficiently described;
- Risk assessment was missing or the suggested measures were insufficient;
- Little environmental benefit comparing to the investment;
- Others.

It's also relevant to add the numbers of "traditional" projects for 2016 and 2017. In 2016, 4 proposals were submitted from Estonia and 3 of them were approved (success rate 75%). Due to the lack of own contribution, one of the approved application was never started. In 2017, 5 proposals were submitted and only one was approved (success rate 20%). Even though the success rate was rather low compared to the previous years, it was still a good year as all proposals were submitted by applicants who had never applied grant from LIFE. For us, it was also important to reach new applicants and we could say that 2017 was still a good year. And on top of that, first Estonian climate project was financed.

Suggestions, what kind of mistakes to avoid, is published on the Estonian LIFE website under the section "Application" as proposed by EASME.

One report (deliverable) was produced and with this, the indicator "Completion of data gathering" was met (Annex 12).

B. Monitoring of the impact of the project actions

B.1. Feedback questionnaires on participant's LIFE knowledge

Foreseen start date: 01.06.2016

Actual start date: 01.06.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.08.2018

Actual end date: 31.08.2018

After each event (A.2, A.4 and A.5) participants are asked to fill in the questionnaires to get feedback about the quality of the event, how useful it was and what could be done better in the future. We have received 160 feedback sheets from people, who participated in the information days.

Most of the participants have been very satisfied (90.2%) with the quality of the information days (A.4). Information days fulfilled its purpose (96.3%), explanations and answers were satisfying (95.0%), presentations were clear and understandable (93.7%) and they got new information (94.3%). The weakest point was that the information day didn't meet the practical needs for 42 participants (25%), but the reason is rather the focus of the programme itself, not the quality of the information days. The main question is, how to reach the right people, who could benefit from LIFE programme (Table 5).

Table 5. Feedback from the information days

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	Total ²	Satisfaction % (4 and 5)
Information day fulfilled its purpose	0	1	5	56	98	160	96.3%
Explanations and answers were satisfying	0	0	8	65	87	160	95.0%
Presentations included enough practical cases	0	5	19	57	78	159	84.9%
Presentations were clear and the content understandable	0	1	9	49	100	159	93.7%
Information day met my expectations	0	4	9	58	88	159	91.8%
I got new information	0	1	8	41	109	159	94.3%
Information day met my practical needs	2	4	36	63	54	159	73.6%
The location of the information day was suitable	0	2	11	24	123	160	91.9%
Total	2	18	105	413	737	1275	90.2%

(1-very bad, 2-bad, 3-fair, 4-good, 5-very good)

We have also collected feedback from people who participated in the trainings (A.2 and A.5). In May 2016 a training was organized in Brussels for 8 people (A.2) and all of them filled in the feedback sheet (Table 6).

Table 6. Feedback from the NCP training

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Satisfaction % (4 and 5)
Training fulfilled its purpose	0	0	0	0	8	8	100%
Explanations and answers were satisfying	0	0	0	0	8	8	100%
Presentations included enough practical cases	0	0	0	3	5	8	100%
Lector was competent	0	0	0	0	8	8	100%
I got new information	0	0	0	3	5	8	100%
Training met my practical needs	0	0	0	1	7	8	100%
The location of the training was suitable	0	0	0	1	7	8	100%
Agenda was well-planned	0	0	0	0	8	8	100%
Total	0	0	0	8	56	64	100%

During the project lifetime, six workshops (A.5) were organized for the potential applicants and totally 65 feedback sheets have been returned (Table 7). Mainly we have asked trainees to fill in the feedback sheets on paper, but we also tried online versions to reduce printing and use of paper. Unfortunately the result was that some of the participants didn't fill in the online forms and thereof there are less feedback sheets than trainees. Also, some of them had to leave before the end of the training.

Table 7. Feedback from the trainings

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Satisfaction % (4 and 5)
Training fulfilled its purpose	0	1	1	15	48	65	96.9%
Explanations and answers were satisfying	0	1	0	8	56	65	98.5%

² The total number of returned feedback sheets (160) is different from the number of participants (309) as some of the participants left before the end of the information day. Also, the feedback sheets were not spread out at the LIFE 25 Anniversary event.

Presentations included enough practical cases	0	0	1	14	50	65	98.5%
Lector was competent	0	0	1	4	60	65	98.5%
I got new information	0	0	1	12	52	65	98.5%
Training met my practical needs	0	1	2	14	47	64	95.3%
The location of the training was suitable	0	0	0	11	54	65	100%
Agenda was well-planned	0	0	3	14	48	65	95.4%
Total	0	3	9	92	415	519	97.7%

(1-very bad, 2-bad, 3-fair, 4-good, 5-very good)

As seen from the table above, the overall satisfaction rate of the trainings is very high – 97.7%.

Monitoring of the results of the action was done during the whole project lifetime and this action will be continued also after the end of the CAP.

B.2. Quantitative recording of the number of attendees and inquiries submitted

Foreseen start date: 01.04.2016

Actual start date: 01.01.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.12.2018

Actual end date: 31.12.2018

During all the events, the project team records the number of participants (every person has to sign that he/she participated in the event) and those sheets are retained in the project folder (A.2-A.5). Also the enquiries sent to the helpdesk (A.6) are recorded and retained in the project folder (excel sheet) (see Annex 13).

There is no specific indicator to assess the impact of the action, but the number of the participants is monitored and an overview is given in the project reports. There are other indicators which need to be monitored and this action is one of the possibilities to evaluate the impact of the project actions. This will be continued also after the end of the CAP.

B.3. Monitoring the dissemination actions

Dissemination actions are monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the project lifetime and a report about project indicators (B.1, B.2, B.3) was prepared in December 2018 as foreseen in the proposal (see Annex 14).

Media is monitored through the number of the editions we publish the LIFE adverts/articles in. We can also monitor the visits of the LIFE webpage and views of the LIFE video clip (Table 8).

Table 8. Monitoring of the dissemination actions

Media type	Content	Date	Editions/Views/ visits/Followers
Newspaper (Postimees)	Article about the programme; information day advert	30.01.2017	44 180 editions
Newspaper (Maaleht)	Article about the programme; information day advert	02.02.2017	43 400 editions
Newspaper (Virumaa Teataja)	Information day advert	04.02.2017	5 929 editions
Newspaper (Pärnu Postimees)	Information day advert	11.02.2017	12 000 editions
Newspaper (Maaleht)	Information day advert	20.04.2017	46 300 editions
Newspaper (Postimees)	Information day advert	21.04.2017	41 400 editions
Newspaper (Harju Elu)	Information day advert	21.04.2017	4200 editions
Online page (Harju Elu)	Information day advert	24.04- 30.04.2017	-

Newspaper (Sakala)	Information day advert	21.10.2017	8100 editions
Newspaper (Postimees)	Information day advert	23.10.2017	44 700 editions
Newspaper (Sakala)	Information day advert	25.10.2017	8100 editions
Newspaper (Võrumaa Teataja)	Information day advert	31.10.2017	3600 editions
Newspaper (Harju Elu)	Information day advert	03.11.2017	6600 editions
Newspaper (Võrumaa Teataja)	Information day advert	04.11.2017	3600 editions
Newspaper (Tartu Postimees)	Information day advert	06.11.2017	16 400 editions
Newspaper (Harju Elu)	Information day advert	10.11.2017	6600 editions
Newspaper (Tartu Postimees)	Information day advert	11.11.2017	16 400 editions
Special edition (100 years of Estonia and Entrepreneurship)	Article about the programme	30.01.2018	42 000 editions
Online newspaper (Delfi)	Article about the call for 2018	19.04.2018	-
Online newspaper (Maaleht)	Article about the call for 2018	20.04.2018	-
Special edition of the Maaleht (School and Education)	Application writing seminar advert	28.06.2018	46 000 editions
Media mention (Radio channel Retro FM)	LIFE programme and possibility to contact with NCP-s	14.11.2018	-
LIFE webpage	Information about programme LIFE, information days, seminars etc.	01.09.2016 – 30.11.2018	12 324 visits
LIFE video clip	Video about LIFE programme	01.09.2016 – 30.11.2018	1046 views
MoE Facebook page	LIFE call 2016, 2017, 2018; Information days adverts	30.11.2018	5134 followers
Facebook Campaign			191 090 impressions
Environment Investment Centre webpage	Information about LIFE programme and call 2018	27.03.2018-16.09.2018	-
Resource Efficiency newsletters	Information days	27.05.2016; 03.10.2016; 10.11.2016; 12.04.2018 29.08.2018	-
Total	-	01.01.2016-30.11.2018	609 103

After the end of the CAP, visits of the LIFE webpage will be monitored at least till the end of 2023. Views of the LIFE video clip will be monitored till the end of the LIFE programme period (2020), after what the video is irrelevant and will be taken down.

C. Actions for communication and for dissemination

Table 9. Deliverables and milestones

Deliverable/ Milestone name (self- explanatory)	Associ- ated action no	Type of deliverable	Quantifi- cation	For publicati ons: Languag e(s)	Access ibility of deliver able	Foreseen month of completi on	Date of comple- tion
Finalization of the creation of the website	C.1	Website	1 website	Estonian	Public	August 2016	August 2016

Completion of the creation of the booklets	C.2	Booklet	2000 booklets	Estonian	Public	December 2016	April 2017
Finalization of the creation of the video	C.3	Video	1 video	Estonian	Public	July 2016	August 2016
To introduce LIFE programme in external events	C.6	Conference, seminars etc.	8 events	N/A	Public	September 2018	Sept 2018
Delivering digital newsletters	C.7	Newsletters	8 newsletters	Estonian	Public	October 2017	-

C.1. LIFE website creation and management

Foreseen start date: 01.03.2016

Actual start date: 01.02.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.08.2016

Actual end date: 31.08.2016

LIFE webpage was created in time and in the end of 2017, additional development was outsourced to improve the visualization and change the structure of the webpage. One person from the IT Centre of the Ministry of the Environment (KEMIT) was responsible for the creation and additional development of the webpage. The webpage will be online at least till the end of 2023 and KEMIT will be responsible for the management (system updates and major changes).

During the CAP, the project manager was responsible for the management of the webpage (updating the information, adding new data, advertising the events etc.). After the CAP, NCPs will take over the tasks and they will manage the webpage. Indicator “Finalization of the creation of website” was met in time.

Since from the launch (September 2016), the website has been visited 12 324 times which can be considered a good result. During the Facebook Campaign, visits of the webpage increased significantly. Address of the Estonian LIFE website is: <https://life.envir.ee/>.

C.2. Creation of LIFE booklet

Foreseen start date: 01.09.2016

Actual start date: 20.09.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.12.2016

Actual end date: 30.04.2017

Start of the action was in time (translation and language design), but the end date was postponed 4 months due to the tight schedule in the first year. As there was a booklet already created by the European Commission, it was decided that it could be done in a slight delay. Actual end date was 30.04.2017, right before the major LIFE information day (see Annex 15).

Although a public procurement was foreseen with the project, a simpler procedure was used due to the low price of the service. Creation and printing of the booklets cost under 1500 euros and there was no need for the public procurement.

Booklets are shared during information days, seminars and trainings. Also, booklets can be found in different places around Estonia (eg. Ministry of the Environment, Environmental Investment Centre, Environmental Board, Environmental Agency, University of Tallinn, Municipality of Pärnu, Municipality of Tallinn, Lääne-Viru county government, University of Tartu, Enterprise Estonia, hotels and conference centres etc).

Due to the new 2-stage application system, which was implemented in 2018, the booklet was updated and extra 400 booklets were printed. This was discussed and agreed by Neemo.

Indicator “Completion of the creation of the booklets” was met in April 2017.

C.3. Video

Foreseen start date: 01.04.2016

Actual start date: 24.03.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.07.2016

Actual end date: 31.08.2016

Start of the action was in time and the video clip was ready one month after the foreseen end date. A public procurement was used as foreseen in the proposal. The process of the contract took more time than expected and the contract was finally signed on 15th of June 2016. One video clip in Estonian language (3.13 minutes) was created by the end of August 2016. The same video clip was published with three different subtitles: Estonian, English and Russian (see Annex 16).

Video clips are uploaded to YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Vd7P4M0Bkk>) and LIFE webpage (<http://life.envir.ee/>). This video clip is distributed during the information days and seminars, and it is also added to the online registration sheets. We have got positive feedback from the Commission and from the other Member States, who said that it was attractive and well-designed.

Indicator “Finalization of the creation of video” was met in August 2016.

C.4. Creating and distributing adverts

Foreseen start date: 01.05.2016

Actual start date: 24.01.2017

Foreseen end date: 31.08.2018

Actual end date: 28.08.2018

Ministry of the Environment has published 21 adverts and articles to promote LIFE information days, trainings and LIFE programme itself (Table 8 ↑). In addition to that, article about the call for proposals in 2018 was published in Maaleht and Delfi online pages (see Annex 17).

A *Facebook Campaign* was added to the project with the prolongation of the CAP. Campaign was outsourced and it lasted from 18th of April till the middle of August. Aim of the campaign was to reach wide range of people to raise the awareness about the LIFE programme. Target group: Estonian enterprises and people between the age of 21-65. During the Campaign we promoted LIFE programme itself, especially intensely one month before the deadline of the submission of the applications (in May and in August). Also information days and training were promoted. Different visualisations were used and during the whole campaign the impact of the adverts was monitored and analysed to understand which adverts work better (see Annex 18).

LIFE adverts were showed 191 090 times (impressions) and when people clicked on the advert, they were directed to the Estonian LIFE webpage. During the campaign 3236 people visited Estonian LIFE webpage (67% of them were women and 32% were men). In addition to that, the number of Ministries Facebook page was increased by 266 followers. As the Ministries Facebook page works as a newsletter, this is very positive additional result of the campaign. Information about the call of proposals and information days are published on the Moe's Facebook page.

In collaboration with Estonian Environmental Investment Centre, we started to promote LIFE programme on their webpage from the call for proposal till the deadline of the submission. This is one of the main webpage where potential applicants search information about different environmental funds and schemes.

Also, every year, direct communication, different mailing lists and websites are used to promote LIFE calls, information days and trainings. More than 1000 e-mails are sent every year. Sites which promote different events, are used to advertise information days (Figure 12). Some of the websites have picked up our adverts and put the same advert on their website. And as already mentioned above, MoE's Facebook page is used to promote different events.



Figure 12. Example of the advert published on the website, which promotes different events (free)

Also, an interview was given to the Retro FM on 9th of November 2016. Same radio channel was used in 2018, when a list of songs was sent to promote LIFE programme. Retro FM has a special programme and every workday 5 songs are selected, which are sent by different collectives. LIFE team sent five songs, which all contained word “LIFE” and this list was played on 14th of November 2018. During the show, LIFE programme and possibility to contact with NCP-s were mentioned several times. Examples of songs which were sent and played: “Always look on the bright side of life”, “Wonderful life”, “Beautiful life”, “Life is life” and “It’s my life”. Radio broadcast can be heard here:

https://sky.ee/tag/arkamisaeg/#podcast_RETROFM_8206_41_3.

C.5. Information and promotion materials

Foreseen start date: 01.03.2016

Actual start date: 03.05.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.05.2016

Actual end date: 30.04.2018

Two banners were ordered in the beginning of the project as foreseen with the project. As one of the banner broke, a new one was ordered in the beginning of 2018. Banners were used during the seminars, information days and trainings. One of the banners was held 24/7 in the lobby of the Ministry to raise the awareness of the visitors (Figure 13).



Figure 13. LIFE banner in the lobby of the Ministry of the Environment

Other promotion materials (notebooks, pens and u-cups with LIFE logo) were ordered in March 2017 (Figure 14). With the budget planned for promotion materials, 180 booklets and 45 u-cups were ordered. 100 extra LIFE notebooks were ordered in 2018 as previously ordered notebooks were very popular and ran out during the information days and trainings. Notebooks were made from recycled paper.



Figure 14. Promotion materials with LIFE logo

Also, as foreseen in the prolongation request, guidelines for the applicants were translated into Estonian language in 2018. Analyse of the guidelines was done in February 2018 to measure the workload, but the translation was done in May, after the publication of the new guidelines.

Climate Action guidelines were finished in June as the deadline for climate projects were in September (see Annex 19).

Due to the additional action, the budget for action C.5 was exceeded by 2582 euros, but this didn't affect the overall budget. Additional action was approved by EASME.

C.6. Introducing LIFE in external events

Foreseen start date: 01.05.2016

Actual start date: 01.07.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.09.2018

Actual end date: 18.09.2018

It was foreseen that the NCP-s and the project manager will go to the external events to introduce the LIFE programme and its possibilities. Since the beginning of the project, NCP-s and/or Project Manager have participated at the following events:

02.06.2016 – LIFE project “OSAMAT” seminar in Tallinn. Ivo Krustok introduced the opportunities of LIFE;

24-26.08.2016 – First joint LIFE workshop for Baltic States in Riga, Latvia (Timo Kark, Allan Tamme, Merike Linnamägi, Tiina Pedak). Timo Kark made a presentation about the situation in Estonia and financed projects during the last years (see Annex 20).

01.11.2016 – Water management workshop. Reeda Kaal introduced the opportunities of the programme LIFE.

22.-23.11.2016 – LIFE Capacity Building Networking Workshop in Budapest, Hungary (Timo Kark, Allan Tamme). Timo Kark made a presentation about the objectives, actions and results of the Estonian Capacity Building Project (see Annex 20).

11.01.2017 – Participating in the meeting of the Viimsi county Environmental and Property Commission. Timo Kark introduced the opportunities of the programme LIFE.

16.03.2017 - Seminar “Implementation of the water management plan of the East-Estonia watershed”. Reeda Kaal introduced the opportunities of the programme LIFE.

28-29.09.2017 – Second joint LIFE workshop for Baltic States in Pärnu, Estonia (Timo Kark, Allan Tamme, Merike Linnamägi, Tiina Pedak, Piret Väinsalu, Reeli Jakobi). Timo Kark made a presentation about the situation in Estonia and financed projects during the last years. Also, Project Manager helped with the organization of the event and project visits (see Annex 20).

16.10.2017 – Resource efficiency information day in Pärnu. Timo Kark participated in the information day and distributed LIFE booklets and shared information if asked. Mrs Jaana Merisaar, who was responsible for organizing the information day, gave a short overview about the LIFE programme and explained that the Project Manager will answer the questions during the coffee breaks and after the information day (see Annex 20).

17.10.2017 – Resource efficiency information day in Kohtla-Järve. Timo Kark participated in the information day and distributed LIFE booklets and shared information if asked. Mrs Jaana Merisaar, who was responsible for organizing the information day, gave a short overview about the LIFE programme and explained that the Project Manager will answer the questions during the coffee breaks and after the information day.

18.10.2017 – Resource efficiency information day in Tartu. Timo Kark participated in the information day and distributed LIFE booklets and shared information if asked. Mrs Jaana Merisaar, who was responsible for organizing the information day, gave a short overview about the LIFE programme and explained that the Project Manager will answer the questions during the coffee breaks and after the information day.

20.10.2017 – Resource efficiency information day in Tallinn. Timo Kark participated in the information day and spread out the booklets and shared information if asked. Mrs Jaana Merisaar, who was responsible for organizing the information day, gave a short overview about

the LIFE programme and explained that the Project Manager will answer the questions during the coffee breaks and after the information day (see Annex 20).

24.-26.10.2017 – Nature Based Solution Conference in Tallinn (Timo Kark participated). There was a separate LIFE table with LIFE banner and booklets. Opportunities of the programme were introduced when asked and LIFE booklets were distributed.

15.-17.11.2017 – Instrutec, Estonian industrial market in Tallinn. Mrs Jaana Merisaar and Mrs Karen Silts from the Ministry participated. MoE and Environmental Investment Centre had a joint box, where information about different funding mechanism was shared. Inter alia, LIFE video clip was showed and booklets were distributed (see Annex 20).

17.-18.09.2018 – Circular Economy Conference in Tallinn (Timo Kark and Tiina Pedak participated). There was LIFE corner created outside with screen and table. Booklets and information was shared and also LIFE programme was mentioned in the presentation of Mrs Ülle-Triin Enden (Head of the Foreign Financing Department) (see Annex 20).

20.-21.09.2018 – Third joint LIFE workshop for Baltic States in Klaipeda, Lithuania (Timo Kark, Olav Ojala, Ivo Krustok, Peep Siim). Timo Kark made a presentation about the situation in Estonia and financed projects during the last years (see Annex 20).

14.11.2018 – Seminar “How to finance activities foreseen in the Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 network”. Mrs Kadri Möller (Advisor of the Nature Conservation Department) gave an overview about financed Estonian LIFE projects and promoted LIFE programme.

NCP-s and project manager have participated in 15 external events during the project lifetime (plus one during the preparation of the Final Report) and with that the indicator “To introduce LIFE program in external events” is met (indicator: 8 events). This action will be continued also after the CAP.

C.7. Social Media and digital newsletters

Foreseen start date: 01.04.2016

Actual start date: 01.06.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.10.2017

Actual end date: 30.09.2018

News about LIFE programme and events are created and shared under the Ministry of the Environment Facebook account, and an invitation is created and sent to different companies, universities, organizations, officials etc. before the major LIFE information days. Also a *Facebook Campaign* was outsourced for the period April-August 2018.

Information about the events are published on the Estonian LIFE website. In collaboration with the Environmental Investment Centre, we have put the information on their webpage as this is one of the main webpage where people search for the information about environmental funds. The Ministry of the Environment will continue with the action also after the end of the project.

As approved by EASME, we didn't order LIFE specific newsletters as we are using all kind of media already and inter alia, information about the LIFE events are advertised in the other newsletters which the Ministry of the Environment has created for the resource efficiency measure (see Annex 21).

D. Project management and monitoring of the project progress

Table 10. Deliverables and milestones

Deliverable/ Milestone name (self- explanatory)	Associ- ated action no	Type of deliverable	Quantifi- cation	For publicati- ons: Languag- e(s)	Accessi- bility of deliver- able	Foreseen month of completi- on	Date of completion
Midterm report with payment request	D.1, D.2	Report	1 report	Estonian, English	Internal	December 2016	April 2017
Progress report	D.1, D.2	Report	1 report	Estonian, English	Internal	April 2018	April 2018
Final report with payment request	D.1, D.2	1 Report	1 Report	Estonian, English	Internal	December 2018	December 2018

Mid-term report was sent to EASME 4 months later than planned as the pre-payment wasn't 100% used. Some of the services were cheaper than expected and study trip that was supposed to take place in 2016, took place in May 2017. This affected the use of the budget. According to the Grant Agreement, midterm report with payment request had to be sent after the pre-payment was 100% used.

Progress report and Final Report was prepared and sent according to the timetable.

D.1. Project management by the Estonian Ministry of the Environment

Foreseen start date: 01.01.2016

Actual start date: 24.01.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.12.2018

Actual end date: 31.12.2018

Project manager was hired on 24th of January 2016 and his contract with the Ministry of the Environment will last till the submission of the final report (31.12.2018). He was a full-time employee and worked in the premises of the Ministry. One person from the Ministry was designated to work for the project as a Support Specialist (up to 50% of her working-time) till the end of December 2017. As foreseen in the prolongation request, there was no need for the help of Support Specialist in 2018.

Other beneficiary's staff member (accountants, drivers etc.) and NCP-s contributed to the activities defined in the proposal. Also two associated beneficiaries were involved in the project: Environmental Agency and the IT Centre of the Ministry of the Environment. Both of the authorities are the subordinates of the Ministry and they belong in the same administration. IT Centre of the Ministry (KEMIT) is responsible for the IT-systems, including the LIFE webpage, in the whole administration. One person from KEMIT was involved in the project (up to 5% of his working time in the first year).

One person, Mr Peep Siim, from the Environmental Agency was working part-timely (up to 10% of his working time) as LIFE NCP. He used to work in the Ministry of the Environment, but he rotated to the Environmental Agency. His tasks as NCP remained according to his own will and in agreement with the employer and Project Manager (see Annex 22).

Partnership Agreements with KEMIT and Environmental Agency were signed in October 2017, which entered into force retroactively from 01.02.2016. Partnership Agreements were updated in September 2018, which entered into force retroactively from 01.01.2018 (see Annex 23).

D.2. Quality Control

Foreseen start date: 01.01.2016

Actual start date: 24.01.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.09.2018

Actual end date: 30.09.2018

Quality of the actions was monitored during the lifetime of the project. Project manager was responsible for the Progress Report, Mid-term Report and Final Report.

Mid-term report with the payment request was submitted in April 2017, Progress Report was submitted in May 2018 and Final Report was submitted in December 2018.

As the actual costs were below 750 000 euros, there is no need for a certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts according to the “Letter Amendment No 4 to Grant Agreement for project LIFE14 CAP/EE/000009, AwaRaEst LIFE”.

5.3. Analysis of impacts and benefits

During the CAP we reached a wide range of people, including potential applicants, using direct communication, different media channels and organizing information days and seminars. Despite of the active communication, the number of applications didn't increase in the first two years. Significant increase in 2018 was probably due to the two-stage application system, which shows that there is knowledge about the LIFE programme among potential applicants, but there are two main reasons why they don't apply grants from LIFE: complicated and time-consuming application system, and; high self-financing rate. These two reasons were often pointed out in the feedback sheets.

Thanks to the change in the application system, there were more applications from Estonia in 2018 (15 concept notes and 3 full proposals), but this also led to another problem – applicants made the effort to prepare the 10 page concept note, but generally the concept notes were poorly prepared. Applications were too general, mandatory actions were missing, financial rules were not followed and usually the pre-work was not done (involving partners, research, etc.). Even though applicants have to submit only 10 page concept note, they need to read through the guidelines and they have to own a clear vision about the whole project, including detailed budget, objectives, actions and possible impact of the project. This is something NCP-s need to emphasize more in the future.

Leaving aside the poor quality of the concept notes, it is still a step forward as now we have the confidence that people are aware about the programme and they are interested in applying if the conditions are appropriate. At the concept note phase applicants didn't have to prove that they are able to cover the own contribution and this is still a question mark. It can be assumed that not all applicants who submitted the concept note, have the necessary own-contribution. Most probably some of them just tested if their idea suits for the programme. Over the years the main problem has been high self-financing rate and this is one of the reasons for the low participation activity in LIFE.

It is also important to take into account that Estonia is one of the countries who benefits from the European Union (Cohesion Fond, European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund) since 2004. Totally 3.4 billion euros for the period 2007-2013 and 4.4 billion euros for the period 2014-2020 was given. LIFE programme has to compete with the other

funds, which often have higher co-financing rate. Some of the topics (waste, waste water, resource efficiency, etc.) have been dealt using other EU funds. Also, some of the applicants, who could benefit from the LIFE programme, have already taken responsibilities. Enterprises have taken loans and made investments using other EU funds or their own budget and each additional investment might devalue the benefits of the previous investments. Therefore they think carefully before taking new responsibilities and making new investments.

In order to enhance the use of the LIFE programme in Estonia, Ministry of the Environment is developing a national co-financing system for LIFE projects. This system is set in many Member States and it has proven to be effective. This is still an ongoing process, but it is a big step forward and hopefully this will be created by the call for 2019. Minister of the Environment has approved the idea and now further development is needed.

As mentioned above, there are many aspects which have influenced the use of LIFE funding in the past. Thanks to the CAP we were able to make LIFE programme more visible in Estonia and it has received more attention. As LIFE programme is coordinated by European Commission and Member States often don't have a functioning system to promote the use of the programme, it doesn't get enough attention or if it does, it is usually short-term. CAP has helped us to realize the importance of the national system, which includes NCP-s, knowhow, contacts, promotion of the programme and budget. Lack of finance is usually the key of the success. Estonia is one of the two Member States, who is eligible for the second Capacity Building Project and Ministry of the Environment will submit the proposal in the beginning of 2019. It's very important to strengthen the created system in Estonia and prepare for the next period.

In 2.5 years, which in fact is a very short period in a long term-planning, we have already achieved some very important results. Besides the numbers which have been pointed out in the Final Report, MoE is collaborating with the Estonian Research Council, who is responsible for the Horizon2020 programme. As LIFE and Horizon are often linked to each other and they partly share the same target group (universities, scientists), it is important to collaborate. This kind of collaboration between Horizon and LIFE programme is rather rare in EU. During the CAP, we have organized joint information days, which has turned to be very efficient. We have guided applicants to Estonian Research Council if we understood that the idea is more suitable for the Horizon programme and they have sent applicants to us. One of the applicants who applied in LIFE 2018, has previously received funding also from the Horizon programme. Their LIFE project is related to the results of the Horizon project. This project was invited to submit the full proposal in 2019 and it was the only project in the environmental field (out of 12), which succeeded to the second stage. This kind of collaboration will be continued in the future.

MoE is also collaborating with the Environmental Investment Centre and information about LIFE programme is also published on their website as this is one of the main websites where potential applicants search information about different funding opportunities. Most of the financed LIFE projects have covered their own contribution from the national environmental fund, which is mediated by the Environmental Investment Centre. As national co-financing depends on opened measures and national priorities, this is not guaranteed for the applicants even if their project is approved by the commission. As outlined above, better national co-financing system dedicated to LIFE is being developed at the moment.

As the number of financed projects in Estonia is low and most of them are nature projects which are mainly implemented only in Estonia, there are no concrete results in transnational

replication and transferability yet. One of the success stories is the collaboration between Estonian Environmental Board and Finnish Metsähallitus centre. Together they submitted two proposals in 2017 and both of them were financed (Flying Squirrel LIFE and CoastNet LIFE). Metsähallitus is the leading partner and Estonian Environmental Board is the associated beneficiary. Both project started in summer 2018 and there are no results yet. As the planned actions will be implemented both in Estonia and Finland, this is one of the good examples of replication and transferability. Other ongoing projects are more Estonian based and replication is done on national level. In addition to that, one of the applicants is preparing an application together with Italian consulting company. Contacts were exchanged during the workshop held in Tallinn. Besides that, project team has introduced Estonian LIFE projects and results at the external seminars. In 2017, Baltic States Networking seminar was held in Estonia and during the two-day seminar, we also visited one project “LIFE Urbancows”. Lithuanian NCP-s and CAP team came one day earlier and project “LIFE Mires” was visited.

Most of the financed Estonian projects have been nature projects and the number of applicants has been limited as there are few NGO-s and public authorities, who have been active and capable enough to apply funding from LIFE. Therefore the CAP team focused on the new potential applicants and in short period we already achieved some important results. Since the beginning of 2016, LIFE helpdesk has consulted 62 different draft proposals. In addition to that, helpdesk has answered numerous phone calls and e-mails and NCP-s have met with the potential applicants to discuss their ideas and explain the rules of the LIFE programme. NCP-s are also aware of other funding opportunities (national environmental fund, Horizon, Cohesion Fund) and they help applicants to orient and choose the most appropriate fund. Interest in the LIFE programme has increased and even though the number of proposals didn't increase significantly in 2016 and 2017, we have heard many ideas, which could be suitable for LIFE. In 2017, there were 5 proposals and all of them were submitted by new applicants, who had never applied funding from LIFE. Four environmental and one climate project. Climate project which was prepared together with Tallinn city, Viimsi county and Balti Environmental Forum, got funded. In 2018, 18 proposals were submitted from Estonia (11 environmental, 3 nature, 1 information and governance and 3 climate). All environmental and climate projects were submitted by new applicants.

Opportunities of the LIFE programme is more often considered in the preparation of the environmental, nature conservation or climate strategies. For example, Ministry of the Environment is updating “Prioritised Action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000 in Estonia” and there is a separate paragraph for the LIFE programme and it is foreseen that some of the actions will be financed from LIFE. MoE has prepared Nature IP, which will implement an important part of the PAF. If this project will be financed (concept note was approved), it has a significant contribution to the implementation of the nature conservation policy. Also Water IP was approved in 2018, which will implement River Basin Management Plans for East-Estonia.

In summary, the results of the CAP have been better than expected. We have achieved all the objectives and besides the quantitative results, we have reached new potential applicants, we have collaborated with other projects, Member States and programmes, LIFE programme has got more attention in Estonia and a national co-financing system is in development.

5.4. Outside LIFE

Ministry of the Environment is implementing the resource efficiency measure, which is funded from the European Regional Development Fund. Environmental Management Department is

responsible for implementation of the measure and among other things they are organizing information days for the industries and participating in fairs (e.g industrial fair). In collaboration with the project manager Mrs Jaana Merisaar, we have participated in their information days and she has shortly introduced the LIFE programme. LIFE booklets were distributed and during the coffee breaks people had the opportunity to ask information about LIFE. Thanks to the resource efficiency information days one of the target groups was covered. About 170 people participated in the resource efficiency information days where LIFE programme was also promoted.

Mrs Jaana Merisaar and/or her team is also participating at fairs and often they distribute LIFE booklets and show LIFE video clip (Figure 15).



Figure 15. Instrutec fair 2017 (LIFE video clip playing in the background)

6. Comments on the financial report

6.1. Summary of Costs Incurred

Table 11. Project budget and total costs incurred

Budget breakdown categories	Budgeted costs in €* €	Costs incurred from the start date to 30/09/2018 in €	% of Budget**
1. Personnel	122 940	146 160.71	118.9%
2. Travel and subsistence	62 660	59 477.81	94.9%
3. External assistance	95 400	48 401.44	50.7%
4. Durable goods	0	0	0%
Equipment	1200	0	0%
5. Land purchase / long-term lease	0	0	0%
6. Consumables	0	0	0%
7. Other Costs	56 820	41 501.77	73.0%
8. Overheads	8424	10 656	126.5%
TOTAL	347 444	306 197.73	88.1%

Table 12. Project budget and total eligible costs incurred

Budget breakdown categories	Budgeted eligible costs in €* €	Eligible costs incurred from the start date to 30/09/2018 in €	% of eligible budget**
1. Personnel	110 520	125 370.71	113.4%
2. Travel and subsistence	62 660	59 477.81	94.9%
3. External assistance	95 400	48 401.44	50.7%
4. Durable goods	0	0	0%
Equipment	600	0	0%
5. Land purchase / long-term lease	0	0	0%
6. Consumables	0	0	0%
7. Other Costs	56 820	41 501.77	73.0%
8. Overheads	0	0	-
TOTAL	326 000	274 751.73	84.3%

Project budget wasn't exceeded even though the project was extended for 9 months and additional actions were added to the project. Some of the services have been cheaper than expected and due to that it was unnecessary to use public procurements. In some cases the subcontractors were not used as it was cost-effective to organize the events or order the services by ourselves.

Because of the extra year and additional actions, it was necessary to modify the budget and move the sums between budget lines, but it was 5% of the total eligible costs (incurred) and official amendment was not needed. Due to the additional year, personnel costs were higher than planned, which were covered from the external assistance costs. As most of the tasks were

carried out by the project team instead of using external assistance, we were able to save some of the budget meant for the external assistance.

Travel and subsistence cost wasn't exceeded, even though there have been some actions, that were not included in the budget at first. As foreseen in the prolongation, an extra study trip to Finland was organized in 2018 and members of the project team participated in several networking events such as Baltic States I, II and III LIFE seminar, etc. Also, in 2018, officials from the administration of the Ministry of the Environment visited Estonian LIFE projects.

The reason for the low rate of external assistance use is that some services were cheaper and in most cases it was reasonable to organize the events by ourselves rather than using the subcontractor. The budget for the website was 20 000 euros (C.1), but it cost only 14 758 euros, budget for the booklet was 13 000 euros, but the final cost was less than 2200 euros. Initial budget of the webpage was 30 000 euros, but it was reduced by 10 000 euros with Amendment no 3. New action was added and this amount was planned to outsource the *Facebook Campaign*. Also the LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshop organisation (A.5) was not outsourced. Those workshops were organized by the coordinating beneficiary and about 19 000 euros was saved due to that even though we organized additional two one-day trainings.

Durable goods – in the application it was written that the Project Manager will be provided one laptop with a stocking station and screen/monitor (1200 euros), but it was decided that the Project Manager has to own a personal computer. The sum of 600 euros (50% of the costs) was unused.

Other costs: 73% of the budget was used. Most of the services (A.4, A.5, C.5, C.2) have been cheaper than expected and some of the information days and one training were held in the premises of the coordinating beneficiary, which means that there were no costs of renting facility.

In addition to the actions foreseen in the CAP, Ministry of the Environment supported Estonian Fund for Nature, who is implementing another LIFE project called "LIFE Mires Estonia". In 2018, Estonian Fund for Nature organized an international LIFE Platform Meeting "Volunteering for nature conservation", but they didn't plan hosting this event in the proposal writing phase, which also means that they didn't plan budget for that. In collaboration with Neemo, EASME and project managers of the two projects, we found a solution, how to cover some of the costs (room rent and catering) and at the same time, to promote LIFE programme on the national and international level. This was approved by EASME.

Table 13. Table per action according to the Form FB of the proposal

Action number and name	Budgeted costs	Budgeted hours	Budget spent	% of Budget spent	% of hours spent
A.1 Recruitment of the Project Manager	0	N/A	0	0%	N/A
A.2 Training for Project Manager and NCP-s	17 620	N/A	14 710	83.5%	N/A
A.3 Awareness raising among public sector officials	39 840	N/A	45 487.15	114.2%	N/A
A.4 LIFE information days	44 520	N/A	13 089.49	29.4%	N/A

A.5 LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshops	42 600	N/A	23 621.9	55.5%	N/A
A.6 Helpdesk service for applications	0	N/A	0	-	N/A
A.7 Specifying and analysing the data for LIFE project submissions	0	N/A	0	-	N/A
B.1 Feedback questionnaires on participant's knowledge	0	N/A	0	-	N/A
B.2 Quantitative recording of the number of attendees and inquiries submitted	0	N/A	0	-	N/A
B.3 Monitoring the dissemination actions	0	N/A	0	-	N/A
C.1 LIFE website creation and management	20 000	N/A	14 757.60	73.8%	N/A
C2. Creation of LIFE booklet	13 000	N/A	2 155.13	16.6%	N/A
C.3 Video	7000	N/A	5 580	79.7%	N/A
C.4 Creating and distributing adverts, including Facebook Campaign	26 000	N/A	17 767.47	68.3%	N/A
C.5 Information and promotion materials	1400	N/A	3 981.26	284.4%	N/A
C.6 Introducing LIFE in external events	900	N/A	8 230.60	914.5%	N/A
C.7 Social Media and digital newsletters	2000	N/A	0	0%	N/A
D.1 Project management by the Estonian Ministry of the Environment	0	N/A	0	-	N/A
Quality control (D.2)	0	N/A	0	-	N/A
Equipment (laptop) (N/A)	1200	N/A	0	0%	N/A
Personnel costs (A, B, C, D)	122 940	N/A	145 439.04	118.3%	N/A
Overheads	8424	N/A	10 656	126.5%	N/A
Total	347 444	N/A	306 197.73	88.1%	N/A

Most of the costs were in line with the budget and all the actions were carried out in the most cost-effective way. With the budget planned for two years, we managed to implement the project 9 months longer and carry out more tasks than planned in the beginning. Despite of that, still around 51 250 euros (15.7% of the EU contribution) was left unspent by the end of the project.

About 3000 euros was saved from the training for Project Manager and NCP-s (A.2) as the travel and accommodation costs were lower than planned. Use of the budget for information days (A.4) and trainings (A.5) was low as the service has been cheaper than expected and there was no need for using subcontractor. About 13 000 euros for A.4 (29.4% of the budget) and 23 600 euros for A.5 (55.5% of the budget) was used.

Almost 4000 euros was left over from the first two study trips (A.3), but the budget for A.3 was exceeded by the end of the project as one extra study trip to Finland and one national trip was added to the project with Amendment no 3. Total costs for A.3 was about 45 500 euros (114%), but the total travel and subsistence costs wasn't exceeded.

Creation and management of the LIFE webpage (C.1) was also cheaper than expected and the budget for C.1 was reduced by 10 000 euros with the Amendment no 3. 74% of the budget was used by the end of the project.

Creation of the booklet (C.2) was much cheaper than expected and only 16.6% of the budget was used by the end of the project. Low use of the budget didn't affect the results of the action.

Creation of the video clip (C.3) was cheaper than expected and 80% of the budget was used by the end of the project.

About 68% of the budget planned for adverts and Facebook Campaign was used by the end of the project.

Use of the budget for introducing LIFE at external events (C.6) was exceeded by 7300 euros as the costs were underestimated in the proposal and no networking was planned within the project. Coordinating beneficiary has participated in some events organised by other Member States, who are also implementing CAP. Even though the budget was exceeded by more than 900%, it makes only 7300 euros. Extra costs were covered from the budget of A.2 and A.5, but the total travel and subsistence costs wasn't exceeded. Networking with other Members States and LIFE projects was encouraged by EASME.

Budget (2000 euros) for Social Media and digital newsletters remained unused. Also budget (1200 euros) for equipment (laptop) was not used as it was decided that the Project Manager has to own a personal computer.

Due to the additional year, personnel costs were higher than planned. Total eligible personnel costs were 125 370 euros and it was exceeded by 14 850 euros. For the same reason, overheads increased up to 10 656 euros (126.5% of the budget). Taking into account the work what has been done and the additional months, then the costs for personnel remained at a reasonable level.

Three highest invoices per cost category and supporting documents are submitted with the Final Report (see Annex 24).

6.2. Accounting system

Accounting of the administration of the Ministry of the Environment (including KAUR and KEMIT) is centralised and service is provided by the State Support Centre according to the signed agreement between the Ministry of the Environment and State Support Centre. One specialist (Ms Angela Laur) is working in the Budget and Planning Department of the Ministry of the Environment. She was the contact person for the Project Manager and she contacted with the State Support Centre if needed.

We have an IT-system called Business Objects, which helps to create different reports and extracts. Estonian CAP has a unique identifier in the accounting system: 9L10-AWARAESTLIFE14 and all payments are easy to follow.

All beneficiaries have established internal rules for the procurements and procedures for ordering services and approving costs. This document was updated on 8th of February 2018 due to the change of the Public Procurement Act (new act entered into force on 1st of September

2018). Till then, different rules applied. If the cost of the service was between 5000-9999 (without VAT) euros, three price inquiries had to be sent. If the cost was under 5000 (without VAT) euros, direct offer could be used. If the cost exceeded 10 000 euros (without VAT), public procurement had to be used. Since 1st of September 2018, public procurement is mandatory if the cost exceeds 30 000 euro (without VAT). Three price inquiries must be sent (if possible) if the cost is between 600-2999.99 euros (without VAT).

All offers, letter of orders, contracts and acts are processed in the document management system called KIRKE. All costs of the project were approved by the project manager, by the direct manager of the project manager and finally by the Secretary General (Mr Andres Talijärv, since July 2018 Mr Meelis Münt). For the public procurements, E-procurement environment must be used (<https://riigihanked.riik.ee/lr1/web/guest/index>). Only twice during the lifetime of the CAP, public procurement was used (LIFE video clip and LIFE webpage) as most of the services didn't require public procurement.

Officials involved in the project, were bound to use timesheets, which were filled in manually. Timesheets were filled in even if the LIFE rules don't require this (employees whose average contribution to the project was less than 2 days per month). For example – Mr Peep Siim, whose average contribution to the project was 0.5-0.9 days per month and Mr Ivo Krustok, whose average contribution to the project was 0.2-0.9 days per month. LIFE timesheet template or equivalent was used. Timesheets were signed digitally or on paper by the officials and by their direct managers in the first days of the following month. Timesheets related to CAP, are kept in the project folder. In the Ministry of the Environment, electronic door cards are also used, but this is due to the safety reasons, not for time recording.

Invoices are processed in the e-service invoice management system (eservice.omniva.eu and <https://fitekin.fitek.com>). Subcontractors were asked to add the acronym and number of the LIFE project to the invoice. All costs were approved by the project manager, direct manager of the project manager, finance specialist and Secretary General. Project Manager always added the relevant contract or letter of order and the reference to the LIFE project. All invoices were also printed and kept in the project folder and they contain a clear reference to the LIFE project.

All procedures were done under the supervision of the project manager and with that, it was guaranteed that the requirements for the procedures, invoices etc. were followed and taken into account.

6.3. Certificate on the financial statement

According to the Amendment letter No 4 sent by EASME on 9th of October 2018, beneficiaries don't have to provide certificate on financial statement if the total contribution is less than 750 000 euros.

List of deliverables

1. Report of the LIFE project submissions (A.7). Analyses of the LIFE project submission was finished in December 2016. In the last 25 years, 34 projects were financed from the programme LIFE and the success average success rate from 2006 to 2015 was 38,7%. The main focus of the analyses was on the projects which were rejected during the period 2011-2015. During this period 15 proposals were submitted and 5 of them were financed (success rate 33,3%).
2. Report about project indicators (B.3)
3. After-LIFE Plan
4. LIFE web site (C.1). In collaboration with the IT Centre of the Ministry of the Environment, Estonian LIFE website was outsourced in 2016. New website was launched in August 2016 and it will be online till the end of 2023. A minor development was outsourced in the end of 2017 to improve the visualisation and structure.
5. LIFE booklet (C.2). New LIFE booklet was ready by the end of April 2017. Text of the booklet was updated and the booklet focused on the Estonian applicants and also examples of the Estonian projects were added. 2000 exemplars were printed and divided around Estonia. Booklet was updated in August 2018 (2-stage approach was added) and 400 new booklets were printed.
6. LIFE video (C.3) One video clip in Estonian language (3.13 minutes) was created by the end of August 2016. There are three different versions of the clip: one without subtitles, one with English subtitles and one with Russian subtitles. Video clips were uploaded to YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Vd7P4M0Bkk>) and LIFE webpage (<http://life.envir.ee/>). This video clip is distributed during the information days and seminars, and it is also added to the online registration sheets.
7. Seminars, Conferences etc. (C.6) NCP-s and project manager have participated at 15 external events during the project lifetime: **02.06.2016** – LIFE project “OSAMAT” seminar in Tallinn, Estonia; **24-26.08** – First joint LIFE workshop for Baltic States in Riga, Latvia; **01.11.2016** – Water management workshop in Tallinn, Estonia; **22.-23.11.2016** – LIFE Capacity Building Networking Workshop in Budapest, Hungary; **11.01.2017** – Participating in the meeting of the Viimsi county Environmental and Property Commission in Viimsi, Estonia; **16.03.2017** - Seminar “Implementation of the water management plan of the East-Estonia watershed” in Tallinn, Estonia; **28-29.09.2017** – Second joint LIFE workshop for Baltic States in Pärnu, Estonia; **16.10.2017** – Resource efficiency information day in Pärnu, Estonia; **17.10.2017** – Resource efficiency information day in Kohtla-Järve, Estonia; **18.10.2017** – Resource efficiency information day in Tartu, Estonia; **20.10.2017** – Resource efficiency information day in Tallinn, Estonia; **24.-26.10.2017** – Nature Based Solution Conference in Tallinn, Estonia; **15.-17.11.2017** – Instrutec, Estonian industrial market in Tallinn, Estonia; **17.-18.09.2018** – Circular Economy Conference in Tallinn, Estonia; **20.-21.09.2018** – Third joint LIFE workshop for Baltic States in Klaipeda, Lithuania; **14.11.2018** – Seminar “How to finance activities foreseen in the Prioritised Action Framework for Natura 2000 network” in Tallinn, Estonia.
8. Newsletters (C.7) At the moment there are no requests for the digital newsletters as the group of people, who are involved with the LIFE programme, is small and the relevant information is sent to them directly through e-mails. There are no LIFE newsletters created, but the events are advertised in the newsletters of the resource efficiency measure, Ministry of the Environment Facebook account, LIFE webpage, mailing lists etc.

9. Mid-term report (D.1, D.2). Mid-term report had to be submitted in December 2016, but the prepayment wasn't used by that time and it was assessed that the prepayment will be 100% used by the end of March 2017. Mid-term report was submitted on 5th of May 2017 and it covered period from 01.01.2016 till 31.03.2017.

10. Progress report (D.1, D.2.). Progress report was submitted in the beginning of May 2018.

11. Final report (D.1, D.2). Final report was submitted in the end of December 2018.

Annexes

Annex 1. Project indicators

Annex 2. After-LIFE Plan

Annex 3. Supporting documents of the Project Manager

Annex 4. Ordinance of the NCPs

Annex 5. NCP training in Brussels (17-19.05.2016)

Annex 6. Study trip to Spain (26-31.03.2017)

Annex 7. Study trip to UK (21-26.05.2017)

Annex 8. Study trip to Finland (21-23.05.2018)

Annex 9. Study tour within Estonia (13-14.09.2018)

Annex 10. Information days

Annex 11. Application and project management quality improvement workshops

Annex 12. Analysis of the submitted and rejected proposals

Annex 13. Table of submitted inquiries

Annex 14. Report about project indicators

Annex 15. LIFE programme booklet

Annex 16. LIFE programme video clips

Annex 17. Adverts and articles

Annex 18. Facebook Campaign

Annex 19. Translated guidelines

Annex 20. External events

Annex 21. Resource Efficiency measure newsletters

Annex 22. Supporting documents of Mr Peep Siim

Annex 23. Partnership Agreements

Annex 24. Invoices