



LIFE Project Number  
**LIFE 14 CAP/EE/000009**

**Mid-term Report**  
**Covering the project activities from 01/01/2016 to 31/03/2017**

Reporting Date  
**24.04.2017**

LIFE PROJECT NAME or Acronym  
**AwaRaEst LIFE**

Data Project

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<b>Project location:</b>	Estonia
<b>Project start date:</b>	01.01.2016
<b>Project end date:</b>	31.12.2017
<b>Total budget:</b>	348 308 €
<b>EU contribution:</b>	326 000 €

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Data Beneficiary

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<b>Name Beneficiary:</b>	Ministry of the Environment
<b>Contact person:</b>	Mr Timo Kark
<b>Postal address:</b>	Narva mnt 7a, 15172, Tallinn, Estonia
<b>Telephone:</b>	+372 626 2967, +372 5348 3518
<b>E-mail:</b>	timo.kark@envir.ee
<b>Project Website:</b>	<a href="http://life.envir.ee">http://life.envir.ee</a>

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# 1. Glossary of keywords and abbreviations

MoE – Ministry of the Environment

EIC – Environmental Investment Centre

CAP – Capacity Building Project

NCP – National Contact Point

## 2. Executive summary

Estonian Capacity Building Project (CAP) lasts for two years (01.01.2016-31.12.2017) and it has 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.

One of the key output of the projects is a competent LIFE helpdesk, who is able to give relevant advice to the potential applicants. Thereof the number of NCP-s was raised from 2 to 6 which is one official more than planned with the proposal. 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 Ministry of the Environment. To raise the awareness of the officials, at least two study trips will be organized to the Member States who have successfully implemented the LIFE programme. The first study trip was organized to Spain and the other one will be organized to Great Britain.

To make the LIFE programme more visible in Estonia, at least 7 information days instead of one will be organized per year. 7 information days plus resource efficiency information days were organized with 208 participants which is 74% from the target. Different media channels are used to reach potential applicants – direct communication (in 2016 at least 1000 e-mails were sent), adverts and articles in the newspapers (105 509 editions of the newspapers where we published our adverts/articles), Ministry of the Environment Facebook page (3922 followers). To make the programme more visible and attractive, Estonian LIFE webpage was created, new booklet was ordered, video clip was ordered and roll-ups were ordered as foreseen in the project.

To improve the quality of the application, four 2-days seminars for 80 people will be organized during the lifetime of the project. Already two has taken place and the third one will be held in May 2017.

One of the most important deliverables is an analyses of the rejected LIFE projects. This analyses was finished by the end of 2016 and it gave a good overview of the most common mistakes.

Generally the project is in schedule and will be finished on time. Some of the actions were finished in a slight delay, but this won't affect the final results of the project. Project budget according to the adopted grant agreement is 348 308 (eligible costs 326 000 euros) and 38,4% of the budget is used. Some of the services has been cheaper than expected and in some cases there were no need for subcontracting. Finally, the budget won't be exceeded and the costs are in line with the project proposal.

During the CAP, it has become clearer, that the main issue in Estonia is the co-financing question, not the awareness about the programme or the low quality of applications. 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.

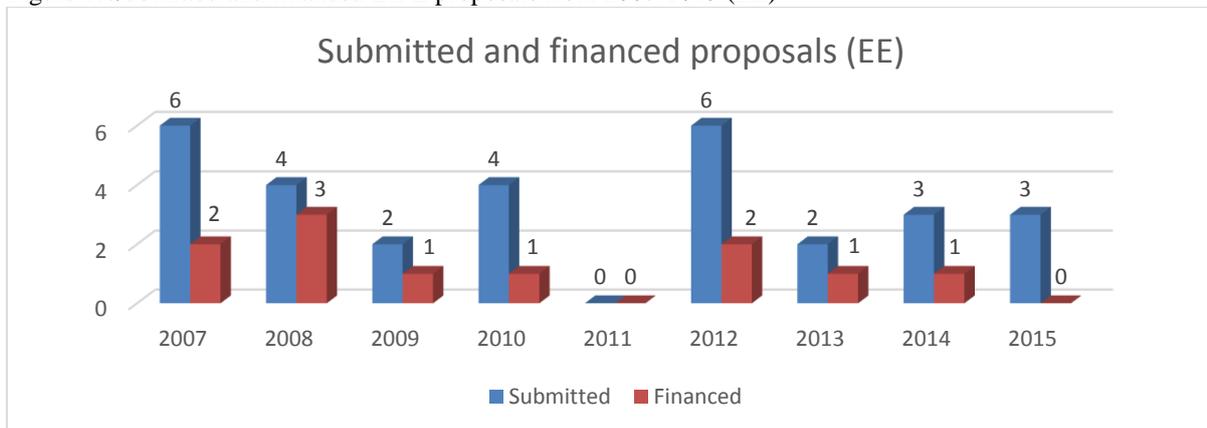
During the project, helpdesk has consulted 23 project proposals, which is 77% from the target. Taking into consideration the work what has been done and number of people we have reached through media and information days, only 4 project proposals plus one Integrated Project was submitted in 2016. Three projects out of 4 were given high points and it is still possible that they will be financed. In this case the success rate is 80%. Also, the average success rate during the period 2006-2015 has been 38.7%. That means that the main problem must be co-financing, not the low awareness or the quality of the application, although the awareness still must be raised and the quality of the applications could be improved. Actions we implement today, will have bigger impacts in the future.

### 3. General overview

#### 3.1. Introduction

Since the beginning of the Capacity Building Project (CAP), Estonian Ministry of the Environment (MoE) has been the only entity in Estonia responsible for the implementation of the LIFE programme. Two officials have been acting as LIFE NCP-s and their workload in the LIFE programme have been up to 10% of their worktime. The main problem in the previous years has been the low number of applications and one of the reasons for that might be the lack of awareness among the public sector officials and potential applicants about the possibilities of the LIFE programme. The other main reason might be the co-financing rate and the financial capacity of the applicants. Generally the projects are supported by the Estonian Environmental Investment Centre (EIC), but there is no separate budget for the LIFE projects. LIFE projects are assessed together with the other projects and thereof it is harder for the applicants to get the national support. In recent years the budget of the EIC has decreased significantly and this is also influencing directly the LIFE projects (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Submitted and financed LIFE proposals from 2007-2015 (EE)



Estonian CAP has 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.

In the first months of the project it was necessary to build up the LIFE team (Helpdesk) in the Ministry of the Environment. The project manager was hired and a Support Specialist was designated to work for the project part-timely (up to 50%). The number of National Contact Points (NCP) was raised from 2 to 6 (officials working in the different departments of the administration of the Ministry: Nature Conservation, Water, Foreign Financing, Climate and Radiation, Environmental Management and Environmental Agency). Raising the number of the NCP-s enables us to cover all the main topics of the LIFE programme and advise the potential applicants in a higher level. Usually the NCP-s are dealing with other funds as well and they have the best knowledge about the differences and objectives of the programmes.

The CAP aims to enhance the competence of the NCP-s and thereof a training was planned in the first months. To raise the awareness of the public officials, two study trips will take place during the project lifetime to countries who have successfully implemented LIFE programme.

The other part of the project focuses on the dissemination actions and the second main objective is to make the programme more visible among potential applicants and to improve the quality of applications through counselling and trainings. To achieve the objectives, 7 information days per year instead of 1, will be organized. The biggest information day will be organized in Tallinn right after the call of proposals is announced, but the other ones will be organized in the other major cities in Estonia to reach new potential applicants. Most of the information days will be organized in autumn and spring. It is evaluated that preparing the proposal might take up to one year and our strategy is to provide the information as early as possible. In order to improve the quality of the applications, two trainings per year is planned. Other dissemination actions like creating the LIFE webpage, video-clip, roll-ups, booklets and adverts will help to make the programme more visible among the potential applicants.

During the project the beneficiary will monitor the number of attendees who participated in the events (information days, trainings), also the feedback sheets will be spread out and analysed. Suggestions are taken into account to improve the quality of the information days and trainings. Data of the inquiries and counselling are gathered and kept in the project folder. Also the number of views of the video-clip and visits of the webpage is monitored. Number of edition of the newspapers, where we publish the adverts or articles, are gathered.

Stakeholders of the CAP are potential applicants (public authorities, NGO-s, SME-s etc.) and wider public. List of the stakeholders is always checked and updated before the major LIFE information day.

### 3.2. Amendments and deviations

A formal amendment was sent to EASME on 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 is also helping us to reach more potential applicants as the target groups of the authorities are often different. Both amendments were accepted by EASME.

Implementation of the CAP is generally in schedule and will be finished in time. There are minor deviations due to the administrative reasons and this has caused delays in some actions. The final results won't be affected and now the project is in schedule. The training for NCP-s (A.2) took place 2 months later due to compilation of the LIFE team and lack of experts in Estonia. The first study trip (A.3) was postponed 6 months as it was complicated to get the group together and make the necessary agreements with other Member States for 2016. The first training session (A.5) took place 3 months later than planned, but the other ones are in schedule. We were able to make an agreement with a Finnish expert (Mr Mikko Tiira). The lack of experts in the region is the main reason for the delay of this action. The booklet (C.2) was supposed to be ready by the end of 2016, but it will be ready by the end of April 2017, just before the information days. In 2016 there were no adverts in the newspapers, because direct communications was used. More than 1000 e-mails were sent and different websites and mailing list were used. In the beginning of 2017, four adverts were published, including 2 major articles about LIFE.

Used methodologies have been sufficient, but in 2017 more adverts will be published. As most of the services are cheaper than expected, there are no need for public procurements in some cases. It was also decided that there is no need for subcontractors to organize information days and trainings. This has been more cost-efficient and reasonable. Due to that, about 30 000 euros were saved. Project Manager has been directly involved in organizing the events and thanks to that, he has been in direct communication with the potential applicants. By the end of the project, all actions foreseen in the application, will be implemented, but with lower costs.

## 4. Technical analysis of progress and impacts

### 4.1. Technical progress in terms of expected results - Quantitative indicators

Implementation of the Capacity Building Project is in schedule and will be finished on time. Most of the actions were started in time or within a small delay and the achieved results are generally good. **All the expected results of the indicators related to human resources will be achieved by the end of the project.**

All actions related to proposals will be implemented as planned and most of the targets of the indicators will be achieved 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 five was submitted in 2016 and this is rather good comparing with the previous years (see Figure 1). The other indicator "Number of successful proposals as compared with previous years" is related with the previous indicator and if there are few proposals, it will be hard to achieve the other target as well. The results of the call 2016 are not known yet.

The dissemination actions and the work done by the Project Manager, Support Specialist and NCP-s can be considered good and sufficient. Targets of the indicators will be met.

Indicators related to integration, compilation, synergies and replicability is complicated to fulfill during the CAP project as there has been too few projects in previous years. The coordinating beneficiary is working towards the targets and hopefully strong base is created during the CAP project, which will be continued after the project (see Annex 1).

### 4.2. Technical progress, per Action – Qualitative assessment

#### A. Implementation actions

Implementation actions are generally in schedule and will be finished in time, except completion of the data gathering, which was finished 6 months later. Training for the NCP-s took place in May 2016 instead of March 2016, but this didn't affect the results and schedule of the project (see Table 5).

Table 5. Deliverables and milestones

Deliverable/ Milestone name (self-explanatory)	Associated action 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	January 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 2017	As of 31/03.2017 12 public sector officials trained
Completion of information days	A.4	280 participants in total	N/A	October 2017	As of 31/03.2017 208 participants in total
Completion of quality improvement workshops	A.5	80 participants in total	N/A	July 2017	As of 31/03.2017 30 participants in total

Helpdesk service	A.6	30 draft proposals	N/A	November 2018	As of 31/03.2017 12 23 draft proposals
Completion of data gathering	A.7	1 report produced	Internal	June 2016	December 2016 (see Annex 11)

### **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 Capacity Building 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 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2016. The recruitment was implemented by the Human Resource Department. Also one person within in 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 the project (31.12.2017). Unofficially was she already involved with 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” is 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 is covered by the Ministry of the Environment and it won't affect the European Union contribution.

The new NCP-s and Support Specialist were designated to work for the project by the Secretary General (Mr Andres Talijärv) and a relevant internal decision was signed (see Annex 2). Estonian NCP-s are:

Mr Allan Tamme (Foreign Finance Department; non-additional personnel);

Mrs Johanna-Maria Siilak (Climate and Radiation Department, non-additional personnel);

Mrs Merike Linnamägi (Nature Conservation Department, non-additional personnel);

Mrs Reeda Kaal (Water Department);

Mr Ivo Krustok (Environmental Management Department);

Mr Peep Siim (Environmental Agency).

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 (14<sup>th</sup> of April 2016). Also a training for the LIFE team was organized on 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> May 2016 in Belgium, Brussels. Three day mission also included a project visit (LIFE OZON) and a visit to EASME (see Annex 3 and 4). 8 people from Estonia participated in the mission, including one person from the management (Mr Margo Nõukas, Advisor to Secretary General), who is directly involved in the co-financing

decisions for the LIFE projects. Instead of 7 persons, 8 persons was 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. Also it needs to be taken into account that the administrative procedures in the State Agencies might take more time due to the internal rules (for example the process for signing the contract took 10 days).

### **A.3. Awareness raising among public sector officials**

Foreseen start date: 01.06.2016

Actual start date: 08.07.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.09.2017

Anticipated end date: 31.08.2017

To increase the competence and raise awareness of the Estonian officials, at least two study trips will be organized during the project to countries who have successfully implemented LIFE programme. The planned group size is 12 people (total 2 trips, 24 people).

The Ministry of the Environment was able to make arrangements with the Spanish and Great Britain NCP-s, so they agreed to host Estonian officials. The first study trip was organized to Spain from 26<sup>th</sup> till 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2017 and 12 people from the Ministry participated in the mission (see Annex 5 and 6). During the 6 day mission, the Estonian officials met with the Spanish NCP-s and visited 5 different beneficiaries (totally 14 different projects in different topics were introduced). As the other Member States have planned similar activities, a joint study trip was organized together with Lithuanian colleagues (8 persons from Lithuania) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Study trip to Spain, meeting with the CARDIFF foundation



The second study trip, which was in the beginning supposed to take place in the end of 2016, will take place in May 2017 (21.-26.05). Study trips were postponed as it was hard to find the suitable dates with the other Member States. 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 is only 2 months, the objective of the trips are not affected. Public officials have the possibility to visit beneficiaries and project sites, which helps to raise the awareness about the possibilities of the programme LIFE. Also, useful contacts are created during the trips. Most of the people (8/12) participating in the second study trip, are new ones, who were not involved in the first study trip – so the overall awareness will raise, which is the main objective of this action.

In addition to the two study trips, one more study trip with a smaller group might take place in August 2017 to Finland. The prearrangement with a beneficiary is already made (Metsähallitus) and if there will be enough available budget, extra study trip will be organized. The visit to Finland would involve the meeting with the beneficiary and on-site visits. Only the nature projects will be visited and the purpose of the visit is to see in real life what is really done to improve the habitats and status of the endangered species. Estonian and Finnish nature is very similar and the problems are often the same. Thereof the cooperation between two Member States should be better and more efficient.

Target of the indicator “Completion of the awareness raising exchange events” will be achieved or exceeded in time.

#### **A.4. LIFE information days**

Foreseen start date: 01.05.2016

Actual start date: 01.05.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.10.2017

Anticipated end date: 31.10.2017

In 15 months the Ministry of the Environment organized 8 LIFE programme information days in different cities around Estonia (target: 14 information days during the project lifetime). The biggest one takes place in Tallinn every year after the call of proposals. 65 people participated in the information day last year in Tallinn which is 3 times more than in 2015. Other ones were organized in Tartu (18.10.2016 and 02.02.2017), Haapsalu (19.10.2017), Jõhvi (20.10.2016), Rakvere (08.02.2017) and Pärnu (16.02.2017). One information day was held in the Ministry of the Environment (04.10.2016) to introduce the opportunities and rules of the Integrated Projects (see Table 1).

Table 1. 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)
02.02.2016	Tartu	16	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
08.02.2016	Rakvere	7	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, enterprises)
16.02.2016	Pärnu	11	Potential applicants (public officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises)
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>143</b>	-

Target groups were public officials, universities, NGO-s, enterprises. Information day held in Tallinn (16.06.2016) was mainly aimed at the potential applicants, who already know about the programme and already have a project idea. Other ones were aimed at the new potential applicants, who doesn't know much about the LIFE programme, but who could benefit from the programme. Thereof those information days were more general (1.5-2 hours) and the people were led to the relevant information and they were encouraged to contact with the NCP-s. Also different project examples were introduced. It was decided that the information days will be held in autumn and spring in order to reach the potential applicants as early as possible before the next call of proposals. It is evaluated that the preparation of the proposal might take up to one year and our goal is to find the suitable projects as soon as possible, so the applicants would start thinking about the project at least 10 months before the deadline. Otherwise the period between call of proposals and deadline for submission is only 4 months and this might not be enough.

In addition to the LIFE information days, the Ministry of the Environment have been organizing resource-efficiency information days and inter alia, the opportunities of the LIFE programme were introduced. The Ministry of the Environment is implementing the resource-efficiency measure, which is financed from the European Regional Development Fund and one of the interest group was covered within the activities of this measure. The person responsible for the activities of this measure is also NCP of the LIFE programme and thanks to the good overview of the opportunities about different funds, he is able to give the best advice to the potential applicants.

Together with the resource-efficiency information days, the Ministry of the Environment have reached 208 people which makes 74% of the target (target: 280 people). The target of the indicator "Completion of the information days" will be achieved by the end of the project.

#### **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: 31.07.2017

Anticipated end date: 31.11.2017

At least 4 trainings will be organized for the potential applicants during the project implementation period. Already two training sessions have been taken place and two more will be organized in 2017. Totally 30 people participated in the trainings which makes 38% of the target (Annex 7 and 8).

Participants got to know the e-proposal system, how to draw up the proposal in a correct way, how to manage LIFE projects, what to pay attention to while preparing the proposal and managing the project etc. Also the rules of the programme were explained through practical cases.

The first training session took place 5 months later than planned (15.-16.12.2016) as there are lack of experts in Estonia who are able to carry out the training. Finding a suitable expert took more time than expected, but finally the coordinating beneficiary managed to make the agreement with the Finnish expert. The first training was held in Tallinn and 18 people participated. Focus of the training was how to prepare a good proposal and how to manage the project. Some of the attendees already had a project idea, which were sent to the lector before the training.

Even though the first training took place 5 months later than planned, all the applicants had the possibility to discuss their ideas with NCP-s. Several meetings were organized and the NCP-s read the whole applications through and gave relevant advice to the applicants. Finally 4 applications were submitted in autumn 2016 plus one Integrated Project. Integrated Project and 3 applications out of 4 got the positive feedback and it is still possible that they will be financed. If so, the success rate for 2016 will be 80%!

The second training session (06.-07.03.2017) was aimed at the officials working in the Ministry of the Environment as they are the target group regarding the Integrated Projects. The focus of the training was how to prepare a good Integrated Project proposal, what to pay attention to, what kind of projects are expected etc. The Ministry of the Environment was already preparing one Integrated Project and presumably two more will be prepared in the next years. The target group was the officials working in the nature protection department, water department, climate and radiation department. Totally 12 officials participated in the training (Annex 9 and 10).

The third training session will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of May in Tallinn and already 15 people have registered. Focus of the training is: how to prepare a good proposal and how to manage the project. Target group is the potential applicants (officials, NGO-s, universities, enterprises).

It is possible that the outcome of the indicator “Completion of quality improvement workshops” might be little bit under the benchmark, but the Ministry of the Environment is doing its best to achieve the target. If there is a need, the Ministry will organize one extra training session in the end of 2017. At least 4 training sessions will be held during the lifetime of the project as foreseen in the proposal.

#### **A.6. Helpdesk service**

Foreseen start date: 01.04.2016

Actual start date: 01.01.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.11.2017

Anticipated end date: ongoing

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.

In 15 months the LIFE team has consulted 23 different draft proposals (77% from the target) and totally 61 opinions/advice was given. This also includes different meetings with the potential applicants. Target of the indicator “Helpdesk service” is 30 draft proposals consulted by the end of November 2018. It can be assumed that the target of this indicator will be achieved already by the end of the project.

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 application. Thanks to the CAP, this helpdesk has more capacity and competence to help potential applicants. Also the LIFE webpage was created, which makes it easier for the potential applicants to find the relevant information about the programme and also the contacts of the NCP-s. LIFE helpdesk will continue its work after the Capacity Building Project and one of the NCP-s (Mr Allan Tamme) will be responsible for the Helpdesk. The webpage will be updated by the NCP-s and the IT Centre of the Ministry will be responsible for keeping the webpage online at least till the end of 2022.

#### **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 results of the analysis were put together by the end of the first year. Only proposals available for NCP-s were gathered and analysed.

For the past 10 years, 31 proposals were submitted by the Estonian applicants and 12 of those were financed, which makes average 3.1 proposals and 1.2 financed projects per year. Success rate is rather high comparing to the EU average – 38.7% (see Table 2). The results of the call 2016 wasn't known at the time and thereof it wasn't included.

Table 2. Submitted and financed proposals in 2006-2015 (Estonia)

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	4	1	25,0%
2006-2015	31	12	38,7%

10 projects were included in the analyses which were rejected during 2011-2015. The reasons for the 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;
- 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.

One report (deliverable) was produced and with this, the indicator “Completion of data gathering” was met (Annex 11).

## **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: 31.10.2017

Anticipated end date: 30.11.2017

After each event (A.2, A.4 and A.5) the 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.

In the application, it was written that the feedback sheets are spread before and after the event to test the knowledge of the participants. This approach was changed during the implementation of the project and it was decided that there is no need to ask the participants to fill in the questionnaires before the event. Most of the information days are aimed at the new potential applicants, who doesn't know much about the LIFE programme. General objective of the CAP is to make the LIFE programme more visible and reach as much potential applicants as possible, not to test their knowledge. Most of the participants wrote that they have received new information and that the event has been useful for them (see Table 3). Also, this kind of approach didn't work in practice as some of the attendees arrived after the start of the information day, some of the left before the end.

Table 3. Feedback from the information days

Questions	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Satisfaction % (4 and 5)
Information day fulfilled its purpose		2	2	33	45	<b>82</b>	<b>95.1%</b>
Explanations and answers were satisfying			6	38	38	<b>82</b>	<b>92.7%</b>
Presentations included enough practical cases		2	9	21	39	<b>71</b>	<b>84.5%</b>
Presentations day was clear and the content understandable		2	6	27	49	<b>84</b>	<b>90.5%</b>
Information day met my expectations		3	6	28	44	<b>81</b>	<b>88.9%</b>
I got new information		1	5	24	52	<b>82</b>	<b>92.7%</b>
Information day met my practical needs		2	23	35	21	<b>81</b>	<b>69.1%</b>
The location of the information day was suitable		2	5	15	60	<b>82</b>	<b>91.5%</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>88,2%</b>
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(1-very bad, 2-bad, 3-fair, 4-good, 5-very good)s

Most of the participants have been very satisfied (88%) with the quality of the information days. Information days fulfilled its purpose (95%), explanations and answers were satisfying (92%), presentations were clear and understandable (90%) and they got new information (92%). The weakest points was that the information day didn't meet the practical needs of the participants, 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.

All the questionnaires are gathered together and they are analysed. Suggestions are taken into account and necessary changes are made to improve the quality of the information days and trainings. During the project 110 feedback questionnaires have been filled (A.2 – 8/8; A.4 – 82/143; A.5 – 20/30). Not all the participants didn't fill the questionnaires as some of them had to leave before the end of the event.

Action B1 is in schedule and will be continued till the end of November 2017. Foreseen ending date is October 2017, but there might be a need for LIFE information day in November and because of that the ending date should be postponed one month. This action will be continued also after the end the capacity building project.

## **B.2. Quantitative recording of the number of attendees and inquires submitted**

Foreseen start date: 01.04.2016

Actual start date: 01.01.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.11.2017

Anticipated end date: 31.12.2017

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 are recorded and retained in the project folder (excel sheet) (A.6).

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 needs 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 the capacity building project.

## **B.3. Monitoring the dissemination actions**

There is no starting and ending date set for this action, but the dissemination actions are monitored on an ongoing basis throughout the project lifetime.

Media is monitored through the readership of the editions we publish the LIFE advertise/article in. We can also monitor the visits of the LIFE webpage and views of the LIFE video clip (see Table 4).

Table 4. Monitoring of the dissemination actions

Media type	Date	Editions/Views/visits/Followers
Newspaper (Postimees)	30.01.2017	44 180 editions
Newspaper (Maaleht)	02.02.2017	43 400 editions
Newspaper (Virumaa Teataja)	04.02.2017	5 929 editions

Newspaper (Pärnu Postimees)	11.02.2017	12 000 editions
Newspaper (Postimees)	21.04.2017	not known yet
Newspaper (Maaleht)	20.04.2017	not known yet
Newspaper (Harju Elu)	21.04.2017	not known yet
LIFE webpage	01.09.2016 – 31.03.2017	1195 visits
LIFE video clip	01.09.2016 – 31.03.2017	323 views
MoE Facebook page	31.03.2017	3922 followers
<b>Total</b>	<b>01.01.2016-31.03.2017</b>	<b>110 949</b>

After the end of the Capacity Building Project, visits of the LIFE webpage will be monitored at least till the end of 2022. 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 5. Deliverables and milestones

Deliverable/ Milestone name (self- explanatory)	Associ- ated action no	Type of deliverable	Quantificatio n	For publicati ons: Languag e(s)	Access ibility of deliver able	Foreseen month of completi on	Date of completion
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.	5 events	N/A	Public	September 2017	Not due yet
Delivering digital newsletters	C.7	Newsletters	8 newsletters	Estonian	Public	October 2017	Not due yet

#### 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

One person from the IT Centre of the Ministry of the Environment (KEMIT) was responsible for the creation of the webpage. Meetings with KEMIT started already in February 2016 and the webpage was ready in August 2016 as planned with the project. Public procurement was used to find the best offer. The webpage will be online at least till the end of 2022 and KEMIT will be responsible for the management (system updates and major changes). Management of the webpage after the end of the project will be covered by KEMIT.

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

#### C.2. Creation of LIFE booklet

Foreseen start date: 01.09.2016

Actual start date: 20.09.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.12.2016

Anticipated 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 is a booklet already created by the European Commission, it was decided that it could be done in a slight delay. The anticipated end date is 30.04.2017, which is right before the major LIFE information day (Annex 12).

Although a public procurement was foreseen with the project, a simpler procedure was used due to the price of the service. Creation and printing of the booklets cost under 1500 euros and there was no need for the public procurement. 3 price inquiries were sent as foreseen with the internal rules of the Ministry of the Environment and with the Public Procurement Act (RT I 2007, 15, 76). Indicator “Completion of the creation of the booklets” will be met by the end of 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 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2016. 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. Indicator “Finalization of the creation of video” is met.

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. We have got positive feedback from the Commission and from the other Member States, who said that it was attractive and well-designed.

### C.4. Creating and distributing adverts

Foreseen start date: 01.05.2016

Actual start date: 24.01.2017

Foreseen end date: 31.10.2017

Anticipated end date: 30.11.2017

It was foreseen that the MoE will publish 4 adverts in national newspapers and 20 adverts in regional newspapers. By the end of March 2017, two adverts including two articles were published in the national newspapers and 2 adverts were published in the local newspapers. In April 2017 two more adverts will be published in national newspaper and one advert will be published in the local newspaper to promote the LIFE information day. Also an interview was given to the Retro FM on 9<sup>th</sup> of November 2016 (see Table 6).

Table 6. Published adverts and articles during the Capacity Building Project

Name of the Newspaper	Date	Editions
Postimees – advertise + article	30.01.2017	44 180 editions
Maaleht – advertise + article	02.02.2017	43 400 editions
Virumaa Teataja - advertise	04.02.2017	5 929 editions
Pärnu Postimees - advertise	11.02.2017	12 000 editions
<b>Total</b>	<b>01.01.2016-31.03.2017</b>	<b>110 949</b>
After the reporting period	Date	Editions
Postimees – advertise	21.04.2017	not known yet

Maaleht – advertise	20.04.2017	not known yet
Harju Elu – advertise	21.04.2017	not known yet
Harju Elu (online) advertise	24.04-30.04.2017	not known yet

MoE will continue with the creation and distribution of the adverts and by the end of the project the target will be met. In 2016, direct communication, different mailing lists and websites were used to promote information days and trainings. More than 1000 e-mails were sent.

### 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: 23.03.2017

Two banners were order as foreseen with the project – one project banner and one banner to promote the LIFE programme. Banners are used during the seminars, information, days and trainings. LIFE banner is held 24/7 in the lobby of the Ministry to raise the awareness of the visitors (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. LIFE banner in the lobby of the Ministry of the Environment



Other promotion materials (notebooks, pens and u-cups with LIFE logo) were ordered with a delay in March 2017 (see Figure 4). The reason for the delay is that the project manager just forgot the need for the promotion materials. There are no indicators for this action and with this, the action could be considered done.

Figure 4. Promotion materials with LIFE logo



## **C.6. Introducing LIFE in external events**

Foreseen start date: 01.05.2016

Actual start date: 01.07.2016

Foreseen end date: 30.09.2017

Anticipated end date: ongoing

It is foreseen that the NCP-s and the project manager will go to the external events to introduce the LIFE programme and its possibilities. The NCP-s and project manager have participated in different seminars together with other Member States to share the experiences and to give an overview about the use of the programme LIFE in Estonia. Also the actions and the results of the CAP were introduced in some seminars:

**02.06.2016** – LIFE project “OSAMAT” seminar in Tallinn (Ivo Krustok, introducing the opportunities of LIFE);

**24-26.08** – First joint LIFE workshop for Baltic States (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.

**01.11.2016** – Water management workshop (Reeda Kaal introduced the opportunities of the programme LIFE)

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

**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)

NCP-s and project manager have participated in 6 external events during the project lifetime and assumingly the indicator “To introduce LIFE program in external events” will be met by the end of the project. Also, this action will be continued after the end of the project.

## **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

Anticipated end date: ongoing

News about the LIFE programme and events are created and shared under the Ministry of the Environment Facebook account, it has 3922 followers. Also an invitation is created and sent to different companies, universities, organizations, officials etc. before the major LIFE information days. 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. As the LIFE system in Estonia is still being built, the digital newsletter was not relevant in the beginning of the project.

Instead, information about the LIFE events are advertised in the other newsletters which the Ministry of the Environment has created for the resource efficiency measure (3 newsletters). Totally 3 newsletters (27.05.2016; 03.10.2016; 10.11.2016), 2 invitations/news (13.10.2016; 30.01.2017) under the Ministry’s Facebook account were created. Also, information about the events are published on the Estonian LIFE website (02.11.2016; 18.01.2017; 16.03.2017). The Ministry of the Environment will continue with the action also after the end of the project.

## **D. Project management and monitoring of the project progress**

Table 7. Deliverables and milestones

Deliverable/ Milestone name (self- explanatory)	Associ- ated action no	Type of deliverable	Quantificatio n	For publicati ons: Languag e(s)	Access ibility of deliver able	Foreseen month of completi on	Date of completion
Progress report	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Midterm report with payment request	D.1, D.2	Report	1 report	Estonian, English	Interna l	December 2016	April 2017
Final report with payment request	D.1, D.2	1 Report	1 Report	Estonian, English	Interna l	December 2017	Not due yet

### 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: 31.12.2017

Anticipated end date: 31.12.2017

Project manager was hired on 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2016 and his contract with the Ministry of the Environment will last till the end of February 2018. He is a full-time employee and works 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). Other beneficiary`s staff member (accountants, drivers etc.) and NCP-s are helping them to carry out the activities defined in the proposal. Also two associated beneficiaries are 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 in from KEMIT is involved in the project (up to 5% of his working time in the first year).

One person from the Environmental Agency is working part-timely (up to 10% of his working time) as LIFE NCP and he rotated to the Environmental Agency for two years. After the rotation period, he will continue his tasks in the Ministry, including the tasks of the NCP.

### D.2. Quality Control

Foreseen start date: 01.01.2016

Actual start date: 24.01.2016

Foreseen end date: 31.12.2017

Anticipated end date: 31.12.2017

Quality of the service is monitored during the lifetime of the project. The project manager is responsible for the mid-term report and final report. Also a competent and independent auditor will provide an audit certificate in the end of the project.

Deadline for the mid-term report was set in the end of December 2016 with a payment request, but the prepayment wasn`t 100% used by the end of the year and it was assessed that the prepayment will be used by the end of March 2017. Some of the outsourced services were much cheaper than expected and the first study trip was postponed (budget for that was 20 000 euros). These are the reasons why the prepayment wasn`t used and the mid-term report wasn`t submitted by the end of 2016.

### 4.3. Analysis of impacts and benefits

During the CAP implementation period, there has been several meetings with the management of the Ministry of the Environment to discuss the options, how to increase the national co-

financing to the LIFE projects. The only possibility for the applicants is the Environmental Investment Centre (EIC) and unfortunately the budget of EIC has decreased remarkably due to the reduction of environmental charges. Estonian government decided to reduce environmental charges on 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2016 to alleviate the concerns of the oil shale sector. Decision entered into force in July 2016 and it will last till January 2018. As a result of this, the budget of EIC decreases at least 10 million euros per year. This is directly influencing the results of the CAP as well, because some indicators are related to the submission of the applications. Target of the indicator “Number of project proposals submitted as compared to the previous years” is 8, but the result for 2016 was 5, which is actually good comparing to previous years. During the last 10 years, only in 2007 and 2012 were more than 5 project proposal submitted.

Also indicators “Number of successful proposals as compared to previous years” (target is 3 per year and for 2016 it is still possible to meet the indicator) and “Number of proposals combining LIFE funding with other complimentary funding programmes” (target 8) are influenced by the reduction of EIC`s budget. The main issue in Estonia is the co-financing question, not the awareness about the programme or the low quality of applications.

It is also important to take into account, that Estonia is one of the countries who benefits from the European Union. Thereof we have had the opportunities to use different European Union Funds like Cohesion Fond (CF), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) since 2004. Totally 3.4 billion euros for the period 2007-2013 and 4.4 billion euros for the period 2014-2020 was given. Also the Norway-Switzerland aid can be used. Big amount of money is invested in the environment, nature, resource efficiency etc and the co-financing rate is often much higer than in the LIFE programme. All those funds are helping to fulfill the requirements of different EU directives and they are also related to the objectives and activities of the LIFE programme. As there are so many ongoing projects all the time funded by European Union, a large number of project managers and potential applicants are already involved in some project.

This has led us to the situation where potential applicants are not used to make bigger efforts to find self-financing as they are used to the funds with higher co-financing rate and they will use those funds as long as possible. It takes more time than two years (period of the CAP) to make the change, but we are one step closer thanks to CAP. We have created a good system and network, we have raised the awariness of the officials and management, we have assessed the situation and pointed out the biggest problem – co-financing! Thanks to the activities we have reached new potential applicants and hopefully they will submit a proposal in the next years.

There are some examples where LIFE programme as one of the funding opportunities is mentioned in a strategic document or development plan. For example, Viimsi municipality is preparing a rainwater management plan and LIFE programme was mentioned as one of the opportunities. In 2017, Viimsi municipality is going to submit an application to the LIFE programme.

Ministry of the Environment submitted environmental LIFE integrated project proposal in 2016 and the answer from the Commission was positive. Full proposal was submitted in spring 2017 and if it will be financed from LIFE, ther impact of the programme would be remarkable. Whole East-Virumaa county water management plan would be implemented and most of the funding would come from LIFE. Also, different funds like Cohesion Fund and Estonian Environmental Fund were combined with LIFE.

#### 4.4. Outside LIFE

Ministry of the Environment is implementing the resource efficiency measure, which is funded from the European Regional Development Fund. The target group is the same like in the LIFE programme for the resource efficiency. During the information days, we are able to introduce different Funds and opportunities, including LIFE programme. This is how we are able to reach different target groups and find the best fund for them.

Applicants have the opportunity to ask co-financing from the Environmental Investment Centre. There is no specific system created for LIFE projects and applicants must compete with all the other projects. This system works without the Capacity Building Project.

It was decided that instead of 5 officials, 6 officials will work as LIFE NCP-s. The costs of extra person are covered by the Ministry of the Environment.

## 5. Comments on the financial report

### 5.1. Summary of Costs Incurred

Table 8. Project costs incurred

PROJECT COSTS INCURRED			
Cost category	Budget according to the grant agreement in € <sup>1</sup>	Costs incurred within the reporting period to 31.03.2017 in €	%
1. Personnel	122 940 (120 600) ↑	66 124.99	53.8%
2. Travel and subsistence	62 660	25 509.93	40.7%
3. External assistance	95 400	24 294.10	25.5%
4. Durables goods: total <u>non-depreciated</u> cost	1200	0	0%
5. Consumables	0	0	
6. Other costs	56 820	12 759.36	22.5%
7. Overheads	9 288	5 091	54.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348 308</b>	<b>133 779.38</b>	<b>38.4%</b>

Project budget won't be exceeded, much the reverse as some services are cheaper than expected and in some cases the subcontractors were not used. As some actions were cheaper, it was not necessary to use public procurements and it was cost-effective to organize the events or order the services by ourselves.

Personnel costs are in balance with the estimated budget. To understand the costs incurred, it is important to explain that in the application, salaries of the Project Manager, Support Specialist and NCP's were calculated on a calendar-day bases (365 days/per year), but in the mid-term report, the salary is calculated on working day bases (standard 1720 as written in the LIFE guidelines). That's the reason why the daily rate in the report seems higher than in the application. For example, in the application, the salary of the Project Manager was estimated 70 200 euros including all personnel costs for the period of 24 months. This makes 96.2 euros per calendar-day. In the financial report (MoE), it is mandatory to report the total number of worked hours per year (annual productive hour) and that's why the daily rate of the Project Manager is higher – 147.69 euros. When dividing the total costs (35 132.52) for 15 months (reporting period) with calendar days (431 calendar days worked), the actual daily rate is 81.5 euros, which is lower than estimated. Same logic is used for the Support Specialist and NCP-s as well.

The workload of the NCP-s depends on the number of inquires and project proposals and during some months, the workload may be even 0%. Or if the workload makes less than 2 hours per week, it is not recorded in the timesheets. For example, according to the timesheet, Mr Ivo Krustok's LIFE workload from January 2017 till March 2017 makes 0%, but actually he participates in the meetings, discussions and information days if necessary.

<sup>1</sup> Revised budget according to the letter Ares(2017)2153554

Travel costs and subsistence won't be exceeded, even though there have been some actions, that were not planned with the project. For example, participating in the seminar of the LIFE Capacity Building Projects and Integrated Projects (Belgium, Brussels), participating in the first joint LIFE seminar of the Baltic States (Latvia, Riga), participating in the LIFE Capacity Building Networking workshop (Hungary, Budapest). Some of the costs were covered by the organizers, but some costs were necessary to cover by ourselves. All those extra events are necessary for the Capacity Building Project as they help to raise the awareness and improve the co-work with other Member States.

The reason for the low rate of external assistance use, is that some services were cheaper and in some cases it was reasonable to organize the event by ourselves than using the subcontractor. The budget for the website is 30 000 euros (C.1), but it cost only 11 877 euros, budget for the content of the booklet is 6000 euros plus printing 6000 euros, but the final cost will be less than 2000 euros. Also the LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshop (A.5) was not outsourced. Those workshops are organized by the coordinating beneficiary and at least 14 000 euros will be saved due to that.

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) will be unused.

Other costs: about 75% of the budget will be used by the end of the project. At the moment, only 22.5% of the budget is used, but in 2017 there will be more information days and seminars. Most of the services (A.4, A.5, A.5, C.5, C.2) are cheaper than expected and one of the trainings were held in the premises of the coordinating beneficiary, which means that there were no costs of renting facility for the seminar and also the catering was not provided.

Table 9. Costs per action

Action	Status	Budget €	Used €	%
A.1 Recruitment of the Project Manager	<u>Finished</u>	0	0	-
A.2 Training for Project Manager and NCP-s	<u>Finished</u>	17 620	13 879.09	78.8%
A.3 Awareness raising among public sector officials	Ongoing	39 840	13 203.59	33.1%
A.4 LIFE information days	Ongoing	44 520	2 927.98	6.6%
A.5 LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshops	Ongoing	42 600	2707	6.4%
A.6 Helpdesk service for applications	Ongoing	0	0	-
A.7 Specifying and analysing the data for LIFE project submissions	<u>Finished</u>	0	0	-
B.1 Feedback questionnaires on participant`s knowledge	Ongoing	0	0	-
B.2 Quantitative recording of the number of attendees and inquiries submitted	Ongoing	0	0	-

B.3 Monitoring the dissemination actions	Ongoing	0	0	-
C.1 LIFE website creation and management	<u>Finished</u>	30 000	11 877.60	39.6%
C.2. Creation of LIFE booklet	Ongoing	13 000	61.13	0.5%
C.3 Video	<u>Finished</u>	7000	5580	79.7%
C.4 Creating and distributing adverts	Ongoing	16 000	6291.30	39.3%
C.5 Information and promotion materials	<u>Finished</u>	1400	982.32	70.1%
C.6 Introducing LIFE in external events	Ongoing	900	5053.38	561%
C.7 Social Media and digital newsletters	Ongoing	2000	0	0%
D.1 Project management by the Estonian Ministry of the Environment	Ongoing	0	0	-
Quality control (D.2)	Ongoing	0	0	-
Equipment (laptop)	N/A	1200	0	0%
Personnel costs (A, B, C, D)	Ongoing	122 940	66 124.99	53.8%
Overheads	Ongoing	9 288	5 091	54.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>348 308</b>	<b>133 779.38</b>	<b>38.4%</b>

## 5.2. 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 is the contact person for the Project Manager and she contacts with the State Support Centre if needed.

We have an IT-system called Business Objects, which helps to create different reports and extracts. Estonian Capacity Building Project 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. If the cost of the service will be between 5000-9999 (without VAT) euros, three price inquires must be sent. If the cost is under 5000 (without VAT) euros, direct offer can be used. If the cost exceeds 10 000 euros (without VAT), public procurement must be used. All offers, letter of orders, contracts and acts are processed in the document management system called KIRKE. All costs of the project must approved by the project manager, by the direct manager of the project manager and finally by the Secretary General (Mr Andres Talijärv). For the public procurements, E-procurement environment must be used (<https://riigihanked.riik.ee/lr1/web/guest/index>).

Officials involved in the projects, are bound to use timesheets, which are filled manually. Timesheets are 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). Subcontractors are asked to add the acronym and number of the LIFE project to the invoice. Also, the project manager is involved in the process and he always adds the reference to the LIFE project. All invoices are also printed and kept in the project folder and they contain a clear reference to the LIFE project.

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

In the end of the project, an independent internal auditor from the Ministry of the Environment (probably Mr Ahto Eesmäe) will validate that all costs declared in the final report, are real, accordingly recorded and eligible in accordance with Article I.3(a)(i).

## 6. Envisaged progress until next report

Estonian Capacity Building Project will be finished in time by the end of 2017. The final report will be submitted by the end of February 2018.

Until the final report, beneficiaries will organize at least 4-5 information days and two 2-days training sessions. The next information day will be held in Tallinn on 5<sup>th</sup> of May and the next training will be held in Tallinn on 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> of May. Other ones will be held in summer and autumn 2017. Adverts and news will be distributed before the events.

If possible, the project manager and NCP-s will participate in the external events to promote LIFE programme.

The new LIFE booklet will be ready by the end of April 2017. E-book will be uploaded to the LIFE webpage and Project Manager will spread printed booklets all around Estonia in different information points (Environmental Investment Centre and its local offices, Enterprise Estonia, Ministry of the Rural Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications etc.).

The next study trip to Great Britain will take place from 21<sup>st</sup> of May till 26<sup>th</sup> of May. 11 officials from the Ministry of the Environment and 1 official from the Environment Board will participate in the study trip. During the study trip, Estonian official will meet with the Great Britain`s NCP-s and 4 project meetings with site visits are planned.

If there will be enough budget, also an extra trip to Finland might take place. A pre-arrangement is made and small group of officials might visit different nature projects, which could be implemented in Estonia as well in the future.

During the next months the website will be improved and helpdesk will continue its work.

In June 2017, the coordinating beneficiary will celebrate 25 years of LIFE and the Habitats Directive and an event will be organized, which was not foreseen in the project, but this will be in line with the objectives of the CAP.

## 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. 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 2022. Potential applicants are now able to find the necessary information in Estonian language and the website is also used to promote different events held in Estonia.
3. LIFE booklet (C.2). New LIFE booklet was supposed to be ready in December 2016, but it will be ready by the end of April 2017. Text of the booklet was updated and the booklet focuses on the Estonian applicants and also examples of the Estonian projects were added. 2000 exemplars will be printed and divided around Estonia.
4. 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.
5. Seminars, Conferences etc. (C.6) NCP-s and project manager have participated in 6 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.
6. 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.
7. Mid-term report (D.1, D.2). Mid-term 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 will cover the period from 01.01.2016 till 31.03.2017.

## Annexes

Annex 1. LIFE Capacity Building specific indicators

Annex 2. Ordinance of the National Contact Points (no 1-2/17/110), which was digitally signed by the Secretary General (Mr Andres Taliijärv).

Annex 3. Agenda of the NCP training held in Brussels (17.-19.05.2016)

Annex 4. List of officials, who participated in the training held in Brussels (17.-19.05.2016)

Annex 5. Agenda of the study trip to Spain (26.-31.03.2016)

Annex 6. List of officials, who participated in the study trip to Spain (26.-31.03.2016)

Annex 7. Agenda of the LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshop (15.-16.12.2016)

Annex 8. List of attendees who participated in the LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshop (06.-07.03.2017)

Annex 9. Agenda of the LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshop (06.-07.03.2017)

Annex 10. List of attendees who participated in the LIFE application and project management quality improvement workshop (15.-16.12.2016)

Annex 11. Deliverable, Report of the LIFE project submissions

Annex 12. Deliverable, LIFE programme booklet