

Description of Demonstration Project

Adapted from Annex G of the UNEP/GEF "Wings Over Wetlands"
Project "Enhancing Conservation of the Critical Network of Sites required by
Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways (AEWA)" – project no. 51210

1. Background and context

1a. Table 1. Summary of background information on demonstration site

Name	The Nemunas River delta area and the NE coast of the Curonian Lagoon
Size (hectares)	30,000
Location	Lithuanian coastal region, Klaipeda county, Silute administrative district (Annex 2, map 1,). Geographical coordinates (central point): 55°18'N, 21°20'E
Principal wetland features	A major system of wetlands, including the wide freshwater delta of the Nemunas River and the adjacent brackish Curonian Lagoon, coastal seasonally flooded meadows, rivers, lakes, raised bogs, large fishpond systems and wet forests. Ramsar wetland type: permanent inland delta, coastal brackish lagoon, seasonally flooded meadows, seasonally flooded agricultural land, permanent freshwater lakes and peatlands. Up to 25,000 ha of coastal meadows, pastures and forests are flooded in spring. Flood control is performed by a system of polders. It is the only wetland with such a high diversity of habitats in Lithuania. The Nemunas River is the main pass for migratory fish species.
Bird species of principal importance under the AEWA agreement and Convention on Wetlands	Staging concentrations (surpassing the 1% Ramsar criterion) of <i>Cygnus cygnus</i> , <i>C. bewickii</i> , <i>Branta leucopsis</i> , <i>Anser anser</i> , <i>A. albifrons</i> , <i>A. fabalis</i> , <i>Anas strepera</i> , <i>A. penelope</i> , <i>A. acuta</i> , <i>A. clypeata</i> , <i>Aythya ferina</i> , <i>Ay. fuligula</i> , <i>Bucephala clangula</i> , <i>Mergus albellus</i> , <i>M. merganser</i> , <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> , <i>Grus grus</i> , <i>Sterna caspia</i> , <i>S. albifrons</i> , <i>S. hirundo</i> , etc. are regularly recorded. There are also records of the globally threatened species: <i>Anser erythropus</i> and <i>Aythya nyroca</i> . The key breeding sites of the globally endangered or vulnerable species: <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i> (up to 200 pairs), <i>Crex crex</i> (up to 2,000 pairs), <i>Gallinago media</i> (up to 50 pairs).
Protective status of the site	The major part of the delta is a protected territory. It is listed as the most important complex of wetlands in the Lithuanian Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. The Nemunas River Delta Regional Park (total area – 26,638 ha) was established in 1997, and covers different protective zones including several nature reserves with some strictly protected areas among them. The Nemunas delta has been a designated Ramsar site since 1993. The whole territory of the Regional Park was designated as "Natura 2000" site in 2004 as SPA for 22 breeding and 24 staging migratory bird species while since 2005 also as pSCI for the 9 Habitats of EU importance and 2 fish, 1 mammal and 1 insect species.
Summary of wetland uses	Agriculture, flood control, peat extraction, fisheries, forestry, tourism and various other recreational activities. Key stakeholders: local farmers, workers and businesses in the tourism sector, managers of the polder system, Direction of the Regional Park, local municipalities.
Summary of wetland threats	Changes in water regime in coastal floodplains; loss or degradation of the principal habitats of waterbirds due to conversion of natural sites to agricultural land and (conversely) due to overgrowing of abandoned meadows and pastures with shrubs (local farmers and managers of polders system); intensive agricultural activities (early and intensive grazing, early hay

	production); disturbance from unregulated and rapidly increasing recreational activities (tourism sector and decision-makers).
Agencies responsible for site management and their roles	The Directorate of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park and Silute district municipalities are responsible for the functional management and protection of the site. The Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University (IEVU) is responsible for organizing of the bird monitoring the site, including the data analysis. It also was involved in preparation of the National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan. In 2006 the IEVU has prepared Special Management Plans for key territories of the site.

NOTE: *The activities described in the present project description are indicative only and may be subject to revision as a result of a project launching workshop to be held on site at the outset of the project. The workshop will ensure participation of all project stakeholders in the review and update of the project objectives, workplan and budget. Subject to prior approval by UNOPS, the results of the workshop and associated revised workplan will be incorporate in the project Inception Report.*

1b. Relevance and importance of the site and proposed activities in the national biodiversity strategy

According to the National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) and Action Plan (BCSAP), seasonally flooded meadows and aquatic ecosystems such as the Nemunas River delta and northern Curonian Lagoon are the most significant complexes for biodiversity conservation in Lithuania (BCS articles 1.1.2, 1.1.3; BCSAP articles 3.1.5, 3.1.7, 3.1.8). The demonstration site is specified as the key wetland system of Lithuania for concentrations of migratory birds in the BSC and BCSAP. The necessity for wetland restoration projects is emphasized in the National Environmental Strategy and Action Program.

Following the EU Bird and Habitat Directives, Lithuania must ensure favourable conservation status of species and habitats, listed in the appropriate annexes of the both Directives. In case of the Nemunas delta SPA, 22 breeding and 24 migratory staging bird species are listed as qualifying, thus the Lithuanian authorities must ensure a favourable conservation status for all of them. Besides, Nemunas delta SPA is classified as a bottleneck site for birds of prey, cranes and passerines. In case of Nemunas delta pSCI, Lithuania has an obligation to protect 9 Habitat types, listed in the Annex I of the Habitat Directive (their codes: 1130, 1150, 2330, 3160, 6120, 7110, 7120, 9080, 91D0) as well as 2 fish, one mammal and one insect species, listed in the Annex II of the Directive and also mentioned as qualifying ones for this site.

1c. Role and status of the site in other relevant national policies/initiatives

Lithuania has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1996 and Convention on Wetland – in 1993. The Lithuanian part of the Nemunas River delta has been a designated Ramsar site since 1993. The northern coast of the Curonian Lagoon is included on the list of potential Ramsar sites. Lithuania joined the African-Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement (AEWA) in 2004. It is also a party to other international agreements and treaties regarding the conservation of wetlands (the Bern Convention, the Bonn Convention, the Helsinki Convention on Baltic Sea Conservation, etc.).

1d. Current conservation status and threats to the site

The major part of the delta is protected as the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park (NDRP) (area - 26,638 ha) The main aim of the Regional Park is to protect the unique landscape of the biggest delta area in the region including its natural and cultural heritage, and arrange all facilities in order to use it for visiting with a focus on environmental education. There are four Nature Reserves along the eastern coast of the Curonian Lagoon with a total area more than 3,000 ha (Kintai and Luzija Botanical, Kliosiai Landscape and Svenceles Botanical-Zoological Reserves). All those Reserves as well as NDRP have been designated as Natura 2000 sites in 2004-2005. Most human activities are regulated in the territory

concerned. The area is mainly threatened by changes in water regime in coastal floodplains caused by the drainage scheme implemented under the former political regime, the loss or degradation of the principal habitats of waterbirds due to conversion of natural sites to agricultural land and due to overgrowing of abandoned, but earlier intensively utilized floodplains with shrubs and increasing disturbance from unregulated tourism activities.

1e. Details of current/past management activities, the organizations involved and current status of management in the site

The Ministry of Environment through its State Service of Protected Territories and the Directorate of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park with Silute and Klaipeda municipalities are responsible for the functional management and protection of the area. The municipalities are mostly related to administrative/legal regulations of various human activities, including farming, fishery, tourism, and various other developments. They are responsible for the practical implementation of the administrative measures as well as practical management and monitoring of the natural resources. The Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University is responsible for co-ordination of the monitoring and research of the site and for the elaboration of necessary management activities. Nature Management Plans for two Nature Reserves and key areas of the NDRP are submitted to the Ministry of Environment and are ready for the practical implementation.

1f. Synthesis of the current management needs in the site, emphasizing the gaps that need to be filled

The major current management needs in the site include the restoration of degrading key wetlands affected by the former drainage schemes and recent changes of agricultural practices, management of the hydrological network of polders with due respect to unique habitats and concentration of recreational activities in specific zones. The low level of environmental education and awareness of key stakeholders cause a major barrier to effective management.

2. Demonstration project rationale, immediate objective and sub-objectives

2a. Demonstration project rationale

The selected demonstration site is the most important wetland complex in Lithuania. It is one of the very few natural or moderately changed estuaries, remaining in the Baltic Region. The Nemunas River delta area is the only territory with such a high diversity of habitats (including many protected types of habitats, listed in the EU Habitats Directive) in Lithuania and one of the key stop-over sites for migratory waterbirds in Europe, regularly supporting internationally important concentrations of more than 20 waterbird species. The site supports 54 nesting bird species listed in the Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. A marked decrease of the carrying capacity of this unique complex of wetlands for migratory waterbirds was recorded during the last decades. It was mainly caused by the loss or degradation of certain key staging habitats due to changes in the natural water regime of the floodplains caused by former drainage schemes and further overgrowing of abandoned seasonally flooded meadows with shrubs following recent changes in agricultural practices/land ownership. Rapidly increasing and poorly regulated recreation activities are new significant threats to key bird areas in the site. Local landowners are poorly informed about the nature values of the site and appropriate management activities of this unique territory. The project aims to enhance conservation and sustainable management of the key areas for migratory birds in the Nemunas River delta through improved awareness and environmental education of key stakeholders (local agencies and landowners responsible for management of the site), restoration of natural open habitats in certain selected key staging and breeding sites of waterbirds, concentration of recreational activities in specially designated zones and detailed identification of sites supporting internationally important concentrations of migratory waterbirds.

2b. Immediate objective of the project

To improve the conservation and management of waterbirds and their habitats in the Nemunas River delta area and along the NE coast of the Curonian Lagoon through improved awareness and environmental education of local communities, restoration of certain key habitats, appropriate regulation of recreational load and detailed mapping of the territories supporting internationally important concentrations of migratory waterbirds.

2c. Sub-objectives

Sub-objective 1. To establish the “Education and Research Center of Migratory Birds (Bird Observatory)” in the Nemunas River delta

The newly developed Bird Observatory will improve environmental education and awareness for local landowners and decision makers, which is necessary for long-term maintenance of the Nemunas River delta as critical site for migratory waterbird populations. It will enable coordination of international activities related to conservation of the Nemunas River delta – the transboundary wetland complex, shared by Lithuania and Russia. The Bird Observatory will serve as the research and education center, essential for collection and publicity of all information related to migratory bird populations in the Nemunas River delta.

Sub-objective 2. To establish new eco-tourism facilities in the Ventes Ragas Landscape Reserve of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park

The newly established route for birdwatchers in Ventes Ragas peninsula will enable the proper regulation of a load of tourists in this key bird area, thus significantly decreasing disturbance to migratory birds. It is very important because the Nemunas delta SPA has been designated also as bottleneck site with a huge concentration of different birds species in the Ventes Ragas peninsula. Besides, new facilities will serve as an important tool for environmental education in the site, which is regularly visited by thousands of birdwatchers. It will ensure the isolation of visitors from wild birds trapped in the nets of Ventes Ragas Ornithological Station, what is particularly important in a view of potential risk caused by the recent spread of avian influenza.

Sub-objective 3. To restore certain degraded wetlands, especially important for migratory and breeding birds

The restoration of natural open floodplains, recently covered by shrubs and bushes, will allow to increase the carrying capacity of these key territories for staging waterbirds (particularly for internationally important concentrations of goose and wader species) and for certain breeding bird species, listed in listed in the Annex I of the EU Birds Directive, including populations of globally threatened species: Corncrake *Crex crex*, Great Snipe *Gallinago media* and Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*.

Sub-objective 4. To prepare and publish a special publication about nature values (particularly migratory birds) of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park

This will enable to fill a major gap in public knowledge concerning the Nemunas River delta as internationally important area for migratory bird populations. The publication will include important information on protected areas, public access regulations and available facilities for eco-tourists.

Sub-objective 5. To establish a management structure, coordinating implementation of the project

The establishment of the Project Team and Steering Committee will enable proper coordination of all activities of the project under sub-objectives 1-4, financial administration and reporting.

2d. Demonstration value of the project

The planned activities, including improved awareness and environmental education of key stakeholders, restoration of natural open habitats in certain selected key staging and breeding sites of waterbirds, concentration of tourism activities in specially designated zones and detailed designation of sites supporting internationally important concentrations of migratory waterbirds are of a regional importance in the Baltic Region. Those activities can be used as a model for replication in other countries in the AEW region and particularly in the neighboring countries (in the Baltic States, Russia, Belarus, Poland), which face similar problems of floodplain management in new economic conditions. Exchange visits of staff working in other sites and specialized workshops will be arranged in the demonstration site.

3. Demonstration project outcomes and activities

3a. Outcomes and activities

Outcome 1. Establishment of the “Education and Research Center of Migratory Birds (Bird Observatory)” in the Nemunas River delta

Activity 1.1. Design and building reconstruction works, aimed for establishment of the Bird Observatory

The Bird Observatory will be established in Rusne island (the key site of the Nemunas River delta, where the Nemunas River divides to the Skirvite and Atmata Rivers) in a temporarily unserviceable building, assigned to the Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University. The reconstruction of the building (address: Neringos 1c, Rusne, Silute Municipality; area – ca. 300 m²; Annex 2, schemes 1, 2; photos 1, 2) designated for Bird Observatory will be performed according to a special design project prepared following the construction regulations for Protected Territories. A construction and design company will be sub-contracted for implementation of these tasks. The reconstructed building will include a meeting hall for visitors and seminars held at the Bird Observatory with necessary demonstration equipment/furniture/small library, accommodation facilities and a research center of migratory birds including a laboratory with necessary equipment (PCs, equipment for sampling of water/soil characteristics, internet, optic equipment). The newly established Bird Observatory will be the main education and research center of migratory birds in the Nemunas River delta. It will be used for such important components of the WOW Project as training, capacity-building, networking, monitoring and data management, also for exchange of staff of different demonstration projects.

Activity 1.2. Arrangement of a training seminar and publishing of informative booklets for stakeholders

A workshop for different groups of stakeholders (about 30 persons) will be arranged to promote and discuss bird conservation, sustainable floodplain management, wetland restoration and eco-tourism issues in the territory concerned. It will be arranged in the newly established Bird Observatory. All information, which is essential for local communities and related to appropriate management and conservation of breeding and migratory bird populations and their habitats (detailed data on key bird areas in the Nemunas River delta, management regulations valid in the territory of the Regional Park, special compensations and EU payoffs available for appropriate management of important bird areas,

etc.), will be compiled in special information booklets and provided for visitors at the Bird Observatory. A special training of local landowners on the joining Agro-environmental schemes and their benefit is an important part of a Special Management Plan for key territories of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park requested by the Ministry of Environment and prepared by the Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University in 2006. A web of the demonstration project will be launched. New information will fill a major gap in environmental education and awareness of local stakeholders, which is essential for successful implementation of the project and for sustainable management of the site after the end of the demonstration project.

Activity 1.3. Arrangement of an international workshop on the transboundary management of the Nemunas River delta area

A workshop on international cooperation will be arranged for researchers and agencies (about 30 persons), responsible for management and conservation of the Nemunas River delta, shared by Lithuania and Kaliningrad District of Russia. Only the joint efforts of two countries will make it possible to fully safeguard this unique site for migratory birds. The WOW demonstration project will be discussed as an example of similar activities, which can be performed in the part of the Nemunas River delta belonging to the Kaliningrad District of Russia and in other key bird areas of Russia or other neighboring countries. The team of the WOW project Coordinating Unit and representatives of certain other WOW demonstration projects will be invited to this seminar.

Activity 1.4. Development of a research center of migratory birds

The research program implemented at the Bird Observatory will particularly be targeted to studies and monitoring of internationally important concentrations of migratory birds (following criteria of the Convention on Wetlands) and their habitats in the Nemunas River delta and along the NE coast of the Curonian Lagoon, according to the protocol of the AEWA conservation guidelines. It will build on the long-term data collected by the IEVU in the demonstration sites. This will enable the detailed designation of the territories supporting internationally important concentrations of migratory waterbirds, will provide timely and reliable feedback for all activities implemented under this project in the demonstration site, as well as necessary data for local and national management/conservation actions. The program will be implemented by the staff of the IEVU in a close collaboration with other research institutes and universities. It will serve as important training and tuition tool for graduate and post-graduate students. The newly developed Database of Migratory Birds in the Nemunas River Delta will include the data on distribution, numbers and appropriate conservation/management measures of migratory birds. Replicates of the Database will be distributed for key stakeholders. A newly developed web site of the Bird Observatory will enable to use collected data for local management, and national/global databases.

Outcome 2. Establishment of new eco-tourism facilities in the Ventės Ragas Landscape Reserve of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park

Activity 2.1. Establishment of new route for eco-tourists in the Ventės Ragas Landscape Reserve of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park

A new special route (length – about 700 m) with the observation tower, information posters and parking with facilities for visitors will be established in the territory of the Ventės Ragas Ornithological Station, managed by the T. Ivanauskas Museum of Zoology (Kaunas) (Annex 2, schemes 1, 3, photo 3). The newly developed eco-tourism route will be connected with the existing routes for eco-tourists in the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park, following the Detailed Plan of the Regional Park adopted by the

Government. The Ventes Ragas route for tourists (particularly birdwatchers) will enable to appropriately regulate a load of tourists in this key bird area, thus significantly decreasing disturbance to migratory birds. It will also allow observing the key staging sites of staging waterbirds in Kniaupas Bay of the Curonian Lagoon and a unique system of bird traps of the Ventes Ragas Bird Ornithological Station from the observation tower. New facilities will serve as important tool for environmental education in the site regularly visited by more than 50,000 of birdwatchers from Lithuania and foreign countries. They will grant the isolation of visitors from wild birds trapped in the nets of Ventes Ragas Ornithological Station, what is particularly important in a view of potential risk caused by the avian influenza. Due to a lack of appropriate regulation ringing activities were prohibited in the Station during the spread of avian influenza in March - June 2006. The newly established eco-tourism facilities will be managed by the T. Ivanauskas Museum of Zoology (letter from the Museum of Zoology attached). The local community of Vente village and adjacent settlements involved in rural tourism and tourism service facilities will benefit from these developments through additional income (in excess of about 20%) and new jobs.

Activity 2.2. Arrangement of annual "BirdWatching Days" in the new route for eco-tourists in the Ventes Ragas and supporting of the "BirdWatching Rally" in the region

Up to 1,000 birdwatchers annually participate in "BirdWatching Days" (aimed to observation of migratory birds during autumn passage) and "BirdWatching Rally" (targeted to record all bird species in a specially designated route), coordinated by the Lithuanian Ornithological Society (BirdLife-Lithuania). The newly established eco-tourism facilities will enable to arrange these annual large-scale events important for improvement of environmental education, related to migratory birds (particularly among young birdwatchers) in Ventes Ragas. Special information sheets will be prepared and published. The Lithuanian Ornithological Society (LOS) will organize these events as part of the Lithuanian demonstration project (letter from LOS attached).

Outcome 3. Restoration of certain degraded wetlands, especially important for migratory and breeding birds

Activity 3.1. Recovering of natural open floodplain habitats in the Rupkalviai Ornithological Reserve of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park and its surroundings

More than 50 ha of the seasonally flooded meadows will be used for the management with a purpose to recover natural open wet meadows (former key sites for migratory populations of shorebirds and for breeding rare bird species) overgrown with shrubs and reed due to the lack of traditional haymaking and cattle grazing (Annex 2, schemes 1, 4). Local farmers will be sub-contracted to implement these tasks. The shrubs will be cleared twice during the project period and will be used as fuel in the local boiler-house. The experts from the Directorate of the NDRP and IEVU will assist the local farmers to prepare the documentation for joining Agro-environmental schemes. It is expected that at least 50 hectares of the most valuable meadows will be appropriately managed as important habitats for waterbirds for a long period after termination of the project.

Outcome 4. A special publication about nature values (particularly migratory birds) of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park

Activity 4.1. Preparation and publishing of a special publication about nature values (particularly migratory birds) of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park

A special illustrated publication (about 50 pages) about nature values of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park (in Lithuanian with English summary) will be prepared and published. It will highlight

the importance of the Nemunas River delta as internationally important area for migratory bird populations. The publication will include important information on protected areas, public access regulations and available facilities for eco-tourists. The IEVU and the Directorate of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park will prepare this issue. It will enable to fill a major gap in public knowledge about nature values of this unique wetland complex.

Outcome 5. Establishment of the Steering Committee and Project Team

Activity 5.1. Establishment of the Steering Committee and Project Team with staff and sub-contractors

Management and implementation of the project will be implemented through a Project Team and overseen by a Steering Committee. The Project Team will be responsible for implementation, administration and monitoring of the project and will comprise a project supervisor, coordinator and accountant. They will be nominated within one month of the project's initiation. The project Supervisor will be the Deputy Director of the IEVU, the coordinator and accountant will be nominated by the Steering Committee (section 7 provides more details of their respective roles). The Steering Committee will periodically examine and evaluate the progress of the project and implementation of measures to be undertaken.

Activity 5.2. Supervision and financial administration of implementation

The Project Team will be responsible for technical, financial and administrative supervision of the project. Work plans will be developed for the project team every six months with each team member allocated specific tasks to be completed over the reporting period. Work plans will be developed to fit within the external project-reporting schedule for the WOW Project Coordination Unit (UNOPS), so that review of the previous six months could be integrated.

Activity 5.3. Reporting

The project Supervisor will be responsible for maintaining an overview of the project progress and success. Regular periodic reports will be submitted to the UNOPS. These will be prepared by the project team and submitted to the project Steering Committee for approval, prior to submission to the UNOPS. Evaluation of progress and success of project activities will be made against the indicators provided in the logical framework diagram (Annex 1).

3b. Project sustainability

The long-term sustainability of the project's results will be maintained primarily through funds planned for implementation of Special Management Plans prepared for key bird areas of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park and submitted to the Ministry of Environment in 2006. The implementation of special measures aimed to long-term conservation and appropriate management of important bird areas is planned since 2008-2009. They will be partly co-funded by funds available from the EU for management of "NATURA 2000" territories and other protected sites supporting species and habitats of European importance. After the termination of the WOW demonstration project, the research and monitoring program of migratory birds in the newly established Bird Observatory will be sustained as a part of the national environmental monitoring scheme, adopted by the Ministry of Environment of Lithuania and also as part of the research program on migratory birds and their habitats, implemented by the IEVU and adopted by the Government. The IEVU plan to use part of funds available from the EU Structural Development Fund for further development and maintenance of the Bird Observatory and its

equipment, maintenance of the Database. The long-term project sustainability will also be ensured through increased environmental awareness of the key stakeholders, especially landowners, and their interest to participate in conservation, wise use and management of key wetlands. Special further training of key stakeholders is planned in Special Management Plans of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park and the Bird Observatory will serve as a venue of these activities. The T. Ivanauskas Museum of Zoology will ensure appropriate management and further extension of the newly established eco-tourism route in Ventes Ragas following the Special Detailed Plan adopted for the Nemunas Delta Regional Park. The Lithuanian Ornithological Society (BirdLife-Lithuania) plan to maintain long-term and large-scale public actions related to migratory birds held in Ventes Ragas Landscape Reserve. The further restoration of degraded wetlands in the Rupkalviai Ornithological Reserve and in other key bird areas of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park is planned in Special Management Plans of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park (including restoration of a natural water regime in certain drained floodplains). Participation of local landowners in Agro-environmental schemes will also ensure sustainability of the demonstration project.

4. Budget

The total estimated budget of the Lithuanian demonstration project is 340,000 US\$ over four years (Table 2). The amount of 44,000 US\$ will be co-funded by the implementing agency - the Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University (see Co-financing Statement attached)

Table 2. Project financing expenditure categories (in US\$)

Personnel	\$26,000	\$23,200	\$49,200
Equipment	\$6,600	\$0	\$6,600
Project administration (including project office maintenance/communications/postage costs)	\$0	\$4,000	\$4,000
Workshops/seminars	\$8,300	\$0	\$8,300
Establishment of the research center of migratory birds (including database development)	\$10,000	\$6,300	\$16,300
Travel	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
<i>Subcontracts</i>			
Establishment of Bird Observatory (building design & reconstruction, web site development)	\$160,800	\$10,500	\$171,300
Wetland restoration works	\$9,000	\$0	\$9,000
Construction of eco-tourism facilities (observation tower, route) & arrangement of “Bird Days”	\$48,000	\$0	\$48,000
Public awareness materials (informative booklets, special publication)	\$9,300	\$0	\$9,300
Monitoring, Evaluation, Auditing	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000
TOTAL	\$296,000	\$44,000	\$340,000

NB: The travel budget has been calculated to allow the demonstration project to participate in two international WOW workshops

Table 3. Disbursement projection in US\$ (co-funded amount indicated in brackets)

Budget Category	Link to Activity	TOTAL (US\$)			Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4
		GEF	co-fin.	Total	semeste r 1	semeste r 2	semeste r 3	semeste r 4	semeste r 5	semeste r 6	semester 7
					GEF	GEF	GEF	GEF	GEF	GEF	GEF
Personnel	all	26,000	23,200	49,200	3,250	4,900	3,250	4,900	3,250	4,900	1,550
Equipment	5.1, 5.2, 5.3	6,600	0	6,600	\$6,600						
Project administration	all	0	4,000	4,000							
Workshops and training	1.2, 1.3, 2.2,	8,300	0	8,300			6,300			2,000	
Establishment of the research center	1.4,	10,000	6,300	16,300		\$5,370	\$1,160	\$1,160		\$1,160	\$1,150
Travel	all	10,000	0	10,000			\$4,000	\$3,000		\$3,000	
Subcontracts:											
Establishment of Bird Observatory (building design & reconstruction, web site development)	1.1,	160,800	10,500	171,300		16,550	50,000	50,000	44,250		
Wetland restoration works	3.1,	9,000	0	9,000					5,000	4,000	
Construction of eco-tourism facilities (observation tower, route) & arrangement of “Bird Days”	2.1,	48,000	0	48,000	4,000	22,000	22,000				
Public awareness materials (informative booklets, special publication)	4.1,	9,300	0	9,300						3,300	6000
Monitoring/Evaluation/Auditing	all	8,000	0	8,000				\$4,000			\$4,000
TOTAL		\$296,000	\$44,000	\$340,000	\$13,850	\$48,820	\$86,710	\$63,060	\$52,500	\$18,360	\$12,700

5. Timetable

The demonstration project is planned for a period of four years. The timetable of principal activities was elaborated after detailed consultations with all executing organizations and the key stakeholders.

Table 4. Timetable chart

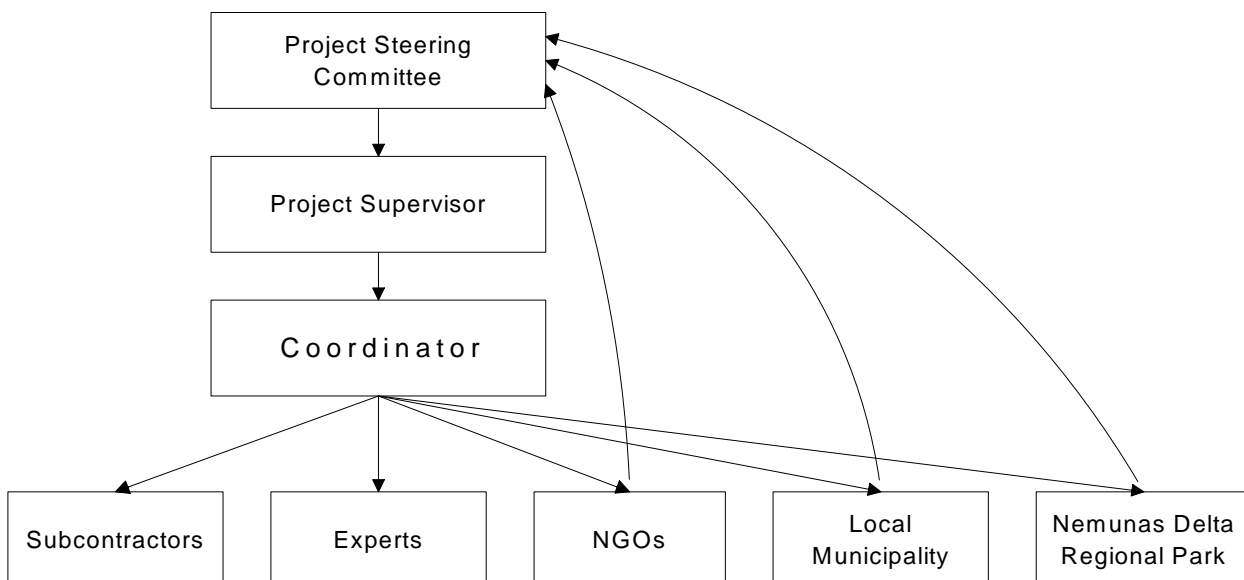
Activities	Months from project start													
	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42
1.1. Design and building reconstruction works, aimed for establishment of the Bird Observatory		■	■	■	■	■	■	■						
1.2. Arrangement of a training seminar and publishing of informative booklets for stakeholders												■		
1.3. Arrangement of an international workshop on the transboundary management of the Nemunas River delta area						■								
Activity 1.4. Development of a Research Center of migratory birds		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Activity 2.1. Establishment of new route for eco-tourists in the Ventes Ragas Landscape Reserve of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park		■	■	■	■	■								
Activity 2.2. Arrangement of annual “Bird Days” and “Bird Rally” in the new route for eco-tourists in the Ventes Ragas			■				■							
Activity 3.1. Restoration of natural open floodplain habitats in the Rupkalviai Ornithological Reserve of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park									■	■	■	■		
Activity 4.1. Preparation and publishing of a special publication about nature values (particularly migratory birds) of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park												■	■	■
5.1. Establishment of the Steering Committee and Project Team	■	■												
5.2. Project management and financial administration		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
5.3. Reporting					■			■				■		

6. Organizational diagram

Project Steering Committee. Periodically examine and evaluate the progress of the project and implementation of measures to be undertaken. Planned members: Deputy Director of the State Service of Protected Territories under the Ministry of Environment, Director of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park, Director of the Lithuanian Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University, Deputy Director of T. Ivanauskas Museum of Zoology, Ecologist of the Silute Municipality and Director of the Lithuanian Ornithological Society.

Project Supervisor. Deputy Director of the IEVU. Supervises the project implementation progress, solves problems, participates in selecting sub-contractors and external experts. Controls activities of the Project Team.

Project coordinator. An expert (with PhD degree) with experience in this field will be nominated by the project Steering Committee. Responsible for the operational project management – execution of daily tasks, co-operation with project supervisor, arrangements and follow up implementation of tasks. Regularly reports on project progress to Supervisor and Steering Committee.



7. Local Executing Agency details:

Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University, Akademijos 2, LT-08412 Vilnius, Lithuania; tel.: +370 5 2729257, fax.: +370 5 2729352; e-mail: zalakevicius@ekoi.lt. Habil.dr. Mecislovas Zalakevicius, Director.

Other main agencies involved:

The State Service for Protected Territories under the Ministry of Environment, A. Juozapaviciaus 9, LT-09311 Vilnius, Lithuania; tel.: + 37069882519. Mr. Vidmantas Bezaras, Deputy Director.

Direction of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park, Lietuvninku 10, LT-99185 Silute, Lithuania; tel/fax.: +370 441 75050. Mr.Mindaugas Budginas, Director.

Annex 1. Logical framework diagram

Intervention logic	Indicators of performance	Means of verification	Risks (R) and assumptions (A)
Development Objective			
<p>Immediate Objective To improve the conservation and management of waterbirds and their habitats in the Nemunas River delta area and along the NE coast of the Curonian Lagoon</p>	<p>Improved awareness and environmental education of local communities; Increased carrying capacity of key habitats for migratory birds; Decreased disturbance to migratory birds from recreational load; Improved detailed data on territories supporting internationally important concentrations of migratory waterbirds and necessary conservation/management measures.</p>	<p>Bird census data; trends of staging/breeding bird numbers in the site; photographic evidence confirming achieved objectives; internal and external expert evaluation.</p>	<p>R.: inter-institutional barriers; conflicts of interests; rapidly increasing costs for all services/equipment. A: presence/availability of qualified experts, experience of implementing agencies in other similar international projects; interests of local community and support of local/regional authorities.</p>
<p>Outcome 1 Establishment of the “Education and Research Center of Migratory Birds (Bird Observatory)” in the Nemunas River delta</p>	<p>The “Education and Research Center of Migratory Birds (Bird Observatory)” in Rusne island of the Nemunas River delta established; Special workshops and seminars for local and international authorities responsible for conservation and sustainable management of the Nemunas River delta arranged; Information materials for local stakeholders published; The special Database on migratory birds of the site and project web site developed.</p>	<p>Photographic evidence of the newly developed Bird Observatory; Minutes and list of participants from the seminar for local stakeholders and from the international workshop; Copies of newly published information materials; Functioning new Database and Web Site.</p>	<p>R.: rapidly increasing costs for construction works and other services (in about 15% per year); lack of equipment; inter-institutional barriers related to sustainable international management of the site; economic interests of local landowners interested in development of intensive agriculture and tourism activities in the site. A.: availability of qualified experts and constructors; support of local authorities; interests of local community in new incomes for agro-environmental schemes co-funded from EU funds; relevant international agreements signed by Governments of Lithuania and Russia.</p>
<p>Outcome 2 Establishment of new eco-tourism facilities</p>	<p>The new route for eco-tourists with</p>	<p>Photographic evidence of the</p>	<p>R.: conflicts with visitors violating</p>

<p>in the Ventes Ragas Landscape Reserve of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park</p>	<p>observation tower and information posters established in Ventes Ragas peninsula; “Bird Watching Days” and “Bird Watching Rally” public events arranged.</p>	<p>newly developed infrastructure and arranged public events; statistics of visitors; evaluation of new eco-tourism facilities provided by local and regional authorities.</p>	<p>regulations valid in the new eco-tourism route; high costs of travel/accommodation related to participation in the planned public events. A.: experience of implementing agencies in development of similar eco-tourism routes in other areas of the site; experience of the Lithuanian Ornithological Society related to arrangement of similar public events.</p>
<p>Outcome 3 Restoration of certain degraded wetlands, especially important for migratory birds</p>	<p>Removed shrubs and dense reed stands in more than 50 ha of key areas for waterbirds in the Rupkalviai Ornithological Reserve; Training for local farmers related to new agro-environmental schemes arranged.</p>	<p>Bird census data; trends of staging/breeding bird numbers in restored sites; photographic evidence of implemented works; minutes from training sessions arranged for local farmers.</p>	<p>R.: conflicts of interest; lack of awareness and environmental education; existing bureaucracy related to issue of necessary permissions enabling shrub removal. A.: presence/availability of qualified experts; support of authorities responsible for management of the site; interests of local community in new incomes for agro-environmental schemes and from wetland restoration works.</p>
<p>Outcome 4 A special publication about nature values (particularly migratory birds) of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park</p>	<p>The publication on migratory birds and other nature values of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park published.</p>	<p>Copies of the new publication; internal and external expert evaluation.</p>	<p>R.: rapidly increasing costs for services of publishing companies. A.: availability of illustrative material & data necessary for publication by the implementing agency.</p>
<p>Outcome 5 Establishment of the Steering Committee and Project Team</p>	<p>Steering Committee and Project Team established, subcontractors and external experts nominated, progress reports produced.</p>	<p>Internal and external expert evaluation</p>	<p>R.: conflicts of interests; rapidly increasing costs for services. A: presence/availability of qualified experts with experience in implementation of similar projects.</p>

Activity 1.1. Design and building reconstruction works, aimed for establishment of the Bird Observatory

Activity 1.2. Arrangement of a training seminar and publishing of informative booklets for stakeholders
Activity 1.3 Arrangement of an international workshop on the transboundary management of the Nemunas River delta area
Activity 1.4 Development of Research Center of migratory birds
Activity 2.1. Establishment of new route for eco-tourists in the Ventes Ragas Landscape Reserve
Activity 2.2. Arrangement of annual “Bird Days” and “Bird Rally” in the new route for eco-tourists in the Ventes Ragas
Activity 3.1. Restoration of natural open floodplain habitats in the Rupkalviai Ornithological Reserve of the Nemunas Delta Regional Park
Activity 4.1 Preparation and publishing of a special publication about nature values (particularly migratory birds) of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park
Activity 5.1. Establishment of the Steering Committee and Project Team
Activity 5.2 Supervision and financial administration of implementation
Activity 5.3. Reporting

Annex 2.

Map 1. Location of the demonstration site



Scheme 1. Orthophoto image of the demonstration site (in attached CD)

Scheme 2. Orthophoto image of the demonstration site (Bird Observatory) with indicated location of planned activities (in attached CD)

Scheme 3. Orthophoto image of the demonstration site (Ventes Ragas eco-tourism route) with indicated detailed location of planned activities (in attached CD)

Scheme 4. Orthophoto image of the demonstration site (wetland restoration in the Rupkalviai Ornithological Reserve) with indicated detailed location of planned activities (in attached CD)

Photo 1. Building of the Bird Observatory (in attached CD)

Photo 2. Habitats surrounding the Bird Observatory (in attached CD)

Photo 3. Ventes Ragas Ornithological Station

Attached documents:

1. Co-financing statement of the Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University
2. Letter of support from the Direction of the Nemunas River Delta Regional Park
3. Letter of support from the T. Ivanauskas Museum of Zoology
4. Letter of support from the Lithuanian Ornithological Society (BirdLife Lithuania)

Annex B

Model Progress Reports (Including report on the use of funds)

B.1 Quarterly Report

B.2 Semi-annual Report

Annex C

Model of Final Report (Including final report on the use of funds)