

Annual Project Report

1. BASIC PROJECT IDENTIFIERS:

Project # and title:	00048429 Polesie FSP (Catalyzing sustainability of the wetland protected area system in Belarusian Polesie through increased management efficiency and realigned land use practices)
National implementing partner:	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus
Donor:	Global Environment Facility (GEF), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Project duration:	24 May 2006 – 17 April 2011
Total budget (Atlas):	USD 2,247,161
Report period:	1 January – 31 December 2008
Period budget:	USD 604 695
Expenditure:	USD 344 254

2. PROJECT RISKS:

Risk description	Type	Date identified, author	Status update / Mitigation strategy	Risk monitor
Government is not interested to improve conservation of natural reserve	Political	August 2005; project developers	Risk probability is low. The situation has a tendency for improvement. Commitments on improvement of reserves' conservation are contained in a number of strategic documents: National Strategy on Development and Management of the System of Specially Protected Natural Areas up to the year 2015, as well as in the relevant State Program, National Action Plan for Rational Utilisation of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection for 2006-2010, State Program for tourism development for 2006-2010, State Program for development of the Environmental National Monitoring System for 2006-2010 and etc. In 2008 with the project contributed to elaboration of the National Strategy and Action Plan for conservation of wetlands in Belarus	Project Manager
Commitments of the Government on co-financing are not implemented	Financial	August 2005; project developers	Risk probability is low. The situation is stable. National co-financing commitments were confirmed by the corresponding letters of the project's partners in 2006	Project Manager
Lack of interest for the Ukrainian side in co-operation on wetlands conservation	Strategic	August 2005; project developers	Risk probability is low. The situation has a tendency for improvement. In 2008 a draft of inter-ministerial agreement between the Ministries of Natural Resources of Belarus and Ukraine was agreed. In 2008 the transboundary Rasmars territory was established	Project Manager
Lack of interest from local communities to participate in project activities	Strategic	August 2005; project developers	Risk probability is low. The situation is stable. There is a significant interest from the side of local communities to develop ecotourism and conduct sustainable bioresources management. The project has established good relations with local authorities and ensures involvement of local communities into the project's implementation. For 2009 it is envisaged to provide reserves with financial assets from district budgets for realisation of chartered functions and events of the land management plans.	Project Manager

Risk description	Type	Date identified, author	Status update / Mitigation strategy	Risk monitor
Heavy emphasis by the Government on self-sustaining of forestries	Strategic	August 2005; project developers	Risk probability is medium. The situation is stable. According to the relevant state program, all forestry enterprises in the project region up to 2009 are expected to undergo national or international forestry certification, where biodiversity concerns are included into the list of certification principles. Moreover, for the every forestry enterprise relevant updates will be done in framework of specialized GIS "Forestry Resources" (at the moment, this exercise has been completed for 4 forestries). Agreement is reached with the Ministry of Forestry on integration of recommendations, developed in the framework of the project, on principles of ecologisation of forest management into forest management plans for the forestries of "Middle Pripyat" reserves.	Project Manager
The Ministry of Environment is divested of the disbursement authority for the Nature Protection Fund	Regulatory	August 2005; project developers	Risk probability is medium. The situation is stable. The Ministry of Environment is authorized to prepare an annual disbursement plan for the Fund, but the ultimate approving authority is with the President of Belarus. The Ministry of Environment is committed to securing sufficient level of funding for protected areas management units by including the required expenditures in the disbursement plan of the Nature Protection Fund and in the National Strategy for Protected Areas Development until 2015 and the corresponding State Program, which are under governmental approval at the moment.	Project Manager

Risk description	Type	Date of identification	Status/ Solution	Date of completion
Local agricultural, forestry and meliorative organisations lack necessary machinery for cutting odd bush and grass vegetation on the wetlands	Problem	September 2008	In the framework of land management plans implementation (co-financing of the budget and the project) to envisage the realisation of activities on hand cutting of key habitats of species (included into the Red Book) by the reserves staff. Necessary equipment is procured and delivered to the reserves	
A number of applications, received in the framework of the Micro-grants Program on the development of tourist infrastructure, is lower than it was planned	Problem	August 2008	The Project has initiated the second stage of the Program's implementation, planned a series of working meetings in the project districts for presentation of the information on the Program and the coverage in mass-media	n/a

3. ANNUAL RESULTS:

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
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¹ Rate the achievement of the annual targets as follows: fully achieved, partially achieved, not achieved; and provide necessary details in the same column

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
Component 1: Reserves are managed efficiently with active participation of local decisions interested in preparation and implementation		
Output 1.1: Legal framework is amended to improve protection level at reserves	Development of proposals on definition of mechanisms for legal regulation at the SPNAs	Fully achieved Agreed draft of regulatory legal act on the mechanism of legal regulation of SPNAs is approved by the Ministry of Nature
	Preparation of proposals on legal regulation of the issues on formation and functioning of the National ecological network, biosphere reserves, transboundary SPNAs	Partially achieved The draft proposals on legal regulation of the issues on formation and functioning of the National ecological network, biosphere reserves, transboundary SPNAs is presented to the Ministry of Nature
	Conduction of working meetings with interested parties on formation and functioning of the National ecological network, biosphere reserves, transboundary SPNAs	Fully achieved Proposals on formation and functioning of the National ecological network, biosphere reserves, transboundary SPNAs is agreed with the interested state bodies and organisations
Output 1.2: Capacity of institutions and individuals for reserve management is developed	Development of management plans for "Middle Pripyat" and "Prostyr" reserves	Fully achieved Draft management plans for "Middle Pripyat" and "Prostyr" reserves are prepared and approved by the Ministry of Nature
	Agreement of the regulations of the management plans for "Middle Pripyat" and "Prostyr" reserves with local land users and interested parties	Partially achieved Regulations of the plans are agreed with local land users and interested parties. The final report is to be presented by 01 February 2009
	Establishment of the integrated monitoring system for flora and fauna, as well as hydro chemical and hydro biological monitoring on the water sites of the "Middle Pripyat" and "Prostyr" reserves (Pinsk and Luninets districts) in the framework of the SPNAs complex monitoring.	Fully achieved Integrated monitoring system for flora and fauna, as well as hydro chemical and hydro biological monitoring on the water sites of the "Middle Pripyat" and "Prostyr" reserves (Pinsk and Luninets districts) in the framework of the SPNAs complex monitoring is included into the National Environmental Monitoring System
	Preparation of methodology for conduction of a complex monitoring of ecological systems at the SPNAs	Fully achieved Methodology for conduction of a complex monitoring of ecological systems at the SPNAs is approved by the Ministry of Nature
	Development of forecast of dynamics of the nature complex condition at the "Middle Pripyat" reserve based on the Geographic Data System (GDS) technologies and analysis of diverse aerospace photos, preparation of recommendations on optimisation of land management for their inclusion into the Management Plan	Fully achieved Based on the maps of the current condition and data of distant reconnaissance for the period from 1950s the forecast for 15 years of dynamics of the nature complex condition at the "Middle Pripyat" reserve is prepared, recommendations on optimisation of land management for their inclusion into the Management Plans

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
	Creation of the integrated monitoring system for flora and fauna, as well as hydro chemical and hydro biological monitoring on the water sites of the "Sporovsky" reserve in the framework of the SPNAs complex monitoring.	Fully achieved The integrated monitoring system for flora and fauna, as well as hydro chemical and hydro biological monitoring on the water sites of the "Sporovsky" reserve in the framework of the SPNAs complex monitoring is included into the National Environmental Monitoring System
	Development and inventory of the draft plan and the regulations of the complex monitoring of "Sporovsky" reserve ecosystem in the framework of the SPNAs complex monitoring.	Fully achieved Plan and regulations of the complex monitoring of "Sporovsky" reserve ecosystem in the framework of the SPNAs complex monitoring are included into the National Environmental Monitoring System
	Update of "Sporovsky" and "Zvanets" reserves management plans	Partially achieved Updated management plans for "Sporovsky" and "Zvanets" reserves are presented at the Ministry of Nature for approval. The closing of the contract is expected by 01 February
	Preparation of a draft project on enlargement of "Zvanets" and "Prosty" reserves	Fully achieved Prepared and approved by the Ministry of Nature the project of borders changing of "Zvanets" and "Prosty" reserves in accordance with national legislation
	Compensation to the reserves' staff for petrol (POL) procurement: "Sporovsky", "Zvanets", "Middle Pripyat" and "Prosty" (Pinsk District), "Middle Pripyat" (Luninets District), "Middle Pripyat" (Stolin District)	Fully achieved All in all 6729 liters of petrol were delivered to 5 reserves
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material and technical support to the target reserves: <p>Procurement of 24 bikes</p> <p>Procurement of 8 boats</p> <p>Procurement of one motorbike</p> <p>Procurement of equipment for organisation of ecotourism activities in the reserves</p> <p>Reconstruction of the premises for the Educational Centre at the "Zvanets" reserve</p>	<p>Partially achieved</p> <p>The project provided assistance in strengthening of material and technical base of "Zvanets", "Sporovsky", "Middle Pripyat" (Pinsk District), "Middle Pripyat" (Stolin District), "Middle Pripyat" (Luninets District):</p> <p>24 bikes procured (6 - "Middle Pripyat" (Pinsk District), 6 - "Middle Pripyat" (Stolin District), 6 - "Middle Pripyat" (Luninets District), 6 - "Zvanets")</p> <p>8 boats procured (2 - "Middle Pripyat" (Pinsk District), 2 - "Middle Pripyat" (Stolin District), 2 - "Middle Pripyat" (Luninets District), 2 - "Zvanets")</p> <p>One motorbike is procured ("Zvanets" reserve)</p> <p>Equipment for organisation of ecotourism activities in the reserves is procured</p> <p>Estimate documentation is prepared for the reconstruction of the premises for the Educational Centre at the "Zvanets" reserve. A tender is called to determine a subcontractor. Completion of the works is expected in the first half of 2009</p>

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
	<p>Reconstruction of the premises for the Educational Centre at the "Sporovsky" reserve</p> <p>Reconstruction of the premises for the Educational Centre at the "Middle Pripyat" reserve (Luninets district)</p>	<p>Estimate documentation is prepared for the reconstruction of the premises for the Educational Centre at the "Sporovsky" reserve. A tender is called to determine a subcontractor. Completion of the works is expected in the first half of 2009</p> <p>Estimate documentation is prepared for the reconstruction of the premises for the Educational Centre at "Middle Pripyat" reserve (Luninets district). A tender is called to determine a subcontractor. Completion of the works is expected in the first half of 2009</p>
	<p>Procurement of furniture and equipment for Ecological and Educational Centres in "Zvanets", "Sporovsky" and "Middle Pripyat" reserves</p> <p>Increase of professional level of the staff at the target reserves on the issues of SPNAs sustainable management</p> <p>Data analysis of the Conservation Finance Alliance on ensuring financial sustainability of SPNAs based on the international experience</p> <p>Educational trip to Lithuania with the objective to study the experience on SPNAs sustainable management, development of management plans and ecological tourism at SPNAs</p>	<p>Not achieved The given goods will be procured after completion of construction works</p> <p>Fully achieved The staff of the target reserves participated in the events conducted by the Ministry of Nature and other state managerial bodies on the issues of application of nature protection legislation and SPNAs sustainable management</p> <p>Fully achieved Proposals on sustainable financing of SPNAs administrations in Belarus, based on the international experience, were prepared and approved by the Ministry of Nature</p> <p>Fully achieved Representatives of the Ministry of Nature, administrations of the reserves (9 persons) got acquainted with practical organisation of natural resources sustainable management and SPNAs functioning, as well as the development of ecological tourism at the SPNAs in Lithuania</p>
<p>Output 1.3: Transboundary conservation arrangements are established and coordination is strengthened between Ukrainian and Belarus protected areas in Polesie</p>	<p>Completion of works on creation of transboundary Ramsar Territory Prostyr-Pripyat-Stokhid</p>	<p>Fully achieved Confirmation from Ramsar Convention Secretariat is reached on recognition of Prostyr-Pripyat-Stokhid system as the transboundary Ramsar Territory</p>
	<p>Participation in the work of the setup seminar of the UNDP/GEF Polesie Ukraine Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft of the agreement between Belarus and Ukraine on co-operation in the field of transboundary wetlands functioning is agreed by both Ministries and refined in accordance with com- 	<p>Fully achieved Joint Action Plan of UNDP/GEF Belarus-Ukraine projects on biodiversity conservation of the Polesie region is agreed</p> <p>Fully achieved Draft of the agreement between Belarus and Ukraine on co-operation in the field of transboundary wetlands functioning is preliminary agreed by both Ministries and refined in accordance with comments and proposals of the interested state bodies and organisations. The agreement provides with the possibility</p>

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
	ments and proposals of the interested state bodies and organisations	to strengthen transboundary co-operation between Belarus and Ukraine via realisation of joint conservation and sustainable management of transboundary SPNAs; preparation and implementation of the SPNAs management plans, joint scientific research and regular monitoring data exchange, joint educational programs for the SPNAs personnel and etc.
Output 1.4: Viability of ecotourism as an alternative biodiversity-friendly livelihood is demonstrated	Elaboration of the Conception for the ecological tourism sustainable development in the "Middle Pripjat" reserve	Partially achieved Conception for the ecological tourism sustainable development in the "Middle Pripjat" reserve is prepared and presented to the Ministry of Nature for consideration
	Creation and description of ecotouristic routes in the "Middle Pripjat" reserve	Fully achieved Description of 10 ecotouristic routes, objects of nature and cultural heritage, maps are prepared
	Printing of the methodological recommendations on legal issues of ecotourism organisation at the local level, attraction of targeted credits for persons aimed at the development of tourist infrastructure	Fully achieved The methodological recommendations on legal issues of ecotourism organisation at the local level, attraction of targeted credits for persons aimed at the development of tourist infrastructure is published in 500 number of copies and disseminated among interested parties
	Conduction of a contest within the Financial Support Program for Ecotourism development in the Polesie region and practical realisation of the selected initiatives on tourist infrastructure improvement at the project territories	Partially achieved The contest within the Program is conducted. From 20 micro-projects 12 had been selected, 7 contracts were concluded
	Conduction of the seminar on ecotourism development in the "Sporovsky" reserve	Not achieved The seminar planned to present tourist product of "Sporovsky" reserve. The conduction of the event is reserved for 2009 after the completion of the Ecological Centre reconstruction at the "Sporovsky" reserve
	Conduction of the seminar-training on ecotourism development for "middle Pripjat" reserve	Not achieved The seminar envisaged presentation of the tourist product of "Middle Pripjat" reserve. The seminar conduction is reserved for 2009 after the completion of the Ecological Centre reconstruction at the "Middle Pripjat" reserve
Output 1.5: Linking of target reserves within the Polesie bionetwork (supported by UNESCO) concept is achieved	Meeting of a Special Research and Development Commission of UNESCO project with participation of experts and administration of GEF project on discussion of the results of the conducted activities (Stage 3. Coordination of the projects activities for 3 years of implementation)	Fully achieved Target reserves of the project are included into the Polesie econetwork, the draft network is presented to UNESCO for approval
Component 2: Agricultural activity in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves		
Output 2.1. Guidelines for the environmental and economic	Refinement of the Manual (methodological recommendations) on ecological and eco-	Partially achieved Corresponding contracts were concluded. The presentation of the Manual (methodological recommen-

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
optimization of agricultural land are developed and tested	conomic optimisation of agricultural activities and its presentation for approval at the State Property Committee of the Republic of Belarus	dations) on ecological and economic optimisation of agricultural activities is expected by 01 February 2009
	Development of the land management system for the Pinsk administrative district.	Fully achieved The land management system for the Pinsk administrative district is developed and approved in accordance with the established procedure
	Baseline mapping information collected and existing data on current land-use and corresponding limitations in Stolin and Zhitkovichi districts analyzed	Fully achieved Field data on current land-use in the Stolin and Zhitkovichy districts for creation of a digital base of the "Middle Propyat" reserve map
	Preparation of the integrated digital map of "middle Pripyat" reserve with topical layers on biodiversity	Fully achieved The integrated digital map of "Middle Pripyat" reserve with topical layers on biodiversity is prepared and presented to the Ministry of Nature
	Collection of information on the development of the model project of "Pinskagroservice" Ltd. (Pinsk district) in-house land management, which borders "Middle Pripyat" reserve	Not achieved Conduction of the current activity is planned under terms of co-financing with the State Property Committee. According to the State Property Committee letter, financing of the given activity along budget lines is planned for 2009
	Elaboration of the land management scheme of the Stolin administrative district (under terms of co-financing with the State Property Committee of the Republic of Belarus)	Partially achieved The first stage of the works on financing along the State Property Committee budget lines is completed. The conduction of the second stage is planned for 2009
Output 2.2. Impact of melioration systems on the project territories is mitigated	Preparation of documentation for receiving of permissions for planning and surveying activities (acts of sites selection and other necessary documents) for optimisation of "Zvanets" reserve hydrological regime	Fully achieved The documentation, required for conduction of planning and surveying activities necessary for optimisation of "Zvanets" reserve hydrological regime is prepared and handed to the projectors
	Design of an engineering project on optimisation of "Zvanets" reserve hydrological regime in accordance with the regulations of reserve's management plans	Fully achieved The engineering project on optimisation of "Zvanets" reserve hydrological regime is prepared in accordance with the regulations of reserve's management plans
Output 2.3: Viability of haymaking as an alternative biodiversity-friendly use of land owned by collectives is demonstrated	Conduction of the test haymaking of the "Zvanets" in accordance with the regulations of the reserve's management plans (on weather conditions)	Partially achieved Eight ha are mowed in autumn 2008, further works with utilisation of available machinery are hardly possible because of excessive moisture in a soil
	Ecological rehabilitation of floodplain meadows – habitats of globally threatened bird species (Pogostsky and Turovsky meadows, Zhitkovichy district) in accordance with "Middle Pripyat" reserve management plan	Partially achieved Ecological rehabilitation of floodplain meadows – habitats of globally threatened bird species (Pogostsky and Turovsky meadows, Zhitkovichy district) is conducted on 50 ha in accordance with "Middle Pripyat" reserve management plan
Output 2.4. Adverse impact of water use by	Preparation of documentation for receiving of permissions for	Not achieved Working meeting with a field trip is conducted with

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
upstream fish farms is reduced	planning and surveying activities (acts of sites selection and other necessary documents) for construction of water-regulating facility on the river Yaselda in "Sporovsky" reserve	participation of interested parties. A decision was taken on inexpediency to conduct construction at the river Yaselda at the present time
	Development of planning and surveying documentation on construction of a water-regulating facility at the river Yaselda at "Sporovsky" reserve in accordance with the regulations of the reserve's management plan	Not achieved See above
Component 3: Forestry activity in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves		
Output 3.1: Forest management plans are revised to integrate biodiversity conservation objectives	Integration of requirements on ecologisation of forestry activities, in accordance with regulations of "Middle Pripyat" reserve management plan, into projects on organisation and conduction of forestry activities for Pinsk, Luninets and Stolin forestries of the Brest production forestry unit, Zhitkovichy forestry of the Gomel production forestry unit and "Lyaskovichy" forestry	Partially achieved Recommendations on ecologisation of forestry activities, in accordance with regulations of "Middle Pripyat" are refined in co-operation with the specialised project organisation "Belgosles" and presented to the Ministry of Forestry for consideration. Agreement is received on their integration into projects on organisation and conduction of forestry activities for Pinsk, Luninets and Stolin forestries of the Brest production forestry unit, Zhitkovichy forestry of the Gomel production forestry unit and "Lyaskovichy" in the course of planned renewal of projects on organisation and conduction of forestry activities in 2009-2010
Output 3.2: Certification in line with national standards (6 forestry enterprises) & international standards (2 forestry enterprises) on forest certification is completed, with guidelines for replication	Insert of data on biodiversity condition into branch of the geoinformation system "Forest Resources" for forestries located at the territories in close vicinity to the project areas and involved into the process of forest certification in the region: Drogochen, Ibatsevichy, Brest, Telekhany, Baranovichy, Pruzhany forestries	Fully achieved Geoinformation system "Forest Resources" for Drogochen, Ibatsevichy, Brest, Telekhany, Baranovichy, Pruzhany forestries is enriched with data on biodiversity condition
	Assistance provided to organisation and equipment of the Forest Educational Ecological Centre in Luninets forestry of the Brest production forestry unit	Fully achieved Local Educational Centre on Forest Certification and Forest Ecological Education is established and operative in the Luninets forestry (furniture, office equipment, study materials, subscription to periodicals are provided)
Component 4: Flood protection program in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves		
Output 4.1: Flood protection program in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves modified	Development of recommendations on optimization of hydrological regime of "Middle Pripyat" reserve in accordance with the reserve's management plan and action plan for reaching target values of the project's logical matrix in the sphere of flood protection	Fully achieved Detailed information on flood protection objects in the region, which define values of the project's logical matrix, is presented; - Action plan on reaching target values of the project's logical matrix in the sphere of flood protection in the target district, is developed; - Proposals on optimization of hydrological regime of "Middle Pripyat" reserve in accordance with the

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
		reserve's management plan are developed
	Preparation of documentation for receiving of permissions for planning and surveying activities (acts of sites selection and other necessary documents) for the objects "Cherebasovsky", "Krivichy", "Molodelchitsy" and "Rakitno"	Partially achieved Prepared and delivered to projectors documentation receiving of permissions for planning and surveying activities (acts of sites selection and other necessary documents) for the objects "Molodelchitsy" and "Rakitno"
	Preparation of project documentation for reconstruction of meliorative systems "Molodelchitsky" (Pinsk district) and "Rakitno" (Luninets district), Brest region with the objective of their sustainable usage	Partially achieved A contract is concluded. Preparation of project documentation for reconstruction of meliorative systems "Molodelchitsky" (Pinsk district) and "Rakitno" (Luninets district), Brest region with the objective of their sustainable usage is expected by 1 May 2009
	Preparation of project documentation for reconstruction of meliorative systems "Cherebasovsky" (Luninets district) and "Berezhtsy" (Pinsk district) Brest region, with the objective of their sustainable usage	Not achieved TOR is prepared and agreed with interested parties. Tender was conducted, though there were no business proposals from potential contractors
Component 5: Tools and methodologies generated by the project in selected wetland reserves are institutionalised, enabling replication in other similar areas within the national protected areas system		
Output 5.1: Management capacity of the national network of wetland reserves is increased	Development of strategy and action plan on conservation of wetlands in Belarus	Fully achieved Strategy and action plan on conservation of wetlands in Belarus are approved according to the to the established procedure
	Conduction of consultations and working meetings on the strategy for conservation of wetlands in Belarus	Fully achieved The draft of the National Strategy on Conservation of Wetlands in Belarus is agreed with the interested parties
	Publication of the National Strategy for Development and Management of SPNAs, relevant Program, as well as the Strategy and Action Plan on conservation of wetlands in Belarus	Partially achieved The National Strategy for Development and Management of SPNAs, relevant Program are disseminated among interested parties
	Development of Manual on SPNAs management plans preparation	Fully achieved Manual on SPNAs management plans preparation is approved by the Ministry of Nature according to the established procedure
	Publication of the Manual on SPNAs management plans preparation	Not achieved The Manual on SPNAs management plans preparation is expected to be published by 1 may 2009
	Presentation of the project at the scientific and practical conference "Participation of the Republic of Belarus in international environmental conventions"	Fully achieved Information on the project is widely disseminated among interested organisations during the scientific and practical conference "Participation of the Republic of Belarus in international environmental conventions" in Retchitsa in September 2008
Output 5.2: Implementation of sustainable agriculture policy near wetland	Preparation of methodological guidance for calculation of reimbursement for damage caused to ecosystems by human activities,	Fully achieved Methodological guidance for calculation of reimbursement for damage caused to ecosystems by human activities, as well as for determination of dam-

Expected Result	Annual Objective	Rating ¹ and Status of Achievement
reserves strengthened at a national level	as well as for determination of damage caused by land degradation with the corresponding grounding	age caused by land degradation with the corresponding grounding are approved according to the established procedure
	Conduction of the educational seminar for the personnel of territorial units of the State Property Committee on ecological and economic optimisation of land management	Not achieved The State Property Committee planned to conduct the event in the first half of 2009
Output 5.3: Integration of biodiversity principles in forest management plans at a national level	Preparation of action plan on shift of targeted areas forestries (Brest and Gomel regions of Belarus) to the principles of sustainable ecologically oriented forest management and activities	Not achieved The achievement of the current objective is planned to conduct at the events, organised by the Ministry of Forestry in 2009-2010
	Conduction of a seminar on the issues of ecologisation of forest management	Fully achieved Project's positive results and action plan on shift of Belarusian forestries to the principles of sustainable ecologically oriented forest management and activities are presented to the Ministry of Forestry structures during the seminar in Luninets forestry in October 2008
Output 5.4: Adaptive management and learning	Annual plan target indicators achieved	Partially achieved The major part of annual plan target indicators was partially or fully achieved
	Reports to UNDP, GEF and Ministry of Economy prepared according to the schedule of reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the project	Fully achieved Corresponding reports to donors, UNDP, Ministry of Economy were prepared and presented
	Support of the project's Internet resource	Fully achieved In June 2008 the site was reconstructed after hacker's attack and now is fully operational
	Works and project activities are conducted in accordance with the Work Plan	Partially achieved Ensure that activities and project expenditures are conducted in a line with the project work plan (budget resource delivery made 60% from planned – undevelopment is caused primarily by the reservation of construction works in Educational Canters and joint activities with the State Property Committee for 2009)
	The project office works according to the project work plan	Fully achieved Agreed equipment and low-value stationery for the project office were procured and maintained properly, translation support was provided, project assets were duly insured.
	Preparation for conduction of 2 Project Steering Committees	Partially achieved A meeting of the Project Steering Committee was conducted on 12 February 2008, where the results of 2007 were presented, and the Work Plan for 2008 was approved
	The actual activities comply with the annual plan and project document	The project management group has been monitoring on-the-ground project activities on a regular basis (13 field missions).

4. PROGRESS TOWARDS PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Project Objective and Outcomes	Description of Indicators	Baseline Level	Target Level	Level at 31 December 2008
The project objective is to catalyze sustainability of the wetland protected area system in Belarusian Polesie through increased management efficiency, and aligning the land use framework in and around protected areas with conservation objectives	1. Water management regime by fish-farms and drainage facilities conducive of biodiversity conservation	8 out of 10 years, water conditions are not favorable for biodiversity	8 out of 10 years, water conditions are optimum for biodiversity	Hydrological monitoring data indicate that water regime in 2006, 2007 and 2008 was optimal for biodiversity
	2. Areas occupied by unique plant associations and vegetation composition of open fens and floodplain meadows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open fens - 58,000 ha; • floodplain meadows - 11,000 ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open fens - 59,200 ha; • floodplain meadows - 11,500 ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open fens - 58,350 ha (increased through hay mowing in Sporovski reserve); • floodplain meadows - 11,045 ha (increased through bush cutting in Turovski flood plain meadow))
	3. Population of indicator bird species (spotted eagle, aquatic warbler, great snipe, corncrake)	Population of indicator species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spotted eagle (10-22) • Aquatic warbler (3700-9000) • Great snipe (150-1000) • corncrake (550-2100) 	Population is retained at the baseline level	2008 monitoring data were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spotted Eagle (21) • Aquatic warbler (6200) • Great snipe (430) • corncrake (2250)
	4. Population of indicator animal species (elk, beaver, otter)	Population of indicator species (elk (65), beaver (400), otter (135) at the low level	Population is kept at the baseline level or increases	Winter-spring 2008 monitoring data were as follows: elk (136), beaver (2120), otter (435)
	5. Population of indicator fish species (pike, ide, catfish, pike perch, roach, zope, white bream)	The share of catch of valuable species decreases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pike from 34% in 1960s till 13% in 2000's, • ide from 2,1% to 0,4%; • catfish from 1.0% to 0,05%; • pike perch from 1.2% to 0,14%); the share of roach, zope and white bream increases by 7-15%	The share of catch of valuable species (pike, ide, catfish, pike perch) stabilized, while the share of roach, zope and white bream remains at the same level	The share of catch of valuable species for 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pike - 11.1%; • brim - 9.6% • ide - 0.92%; • pike - perch - 0.21%; For roach, blue and white bream and other low value fish is 9-34%.

Project Objective and Outcomes	Description of Indicators	Baseline Level	Target Level	Level at 31 December 2008
	6. Use of METT indicates measurable increase in management capacities of the four PAs	METT score: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets – 48 Sporovsky – 48 Prostyr – 20 Middle Pripyat – 21 Total - 137	METT score: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets – 72 Sporovsky – 72 Prostyr – 70 Middle Pripyat – 75 Total – 289	METT score: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets – 62 Sporovsky – 69 Prostyr – 56 Middle Pripyat – 62 Total – 249
Outcome 1: Reserves are being managed effectively, with the active participation of local stakeholders in design and implementation aspects	7. Increase in the area of Zvanets and Prostyr protected areas (in hectares)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets – 10,460 ha; Prostyr – 3,440 ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets – 15,873 ha; Prostyr – 7,600 ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets - 10,460 ha; Prostyr – 3,440 ha
	8. Legislative approval of cross-border Ramsar site status for Prostyr reserve	Prostyr has status of national reserve (zakaznik) and a Ramsar Site	Prostyr has status of transboundary Ramsar site "Prostyr-Pripyat-Stokhid"	Prostyr has status of national reserve and a transboundary Ramsar site.
	9. Full complement of PAMU staff recruited, trained, financial support ensured	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets - 2 full-time employees, Sporovsky - 2, Middle Pripyat - 4, Prostyr - 1; All positions are supported financially by the State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zvanets - 5 full-time employees,, Sporovsky - 5, Middle Pripyat and Prostyr– 11; All positions are supported financially by the State
	10. Annual budget allocation from Nature Protection Fund	0	Starting from 2 nd year onwards, all 4 PAMUs receive an annual budget, adjusted every year for cost increases	In 2008 financial support from the State constituted 77.8% of PAMUs' costs, with 22.2% of costs covered by the project (US\$ 86 364 and US\$ 24 680 respectively)
	11. Local communities - aware of biodiversity conservation values and zoning regimes of reserves (% of local population) - involved in PA management (individuals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20% 24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% 150 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% 46 According to the data of the sociological survey PAMUs' personnel, staff of the local forestries, agricultural enterprises, executive and administrative bodies

Project Objective and Outcomes	Description of Indicators	Baseline Level	Target Level	Level at 31 December 2008
	Incidence of violations of reserves' regime through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illegal fishing • poaching (officially registered and duly processed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,200 • 200 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 450 • 40 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 178 • 8
Outcome 2: Agricultural activity in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves	12. Land area converted from arable agriculture to grasslands	0 ha	4,000 ha by the fourth year of the project	5,441 ha Transformation of agricultural lands into forested lands and meadows in Luninets (Mid-Pripyat reserve) and Bereza districts (Sporovsky reserve)
	13. Area of lands where sustainable haymaking is conducted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • floodplain meadows • fen mires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,700 ha • 500 ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,200 ha • 1,700 ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3354 ha • 583 ha
	14. Area of mineral islands under traditional agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zvanets – 90 ha • Sporovsky – 100 ha 	Sustainable or reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zvanets – 91 ha • Sporovsky – 40 ha
	15. Area of non-productive agricultural lands that continue to be employed in agriculture in the Polesie lowlands	283,000 ha (total 700,000 ha in Belarus)	274,000 ha	277,560 ha (Transformation of agricultural lands into forested lands and meadows in Luninets (Mid-Pripyat reserve) and Bereza districts (Sporovsky reserve))
	16. Number and extent of human-caused uncontrolled burning of vegetation	Around 20,000 ha of fen mires were affected by fires	Less than 100 ha	58 ha
Outcome 3: Forestry activity in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves	17. Number of forest enterprises operating in and around the project reserves that apply special forestry planning principles (6 forestries in the project region)	0	6	3 (Luninets, Stolin and Pinsk)
	18. Number of forest enterprises operating in and around the reserves that are certified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. according to national standards b. according to interna- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 • 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 (Ivatsevichy and Drogichin) • 2 (Luninets and

Project Objective and Outcomes	Description of Indicators	Baseline Level	Target Level	Level at 31 December 2008
	tional standards			Ivatsevichy)
Outcome 4: Flood protection program in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves	19. Number of planned anti-flood embankments that are modified to avert adverse impacts on biodiversity	4 anti-flood embankments (20 km long); 7 dykes (35 km long) constructed	6 dykes (30 km) are relocated, 3 dykes (10 km) are not constructed at all and 2 existing dykes (15 km) are demolished	8.6 km of old dike in Yastrebelskiy polder lost its functionality due to the construction of 2 water-pass sluices
Outcome 5: Tools and methodologies generated by the project in selected wetland reserves are institutionalized, enabling replication in other similar areas within the national protected areas system.	20. Number of reserves functioning under the project management model	0	22	6 (Zvantes, Sporovsky, Middle Pripyat, Prostyr, Elnya, Osveyskiy)
	21. Number of district's comprehensive land-use schemes	1	3	2 (Luninets and Pinski districts)
	22. Number of forest enterprises in Belarus (outside project region) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply special forestry planning principles • certified according to the national standards • certified according to the international standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 • 0 • 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 15 • 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 • 28 • 27

5. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE:

Project Components	Annual budget, USD	Annual expenditure, USD	Delivery, %
Component 1: Reserves are being managed effectively, with the active participation of local stakeholders in design and implementation aspects	319,230	162,723.10	51%
Component 2: Agricultural activity in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves	101,740	37,502.71	37%
Component 3: Forestry activity in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves	12,500	19,629.84	157%
Component 4: Flood protection program in and around the reserves is modified to diminish threats to biodiversity harbored in reserves	41,300	29,289.67	71%
Component 5: Tools and methodologies generated by the project in selected wetland reserves are institutionalized, enabling replication in other similar areas within the national protected areas system	129,925	114,054.70	88%
TOTAL	604,695	363,200.02	60%

Note on delivery rates:

- **Outcome 1:** reconstruction of premises in 3 reserves is planned for 2009
- **Outcome 2:** according to the letter of the State Property Committee on co-financing, concluding of contracts for the development of land management scheme of the Stolinskiy district, as well as the scheme of in-house land management is carried over to 2009
- **Outcome 3:** the contract on preparation of an engineering project on reconstruction diked marshes "Krivichy" and "Cherebasovskiy" is not concluded due to the lack of business proposals from potential contractors.

6. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES/ CHALLENGES

The project has faced the following issues in 2008:

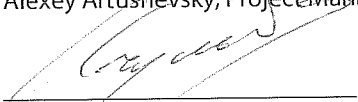
- ◆ Due to the shortage of the machinery, required for cutting excessive bush and grass vegetation at the mires in summer time, as well as during the mild winter 2007-2008, local agricultural, forestry and meliorative organisations could not reach planned in the annual working plan values on mowing of the target areas.
- ◆ Only 12 micro-projects were selected in the framework of the Financial Support Program for Ecotourism Development, 7 of them concluded contracts on grants provision.
- ◆ Delay with the reconstruction of the Ecological and educational centre at the reserves is caused by significant excess in estimated cost in comparison with previously planned costs and working out of alternative variants of the given centers development.

7. LESSONS LEARNED

Key lessons learned during the reporting period:

- In 2008 the National Strategy on Development and Management of SPNAs up to 2015 and relevant Programme, elaborated in the project's framework, were approved and adopted. When developing the given documents, contemporary approaches towards SPNAs systems management and the key directions of the current project in these spheres, were taken into account .
- In 2008 the National Strategy and Action Plan on wetlands conservation were developed in the project's framework. The given documents allow to increase significantly institutional sustainability of the national system for wetlands.
- Practical experience in preparation and organisation of construction activities highlighted a necessity to employ construction specialist on a full-time basis.
- In order to improve mass-media coverage of the project's achievements, results and challenges it is necessary to employ PR specialist for the project.

Prepared by: 
Alexey Artushevsky, Project Manager

Reviewed by: 
Igar Tchoulba, UNDP Program Officer

