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Acronyms

BBF – Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation

BAS – Bulgarian Academy of Science

CBC – Cross-Border Cooperation

CCs – Consultative Councils

DBU – Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt

EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment

EMEPA - Enterprise for Management of Environmental Protection Activities

MoEW – Ministry of Environment and Water

MP – Management plan

NNPS – National Nature Protection Service

NFB – National Forestry Board

NCIOM – National Centre for Public Opinion with the Parliament

PAs – Protected areas

RIEW – Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water

SMEs – Small and medium enterprises

ToR – Terms of Reference

1. Executive summary

The objective of the present report is to demonstrate the progress achieved by the BBF during the year 2005. It confirms that the BBF has followed the yearly plan of operation, considering the milestones and indicators foreseen; the changes in the initial planning are insignificant.

This executive summary aims at highlighting only the major accomplishments and challenges the BBF faces while achieving its project's and development goals for 2005.

Successes:

Parliament Lobbying

The BBF has been developing its lobbying capacity and has played an active role in discussing the biodiversity agenda with political parties and with the Parliament. The BBF proved to be an active player in the NGO coalition and has come up with professional and constructive propositions. The BBF has encouraged the elaboration of common statements/positions and has reinforced the dialogue between the NGOs, MoEW and the Environmental Commission of the Parliament. The focused work with the Parliament (going in parallel with the negotiations with the MoEW) has contributed to better positioning the BBF and has helped to communicate and defend biodiversity principles and arguments. As a result specialized procedure for EIA and ecological assessment of investment projects and programmes concerning protected zones – the future Natura 2000 sites have been foreseen by the ammended Biodiversity Act; it clarifies the coordination procedures with the landowners of Natura 2000 sites and updates the lists of habitats to be protected. Last but not least, the strong involvement of the BBF and other NGOs has contributed to the involvement of the civil society and reinforced the consultative mechanisms.

Animation and diversification of the NGO coalitions

In 2005 the BBF became an active player in the NGO coalitions. This statement is probably not new but it is underlined by the BBF team to demonstrate the added value of the BBF efforts in initiating sustainable NGO collaboration. In the field of biodiversity the year 2005 was the year of the coalitions – Floods and River Management Coalition (NGOs and scientific institutes), Coalition for Planning the EU funds and the National Development Plan 2007 – 2013 (NGOs), Protected Areas Coalition (NGOs and business). In all this forums the BBF has played a role of either initiator, coordinator, moderator, active participant, and expert. The BBF has broken the classical model of the NGO coalitions introducing new players like other non-environmental NGOs, representatives of the business, scientific organizations and has made them aware of being part of the pro-biodiversity community.

Promising start of the collaboration with universities

Only in one year the BBF has established very good collaboration with its newest partners - the Sofia University and the Forestry University. All the BBF activities like the development of post graduate curriculum on PAs management, the support for the students' masters' thesis and the organization of the student conference were supported. In addition, the emergency of this involvement was recognized by the universities. It has also proven that this niche is still empty and that the BBF could further position itself in it. The BBF successful work with universities is also due to its purposeful attempts to start linking science to direct conservation. Therefore the BBF

work in this direction was largely supported by the MoEW, the MoAF and the managers of the protected territories.

Official approval of the Consultative Council of Pirin National Park

The promotion and establishment of mechanisms for public participation in the management of various protected areas is the BBF major profile. One of the main project's outputs is the capitalization on this issue and proposal for legislative amendments favoring the participatory management. The official approval of the Minister of Environment and Water for the CC of Pirin NP proves that even the management concept of the national parks is evolving. It includes already the contemporary notion of management with and in favor of the local communities.

Testing of mechanisms for private/business donations

In spite of the difficult environment for the donations in Bulgaria (insufficient tax incentives for the business, lack of information/awareness, devaluation of the idea of the foundations, etc.) the BBF has successfully started the "For the Bulgarian Nature" joint initiative with the tourist equipment shop Stenata. 5% of the cost of each product labeled "For the Bulgarian Nature" goes to BBF for preservation of the Bulgarian protected areas. This is an example of how the business could have financial contribution to the BBF efforts and at the same time become banded with the biodiversity cause.

Challenges

Lack of strategic projects to ensure the long-term financial sustainability

The BBF has not been successful so far in attracting other major and especially EU donors. The three projects submitted to EU donors were rejected. The conclusion could be drawn that the projects were not adequately prepared but there are probably also other reasons to be further analyzed (e.g. lobbying and the non-transparent selection mechanisms). The lack of strategic projects made uncertain/ problematic the BBF financial sustainability in long-term perspective.

Public participation in the decision making processes for the environment is not formalized

The BBF is the main promoter of the idea for informed public participation among the NGOs. Unfortunately the work in this direction is very much linked to the public awareness and change of mentality and goes slowly. In one year time only one of the three CCs foreseen has been established. Still the public participation is an intrusive and "outside-in" process and is not seen as a priority one by the local communities and the decision-makers. This is also provoking the lack of interest on behalf of the donors.

Business is not sufficiently motivated to switch to pro-biodiversity practices

Work with the business was a real challenge to the BBF. The lack of previous experience and know-how in this direction made the business component the most dynamic one. While planning the project the BBF made several assumptions that were not confirmed (e.g. the identified wood-processing business in Pirin does not see economic incentives in the certification, or the gaps in the legislation do not guarantee sufficient protection for producers registering local label/mark of origin, etc.). In 2005 the "learning by doing" experience dominated the BBF work on this objective. However the BBF has gained useful knowledge and has adjusted its strategy for 2006:

the accent will be put on providing good models/ best practices to the SMEs businesses but also will aim at attracting the social responsible corporate business as a supporter and donor for the BBF.

Strandja MP

Approval of Strandja MP is far to become a reality. The Strandja MP turned into the "case Strandja". It is an example of impossibility of the civil society to overcome the economic and political pressure on a protected area.

2. Context (Conditions/environment)

The context of the first year of the project's implementation has been dominated by the new parliamentary elections and the formation of a government coalition of three political parties – the Bulgarian socialist party, the Simeon II National Movement and the Movement for Rights and Freedom. The new Minister of the MoEW is Dzevdet Chakarov from the Movement for Rights and Freedom. Taking advantage of the preparation for the general elections (held in June), the BBF organized a public debate on the environmental profile of the political parties, especially the environmental policy impact on their platforms. Only 3 political parties (the Socialist Party, the United Democratic Forces - UDF and Democrats for Strong Bulgaria – DSB) have shown interest and participated in the BBF debate. The 3 political parties shared the same position regarding further construction within the protected areas. They stated they will not tolerate any investments at the expense of loss of biodiversity and protected areas, although this contradicts to the previous statements of the same parties in the very pre-election meetings (especially with the electorate at the municipal level!). Except for the DSB (the former environmental minister, Mrs. Evdokija Maneva) the other political parties do not foresee any enlargement of the protected areas territory, and as a whole do not understand well the commitments of the country in terms of the EU Accession. The immaturity of the Bulgarian politicians, as well as the low priority for the environmental and more particularly for biodiversity issues should be taken into account.

Another major issue that attracted the BBF attention and efforts was the proposed amendments to the Bulgarian Biodiversity Act. The opposition against the hazardous amendments of the Bulgarian Biodiversity Act comprised 9 major Bulgarian environmental NGOs (including BBF), small- and medium scale tourism business and travel agents, as well as international NGOs like WWF, Euronatur, Europarc, CEEWEB, EUCC, PlantaLife, International MIRE Conservation Group.

Another big concern of BBF has been the intentions of some investors and the political circles related to them for construction and development of ski resorts in:

- the Super Borovetz
- the Central Balkan National Park (Teteven, Ribaritsa, Apriltzi, Troyan – the so called project "Super Ribaritsa")
- the Western Stara planina (Berkovitza - Kom)
- Rila (Panichishte)
- Pirin – intentions for enlargement of the existing skiing zone, and
- the Western Rhodopes (Sutka, Perelik, Pamporovo).

The above mentioned investment projects have been warmly supported and promoted by the politicians (e.g. the Bulgarian Socialist Party has used this as a main pre-election promise in the Central Balkan). They have been systematically pushed forward with the official candidature of Bulgaria for the Winter Olympic Games 2014. This has confirmed the commitment of BBF to continue allocating efforts for this "hot" topic. Recently a coalition is formed to debate and contest the Winter Olympic Games 2014. This issue together with the one defending Bulgarian Protected areas will be the two major issues of the pro-biodiversity community in 2006.

The newly approved Regulation regarding the construction along the Black Sea Coast will have a crescent influence on the BBF's operation. The municipalities have blocked similar Act, tackling the construction rules along the Black Sea Coast. However, only some of the provisions of this draft Act have been included in the new Regulation. The spirit of the Regulation is very much in favor of the municipalities' economic development. The new regimes introduced increase the threats over the coast: for instance constructions are allowed not 200 m off the coastline but only 150 m off the coast. Given that two of the three BBF regional projects are coastal ones this could provoke change of the project's focus.

Another concern should be mentioned regarding the BBF's context of operation: the MoEW's negligence towards the management plans and "BSBCP heritage". The case of Ropotamo Complex management plans is another example where the MoEW and RIEW – Bourgas have infringed their own regulation trying to exclude the dunes between Arkutino and building of "Zname na mira" in favor of the building company Glavbolgarstroj. Currently, the Court's decision is expected. It is another protected area that will be affected if the changes of the PA Act were approved by the Parliament. The Ropotamo complex MPs have been submitted to the MoEW in 2002. Unofficially, it has been agreed with the MoEW that the BBF should submit a proposal to the EMEPA for finalizing Ropotamo Management plans. In the mean time the municipality of Primorsko has organized a public hearing to present its new urban/development plan. The nature conservation status of Ropotamo was absolutely neglected; moreover a diminishing of the PA is envisaged as well as a construction of 40000 places for accommodation. The BBF has submitted official letter disagreeing with the some aspects of the Primorsko development plan. The BBF has also continued insisting and re-drafting the management plans for Kamchiya and Kaliakra.

It should be mentioned that the financial environment for the biodiversity NGOs has been quite unfavorable. One of the few instruments available to the NGOs are the UNDP GEF Rhodopes Project and the Small grants programme where Rossen Vassilev is part of the Steering committee as NGO representative. The BBF has been involved and consulted in the programming of the PHARE CBC with Turkey and Greece but the official start of this main financial instrument has been postponed. The PHARE CBC and the EMEPA are the main funding sources for biodiversity. The implementation of another tool - the agro-ecological measure of SAPARD has been postponed, too. Therefore the support for sustainable use of pastures and semi-natural habitats in Dobrudja and Strandja was not feasible. The Bulgarian NGOs still can not rely on private or corporate donations to implement long-term activities for biodiversity and even less for their organizational sustenance, although there are steps for approaching private and individual donors.

There is a significant change in the role of the municipalities in the Bulgarian society. Despite that the legislation is the same and they have limited official sovereignty, the Central Government started paying much more attention to their opinions. All central

decisions are coordinated with the municipalities. The state also began distributing larger funds among the municipalities in order to get their political support.

Unfortunately, given the lack of citizen activities on grass-root level, most of the municipalities are corrupted and defend unclear business interests against the interests of their citizens. Having the financial support from the state the municipalities are not so interested in our smaller support, which is directed towards real activities with no opportunities for corruption. In the same time, the municipalities are much more open for dialogue with other institutions (including NGOs).

The recent disasters like the floods have brought the biodiversity in the focus of the public attention. Some of the consequences of wrong decisions of the state administration like standing of river beds, building of mini hydro power plants, etc. become visible and suddenly the society has started to visualize the necessity of the biodiversity protection.

At the same time the dissemination of the bird flu has created a negative image of the nature conservationists and has deadened the arguments for the conservation of the wild birds.

3. Management

The BBF operational management is improved although there are still a lot of challenges to face towards achieving financial sustainability. Within the so-called core staff a new position of Financial Director has been announced and Ms. Mariela Natcheva has been selected for this key position. The core staff working on permanent contracts numbers 5 persons¹, while the temporary project staff is 7 persons: Stefan Avramov – Biodiversity Coordinator, Petko Tzvetkov – Networking Coordinator, Rumiana Ivanova – Coordinator Local Partnerships, Pavel Gospodinov – Coordinator CHM, and the local facilitators – Dimiter Georgiev – Northern Coastline, Radostina Tzenova – Strandja and Simana Markovska – for the Pirin region.

The managerial staff has been trained: the Executive Director completed a course for an international quality management standard and is already a certified auditor on ISO 9001:2000. The Programme Director has continued her training at IUCN Regional Office for Europe and has been closely involved in the IUCN European Green Belt initiative. The Networking Coordinator has followed tree-week training in the USA for applying models for stewardship of natural resources and cultural heritage. Coordinator of the Local partnerships has followed an intensive English language course.

The internal communication has been improved: weekly staff meetings carried out with minutes distributed; 7 coordination meetings organized to discuss the project progress and its impact on the Foundation's role and activities, and to discuss new project ideas and its future development; 2 formal Board meetings and at least 12 informal meetings with individual Board members.

In comparison with previous periods it has to be admitted that the Board members individually have taken more active role in supporting the staff, as well as have provided know-how on different subjects, e.g. EU funding and project preparation, assessment of stakeholders, sociological survey at national and local level, organizing

¹ Summarized time sheets of the Executive Director, Programme Director, Financial Director and the PR officer are enclosed in Annex 2.

of thematic focus groups with local and national stakeholders, etc. It has to be mentioned that the BBF staff agrees with the findings of Peter Hislaire's report concerning the interrelations Board - staff but did not have an immediate solution to propose. Having in mind that the role of the Bulgarian members should grow the BBF has approached two new Board members – Ventzi Sabev (Bulgarian citizen living in Switzerland, with a strong business profile and experienced fundraiser), and Bourjana Konaklieva (former director of the Foundation for the Development of the Civil Society, at present expert in the EU Programming department of the Ministry of Regional Development). Both are strongly motivated to become BBF Board members and have started already assisting BBF team.

By the end of 2005 there are no convincing proofs of the usefulness of the new position of financial director for the overall BBF management and development. In the beginning of 2006 special assessment will be carried out and decision upon the future of the position will be taken.

Still the Foundation should find mechanisms for better involving its experts and trying to keep them informed and concerned, as well as further developing its pro-active approach. During the first semester the BBF faced management problems in the Dobrudja region but has overcome them by the end of the year. The BBF team decided to continue working in Dobrudja region but to invest more efforts in strengthening the involving of the local partners. Therefore the agreement reached with Balgarevo/Kavarna municipality is a first step towards real collaboration in favor of nature and local tourist development.

4. The SDC-funded project: "Pro-Biodiversity Partnerships - The Nature Beyond Conservation"

Comments on Progresses against the Objectives and Outputs (for details see chapter 7.)

4.1. The project's overall objective includes:

To build effective partnerships for biodiversity conservation in Bulgaria:

- initiate partnerships,
- facilitate dialogs,
- strengthen and consolidate pro biodiversity community

One year after the official start of the project, the BBF has built up the foundations for achieving the project's overall objective. The BBF has been successful in initiating, facilitating and consolidating partnerships in the three project regions and at the national level: 30 different stakeholders in each region participate in the local dialog platforms (Forum Coastal Dobrudja, Dynamic group Strandja, 5 thematic dynamic groups in Pirin) and 50 national -level stakeholders take active role in the National Biodiversity Platform discussing flooding issues and river management, mini-hydro power plants and wind mills, transport an biodiversity.

In the light of the above, and given the below reported advance by specific objectives it may be concluded that the accomplishment of the tasks at present is 90%, i.e.

there are no specific objectives/ activities/ outcomes significantly delayed or canceled. The adjustments made are within the normal for the project cycle management limits.

4.2. The stakeholders are stimulated to participate effectively in biodiversity management in and outside protected areas

The inventory and analysis² of the stakeholders in the 3 model regions has been organized as planned. The following stakeholders groups were identified: local authorities, regional state administrations – park directorates, RIEW, Governor's administration, Regional Forestry Boards, State Game-Breeding Stations, Basin Directorates; private business, agricultural associations, schools and museums, media. One of the impressive conclusions is that the stakeholders perceive BBF not only as possible donor, but also as a competent partner for different initiatives. Mechanisms available within BBF and providing possibilities for additional funding or co-funding are very helpful for the negotiations with partners and undoubtedly facilitate BBF's positioning. Regarding the partners' attitude towards BBF following conclusion were drawn:

- the state administration, NGOs, schools and museums, and media demonstrate positive attitude and are ready to closely cooperate with BBF;
- the local authorities in Dourankulak, Tzarevo and Bansko show distant attitude;
- the BBF does not offer significant financial stimulus for the branch associations and therefore they look at the BBF not as a partner but as a main competitor, especially in its role of a municipalities' "coach"³

The results of the stakeholders' analysis at the local level coincide with those at the national level. The stakeholders have formulated several main expectations from the BBF, namely:

- the BBF should stimulate functional partnerships between the state administration, business, NGOs and media
- the BBF should facilitate and catalyze public-private partnerships with the pro-biodiversity business
- the BBF should ensure funds of nature conservation activities

Based on the analysis, local dynamic groups have been established. The type and the modus operandi of the dynamic groups vary depending on the specificity of each region:

- For Strandja region the groups at the beginning were mono-stakeholder (e.g. of the state administration, of the local NGOs, national NGOs, business associations) but by the second semester they become one multi-stakeholder dynamic group;
- In Pirin region the process started as mono-stakeholder, later grew into multi-stakeholder thematic groups and ended with a virtual multi-stakeholder electronic forum to discuss different themes (e.g. Days of Pirin, business, education, Consultative council, etc.);

² Detailed analysis in Bulgarian is presented in Annex 1.

³ Providing trainings is the main source of income for the these associations

- In Dobrudja region the process started as a revival the BSBCP “Coastal Dobrudja Regional Forum” but later 6 thematic multi-stakeholder groups were established to discuss 6 topics: 1) Mechanism of information exchange between institutions and citizens in the field of environmental protection, 2) Projects related to mass constructions along the Black Sea coast, 3) Environmental education and training, 4) Consultative councils for PAs, 5) Implementation of the legislation and management plans, 6) Sustainable use of natural resources

The local dynamic groups will be the main instruments of BBF for consultation with and communication to the local communities. For example, the opinion of the dynamic groups has been considered while preparing the programme for the exchange visits in September. A consultation with the local dynamic groups and the national stakeholders has been organized for elaborating the training programme. As a result the following priority topics for training have been identified:

- Mainstreaming of biodiversity concerns in the process of planning of energy, transport, regional development and agricultural sectors
- Methods and strategies for management of the conflicts between natural resource users and sustainable development and protection concept
- Establishment of national and regional dialog platforms for discussing biodiversity issues. Campaigns
- Nature Parks Management⁴

The above topics do not suppose clear distinction between the project’s local and national level, and confirm the thematic approach necessity while tackling important issues of the biodiversity agenda. One of the main principles of the BBF’s training programme is its incorporating into the training of other partners’ organizations (e.g. UNDP, BRTA, and Environmental Partnership Foundation). This approach is accepted not only because of the limited financial resources, but because it proves to be more efficient and coordinated.

Four trainings with more than 110 representatives of the local stakeholders have been already held: “Participatory planning of the parks’ management”⁵, “Marketing and PR for the region of Pirin National Park”, “Biosphere reserve in Pirin: from an old idea towards new approach”, “Responsibilities of institutions in Strandja NP”. In the period October – December three trainings with the participation and expert support of Pro Natura were organized for the local and national level stakeholders: “Campaigning for and promotion of Protected area”, “Transport and biodiversity” and “PAs and possibilities for local economic development”.

In the process of preparation of the national opinion poll, the BBF together with NCIOM have organized **two focus groups** – with experts from different ministries and with NGOs (including social, tourism, etc., groups), to debate “hot” biodiversity issues and possible synergies and partnerships. One very important assumption of BBF has been confirmed: the administration has a negative attitude, especially towards environmental NGOs; the reasons for this are: the NGOs’ aggression and total rejection of state policy, manipulation of public opinion, non-professional and

⁴ The dynamic groups in Strandja have suggested the nature parks theme but the theme is considered to be of national importance and moreover the intervention on this theme should be done at a national level.

⁵ This specific training has been organized in close partnership with Bulgarian Environmental Partnership Foundation and QLF - USA

unjustified statements, etc. Their representatives stated that partnerships with NGOs might be useful only at the local level. Delegation of state responsibilities to NGOs is still impossible.

It was confirmed that a “niche” exists for a dialog mediator of the environmental NGOs and other stakeholders. It has also been proven that the messages of the conservation NGOs are not well formulated and are incomprehensive even for the other sector NGOs (e.g. social, Bulgarian Hunting Association, etc.).

During the discussions of the 2 focus groups the participants confirmed the “hot” biodiversity topics chosen by BBF, namely:

- the intensive constructions within the protected areas (enlargement of resorts of Bansko, Black Sea Coast, new hotels, etc.), and
- the political pressure for excluding of terrains from the protected areas, inefficient control of the state, etc.

The results of the discussions within the 2 focus groups helped the BBF formulating questions for the **national sociological poll**⁶ held in April. Generally speaking, nature conservation and particularly conservation of biodiversity are almost unknown for the general public in Bulgaria. Although some of the “hottest” problems, like the new constructions within the protected areas, development of the intensive tourism along the Black Sea Coast and in the skiing resorts attract the public attention.

People aware the fact that the tourism development is an important source of income for the state economy. However they do not show any tolerance to the infringements of protected areas legislation provoked by the investors. The illegal logging is considered major problem together with the uncontrolled infrastructure development.

The information policy on the protected areas’ regime in Bulgaria is inadequate. Local people are ready to provide information and to participate in assessment of the protected area status.

The results of the sociological poll show that after many years of almost no interest, there is a revival of the general public interest in nature conservation and biodiversity. The general public supports the environmental NGOs and recognizes the need of such organizations; some Bulgarians are even ready to support financially the NGOs. The results of the national opinion poll were largely promoted in the media: a press conference was organized in June to communicate the finding to the NGOs, journalists and politicians.

It should be underlined that in parallel with the national opinion poll and the inventory of the local stakeholders in the three regions, an analysis of the national level stakeholders was organized, as a part of establishment of a **national biodiversity platform**. The analysis shows that so far, the mono-stakeholder groups on different subjects dominate. Given that the establishment of a national multi-stakeholder platform is a long-term process, the BBF has focused its efforts to first break the mono-stakeholder pattern of the closest environmental NGOs circle. As an example, the BBF together with the UNDP/ GEF – Rhodopes Project managed to enlarge the members of the NGO working group on the mini-hydro power plants and to reach an agreement for including representatives of the state agencies, BAS and the business. Taking advantage of the political situation before the general elections in June, the BBF together with 9 NGOs organized a public dispute between the NGOs and the political parties on the following three main topics: biodiversity conservation,

⁶ Detailed report in Bulgarian including graphs is presented in the BBF semester report.

sustainable use of natural resources and public participation. Political parties presented their platforms and answered questions of NGOs and media.

In terms of facilitating the establishment of a national multi-stakeholder biodiversity dialogue, the BBF organized discussions with non-conservation NGOs such as Bulgarian Tourist Society and the Union of Hunters and Fishermen in Bulgaria, and with some business associations – that of the honey producers, beekeepers, owners of fisheries and hotels. The BBF's objective is to establish the national level multi-stakeholders groups (e.g. mini-hydro power plants, Natura 2000, transport and biodiversity) including representatives of local dynamic groups by the end of the year, rather than having institutionalized biodiversity platform. This will not only help the participants of the different groups in sharing their experience, but will also assist in promoting and integrating this experience within the work of other stakeholders. Special attention should be given to involving politicians and political parties in further promoting the biodiversity issues.

The BBF organized an inventory of the mechanisms for public participation within the process of environmental decision-making. Most of the mechanisms have not been very efficient (e.g. the EIA) or have been new and there is insufficient implementation experience (e.g. SEA). The composition of the existing CCs or consultative mechanisms have not been balanced, i.e. they comprise of representatives of the state institutions mainly. The participation of individual citizens or civil society structures is not a common practice; e.g. the representatives of the internal structures of the MoEW dominate the High Ecological Expert Council.

In terms of the mechanisms for public participation the interest in the **Consultative Councils (CC) for protected areas** varies. Therefore the establishment or revival of operational CC in the three project regions was one of the major challenges. The BBF has organized consultations with the stakeholders on the CC structure, operations and competencies. As a result the Pirin CC was established and its composition and modus operandi were approved by the Minister of Environment and Water. The process of establishing CC for Shabla lake is about to be finalized; the Shabla municipality has convoked a constituency meeting in February 2006. In Strandja region the BBF has postponed the CC revival due to the opposition of the two municipalities. It should be mentioned that the other stakeholders unanimously wanted to revive the CC but they fully agreed that a CC cannot be operational if two of the main stakeholders obstruct its *raison d'etre*.

The context in the regions is very different and influences the process of public participation. The BBF has relied very much on capitalizing on the CC experience and exposing it to a national level. Unfortunately in one year period is not feasible to have come with concrete proposals for legislative modifications in favor of participatory management of PAs. However the BBF will further pursue this topic and by the end of the project will come up with concrete proposals for legislative modifications.

As prescribed by the Project Document, the BBF elaborated and communicated in the three project's regions the criteria for the Local Initiatives Facility (LIF). Together with the local dynamic groups the BBF discussed possible ideas for partnership projects. The sums under the LIF were divided between the three regions. The stakeholders (all adjacent municipalities, DNP and NGOs) in Pirin unanimously decided LIF to support the organization of the Pirin's Days. In Strandja the LIF has supported 9 partnership projects of the local NGOs. In Dobrudja region the LIF has supported 1 project of the BBF, municipality of Kavrana and Balgarevo aiming at developing and promotion of the Kaliakra information centre; due to some delay in the overall implementation of the project in Dobrudja the finalization of LIF project is foreseen for 2006.

4.3. Innovative public-private partnerships for pro-biodiversity businesses are established

The initial inventory of the appropriate businesses, related to biodiversity in each of the three project regions has been integrated in the Stakeholder analysis, using the same methodology as for other stakeholders. Being recently defined as BBF's target group, no contacts with business were established in advance, neither preliminary information was collected. Therefore, the BBF local facilitators and national coordinators consider the business sector as the most difficult in terms of the Stakeholder analysis.

The inventory was successfully finalized first in **Pirin** region (by the end of May 2005). The results and information, obtained during BSBCP Pirin Project (2001 – 2004) were largely utilized here, as well as the own contacts and activities of Pirin Tourist Forum. The following priority businesses were identified:

- Local associations of family hotel owners – partners with significant interest in alternative tourism and potential for joint activities;
- Wood-processing industry – a sector with significant pressure on forest ecosystems, particularly in territories adjacent to the Pirin NP; identified by most stakeholders as the most important economic sector, related to the natural resources in the region; perspective for introduction of sustainable forest practices and forest certification.

The BBF lacks specific expert capacity in forestry and should seek for partnerships or involvement of external experts if decided to initiate activities in this field.

The inventory in the three regions focused not only on the typical "pro-biodiversity" businesses, such as ecotourism. Its target is broader and covered also economic activities, which: have significant impact on ecosystems, are linked with natural resources and/ or are widely presented in BBF's pilot regions (farming, wood processing etc.).

The Stakeholder analysis was finalized later in **Dobrudja** and **Strandja** regions and the information collected identified the following priority businesses:

Strandja region:

- Apiarists and bee-honey producers – local branch associations have been already established;
- Herbs gatherers - appropriate for demonstration of collective local label and support for the establishment of regional branch associations
- Owners of family hotels and guest houses; the development of alternative tourism is identified as priority by the NP Strandja Directorate

In general the region is appropriate for demonstration of collective local label establishment.

Dobrudja region:

- Rural tourism in Balgarevo municipality

- Sustainable fishing model in Durankulak Lake – the model does not operate because of the lack of functioning legislative procedures. However its replication in Shabla Lake could be a subject of a feasibility study.
- Development of Ecotourism in Shablenska Tuzla in partnership with Shabla Municipality

Selection of one model business for each region and assessment of its needs was held: in Strandja bee keepers were selected as a priority business, in Pirin and in Dobrudja – small family hotels owners. Based on already established contacts and ongoing activities in Strandja, the project team has established contacts with the national Association of organic bee-honey producers and have already used its network to have access to one of the largest pro-biodiversity community.

Logging and timber industry in Pirin is a sector with significant pressure on the forest ecosystems and should be considered as important target group. However the present situation in Bulgaria does not create market incentives for the introduction of environmental friendly practices (such as forest certification). The work in this direction should be kept.

Tourist associations, owners of family hotels and guest houses in Pirin and Dobrudja regions remain important partners of the BBF for various activities: demonstration of sustainable tourism practices, elaboration of supplementary tourist services, and participation in the consultative council, etc.

The meetings with local representatives of the business sector in the three pilot regions outline the importance of identification and promotion of good practices and demonstration of income generation from sustainable/pro-biodiversity businesses. In fact this confirms the BBF approach to select and provide specific support to selected pro-biodiversity businesses and upon request.

Elaboration and registering of collective local labels was one of the expected project outcomes. In spite of the stated interest from the park administrations and local business partners in Pirin and Strandja such labels have not been registered. In general, Bulgarian experience in registering collective local labels, related to protected areas is limited, the knowledge is insufficient and the direct benefits are not obvious. Therefore the BBF has organized a seminar to explain the legal framework for registering of local labels, protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication, etc. In late 2006 is expected new Competition law, including articles for the protection of trademarks and labels, which will improve the trust of the local entrepreneurs.

Providing consultative and legal support for the establishment of local associations of producers is delayed and there are no newly registered associations so far.

As the financial resources for identification and support of pro-biodiversity businesses are limited, the BBF has focused its support to the business associations, which hold more information and new projects ideas than single entrepreneurs. There are number of governmental and non-governmental structures, providing consultative services and support to SME and business associations but their expertise and motivation to assess and support pro-biodiversity businesses is limited. The strength of BBF is in its specific background and experience concerning the nature conservation and its correlation with the sustainable business practices. At the same time BBF current expertise is focused on the biodiversity and is lacking experience in providing direct services to the business. For this reason the BBF has established partnerships with business centers, business incubators and regional commercial chambers, to provide them supplementary services. Negotiations have already started with the Business

center – Malko Tarnovo (established under JOBS Project), Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) – Vratza, RCCI – Blagoevgrad, RCCI – Dobrich. Framework agreement with the Business center – Malko Tarnovo will be signed in January 2006.

These relations and the potential future common projects with business centers and trade chambers at national and regional level are of strategic importance for BBF. The BBF's resources available for consultative support for the establishment of public-private partnerships and pro-biodiversity businesses should be used as "seed money" for elaboration of new projects and mobilization of funds different from SDC. If BBF is prepared to provide adequate and competitive consultative services to SME, these services will be able to generate incomes and contribute both to the financial sustainability and to the ideal objectives of the Foundation.

As already stated, the BBF so far did not have experience in approaching the business as a specific target group. Moreover, the business requires specific knowledge and approach. That is way the BBF team has followed a tailored-made two days intensive training on business negotiations. Concrete cases emerging from the BBF present experience were discussed and analyzed. This has helped the team to better prepare its future strategy to approach the SMEs and the corporate business.

While planning the project the BBF made several assumptions that were not proven. Most of the branch associations consider the BBF as competitor or a "less-strategic" partner. On the other hand, some of the state business structures, e.g. the National Agricultural Advisory Service working directly with local business (at the village or town level) or the Business centers and the RCCI consider the BBF promising partner in implementing less popular sustainable business incentives (trade marks registration, interpretation programmes, etc.).

It should be mentioned that the lack of previous experience and know-how in this direction made the business component is the most dynamic one. In 2005 the "learning by doing" experience dominated the BBF work on this objective. However the BBF has gained a useful knowledge and has adjusted its strategy for 2006: the accent will be put on providing good models/ best practices to the SMEs businesses but also will aim at attracting the social responsible corporate business as a supporter and donor for the BBF.

4.4. The BBF is enhanced to initiate, catalyze and manage innovative and model approaches to biodiversity protection

BBF continued positioning itself among the other NGOs and strengthening its presence. The main working direction was development of new partnerships, representation in different consultative councils and coalitions, and active role in consultations of biodiversity related strategic documents. The BBF did not forget its heritage and continued working on some of the former BSBCP topics like the finalizing of management plans, species action plans, CHM and declaration of new protected areas.

Following the programme development direction the BBF focused its attention on mainstreaming of biodiversity in key development sectors like transport. Being represented in the Consultative Council of the Ministry of Transport, the BBF participated in 9 meetings of the working group responsible for the Operational Framework "Transport" elaboration, as well as in two national forums for the National

Development Framework⁷ (2007–2013) planning. We have contributed to the definition of priorities and analysis of the Operational Programme "Transport".

In the beginning of April the Council of Ministers approved the National Environmental Strategy for the 2005–2013 period. The elaboration of the Biodiversity Action Plan is ongoing and the BBF has been involved (the Executive Director is representing the NGOs community). Some comments of the BBF were included in the Action Plan.

One new working direction of the BBF that has to be underlined is the consultations with political parties represented in the Parliament and lobbying for the biodiversity agenda. Being a part of the NGOs campaign against the amendments of the Protected Areas and Biodiversity Acts, the BBF organized a meeting with the For Bulgaria Coalition. After the finalization of the Biodiversity Act the BBF in close collaboration with the Parliamentary Environmental Commission have organized a presentation event aiming at: 1) promoting the collaboration with the civil society organizations as a good practice to be further reinforced, 2) declaring readiness to work together for the forthcoming amendment of the Protected Areas Act and 3) promoting key protected areas in Bulgaria and its resources. In the pre-election debates the BBF elaborated and presented to the Green Party a draft platform to be included in the platforms of the political parties. Unofficially the BBF consulted Mr. Yane Yanev (leader of the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union) regarding the illegal logging.

As stakeholders identified the forestry, especially combating the illegal logging, as priority topics to be discussed, the BBF took an active position on this issue. The BBF Biodiversity Officer represents the NGO community in the National Consultative Council on Forest, Game and Fish. He presented the BBF's position regarding the illegal logging in Bulgaria; namely that this dramatically exceeds the officially presented figures. During the session of the National Council the BBF has proposed to initiate a serious debate on this issue based on the WWF report. So far the National Forestry Board did not react to the proposal⁸.

The BBF collected data concerning the management problems of the State Game-Breeding Stations, working on the new operational scheme are making their profits mostly on the basis of the timbering and are selling it on prices lower than the market ones. This is especially valid for the Stations in the Rhodopes, which operate mostly as timbering companies, rather than game nurseries. Given that the operation of these stations is considered to be a model for the future re-structuring of the forest sector, the practice is especially worrying.

The BBF participated in three meetings on forest certification organized by the WWF. The BBF Biodiversity Coordinator attended training on Role of the NGOs in the Process of Forest Certification. The problem identified which provoked the intervention of BBF on this issue was the lack of active participation of the civil society organizations in the process of certification of the Bulgarian forest. This could lead to standards imposed by economic groups. Our representative (Vanya Ratarova) has won a DBU traineeship in Germany to elaborate a project "Role of the NGOs in the forest certification in Bulgaria"

The BBF participated actively in four meetings of the National Consultative Hunting Council. The BBF assisted the NFB in the process of introduction of the ibex and

⁷ The main document prescribing distribution of the EU funds.

⁸ The NFB recognizing that the illegally felled timber is less than 1 mln m³, while the WWF expert assessment is amounting at 3,7 mln m³. The official NFB data show that firewood production is 2 mln m³, but the results of the opinion poll (commissioned by the NFB) are different: 6 mln m³ production of firewood. The financial difference is about 100,000,000 BGN per year!

aurochs. The NFB is ready to mandate to the BBF the elaboration of an action plan for the chamois and the capercaillie.

BBF representative is taking active role in the Advisory Committee of the SAPARD concerning the agro-environmental measure.

An important input has been given to the "Family of the environmental organizations"⁹ where the participation of the BBF contributes to the cooperation of the environmental NGOs with other sectoral NGOs (sustainable development, social, cultural, etc.).

The BBF started close collaboration with the team of TRAFFIC¹⁰ responsible for the monitoring of the implementation of the CITES in SEE. The BBF has acquainted the TRAFFIC with the situation in Bulgaria and is about to finalize the common activities.

The first action plan for tortoises elaborated with the financial support of the BBF (BSBCP) has been officially approved and recognized by the responsible authorities. During the discussion it came out that the MoEW is not ready for making long-term commitments. They are ready to be a partner but not the main donor even for protection of priority species. In the frame of the cooperation with the MoEW it has been suggested that BBF elaborate a project proposal for finalizing the Ropotamo Management Plan. The project is under development. The final version of the documentation for the Belasitsa Nature Park is ready and has to be submitted to the MoEW. In parallel to the process of NP declaration 2 projects for nature conservation and local development are elaborated.

Within the partnership project the BBF continues finalizing the Strandja Management Plan (MP) towards more consensus draft. The BBF MP team organized numerous meetings with the NFB, MoEW (NNPS and EIA Department)¹¹. The MP team has involved additional external experts, especially in order to answer the remarks of the POVVIK Company (responsible for the Environmental Assessment of the MP). The process of involvement and work with the POVVIK has taken more time than the initially planned. The Company is expected to produce environmental assessment of the three options of the MP: option minimum (close to the BBF version submitted to the MoEW last year), option maximum (based on the objections and requirements of the municipalities) and a consensus version. During the meeting with the NNPS it came out that the BBF could not expect special attention and short deadlines. The MP will be discussed within the term envisaged by the law: between 6 months and one year. By the end of the year still the question for the BBF is whether to continue reflecting the remarks of the High Ecological Expert Council especially if they are in contradiction with the environmental principles of the BBF. The BBF has prepared a CD with the version of the MP that has been submitted to the MoEW.

The BBF has successfully started implementing activities in a new field: collaboration with universities for development of a contemporary teaching in conservation biology. After the investigation it was decided not to develop a master's program but a postgraduate training course¹². An expert team was established to elaborate the programme of the course and the main teaching materials. The team decided to use the Austrian course as a model one for the development of the Bulgarian postgraduate course on PAs Management. By the end of January 2006 is expected to have finalized the detailed course (incl. lectures). The development of distance learning needs to be

⁹ A Bluelink project financed by the Open Society - Bulgaria

¹⁰ TRAFFIC – joint programme of IUCN and WWF, the world largest wildlife trade monitoring network

¹¹ Minutes of the meetings are available

¹² The reasons for that were explained in the BBF semester report

further clarified. A foreign expert from the IEEM – Paul Gorup was engaged. IEEM is interested in long-term collaboration with the BBF and is ready to start developing a larger scale project for the EU funds. The Biodiversity Coordinator has initiated meetings with the two universities – Sofia University and Forest University. As a result an agreement for joint activities with Sofia University, Faculty of Biology was signed.

In the field of collaboration with Universities a competition for supporting master's works of students has been organized. Twenty-two applications were received but only eleven have been awarded. During the student's conference in December 18 students from different universities have presented their works. The conference was largely promoted and therefore not only the 11 students financed by the BBF have participated but it attracted also other students; representatives of the national and nature parks, MoEW, MoAF were invited. Aiming at connecting science with the direct conservation the conference come up with a proposal to include the management bodies of the PAs in defining and prioritizing the themes for students diploma works. The diploma works presented at the conference are prepared for publishing.

After setting its rules and procedures the Emergency fund started to operate¹³. After series of discussions on the Bulgarian context and the place of the Foundation it has been proposed to change the initial direction of the fund from funding local activities to funding also emergency actions on issues of national importance. Taking into account the specificity of the emergency needs the BBF has applied individual approach to one each particular case/project. As a result 13 projects were submitted and 6 of them were financed. It has to be mentioned that the main reasons for rejecting projects were: 1) themes do not contributing to the biodiversity conservation (e.g. artificial plant of river with fish), 2) insufficient capacity of the organization to handle the subject, 3) the problem has a long story and does not require an emergency assistance (e.g. elaboration of management plans, scientific research, educational activities, etc.), 4) serious mistakes in the projects' justification. The financed projects has tackled themes like river management and mini hydro power plants, prevention of pollution with cyanides in the Rhodopes, campaign for communicating expected modifications of the Protected Areas Act, presenting the Bulgarian NGO position regarding Kresna to the Bern Convention, campaign against illegal stone-pit in Nikopolsko plato (potential Natura 2000 site), initiation of court cases against municipal and state administration concerning decisions for development of the ski zone in Pirin NP. The above mentioned themes are of national importance although they have local dimension. For one year already the Emergency Fund becomes known instrument for citizens' participation in raising awareness or solving of "hot" biodiversity cases. It has to be mentioned that because of the specificity of the projects' issues, the projects' supervision and finalization overpass the yearly plan of operation.

4.5 Programme development component

The development and negotiation of a Programme Portfolio corresponding to the Foundation Development Strategy within the frame of the partnership project is among the crucial BBF tasks. Special procedure for selecting and evaluating project proposals to be included in the BBF project portfolio was elaborated and agreed. The so-called ABC project list shows the stage of readiness of each project idea: stage A – project ideas, stage B – submitted projects or projects under negotiations with partners and donors, stage C – approved project proposals by the donors. So far in

¹³ See the BBF semester report

the BBF ABC list are presented 30 project ideas¹⁴. Clear selection procedure defining how an idea could be further developed to become BBF portfolio project was approved by the Board. The project ideas have to meet a set of criteria and have to be discussed in an informal (yet) Advisory Committee that includes the BBF coordinators and experts. The executive director takes the final decision and the Board approves the final choice.

As a result of the SDC additional funding mechanisms the BBF has managed to diversify its partnerships and funding base. By the end of 2005 the BBF has submitted a project portfolio including 7 projects.

Apart from the SDC funding the BBF got financing from the REC for mapping the floods sites and regions and assessing the potentials of improving the river ecosystems status.

The BBF received funding from the UNDP/ GEF Rhodopes Project for mapping of habitats in the Eastern Rhodopes amounting to BGN 23,000. Other two mandates were commissioned by the National Forestry Board for the elaboration of the Chamois Action Plan and for preparing a guidebook for the riparian ecosystems.

Unfortunately, the BBF was successful in acquiring big projects. Three projects have not been approved for financing, namely 1) Identifying and developing nature conservation projects in Bulgaria and Romania in the frame of PHARE CBC (BBF in consortium with the Dutch partner ALTERRA), 2) Management of Protected Zones within Natura 2000 sites submitted to DEFRA and 3) Marine Protected Areas Bulgaria (in partnership with Econet Action Fund) for the BBI Matra.

A meeting for discussing and analyzing the failures in acquisition of EU funded projects is planned for February 2006. It will be combined with an internal session to discuss new project opportunities. This has also resulted in the BBF strategy for 2006 where the business is seen as more reliable donor than the EU funds. However the BBF cannot reject or completely mistrust the EU funds and therefore it has started negotiations with the UNDP for a joint "Public-private partnership" project aiming to prepare the Bulgarian municipalities for the forthcoming structural funds. The municipalities become a key partner if a NGO wants to have access to the EU funds.

A revision/ adjustment of the programme development directions has already started. The BBF has sum up that building partnerships is still its programme development objective but what is needed as well is to illustrate this partnerships with sustainable/ resource use models. This should be reflected in the new BBF project portfolio where projects with the business for promoting sustainable management of resources would be a priority (e.g. correlation of the Salinas and Atanasovsko lake management).

5. Other BBF projects

In parallel with the implementation of its main SDC funded project, the BBF has also implemented some other projects. The projects do not represent a significant share in comparison to the Pro-biodiversity partnership project but contributes significantly to the implementation of the BBF mission and diversifies its fields of know-how. A short description of the projects is given below:

¹⁴See the BBF semester report

5.1. Participatory Regional Development Planning in the South-Eastern Region of Bulgaria

The project was implemented by Foundation "TIME-Ecoprojects" in partnership with the BBF. The project's overall objective was to elaborate, in a participatory manner, the Regional Development Plan (RDP) 2007-2013 for the South Eastern Planning Region of Bulgaria. The project was funded by SDC and focused at establishing and promoting of a pilot Geographical Information System (GIS) as resourceful instrument for the up-dating of the RDP for the South Eastern Planning region and as an useful information technology to other planning regions and the MRDPW. One of the main project's components envisaged an active involvement of stakeholders in the process of elaboration of the RDP 2007-2013. The project team had to ensure also that the nature conservation priorities are integrated into the RDP. The main project's beneficiaries were the District administrations of Burgas, Yambol and Sliven, as well as the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works.

5.2. Conservation of Globally Significant Biodiversity in the Landscape of Bulgaria's Rhodope Mountain

The project, financed by the UNDP GEF Rhodopes Project was aiming at mapping the Natura 2000 habitats in the border territory of the Central and Eastern Rhodopes. Through a GIS Distance Method analysis an area of 991.32 km² was investigated and a map of the common habitats was elaborated. Special attention was paid to the field mapping of the remaining habitat types (field identification of the non-defined habitats, field verification and detailed survey of the old growth forest polygons). GPS receiver fixed the co-ordinates of 442 field points that were applied as habitat description. In total 24 habitats were described in the surveyed territory. The project team proposed recommendations for conservation activities in the region that were used as a basis for proposing capitalisation activities to the SDC Recapitulation Fund.

5.3. Elaboration of a National Action Plan for the Chamois

National Forest Board (NFB) has entrusted the BBF the elaboration of the National Chamois Action Plan. After series of consultations with the MoEW and NFB a detailed Terms of Reference of the action plan was developed. MoEW and NFB approved it both and in October a contract with the NFB was signed. The project team prepared the first draft of the Action plan and organized discussions with the forest services in the Western Rhodopes. The project will continue in 2006. It is part of the BBF efforts to develop and implement resources plans for key species of economic interest. The Chamois Action plan brings added value to the integrated biodiversity management in forests.

5.4. Development of the Bulgarian Clearing House Mechanism (CHM)

Second consecutive year the MoEW entrusts the management of the Bulgarian Clearing House Mechanism to the BBF. The overall project implementation has been financed by the MoEW and the SDC.

5.5. Strandja Management Plan

Following an agreement between the SDC and the MoEW, the MoEW has provided the BBF with an amount of 8000 BGN for the finalization of the Strandja Management plan. The

5.6. Dragonfly Year

Dragonfly Year, Bulgaria 2005 was an initiative of the Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation with "Green Bulgaria" Association as main organization hired for implementation of the planned events. Financial support has been received from the two main sponsors of the Dragonfly Year – the British Dragonfly Society and the International Dragonfly Fund.

Initial program was very enthusiastic and included many activities for which we knew we had limited finances. We are proud to announce that were honored with the attention of different international organizations and private persons.

Issuing the 12-pages calendar

It was designed with species that need protection in Bulgaria. Each of them was presented separately with short information on its biology and ecology. People used the calendar were given with opportunity to cut out the dragonfly image at the end of the month in which way they received a post card of high quality. It was assured by the perfect photos donated by Hans-Ulrich Kohler, Burkhard Grebe, Matjaž Bedjanič, Dave Smallshire and Sami Karjalainen.

Preparing Internet site for the Bulgarian species

Everyone can visit it at <http://odonata.biodiversity.bg>. There you'll find information for all 68 species thought to be found now or in the past within the current Bulgarian state borders. Each species is provided with individual photo, picture of its habitat, distribution map and diagram, phenological graph as well as facts on species taxonomy, biology and ecology. From the site you can learn about the development of the Odonatology in Bulgaria and important questions needed clarification. However, you must know Bulgarian as we are still working on the English version. For the site we obtained additional pictures from Allan Brandon, Jean-Pierre Boudot, Miroslav Michev, Nikolai Simov and Richard Seidenbusch. The site was officially promoted in June before leading Bulgarian television and students from the Faculty of Biology, Sofia University.

The Dragonfly Day, 31 May 2005

A joint activity with the Vitosha Nature Conservation and Information Center of the Ministry of Environment and Water. That was the day when we succeeded to gather around 140 children from two Sofia's schools. They decided to celebrate the end of their school year in the nature of Vitosha Mountain having dragonflies as main object for the day. All they participated in the so called "Odonatoliada".

Participants were invited after that to take an imaginal flight over the Vitosha mountain and to chose a place to live. They were introduced with the Exhibition of Center where each stops were marked with a dragonfly picture. Same picture was placed on a big cake provided by the "Atlantik" Confectionery and enjoyed very much from all children.

Finally children received many educational materials about dragonflies and Vitosha Mountain. Some of them were awarded for their participation in the competition for children dragonfly picture.

A second similar celebration day was implemented on 06.-08. July in Pirin National Park. Total of 30 children were organized by the Park's directorate. They visited Pirin

mountain, made short distance walks within the mountain and played different games in order to introduce Odonata in an informal way.

Producing postal stamps with dragonfly images. Bulgarian Ministry of Transportation agreed to produce four stamps and one envelop dedicated to our activity. The stamps were officially presented on 29.06.2005 during a short ceremony in the Ministry. We thank very much to Hans-Ulrih Kohler for the free pictures he provided.

Supporting Dragonfly Reserve. That Reserve is our idea since many years. Finally the activities around its establishing started in the autumn of 2003 with the support from Ford Conservation & Environmental Grants and later from "EcoSociety" Foundation. Then we dug and shaped the main part of the wetland. That is how we turned a former agricultural land into a wetland. The land is "Green Bulgaria" Association property. In 2005 the wetland was enlarged. Separate sections were formed with still and running water, shady and sunny places. The whole area was fenced to prevent entering the domestic animals. Signs and information panels were placed at certain points to show to visitors, which are the important moments in a dragonfly life and wetlands as general.

Coenagrion ornatum, *Crocothemis erythraea*, *Orthetrum brunneum*, *Sympetrum sanguineum* were among the first visitors of our Reserve.

Scientific researches. These included:

- ✓ following the life-span of *Lestes macrostigma*. An open area insectaria (sized 9 x 1,5 x 1,5 m) was established in Poda Protected Area near the town of Burgas, South Black Sea coast. Total of 60 *L. macrostigma* individuals were placed inside it. The insectary was checked in two weeks when 14 of the insects were still alive. It is a very high percentage comparing with the data established eight years ago in natural conditions;
- ✓ faunistical investigations on species with limited distribution in Bulgaria. The area of Rila National Park was visited in search of new breeding sites for *Somatochlora arctica* and *Leucorrhinia dubia*. The former was proved for four new places and the later for six. It is interesting that all these were within a particular region of the mountain. It is important to investigate the possible reason why they left there exactly and not spread to other suitable known wetlands in Rila.

Traveling exhibition. It is meant to have six modules representing different aspects of dragonfly life and morphology. Only first part it prepared till now. It was used during both activities with children mentioned above. We are still working to produce other modules of the exhibition.

Slide shows. More than 30 slide shows were performed before nearly 1000 participants. Slides were arranged in a way to present the dragonflies' morphology, diversity in Bulgaria and biological peculiarities.

In our view the Dragonfly Year was a big success for making dragonflies more popular in Bulgaria. We were contacted by different medias and as results many materials were published or launched. We are also satisfied to see more and more dragonfly artifacts appeared in Sofia markets, like souvenirs, dresses, small sculptures and jewelries, bags. Possibly they appeared as results of our activities?

6. Outlook for the future

In one-year perspectives the BBF strategy is described in the 2006 plan of operations. The outlook for the future of the project and the BBF positioning and sustainability seems positive but challenging. One general conclusion has to be shared: the “overlapping” between the topics identified by the stakeholders, the topics suggested for training, the BBF project portfolio directions, confirm that the thematic approach used so far is the most adequate. Given its financial frames, the project should underline its demonstration character and should reinforce the replication of successful approaches (incl. BSBCP working models).

In the process of permanent assessment of the BBF strategic priorities one important conclusion emerges: there is certain contradiction between the nature conservation and the sustainability goals of the Foundation. This is to say that the most fragile and sensitive in terms of biodiversity regions are rather underdeveloped and do not offer financial sustainability opportunities. In other terms they rather consume than supply funds. However, the commitment of BBF to such topics and regions is inevitable, bearing in mind its profile.

It should be mentioned that the lack of know-how and previous experience with the SMEs made the business component the most dynamic one. In 2005 the “learning by doing” experience dominated the BBF work on this objective. However the BBF has gained a useful knowledge and has adjusted its strategy for 2006: the accent will be put on providing good models/ best practices to the SME businesses but also will aim at attracting the social responsible corporate business as a supporter and donor for the BBF and the biodiversity cause.

7. Implementation of activities against the BBF yearly plan of operations

Implementation of activities against the project yearly plan of operations 2005

Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Specific Objective 1: Staff			
1) Coordination of national dialogue platforms task, including 10% programme development	“networking” coordinator reports by March 31, June 30, September 30, December 10 Draft project proposals by April 30 and August 31	“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator	3 progress reports available in Bulgarian Trip reports available Study trip report available 4 additional projects elaborated
2) Local facilitators – 3 people in 3 regions, including 10% programme development	Trimester progress reports by June 30, September 30, December 10 Draft project proposals by April 30 and August 31 Local facilitators log-sheets	“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator	Progress reports and trip reports available in Bulgarian 2 additional projects elaborated
Specific Objective 1.1.: Strengthen, better organize, coordinate and consolidate the pro-biodiversity community in Bulgaria			
Output 1: National-wide “dialogue platforms” of the main stakeholders are established, operational and eventually become basis for setting BBF’s Advisory Committee			Amendments to the BD Law adopted by the Bulgarian Parliament Indicative map of the Bulgarian natural rives Comments to the National Development Frame 2007-2013, Operational Programmes “Environment” and “Transport”, National Rural Development plan 2007-2013, as well as National Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan 2005-2009, NGO Common Statement on the Reasons for the Floods in Bulgaria
Activities			
Carry out a stakeholder analysis particularly for the biodiversity field and design the dialogue platforms	One stakeholder analysis and platforms design report by May 31	Stakeholder analysis and platforms design expert, “networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inventory and analysis of the stakeholders in the 3 model regions has been organized as planned. The following stakeholders groups were identified: local authorities, regional state administrations – park directorates, RIEW, Governor’s administration, Regional Forestry Boards, State Game-Breeding Stations, Basin Directorates; private business, agricultural associations, schools and museums, media. 2 focus groups were organized by the National public opinion center on a national level with representatives of the state administration and non-ecological NGOs. 12 focus groups on a local level including all identified stakeholders. Methodology available Common matrix for identifying and assessing the stakeholders is available 6 main groups of stakeholders on national level were identified: state administration; business and business associations; national association of natural resources users; national and regional associations of municipalities; national NGOs; scientific and academic institutions; zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums and rescue centers Platforms design was prepared

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Activities	<u>Milestones</u>	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Identify the concrete biodiversity issues to debate	Paper on topics with justification by May 31	“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator	The concrete biodiversity issues were identified. On a national level: PAs management, Integration of biodiversity concerns into the transport sector policy, energy production (construction of hydro power plants) National Development Plan 2007-2013; Floods and management of flood risk On a local level: how to improve the functioning of the Nature Parks; role of the Directorates (management, control and public awareness); establishment of a new category of PA– nature park (not forestry land, but mainly Municipal owned agricultural land).
Establish a national multi-stakeholder platform meeting once a year	Facilitators’ meeting report by December 5	“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator	Coalitions established: Coalition on the amendments to the Biodiversity and PAs laws (8 NGOs involved) (more than 6 meetings and writing statements) Coalition on Floods (12 NGOs and 2 scientific institutions involved) (2 meetings and one statement); Coalition on natural river protection (7 NGOs and 2 scientific institutions involved) (6 meetings and statements, indicative map); Coalition on planning the EU funds in Bulgaria (8 national NGOs involved) ; Coalition on PAs (8 NGOs and 2 companies involved); (3 meetings) National discussion platforms initiated by or with active involvement of BBF on: Biodiversity Law Amendment (Parliament, MoEW, MAF, NGOs) Flood risk management (Bulgarian Parliament – Commission on natural disasters, environmental and social NGOs) Construction of mini hydro power plants and elections discussions on the environmental programs participation in the elections (Political Parties, NGOs and mass media)
Establish local dynamic dialogue groups	9 meeting reports – 3 by June 30, 3 by September 30, 3 by December 10	“networking” coordinator, local facilitators and Programme coordinator	Dobrudja: the RegionalForum for Coastal Dobrudja (RFCD) was revitalized; 6 local dynamic dialogue groups identified and established, 2 meetings held Pirin – 4 dynamic groups, one virtual multi-stakeholder electronic forum Strandja – 4 mono-stakeholders groups, one multi-stakeholder group at the end

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Activities	<u>Milestones</u>	Responsibility for implementing	Results
<p>Output 2: The different stakeholder groups have improved capacity to carry forward the conservation messages</p>			
<p>Activities Provide exchange of experience for the different stakeholder groups</p>	<p>2 Trip reports: by June 30 and by November 30</p>	<p>“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator</p>	<p>Dobrudja - trip for stakeholders of Dynamic group “Consultative council” including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting of the Consultative council of protected site “Brushlen – Kalimok” • Workshop in the office of KBPS Association, • field visit of Kalimok-Brashlen PS and a meeting with local fishermen • visits to the Fishermen museum in Tutrakan and the • Natural History museum of Srebarna managed reserve • Chart of consultative councils of Durankulak and Shabla <p>protected sites were also discussed.</p> <p>In Strandja – trip for the local groups to Pirin and Rila national parks. Only the both Municipalities rejected the invitation. 20 stakeholders participated</p> <p>For stakeholders from Pirin was organize five-day study trip around Bulgaria: 13 participants from NPD, local NGO's and experts from municipalities. The participants visited the info- centers and eco-trails in Nature parks “Strandja” and “Vratchanski Balkan”, National park “Central Balkan ” and Eastern Rodopes – Madjarovo.</p>
<p>Capacity building of the stakeholder groups chosen at national level: one training for 5 stakeholder groups</p>	<p>5 training course reports by trainer by September 30</p>	<p>“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator</p>	<p>4 training courses (WS and seminars) organized as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of local communities in planning and management of PAs – Kalofer, July 2005, (35 participants of local stakeholders from Standja, Pirin, Kalimok/Brashljan, Central Balkan) • Organization of campaigns on PAs, Kalofer, October 2005 (20 participants of local stake holders from Pirin, Strandja, Central Balkan, etc.; • Transport and Biodiversity, Sofia, December 2005 (32 participants from MoEW, Ministry of Regional Development, National Road Agency, scientific institutions, NGOs, business, etc); • PAs and local development, Blagoevgrad, December 2005 (45 participants from MoEW, RIEWs, MAF, municipalities, NGOs; • 4 trainings of the local dynamic groups on themes requested by the stakeholdres
<p>Capacity building provided by Pro Natura – Switzerland for the local level stakeholders</p>	<p>1 training course each year # of participants and stakeholder groups</p>	<p>“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator</p>	<p>The initial concept of the training courses of Pro Natura was changed and the training programme included also national level stakeholders. Three training courses (Organization of campaigns on PAs, Transport and Biodiversity, and PAs and local development) were organized in cooperation with Pro Natura, Switzerland - 4 lecturers from Swiss organizations were involved. In total 97 participants from about 35 local and national stakeholder groups took part in the BBF/Pro Natura training progamme</p>

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Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Output 3: The biodiversity concerns are integrated into the public and political agenda of the society			
Activities			
Main stakeholders organize national-wide campaigns to bring the biodiversity concerns into the public and political agenda of the society	PR Campaign Report and PR trimester reports by March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 10	PR officer and Programme Coordinator	<p>In 2005 BBF organized and participated into 6 Press conferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new project of BBF for Partnerships or “Foundation is not a dirty word” – April • Presenting the results of the National Biodiversity Survey – June • Dragonfly Year activities – together with Green Bulgaria Society - June • Days of Pirin – together with Pirin Tourist Forum – July • Floods and Statement of NGO coalition – August • The achievements and problems of 2005 – together with BAAT and Park Association – December <p>Other events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with Political Parties representatives on public opinion for biodiversity – 6 were invited, 3 participated (DSB, BSP, ODS) – June. • Campaign against the changes of the PA Act – BBF coordinates the Working group - - Starting the PAs campaign – publishing leaflet for the PAs and their treats; unusual promotion in “Stenata” shop with option for donation. • Organizing National survey for the public opinion for the biodiversity and PAs and presenting it in our web site and among the Political Parties, Media, and partners. • Promoting the regional surveys for the public opinion • Successful PR event in the Parliament for a promotion of the PAs benefits and render thanks to the deputies for the Biodiversity Act (with participation of our main partners). • Promotion of the Emergency fund and the LIF in BBF web site, Bluelink, etc. • Starting the campaign “More places for the rivers and security for the people” with our NGO partners. <p>Participation in the events of our partners – Rhododendron Fair, Days of Pirin, Opening of the Eco Trail in Rila NP, etc</p>
Organize a national representative opinion poll	Opinion pools Report by April 30	“networking” coordinator and Programme coordinator	<p>The national sociological poll was held in April.</p> <p>2 focus groups on national level were organized including the state administration and NGOs.</p> <p>The most important themes from focus groups were used to prepare questionnaire for the national sociological poll</p> <p>The results from the research were presented on a press conference to politicians, journalists and NGOs.</p>
Specific objective 1.2.: Provide for public participation into the biodiversity decision-making and policy formulating			
Output 4: The legal and regulatory basis providing for public participation improved			
Activities			
Inventory the existing tools and structures providing for public participation	Report developed by May 31	“networking” coordinator Programme coordinator	A report was prepared including the following chapters: Introduction and terminology, Legislative and institutional frame of public participation, Forms/practices of public participation, Selected examples of international practice, Conclusions and recommendations
Develop proposals to improve the legal and regulatory basis for public participation			Some of the information collected was used for argumentation on the proposed amendment to the BD Law, especially on public participation and public hearings on the proposed NATURA 2000 sites in Bulgaria.

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Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Output 5: Adequate mechanisms, models and tools for informed public participation are developed and operational			
Activities			
Establish and develop three model consultative councils	Report on principles for establishing the councils by May 31	“networking” coordinator Programme coordinator	The lists of participants and Statutes for the Pirin Consultative Council was presented to the MOEW and approved. NPD Strandja is convinced to restore the functioning of the Consultative Council, which was established in 1997 and had been working till the end of 1998. After several discussions the NP Director presented a list of possible members of CC, which was discussed with the other partners. Unfortunately the absence of the Municipalities in the last meetings decreases the % of trust of CC working efficiency. Consultative Council for PS Shabla lake is about to be established. The real work will start in 2006.
Support three model consultative councils	Councils’ meetings minutes	“networking” coordinator, local facilitators, Programme coordinator	9 meetings were organized in the 3 regions
Output 6: Local initiatives facility functions to support the integration of the biodiversity concerns into the local agenda			
Activities			
Establish financial facility for local joint initiatives ¹⁵	Report on structure and operational scheme of local initiatives facility by April 30	“networking” coordinator Programme coordinator	As decided by the local stakeholders, the LIF for Pirin region was used for the organization of the third regional partnership initiative Days of Pirin’2005. Within one week, a series of various events, incl. Green schools for children, community celebration – Days of Pirin in all municipalities In Dobrudja was decided the LIF to be use for a joint management of the NIC Kaliakra. An agreement of cooperation between BBF, Kavarna Municipality and Bulgarevo was signed In Strandja the participants in the local dynamic group decided to use a different approach – the small grants. Common criteria for small grants programme was approved. 13 project proposals were received. Commission of representatives of BBF, RIEW and RFB Bourgas evaluated them in details and select 9. Special meeting was organized with all financed projects in M. Turnovo to present the projects
Operate the financial facility for local joint initiatives	# of grants released; # of joint activities accomplished;	“networking” coordinator Programme coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 grants released in Strahdja; • one joint project accomplished in Pirin; • one joint project started in Dobrudja
Objective 2: Innovative public-private partnerships for pro-biodiversity businesses are identified			
3) Specific Objective 2: Staff			

¹⁵

Covered under the general fund’s establishment task in 3.1.

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Activities	<u>Milestones</u>	Responsibility for implementing	Results
4) Coordination of public-private partnerships task, including 10% programme development	“SMEs” coordinator trimester reports by March 31, June 30, September 30, December 10 Draft project proposals by April 30 and August 31 “SMEs” coordinator log-sheets	“SMEs” coordinator, Programme coordinator	<p>Regular coordination meetings of BBF staff were held on a monthly basis. SME coordinator has organized 12 additional meeting with Network coordinators, Biodiversity coordinator, Executive director and local facilitators The inventory is integrated in Regional Stakeholder analysis. Common approach for collection of initial information about SME coordinator is involved in elaboration of 6 new project proposals submitted to non-SDC donors was developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and maintenance of Bulgarian CHM in 2005 was approved by SEMEA/MoEW • GIS component of the project “Participatory Regional Development Planning in the South-Eastern Region of Bulgaria” was mandated by TIME Foundation • Project proposal “Public awareness and elaboration of public participation based management models for Natura 2000 sites” was submitted to DEFRA • Project proposal “ Riparian habitat management trough the sustainable use of medicinal plants in Maritza river basin, Bulgaria” was submitted to DEFRA • Pilot project for digitization, electronic cataloguing and data management of selected parts of the natural collection at the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH)- Bulgarian Academy of Science was submitted to KNIP-MATRA • Proposal for Gradual digitization, electronic cataloguing and data management of the natural collections at the three institutes of Bulgarian Academy of Science was submitted to SEMEA/MoEW

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Activities	<u>Milestones</u>	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Output 1: Private-public partnerships are established			
Activities			
Inventory appropriate businesses linked with biodiversity in the three selected regions in parallel with the Stakeholder analysis	Report on inventory carried out businesses linked with biodiversity by May 31	“SMEs” coordinator, Programme coordinator, Local facilitators	<p>Consultations with other programmes, active in the domain of biodiversity and environmentally responsible business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Bioselena and Association for Breeding Indigenous Breeds in Bulgaria (ABIBB) for identification of common issues and synergy (minutes in English is available) • Meeting with Bulgarian-Swiss Forestry Programme • Meeting with WWF – Bulgaria (minutes is available in Bulgarian) • Participation to the National fair of biological agriculture, organized by Bioselena. • Meeting with Balkan-Biocert for identification of common issues and synergy. (minutes is available) • Meeting with GEF – Rhodope project for identification of common issues and synergy. <p>Consultations with Regional commercial chambers/Business associations/Business incubators, active in 3 selected regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introductory meeting with the director of RBC – Vratza was organized. Consultation is used for elaboration of BBF’s approach towards business associations at regional and local level. • Meeting with Business center and Business incubator – Malko Tarnovo. • Meeting with the District service for Agriculture advises – Burgas • Meeting with National association for biological honey producing; • Participation to the Annual fair of the “Manov” honey; • Inception meeting with Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) - Blagoevgrad; Involvement of CCI in the Stakeholder analysis • Inception meeting with Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) – Burgas • Meeting with National association of honey producers; • Meeting with local association of honey producers in Kavarna <p>Identification of the local commercial chambers/associations of interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline information about local commercial chambers/ branch associations was collected during the Stakeholder analysis. • Meetings with this target group took place through Local dynamic groups in order to identify possible activities of common interest <p>Drafting the Inventory Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conclusions of the Inventory are described in the present report. • Guidelines for the implementation of Specific Objective 2 were elaborated in April ‘05 (available in Bulgarian language only) • Draft Business plan for BBF’s paid consultative services was elaborated in May ‘05, further developed and discussed with BBF staff in October ‘05
Output 2: Models of pro-biodiversity businesses are developed and implemented			
Activities			
Capacity building of the BBF staff to work with business (training or extensive consultations)	Trainings carried out; SME coordinator annual report	“SME” Coordinator	

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Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Appoint 1 model businesses for joint work in each region ¹⁶	“SME” coordinator annual report	“SME” coordinator and Programme Coordinator	Three model businesses were selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honey producers in Strandja - the need assessment is finalized and support actions are planned. • Family hotel owners and supporting tourist services in Pirin municipalities. • Ecotourism in Dobrudja, focusing on the partners of IC Kaliakra. Follow-up activities are planned.
Output 3: Tools facilitating the pro-biodiversity businesses are developed			
Activities			
Further support selected businesses by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing collective local labels¹⁷ 	Report of “SMEs” coordinator on selection of 3 labels to be elaborated	“SME” coordinator and Programme Coordinator	2 partners willing to register local labels are identified in Strandja and Pirin. Workshop for the exchange of experience and best practices was held. The study report has been prepared (in Bulgarian language) and provided to the BBF collaborators and partners. It contains several options for registering of Collective local labels and recommendations
Support local commercial chambers/ associations of producers	# of chambers/ associations registered # of expert advises provided to businesses # of requests for advise by the businesses	“SME” coordinator and Programme Coordinator	A review of the legislative framework is done. 5 legal advises and 6 consultations provided. Preparation of a proposal for common activities with JOBS project for the support of local business associations and SME in Strandja.
Output 4: The pro-biodiversity businesses are largely promoted and become popular in the country			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 meetings with PR officer • Participation in a meeting for elaboration of common PR and marketing approach of BBF, held in October • Development and maintenance of CHM node “Business and biodiversity” • Participation in Annual fair “Nature, hunting, fishing” 2005 in Plovdiv – meetings with tourist companies, floristries and park directorates
Activities			
Promote the work with the SMEs for establishing pro-biodiversity business	PR Campaign Report and PR trimester reports by March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 10	PR officer and Programme Coordinator	Preparing and participating in the International Fair “Nature, Hunting, Fishing” in Plovdiv Preparing and participating in “Nature and Tourism” Exhibition in Sofia – June Preparation for the Mushroom Year (calendar) and Bee honey Fair Participation and promotion of the BBF in the IV National Day of Organic Agriculture, organized by Bioselena Foundation in Sofia – September
Travels and accommodation	SMEs coordinator and experts trip reports	“SME” coordinator and Programme Coordinator	
Specific Objective 3.1.: Increase the capacity of BBF and develop its constituency to position itself as a catalyst and think—tank at the national biodiversity scene			
Output 1: The BBF has increased capacity, developed constituency and positioned itself as a key player and catalyst of the dialogue at the national biodiversity scene			
Activities			
8. Reinforce the role of BBF’s Board in the project steering and the BBF managing	BBF Board SDC project’s monitoring reports	BBF Board and Executive Director	2 formal and 1informa Board meetings
9. BBF board regular meetings, including CH members travel and per-diems for 2 trips	BBF Board Meeting minutes	BBF Board and Executive Director	15 meetings with individual Board members

¹⁶ Covered by the fee of SMEs coordinator

¹⁷ The collective labels by the BG legislation are registered by associations of producers. The intention is to support the businesses that are not connected with production of food, for which certifying for biological production is envisaged.

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Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
10. Hiring foreign experts			6 foreign experts hired
11. Elaborate the BBF programme development dimension ¹⁸	BBF Programme Development dimension by April 30 and August 31	BBF Board and Executive Director	BBF portfolio submitted to SDC Regular update of the ABC list
12. Develop Statutes for the Advisory Committee	Expert lawyer proposal for Statutes	Lawyer and Executive Director	N.A.
13. Put into operation the Advisory Committee of BBF	Meetings' reports by June 30 and December 10	Meeting facilitator and executive Director	N.A.
14. Invite recognized foreign organizations and individuals to constitute the BBF "International Advisory Committee"	List of members of International Advisory Committee	BBF board	N.A.
15. BBF Executive director managing the foundation, organizing the monitoring, supervision and steering at objectives level, including programme development	Executive Director semester reports by July 15 and December 25 Draft project proposals by April 30 and August 31 Monthly log-sheets by the end of each month	BBF Board and Executive Director ¹⁹	Progress reports Time sheets available
16. Programme Coordinator to manage the day-to-day operation of the project and deal with contracts/ agreements to be submitted for approval to ED, including programme development	Programme Coordinator trimester reports by April 5, July 5, October 5, December 15 Draft project proposals by April 30 and August 31 Monthly log-sheets	Programme Coordinator and Executive Director	Progress reports Time sheets available
17. BBF accountant – keeping the accounting according to the BG legislation	Trimester accounting statements by April 15, July 15, October 15, December 25	Executive Director	Monthly financial reports available 1 visit of SDC financial officer to supervise the BBF accounting Consolidated final financial report
18. BBF Financial Audit	Registered Auditor's Report by March 2006	Registered Auditor, Executive Director and Accountant	Audited semester financial report
Ensure ISO management certification for the key BBF staff through providing training in key aspects: develop training curriculum	Training curriculum by March 31	Training Expert, Programme Coordinator and Executive Director	Training needs specified Executive director has followed intensive ISO training and is a certified auditor
♦ fundraising and funds management;	Training expert report on training	Training Expert, Programme Coordinator and Executive Director	BBF experts have participated in fundraising and funds management trainings organized by the partner organizations

¹⁸ Costs for this are calculated in the salaries of the BBF staff and coordinators

¹⁹ Calculated according to current BBF salary rates for similar positions at monthly basis

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Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
♦ organizational management	Training expert report on training	Training Expert, Programme Coordinator and Executive Director	N.A.
♦ training of one BBF staff in EU financial mechanisms and tools	BBF staff member monthly trip reports	BBF staff member Executive Director	Report of the Programme Director available
Output 2: The BBF capacity to raise and manage funds is improved			
Activities			
Create financial mechanisms for biodiversity protection	Expert report with operational mechanism for different facilities of finance expert by May 31	Finance expert and BBF Financial manager	Created and tested mechanism for private individual and corporate donations.
Set up the Emergency fund	Emergency Fund Reports of operation submitted to BBF Board	Executive Director and Financial manager	The emergency Fund started to efficiently operate in September after long discussing different scenarios how to operate. 14 projects were submitted till the end of December from the whole Bulgaria. 6 of them were approved.
BBF Financial Manager to diversify the financial partners of the foundation, including programme development	Financial Manager Trimester Reports by March 31, June 30, September 30, December 10 Draft project proposals by April 30 and August 31 Monthly log-sheets	Executive Director and Financial manager	Developed draft strategy for the BBF commercial activities Elaborated list of the Swiss companies operating in Bulgaria
Output 3: The BBF is better known on the international and national scene			
Activities			
Develop the BBF establishment.	Events' participation reports due in the trimester reports of different representatives	Executive Director, Programme Coordinator and PR officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - PR promotion of the 10th Anniversary of BSBCP – a big and interesting exhibition in Sofia, visited from more than 800 people, many students, and friends of the BSBCP. The event was well presented by different media. • - Organizing special 5 days exhibition for BBF activities in Plovdiv Municipality with 2000 visitors – April • - Promotion of the new book for the Eastern Rhodopes with Pensoft Publishing House - August • - Promotion of the new book for the Bourgas Wetlands Waterbirds with Zoology Institute - September • - Organizing internal workshop for BBF staff discussing PR strategy, mission and messages of the Foundation – October • - Discussing Ecological TV set and biodiversity films production with an experience young women with brave ideas – October • - Studying the possibilities of Metromedia for promotion of BBF in the Metro stations – November • - Preparing and using 3 m blind for BBF – November • - Preparation of the PR Strategy and discussing it with the Board and the team of BBF • - Regular presentation in the media – 22 publications in the newspapers, 16 in the Radio stations, 8 in the Televisions • - Developing the web site of BBF and especially the News section • - Developing Dragonflies campaign – publishing calendar, promotion “Dragonfly Reserve” near Debelt village, web site, educational activities, media, etc.

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Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Ensure the presence of BBF at the international scene.	Trip reports of BBF representatives	Programme Coordinator and PR officer	Trip reports of BBF representatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - IUCN (Nada) • - Green Belt (Petko) • - Turkey (Roko) • - Azerbejdzan (Roko)
3.2. BBF supports maintenance of models of systematic approaches to biodiversity protection.			
Hire a “biodiversity” coordinator to facilitate the whole sub-objective, including programme development	Trimester reports of “biodiversity” coordinator Draft project proposals by April 30 and August 31 Monthly log-sheets	“biodiversity” specialist	Lobbying in the Parliament and participating at least 15 meetings against the amendments of the Protected Areas Act and Biodiversity Act. Developed platform on biodiversity and discussed with the political parties. Participation in 5 meetings with politicians and members of the Parliament on the illegal logging. Participating in the only meeting of the National Consultative Council on forests, game and fish protection. Participation in 3 meetings of the National Consultative Council on hunting. Lobby for increased support for chamois reintroduction in Bulgaria. Development of Chamois action plan was mandated to the BBF. Participation in 1 meeting of the Consultative Council at MoEW. The Tortoises Action Plan was approved. Third version of the documentation of the future Nature Park Belasiza was prepared. Participation in 3 state commission (as observers) for the creation of the protected sites of Zemen, Skrin and Viden. Participation in 5 meetings of the Bulgarian institutions on Natura 2000. 2 meetings in Greece with local and national Greek conservation NGOs in order to receive up-to-date information on the development of Natura 2000 in Greece. Development and acquisition of financing for 3 new projects: habitat mapping in the Rhodopes, National Chamois Action Plan and Manual on restoration of riparian forests in Thrace lowland and Eastern Rhodopes
Output 4: The Bulgarian conservation effort is enhanced significantly through provision of contemporary university training in conservation biology			
Activities			
Finalize the Strandja Nature Park Management Plan	The MP draft finalized by April 30	“biodiversity” coordinator	MP is finalized in August and submitted to the MoEW. No further positive development
Update the set of digital maps	The set of digital maps produced by April 30	“biodiversity” coordinator	Maps are updated and submitted to the MoEW.
Output 5: The Bulgarian conservation effort is enhanced significantly through provision of contemporary university training in conservation biology			
Activities			
Ensure contemporary teaching in conservation biology in two key Universities:	Master’s curriculum developed by June 30	“biodiversity” coordinator	A working group was established in the beginning of the year. The group had 5 meetings. The international consultant was contracted. Third version of the program was developed by the end of the year. The program is delayed and will be finalized in March 2006. Two meetings were held with representatives of the Forest University (the Rector) and the Biological Faculty of Sofia University. Both institutions are interested to cooperate with us, but before to sign any contract for cooperation they need the final program of the course
Provide teaching materials	“biodiversity” coordinator trimester report by July 30	“biodiversity” coordinator	This activity is connected with the above mentioned course. Third draft of the postgraduate teaching was developed. A CD with relevant online publications on the topic was prepared. The final version will be printed in March 2006.

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Activities	Milestones	Responsibility for implementing	Results
Provide opportunity for students to work on their thesis (only travel, per-diems and accommodation)	Student's trip reports by September 30	"biodiversity" coordinator	A competition for supporting master's works of students was organized. 22 works were submitted and 11 were awarded in July. Information is published in the BBF internet site. Contracts were signed with 10 students in August. This competition attracted the attention of the Bulgarian academic and nature conservation circles. Significant number of students started to request us in advance which topics for MS to choose in order to be more eligible for support. This activity can support BBF to become a bridge between the managing bodies of the PAs and the science.
Support Students' Biodiversity Conference	Conference Compendium by December 10	Conference facilitator and "biodiversity" coordinator	Special memorandum for collaboration was signed between BBF and Biological Faculty of Sofia University. The students' conference was organized in December. 18 presentations were made. The conference was attended by more than 70 people from Universities, NGOs and state officials. After the conference a seminar on linking the science and the protected areas was held. The presented reports are published.
Output 6: The Bulgarian Biodiversity CHM is further developed and information exchange is enhanced			
Activities			
◆ Support the development of the Bulgarian Biodiversity CHM Improve the Bulgarian Environment Agency Information Node	CHM specialist 3 trimester reports at 30 each third month and December 10 the last	"biodiversity coordinator" and CHM specialist	The project has 4 months delay. It is developing and will be finished by April. The detailed report for CHM activities for 2005 is available.
◆ Prepare the establishing a Balkan CHM	CHM specialist trip report by October 31	"biodiversity coordinator" and CHM specialist	The Bulgarian CHM was promoted to the two international meetings – one in the Bucharest and second in Copenhagen. The idea for the establishing of a Balkan CHM was accepted on international and national level. Unfortunately because of the elections in Bulgaria the process was delay.
◆ Maintain the biodiversity.bg server	CHM specialist 3 trimester reports at 30 each third month and December 10 the last	"biodiversity coordinator" and CHM specialist	Server is maintained and a concept for its future development is available. The server is under reconstruction
▪ Promote the CHM at the national level.	3 meetings reports of CHM specialist by April, 30; July 30; October 31	"biodiversity coordinator" and CHM specialist	6 meetings with different national stakeholders were organized. 10'000 leva were ensured from the MoEW for the next year operation of the CHM and related activities. Furthermore a new project for CHM has suggested to MOEW and it will be approved by March.