

Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

Half Year Report Form

Project Title	Schools and communities monitoring and protecting biodiversity in Slovakia
Country	Slovakia
Organisation	Field Studies Council and Slovak Environmental Agency
Project Ref. No.	126/9/007
Report date	for October 2002

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

In April of this year there was a launch of the results of the Biodiversity Survey by the Minister of Environment and British Ambassador at a special event in Bratislava. The survey results were published as a hard copy, and a CD together with a Biodiversity Poster. The Results were also featured in Enviromagazin of SAZP and also in the Annual State of the Environment Report for the Slovak Republic.

In April and May application forms were collected from schools and groups for the second phase of the project. The second phases consist of small scale ecological projects related to the Biodiversity Issues that the monitoring process had identified. 141 groups applied for the second phase of the project. They were provided with support materials on How to Organise a Small Scale Project and the opportunity to attend training.

The Groups were expected to undertake their projects from May to September and submit their reports by the end of November. At the time of writing this report, 53 groups had submitted their projects for evaluation. The majority of projects concern to topics like Ant-hills protection, Invasive plants monitoring, Bird boxes constructions, Lichens – air pollution indicators, Trees health state, Water flow characteristics, Wetland adoption and Educational trails.

Also during this period the SAZP Team worked on the development of a multi-media CD called "Nature Detectives".

Two visits were made by the FSC to Slovakia to attend the Launch, support SAZP, and monitor the Small Scale Project development.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments, that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will effect the budget and timetable of project activities. Have any of these issues been discussed with the Department and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

There were no significant project difficulties.

The majority of the groups did not work during the summer holiday (July – August) and students were at home and it was problem for all group members to meet in this period. The situation changed in September when groups started to follow in doing projects. The consequence of this situation was that the deadline of sending of the small-scale projects was extended to the end of November.

The students who lived the primary school and started to attend high school in September 2002 in other town, were replaced in the groups by new students. It made possibility to be involved into the project for new children.

A smaller number of groups have applied to take part in the practical projects and a smaller proportion appear to have completed the projects. This is a little disappointing although to be expected. This second element of the project is harder work and less curriculum related.

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures.

The project is very popular and a number of groups have submitted interim reports, indicating that they intend to continue with the project in 2003. Although a lower number than took part in the first phase, a network of over 100 schools undertaking Biodiversity improvement projects is significant.

Completed forms to: Rose Clarkson, Darwin Initiative M&E Project Manager, John Muir Building, Kings Buildings, University of Edinburgh, Mayfield Rd., Edinburgh EH9 3JK, Scotland. Email: R.Clarkson@ed.ac.uk