

EN



LIFE Project Number
LIFE17 ESC/PT/003

Progress Report¹
Covering the project activities from 01/01/2018² to 30/09/2018 only
the financial part, the other parts is until 30/11/2018

Reporting Date³
30/11/2018

LIFE PROJECT NAME or Acronym
LIFE VOLUNTEER ESCAPES

Data Project

Project location:	Portugal
Project start date:	01/01/2018
Project end date:	31/12/2020
Total budget:	1751902,00€
EU contribution:	1139115,00€
(%) of eligible costs:	

Data Beneficiary

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¹ Progress Report without any payment request (for Progress Reports with payment request, use the Mid-term Report template)

² Project start date in the case of the first Progress Report, otherwise date since the last reporting period

³ Include the reporting date as foreseen in part C2 of Annex II of the Grant Agreement

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* The mentioned annexes can be found inside the folder "Annexes" inside the corresponding to each annex folder.

1. List of key-words and abbreviations

Abbreviations:

- APA-ARHAlgarve – Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente - Administração da Região Hidrográfica da Região do Algarve
- ASSOL – Associação de Solidariedade Social de Lafões

- BCSD Portugal – Conselho Empresarial para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável de Portugal
- CEV – Centro Europeu de Voluntariado
- CPV – Confederação Portuguesa do Voluntariado
- CNPV – Conselho Nacional para a Promoção do Voluntariado
- CASES – Cooperativa António Sérgio para a Economia Social
- ESC – European Solidarity Corps
- IAS – Invasive Alien Species
- ICNF-PNSC – Instituto de Conservação da Natureza - Parque Natural de Sintra-Cascais
- ICNF – Instituto de Conservação da Natureza e Florestas
- MARCA ADL – MARCA Associação de Desenvolvimento Local
- MONTIS – MONTIS Associação de Conservação da Natureza
- MTV – Município de Torres Vedras
- P1A – Plantar uma Árvore
- Playsolutions – Playsolutions - Audiovisuais, Unip. Lda
- PSML – Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua
- PASS – Placement Administration and Support System Platform
- IVP – Individual Volunteering Plan
- RRN – Rede Rural Nacional
- RV – Rota Vicentina – Associação para a promoção do turismo de natureza na Costa Alentejana e Vicentina, ROTA VICENTINA
- SIC – Sociedade Independente de Comunicação, SA
- SPEA – Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves

Key-words:

- Biodiversity;
- Conservacion;
- Invasive Allien Species;
- Nature;
- Portugal;
- Volunteering.

2. Executive summary

2.1. General progress

In general, the project is delayed against the foreseen in application.

Actions A (*Implementation actions*) are delayed, due to the low interest of national volunteers in this subject and to the welcoming delay to joint volunteers (A.3).

Actions B (*Actions for communication and awareness raising*) are also delayed, namely the website (still inactive), the communication plan definition and *Networking*. The necessary process to welcome the first volunteers was more complex and longer than foreseen. This forced the partnership to give priority to the recruitment of volunteers and stabilization of the volunteering program, consequently delaying the remaining actions.

Actions C (*Project management and monitoring of the project progress*) are globally progressing as foreseen.

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

Despite the problems found, 44 volunteers have already been welcomed until the end of November. In the application, the volunteering period was foreseen to have fixed periods. With the project progress the volunteering period was authorized to be between 2 to 12 months. To a more reliable comparison between the foreseen in application and the executed, a calculation was made based on the total number of months accomplished by volunteers instead of the number of volunteers. Based on this calculation, the volunteers received, until now, represent 19% of the total foreseen in application. The first volunteer was received on the 19th of March 2018. From the total of 44 volunteers received, 5 ended their volunteering period before the period agreed on their LIFE VOLUNTEER ESCAPES agreement, being job opportunities given to these volunteers the main reason for the renunciation.

The volunteers have been scaling the management conservation works, either with direct work or by stimulating/ promoting activities with the beneficiaries, helping also as monitors. In addition, the work between the beneficiaries has allowed to optimise the complementary goals of each association, for example the joint volunteering actions between Plantar uma Árvore and Montis.

The volunteers have been in contact and in communication with local communities. Efforts are being made to improve and reinforce these components in the beneficiaries, such as Rota Vicentina, leading the volunteers into doing environmental education in the community, or as Montis, that in October made a volunteering action with ASSOL (an association that works with mental and physical handicaps) supported by our volunteers. Marca ADL volunteers had an easier contact and communication with the community as the volunteers from this beneficiary come from Montemor-o-Novo Municipality (city where the beneficiary is based). This, increased the number of volunteers mobilized, either for activities or to the project itself, and also promoted a higher disclosure of the environmental problems worked at a local level.

2.3. Identified deviations, problems and corrective actions taken in the period

The lack of available information felt initially, had some repercussions to the delay of the execution of some actions. The several problems found with the PASS platform, led to the finding of alternatives ways to contact (e.g. e-mail) directly with the PASS platform volunteers. Consequently, the lunch and closing of offers was made directly with each one of the volunteers. It is to highlight that a disclosure outside the platform for the project has been made and the possible volunteers are posterily forwarded to register at the PASS platform. Although this system as been more time consuming, the logistics associated to this have demonstrated to be functional. The problems with the platform already led to the loss of one volunteer and discontent of others. It has been frequent to send an offer to a specific volunteer and despite the volunteers' acceptance of this offer, the PASS platform does not assume the acceptance. This may lead to some volunteers exercising their volunteering period without an accepted offer.

A great difficulty was felt in recruiting national volunteers. Those showing less availability and interest to participate in the project for long periods of time, leading to the extension of the offers to international volunteers, with EASME acknowledgement. It is to highlight that, after this change, the volunteers welcoming process accelerated considerably. Due to the lack of adhesion from the volunteers to periods longer than 6 months, and with EASME acknowledgement, a change to the volunteering period was also made, extended this from 2 to 6 months.

It was foreseen in application that the elaboration of the Individual Volunteering Plan was to be done between the first and the second quarter of the project. However, it was decided to elaborate an editable template that is adapted according each volunteer characteristics. This

change, has been beneficial to obtain a higher flexibility to different situations that are emerging.

The APA-ARH beneficiary had some problems with administrative procedures arising from its nature as a public entity, mainly with expenditure framework, hiring processes and goods acquisition. These problems resulted in delays to volunteers' payments, to description sheets of the intervention parcels and staff hiring.

As already informed to NEEMO the excel LIFE_financial_reporting" that is being used to expenditure register was adapted from TOOLKIT LIFE model, since a financial model specifically adapted to the foreseen categories in application, mainly regarding the categories F6.A and F6.B was not provided.

An application error was detected in action A.9, corresponding to the beneficiary Rota Vicentina. Despite being defined in the written section that the beneficiary will welcome 12 volunteers, in the financial section there is only funds for 8 volunteers. Work will be done to reach the maximum number of volunteers considering this error.

3. Administrative part

Contrary to the foreseen in the application, a need was felt to hold monthly presential coordination meetings, to ensure a better operation of the project partnership and to secure the evolution of the project, since it is a preparatory project and some beneficiaries are inexperienced in dealing with LIFE. The meetings have been held alternating between the intervention locals of the beneficiaries to allow a better knowledge of the intervention areas and tasks to be performed by the volunteers. As the partnership is now consolidated, in the future, in order to reduce costs and time spent with trips, the presential meetings will be alternated with web meetings. The possibility of having meetings every 2 months, after a greater stability with the project execution is being considered.

There have been some difficulties from the beneficiaries, regarding the administrative and financial parts inherent to LIFE. Montis has held extra meetings destined to improve those aspects.

In order to facilitate the project management, Montis has created a virtual cloud where all the administrative and financial archive of the project is loaded, with access to all beneficiaries.

In November, the Project Manager of the coordinator beneficiary Montis has left the project. To solve the situation, Montis has ascended the Assistant to Project Manager, being the person with more knowledge of the project. A new technician was hired to the Assistant position. Despite the new manager being full-time, the current solution has not increase the general and personnel costs made by Montis.

The beneficiary Rota Vicentina, has changed the technician in the position of Management and Coordination. This change has not affected the action.

At BCSD, there was also a change in the project team. The person associated to the project in the position of *Adviser* has left the association, whereby, another person has entered to perform the same functions.

4. Technical part

4.1. Progress per action

A.1 Co-Definition of Joint Volunteering Program and Preparation of Individual Volunteering Plans

State: On course

Foreseen start date: 1/01/2018
Foreseen end date: 30/06/2018

Actual start date: 1/01/2018
Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/03/2020

The action has suffered changes regarding the Individual Volunteering Plan (IVP) and is delayed relatively to joint volunteers.

It was foreseen in application that all IVP's would be done until 30/06/2018. After the start of the project this was found to be impossible to do, mainly due to the specificity needed in adapting each IVP's to each volunteer profile and to the irregularity with the volunteers' arrivals. Thus, it was decided in a project meeting to produce the IVP's as the volunteers arrive to the entities. It is to highlight that aside from this measure, an "Volunteer Agreement" was produced, describing the rights and duties from the volunteer to the entity and from the entity to the volunteer. The corresponding IVP is attached to this agreement.

Resulting from this decision, the two *milestones* of action A.1 "Approval and Public Deployment of first package of Individual Volunteering Plans", foreseen in application for 31/03/2018 and "Approval and public deployment of all Individual Volunteering Plans concluded", foreseen for 30/06/2018, will only be possible to achieve at the end of the project, with the reception of all volunteers. At the end of the project, all IVP's produced during the application will be compiled and sent with the respective report.

Until the end of November, 47 IVP's were produced, being 3 of those IVP's Montis volunteers that are not yet in the project.

To produce and manage the Individual Volunteering Plans, 4 meetings between the beneficiaries were held.

It is expected for all the IVP's to be done by 31/03/2020, since the last volunteers to be received will refer to action A.9, Foreseen to end at 30/09/2020.

Regarding the joint volunteers, the action has not started yet. Due to delays with the volunteers' reception, it was decided to give priority to actions A.4 and A.11, obtaining the necessary knowledge to manage this action. This decision was agreed by all the partnership.

The produced IVP's until this date correspond to 27%, if the 175 IVP's foreseen in application were produced.

All the produced IVP's until this date are annexed to this report on "Annex I – Individual Volunteering Plans".

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
% of IVP approved/delivered for each action	100	27
Number of joint work meetings	3	4
Number of external stakeholders contacted to prepare IVP's	18	10

A.2 Updating Information on Concrete Conservation Areas and Detailing Conservation Activities/Tasks

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/01/2018
Foreseen end date: 30/06/2018
elaborated document

Actual start date: 1/01/2018
Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/11/2018 1°

The action is globally completed, although the main deliverable is delayed for lack of information from one associated beneficiary.

Until the date of 8/06/2018 all beneficiaries collected and compiled the necessary information to the development of the action, except for the beneficiary APA-ARH Algarve.

The delay with the preparation of characterisation files for the intervention locals of the 16 counties of Algarve by the beneficiary APA, mainly regarding the "*Descrição sintética dos Valores de conservação de cada parcela operacional*", is due to a set of difficulties found in obtaining support for necessary documents from ICNF (Forest and Nature Conservation Institute). Thence, this beneficiary was only able to provide incomplete information on its operational plots, thus making still impossible to finish the deliverable "*Action Report (including maps with operational, synthesis description of values in each plot and proposed tasks/activities for volunteers)*" foreseen to be delivered for 30/06/2018. The deliverable is expected to be ready on the first quarter of 2019.

The first document prepared (with information provided by APA-ARH Algarve) follows in annex to the report, on "Annex II – Action Report".

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Number of maps with operational plots delivered by project partners	7	51
% of concrete conservation areas with updated field information and proposal of operational plots	100	58
Number of joint work meetings	3	3

A.3 Joint Volunteering Program for integration of ESC with nature and biodiversity conservation

State: initiated

Foreseen start date: 1/07/2018
Foreseen end date: 30/03/2020

Actual start date: Foreseen for the 1° quarter of 2019
Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/03/2020

The action was scheduled to start at the beginning of July 2018. However, until now there has not yet been a joint volunteer, and therefore the start of the action is expected to start with a 6 months delay (the milestone "Welcome to first volunteers", foreseen for 1/07/2018 was not achieved yet). Taking in account the problems already reported with the PASS platform, the project beneficiaries decided in a meeting to give priority to the reception of non-joint volunteers (Actions A.4 and A.11). Reinforcing with this, the recruitment and reception of the volunteers before introducing the joint component.

Currently, with the experience gained with the welcomed volunteers and their integration, it is foreseen for this action to start soon, since two volunteers (in Montis) have manifested their interested to become joint volunteers.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	0
% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	90	0
Number of Average of new skills/competencies acquired by ESC volunteers useful for nature conservation	2 to 4	0
% of Increase in number of activities for nature conservation deployed	125	0
% of Organizations capacitated for undertaking new activities for nature conservation	9	0
Number of Joint volunteering programs with national aim in operation after project ends	1	0

A.4 Volunteering for awareness-raising on natural capital protection, conservation and enhancement

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/07/2018
Foreseen end date: 30/06/2020

Actual start date: 01/08/2018
Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/06/2020

The action is globally delayed.

Regarding action A4.1 “Volunteers selection, recruitment, preparation and training and monitoring”, the first volunteer has started his activity on 1/08/2018, with one month delay relatively to the expected (*milestone* “Welcome to first volunteers” was foreseen for 1/07/2018). The delay was due, mainly, to the low number of volunteer applications received, which led to the necessity of increasing the period to receive applications, and to the fact that the volunteer in question was only available after August 2018. This means action 4.1 is a work in progress, which is mainly on the training and monitoring phase.

Action A4.2 “Working plan development” is also a work in progress, because even though only 11 sessions with schools were carried out until now, currently there are more than 40 sessions scheduled from January until March, and the rest of the actions will soon be scheduled.

Action A4.3 “Good practices sharing sessions among companies and their stakeholders” and Action A4.4 “Awareness-raising sessions for young entrepreneurs, start-ups and SMEs” will be initiated in 2019.

Regarding A4.5 “Awareness-raising sessions for secondary students”, as referred before, were done 11 sessions on 2018, and nearly 40 are scheduled for 2019.

The *deliverable* “PPT Presentation about natural capital for students (A4.5)” was finished in the schedule presented in the application (30/09/2018). The *deliverable* can be found in Annex III - PPT Presentation about natural capital for students. It is expected that the *deliverable* “Brochure about natural capital for business (A.4.4)”, foreseen to 01/05/2020, will be finished by 31/01/2019, 15 months before the foreseen in the application.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Average number of activities organized and implemented by each volunteer	32	11
Number of good practices sharing sessions among companies and their stakeholders	8	0
Number of companies and stakeholders representatives in the good practices sharing sessions	200	0
Number of awareness-raising sessions for young entrepreneurs and start-up’s	8	0
Number of entrepreneurs and start-up’s representatives in the awareness-raising sessions	120	0
Number of awareness-raising sessions for secondary school students	48	11
Number of secondary student’s in the awareness-raising sessions	960	766
Number of businesses evaluating positively the usefulness of ESC volunteers for awareness raising and good practice dissemination	20	0

A.5 Volunteering Activities for Green Infrastructure within the Municipality of Montemor-o-Novo

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/07/2018

Actual start date: 12/04/2018

Foreseen end date: 30/06/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/06/2020

The action is globally advanced.

The recruitment of the first volunteer happened at 12/04/2018 and during the rest of April and during May, 4 more volunteers were recruited. The works regarding the maintenance of Marca nursery began with the volunteers’ arrival. After authorization from Montemor-o-Novo Municipality the volunteers work has started in the intervention areas under management or

owned by the municipality. The work, focused on IAS control started in May 2018, specially in the surrounding area of Castelo de Montemor-o-Novo. The IAS control in this area was interleaved with the surrounding area of Nossa Senhora da Visitação and Monfurado. On the same areas and after the first period of IAS control was concluded, plantation of native species was performed.

In an early stage of the project it was decided to do, together with the volunteers, an analysis of the different areas previously flagged as IAS control areas. In these field trips contacts with the different land owners were also established focusing in creating awareness of the IAS issue between the owners and requesting permission to intervene in their lands, committing to provide native plant species to reforest these areas.

With these interventions, 2,586 ha of IAS area was controlled, in an urban perimeter (Buffer Zone), excluding the Rede Natura area, in which 1.712 ha correspond to *Acacia* sp. areas.

At the same time, tasks were done that allowed the rehabilitation of small sections of water courses. These tasks included, control of *Arundo donax* and implementation of natural engineering techniques, promoting then the settlement of native flora and stabilization of water courses banks.

Some time was spent in seed collection, seeds sorting, seeding and seed/plant transplants. These works were developed to ensure the propagation of the amount of native flora needed for the restoration of the intervention areas. These processes also supported the works foreseen in LIFE LINES.

The control of IAS's is not as advanced as expected, not only due to the time spent with the plant propagation but also due to the technique adopted for IAS control, particularly regarding *Acacias*. The adopted technique – *Acacia* ring barking of individuals with a diameter greater than 5 centimeters (representing 80% of the selected areas) – can not be used through the whole year. This technique requires an optimal season with mild temperatures and high atmospheric humidity, contrary to the hand pulling technique being used in the remaining individuals. Thus, it was not possible to apply the ring barking technique between August and October, foreseeing that the same may happen between December and February. For this, it was only still possible to intervene around 1 ha of the Rede Natura IAS, due to the mentioned constraints.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Area (ha) of habitats protected by the Habitats Directive improved	12	5,5451
Area (ha) of riparian habitats improved/restored	1,2	2,175
Area (ha) of IAS controlled	8	3,349
Number of autochthonous trees and shrubs produced in nursery	2000	1200
Number of autochthonous plants planted in conservation works	2000	500
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	100

% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	80	In evaluation
Number of local Volunteers participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	75	97
Number of local landowners engaged in nature conservation activities following contacts with ESC volunteers	10	4
Number of LIFE funded projects with which ESC volunteers will iterate for improvement/enlargement conservation works	1	0

A.6 Volunteering Activities for improvement of nature and biodiversity conservation in private land

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/07/2018
Foreseen end date: 30/03/2018

Actual start date: 19/03/2018
Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/03/2018

The action is globally elapsing as expected.

The first volunteer was welcomed at 19/03/2018, 4 months before the foreseen (*milestone* “Welcome to first volunteers” foreseen for 1/07/2018). Until the end of November, Montis welcomed a total of 8 volunteers. These volunteers correspond to an estimate of 5 volunteers if the volunteering duration foreseen in application was kept at 6 months. Which indicates that this action is below the expected, since the foreseen, until this date, was to welcome 7 volunteers.

From the 8 volunteers, 1 has left the project LIFE VOLUNTEER ESCAPES before the agreed volunteering period. The volunteer was in the project more than the two compulsory months and for personal reasons has decided to leave the project.

All the volunteers have been developing tasks in the different areas managed by Montis contrary to the model of 1 intervention area for each volunteer. This model of intervention in the different areas is more enriching to the volunteers, as they can experience and learn different problems and solutions to all the areas. It also allows a better adaptation to the real needs and priorities of each managed property. Until now, the volunteers have already performed conservation actions in 4 properties managed by Montis: Carvalhal de Vermilhas, baldio de Carvalhais, Costa Bacelo and Valadares. These conservation actions covered 2 ha of Rede Natura 2000 “Serra das Freita e Arada” (PTCON0047) and “Rio Paiva” (PTCON0059) areas. Despite this value is relatively low, it is expected for it to substantially increase during 2019.

These interventions include the supporting of natural regeneration (though pruning and reduction of biological competition – shrub cut), use of natural engineering techniques (such as gabions and palisades), plantations of autochthonous trees, IAS control (mainly *Acacia spp.* e *Hakea spp.*), opening and maintenance of accesses, ecological monitoring and direct seeding. Apart from these tasks, the volunteers were also involved in other conservation activities or complementary, developed by Montis.

The indicators regarding the number of local volunteers involved in activities with the ESC volunteers were achieved and overcome.

The indicators regarding the new job positions created within the project, with a view to be maintained after the project end, were achieved and overcome.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Area (ha) of IAS controlled	20	0,01
Number of autochthonous plants planted in conservation works	3000	250
Number of erosion control devices set in water lines with natural engineering works	120	10
Area (ha) of habitats protected by the Habitats Directive improved	20	2
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	100
% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	80	In evaluation
Number of Local Volunteers participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	240	258
Number of other volunteers, with Montis membership, participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	120	15
Number of External Partner institutions (public or non-profit) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	4	3
Number of External Partner institutions (private) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	4	3
Number of LIFE funded projects with which ESC volunteers will iterate for improvement/enlargement conservation works	1	0
Number of Jobs created and expected to be maintained for the post-project	1	3

A.7 Volunteering Activities for nature conservation within the Municipality of Torres Vedras

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/07/2018

Actual start date: 6/11/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/03/2018

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/03/2018

The action is globally delayed.

The first volunteers started at 06/11/2018, with a 4 months delay from the foreseen. The problems with the PASS platform were attempted to be overcome by the disclosure of the volunteering offers through other platforms, such as the Municipality Local Volunteer Bank, Youth Area, Facebook, the Municipality website, highschool, professional and universities

contacts and e-mails. Through these channels it was possible to reach young people from the region interested in making part of the project as volunteers.

The 3 volunteers received for the period of 6 months each, have been supporting not only the production of autochthonous species in nurseries and with plantations of dune flore with collaboration of the school students from Torres Vedras county, but also with plantations of other autochthonous species in lands of the municipality.

So far, it was not possible to quantify the habitat protected areas of the Habitat Directive and the area intervened with IAS control, mainly the removal of *Carpobrotus edulis* in Praia Azul dunes (in collaboration with LIFE volunteers and students from the county) as these activities occurred very recently.

Within the LIFE Volunteer Escapes the beneficiary Município de Torres Vedras intends to carry out, among other actions, work for the habitat maintenance/conservation of Ruivaco-do-Oeste (*Achondrostoma occidentale*), an endemic fish species from the Sizandro and Alcabrichel rivers. These works are yet to be initiated as the activities can only start after the works in the habitat restauration of Ruivaco-do-Oeste (*Achondrostoma occidentale*) are concluded. The work for the restauration of this habitat are being executed within the project financed by POSEUR. The works in this project are expected to take place until April 2019. After concluded, complementary maintenance actions will be performed by the LIFE project volunteers, as foreseen in application.

The land owners' enrolment in conservation activities has yet to start.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Area of habitats protected by the Habitats Directive improved (ha)	7	To quantify
Length of riparian habitats improved/restored (km)	1	0
Area of IAS controlled (ha)	8	To quantify
Number of autochthonous trees and shrubs produced and planted	2000	1150 plantations 0 produced
Numer of local Volunteers participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	80	50
Number of local landowners engaged in nature conservation activities following contacts with ESC volunteers	10	0
Number of External Partner institutions (private) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	10	0
Number of External Partner institutions (public or non-profit) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	4	2
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	100
% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	80	In evaluation

A.8 Volunteer Programs for Native Habitats Restoration, Promotion and Conservation and Management of Visitation Impacts

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/07/2018

Actual start date: 9/07/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/03/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/03/2020

The action is globally elapsing as foreseen.

The action in question started at 9/07/2018, with the welcoming of the first volunteer by P1A coinciding with the date foreseen in application (the milestone “Welcome to first volunteers” was Foreseen for 1/07/2018). However, there was postponement of the stipulated date for the reception of the first volunteers due to the constructions in the accomodation intended for the volunteers in Sintra region and also due to the need to extended the period of preparatory assessment work to the intervention areas in Alvão, which are regionally distant and new to the Association.

The contact with various audiences, whether corporate, associate or local communities, has allowed the development of skills not only in communication, sensibilization and training of the different groups, but also coordinating field work and organizing intervention initiatives in the field.

The indicators regarding the enrolment of local volunteers in ESC volunteers’ activities have been achieved and overcome.

The indicators regarding the enrolment of External Partners in ESC volunteers’ activities as not only been achieved but also overcome. The indicator regarding the new job positions created with the project, with a view to be maintained after the project end, has also been achieved.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Area of IAS controlled (ha)	12	4,4
Number of autochthonous plants planted in conservation works	6000	1 578
Number of autochthonous trees and shrubs produced in nursery	8440	740
Area of habitats protected by the Habitats Directive improved (ha)	20	5
Length of interpretation trails maintained/restored for adequately directing tourists in nature/biodiversity sensitive areas (km)	40	10
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	100
% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	80	In evaluation
Number of local Volunteers participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	480	948

Number of External Partner institutions (public, non-profit or private) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	8	29
Number of jobs created and expected to be maintained for the post-project	2	2

A.9 Volunteering Activities for nature conservation along the Rota Vicentina Nature Trail

State: initiated

Foreseen start date: 1/01/2019
Foreseen end date: 30/09/2020

Actual start date: 25/10/2018
Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/09/2020

The action is elapsing as Foreseen.

As planned in the application volunteers will only be welcomed in January, so at this moment the associated beneficiary Rota Vicentina does not have volunteers. However, at 25/10/2018 the volunteering offers disclosure was initiated. Currently the selection of future ESC volunteers to the beneficiary Rota Vicentina is elapsing.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Length of interpretation trails maintained/restored for adequately directing tourists in nature/biodiversity sensitive areas (km)	450	0
Area of IAS controlled (ha)	2	0
Number of other volunteers, from public and private bodies, participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	40	0
Number of corporations from the tourism sector engaged in nature conservation support and participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	20	0
Number of public bodies from the tourism sector engaged in nature conservation support and participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	5	0
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	0
% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	80	0

A.10 Volunteering Activities for Bird Conservation

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/10/2018
 Foreseen end date: 30/09/2020

Actual start date: 1/10/2018
 Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/09/2020

The action is elapsing as expected.

The volunteers work started at 1/10/2018, as foreseen in application, despite the constraints already reported. Currently the beneficiary SPEA has 3 volunteers in Berlingas achipelago, for a period of 6 months. These volunteers performed several field interventions within the scope of the Conservation Plan After-LIFE Berlingas, mainly on IAS control (namely *Carpobrotus edulis*), monitorization of sea birds' populations, construction and maintenance of artificial nests, flora monitorization, paths maintenance and also providing support to the production of information for visitors, ect.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Area of N2000 priority habitats improved (ha)	30	2
Area of IAS controlled (ha)	20	1
Number of autochthonous plants planted/produced	30000	0
Number of local Volunteers participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	480	4
Number of local insitutions involved with nature conservation support and/or participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	10	1
Number of municipalities engaged in nature conservation support and participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	1	0
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	100
% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	80	In evaluation

A.11 Volunteering Activities for Conservation of Riparian/Aquatic Habitats within the Regional Structure for Environmental Protection and Conservation

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/07/2018
 Foreseen end date: 31/03/2020

Actual start date: 17/09/2018
 Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/03/2020

The action is elapsing as Foreseen.

Even though the *milestone* "Welcome to first volunteers" was foreseen for 1/07/2018, the beneficiary APA-ARH had a 2 months delays regarding the welcoming of volunteers. The 2 volunteers have started their volunteering period of 12 months on 17/09/2018, performing tasks on the properties with an operational plan already defined. The main tasks being monitorization

of costal and marine water ecological quality and stream waters, IAS control and removal, plantations of autochthonous species, criation and implementation of environmental education activities and volunteering, etc.

The indicator “Number of External Partner institutions (public or non-profit) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers” was already achieved.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Length of riparian habitats improved/restored (km)	1	0
Area of IAS controlled (ha)	2	0
Number of local Volunteers participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	500	250
Number of External Partner institutions (private) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	4	0
Number of External Partner institutions (public or non-profit) participating in joint activities with ESC volunteers	16	16
% of ESC volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	100
% of ESC volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	80	In evaluation

B.1 Definition and Implementation of Communication Program

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 01/01/2018

Actual start date: 01/01/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/12/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/12/2020

Action B1 is behind schedule.

Inicially the project communication was focused on the creation of the project logo, project disclosure though Facebook, radio and “press news” emission.

Until the specialized team was hired for the communication work, such works were developed by MONTIS with the associated beneficiaries support. In meetings held, given identified needs, communication strategies were produced. Until now, a communication plan specifically for Facebook was produced. The document of this plan is annexed to this report in “Annex IV – Communication Program for Facebook Page”. A complete communication plan will be sent when finished.

The team hired by APA-ARHAlgarde and Torres Vedras Municipality was Estúdio Criativo BOTODACRUZ (<http://botodacruz.com/>).

At 21/08/2018 the first *media* visit to the project being published at 28/08/2018 in Jornal Notícias de Aguiar and Jornal Público achieving the *milestone* “First media visit to intervention areas accomplished”, foreseen for 31/08/2018. The *milestone* “First radio coverage of project works accomplished” foreseen for 31/12/2018 was also achieved at 28/08/2018 with the news on Rádio Clube Aguiarense.

The preparation and launch of the project website are currently with a 6 months delay as the website is yet to be done. The website will be hosted on <http://www.lifevolunteerescapes.org/> and it is expected to be fully operational until the end of January 2019. The hired team is currently dealing with this matter.

As the necessary effort to receive the first volunteers was more complex and time consuming than expected, the beneficiaries made the decision to give priority to the recruitment and stabilization of the voluntary program, leading therefore to the above mentioned delays.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Number of web site users	250	0
Number of Facebook page followers	5000	820
Number of links to project events posted by the National Rural Network website	12	0
Number of media visits promoted	20	2
Number of National TV news broadcasted	4	0
Number of Radio news broadcasted	10	1
Number of Press Releases deployed	20	4
Number of Press news	40	9
Number of similar organizations (NGO's, national/regional/local public administrations) attending technical seminars	80	61
Number of other members from the national rural network attending technical seminars	18	0
% of volunteers sharing their experiences through specific events (e.g. small talks in schools or colleges)	100	0

B.2 Production and Deployment of Teaser(s) to Raise Awareness and Engage ESC Volunteers

State: finished

Foreseen start date: 01/01/2018

Actual start date: 01/01/2018

Foreseen end date: 30/09/2018

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 16/05/2019

The Teaser for Engagement of Volunteers was initiated on January 2018 and finished at May 16th 2018, on the same date as its first publication (*milestone* "First public deployment of the teaser concluded, Foreseen for 15/04/2018). Although its conclusion was originally scheduled for April 1st 2018, the fact that it was a video for recruitment of volunteers it was important for the teaser to be displayed in articulation with the operation of volunteer registration platforms. This was the reason for the delay in completing this action.

After the disclosure of the teaser, it was found that other already in use channels would be more suitable and profitable for volunteer recruitment than using e-mails. The video displayed on the web platform had about 1500 views.

See “Annex V – Teaser for Engagement of Volunteers (EN and PT)” for the two versions (PT and EN).

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
In country ESC volunteers engaged	175	30
Facebook views of the teaser(s)	12000	5636
Facebook shares of the teaser(s)	100	68
Youtube visualizations of the teaser(s)	2000	1629
Mails sent to deploy the teaser(s)	2000	0

B.3 Production and Deployment of TV Series for Dissemination, Replication and Transfer

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 1/04/2018

Actual start date: 01/06/2018

Foreseen end date: 30/09/2019

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 30/09/2019

The action is globally delayed.

Like was explained in the first report, it was foreseen in application the production of 12 episodes for the TV series, however and after analysis of the episodes, the episode “TV series “Business and Natural Capital” was considered not fit with the remaining episodes. The partnership decided to produce 13 episodes instead of 12 episodes, without additional costs, being that the episode “TV series “Business and Natural Capital” will not be transmitted by SIC but will be available online and used by BCSD.

The preparation for the production of this episode started in June 2018 with a meeting held between the beneficiaries PlaySolutions and BCSD in June 2018, to define the video guide structure. The necessary images were already collected as well as some testimonies. An approval by the beneficiary BCSD of the video guide in order to start its edition and conclusion is currently awaited. The episode is expected to be finished by 31/01/2019, with a total of 4 months delay to the foreseen in application, the *deliverable* “TV Series – episode on “Business and Natural Capital” scheduled for September 30th 2018. It is to highlight that this *deliverable* was associated wrongly, in application, as it was associated to action B.2 instead of B.3.

In August 2018 the preparations of the series started simultaneously with the gathering of information regarding the volunteering activities planned for each beneficiary. A structure for the series episodes was prepared including the activities to be performed by the volunteers in each beneficiary. This structure was presented and discussed with the project communication committee, through a *Skype* meeting, and was posteriorly presented to the remaining beneficiaries to approval in a monthly meeting.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Number of TV spectators watching the series	500000	0
Number of web downloads of the TV series – PT version	100	0
Number of web downloads of the TV series – EN version	200	0

B.4 Networking with other LIFE projects/teams

State: initiated

Foreseen start date: 01/01/2018

Actual start date: 19/09/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/12/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/12/2020

The action is globally delayed to the foreseen in application.

Montis attended, with the organisers' invitation, to the "platform meeting" "Volunteering for Nature Conservation" in Tartu, Estonia, from 19 to 21 September 2018, (*milestone* "First Networking visit to external projects concluded", scheduled to 31/03/2018). This was, so far, the only *networking* activity held within the project with other LIFE projects, corresponding to the *milestone* "First Networking visit to external projects concluded". This *milestone* foreseen for 31/03/2018, has a 6 months delay.

The *milestone* "Initial Networking invitation to visit project concluded" foreseen for 30/06/2018, has yet to be accomplished. However, during the "platform meeting" contacts were made with potential future *networking* partners, mainly LIFE Followers.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Number of Networking Synthesis Reports (with a critical review) delivered	10 (1)	0
Number of Critical Review Reports delivered by invited LIFE projects	2	0
Number of External visits promoted to the project	2	0
Number of External LIFE project teams actively cooperating with the project beneficiaries during the project works	20	0
Number of External LIFE project teams actively cooperating with the project beneficiaries after the project works	10	0
Number of External LIFE project teams actively cooperating in sending EU volunteers for the post-project joint volunteering program	1	0

C.1 Overall Project, Partnership and Stakeholder Management

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 01/01/2018

Actual start date: 01/01/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/12/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/12/2020

The action is globally elapsing as expected.

The Partnership Agreements with the project beneficiaries were finished and signed on 28/02/2018, with 2 months delay to the foreseen in application (see Annex VI – Partnership Agreements).

Before the project start, a presential meeting was held on 12/12/2017 with the Coordination Team in order to prepare the first steps for the project execution.

The first project coordination team monthly meeting was held in 11/01/2018 achieving the *milestone* “First Meeting of the Project Coordination Team concluded” scheduled for 31/01/2018. Currently, 9 monthly meetings were already held, from which 8 were presential monthly meetings, and only the last one held, at 22/11/2018 was done by Skype. The monthly meetings have been ensuring a better coordination of the team and administrative, technical and financial management of the project.

Apart from the project general management meetings, several other presential meetings were held, according to the beneficiaries’ availability, to discuss and ensure the financial and administrative management of LIFE.

The project coordination and management as been supported by the use of a web cloud where all the project administrative and financial archive has been updated and kept.

The Stakeholders Advisory Board was received in 26/09/2018, achieving the *milestone* “First Meeting of the Stakeholders Advisory Board concluded”, foreseen for 31/01/2018. The meeting was held during the SEIVA event, organised by APA-ARH Algarve, which was open to the general public and allowed the disclosure of the project, the exchange of ideas and experiences between the project beneficiaries, the Stakeholders Advisory Board and the public. It was decided to first have a meeting focused on the volunteering with the Stakeholder Advisory Board, which consists in Confederação Portuguesa do Voluntariado - CPV, Centro Europeu de Voluntariado - CEV and Cooperativa António Sérgio para a Economia Social - CASES (with the functions of the old Conselho Nacional para a Promoção de Voluntariado - CNPV). A future meeting will take place with the same perspective of being open and boost the exchanging of ideas, focused on conservation and rural development. In this meeting of the Stakeholders Advisory Board the ICNF – Forest and Nature Conservation Institute and the Rede Rural Nacional RRN will be present.

In addition to the Stakeholders Advisory Board, there are also a set of project stakeholders, which have been following and contributing to the project development. Some examples of these stakeholders are the Câmara Municipal de Vouzela, o Bioparque – Parque Natural do Pisão, a Junta de Freguesia de Carvalhais, o Instituto de Conservação da Natureza-Parque Natural de Sintra e Cascais – ICNF-PNSC, o Parque de Sintra-Monte da Lua – PSML, a Câmara Municipal de Sesimbra, etc.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Number of Project Progress Reports delivered on time	3	1
Number of Meetings from Project Coordination Team	18	9
Number of Meetings from Stakeholder Advisory Board	4	1
Number of Stakeholders integrating the various meeting from SAB	20	3
Number of Staff to be assigned mentor role undertaking former capacity/training workshops	100	0

C.2 Overall Management of the ESC Volunteering Cycle

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 01/01/2018

Actual start date: 01/01/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/12/2020

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/12/2020

The action is elapsing as expected.

The first certificate was prepared by 17/09/2018, 13 days before the foreseen in application (*milestone* “First Certificate of Participation endorsed” foreseen to 30/09/2018).

To this date 5 volunteers have ended before expected their volunteering period in the project LIFE VOLUNTEER ESCAPES, mainly due to professional reasons (job opportunities) but also due to personal reasons. However, as these volunteers fulfilled the 2 months minimum of volunteering they were entitled to participation certificates. The certificates are found in “Annex VII – Certificates”.

To this moment, the interventions made by the volunteers have been monitored and the information has been compiled. However, the procedures for this monitoring and information compilation still need to be reviewed and standardized. This task is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2019.

It is still not possible to display a percentage of fully satisfied volunteers with the project, as an evaluation form is being produced for the ESC ex-volunteers. This form will provide not only the volunteers perspective of their volunteering period but also improvement suggestions for the future. The final document is yet to be available as, for the moment, informations and contributions from the beneficiaries are being compiled. It is expected the form to be finished and available to the volunteers until the end of January 2019.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
Number of yearly reports submitted	3	0
Number of ESC Volunteers giving up after hosting	0	5
% of ESC Volunteers signing a contract for the tasks being offered	100	100

% of ESC Volunteers issued a Certificate of Participation by MONTIS and associated beneficiaries	100	100
% of ESC Volunteers acquiring new competencies and skills, useful for nature conservation	100	100
% of ESC Volunteers fully satisfied with their deployment	100	In evaluation

C.3 External Audit

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 01/04/2018

Actual start date: 20/03/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/03/2021

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/03/2021

As referred in Annex X of the Grant Agreement ("Financial and Administrative Guidelines") and discussed during NEEMO's visit, in 20/06/2018, there is a possibility of an external audit foreseen in application to not be performed. For the moment, a confirmation from EASME is awaited.

Progress indicators

Indicator	Foreseen in application	Progress report n°1
% of Project's expenditure verified by external audit	100	0
% of Project's expenditure certified in respect to the General Conditions of the Model LIFE Grant Agreement	100	0

C.4 Monitoring project outputs and impact in LIFE performance Indicators and the local socio-economy

State: on course

Foreseen start date: 01/01/2018

Actual start date: 01/01/2018

Foreseen end date: 31/12/2021

Actual (or anticipated) end date: 31/12/2021

As reported to NEEMO on 24/07/2018 by email, the application did not have attached a KPI indicators table. On this email, it was sent to NEEMO team a table with a compilation of the indicators referred in this report. It is to highlight that these indicators, when applicable, are designated on each Protocol signed with the associated beneficiaries. These indicators are being filled since the start of the project, being described by action in the previous chapters. As foreseen, the indicators will be delivered at the end of the project, at 31/12/2020.

C.5 Drafting and delivering the After-LIFE Plan

Budget breakdown categories	Budgeted costs in €*	Costs incurred from the start date to 30/09/2018 in €	% of Budget**
1. Personnel	€693 760,00	€95 473,07	13,76%
2. Travel and subsistence	€98 951,00	€7 832,03	7,92%
3. External assistance	€102 516,00	€1 100,00	1,07%
4. Consumables	€75 046,00	€4 128,92	5,50%
5. Other costs	€70 661,00	€4 164,34	5,89%
6A. Costs for volunteers (60%)	€15 675,00	€341,58	2,18%
6B. Individual OR organisational support for volunteers (75%)	€586 495,00	€23 664,14	4,03%
8. Overheads	€108 798,00	€8 879,81	8,16%
TOTAL	€1 751 902,00	€135 734,27	7,75%

The overall costs incurred until the end of September are lower than expected, and the total percentage of budget spent so far is 6,25%. This low rate is related to the delay in some actions, reflected mainly in categories 3 (“External Assistance”) and 6 (“Costs for volunteers” and “Individual or organisational support for volunteers”). For external assistance weight, apart from the action’s delays, delays in hiring, particularly in the case of public entities such as APA-ARH Algarve. On category 6 weighs the delay in the reception of the first volunteers. Other detailed financial matters, including doubts, will be presented in annexe VIII. In response to the requested in point 9 on the letter concerning the 1st NEEMO visit (EASME B3/DO/TH), dated of December 7th 2018, the requested information will be in Annexe IX.