

Contract Number: 2006/132-844

<South-East Finland - Russia Neighbourhood Programme >

Final Narrative Report
Tacis component of the joint project

- This report must be completed and signed by the person responsible for the project
- The information provided below must correspond to the financial information that appears in the financial report.
- Please expand the paragraphs as necessary.
- **Please refer to the Special Conditions, Article 5 of your Grant Agreement where to send the report.**

The European Commission will reject any incomplete or badly completed reports.

1. Name of Lead Partner of grant agreement and of legal representative: Metsähallitus, Southern Finland Natural Heritage Services

2. Name and title of the person responsible for the project: Mr. Stig Johansson, Regional Director

3. Name of partners in the project: Saint Petersburg Naturalist Society (SPNS); Committee for natural resources and environmental protection of the Leningrad region; Fund Lenoblpiroda

4. Title of the project: People, Nature and Harbours

5. Contract number of the project: 2006/132-844

6. Start date of the reporting period: 16.1.2007

7. End date of the reporting period: 15.01.2009

8. Target country(ies) or region(s): Russia, Leningrad Region

9. Target groups: Local inhabitants, industry and development companies situated in the vicinities of pilot areas and responsible for present/potential negative impacts on them, private business related to natural resource use like tourism, hunting, fishing etc., conservation groups, municipal and regional authorities.

Contract Number: 2006/132-844**A. Compliance with the Grant Agreement:**

1. Has the project been carried out as foreseen in the methodology? If not, please explain how and why the original proposal was modified, including the dates that any addenda were requested and received.

For the most part the project has been carried out according to the action plan approved of by the EC Delegation as part of the grant contract.

Minor changes concerning the scheduling of action T 1.1 “Joint Finnish-Russian seminar on the valuable natural sites in the Eastern Gulf of Finland” took place as the seminar was organised in April instead of February. The reason for the shift was the need for the experts to become more familiar with the pilot projects and to allow them to prepare the presentations to be discussed at the seminar.

Also the shift of activity T 2.3 “Seal censuses” from year 2008 to year 2007 was proposed in order to be able to respond to the unique weather and ice situation and the consequences of these to the distribution of seal populations. The changes were proposed by the Beneficiary on 23rd February and approved of by the EC Delegation Project Officer on 26th February. However, as the weather conditions changed in such a way that the seal censuses were likely to yield no results at all, they were proposed to be shifted again back to year 2008. This procedure was proposed by the Beneficiary on 23rd March and approved of by the EC Delegation Project Officer on 26th March.

According to the Grant Agreement, a nature trail was supposed to be constructed and equipped to Berezovye Islands (Act. T 1.6). The project experts have designed and mapped out the trail that was supposed to be constructed in summer, 2008. However, it was found that due to a new Federal Act from 16.5.2008 N75-FZ “On the alteration of the Federal Law on Ecological Expertise and the Articles 49 and 54 of Federal Town-planning Code of Russian Federation”, this kind of activity would require environmental impact assessment. Although the area and nature values of the designed trail were mapped, no such assessment was done that would meet the criteria of this new code, because it was not originally planned (there was no knowledge of the planned change in the legislation in time). In addition, within Leningrad Region administration, there is a demand for zoning and management plan (adjusted to the Federal Water Code and Federal Forest Code that came into effect on 01.01.2007 and recent amendments to the Federal Law on Protected Areas) before any new recreational equipment can be constructed. This concerns also the recreational infrastructure that was supposed to be established to Berezovye Islands. Therefore it was proposed by the project management to carry out, instead of construction of the facilities, special work on preparing the management plan of Berezovye Islands in accordance to the new federal legislation and to the growing anthropogenic pressure on the area. The new management plan should also include functional zoning of the reserve based on scientific data on natural values and management scheme for sustainable recreation. This work was carried out by the project experts and contracted organisation “Geoid Ltd.” The works were financed by the project partner Committee for natural resources and environmental protection of the Leningrad Region as part of the partners’ contribution to the project.

For the same reasons (the demands of the above-mentioned new Federal Act) it also turned out to be impossible to construct recreational facilities to River Svir Delta within the pilot project. Besides, due to recent reorganisation within the regional system of management of protected areas, the ownership and responsibilities of such facilities are not clear. Therefore it was decided to cancel this activity. However, the proposals for constructing the facilities were elaborated and the sites were defined. This is included in the land use plan for the Svir Delta prepared within the Activity T 1.9.

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As for construction of simple recreational facilities on pilot area Kurgalsky (Act T 1.8) as well as construction of information boards (Act T 1.10), the original plans were made in time to provide also the necessary environmental impact assessments meeting the requirements of the new legislation. This was due to these activities having been planned to be implemented as part of the contribution from the project partner Government of the Leningrad Region, as part of their program "Support and development of Protected Areas of the Leningrad Region" with somewhat stricter requirements for operations than other project activities.

2. Was the provisional budget of the project respected? If not, please explain any changes that occurred.

The Beneficiary has proposed a change of the project budget concerning budget lines 1.3.1 "Per diems for missions/travel", 2.1 "International travel", 2.2 "Local transportation, Russia", 3.1 "Rent of car/boat", 3.2 "Furniture, computer equipment", 4.2 "Office rent" and 4.4 "Other services". The proposal was accepted by the EC Delegation, Head of Finance and Contract Section on 27th December, 2007 and the corresponding Addendum N^o 1 to the grant contract was signed by the Beneficiary on 8th January, 2008. The project has been implemented in line with the provisional budget and the consequent addendum, which is shown in the final financial report.

B. Project Objectives:

1. Please list all project objectives, and indicate if they were modified.

- 1) To test the approaches for public participation and stakeholder involvement into joint management, conservation and sustainable use of natural sites
- 2) To complement to the establishment of a harmonized monitoring of the eastern Gulf of Finland catchment.

The objectives are not modified from the ones stated in the application and grant contract.

C. Project Activities

1. Please list all the activities in line with Annex I of the Contract since the beginning of the project, e.g.

Activity 1

Title of the activity

Conference at town W with X participants for Y days on Z dates

Please elaborate on the activities covered:

Reason for modification for the planned activity (if applicable):

Your assessment of the results of this activity:

Activity T 1.1**Joint Finnish-Russian Seminar on the valuable natural sites in the Eastern Gulf of Finland**

Seminar in Lomonosov, Saint Petersburg on 19-20th April, 2007 for 39 participants.

- Current state of the project was discussed.
- Activities of the project were designed in more details.
- Information about pilot projects was presented.
- Preparation of study tour (Act T 1.3) was discussed.
- Situation on pilot sites was presented.
- Solving of environmental problems of Eastern Gulf of Finland was discussed.
- Number of presentations given in the seminar: 10

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- An excursion to Lebyazhie regional protected area was done and the natural values and threats to the reserve were discussed.
- Brief summary of the seminar is attached to the report. (See Annex 1).

The seminar was very useful for the proper starting of the project as the representatives of all interested parties participated. They became aware of the project aims and activities and elaborated, in the course of discussions, common vision of current problems of valuable natural sites of the region and possible ways of solving these problems. A regional co-operation network for the protection of natural resources in the Eastern Gulf of Finland area was established.

The seminar was arranged in April instead of February. The reason for the shift was the need for the experts to become more familiar with the pilot projects and to allow them to prepare the presentations to be discussed at the seminar. Time was also needed to conduct the tender procedure for choosing the contracted company responsible for organisation of all project seminars. This was done in March, 2007, and the company “Monomax” won the tender.

Activity T 1.2**Workshops on designing pilot projects**

Four workshops were held in Saint Petersburg on 5-6th April with altogether 45 participants.

- Current situation of each pilot site was presented.
- Aims and objectives of the pilot projects were defined.
- The most critical problems of each pilot area concerning the aims of pilot projects were identified.
- Priorities and main tasks of each pilot project were defined and responsibilities of project partners and experts were specified.
- Brief summaries of the workshops are attached to the report (See Annex 2).

The workshops were an effective way to launch the pilot projects by gathering together the project experts as well as representatives of local interest groups.

Activity T 1.3**Study tour on sustainable tourism and recreation development**

Study tour to Kymenlaakso region (Kotka and Valkeala) in Finland for 9 Russian participants (with 5 Finnish participants representing the Beneficiary).

- Destinations of nature tourism managed by Metsähallitus were presented.
- Concepts and methods of sustainable nature tourism and recreation were presented.
- Possibilities for multiple uses of forests were presented by Metsähallitus and the forestry company UPM.
- Cooperation between Finnish experts and study tour participants aiming at development of sustainable nature tourism concepts in pilot sites of the project was established.
- Brief summary of the study tour is attached to the report (See Annex 3).

The tour was successful in gathering together representatives of project partners as well as representatives of the local authorities from all four pilot areas.

Activity T 1.4**Defining models and sites for sustainable recreation**

The activity of defining models and sites for sustainable recreation consisted of various meetings and discussions between project partners, protected area management authorities, nature conservation NGOs and other stakeholders, with the aim of defining areas suitable for recreation within the pilot areas. These areas were then included into recreational zones of the pilot areas within the materials for framework management plans and land use plans composed in the course of the project.

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As a basis for this work, digital maps presenting the land use and basic cartography of all the four pilot sites were needed. A tender was conducted to select the supplier of digital maps, with the winner being the group of Alexei Tomilin from the company Geoid Ltd. This company had already experience in digitalising maps for a previous Life project. Necessary cartographic materials were collected by the group. Due to access to the regional land cadastre the data on all land-users within pilot project areas are available. Literary materials and some additional field data (to be used for the zoning of the pilot areas) were also collected for each pilot site. As a result, the digital maps of land-use of four Ramsar sites were created by using ArcGIS software. The actualization of spatial description of the borders of protected areas was done on the basis of new data. These new information resources were integrated in the Information-Analytical System of Protected Areas of Leningrad region. See the report by Alexey Tomilin (Annex 4).

The created digital maps were then used within the project as an important tool for defining land use models for each of the pilot sites (including the zoning of the areas, location and criteria for recreational zones, planning recreational facilities and arrangements of recreational activities). This is included into the reports of each pilot site (materials for management/land use plans) – see Annexes 6, 7, 11, 16).

Establishment of the digital maps was certainly useful for the project purposes, as well as for the future management activities of the protected areas. However, the other aspect of this activity, namely developing joint approach for combining conservation needs with increasing recreational pressures was in practise not so easy, since the methodology and exact aims were not clearly defined. Nevertheless, after several discussions and debates on the subject, some common views of the arrangements of sustainable recreation were established. Due to some unsolved questions related to management responsibilities of recreational areas and infrastructure, it is not thoroughly clear how to bring the developed ideas into practise, though.

Activity T 1.5**Training seminars on entrepreneurship**

A seminar «Protected Areas of international importance: Cooperation of stakeholders on sustainable management and entrepreneurship development» was arranged as a one-day training event on October 28th, 2008 at Lomonosov (Lebyazhie pilot area). The seminar was conducted by the Baltic Fund for Nature of St.Petersburg Naturalists' Society and the Committee on Natural Resources and Environment Protection of the Leningrad Region Administration, with support from Lomonosov District Administration.

Participants from each pilot site (32 persons) were invited; altogether 21 persons participated. They represented private and state organisations dealing with or interested in developing nature tourism, recreation and environmental education at the pilot areas Lebyazhie, Berezovye Islands and Kurgalsky. Representatives of municipal administrations involved in nature tourism and recreational activities also participated. General topics of the seminar were 1) possibilities of private entrepreneurs to work on protected areas, 2) developing recreational infrastructure, 3) legal obstacles to the activities of private entrepreneurship on PAs and 4) views of local people towards Ramsar sites and PAs.

The seminar was quite successful. People were very active in discussing the issues of entrepreneurship on PAs and also general issues of nature conservation and sustainable nature use on Ramsar sites. It was a common opinion of the participants that this event can be regarded as a good step ahead on developing participatory approach in managing pilot areas of the project. (See the seminar materials in Annex 5).

Activities T 1.6-T 1.9 Pilot projects at four pilot areas

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The common approach for all the pilot projects was to develop methods of public participation and stakeholder involvement into joint management, conservation and sustainable use of natural sites. For a basis of this work, also materials of the natural values of the sites were collected and processed. As a result, proposals for improving management planning and practical management solutions for the areas were established in the form of materials for management plans for Berezovye Islands and Kurgalsky, as well as land use plan for River Svir Delta Area. For Lebyazhie, the aims were to provide support for the legal establishment of the PA and to establish a local network of NGOs and interested stakeholders to ensure sustainable development of the site.

Activity T 1.6**Pilot project at Berezovye islands****1) Collection of data on natural values of the area**

Data base on natural values of the area has been compiled within the framework of another project. Data has been collected from scientific literature and other available sources. The book “Environment and biological diversity of Berezovye Islands’ archipelago” with full description of natural values of the islands was prepared by experts from SPNS and Botanical Institute of RAS and published in the end of the year 2007. Data collection (field surveys) and printing were funded from other sources, but the PNH project experts (Nadia Alexeeva, Mikhail Verevkin, Nikolay Kovalchuk, Roustam Sagitov and Vladimir Dievsky) cooperated with the other project team and took very active part in completing and editing the manuscript during January-July, 2007. Some ideas on the zoning, regulation of recreation, co-operation with Primorsk harbour etc. established within PNH project were included in the book. Additional data on nature values (birds and seals) has been collected during the field surveys of PNH project in spring and summer, 2008.

2) Designing recreational facilities

According to the Grant Contract, a nature trail and some recreational facilities were supposed to be constructed to Berezovye Islands. However, due to the above-mentioned reasons regarding the need of the new Federal Act, establishing recreational infrastructure was not possible without the project having passed ecological impact assessment. Two nature trails on Bolshoy Berezovyi Island were anyhow designed and mapped out (See the report in Annex 6A). To compensate for the deficiency in project outputs and to prepare for the future environmental impact assessment of the construction of designed nature trails, data on existing infrastructure and tourism facilities were collected by the project experts. A special field survey on preparing justification for functional zoning of the PA was carried out by the order of the Board on Natural Complexes and Objects (competent body of the project partner - Committee on Natural Resources of Leningrad Region). This activity was supported by the Regional Target Program (implemented by the Committee) “Support and development of Protected Areas of the Leningrad Region”. Data on unauthorised recreation, objects of tourist interest, damage and threats of natural complexes (wasting, pollution, poaching etc.) were collected and mapped out. A draft map of the functional zoning of the area was prepared (See the report in Annex 6B).

3) Preparing materials for the management plan of Berezovye Islands

The set of materials for the management plan of PA “Berezovye Islands” (including the improved zoning based on detailed analysis of nature values, threats for them, proposals on changing the PA borders, development of recreational infrastructure etc.) was prepared by the project experts on the basis of literary data and field inventories’ data collected within PNH project. Finnish experience on best practices of PA management was also utilised. The established materials for the management plan are committed to the Government of the Leningrad Region for the environmental impact assessment (ecological expertise) and subsequent approval. (See the report in Annex 7).

4) Establishing cooperation network on Berezovye Islands’ PA

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Co-operation network on PA “Berezovye Islands” was created. It includes regional and municipal administrative bodies (Leningrad Region Government, Vyborg and Primorsk municipal administrations), scientific institutions (St.Petersburg State University, Botanical and Zoological institutes of Russian Academy of Sciences etc.), main land users in the area (Admiral Makarov State Maritime Academy, Concern Naval Underwater Weapon/Central research institute “Gidropribor”), NGOs (St.Petersburg Naturalists Society and Wetlands International), activists of Krasny Ostrov settlement, Children Environmental Center in Primorsk, Primorsk Historical Museum. The network participants took part in the project seminars, workshops and the study tour in Finland. Co-operation with Finnish tourist company Suomen Autolomat Oy concerning development of recreational facilities has also been established. Suomen Autolomat Oy has a history of operating in Berezovye Islands as the only allowed foreign tourist company. It is closely connected with the Society “Koivisto” uniting former Finnish inhabitants of Berezovye Islands.

In general, this activity turned out to be more comprehensive than it was planned in the project proposal and stated in the Grant Contract. As mentioned in the Section A of this report, there were changes in Russian legislation on natural objects and environmental impact assessment that increased the importance of establishment of the PA management plan and functional zoning. These became the most important content of this activity. Besides, deep involvement of Finnish experts in the planning process made it possible to use best international experiences in managing protected areas and using participatory approach in management, conservation and sustainable use of natural sites. As a result, the prepared Materials for the Management Plan of the state nature complex reserve “Berezovye Islands” (See Annex 7) are in accordance with the Russian requirements and could be used as a model for management planning of other protected areas in Russian sector of the Baltic Sea. However, a fact that complicated the project work was the necessity to work with the materials simultaneously in English as well as in Russian, with respect to project reporting and demands of the local PA managers, respectively. This caused somewhat bigger workload with the constant translations than was originally estimated. Also the exact contents of the report were not that clearly defined in the application and the Grant Contract, so it took some efforts to jointly define the needs for the materials and their desired contents. These remarks apply also to the materials for the management plan of the pilot area Kurgalsky and the land use plan of the pilot area River Svir Delta (Activities T 1.8 and T 1.9, respectively).

Activity T 1.7**Pilot project at Lebyazhie**

Lebyazhie was nominated as a regional protected area (Complex Regional Nature Reserve (sanctuary) “Lebyazhy”) on 3rd of April, 2007. The legal documents on PA “Lebyazhy” (in Russian) can be found at the web-site of Protected Areas of Leningrad Region (www.paslo.ru) established by the Committee on Natural Resources and Environment Protection of the Leningrad Region (See also the PA Regulations in Annex 8).

Two information boards were established at Lebyazhie in October, 2008 (See the photos in Annex 9).

Composition of network of local stakeholders was identified, and the network was established and expanded during the project. It includes regional and municipal administrations (Leningrad region, Lomonosov district, Lebyazhie and Bolshaya Izhora municipalities), scientific institutions (St.Petersburg State University, Botanical and Zoological institutes of Russian Academy of Sciences), NGOs (Baltic Fund for Nature, Green World, Coalition Clean Baltic, Wetlands International), local land-users and entrepreneurs. They participated at the project seminars, workshops and to the study tour in Finland. Two project events, Joint Finnish-Russian seminar on the valuable natural sites in the Eastern Gulf of Finland (opening seminar of the project) and Training seminar on entrepreneurship were held at the pilot project area with a support of Lomonosov district administration.

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By our assessment, this activity was quite successful. It was carried out in full correspondence with the Grant Contract, and the planned outputs were achieved.

Activity T 1.8**Pilot project at Kurgalsky**

1) Collection of data on natural values of the area

Ornithological and theriological inventories were conducted by project experts Vladimir Fedorov, Valery Buzun and Mikhail Verevkin in the northern part of the area (See Annexes 10 and 20). Key habitats of valuable species were identified and mapped out. Six forest sites with very high biological values were defined in cooperation with the team of Russian-Swedish project “Development and application of methodologies for biologically valuable forests south of the taiga”. Detailed data on biological values of the sites were collected.

Recommendations on changing nature use regulations in the reserve based on these data were elaborated by SPNS scientific team and sent to the Government of the Leningrad Region.

2) Improvement of the area and establishment of simple recreational facilities

The following activities supported by the Committee for natural resources and environmental management of the Government of Leningrad Region and included in their operation plan called “Support and development of Protected Areas of the Leningrad Region” were conducted during 2007 - 2008:

- tidying up the area by schoolchildren’s teams and removing waste from the coast (See the report in Annex 13);
- preparing parking and picnic places (equipped with waste containers) at the recreational zone (See the report in Annex 13);
- making and establishing two information boards in the reserve (See the report in Annex 13 and pictures in Annex 14);

3) Preparing materials for the management plan of Kurgalsky

A set of materials for improvement of the existing management plan of PA Kurgalsky (including the improved zoning based on detailed analysis of nature values, threats for them, development of recreational infrastructure etc.) was prepared by the project experts on the basis of literary data and the field inventories’ data collected within PNH project and with use of Finnish experience on best practices of PA management (See the report in Annex 11). The materials were committed to the Government of the Leningrad Region.

4) Planning of the visitor centre

Primary design of recreational and environmental education center at PA Kurgalsky was prepared by the company “Mitra Ltd.” based on the order of the project partner Lenoblpriroda Fund (See the report in Annex 12). The works on choosing the land plot for the center and linking the center’s development with the “Program of complex development of Ust-Luga area” implemented by the Ust-Luga Harbour were carried out in close cooperation with Ust-Luga design-engineering company responsible for the harbour facilities.

5) Establishing cooperation network on Kurgalsky PA

Network of local stakeholders has been identified, established and expanded during the project. It includes regional and municipal administrations (Leningrad region, Kingisepp district, Ust-Luga municipality), scientific institutions (St.Petersburg State University, Botanical and Zoological institutes of Russian Academy of Sciences), NGOs (Baltic Fund for Nature, Green World, Coalition Clean Baltic, Wetlands International), “Ust-Luga Company” JSC and its daughter company “Ust-Luga design-engineering company” JSC, small local land-users and entrepreneurs. Many of them participated in the project events – seminars,

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workshops and study tour in Finland. Due to established cooperation with Ust-Luga design-engineering company PNH project partners (Committee on Natural Resources of Leningrad Region, Fund Lenoblpriroda and Baltic Fund for Nature of St.Petersburg Naturalists Society) took an active part in preparing the “Project on elaboration of environmental policy in the framework of complex development of Ust-Luga area for the period 2008-2010”. Environmental education of school children from the Ust-Luga area was planned and carried out by the project experts in cooperation with the local secondary school.

Kurgalsky was one of the target areas in a Eurosite Adaptive Management Workshop held in November 2007 in Savonlinna, Finland. Participants to the workshop were Nadia Alexeeva, Natalia Lentsman, Vladimir Fjodorov, Vladimir Dievsky and Alexander Lisitsyn.

Like the pilot project in Berezovye Islands, this activity turned out to be more comprehensive than planned. Its results should be assessed in a similar way as the results of Act T 1.6, and they also could be used as a model for the other protected areas in Russian sector of the Baltic Sea. In general, this pilot project was carried out in correspondence with the Grant Contract.

Activity T 1.9**Pilot project at River Svir Delta**

1) Collection of data on natural values of and recreational activities in the area

Basic information for preparing land use plan for hunting, tourism and recreation was collected. Field trips around the area were conducted by the project team (6 participants) in June, 2007. The most important sites for nature tourism and hunting were inspected. Coordination of bird conservation activities with agricultural land users was discussed in joint planning meetings. A cooperative field trip between Finnish and Russian experts was arranged in September, 2007. The issues of environmentally-friendly land use were discussed with representatives of local agricultural enterprise (Rassvet Ltd.), hunting dealers (Veles-Volkhov and Petrovskoye Game Service) and Nizhne-Svirsky Nature Reserve.

Ornithological survey in the area was carried out by the project expert Valery Buzun with a special focus on red-listed and game birds. Parts of Svir Delta Area (Zagubye and Domozhirovo Fields), being a place of mass concentrations of migratory waterfowl, have been traditionally used for hunting. As part of this survey, proposals for establishing seasonal game reserve there were elaborated and agreed with hunting dealers (See the report in Annex 15).

2) Preparing materials for the land use plan of River Svir Delta

Materials for the general land use plan of the area were prepared (See the report in Annex 16). Proposals for nature-friendly agricultural land use were elaborated and agreed with land-owners. The materials were committed to the Leningrad Region Administration.

3) Planning and providing simple recreational facilities

The work on defining, designing and mapping facilities for tourism/recreation on the basis of the data on nature values was carried out (See Annexes 15 and 16). Construction of simple recreational facilities was not realised (See the explanation in the Section A of this report).

Although this activity could not be implemented in full extent (by the reasons described above), we assess it as quite successful. The established cooperation of administrative bodies, main land users in the area and federal protected area – Nizhne-Svirsky Nature reserve – made it possible to jointly create a land use plan for the area. It is regarded as an important improvement in the management of the Ramsar site “Svir Delta”.

Activity T 1.10**Information materials**

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More than 250 high-quality photos of rare bird species and landscapes were made by nature photographer Andrey Frenkel. The photos were used in the information materials as well as in other project materials and events.

Four sets of booklets on the pilot areas (also Ramsar sites) Berezovye Islands, Kurgalsky, Lebyazhie and Svir Delta were designed and published (400 copies each) in December, 2008 (Annex 17). The booklets describe the characteristics of natural values of the pilot areas and contain information about the Ramsar Convention thus raising public awareness on the Ramsar sites and nature conservation issues. The booklets are distributed within the networks of stakeholders established within pilot projects.

Four information boards were established at Kurgalsky and Lebyazhie (see Activities T 1.7 and T 1.8 and Annexes 9 and 14).

Activity T 2.1**Methodological workshop**

International methodological workshop/seminar “Bottom Communities of the Gulf of Finland” was held on April 1-2, 2008 in St. Petersburg with 31 participants from Russia, Finland and Lithuania representing scientific institutions, administrative nature conservation bodies and NGOs. Altogether 18 presentations were held. The topics included protection of marine biodiversity, sustainable management and conservation of marine bottom communities. Methodological aspects of surveys on marine habitats and species as well as monitoring within the Gulf of Finland area were discussed.

According to general opinion of the participants the workshop was quite successful. The presentations were very diverse and interesting. New contacts were established, thus expanding the cooperation network (See the seminar program in Annex 18).

Activity T 2.2**Field inventories on marine habitats and species**

Underwater marine inventories were conducted by the project expert Nikolay Kovalchuk using the method of biological diving inventories along line transects. In the year 2007 the surveys were conducted at two pilot areas – Berezovye islands (more than 20 transects) and Lebyazhie (6 transects), and also at Ust-Luga and Primorsk harbours in the immediate vicinity of the pilot areas. The activity was continued during the year 2008 at Kurgalsky pilot area (12 transects). Underwater communities were described with special focus on rare and indicator species and habitats.

Monitoring sites were identified and established based on the inventories. As planned in the application and the Grant Contract, they are located in areas where there is heavy human impact, especially ship traffic and harbour activities etc. These sites are located in Kurgalsky, Lebyazhie and in Berezovye Islands (See the report by Nikolay Kovalchuk in Annex 19). The obtained data (likewise the data by other project experts) have been put in the database of the Information-Analytical System “Protected areas of the Leningrad Region”. This System is created and maintained within the framework of other projects and owned by the Committee for natural resources and environmental protection of the Leningrad Region.

Due to differences in methodologies and operational capacities between Finnish and Russian marine inventories’ teams, it proved rather difficult to harmonise the inventory methodologies and monitoring schemes. Implementing joint field inventories turned out to be impossible, because it was too difficult to transport diving equipment over the Finnish-Russian border and to obtain the necessary permits for foreign divers. In Finland, Metsähallitus’ marine biologists together with experts from the Finnish Environment Research Institute have been doing extensive development of marine underwater inventories’ methodology. However, in Russia

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there are not that many marine biologists engaged in underwater inventories, and only very limited resources and knowledge are available for this kind of work.

Activity T 2.3**Seal censuses**

Aerial censuses of seals both within the Gulf of Finland as well as in Ladoga Lake were conducted. During the winter 2006-2007, the weather was unusually warm and as a result, almost no ice at all was formed on the above-mentioned water bodies. At first there was an idea to perform the aerial censuses during year 2007 to observe the effect of those extraordinary conditions on seal populations during their breeding season. However, the process of ice formation turned out to be so severely hindered that almost no suitable breeding habitats were formed for the seals. Therefore it was decided to perform the aerial censuses during year 2008, according to the original action plan within the Grant Contract. Anyhow, it was decided to carry out summertime censuses of seals within the Gulf of Finland during summer 2007 to estimate how the extraordinary weather of the previous winter had affected the populations. Summertime censuses were conducted by using a boat. The following islands of the Gulf of Finland were visited: Gogland, Hallicarti, Itakivi, Vigrund, Hitomatola, Kurgalsky reef, Rodsker, Malyi Tyters, Virgins. The total of 326 grey seals was counted, and a decrease in numbers of the ringed seal population was indicated.

The activity was continued by the aerial censuses during early spring 2008. A tender procedure for contracting a flight company was conducted in March, and the Sport Aviation Club ROSTO won the tender. Aerial counts of the seals on ice (using the AN-2 airplane) were carried out on the 5th of April 2008 on the Lake Ladoga and on the Gulf of Finland. As the frozen area of the water bodies was relatively small (because of weather conditions), additional censuses for the ringed seals and their burrows on the Gulf of Finland were carried out on 15th of May 2008 from a hovercraft. The floating ice fields suitable for seals' snow lairs were inspected.

As a result of the surveys, better knowledge about the seal populations of the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland and of the Lake Ladoga and the impact of the human activities on them was gained. It was corroborated that on the territory of Protected Areas "Berezovye Islands" and "Kurgalsky Peninsula" the seals of both species find the places for summer rookeries and winter breeding. In current situation, associated with the increase in transport loads in the water area of the Gulf of Finland, these Ramsar sites may become the only reserves that are able to provide the necessary conditions for survival of marine mammals in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea. The construction and exploitation of port terminals in Ust-Luga and Primorsk in the immediate proximity to the nature reserves demands particular attention to the maintenance of the protection policy of the mentioned Ramsar sites (See the report by Mikhail Verevkin in Annex 20).

The procedure of changing the schedule of the aerial censuses is described in part A, chapter 1 of this report.

Activity T 2.4**Joint Russian-Finnish seminar on project results**

The final project seminar was held on 3-4 of December, 2008 in St.Petersburg with 43 participants from Russia and Finland. The first session with participation of all project partners and experts was held on the first day (3.12.2008) at the Baltic Fund for Nature of St.Petersburg Naturalists' Society. The current state of the project and the contents of final reporting were discussed.

The second session was held next day (4.12.2008) at the Hotel Russia. Representatives of all project partners and the created networks of cooperation around the pilot sites (with members from federal, regional and municipal administrative bodies, NGOs, scientific and educational

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institutions and business) took part in the conference. 13 presentations were made, summarizing the project results and discussing urgent issues of nature conservation, sustainable management of protected areas of the Leningrad Region and cooperation of stakeholders (including international cooperation) in the field of conservation of natural values in the Eastern part of the Gulf of Finland. The general discussion was very interesting and productive. All conference participants regarded this event and the project itself as an important step towards practical improvement of the system of protected areas in the Leningrad Region and further incorporation of these areas into international networks such as HELCOM marine protected areas, Ramsar sites network etc (See the seminar program in Annex 21).

2. Please list all materials and publications (and no. of copies) produced during the project to date and include one copy of each item in the report. Please state how your publications are being distributed and to whom.

- Four booklets on the pilot areas Kurgalsky, Beryozovye Islands, Lebyazhye and Svir Delta were published (400 copies each one) (Annex 17). The booklets were distributed within the networks of stakeholders.
- Four information boards were constructed at the pilot areas Kurgalsky and Lebyazhie (Annexes 9 and 14).
- Primary design of visitor center at pilot area Kurgalsky (Annex 12).
- The set of materials for the management plan of pilot area Berezovye Islands (Annex 7). The materials are committed to the Government of the Leningrad Region for the environmental impact assessment (ecological expertise) and subsequent approval.
- The set of materials for improvement of existing management plan of pilot area Kurgalsky (Annex 11). The materials are committed to the Government of the Leningrad Region for the environmental impact assessment (ecological expertise) and subsequent approval.
- A land use plan of pilot area River Svir Delta (Annex 16). The materials are committed to the Government of the Leningrad Region for the environmental impact assessment (ecological expertise) and subsequent approval.
- Digital maps of land-use of the four pilot areas (Annex 4). The electronic maps are integrated in the Information-Analytical System of Protected Areas of Leningrad Region.
- Ornithological report on pilot area Kurgalsky (Annex 10).
- Ornithological report on pilot area River Svir Delta (Annex 15).
- A report on the seal censuses (Annex 20).
- A report on the underwater inventories on marine habitats and species (macroalgae) (Annex 19).

The data from all inventory reports have been included in the database of the Information-Analytical System of Protected Areas of Leningrad Region. This system is already used by the Government of the Leningrad Region as an important tool for managing regional protected areas.

3. What problems have arisen and how have these been addressed?

The main problem creating some obstacles for the project implementation was the continuous reorganization of nature conservation bodies in the Government of the Leningrad Region. The Committee on Natural Resources has been going through numerous shifts of responsibilities and also changes among its staff. Its structural unit - the Directorate of natural complexes and objects of the Leningrad Region, which is responsible for management, among others, of the pilot project areas, has recently been replaced by a newly created Committee on Protection, Control and Regulation of Use of Faunistic Objects of the Leningrad Region. Nevertheless, the Committee on Natural Resources and the Fund Lenoblpriroda, as the official project

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partners, followed their duties and obligations in the project implementation and did their best to minimize the harmful influences of administrative changes on the project activities.

4. Please outline any activities and publications foreseen in the agreement that have not taken place and any other changes to the foreseen activities or timetable, explaining the reasons for these.

As it is mentioned above, some changes in the project activities have happen because of changes in Russian federal legislation:

T 1.6. Nature trail and information board at Berezovye Islands could not be constructed. Instead, by the request of the Government of the Leningrad Region, additional works on preparing materials for the management plan and functional zoning of the pilot area were carried out.

T 1.9. Simple recreational facilities at River Svir Delta could not be constructed, although all necessary proposals and arrangements for their construction have been included in the land use plan.

D. Results, Impact, Multiplier effect, and Evaluation

1. What results have been achieved during the reporting period (based on the results anticipated in your project application)? Please quantify these results, where possible.

International seminar on the valuable natural sites in the Eastern Gulf of Finland for 39 participants and 4 local workshops on designing pilot projects on pilot sites for altogether 45 participants have been carried out (Annexes 1 and 2).

Study tour to Finland on sustainable tourism and recreation development has been arranged for representatives of local public groups and interested stakeholders – 4 days for 9 Russian participants, with 5 Finnish participants representing the Beneficiary (Annex 3).

Digital maps of land-use of four pilot areas have been created. New information resources have been integrated in the Information-Analytical System of Protected Areas of Leningrad Region (Annex 4).

The seminar «Protected Areas of international importance: Cooperation of stakeholders on sustainable management and entrepreneurship development» was carried out with 21 participants (Annex 5).

Materials for the management plan of PA “Berezovye Islands” (including the improved zoning based on detailed analysis of nature values, threats for them, proposals on changing the PA borders, development of recreational infrastructure etc.) have been prepared by the project experts (Annex 7).

Lebyazhie was nominated as a regional protected area (Complex Regional Nature Reserve (sanctuary) “Lebyazhie”) on 3rd of April, 2007 (Annex 8).

New data on nature values of Kurgalsky nature reserve have been collected by the project experts (Annexes 10 and 20). Recommendations on changing the nature use regulations in the reserve have been elaborated by SPNS scientific team and sent to the Government of the Leningrad region. The materials for improvement of existing management plan of pilot area Kurgalsky have been prepared by the project experts (Annex 11).

Tidying up of the area (5.9 km² of coastal zone) and construction of simple recreational facilities at Kurgalsky peninsula have been organised (Annex 13).

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Primary design of visitor center at pilot area Kurgalsky has been prepared. It is linked with the Program of complex development of Ust-Luga area elaborated by Ust-Luga Design-Engineering Company (Annex 12).

A land use plan for the pilot area River Svir Delta was prepared. Proposals for nature-friendly agricultural land use have been elaborated and agreed with land-owners (Annex 16).

Information materials on pilot sites have been prepared. Four booklets on the pilot areas Kurgalsky, Berezovye Islands, Lebyazhie and River Svir Delta have been published (400 copies each one) (Annex 17). Four information boards have been constructed at the pilot areas Kurgalsky and Lebyazhie (Annexes 9, 14).

International methodological seminar “Bottom Communities of the Gulf of Finland” was held on April 1-2, 2008 in St. Petersburg with 31 participants from Russia, Finland and Lithuania (Annex 18).

Data on sensitive/indicator marine habitats and species on 3 pilot areas – Berezovye Islands, Lebyazhie and Kurgalsky and also at Ust-Luga and Primorsk harbours, have been collected and put into the Information-Analytical System of Protected Areas of Leningrad Region. Monitoring sites have been defined (Annex 19).

Aerial and boat censuses of seals have been performed. Better knowledge about the seal populations of the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland and the Ladoga Lake and the impact of the human activities on them has been gained (Annex 20).

The final seminar on project results was held on 3-4 of December, 2008 in St.Petersburg with 43 participants from Russia and Finland (Annex 21).

Better understanding and cooperation between local people, administrations and stakeholders about conservation/ other land uses of the area has been acquired.

In the course of joint project activities (study tour, seminar, field trips etc.), information about the best practices on nature conservation combined with other local interests on wetlands has been transferred from Finland to Russia.

Russian-Finnish network of experts, administrations and stakeholders, dealing with wetlands protection, management and use has been established.

The project established good connection with the Ramsar Secretariat. The project results were presented at the Meeting of Nordic Baltic Wetland Initiative coordination group organised by the Ramsar Secretariat together with Metsähallitus. The meeting was held on 23-25 September, 2008 in Oulu, Finland.

2. What is your assessment of the results of the project so far? Include observations on the extent to which foreseen goals are being met and whether the project has had any unforeseen positive or negative results (see Indicators in Logframe).

In general, the project has been carried out in accordance with the project proposal and the Grant contract. Minor changes in scheduling of some activities have taken place after approval of the EC Delegation, with no implications on proposed project results. Despite the changes in the project activities T 1.6 and T 1.9 mentioned above, the results achieved have in general been in accordance with the presumptions formulated when planning the project activities, and the project met the aims set during the planning phase.

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3. What has been the impact on both the beneficiaries &/or target group (if different) and the situation in the target country population or target region which the project addressed?

The main impacts on Finnish target groups have been realised through the Interreg part of the joint project and have been reported within Interreg project reports.

During the project multisectoral dialogue among NGOs, regional and district administrations, local inhabitants, Ust-Luga harbour administration, hunting and agricultural enterprises at Svir delta, small businesses, scientific bodies etc. has been established and is actively developing. Representatives of the target groups have taken part in on-site activities at pilot areas (eg. zoning of the areas, control and monitoring of nature use, elaboration of proposals on environmentally-friendly management of nature values, tidying-up the area on Kurgalsky), and have also participated at the project meetings, seminars and study tour. This has contributed to recognition of their role in further development and support of protected areas and thus has strengthened public participation in protected area management in the Leningrad Region.

4. How and by whom have activities been monitored/evaluated? Please summarise the results of the feedback received, including from the beneficiaries.

Project activities have been monitored by Metsähallitus (joint Interreg and Tacis projects' coordinator and project manager), by SPNS as the lead Russian partner (Tacis project coordinator and financial manager) as well as project steering group with representatives of each partner organisation. The steering group functioned through frequent working meetings between representatives of project partner organisations and project experts. The project has been carried out in accordance with the Grant Contract with the results as foreseen in the project action plan.

5. What impact is the project having on your organisation and on your partners?

The project has increased international and trans-boundary cooperation within Metsähallitus and facilitated formation of cooperating networks in the area of nature conservation between Finnish and Russian conservation bodies and authorities. This cooperation has been of great value also in planning and implementing other nature conservation projects in cooperation with Metsähallitus and the Russian project partners and other Russian bodies working in the field of nature conservation.

Saint-Petersburg Naturalists Society has gained new experiences in trans-boundary cooperation with Finnish partners, and has also improved relations with Russian regional and municipal authorities in the sphere of nature conservation. It has been especially important for SPNS to establish new constructive relations with local businesses responsible for nature use in PAs and their surrounds. For example, very promising and constructive dialogue has been established with Ust-Luga harbour company on developing recreational zone, environmental education and nature tourism at Kurgalsky PA and its vicinity. SPNS participated, together with other project partners, in elaboration of the Program of complex development of Ust-Luga area. Also the cooperation with private agricultural and hunting enterprises at River Svir Delta is of considerable importance. Altogether, the project has increased the ability and the role of SPNS in decision making on regional nature conservation policy.

For the Committee for Natural Resources of the Leningrad Region and for Lenoblpriroda Fund the most important impact of the project has been getting EU (Finnish) experiences on public participation in PA management and practical advises by Finnish experts on improvements of nature conservation on PAs. These conservation authorities actively develop themselves as parts of pan-European nature conservation structures and adopting best practises of EU (Finnish) nature conservation schemes into use in Russia.

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6. How is your organisation ensuring that the results obtained / the lessons learned from the project, are being made public?

A web-page has been created for the project under the web-site of the Baltic Fund for Nature of SPNS (www.bfn.org.ru). During year 2007, a media tour concerning Pas management in Leningrad Region was carried out, and the pilot projects of PNH also gained visibility via it. Information materials presenting the pilot areas have been designed and distributed via the cooperation networks established during the course of the project.

7. Please outline any links you have developed with other EU-Russia Cooperation Programme/other donor projects.

The project is linked to the Interreg project of “Yhteiset uhanalaiset” (“Joint endangered species”) carried out by Metsähallitus during 2004-2007. People, Nature and Harbours project has utilized cooperation networks and data on endangered species, eg. seals, gathered during JES project as basis for future field inventories on nature values, as well as for the preparation of materials for the management plans on the pilot areas.

Geographically the PNH project was also connected with Russian Life Third Countries project LIFE04 TCY/ROS/000050 “Bringing regional protected areas of the Leningrad Region (Russian Federation) into European context” and Latvian-Estonian-Lithuanian Life Nature project LIFE 05 NAT/LV/000100 “Marine protected areas in the Eastern Baltic Sea” and established cooperation with them. The main purpose of the LIFE04 Project was to aid the Leningrad Region in development of PAs network and conservation of landscape and biological diversity by improvement of key PAs management and their involvement into pan-Baltic and pan-European ecological networks. The LIFE 05 Project was an important part in the whole chain of the Baltic environmental projects focused on Marine Protected Areas (which to date has been a very underdeveloped aspect in Russia). It can become a good basis and example for similar ones to be implemented in the Baltic Russia and wider. The Project also provided good opportunities for communication and practical collaboration between relevant environmental organizations (of different status) in Russia and in the Baltic countries. The PNH project has utilised achievements and experiences of the Life projects on the pilot sites.

The project has also established cooperation with Project on trans-boundary management of nature reserves at Lake Peipus area - Alam-Pedja, Emajõe-Suursoo and Remidov nature reserves, within EU-Russia Neighbourhood Programme Baltic Sea Region Interreg III B. The approaches on joint management of Ramsar sites at Russian-Estonian boundary elaborated by the project partners (Estonian Fund for Nature and Baltic Fund for Nature of SPNS) have been utilized in the current PNH project.

A survey of biologically valuable forest areas in Kurgalsky nature reserve has been done in cooperation with the Project “Development and application of methodologies for biologically valuable forests south of the taiga” funded by Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and realized as a partnership between Swedish Forest Agency, Committee on Natural Resources and Environment Protection of Leningrad Region, Saint-Petersburg Forestry Research Institute, Saint-Petersburg State University, Foundation Pro Natura (Sweden) and Baltic Fund for Nature of SPNS (Russia). The results of this survey have been utilised in preparing the materials for the management plan of pilot area Kurgalsky.

The project established very close cooperation with the project “Development of the Regional Protected Areas in NW Russia” financed by Finnish Environment Institute, where Metsähallitus is the lead partner. The project deals with the development of regional protected

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areas in the Republic of Karelia, Murmansk, Leningrad, Arkhangelsk and Vologda regions and the City of St. Petersburg.

8. The success of the project depended on various assumptions (see logframe). Have these influenced the results so far?

There have been a couple of factors having influences on project results in the beginning. The first issue has been the highly extraordinary weather conditions effecting e.g. the seal populations within the Gulf of Finland. The considerations concerning wintertime aerial seal censuses (Activity T 2.3) have been explained in the previous chapters of the report.

Other thing that has affected project performance has been the initial lack of interest/participation of the harbour authorities, that has somewhat complicated implementation of the pilot projects and the development of joint management methods. However, in December 2007 contacts within Ust-Luga harbour authorities/company have been established, and after that new, promising steps towards mutually beneficial cooperation in the frame of project action plan took place. In cooperation with Ust-Luga design-engineering company PNH project experts participated in preparing the Program of complex development of Ust-Luga area. Unfortunately, despite of the efforts of PNH project partners, there was no willingness on cooperation from Primorsk harbour administration.

E. Partners and other Co-operation:

Each partner organisation should write a one-page assessment on its role and co-operation in the project. This does not have to be limited to the questions in this section.

1. How do you assess the relationship between the formal partners of this project (i.e. those partners which have signed a partnership statement)? Give details about the division of responsibilities, transfer of expertise, and overall co-ordination of the partnership(s).

Metsähallitus as the Beneficiary and SPNS as the main partner responsible for project coordination and implementation in Russia have concluded a bilateral cooperation agreement concerning the responsibilities of each organization within implementation of the project. SPNS has in turn concluded cooperation contracts with the other two Russian partners concerning their obligations in implementation of the project.

Metsähallitus had, according to the partnership agreement concluded with SPNS, as the Overall Lead Partner of the PNH Project and the Beneficiary of the Grant Contract 2006/132-844, the main responsibility for:

- the overall contractual responsibility for the implementation of the PNH Project towards the EC Delegation
- overall supervision of the project implementation
- ensuring the overall quality and effectiveness of the project outcome and ensuring that environmental standards are applied in project implementation
- receiving the awarded grant and transferring of funds to the SPNS in a manner that guarantees successful implementation of the Project
- concerning the Interreg part of the Project, transfer of funding to SPNS in accordance with Annex IV of the Agreement
- setting up the financial administration procedures for the Project
- providing the financial contribution of Metsähallitus for the project implementation as defined in the Financing Plan of the Grant Contract
- organising the auditing of the project accounts and communication with the auditor on the financial issues of the Project

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- preparing and submitting technical and financial reports and requests for payment to EC Delegation as defined in the Grant Contract
- chairing the Supervisory Board
- all the written communication towards the EC Delegation; Project Officer Ms Valentina Chaplinskaya, Project Manager Mr Pedro Henriques and Head of Finance & Contract Section Mr Boris Iarochevitch; and informing the Partners about the communication within due time
- circulating any instruction, note, information etc. from the EC Delegation to SPNS as quickly as possible
- maintaining the original auditing documents and original receipts of Metsähallitus, and the copies received from the Partners for external auditing as defined in the Grant Contract
- supervising the preparation of the bi-annual Action plans for the Project prepared by SPNS
- disseminating the Project information and results in general in accordance with the Grant Contract.

Metsähallitus acted in close cooperation with the Russian partners, especially with SPNS as the lead Russian partner with the main responsibility of implementation of the project in Russia. The cooperation was realized through continuous communication via e-mail, by phone and within work meetings. All questions related to project implementation as well as questions related to project management including financial management questions) were discussed with the partners in order to reach mutually acceptable conclusions.

Saint Petersburg Naturalist Society (SPNS) as the responsible partner for the general coordination and project implementation of the Tacis part of the PNH Project in Russia had the main responsibility for:

- implementing the Russian part of the Project as a whole in accordance with the Grant Contract
- supervising and negotiating with the Russian partners on the daily implementation of the Project
- ensuring the overall quality and effectiveness of the project outcome and ensuring that environmental standards are applied in project implementation
- overall financial management and accountancy of the Tacis part of the PNH Project in Russia, that is requesting, receiving and managing the funding provided as advance payments from the Grant Contract from Metsähallitus, according to the conditions set in the Grant Contract and its Annexes and the provisions set in the Agreement for successful implementation of the Project
- providing the financial contribution for the project implementation as defined in the Financing Plan of the Grant Contract
- contracting personnel and purchasing goods according to the Action plan and budget and the rules set in the Grant Contract and its Annexes
- putting out to tender purchases as set in the Grant Contract and its Annexes and retaining the related documentation (bids, contracts, order forms, invoices etc.)
- providing valid receipts of expenditures of the Project so that the accrued expenditures can be accepted as eligible project costs, as well as compiling time sheets and supporting documents stating the expenditures in staff costs, as conditioned in Annex II, Article 16.3 of the Grant Contract
- providing the information required for technical and financial reports and requests for payment to Metsähallitus as defined in the Grant Contract
- sending the accounting files and documents to Metsähallitus according to the schedule set in the provisions of this Agreement
- retaining the accounting documents as well as the supporting documents for the accounts of SPNS for external auditing as defined in the Grant Contract
- providing timely any relevant information concerning the Grant Contract and/or the Agreement to Metsähallitus and to the Russian partners
- visibility and publicity measures in Russia including the establishment and maintenance of project web page
- preparing the bi-annual Action plans for the Supervisory Board approval

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- participating the work of the Supervisory Board of the Project as a member

SPNS acted in close contact both with Metsähallitus and Russian partners and subcontractors. Within Russian territory there were practically every day's telephone talks with partners and, if necessary, regular personal meetings. All project activities were deeply discussed and coordinated among partners and experts. Results of internal discussions and information on current project status were immediately transferred to Metsähallitus for information and coordination.

Committee for natural resources and environmental protection of the Leningrad

Region (LenGov) had the responsibility for

- ensuring that the project implementation adequately follows the rules and procedures of the Leningrad Oblast Government
- providing the financial contribution for the project implementation as defined in the Financing Plan of the Grant Contract
- providing valid receipts of expenditures of the Project so that the accrued expenditures can be accepted as eligible project costs
- retaining the accounting documents as well as the supporting documents for the accounts of LenGov for external auditing as defined in the Grant Contract
- compiling and maintaining original time sheets as well as supporting documents stating the expenditures in staff costs, as conditioned in Annex II, Article 16.3 of the Grant Contract for external auditing
- providing timely any relevant information concerning the Grant Contract and/or the Agreement to Metsähallitus and to the Russian partners
- participating the work of the Supervisory Board of the Project as a member

LenGov implemented its part of the project in close cooperation with SPNS and Len Obl. As it is mentioned above, there were regular talks and meetings with Russian partners for discussing current project issues including financial contribution, cooperation with other projects and programs funded from Leningrad Region Government (first of all the Regional Target Program on PAs support). LenGov project experts took active part in practical work on pilot project areas.

Fund Lenoblpriroda (LenObl) had the responsibility for

- providing the financial contribution for the project implementation as defined in the Financing Plan of the Grant Contract
- requesting, receiving and managing the funding provided as advance payments from the Grant Contract from SPNS according to the provisions set in the Agreement for successful implementation of the project
- providing valid receipts of expenditures of the project so that the accrued expenditures can be accepted as eligible project costs
- retaining the accounting documents as well as the supporting documents for the accounts of LenObl for external auditing as defined in the Grant Contract
- compiling and maintaining original time sheets as well as supporting documents stating the expenditures in staff costs, as conditioned in Annex II, Article 16.3 of the Grant Contract for external auditing
- providing timely any relevant information concerning the Grant Contract and/or the Agreement to Metsähallitus and to the Russian partners
- participating the work of the Supervisory Board of the Project as a member

LenObl was one of key Russian partners as it is directly responsible for practical activities on PAs. Within the project its activities were coordinated with other partners, first of all LenGov and SPNS. Also LenObl made important contribution in networking with local businesses (Ust-Luga harbour etc.).

2. How would you assess the relationship between your organisation and state authorities in the project countries? How has this relationship affected the project?

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The Committee for natural resources and environmental protection of the Leningrad Region being one of the key project partners is also a state authority. Its participation into the project as a partner was of crucial importance. Without direct partnership with state authorities responsible for nature resources management and environmental protection the implementation of this kind of projects would be severely complicated.

3. Where applicable, describe your relationship with any other organisations involved in implementing the project, e.g. associated partners or sub-contractors.

PLC “Veles-Volkhov” as a sub-partner has been very active in implementing the pilot project at River Svir Delta. The company has provided high-quality expertise on hunting and agricultural land use in the area and has facilitated cooperation with local stakeholders.

Geoid Ltd. being a sub-contractor for preparing digital maps has proved itself as very professional organisation with high awareness of environmental issues.

SPNS has close relations with regional environmental NGOs, and one of them – “Zeleny Mir” (Green World) became a very important partner in implementing the project as it facilitated public participation in managing pilot project areas Kurgalsky and Lebiazhye.

4. How do you evaluate co-operation with the European Commission services?

Cooperation with the EC services/delegation in Moscow has worked very well. EC Delegation project officer has provided answers to questions emerged during implementation of the project with prompt and co-operative manner.

F. Other

1. How is the visibility of the EU contribution being ensured in the project?

The EU flag sign as well as information about the SEF-R Neighbourhood Program have been presented in project materials as well as on project web site.

2. Has the grant so far helped secure new sources of funding for the project? Please give details.

3.
The activities supportive to the joint project (eg. work meetings and seminars not included in the original project budget) have been allotted funding within the framework of trans-boundary cooperation of Metsähallitus, funded by SYKE (Finnish Environment Institute). Negotiations for continuation of work done in PNH project have been started with the aim of drafting a new project proposal on the theme/themes of PNH. However, this development is hindered by the fact that Russia so far has not signed the contract on ENPI with the European Union.

4. Please add any further information that would help the Commission to make a balanced assessment of the project to date.

All the relevant information has been presented in the previous chapters of this report.

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5. Do you have any objection to this report being published? If so, please state your objections here.

Neither the beneficiary nor the other project partners have objection to this report being published.

Name of the person responsible for the project: Stig Johansson

Signature:

Location: Tikkurila, Finland

Date foreseen for report:

Date report submitted:

17.6.2009

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- Annex 1. Brief summary of the opening seminar (Act T 1.1)
- Annex 2. Brief summaries of the workshops on pilot projects (Act T 1.2)
- Annex 3. Brief summary of the study tour (Act T 1.3)
- Annex 4. Report on the creation of the digital maps of the four pilot areas (Act T 1.4)
- Annex 5. Seminar materials on the training seminar on entrepreneurship (Act T 1.5)
- Annex 6A. Description of proposed nature trails on Bolshoy Berezovye Islands (Act T 1.6)
- Annex 6B. Technical report on preparing justification for functional zoning of the reserve “Berezovye Islands” (A summary in English with the report in Russian) (Act T 1.6)
- Annex 7. Materials for the management plan of pilot area Berezovye Islands (Act T 1.6)
- Annex 8. Report of the activities carried out within the pilot project at Lebyazhie (Act T 1.7)
- Annex 9. Information boards constructed within the project. Pilot area Lebyazhie (Act T 1.7 and Act T 1.10)
- Annex 10. Report on ornithological inventories on the pilot site “Kurgalsky Peninsula” within the framework of the project People, Nature and Harbours (Act T 1.8)
- Annex 11. Materials for the management plan of the pilot area Kurgalsky (Act T 1.8)
- Annex 12. Plan for the visitor centre of pilot area Kurgalsky (In Russian) (Act T 1.8)
- Annex 13. Report on arranging the facilities in the territory of the complex reserve Kurgalsky (Translation from Russian) (Act T 1.8)
- Annex 14. Information boards constructed within the project. Pilot area Kurgalsky (Act T 1.8 and Act T 1.10)
- Annex 15. Bird fauna of the southern part of the Ramsar site Svir Bay: Current state and conservation issues (Act T 1.9)
- Annex 16. Land use plan for the pilot area River Svir Delta (Act T 1.9)
- Annex 17. Booklets on pilot areas (4 booklets; Berezovye Islands, Kurgalsky, Lebyazhie, River Svir Delta) (Act T 1.10)
- Annex 18. Program of the marine methodological workshop (Act T 2.1)
- Annex 19. Report on the inventories of underwater macroalgae communities of the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland in the pilot sites of the People, Nature and Harbours project (Act T 2.2)
- Annex 20. Report on the pinnipeds of the Gulf of Finland and Ladoga Lake within the project People, Nature and Harbours (Act T 2.3)
- Annex 21. Program of the joint Russian-Finnish seminar on project results and list of participants (Act T 2.4)
- Annex 22. List of people that have participated in project activities.