



LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453

Progress Report

Covering the project activities from 01/10/2011 to 31/10/2012

Reporting Date

10/12/2012

**Establishment of a Plant Micro-Reserve Network in Cyprus for the Conservation of
Priority Species and Habitats (PLANT-NET CY)**

Data Project

Project location	Nicosia, Cyprus
Project start date:	01/01/2010
Project end date:	30/06/2013 Extension date: -
Total budget	€ 1.547.297
EC contribution:	€ 1.070.265
(%) of eligible costs	69,17%

Data Beneficiary

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List of key-words and abbreviations (when appropriate).

AB: Associated Beneficiary

APM: Assistant Project Manager

ARI: Agriculture Research Institute

BGDF: Botanical Gardens of Department of Forests

CB: Coordinating Beneficiary (Department of Environment)

DE: Department of Environment

DF: Department of Forests

EC: European Commission

FDO: Financial Desk Officer

FEOC: Federation of Environmental Organisations of Cyprus

IR: Inception Report

MANRE: Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment

MEC: Ministry of Education and Culture

MTR: Mid-Term Report

NKUA: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

PA: Project Accountant

PM: Project Manager

PMR: Plant Micro-Reserve

PMT: Project Management Team

PMTL: Project Management Team Leader

PR1: First Progress Report

SB: Stakeholders Board

SC: Scientific Committee

SCo: Scientific Coordinator

TDO: Technical Desk Officer

UNDP-ACT: United Nations Development Programme - Action for Cooperation and Trust

VAT: Value Added Tax

1. Executive summary

1.1. General progress

The project «Establishment of a Plant Micro-Reserve Network in Cyprus for the Conservation of Priority Species and Habitats» (PLANT-NET CY) focuses on the improvement of the conservation status of four priority species and two priority habitat types of Cyprus that are found in Natura 2000 sites.

The project's concept is innovative in Cyprus, since this is the first time that the PMR approach is implemented in the country for the conservation of priority endemic species and habitat types. The project combines the development of both *in situ* and *ex situ* measures for the conservation of the targeted species and habitat types. Moreover, the project seeks the contribution of the local communities living adjacent to the PMRs and promotes their involvement in the conservation activities.

The project has already achieved a positive impact on the population of the targeted species and habitat types, as a result of the application of sound species / habitat-specific conservation measures. In addition, these measures also benefit other endemic, rare and threatened plant species found within the PMRs.

The project enhances the implementation of the Habitats' Directive (92/43/EEC) and achieved the nomination of an Article in the Cyprus' Forestry Legislation [Article 16: «Declaration of forest monuments and Micro-Reserves»], which defines the legal status of the PMRs as areas of great importance for the conservation of biodiversity (**Annex 1**).

So far, all activities ensuring the project's proper implementation have been carried out since the beginning of the project (#1.1. in *Mid-Term Report (MTR)*, page 5 – 24/01/2012).

1.2. Assessment as to whether the project objectives and work plan are still viable

The project's objectives are still viable and the work plan is implemented according to the original plan. Several factors/developments have contributed towards this direction, such as i) the PMR approach is a widely accepted concept for the conservation of species/habitat types, ii) the scientific and management bodies (Project Management Team, Scientific Committee, Stakeholders Board) of the project work properly and carry out effectively their mission, iii) the project beneficiaries have developed continuous and effective cooperation for the efficient implementation of the project and for the dissemination of its objectives and results to the general public, iv) the project's actions are carried out within the proposal's timeframe (#3. *Technical Part*), v) the local communities neighbouring the PMRs have been involved in the project and they are very willing to contribute towards the successful implementation of the project, vi) the project beneficiaries have achieved to promote the ratification of a new legislation for the assurance of PMRs' legal status (#3.3), vii) the project beneficiaries have achieved to promote the inclusion of the PMR approach in the curriculum of the primary education, as a concept for nature conservation (*Annex 6 in MTR*, page 11 – 24/01/2012) and viii) the project has become a networking platform of all previous and running LIFE projects that have adopted the PMR approach in Europe (*Annex 28 in First Progress Report (PR1)*, page 19 – 01/09/2011).

1.3. Problems encountered

In general, the project has not encountered serious problems during its implementation thus there were no important deviations in carrying out project's actions. Certain difficulties encountered were noted in previous reports and have already been addressed.

2. Administrative part

For the effective administrative coordination and proper implementation of the project, the «Organization and Management Chart» has been adopted, since the beginning of the project. Based on this chart, three bodies have been nominated: 1) Project Management Team (PMT), 2) Stakeholders Board (SB) and 3) Scientific Committee (SC).

The PMT is responsible for the overall management of the project and its members are into communication in a regular basis. They also communicate with the representatives of the associated beneficiaries, via the Project Manager (PM). The changes in the PMT, which took place have already been reported to the EC (#2 in *PR1*, page 6 – 01/09/2011 and in *MTR*, page 8 – 24/01/2012). These changes were: 1) The replacement of the Project Management Team Leader (PMTL) and 2) The reduction of the PM's working hours in the project and at the same time the recruitment of an Assistant Project Manager (APM). These changes do not influence the normal implementation of the project neither modify its budget.

The nomination of the members of the SB and the SC took place at the early stages of the project and both bodies carry out their mission and meet according to the foreseen timeline (#3.1.22 and 3.1.23).

The project's financial administration is carried out according to the guidelines assessed by the Project Accountant (PA) in the «Guide for keeping and checking the project financial files» (*Annex 18 in IR*, page 17 – 30/09/2010) and based on the comments received by the LIFE+ programme's Financial Desk Officer (FDO). In addition, the project has a mid-financial report by an External Audit.

Till this reporting period (October 2012), the PMT prepared and sent to the EC (and the External Monitoring Team (EMT)) the following reports: 1) Inception Report (IR) – 30/09/2010, 2) First Progress Report (PR1) – 01/09/2011, 3) Mid-Term Report with payment request (MTR) – 24/01/2012 and 4) the present Second Progress Report – 30/11/12.

Until now (October 2012), the project's actions have been carried out according to the initial time frame and the foreseen deliverables have been prepared. It is not expected any delay in project's end date (June 2013).

3. Technical part

3.1. Actions

3.1.1. Action A.1: Inventory of the localities of the targeted species/habitats and determination of the boundaries of the micro-reserves

This action focused on the inventory of the localities of the known subpopulations of the targeted species and habitat types and on the inventory of new localities within the respective sites. The project has contributed to a more complete knowledge of the population distribution of the targeted species and habitat types. The action was successfully implemented and completed within the proposed timeframe (January 2010 – June 2012). As a result of this action, the boundaries of each PMR were determined.

Deliverables¹:

- Database with data gathered through the inventory of the localities of the targeted species/habitats (*Annex 2 in IR, page 2 - 30/09/2010*).
- Five 1:5000 scale maps (one for each PMR) with the exact boundaries of the micro-reserves (*Annex 3 in IR, page 7 - 30/09/2010*).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE)²: The deliverables of this action will be utilised for the proper management of the PMRs even after the end of the project.

3.1.2. Action A.2: Detailed mapping of the plant micro-reserves

The action focused on the precise mapping of each PMR and provided information about the exact subpopulation distribution of the targeted species, the habitat types which occur within each PMR and other data such as slope, aspect and soil type. The action started earlier than foreseen in the proposal of the project (February 2010 instead of June 2010) and completed on time (December 2010).

Deliverables:

- Five high-resolution and large-scale (1:500) maps (one for each PMR) (*Annex 4 in PRI, page 7 - 01/09/2011*).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

¹ All Deliverables and Milestones of the project are available on its website at: <http://www.plantnet.org.cy/deliverables.html> and <http://www.plantnet.org.cy/milestones.html>, respectively.

² At the field «Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE)» are indicated the preliminary estimates of the project's beneficiaries for the activities which will be developed after the end of the project within the framework of the respective actions. All After-LIFE activities implemented within the PMRs will be described in detail in the «After-LIFE Conservation Plan» (Action E.6).

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The deliverable of this action will be utilised even after the end of the project.

3.1.3. Action A.3: Preparation of Monitoring Plans for each PMR

The action aimed at the development of well-designed and complete Monitoring Plans (one for each PMR), which constitute essential tools for the monitoring of the targeted species/habitat types. The action was carried out according to the timeframe of the proposal (January 2010 – December 2010).

Deliverables:

- Five Monitoring Plans (one for each PMR) (*Annex 5 in PR1, page 7 - 01/09/2011*).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The Monitoring Plans and the results that will arise during their implementation will be used for the proper preparation of the «After – LIFE Conservation Plan».

3.1.4. Action A.4: Preparation of Management Plans for each Plant Micro-Reserve

The purpose of this action was the development of integrated Management Plans (one for each PMR) comprising of *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation measures for each priority species/habitat type and for the respective PMRs. The Management Plans were approved by the SC of the project and officially validated by the competent authorities (Department of Environment (DE) and Department of Forests (DF)), which are responsible for the implementation of the European and National legislation related to the protection and conservation of nature as well as the application of the Habitat's Directive (92/43/EEC) and the effectiveness of the *Natura 2000* sites network in Cyprus (*Annex 7 in PR1, page 8 - 01/09/2011*). The action was completed in December 2010.

Deliverables:

- Five Management Plans (one for each PMR) (*Annex 6 in PR1, page 8 - 01/09/2011*).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The Management Plans and the results that will arise during their implementation, similarly to Monitoring Plans, will be used for the proper preparation of the «After – LIFE Conservation Plan».

3.1.5. Action A.5: Assessment of the genetic diversity and population structure for each of the 5 targeted priority species and *Cedrus brevifolia*.

The main goal of this Action is to assess the genetic diversity and population structure of each of the targeted species and the habitat type *9590 - *Cedrus brevifolia* forests (*Cedrosetum brevifoliae*). The level of wild species populations' genetic diversity should be seriously considered when assessing impacts of translocations on genetic diversity and population persistence. With the increasing number of threatened species, it is important to investigate the effects of translocations upon genetic diversity. For the targeted priority species (**Arabis kennedyae*, **Astragalus macrocarpus* subsp. *lefkarensis*, **Centaurea akamantis* and **Ophrys kotschyi*) there is not any previous knowledge on their genetic diversity, while for *Cedrus brevifolia*, there are recent scientific publications. Investigation of the genetic analysis showed important results which are presented in **Annex 2: DELIVERABLE – Report on the genetic diversity and population structure for each of the 4 targeted priority species and *Cedrus brevifolia*.**

The results for this action provide powerful tools for the sustainable *in situ* conservation and improving the genetic diversity of the targeted populations within the PMRs (**Annex 3: DELIVERABLE - Report on the necessity and feasibility of reinforcement of existing populations**). Moreover, the results support the *ex situ* conservation of the targeted species, based on the sampling strategy for the collection of plant material that will be used in the botanical gardens and the seed bank (Actions C6 and C7).

The action was foreseen to end in September 2011 but it ended in May 2012. This delay was due to: 1) the biology of the targeted species (periodical growth) leading to the limitation of the sampling season, and, hence, in some cases sampling ended in mid 2011, 2) the electricity problem which occurred in the whole island during July 2011 – September 2011 (explosion in Mari area), caused problems to the lab-work processes. The lab work for DNA extraction resumed when the electricity problems were solved and the equipment was repaired and 3) the necessity of further treatment (purification) of the samples before molecular analysis due to the fact that is the first time that these species are studied.

Deliverables:

- Report on the genetic diversity and population structure for each of the 4 targeted priority species and *Cedrus brevifolia* (**Annex 2**).
- Report on the necessity and feasibility of reinforcement of existing populations (**Annex 3**).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Based on the proposal of the project this action was foreseen to be implemented via «External Assistance». However, following the permission that was provided by the UNDP-ACT (associated beneficiary) to FU personnel to use UNDP's lab and all the molecular analysis' specialized equipment, FU made a partial modification of the proposal. The change concerns the purchase of additional equipment and the implementation of lab work in Cyprus (DNA isolation). The genetic analyses will be implemented via «External Assistance» as foreseen. The EC approved before these changes (IR – 30/09/2010). The change does not alter the purpose or the expected result of the Action.

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Due to the change at the technical part of the action there was alteration at the action's costs which is already presented at the IR (30/09/2010) and the letter answering the EC's questions sent with PR1 (01/09/2011).

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): All conservation activities that will take place at the PMRs after the end of the project will take into consideration the results of this Action.

3.1.6. Action A.6: Learning from the experiences of other EU countries that adopted the PMR approach - Training of staff that will be involved in the implementation of the project

The purpose of this action was to familiarise the scientists involved in the project with the PMRs approach as it is already implemented in other European countries. The knowledge and experiences that the scientists gained, were transferred to their organisations and utilised towards the successful implementation of the project. The action started in May 2010 and it was completed three months after the date that was initially scheduled (June 2011 instead of March 2011) (#3.1.6 in MTR, page 14 - 24/01/2012).

Scientists of the project visited: 1) The PMR network in Crete (LIFE04 NAT/GR/000104) from the 16th to the 19th of May 2010, 2) The PMR networks in Valencia (LIFE93 NAT/E/011100, LIFE95 NAT/E/00856, LIFE99 NAT/E/006417, LIFE03 NAT/E/0064) and Menorca (LIFE00 NAT/E/007355) from the 24th to the 30th of October 2010 and 3) The PMR network in Bulgaria (LIFE08 NAT/BG/279) from the 14th to the 17th of June 2011.

Deliverables: None

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: The delay in completing the action resulted from changing one of the foreseen destinations. Members for the PLANT-NET CY visited the PMR network in Bulgaria, which has been established within the framework of a running LIFE+ project (LIFE08 NAT/BG/279), instead of the PMR network in Slovenia.

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: There was a change in the action's budget following the transfer of External assistance costs (€9,000) from DE to FU. These costs were foreseen for purchasing services from the respective European projects for training (Learning from other PMRs). This change was approved by the EC (# 3.1.6 in IR, page 10 - 30/09/2010 and Annex 24 in PRI, page 17 - 01/09/2011).

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): Not applied

3.1.7. Action B: Purchase/lease of land and/or compensation payments for use rights

NON APPLICABLE

3.1.8. Action C.1: Establishment of the Plant Micro-Reserves in the field

The action focused on the establishment of the five PMRs in the field and was successfully carried out. Signs, with the logo of the project, were placed on the borderline of each PMR and indicate their boundaries (*Annex 9 in PRI, page 10 – 01/09/2011*). Additionally, in three out of the five PMRs (PMR 1, PMR 2 and PMR 5) a pathway was created (**Annex 4: Information on the conservation activities (Actions C) - Table 1**). In addition, parts of PMR 1 (**O. kotschy*) and PMR 4 (**C. akamantis*) have been fenced for the prevention of significant number of plants' predation (**Annex 4 - Table 1**). The pathways' construction and

the fencing which took place followed the guidelines defined by the Management Plans (Action A.4).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The PMRs will continue to be active after the end of the project and their management will be under the responsibility of DE (PMRs 1 and 5) and DF (PMRs 2, 3 and 4).

3.1.9. Action C.2: Installation of permanent monitoring plots

The action's aim was to install permanent monitoring plots for continuous monitoring of the target species and habitat types, mainly inside the PMRs but also in neighbouring locations for comparison purposes. The action was successfully implemented within the foreseen timeline (January 2010 – June 2011). The number and size of the established monitoring plots in each PMR were determined by the Monitoring Plans (Action A.3) and vary according to the targeted species/habitat type (**Annex 4 - Table 2**).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): It will be indicated by the After-LIFE Conservation Plan.

3.1.10. Action C.3: Monitoring of the Plant Micro-Reserves

This action focuses on the monitoring of the PMRs and the targeted species / habitat types, by recording external (biotic and abiotic) factors which affect them, according to the guidelines set in the Monitoring Plans (Action A.3). For the purpose of this action, “monitoring stations” (digital sensors and data loggers) were established in each PMR (except from PMR 3 - a “monitoring station” of the DF, was established at the site within the framework of a different project) (*Annex 10 in PR1, page 11 - 01/09/2011*).

Five Monitoring Reports (one for each PMR) were prepared as it was foreseen in the proposal (June 2012). The reports provide information on the implementation of the monitoring plans that have been prepared within the framework of Action A.3. The Monitoring Reports are attached to the present report (**Annex 5: DELIVERABLE – Five Monitoring Reports (one for each PMR)**). By the end on the project (June 2013) five more reports (Final Monitoring Reports), one for each PMR will be also prepared and delivered with the Final Report to the EC. The action will end in June 2013, according to the project proposal.

Deliverables:

- Operation and maintenance protocol for the Monitoring Stations (*Annex 10 in PR1, page 11 - 01/09/2011*).
- Monitoring Reports (one for each PMR) (**Annex 5**).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: According to the proposal of the project, the deliverable Post-Project, Long-Term Monitoring and Management Plan is mistakenly foreseen to be implemented by July 2013. The deliverable will be prepared by the end of the project (June 2013) and will be sent to the EC as an attachment of the Final Report.

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): It will be indicated by the After-LIFE Conservation Plan.

3.1.11. Action C.4: Application of conservation measures within the Plant Micro-Reserves

This is one of the core actions of the project, since it focuses on developing, testing and applying concrete and environmentally friendly management measures for the conservation of the targeted species and habitats. The action started earlier, in order to extend the period of the application of conservation measures and include the flowering period of the targeted species (April 2010 instead of October 2011). The application of the management measures was done according to the Management Plans (Action A.4). All activities foreseen in the proposal of the project are implemented on time. **Table 3 of Annex 4** presents the progress until present reporting period (October 2012).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: No significant changes were done. The suggestions regarding the implementation of certain management measures by the SC, were accepted and implemented.

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): It will be indicated by the After-LIFE Conservation Plan.

3.1.12. Action C.5: Enrichment of the populations of the targeted species

Enrichment of the populations of the targeted species (apart of **O. kotschyi*) takes place by outplanting plantlets, which are produced in the nurseries of the DF (**Annex 4 – Table 4**). Although the action was foreseen to start in October 2011, preparatory activities such as the collection of seeds of the targeted species from the respective PMRs, were carried out earlier. The timing of outplanting takes into consideration the biology of each species and usually takes place during spring time (March – May). Following the remarks and indications of SC, enrichment will take place also in fall (September – November 2012) in order to avoid the stressful summer environmental conditions for the plantlets (**Annex 6: Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Scientific Committee**). The results of Action A5 are taken into consideration for the enrichment of the genetic diversity of the populations within the PMRs by using plants that origin from different areas. The action will continue until the end of the project (June 2013).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The need of further enrichment of the population of a certain targeted species after the end of the project will be indicated in the After-LIFE Conservation Plan.

3.1.13. Action C.6: Utilisation of existing Botanical Gardens of the FD to achieve the *ex situ* conservation of the targeted plant species

The main aim of this action is to contribute to the long-term survival of the targeted species outside their natural environment, through the establishment of living collections in particular sections of the Botanical Gardens that are located within Troodos, Athalassa and Akamas National Forest Parks. Similarly to Action C.5, preliminary activities such as seed collection and seed germination, started in April 2010 and are seasonally repeated according to the fruiting season of each targeted species. The seedlings produced in the lab from seed germination experiments are delivered to the nurseries of DF to further grow (**Annex 4 - Table 5**). In the Botanical Garden of Troodos saplings of **A. kennedyae* was planted; further, two small-scale habitat types were created, one for *9390 - Scrub and low forest vegetation of *Q. alnifolia* and *9590 – *C. brevifolia* forests (*Cedrosetum brevifoliae*). In addition, in the Botanical Gardens of Athalassa and Akamas, saplings of the species **A. macrocarpus* subsp. *lefkarensi* and **C. akamantis*, respectively, were planted. Planting will continue until the end of the project. The action is estimated to continue without any problems and will end in June 2013.

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: A transfer of man-hours and consequently budget, from Action C.6 to C.7 was made, taking into consideration the reply of the EC to the MTR request (#3.1.13. in MTR, page 21 – 30/09/2011). These man-hours and budget (personnel and consumables) were mistakenly allocated to NKUA as contribution to action C.6 (instead of C.7).

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The living collections of the targeted species will be maintained at the BGDF after the end of the project for dissemination and awareness purposes, as well as for the *ex situ* conservation of the species.

3.1.14. Action C.7: Collection and storage of seeds of the targeted species at the seed bank of the Agricultural Research Institute to achieve the *ex situ* conservation of the targeted taxa.

This action aims to contribute to the long-term survival of the targeted taxa by storing and preserving a representative range of their genetic diversity at the National Seed Bank at the Agricultural Research Institute (ARI) (Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment). The action adopts the provisions of the Management Plans (Action A.4). Seedlots from each targeted species (except from **O. kotschyi* and **Q. alnifolia*, whose seeds cannot be stored in a seed bank) have already been collected, prepared and delivered to the National Seed Bank of ARI (January 2012) (**Annex 7: Storage of seedlots of the targeted species at the seed bank of the Agriculture Research Institute for the *ex-situ* conservation**). Seeds that were collected in 2012, are kept in the laboratory of Frederick University and will be delivered to the ARI as soon as all seedlots are prepared.

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The seedlots will be stored in the National Seed Bank for *ex situ* conservation or future usage, if needed. The storage follows scientifically accepted approaches.

3.1.15. Action C.8: Safekeeping of the Plant Micro-Reserves

Safekeeping of the PMRs is implemented by frequent patrolling of trained staff of the DF (*Annex 11 in PRI, page 13 - 01/09/2011*). The action started earlier (May 2011) than it was initially planned (January 2012), as soon as the PMRs were established in the field (Action C.1).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: The patrolling of trained staff of the DF started earlier than it was initially planned in order to secure the protection of the infrastructure (i.e. meteorological stations) that was established in the PMRs.

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): It will be indicated in the After-LIFE Conservation Plan.

3.1.16. Action D.1: Information campaign, organisation of workshops, seminars and conferences, production of information material

The activities of this action aim to provide information and promote the active involvement of all stakeholders in the project. The action's implementation follows the timeline of the proposal. Until the present reporting period (October 2012) the following activities have taken place:

Notice boards: Ten notice boards (one in each PMR and one within the village neighbouring each PMR) describing the project, were established at strategic places accessible to the public, at the entrance of the respective PMRs and in the neighbouring communities. The cooperation of the local communities with the project's beneficiaries was secured towards placing the notice boards within the boundaries of each community. The ten notice boards are a deliverable of this action (*Annex 12 in PRI, page 13 - 01/09/2011*).

Participatory rural appraisals and local workshops: Four such events took place at the beginning of the project in the communities neighbouring the PMRs, thus facilitating the involvement of local people in the project. The reasons for the delay (July 2010 instead of February 2010) of the implementation of the action was reported in IR (# 3.1.15 in IR, page 12 - 30/09/2010). Four reports from the participatory rural appraisals and local workshops are a deliverable of this action (*Annex 6 in IR, page 12 - 30/09/2010*).

Tourism workshop: One-day seminar took place on the 13th January 2011, in order to inform tour-operators, ecotourism guides and environmental NGOs about the objectives of the project, the important plant biodiversity of the targeted areas and possibilities for ecological tourism. The workshop attracted 50 participants and was addressed by the Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (MANRE) and the Environment Commissioner. «The report on the tourism workshop» is a deliverable of this action (*Annex 13 in PRI, page 14 - 01/09/2011*).

Youth competition: A competition for the youth of Cyprus took place during the school year 2011-2012 in all the public schools of Cyprus. The competition lasted from September 2011 until April 2012, following a request for an extension which was reported in the previous report (# 3.1.16 in MTR, page 23 - 24/01/2012). For the purposes of the action, the FEOC contacted the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (Ministry of Education and Culture - MEC), which promoted the involvement of all schools and educational institutions of Cyprus and the participation of all-age pupils (kindergartens, elementary schools, technical schools and high schools) (*Annex 20 in PR1, page 15 – 01/09/2011*). The theme of the competition was «The involvement of students in environmental activities related to biodiversity» and had five thematic areas. Students could choose a subject under these areas and prepare a 10-photo-album (primary education) or a 3-minute-video (technical and secondary education) (**Annex 8: DELIVERABLE – Report on youth competition**). The participation exceeded the project's expectations (*44 schools - more than 590 students*) and all albums and videos were interesting indicating that youth of Cyprus is aware of the importance of biodiversity and the need of its conservation (**Annex 8**). The winners were awarded at a ceremony which was combined with the event for the celebration of LIFE's 20th anniversary and was organised in cooperation with all LIFE-NAT projects currently running in Cyprus (PLANT-NET CY - LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453, ICOSTACY - LIFE09 NAT/CY/000247, OROKLINI - LIFE10 NAT/CY/000716, JUNIPERCY - LIFE10 NAT/CY/000717). Representatives of the four LIFE projects, local people, representatives of competent authorities (MEC and MANRE) and the Minister of MANRE also participated at the event (**Annex 8**).

Bicommunal workshop: A workshop, involving people from both Greek-Cypriot (GC) and Turkish-Cypriot (TC) communities, took place on the 31st of October 2011. The workshop was carried out at the Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC, premises of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) and was entitled «Workshop on creating an island-wide network of Plant Micro-Reserves» (**Annex 9: DELIVERABLE - Report on bicommunal workshop for experts**). The event was organised by FEOC, UNDP-ACT and the PMT. The workshop brought together GC and TC scientists, environmental organisations and NGOs that got familiarised with the PMR concept and discussed the potential of utilising the PMR approach towards the sustainable management and conservation of rare endemic plant species in Cyprus. The workshop attracted more than 50 participants.

Media coverage: The activities and outputs of the project are foreseen to be promoted by the media through 3 press releases, 3 TV and 2 radio broadcasts and 3 articles in the newspapers/magazines. These are also deliverables of the action. So far, the project implemented 2/3 press releases (*Annex 7 in IR, page 12 - 30/09/2010, Annex 14 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011*), 2/3 TV broadcasts (*Annex 15 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011*), 2/2 radio broadcasts (*Annex 15 in PR1, page 14- 01/09/2011 and Annex 3 in MTR, page 24 - 24/01/2012*) and 2/3 articles (*Annex 16 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011 and Annex 10: DELIVERABLE – Media coverage: article in newspaper and magazine*). The activity will end according the project proposal (June 2013).

Information material: The information material includes leaflets, posters, DVD and newsletters based on the project's proposal.

- Newsletters: Total of 3000 copies (1000 for each of the years 2010, 2011, 2012). These newsletters are the deliverables of this action and have already been produced and disseminated to all the involved groups (June 2010, 2011, 2012) (*Annex 8 in IR, page 12 - 30/09/2010, Annex 17 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011 and Annex 11:*

DELIVERABLE – Third newsletter). The recipient list and the third newsletter are attached with this report.

- Leaflets: A leaflet was prepared in three languages (Greek, English and Turkish (2000 copies for each language) providing information about the targeted priority species / habitat of each PMR and the conservation objectives of the project (*Annex 19 in PR1, page 15 - 01/09/2011*).
- Coloured posters: General information about the PMR approach and the project's activities is presented on these posters (500 copies), which were mainly distributed to the primary and secondary schools, as well as to the project's beneficiaries (*Annex 18 in PR1, page 15 - 01/09/2011*).

Deliverables:

- Four reports from the participatory rural appraisals and local workshops (*Annex 6 in IR, page 12 - 30/09/2010*).
- Media coverage: 1 press release (*Annex 7, in IR, page 12 - 30/09/2010*).
- First newsletter (*Annex 8 in IR, page 12 - 30/09/2010*).
- Ten notice boards (*Annex 12 in PR1, page 13 - 01/09/2011*).
- Report from the tourism workshop (*Annex 13 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011*).
- Media coverage: press release (*Annex 14 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011*).
- Media coverage: Presentations in one radio and two TV broadcasts (CD) (*Annex 15 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011*).
- Media coverage: article in newspaper and magazine (*Annex 16 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011*).
- Second newsletter (*Annex 17 in PR1, page 14 - 01/09/2011*).
- Posters (*Annex 18 in PR1, page 15 - 01/09/2011*).
- Leaflets (in Greek, English and Turkish) (*Annex 19 in PR1, page 15 - 01/09/2011*).
- Media coverage: Presentation in one radio broadcast (CD) (*Annex 3 in MTR, page 24 - 24/01/2012*).
- Report on youth competition (**Annex 8**).
- Report on bicommunal workshop for experts (**Annex 9**).
- Media coverage: article in newspaper/magazine (**Annex 10**).
- Third newsletter (**Annex 11**).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: For two of the dissemination activities, namely: 1) Youth Competition (it took place in April 2012 instead of September 2011) and 2) DVD (it will be prepared by June 2013 instead of December 2011), an extension was requested for their more efficient implementation (#3.1.16 in PR1, page 14 – 01/09/2011). The requested changes do not have any impact on the course of the project. EC has already been informed about these changes through the PR1 and the MTR.

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: There were some changes regarding the financial part of this action, of which the EC is already informed (#4.2. in PR1, page 24 – 01/09/2011 and #3.1.16 in MTR, page 23 – 24/01/2012). There was a transfer of funds from UNDP – ACT to FU which regards: 1) personnel costs of the two Turkish-Cypriot Plant Ecologists (€9,620), who work for the project and 2) catering costs for the Bicomunal workshop (€1,000). Additionally, it was reported (# 4.2 in PR1, page 24 – 01/09/2011 and #3.1.16 in MTR, page 23 – 24/01/2012) an increase of the external assistance costs for the DVD preparation (from €500 to €4,000) and also for the promotion campaign of Youth Competition (from €1,000 to €3,000). These increases do not change the project's overall budget, and they are within the foreseen limits. The EC has been already informed on these changes.

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): Not applied

3.1.17. Action D.2: Technical publications, website development, CD-ROM production, Layman's report

This action focuses on the presentation and publication of the scientific data and the results that arise from the project. The action started with the construction of the website (*Annex 10 in IR, page 13 - 30/09/2010*). A site meter has been added at the cover page of the website following the indications of the EMT. Additionally, the project's beneficiaries adopted all indications of the EC following the IR (*Annex 24 in PR1, page 17 – 01/09/2011*). The website has over 50 visits per month, which covers the target number of visitors (**Annex 12: A report showing the number of visitors of the project's website**).

The dissemination of the project's scientific results was carried out through the participation of the project's members in scientific conferences. The project was presented in more than three scientific conferences (in seven conferences), as indicated in the proposal. In five out of the seven conferences the participation cost was covered by the project's budget (*Annex 11 in IR, page 13 – 30/09/2011* and *Annex 22 in PR1, page 16 – 01/09/2011*), while the participation in the other two conferences was covered by other financial sources (see # 3.4.). The action follows the timeline of the proposal of the project and will end in June 2013.

Deliverables:

- Project website (**www.plantnet.org.cy**) (*Annex 10 in IR, page 13 - 30/09/2010*).
- Publications in three international conferences (*Annex 11 in IR, page 13 - 30/09/2010* and *Annex 22 in PR1, page 16 - 01/09/2011*).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The project's website will keep operating after the end of the project, for at least 5 years

3.1.18. Action D.3: Operation of Information Centres within three Botanical Gardens

This action focuses on the operation of Information Centres within the three Botanical Gardens (BG) of the DF, which are situated within three National Forest Parks (Troodos, Athalassa, Akamas), for the promotion of public awareness about conservation values, the objectives of the project and the importance of the targeted species. The action started in December 2011 as foreseen and living collections of the targeted species are already exhibited to the visitors. Apart of establishing the living collections, the promotion of public awareness was supported by establishing a section for the PMR approach in the Botanical Gardens. This section presents general information about the project. For the purposes of this action, deliverables of Action D.1 (information materials) and Action C.6 are utilised in this section, while a poster was designed and displayed within each Information Centre (**Annex 13: Poster for the Information Centres of the Botanical Gardens of the Department of Forests**).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The Information Centres of the BGs will continue to operate even after the end of the project to inform visitors about the project and the PMR concept.

3.1.19. Action D.4: Preparation and publication of a book on PMR experiences

This action aims at publishing a book (500 copies, coloured, 150 pp, A5 size) which will present the knowledge and experience that has been accumulated during the last 15 years from successful, LIFE funded, PMR projects. The book will present scientific information and best practices on effective conservation management measures developed within PMRs in several European countries. The contribution of scientists who lead PMR projects in other European countries will be sought. The action started in July 2010 and the book will be published at the final stages of the project (May 2013) including the experiences accumulated through this project as well (**Annex 14: Presentation of the format and the table of contents followed for the preparation of the PMR Book**).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): Not applied

3.1.20. Action E.1: Project management

This Action focuses on the effective administrative, scientific and financial coordination and proper implementation of the project. The management of the project is based on the Organisation and Management Chart (**Annex 15: Table of personnel involved at the project**) and Project Management Team (*Annex 23 in PRI, page 16 - 01/09/2011*). The members of the Project Management Team (PMT) are in constant communication with the representatives of each beneficiary to monitor and assess the progress achieved in each action of the project.

The representative of the External Monitoring Team (EMT) [Dr. Georgia Valaoras] visited the project and met with the PMT and the project's beneficiaries on the 13th – 15th of April 2010 (*IR – 30/09/2010*), the 9th – 10th of June 2011 (*PR1 – 01/09/2011*) and the 7th – 8th of March 2012. In addition, on the 7th – 8th of March 2012 representatives of EC visited the project: 1) the Technical Desk Officer (TDO) [Mrs Muriel Drukman] and the Financial Desk Officer (FDO) [Mrs Evi Tsourounaki].

The PMT has already sent to the EC the: 1. IR (30/09/2010), 2. PR1 (01/09/2011) and 3. MTR with payment request (24/01/2012). The present report is the «*Second Progress Report*». In **Annex 16: Answers to the questions of the European Commission** the PMT answers the EC questions that were received following the MTR. The next report will be the «*Final Report with payment request*» (up to six months after the project's end). The action finishes with the end of the project (June 2013).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: There were changes of the personnel participating in PMT. These changes do not influence the normal course of the project neither alter its financial part. Description of these changes are presented in # 2.

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: see # 4

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): Not applied

3.1.21. Action E.2: Project monitoring

This action is designed to measure the effectiveness of the project actions as compared to the initial situation and the objectives and expected results. The action started in January 2010 with the development of the «Monitoring Protocol», which was approved by the SC. The «Monitoring Protocol» consists the base for the quantitative and qualitative monitoring of the project by the PMT and the SC. The progress of the project was evaluated during the 2nd (*Annex 25 in PR1, page 17 – 01/09/2011*) and the 3rd meeting of the SC (**Annex 17: Monitoring Protocol of the Project Implementation**). The PMT in coordination with the SC will keep assessing the project's implementation using the «Monitoring Protocol» until the end of the project (June 2013).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): Not applied

3.1.22. Action E.3: Operation of the Scientific Committee

The role of the SC of the project is to provide scientific and technical support to the major decisions of the project. According to the project proposal, the SC had three official meetings (13/04/2010: *Annex 15, in IR, page 15 – 30/09/2010*, 04/04/2011: *Annex 26 in PR1, page 17 – 01/09/2011* and 26/04/2012: **Annex 6: Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Scientific Committee**). The fourth meeting of the SC will take place during the last year of the project (April 2013). During the meetings, the members of the SC are informed on the project's progress and evaluate the results of its actions based on the «Monitoring Protocol». The members of the SC are in continuous, informal contact with the SCo and the PM. The operation of the SC will continue until the end of the project.

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): Not applied

3.1.23. Action E.4: Operation of the Stakeholders Board

The SB provides a platform for the cooperation of the project beneficiaries with the local, regional and national administrative authorities. The SB promotes the awareness activities of the project and the participation of local communities in conservation and management initiatives. The members of the SB are in continuous, informal contact with the PM and they also meet officially according to the project's proposal. Up until now (November 2012), three meetings of the SB took place (05/02/2010: *Annex 16 in IR, page 16 – 30/09/2010*, 13/01/2011: *Annex 27 in PR1, page 18 – 01/09/2011* and 18/01/2012: **Annex 18: Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Stakeholders Board**). The fourth and last meeting of the SB will take place in 2013. The operation of the SB will continue till the end of the project (June 2013).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): Not applied

3.1.24. Action E.5: Networking with other projects

The project aims to provide a platform for networking of all previous LIFE projects focusing on the establishment of PMRs in Europe, through which scientific information and best practices will be exchanged. Within the framework of this action, which started in January 2011, experts from the Valencian PMR Network visited the project in order to share their experience and knowledge (12-13/04/2010: #3.1.23 in *IR, page 16 - 30/09/2010* and 04-05/04/2011: # 3.1.24 in *PR1, page 18 – 01/09/2011*).

Additionally, the project organised a two-day expert's workshop (05-06/04/2011) entitled «Experts Workshop on Plant Micro-Reserves», which brought together scientists and experts on the PMR concept from seven European countries. The discussion that took place during the workshop resulted in a generally accepted idea for the promotion of the establishment of a European PMR Network. A letter describing this idea was sent to the EC and it is presented as an attachment to the action's deliverable (*Annex 28 in PR1, page 19 - 01/09/2011*). An important outcome of this workshop was the need for the creation of a European PMR Network in the future, on the basis of the interactions and partnerships created between European projects / countries, which have adopted the PMR concept.

Deliverables:

- Report on a two-day expert's workshop (*Annex 28 in PR1, page 19 - 01/09/2011*).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: There was a transfer of funds from the DE to the FU. These funds (External assistance costs – €10,740) were provided for the visit of two Valencian experts to Cyprus three times to provide the partners with practical advice on

various issues. (# 3.1.23 in IR, page 16 – 30/09/2010 and Annex 24 in PRI, page 17 – 01/09/2011).

Outside LIFE: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE):

Action E.6: After LIFE

The action will result in the development of an «After-Life Conservation Plan» which will provide information on how the partners plan to continue and develop the actions which have initiated through the project, after its end (June 2013).

Changes in the Technical Part of the action: Not applied

Changes in the Financial Part of the action: Not applied

Continuation of the action after the end of the project (after-LIFE): The deliverable of this action will indicate the activities which will continue following the project's end (June 2013) and also the beneficiaries which will be responsible for their implementation.

3.2. Envisaged progress until next report.

The cooperation among the associated beneficiaries (AB) as well as the AB and the PMT, will lead to the normal continuation and termination of the project. Based on this, the PMT will make sure that all actions which are in progress until the end of the project (Actions C3-C8, D1-D4, E1-E5) will be implemented properly and end according to the project proposal. Following this report, the project will prepare and send the «Final Report with payment request» (up to six months after the project's ending on 30/06/2013).

The revised table of the reporting schedule as well as an up-to-date table of the project's Deliverables and Milestones are shown in **Annex 19: Timetable, Deliverables and Milestones of the project**.

3.3. Impact:

Nature & Biodiversity: The main objective of this project is to improve the conservation status of four priority plant species and two priority habitat types of Cyprus that are found in NATURA 2000 sites through the establishment, monitoring and management of a network of five Plant Micro-Reserves (PMRs). Within this framework, the project engages the knowledge acquirement on the biology/ecology of the targeted species/habitat types and the usage of this knowledge for the development of targeted and effective conservation measures. Most of the project's objectives have been almost achieved, since i. The factors that threaten the targeted species/habitat types are known, ii. Targeted measures are being carried out for dealing with these threats, iii. The measures taken have already contributed in the *in-situ* conservation of the targeted species and the enrichment of their populations and iv. The conservation measures have positive impact on other endemic and rare plant species found within the PMRs. The results of the conservation actions are not only qualitative but also quantitative.

The contribution of the project is important not only for the conservation of the diversity of the Cyprus flora but also for the sustainable management of the nature of Cyprus. Additionally, through the PMR concept and the implementation of the project's Monitoring

Plans, the project contributes in the increase of knowledge on the biodiversity of the targeted species, habitats and Natura 2000 sites.

Environmental Policy & Governance: The project's contribution is significant since it promotes the implementation of the Habitats' Directive (92/43/EEC) through the implementation of rational measures for the conservation of priority species/habitat types. It is noted that the project promoted the ratification of an Article in Cyprus' Forestry Legislation [Article 16: «Declaration of forest monuments and Micro-Reserves»], which defines the legal status of the PMRs as areas of great importance for the conservation of biodiversity. The expansion of the PMRs network, through the establishment of new PMRs by the competent authorities in the future, will promote the conservation and management of species and habitat types of Community interest.

Information and Communication: The project aims at disseminating its results and raising public awareness as well as promoting the involvement of general public in conservation activities. Based on this approach, the project has developed a number of activities which include interaction with local communities neighbouring the PMRs and other target groups as well as the production and dissemination of printed and electronic information material to these groups. The target groups of the project include, among others, governmental departments, youth, local communities, environmental NGOs, touristic guides, local and foreign visitors. The local communities and the wider public of Cyprus have positively responded to the project's initiatives and several social groups have shown keen interest to be involved in the project's activities.

3.4. Outside LIFE:

Aiming at better achieving the project's objectives, the project's beneficiaries have developed numerous actions, beyond those set in their initial proposal. The implementation of these actions demonstrates the great impact that the project had in the environmental, social, and educational levels. In general, all activities outside the proposal are complementary to the project and do not change its course neither alter its budget. They facilitate the implementation of the project and strengthen the outcome of each action.

For conservation issues:

- Assessment and monitoring of insects which have a significantly negative impact on the seeds viability of the targeted species within the PMRs (**A. macrocarbus* subsp. *lefkarencis* and *Q. alnifolia*). Monitoring and sampling of insects was carried out by the members of the project's team, while the classification of the specimens was done by experts abroad (DF sent the specimens to specialised labs abroad -own contribution). The classification showed that some of them represent rare species of the insect fauna of Cyprus and need conservation (*Annex 9 in PRI, page 10 - 01/09/2011*). Thus the project has brought direct and indirect impact on the knowledge of the Cyprus' insect fauna.
- Pilot hand pollination of **Astragalus macrocarpus* subsp. *lefkarencis* and at the same time application of environment friendly pesticide control for the prevention of fruit predation. The experiment showed certain results, which will be confirmed by new experiments in 2013.

Dissemination activities and public awareness

- In PMR 3 and PMR 4 a pathway was created by FD before the two PMRs established in these areas. However these pathways are conserved by the FD during the project period, as well as after the project end, through it is budget.
- Presentation of the project's objectives and actions to the students of the primary school in Mitsero, which neighbours PMR 1 (**O. kotschyi*), in two different years (2010 and 2012). The presentations aimed to inform the students about the biodiversity found in their neighbouring PMR and the importance of the actions that take place for the conservation of the orchid (*Annex 9 in PR1, page 10 - 01/09/2011* and **Annex 20: Documentation of Outside-LIFE activities – Section A**).
- Providing of information and pictures of **O. kotschyi* to Mitsero community for inclusion in the community's 2011 calendar (*Annex 9 in PR1, page 10 - 01/09/2011*).
- Presentation of the PMR approach and the actions of the project as example for the conservation of nature, to the students of the MSc programme in "Education for the Environment and Sustainable Development" (EESD) of Frederick University (*Annex 9 in PR1, page 10 - 01/09/2011*).
- Implementation of four Master theses within the EESD Programme, focusing on the project's objectives and the preparation of education material.
- Volunteer cleaning of PMR1 (**O. kotschyi*) with considerable assistance from the members of the «Environmental Organisation of Mitsero» (*Annex 9 in PR1, page 10 - 01/09/2011*).
- Dissemination of the project's actions and objectives at the 1st Environment and Recycling Festival of Green Dot Cyprus, in June 2011 (*Annex 9 in PR1, page 10 - 01/09/2011*).
- Inclusion of the PMR concept in the official curriculum of primary education of the Republic of Cyprus, as a means for the promotion of knowledge and awareness on biodiversity and conservation issues (*Annex 6 in MTR, page 27 – 24/01/2012*). This is considered as one of the most important accomplishments of the project.
- Selection of the project as a case study in promoting public participation by the programme «Future Together: Participatory Development in Cyprus», funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The programme was designed to promote a socially inclusive reconciliation process on the island with a focus on enhancing cultural and natural heritage projects through participatory approaches.
- Participation and presentation of the project at the Grundtvig workshop entitled «Building Bridges - Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for MAB BRs and other Designated Areas» organised by MIO-ECSDE / MedIES Initiative, with the support of UNESCO Venice Office. The project was represented by the APM. The workshop took place in Athens, Lavrion and Amfissa, on 30th March – 5th April 2012 and all expenses were covered by the organisers (**Annex 20 – Section B**).
- Presentation of the project at the 4th Eco Festival, organised by the Municipality of Lakatamia, in May 2012. The festival attracted young people who had the chance to

communicate with the project's scientists and get familiarised with its targeted species/habitat types and conservation actions (**Annex 20 – Section C**).

- Presentation of the project's course and the conservation actions focusing in PMR 1 (**O. kotschy*), by the PM, during an event entitled the «Orchid Day», dedicated to the targeted species. The event was organised by the community of Mitsero to celebrate the World Environment Day, on the 5th of June 2012 (**Annex 20 – Section D**).
- Co-organisation and implementation of an event for the celebration of LIFE's 20th anniversary, in association with the other three LIFE08-11 NAT projects currently running in Cyprus (ICOSTACY - LIFE09 NAT/CY/000247, OROKLINI - LIFE10 NAT/CY/000716, JUNIPERCY - LIFE10 NAT/CY/000717). The event took place in May 2012, at the premises of the Environmental Information Centre of the Department of Forests in Athalassa National Forest Park. The event's objective was to promote public awareness (**Annex 20 – Section E**).
- Participation of the project at the «Researcher's Night, Cyprus 2012». The purpose of the event was the promotion of public awareness on the importance of research activities that take place in Cyprus. The project's representatives associated with youth of all ages through interactive activities in order to learn about the project's actions and targeted species/habitat types (**Annex 20 – Section F**). All expenses were covered by the organisers.
- Publication of an article (in both English and Greek language) in SUNJET (Cyprus Airways in-flight magazine) presenting the project's objectives and actions, focusing on the Bicomunal workshop which took place in October 2011 (**Annex 20 – Section G**).
- Apart from the website, the project can also be found on «Facebook» as a group named «Establishment of a Plant Micro-Reserve Network in Cyprus for the Conservation of Priority Species and Habitats» having 247 friends (*Annex 9 in PRI, page 10 - 01/09/2011*).
- The videos and radio broadcasts of the project are also available for general public access on the project's Youtube Channel entitled PLANT-NET CY.
- The scientific outcomes of the project were presented in more than three scientific conferences (seven conferences), as indicated in the proposal. Two out of the seven conferences were covered by other financial sources without charge on the project's budget; these conferences were:
 1. 5th International Conference of the International Biogeography Society, 7-11 January 2011, Crete, Greece.
 2. 2nd Botanical Conference in Menorca “Islands and Plants: preservation and understanding of flora on Mediterranean islands”, 26-30 April 2011, Menorca, Spain.

4. Financial report

4.1. Incurred Costs

Table 1: Cost analysis summary

Budget breakdown categories	Total cost in €	Costs incurred from the start date to 31 October 2012 in €	% of total costs
1. Personnel	1.096.540,00	68.6964,41	62,65
2. Travel and subsistence	94.237,00	43.353,29	46,00
3. External assistance	168.300,00	60.573,33	35,99
4. Durable goods			
Infrastructure	8.000,00	8.855,00	110,69
Equipment	63.407,00	82.979,15	130,87
Prototype	0	0	0
5. Land purchase / long-term lease	0	0	0
6. Consumables	11.500,00	22.283,20	193,77
7. Other Costs	9.500,00	5.731,98	60,34
8. Overheads	98.813,00	56.892,01	57,58
TOTAL	1.550.297,00	967.632,37	62,42

4.2. Cost Analysis

The costs incurred for the period of January 2010 to October 2012 add to a total of € 967.632,37 and an eligible cost of € 952.544,20 which represents 61% of the foreseen project budget.

Personnel costs are at 63% of the budget which is considered slightly low for the stage of the project. Personnel costs for some partners such as FEEO and the Forestry Department have been lower than anticipated due to the use of personnel that have lower salary rates than the personnel initially foreseen.

It is noted that several partners have declared costs in the interim report which did not include the employer's social insurance contributions. The personnel costs, as calculated until October 2012, have now been adjusted to account for this additional amount.

As reported in the interim report, minor adjustments in personnel costs have been made concerning UNDP. In particular al UNDP does not intend to charge personnel costs to the project.

Travel and subsistence also appears to have a low rate of absorption. However, this is to be expected as several trips by the Greek partners have been foreseen for the later stages of the project.

External Assistance costs are at 36% of the foreseen budget. As discussed in the interim report, budgets in this cost category were transferred from the Department of Environment and UNDP to Frederic University. As discussed also in the interim report, a part of this budget needs to be transferred to other cost categories, mainly equipment and infrastructure. In general, activities under external assistance have been undertaken as foreseen but the costs have been somewhat lower than initially anticipated.

Consumables: NKUA shows a low absorption rate for consumables. However the remaining budget will be used in the last year of the project when the bulk of experiments are planned.

Based on the above cost statement the project team anticipates that there will be a need for a budget change. Detailed estimates for a new budget will be made in the next days and a budget change request will be made if appropriate.

5. Annexes

5.1. Deliverables

Annex 2: DELIVERABLE – Report on the genetic diversity and population structure for each of the 4 targeted priority species and *Cedrus brevifolia*.

Annex 3: DELIVERABLE - Report on the necessity and feasibility of reinforcement of existing populations.

Annex 5: DELIVERABLE – Five Monitoring Reports (one for each PMR).

Annex 8: DELIVERABLE – Report on youth competition.

Annex 9: DELIVERABLE – Report on bicomunal workshop for experts.

Annex 10: DELIVERABLE – Media coverage: article in newspaper and magazine.

Annex 11: DELIVERABLE – Third newsletter.

5.2. Others

Annex 1: The Forest Law 2012.

Annex 4: Information on the conservation activities (Actions C).

Annex 6: Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Scientific Committee.

Annex 7: Storage of seedlots of the targeted species at the seed bank of the Agriculture Research Institute for the *ex-situ* conservation.

Annex 12: A report showing the number of visitors of the project's website.

Annex 13: Poster for the Information Centres of the Botanical Gardens of the Department of Forests.

Annex 14: Presentation of the format and the table of contents followed for the preparation of the PMR Book.

Annex 15: Table of personnel involved at the project.

Annex 16: Answers to the questions of the European Commission

Annex 17: Monitoring Protocol of the Project Implementation.

Annex 18: Minutes of the 3rd meeting of the Stakeholders Board.

Annex 19: Timetable, Deliverables and Milestones of the project.

Annex 20: Documentation of Outside-LIFE activities.

Περίληψη της Δεύτερης Έκθεσης Προόδου του Έργου LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453

Το έργο «Δημιουργία Δικτύου Μικρο-Αποθεμάτων Φυτών στην Κύπρο για τη Διατήρηση Ειδών και Οικοτόπων Προτεραιότητας» (ακρωνύμιο PLANT-NET CY, LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453) στοχεύει στην εγκατάσταση πέντε Μικρο-Αποθεμάτων Φυτών (ΜΑΦ) με σκοπό τη βελτίωση της κατάστασης διατήρησης τεσσάρων ειδών (**Arabis kennedyae*, **Astragalus macrocarpus* subsp. *lefkarensis*, **Centaurea akamantis* και **Ophrys kotschyi*) και δύο τύπων οικοτόπων (9590 - **Cedrus brevifolia* forests -*Cedrosetum brevifoliae*- and 9390 - **Scrub and low forest vegetation of Quercus alnifolia*) προτεραιότητας της Κύπρου, που βρίσκονται σε περιοχές Natura 2000. Το έργο έχει διάρκεια 42 μήνες (Ιανουάριος 2011 – Ιούνιος 2013). Μέχρι τώρα, το έργο υλοποιείται με βάση την αρχική πρόταση και έχει ολοκληρώσει τα αναμενόμενα παραδοτέα. Οι φορείς του έργου διαβεβαιώνουν ότι το έργο θα ολοκληρωθεί εντός του αναμενόμενου χρονικού πλαισίου όπως ορίστηκε από την πρόταση (Ιούνιος 2013).

Μέχρι τώρα, το έργο έστειλε ήδη στην Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή (ΕΕ) τις ακόλουθες εκθέσεις: 1) Αρχική Έκθεση – 30/09/2011, 2) Πρώτη Έκθεση Προόδου – 01/09/2011 και 3) Ενδιάμεση Έκθεση – 24/01/2012. Η Δεύτερη Έκθεση Προόδου είναι η τέταρτη έκθεση που αποστέλλεται (Δεκέμβριος 2012) και καλύπτει την πρόοδο του έργου μέχρι τώρα (01/10/2011 – 31/10/2012) και εστιάζει στην περιγραφή των διοικητικών, τεχνικών και οικονομικών παραμέτρων του έργου. Μετά από την παράκληση της ΕΕ, η έκθεση ετοιμάστηκε στα αγγλικά σε αντίθεση με τις προηγούμενες εκθέσεις που γράφτηκαν στα ελληνικά. Στην προσπάθεια να παρουσιαστεί το έργο στην ολότητά του, στα αγγλικά, η έκθεση ξεπερνά τον καθορισμένο αριθμό των σελίδων.

Το έργο υλοποιείται κανονικά χωρίς σοβαρές αποκλείσεις από την αρχική πρόταση. Η λειτουργία της Ομάδας Διαχείρισης Έργου διασφαλίζει την σωστή διαχείριση του έργου σε διοικητικό επίπεδο σύμφωνα με το «Organisation and Management Chart». Η λειτουργία των τριών «σωμάτων διοίκησης» του έργου (Ομάδα Διαχείρισης Έργου, Επιστημονική Επιτροπή και Επιτροπή Αρμόδιων Φορέων) διασφαλίζει την αποτελεσματική συνεργασία μεταξύ των φορέων και την ομαλή υλοποίηση του έργου.

Όσον αφορά στο τεχνικό μέρος του έργου, κατά την περίοδο αναφοράς 01/10/2011 – 31/10/2012 η Προπαρασκευαστική Δράση Α.5 ολοκληρώθηκε με καθυστέρηση, για λόγους που εξηγούνται στην παρούσα έκθεση. Επομένως, όλες οι Δράσεις Α έχουν ολοκληρωθεί. Επιπλέον, οι Δράσεις Γ.3 – Γ.8 (οι δράσεις Γ.1 – Γ.2 ολοκληρώθηκαν) και Δ.1 – Δ.4 υλοποιούνται ομαλά στο χρονικό πλαίσιο όπως ορίζεται από την πρόταση του έργου. Η παρακολούθηση της πορείας και η διαχείριση του έργου (Δράσεις Ε) ακολουθούν την πρόταση του έργου.

Αναφορικά με το οικονομικό μέρος, από την έναρξη του έργου μέχρι την περίοδο αναφοράς (Οκτώβριος 2012), οι συνολικές δαπάνες του έργου είναι €967,632.37 και καλύπτουν το 62,42% του συνολικού προϋπολογισμού του.

Η Δεύτερη Έκθεση Προόδου παρουσιάζει την μέχρι τώρα πορεία του έργου. Επίσης μαζί με την έκθεση αποστέλλεται συνημμένη η απαντητική επιστολή στις ερωτήσεις της ΕΕ, που προέκυψαν μετά την Ενδιάμεση Έκθεση, ως Παράρτημα 16 (Annex 16), περιλαμβανομένων σχετικών εγγράφων.

Η Δεύτερη Έκθεση Προόδου περιλαμβάνει 20 παραρτήματα, από τα οποία επτά (7) αποτελούν «Παραδοτέα» του έργου και τα άλλα δεκατρία (13) περιλαμβάνουν συμπληρωματική πληροφορία σχετικά με την μέχρι τώρα πορεία υλοποίησης του έργου.

Summary of the Second Progress Report of the project LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453

The project entitled “Establishment of a Plant Micro-Reserve Network in Cyprus for the Conservation of Priority Species and Habitats” (acronym PLANT-NET CY, LIFE08 NAT/CY/000453), aims at establishing five Plant Micro-Reserves (PMRs) for improving the conservation status of four priority plant species (**Arabis kennedyae*, **Astragalus macrocarpus* subsp. *lefkarensis*, **Centaurea akamantis* and **Ophrys kotschyi*) and two priority habitat types (9590 - **Cedrus brevifolia* forests - *Cedrosetum brevifoliae*- and 9390 - *Scrub and low forest vegetation of *Quercus alnifolia*) of Cyprus, found in *Natura 2000* sites. The project has a duration of 42 months (January 2011 – June 2013). So far, the project has been implemented according to the initial proposal and it has produced the foreseen deliverables. Moreover, it has achieved much more accomplishments than those described in the proposal. The project beneficiaries are very confident that the project will be successfully completed according to the foreseen time framework.

So far, the project beneficiaries have sent to the European Commission (EC) the following reports: 1) Inception Report (IR) – 30/09/2010, 2) First Progress Report (PR1) – 01/09/2011 and 3) Mid-Term Report with payment request (MTR) – 24/01/2012. The Second Progress Report (PR2) is the fourth report to be sent (December 2012) and covers the progress achieved by the project (01/10/2011 – 31/10/2012) and focuses on its management, technical and financial parameters. Following the request of the EC, this report is written in English in contrast with the previous reports which were drafted in Greek. Thus, in order to be comprehensive it exceeds the foreseen number of pages.

The project is being carried out properly without substantial divergences from the initial proposal. The Project Management Team ensures the efficient management of the project at the administrative level, according to the «Organisation and Management Chart». The operation of all three management bodies (Project Management Team, Stakeholders Board and the Scientific Committee) secures the effective cooperation among all beneficiaries for the successful implementation of the project.

Regarding the technical part of the project, within reporting period 01/10/2011 – 31/10/2012 the Preparatory Action A.5, which was delayed for reasons explained in the report, is completed. Regarding this, all Actions A have finished. Additionally, Actions C.3-C.8 (Actions C.1 and C.2 are completed) and D.1-D.4 are properly implemented following the foreseen time schedule of the initial proposal. The project's operation and monitoring (Actions E) continue following the proposal of the project.

Referring to the financial part of the project, since its beginning (January 2010) and till this reporting period (October 2012), the project's expenses are €967,632.37 and cover the 62,42% of the total budget.

The Second Progress Report presents the progress achieved in each of the project's Actions. Also attached to the SPR is Annex 16, which includes the answers to the questions sent by the EC, following the MTR's evaluation, including supporting documents.

The Second Progress Report includes 20 annexes, out of which seven (7) are project deliverables and thirteen (13) additional files with information supporting the project's progress so far.