



After-LIFE Conservation Plan

Project LIFE00NAT/SLO/7226 – Restoring and conserving habitats and birds in Škocjanski zatok N.R.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Project LIFE00NAT/SLO/7226 – Restoring and conserving habitats and birds in Škocjanski zatok N.R. was dealing with the restoration of the largest brackish wetland in Slovenia, Škocjanski zatok N.R. The reserve is located on the outskirts of the coastal city of Koper and consists of a brackish lagoon surrounded with various salt marsh and freshwater marsh habitats.

The principal objective of the project was to improve, enhance and restore different types of habitats in Škocjanski zatok N.R. to a favourable conservation state supporting breeding Annex 1 species, nationally endangered species and migratory species endangered at the national level after an industrial degradation back in the 1980s. In addition to restoration works in the reserve, the project minimised the consequences of previous pollution, optimised fresh water inflow to the brackish lagoon and contributed to the improvement of its ecological conditions. In order to ensure long-term conservation of Škocjanski zatok N.R., the project staff also worked to improve local awareness and stimulate a positive attitude of local authorities and communities.

Throughout the project implementation, the beneficiary DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia and the partner Ministry of the Environment managed to successfully abolish all four threats, identified in the project. Three of them originate in the degradation period, as follows:

- insufficient inflow and circulation of fresh and salt water in the brackish lagoon;
- organic pollution of mud accumulated in the lagoon; and,
- loss of breeding habitats.

Disturbance of the wildlife caused by human presence was the fourth threat. It was dealing with the future organisation of the reserve, open to the public and its adjacency to the urban center, which requires the consideration of this issue through the restoration and management activities.

2. PROJECT RESULTS

The main project outcomes are as follows:

1. **The freshwater marsh**, consisting of 13 hectares of wet meadows and 13,5 hectares of open water areas with reed bed and nesting islets was created in the reserve area known as Bertoška bonifika upon the technical blue-prints produced as a preparatory project action. The habitat creation works were completed in March 2007 and as a result, the first breeding season brought many birds to nest in the area, including 5 breeding pairs of Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*), at least 15 pairs of Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*), 20 pairs of Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) and about 15 pairs of Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*) should be mentioned. Also two pairs of Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*) bred in the newly established marsh, while a pair of Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) hasn't bred successfully in Bertoška bonifika, while two pairs did in the lagoon area. The presence of all these birds is an excellent success for the reserve, indicating that in the short-term period, the reserve will resume its importance as an endangered birds breeding site.
2. **Restoration of brackish lagoon including the creation of coastal brackish and salt marsh habitats** was the most important activity of this restoration project. The lagoon restoration included dredging of approximately 225.000 cubic meters of mud from the lagoon: 185.000 cubic meters of organically polluted mud was removed to the disposal site, while the remaining 40.000 cubic meters of non-polluted mud was used to create the mudflats and nesting islets in order to create conditions for the 5 habitat types, listed on Annex I of the EU Habitat Directive as well as give grounds for endangered breeding birds, such as Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*), Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*), Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*). Approximately 20 hectares of new mudflats and islets have been created and additional shallow areas, suitable for development of Mudflats

and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide (Natura 2000 code 1140). The new mudflats and islets will give new additional grounds for 3 targeted habitat types, which were destroyed during the past degradation: Salicornia and other annuals colonizing mud and sand (Natura 2000 code 1310), Mediterranean salt meadows (*Juncetalia maritimi*) (Natura 2000 code 1410) and Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (*Sarcocornetea fruticosi*) (Natura 2000 code 1420). The habitat type Coastal lagoons (Natura 2000 code 1150*) covers all the water parts of the lagoon. Additionally, the Ara mouth area has a good potential to develop into the habitat type Estuaries (Natura 2000 code 1130). Three pairs of Kentish Plover and two of Black-winged Stilt have bred successfully already in 2007 while the lagoon restoration was still being performed. In the spring of 2008, the abundant growth of halophytic vegetation is expected and strong increase in bird populations.

The lagoon restoration was crucial to assure the favourable ecological conditions in the lagoon: the removal of accumulated polluted mud also resulted in the improved circulation of sea and freshwater and as a common result of all activities, the eutrophication and anoxia are prevented in the lagoon and the threat of botulism substantially diminished.

3. **Water inflow improving** was a subject of several activities, including two most important ones: cleaning of the Rižana river left discharging channel Ara outlet and riverbed (Ara is the only freshwater source for the reserve) and mounting of the sluice system at the sea channel, which will enable full water level control in the future.
4. **Awareness-raising and educational activities** were actively focused to. Among them, over 40 lectures and presentations of the reserve and similar naturalistic or conservation subjects were held for local community in Koper, 17 guided tours to the reserve prior or during the restoration and before 2006, over 40 guided tours for local schools. The reserve web page was prepared and in the last years up-graded into a nice trilingual page (Slovene/English/Italian). 7 editions of reserve newsletter published. In the end of the project, an educational documentary has been prepared as well as a publication about the reserve. Adding many personal contacts and regular work with media, the positive message about the reserve has spread in the local community and also further nationally and internationally. We can assume, that the educational and awareness-raising activities within this project have brought the future functions of the reserve near the local people. Many of them have managed to recognize its real value in between and have become the active holders of the part of the responsibility for the nature conservation in their adjacency.
5. **Over two-kilometer-long circular education trail** was constructed, laid out along the border of the freshwater part of the reserve. Ponds of various sizes and forms were created along the trail, which are now already inhabited by invertebrates and amphibians. Furthermore, these ponds are models that help visitors get a closer look at the life in the marsh. The material excavated during the creation of the freshwater marsh was used to construct screening embankments along the newly formed circular education trail, aiming to prevent disturbance of wildlife caused by visitors. The project substantially contributed to the effective implementation of **nature protection control**, another important activity in preventing the disturbance, as the first full-time warden of the reserve has been employed through European funding.
6. **Regular monitoring** has been carried out throughout the project period on bird populations, water quality and also on hydrological parameters, necessary to establish the future lagoon organisation and management. The ornithological monitoring proved the excellent results of this project through the increase of bird populations during the project period and increase of the number of species and populations of the breeding birds in the first breeding season after the restoration. The water quality monitoring confirms the improvement of the water quality in the reserve, particularly in the last 2 years with restoration results coming to the evidence.

Also three **surveys** were carried out. The first quantitative research on fish populations was necessary to establish the conditions prior to degradation, so that the comparison will be possible in the future. The research of potential repopulation capability was carried out to establish the conditions, necessary to assure successful repopulation of plant communities and zoobentos and as such, necessary for the preparation of the technical blue-prints for reserve restoration. In the end of the project, also the habitat mapping was carried out in freshwater part of the reserve, identifying the habitats, established in 2007.

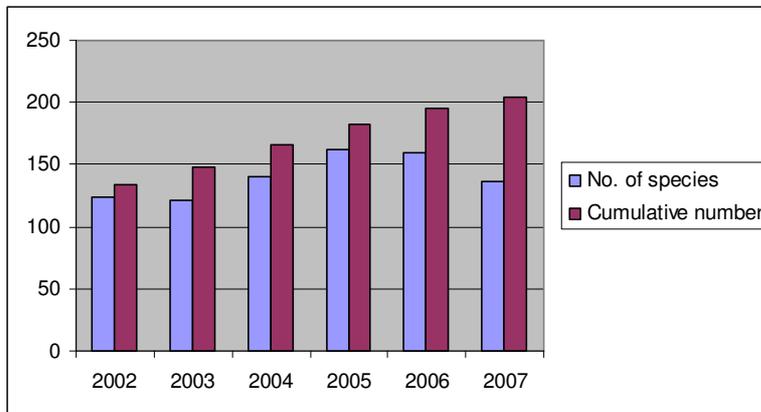


Table 1: Increase of bird species in Škocjanski zatok NR in the period from 2002-07

7. **Co-operation** was one of the basis of the project success. DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia and the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning have created firm and successful partnership for the organisation and management of Škocjanski zatok, which is quite unique in the field of co-operation between governmental and non-governmental sectors in Slovenia. That's how we managed to implement a pilot project, which doubtlessly ranks among top ten restoration projects of degraded natural areas in the Mediterranean part of Europe.

Existing and new partnerships also contributed towards project success. DOPPS is a national partner of the BirdLife International - a global Partnership of conservation organisations that strives to conserve birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. Partnership offers precious expertise and knowledge exchange and particularly the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) has contributed significantly with skilled and experienced experts.

Within a project, a very important and perspective partnership was formed – an **informal network of North-Adriatic wetlands' managers**, called Adriawet. The network was aiming to bring together the wetlands managers from Italy and Slovenia to exchange experience and to enable joint promotion of the areas. The idea was well accepted among the potential partners and today the network joins the managers from the Po Delta wetlands, Venice lagoon, Friuli Venezia Giulia wetlands to Slovenian protected areas on the coast and in hinterland. Through networking at international level, the project has benefited from the knowledge that had been tested and available in the neighbouring Italy.

8. **Reserve Management Plan for the period 2007-11** was prepared under this LIFE project and is the most crucial document for the future of the reserve, as it guarantees sustainability and continuation of this project. On 30.8.2007, it was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in a form of a legal act – a Decree on Program of conservation and development of Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve for the period 2007-11 (Odlok o programu varstva in razvoja naravnega rezervata Škocjanski zatok za obdobje 2007 – 2011). The Decree was published in the Official Bulletin of the RS no. 83 on 14.9.2007 (Uradni list RS, št. 83/2007). **The governmental adoption of the management plan is the best guarantee that the plan will be implemented and budget funding available for that.**

3. AFTER-LIFE CONSERVATION PLAN

On the next few pages, the main contents of the adopted Management Plan are presented as well as the responsible bodies for implementation of the plan and financial issues.

3.1. Aims and objectives

Long-term aims

1. Restore and manage the Škocjanski zatok NR to order to achieve conservation goals, as specified in all designations and conservation status (natural value, ecologically important area, state nature reserve and Natura 2000 site) and as a site in the network of North-Adriatic wetlands sustaining important populations of target species and habitat types, protected at national and international level.
2. Assure the implementation of the development functions of the reserve, open to the public, which will enable nature friendly relaxation and recreation as well as high-quality nature experience for the visitors and local people.
3. To use the area as an environmental education resource to benefit local schools and education establishment and as scientific and research centre.
4. To use this area as a demonstration of good nature conservation practice and positively influence National environmental policies and initiatives

Operational objectives

Objective 1: By the end of March 2007 create and later manage 12 ha of predominantly fresh open water and wet Phragmites swamp suitable for colonisation of Little Bittern and other birds with similar ecological requirements and for wintering and passage waterfowl

Objective 2: By the end of March 2007 create and later manage 13 ha of wet meadows, suitable for colonisation of Black-winged Stilt, as migration and wintering area for nationally important populations of waterfowl, such as Wigeon and Northern Shoveler

Objective 3: In 2007 restore semi-natural functions and conditions of brackish lagoon by removal 200,000 cubic meters of sediments, creating a deepwater channel and secondary channels to improve tidal exchange and circulation of water in the lagoon, re-establish the connection with the marine ecosystem and benefit nationally important populations of wintering waterfowl, such as Coot, ducks and other diving species

Objective 4: By the end of April 2007 restore, create and enhance the habitats along the lagoon borders, including 25 ha of saline mudflats with halophyte vegetation, 1,5 ha of Mediterranean salt meadows and 1 ha of unvegetated islands

Objective 5: To manage the littoral habitats in order to increase numbers of Kentish Plover (5-10 pairs) and provide suitable conditions for colonisation by Little Tern

Objective 6: To maintain and manage fresh open water lake Jezerce, with surrounding reedswamp, scrub and ruderal vegetation. Conditions should be suitable for breeding of 1-3 pairs of Little Bittern, 8-10 pairs of Great Reed Warbler, 6-10 pairs of Cetti's Warbler and support other wetland birds

Objective 7: Maintain and improve the quantity and quality of freshwater necessary for habitat management of the whole reserve to sustain favourable status of all habitats

Objective 8: To develop and maintain a high, positive profile with key audiences on and off the reserve, and with communities around the reserve

Objective 9: Construct foreseen visitor facilities (visitor centre, central bird-watching hide, bird-watching tower, educational trails) by the end of 2009, which will enable high-quality nature experience and help in delivering the key messages

Objective 10: Finish all the programs for visitors in 2007 and carry them out regularly later on

Objective 11: Encourage the research work of students, school children, other educational groups and research establishments in the reserve

Objective 12: To maximise income without compromising the key conservation objectives for the site

Objective 13: Sustain the nature protection regime and run the reserve in an efficient and cost-effective manner (in accordance with the national legislation)

Summary of priority activities after the completion of reserve restoration:

- regular habitat management (water management, mowing, grazing, etc.)
- regular monitoring of biotic and abiotic parameters and research work
- reserve promotion through events and media as well as presentations
- co-operation with all sectors of local community, other protected areas, environmental NGOs, local communities in the hinterland
- construction and regular maintenance of the visitor facilities
- preparation and implementation of the reserve education program and other programs and events for visitors
- prepare and carry out efficient marketing strategy and effectively manage the reserve
- nature protection control throughout the site
- activities for improving the water quality in the reserve, including the rehabilitation of birds in cases of spills
- prolongation of management licence over the reserve in 2009 as a precondition for efficient implementation of this plan
- gain management licence for adjacent area outside the reserve borders

3.2. Foreseen activities: time planning and priorities

Objectives/management strategies/activities	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Objective 1					
1.1. Completion of restoration works for creation of 12 ha of open freshwater areas with reed bed in Bertoška bonifika	1				
1.2. Mounting of sluices and other water management infrastructure, providing possibility for complete periodical draining of the area	1				
1.3. Creation of min. 4 ha of reed bed	1				
1.4. Reed bed management					
- Regular control and maintenance of reed bed and other vegetation		2	2	2	2
- Maintenance of the water regime in the reed bed		1	1	1	1
1.5. Management of open water areas and islets					
- Cleaning of water supply channels			2	2	2
- Regular maintenance of sluices and other water man. infrastructure	1	2	2	2	2
- Management of water levels in the marsh	1	1	1	1	1
- Islets overgrow control, vegetation removal	2	1	1	1	1
- Mowing/mulching of overgrown areas	2	1	1	1	1
- Construction of the pump for complete draining of the area (including blue-prints)		2	2	2	2
- Monitoring and cleaning of Ara riverbed outside the reserve	3	2	3	2	3
1.6. Salt meadow management					
- Obtaining the management licence	1	1			
- Protection of the salt meadow	1	1			
- Monitoring of salt meadow	1	1	2	3	2
- Strategy for the salt meadow management		2	1		
1.7. Bird monitoring	1	1	1	1	1

1.8. Research and monitoring – other animal species					
- <i>systematic research of indicator species</i>	3	3	3	3	3
- <i>regular monitoring of most important groups</i>	3	3	2	2	2
1.9. Habitat mapping	1		1		1
Objective 2					
2.1. Completion of restoration works for creation of 13 ha of wet meadows	1				
2.2. Management of meadows					
- <i>Dividing the area in the areas with various mowing/ grazing approaches</i>		1	2	2	2
- <i>Mechanisation purchase</i>	2	2	2	2	2
- <i>Mowing and mulching of meadows</i>	1	1	1	1	1
- <i>Establishing and maintenance of grazing system (including the purchase of grazing animals)</i>	2	2	2	2	2
- <i>Obtaining the seeds, sowing of meadows with meadow plant species</i>		3	3	3	3
2.3. Mounting of sluices and other water management infrastructure and management of water levels					
- <i>Mounting of main sluice and barrage on Ara channel</i>	1				
- <i>Water level management</i>	1	1	1	1	1
2.4. Research and monitoring of invertebrates					
- <i>systematic research of different groups</i>	3	3	3	3	3
- <i>regular monitoring of most important groups</i>	3	3	2	2	2
- <i>research of <i>Vertigo angustior</i></i>		2	1		
2.5. Monitoring of wet meadows development	2	2	2	2	2
2.6. Habitat mapping	1		1		1
2.7. Bird monitoring	1	1	1	1	1
2.8. Predators control	1	1	1	1	1
2.9. Monitoring of water levels in the channels and underground water level					
- <i>Buying and installation of gauge boards and dipwells</i>	1	1			
- <i>Monitoring of water levels</i>	1	1	1	1	1
Objective 3					
3.1. Lagoon restoration – sediment removal with all corresponding activities	1				
3.2. Establishing tidal exchange, control of lagoon functioning					
- <i>Mounting of sluice system at the sea channel</i>	1				
- <i>Observe the lagoon functioning</i>		2	2	2	2
- <i>Management of water levels in the lagoon</i>		1	1	1	1
- <i>Regular maintenance of sluice</i>		2	2	2	2
- <i>Geodetic survey and cleaning of the sea channel if necessary</i>		3	2	1	
3.4. Research and monitoring of marine flora and fauna					
- <i>systematic research of different groups</i>	3	3	3	3	3
- <i>Monitoring of most important groups</i>	2	2	2	2	2
Objective 4					
4.1. Creation of coastal habitats	1				
4.2. Repopulation of vegetation	1	1			
4.3. Monitoring and control of vegetation development in coastal habitats	1	1	1	2	2
4.4. Habitat mapping	1		1		1
Objective 5					
5.1. Creation and maintenance of suitable breeding					

conditions for both species					
- Maintenance of water levels in the lagoon		1	1	1	1
- Creation of nesting areas without vegetation for Kentish Plover	1				
- Vegetation management at breeding areas of Kentish Plover and on nesting islets		2	2	2	2
5.2. Bird monitoring	1	1	1	1	1
5.3. Predators control	1	1	1	1	1
5.4. Disturbance prevention in the west part of the reserve					
- Planting of the termophile shrubs and trees at the reserve border			2	1	
- Creation of protection channel preventing the access of visitors and predators to the mudflats	1				
- Co-operation with investor and manager of the nearby roads for nature-friendly construction and management of the road	2	2	2	2	2
Objective 6					
6.1. Removal of the infrastructure of allotment holders near Jezerce	1				
6.2. Maintain the connection between Jezerce and lagoon	2	2	2	2	2
6.3. Planting of autochthon shrubs and trees					
- Planting of willow trees at Jezerce	3	2			
- Planting of bushes and low trees in the area between Jezerce and high-way	3	2			
- Maintenance of ruderal vegetation	3	3	3	3	2
6.4. Restoration of Jezerca by the end of 2010 (optional)					
- Co-operation with Municipality-arranging the sewage water discharge from Škoc.hrib	3	2	1		
- Arranging of discharges, planting of willow trees	2	1			
- Regular water quality control, identifying the pollution sources	2	2	2	2	2
- Preparation of the conservation guidelines and expert documents		2	1		
- Preparation of blue-prints			2	1	
- Restoration of Jezerce			2	1	
6.5. Bird monitoring	1	1	1	1	1
6.6. Fish, amphibian and invertebrate monitoring					
- systematic research of invertebrates	3	3	3	3	3
- regular monitoring of fish and amphibian populations	3	3	2	2	2
Objective 7					
7.1. Maintain and improve water quantity and quality for reserve management					
- Regular co-operation with river supervisors, responsible water-management bodies and other users of Rižana water	2	2	2	2	2
- Co-operation at water management infrastructure outside the reserve borders	3	3	3	3	3
- Protection of the lagoon from the potential pollution from the sea	1	1	1	1	1
- Defining the communication protocol in case of oil spills or similar injuries	1	1	1	1	1
- Assure suitable measures on different water discharges to the reserve (oil filters, regular maintenance)	2	2	2	2	2

- Nature protection control of all works in the adjacent area which could negatively affect the reserve water quality	2	2	2	2	2
- Co-operation in European Sea Alarm Foundation	2	2	2	2	2
- Preparation of reaction protocol and its implementation in case of oils spills and bird injuries at the Slovenian coast	2	1	1	1	1
7.2. Establish additional freshwater inflow to the reserve from well ŠZV-1/02 (optional)					
- Obtain the funding				3	
- Carry out all the necessary procedures, obtain permit				3	
- Implementation of works, including regular control					3
7.3. Monitoring of water quality and hydrological parameters (water levels)					
- Organisation of regular long-term water quality monitoring	1				
- Implementation of water quality monitoring	1	1	1	1	1
- Implementation of water levels monitoring	2	2	2	2	2
Objective 8					
8.1. Communication through virtual, printed and other products, produced by DOPPS	2	2	2	2	2
8.2. Media and events					
- Work with media, particularly in case of wide response events	2	2	2	2	2
- Inaugurations (after reserve restoration, visitor centre)	2	2	2		
- Fairs and participation at different events	2	2	2	2	2
- Travelling exhibition	2				
- Advertising	3	3	2	2	2
8.3. Direct presentations and reserve promotion	2	2	2	2	2
8.4. Development and maintenance of good terms with local community and key organisations	2	2	2	2	2
8.5. Co-operation and common promotion within Adriawet network and with managers of other protected areas	2	2	2	2	2
Objective 9					
9.1. Completion of the basic documents for construction of the visitor facilities	1				
9.2. Obtaining of funding	2	1	1		
9.3. Preparation of blue-prints and obtaining of all consents and permit	1	1			
9.4. Construction and maintenance of circular education trail with observation spots and ponds					
- Construction of the planned facilities	1				
- Maintenance		2	2	2	2
9.5. Construction and maintenance of the visitor centre with surrounding areas and central bird-watching hide in Bertoška bonifika	2	2	1		
- Construction of the planned facilities		2	1		
- Maintenance		2	2	2	2
9.6. Construction and maintenance of buildings, trail and other facilities in the western part of the reserve					
- Construction of trail and screening embankments	1				
- Construction of the buildings			2	1	
- Equipping of the buildings				2	1
- Maintenance			2	2	2
9.7. Disturbance minimising					

- Construction and maintenance of all natural and man-made screening	1	2	2	2	2
- Limited access to breeding areas during breeding		2	2	2	2
- Reserve Conduct code	2	2	2	2	2
- Guided tours	2	2	2	2	2
- Additional protection against the noise from the adjacent roads	3	2	2	2	2
- Liaison with key stake-holders for diminishing of noise and light pollution in the reserve neighbourhood	2	2	2	2	2
9.8. Monitoring of visitors, their numbers, their demands and needs	2	2	2	2	2
Objective 10					
10.1. Preparation of programs for the reserve visit for all target groups	1				
10.2. Preparation of interpretation and education materials, development and purchase of necessary equipment and material	2	2	2	2	2
10.3. Implementation of programs for visitors	2	2	2	2	2
10.4. Implementation of education program	2	2	2	2	2
Objective 11					
11.1. Preparation of research and monitoring program in the reserve and comparison analyses with other areas	2	3	2	3	2
11.2. Distribution of the program to education and research establishments	2	3	2	3	2
11.3. Regular contacts with education establishments	2	2	2	2	2
11.4. Co-ordination of research work	2	2	2	2	2
11.5. Including the results of the research and monitoring to the reserve management	2	2	2	2	2
11.6. Preparation of reports	1	1	1	1	1
Objective 12					
12.1. Development of identified sources	2	2			
12.2. Preparation and implementation of the marketing strategy					
- Preparation of marketing strategy	1				
- Complete services offer	2	2	1	1	1
- Products offer		2	1	1	1
- Implementation of other activities from the strategy		2	1	1	1
Objective 13					
13.1. Nature protection control	1	1	1	1	1
13.2. Management and maintenance of all buildings, equipment and real estate in the reserve	2	2	2	2	2
13.3. Obtaining of funding for reserve restoration and completion and implementation of activities according to the contracts with the funders and co-financers					
- Completion of on-going LIFE & INTERREG projects	1				
- Monitoring of available resources for construction of visitor facilities and other investments in the reserve	2	2	2	2	2
- Preparation of project applications	2	2	2	2	2
- Co-operation in international projects (such as partnerships in Interreg initiative)	2	2	2	2	2
13.4. Efficient reserve management					
- Prolongation of management licence			1		
- Obtaining the licence over the areas currently outside the reserve borders	1				

- Evaluate the implementation of ManPlan, prepare new ManPlan for period 2012-16					
- Other activities	2	2	2	2	2

Priority 1

Priority 1 activities have to be carried out in the determined year. Restoration activities range to this category, as they are the precondition for achieving of the reserve conservation goals. Of the equal importance are the activities for the construction of the visitor facilities, which will support the reserve development goals. Also some monitoring programs were included to this category, because they are crucial source of information about the success of the protected area restoration – a new experience for Slovenia. The same goes for the annual reports, which are of extreme importance for supervision over the success of this plan and meeting its goals.

If the activities are not carried out in the determined period, the implementation of the complete plan can be negatively affected or achieving of the reserve goals in general. It might harm the endangered animal or plant species, as well as habitat types and thus negatively affect the biodiversity of the area. If some priority 1 activities are not carried out in determined period, the reasons for this must be well explained in the annual reports.

Priority 2

Activities necessary for regular reserve management fit into this category. It is recommendable to be carried out in determined period. The time of implementation is more flexible as they can be postponed up to one year without immediate direct negative effects on reserve biodiversity or meeting the goals of the plan.

In case when Priority 2 activities are not carried out, the negative effects on conservation status of habitats and species can be expected in the period of 2-3 years. The reasons must be presented in the annual report.

Prioriteta 3

Priority 3 activities are those, which are desired to be carried out in outlined time. On the other hand, their priority level is low and they will be implemented only if time and funding will be available for this. It's important that they are identified and carried out before the end of the management plan period (2011).

3.3. Responsible bodies

Škocjanski zatok NR is a state nature reserve and therefore the main responsible body for conservation and development of the reserve is the responsible Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning. However, in 1999 the Slovenian Government awarded DOPPS – BirdLife Slovenia with a 10 year management licence over the reserve. Due to the fact, that the licence expires in 2009, its prolongation ranks among the priority activities of this plan. The management of the reserve is the responsibility of the reserve manager (while the Ministry has to assure that the preconditions for management are met!), while the conservation issues are responsibility of the Institute of RS for Nature Conservation (IRSNC).

The management tasks of the reserve manager are specified in the Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve Act and in Nature Conservation Act and the main are as follows:

1. implementation of the protection regime,
2. preparation and implementation of the Annual Reserve Work Program,
3. regular monitoring and analysing the status of natural values in the reserve and informing the responsible Institute of RS for Nature Conservation
4. keeping the documentation about the reserve natural values status,

5. management of the land (habitats)
6. construction and maintenance of the buildings, trails and signs
7. publication of brochures and informing the public,
8. visitor centre management
9. co-operation within international projects, at presentations and research work in the reserve and implementation of confirmed projects
10. organisation and implementation of warden service
11. liaison with local community in achieving the reserve designation goals as well as conservation and development objectives
12. co-operation with Institute of RS for Nature Conservation in preparation of nature protection guidelines for the reserve
13. co-ordination of research in the reserve
14. maintenance, restoration and conservation of reserve natural values

The activities list comprehends the majority of the activities as listed in the Management Plan. Further on, the Institute of RS for Nature Conservation is responsible public body for nature conservation in the country and upon Škocjanski zatok Nature Reserve Act, their duties are as follows:

1. preparation of the Program for protection and development of Škocjanski zatok NR for period 1999-2003
2. preparation of additional expert proposals for reserve natural values protection
3. preparation of proposals for restoration and maintenance activities
4. co-ordination of research in the reserve and organisation of research work
5. implementation of other expert tasks in the reserve.

3.4. Financial plan

According to the Škocjanski zatok NR Act, the funding for reserve management can be obtained from:

- state budget,
- reserve income, including entrance fees,
- grants and donations,
- other resources.

In the period from 2007-11, the reserve manager will obtain the funds for the implementation of this plan from all the foreseen sources except the entrance fees (the entrance to the reserve is free according to the legislation). DOPPS will start to create income from the services offered to the visitors, including guided tours, sale of souvenirs, products for helping the wildlife, sales from bar and other services. As no experience is available on how much income can be generated this way, the table below includes the estimation on this issue. The regular foreseen reserve management funding is according to the budget item 2143 (see the table below).

In the last few years, DOPPS has actively participated in programming of strategic documents for EU financial perspective 2007-2013. In this process, some potential sources for funding of the reserve visitors facilities were identified and are now further developed.

As all the financial sources are not confirmed at this stage and will affect the implementation of this plan, DOPPS will include the actual confirmations to the Annual Reserve Operation Plans which will be prepared upon the adopted Management Plan. These changes can affect the priority list of the activities in the reserve.

The estimation of the expected costs and funding sources for implementation of this plan has been prepared and the total expected costs summed up to 8,3 million EUR. The details are as follows:

YEAR	2.007	2.008	2.009	2.010	2.011	TOTAL
TOTAL COSTS (EUR)	2.599.943	2.005.493	2.317.335	1.019.750	372.400	8.314.921
COSTS OF PERSONNEL, MATERIAL AND SERVICES						
1. Personnel	137.298	161.000	190.000	195.000	195.000	878.298
2. Habitat management and other management	31.997	50.600	57.400	22.400	18.200	180.597
3. Interpretation and education	30.307	11.000	20.500	21.000	16.000	98.807
4. Promotion and marketing	61.313	31.500	36.000	59.000	71.000	258.813
5. Monitoring and research	7.548	19.000	25.000	20.500	22.500	94.548
6. Overheads and travel costs	32.672	31.000	33.000	47.600	49.700	193.972
TOTAL	301.135	304.100	361.900	365.500	372.400	1.705.035
INVESTMENT COSTS						
1. Restoration – landscape regulation and water management	2.060.594	198.490	260.000	654.250	0	3.173.334
2. Visitor facilities	238.214	1.502.903	1.695.435	0	0	3.436.552
TOTAL	2.298.808	1.701.393	1.955.435	654.250	0	6.609.886
TOTAL INCOME (EUR)	2.599.943	2.005.493	2.317.335	1.019.750	372.400	8.314.921
1. MOP – budget item 2143	182.077	243.500	270.000	275.000	280.000	1.250.577
2. MOP – Water Fund – budget item 3017	2.100.000	178.490	0	268.750	0	2.547.240
3. SVLR - budget items 1608 in 1588	223.077	0	0	0	0	223.077
4. EC LIFE	87.280	0	0	0	0	87.280
5. ERDF (Objective 3) or similar sources	0	1.277.468	1.441.120	0	0	2.718.587
6. Other co-financers and sponsors	0	301.035	586.215	436.000	42.400	1.365.651
7. Reserve income	7.509	5.000	20.000	40.000	50.000	122.509