

## ***Darwin Initiative Annual Report***

### **Important note:**

To be completed with reference to the Reporting Guidance Notes for Project Leaders – it is expected that this report will be about 10 pages in length – Submission deadline 30 April 2007

### **Darwin Project Information**

Project Ref Number	14-021
Project Title	Large Carnivore Education Centre, Bulgaria
Country(ies)	UK, Bulgaria
UK Contract Holder Institution	Education 4 Conservation Ltd
UK Partner Institution(s)	UK Wolf Conservation Trust
Host country Partner Institution(s)	Balkani Wildlife Society BBPS Semperviva
Darwin Grant Value	£95,210
Start/End dates of Project	April 2005 to March 2008
Reporting period (1 Apr 2006 to 31 Mar 2007) and annual report number (1,2,3..)	1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007 Annual Report No. 2
Project Leader Name	Denise Taylor
Project website	<a href="http://www.education4conservation.org">www.education4conservation.org</a>
Author(s), date	Denise Taylor, Chris Senior, Elena Tsingarska – May 2007

### **1. Project Background**

The project is based in a village called Vlahi (pronounced Vlaki) in the Pirin Mountains, in south west Bulgaria, close to the borders of Macedonia and Greece. The Pirin Mountains are categorised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The aim of the project is to build, refurbish and equip a Large Carnivore Education Centre.

Bulgaria has a rich diversity of species, including large carnivores. The socio-cultural climate is such that large carnivores, and wolves in particular, have a negative image in Bulgaria to the extent that wolves still carry a bounty equivalent to two weeks wages: Hunting is a strong tradition, and farming is still pastorally based.

The aim of the project is to provide education and to raise awareness about large carnivores: This environmental education was once part of the communist schooling, but is no longer covered in the national syllabus. The Centre also aims to raise the profile of the region and rebuild the infrastructure of the village.

The Centre will be open to visitors both local and from far and wide. It has accommodation available for up to 18 people, and facilities for horse riding with stables being an integral part of the new building. The Centre will also have a cafeteria.

The education programmes will be available to schoolchildren from all over Bulgaria, with programmes ranging from a few hours through to several days of total immersion in environmental education, and there will be facilities to run workshops, seminars and small conferences for adults. International eco-tourists, eco-volunteers and students will also be encouraged to use the Centre.

Biological research is an important part of the conservation work for large carnivores, and this will continue, using the Centre as a base. (See annual reports attached for further information on the biological research that has taken place.)

Through the partnership with BBPS Semperviva, the project is also involved with other practical conservation strategies such as providing livestock guarding dogs to farmers with the aim of increasing tolerance towards large predators.

## **2. Project Partnerships**

There has been a longstanding collaboration between the UK and host partners, and this continues to be extremely positive. The relationships developed extend into other networks which benefit the host country project. The UK Wolf Conservation Trust, of which the UK Project Leader is also a director, is supportive of the LCEC, and carnivore conservation in Bulgaria. Funding has been donated to Balkani Wildlife Society from the UKWCT, and an international student exchange is currently being set up and implemented which will support biology and veterinary students from colleges and universities both in the UK and in Bulgaria.

The previous report gave details of a proposed trip to Russia to visit the Chisty Les Biological Station. This took place in August 2006. The Large Carnivore Education Centre in Russia has been completed, and played host to their first bear biology conference, comprising 60 biologists from all over Russia, whilst we were there. The project has had two wildlife documentary films produced concerning wolves and bears, and these have been shared with Bulgaria. The film about the bears, called Bubo, was shown at the opening of the LCEC in Bulgaria in May, and both films will be used to highlight conservation work about large carnivores in Europe. Stronger links are being developed between Russia and Bulgaria, and it is intended that project staff visit Russia rather than the UK during the 2007/08 funding period. Both teams feel that more would be gained from this exchange than organising a trip to the UK.

This project has helped capacity building in the UK; the transfer of knowledge and skills has been a two-way process. The UK team has benefited from being directly involved in some of the biological research that has taken place in Bulgaria.

## **3. Project progress**

### **3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities**

During the second year of the project, a lot of the work has been focused on building the centre itself. Although Balkani Wildlife Society and BBPS Semperviva are relatively small NGOs, the scale of the new education centre is one that could be expected of a much larger organisation. The building is two storeys and will house a seminar hall which will accommodate 50 delegates comfortably, exhibition halls, a café, accommodation for 18 people, and offices.

There have been delays in the building work due to funding being delayed for this, and there have also been problems with the builders. However, the part of the project funded by the

Darwin Initiative is not totally reliant on the building being completed and so the education and training have gone ahead according to plan.

Denise Taylor and Chris Senior visited the project from 1 to 7 May, when there was the first phase opening of the new centre, to see the progress made in developing the education materials.

The project team in Bulgaria comprises a number of family members who are artists and designers, and they have produced a range of high quality educational materials and displays. The team visited the UK on two occasions specifically to gain new ideas on educational displays at a number of different education centres, London Zoo, and the Natural History Museum. The materials produced comprise large poster displays, interactive displays aimed at children and presentations for seminars and workshops, and games.

## **Staffing**

The new centre is fully staffed with both paid employees, and volunteers. There is a Centre Manager and an Assistant who will be responsible for the day to day running of the Centre. Project Leader, Elena Tsingarska, will continue to oversee the development of the Centre, along with Sider Sedefchev, who is the Project Leader at BBPS Semperviva as well as being the guide for the new Centre and one of the artists. Sider is Elena's husband.

The Centre Manager has been in post for some time. He is very instrumental in helping with the capacity building in Vlahi, having developed a partnership with an Eco Centre which is now also located in the village. The aim is to develop a building from natural materials, and which will promote traditional building styles which are ecologically sustainable. The Eco-Centre is also expected to have a lot of visitors which will attract people to the village. Every summer the Centre runs volunteer camps.

The previous assistant at the Centre, Nino Kirova, has left to pursue her studies full time, but is still involved with the project and aims to return in the future.

## **Training**

Following their first visit to the UK, the Bulgarian team had a much clearer idea of the kind of education displays they wanted to see, and during their second visit were particularly keen to spend as much time as possible at London Zoo and revisiting the Natural History Museum in London.

The team members who visited the UK in November 2006 were

Elena Tsingarska, Sider Sedefchev, Attila Sedefchev, and Hanko Sedefchev.

Hanko is Elena and Sider's son. Attila is Sider's brother.

## **Visits to Bulgaria**

A team from the UK visited Bulgaria in December 2006 and in early May 2007. The purpose of the visits was to review the progress being made at the Centre and to maintain the strong relationships between the Bulgarian and UK teams.

In December 2006, building work had progressed on the new centre, but it was clear that it was still behind on schedule. The project leaders in Bulgaria had had some difficulties obtaining the money from the funders in Germany: DBU and Frankfurt Zoological Society. This was delayed because of the bureaucracy involved. In addition, the team had problems with the builders. One team started the project and then left. It took a little time to find a new building company to take on the project.

During our visit in early May 2007, the building work had made great progress. There were clearly two storeys to the building now, and the whole thing had taken shape. It was impressive to see how big the education centre will actually be when completed, and is now a dominant feature of the village.

Clearly, the building was not going to be completely finished in time for this visit, but it was decided by the team in Bulgaria to get as much as possible up and running, and carrying out the education function. To this end, the seminar hall was made ready along with the ground floor exhibition halls.

While we were at the centre in May, the first phase opening took place. The project leader invited schoolchildren from around the region, and regional media. For the time-being, the project leader wants to keep the media attention low key. When the centre opens fully in September 2007, local, regional and national media will be invited. (It can be seen from the outputs that there is already national media attention). Also, in September, local dignitaries will be invited. Because of the politics involved in larger scale projects in a previously Eastern bloc country, the Bulgarian team want to complete the building works before involving officials from the municipality.

### Difficulties

Apart from the delays in the building work, the project has not experienced too many difficulties that have had an impact on education delivery. Education activities are ongoing in Vlahi, and the project facilities are well established enough to cope with visitors. They can spend time at the project house, visit the wolf and the bear, or spend time horse-riding.

Below Vlahi village, there has been a new hydro-electric plant built, which diverts water from the mountain river. The project team are not at all happy about this. The impact this will have on the area is still to be assessed. The project leader intends to voice her concerns about the environmental impact of the hydro plant once the education centre building is completed. Until then, she is occupied full time with the centre, delivering education, and carrying out biological research.

Funding, or lack of it, is a perennial issue. This has been delayed, and the building works have cost more than originally anticipated. The Bulgarian team are resourceful people (as mentioned in previous reports), and the team has the capacity to finish the building work themselves. This would put undue pressure on them as the project partner, BBPS Semperviva, now has over 130 sheep and over 100 goats to tend as well as the accompanying guarding dogs and Karakachan horses. At present, the building work should be completed without resorting to these measures, but it is a constant worry for the team.

The UK team members have directed other funding to the project from another organisation they work with in the UK (the UK Wolf Conservation Trust), who also support the project financially and on a practical level. Bacardi has donated £10,000 to the project as part of their campaign to help European large carnivores.

## 3.2 Progress towards Project Outputs

The project outputs have been achieved for Year 2. Although the building work has been delayed, there has been significant media interest in the project on a regional, national and international level. In the UK, every opportunity has been taken to publicise the work in Bulgaria. The website is updated regularly, and updates are regularly published in the international magazine, Wolf Print. Presentations given by E4C and the UKWCT contain information about the Bulgarian project. A presentation was given recently by the UKWCT to an audience of 400 people at the Royal Geographical Society in London. This featured the three projects that the UKWCT is working with in Bulgaria, Croatia and Russia.

## 3.3 Standard Output Measures

**Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures**

Code No.	Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	TOTAL

		Total	Total	Total	Total	
Established codes 6a / 6b	Up to 3 Centre staff to attend training programme in the UK.		4 staff attended training in November 2006			
15a / 15b / 15c / 15d  18a / 18b / 18c / 18d  19a / 19b / 19c / 19d	At least 4 press releases to be distributed in both the host country and the UK prior to the opening of the Centre. Radio and TV to be invited to launch of the Centre		This output has been achieved. See details below.			

### **Visitors to the Large Carnivore Education Centre in Year 2**

March 2007 – 30 children from the town of Sandanski.

May 2006 – 30 British tourists visited the Centre.

June 2006 – 30 pupils, Grade 3-4 from Sofia

July 2006 – A group of British eco-tourists who booked a horse-riding trip.

July 2006 - Pirin Mountain Days – 50 children from Kresna, Bansko, Blagoevgrad and Sofia. National Park Director also visited along with people from the administration.

Every weekend – groups of visitors from the local region.

Approximate total number of visitors last is 300 adults and 300 children.

### **3.4 Progress towards the project purpose and outcomes**

One of the main aims of the project is to raise awareness of large carnivore conservation in the host country and to educate people about large carnivores. This will be achieved through increasing knowledge through scientific research, raising awareness through media and through the displays and activities at the centre, and educating through activities at the centre and in schools. The project purpose is specifically to protect and conserve biodiversity in Bulgaria and specifically in the Pirin and Kraiste regions.

### **3.5 Progress towards impact on biodiversity, sustainable use or equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits**

The project, based in Vlahi, in the Pirin mountains is showing positive signs of having an impact on biodiversity, and sustainable use. One of the main barriers to wolf conservation in particular has been the dissemination of inaccurate information about wolves from hunting groups, which has been perpetuated by forestry and other government agencies. The project was successful in capturing and radio-collaring a wild female wolf in 2006, which provided valuable data.

The project leader is on the committee for the local hunting association, and regularly attends international workshops on large carnivore biodiversity.

The partnership between BBPS Semperviva and Balkani Wildlife Society has regenerated the village of Vlahi. Houses in the village are being rebuilt and refurbished, and the project has attracted other environmental agencies (an eco tours project has also now renovated a property in the village). Even the church is to undergo much-needed refurbishment work,

financed by a former village resident, who now owns a building firm, and brought about through the work of the Centre manager,

BBPS Semperviva has built capacity in the village through the rare breeds programme. The project now has over 130 sheep and 100 goats. There are a number of horses which are used for eco-tours, and the livestock guarding dog programme.

The regeneration activity in the village has prompted the local municipality to looking at providing piped water to the village. Currently there is no water supply. There will also be remedial work undertaken on the mountain track in order to make the village more accessible by road.

#### **4. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons**

The project staff in Bulgaria produce annual reports on the Wolf Education Programme. These reports detail all the work carried out with schools, interns at the project, seminars and exhibitions.

As part of the doctoral thesis of the UK project leader, Bulgaria is a case study in relation to comparative analysis of Wolf Conservation Education Programmes throughout the world. Questionnaire surveys and depth interviews have been conducted which relate specifically to the education work undertaken.

Pre and post education surveys are undertaken by the project on a regular basis with regard to the school education programmes undertaken.

Participant observation is undertaken when UK staff visit Bulgaria. The nature of the project is such that anyone who spends time there actively participates in the work. This includes getting involved in biological research, helping with delivering education, helping with the maintenance of the centre itself.

There is regular correspondence and telephone communication with the project staff, all of which is documented and recorded.

The achievements of the project are tangible in terms of outputs and can be clearly observed by any visitors to the centre. The dedication, commitment and sheer hard work that every member of the team in Bulgaria puts in is visible. Motivation levels are very high, and the desire to achieve the project goals and aims are evident. There is clear evidence of team-working, which is in part culturally and socially based, but also arises from the ethics and values of the team's individual and collective wildlife conservation ethic.

Photographic evidence has been collected throughout the project. There are now over 2000 photographs charting the development of the new education centre, as well as daily life in rural Bulgaria. The photographs give a very good impression of what life is like living in the mountains in Bulgaria, and working at the project.

#### **Lessons**

One very striking lesson that has been learned throughout this whole project is that in Western Europe, we view Bulgaria as being economically poor, and there is a tendency in Western culture to equate being economically poor with being underdeveloped. While this may be true on some levels, it can also draw attention away from the fact that having lived through harsh times under a socialist regime and the subsequent collapse of that regime, this has made people in the country extremely resourceful. The project team bear this out as they seem to be able to turn their hand to almost anything in order to get the work done and the project completed. Sider Sedefchev, for example, will spend time building, and then the next day he will be out on the pasture shepherding. He is an accomplished cook, and a highly talented artists and designer. I use Sider as an example, but at the project in particular, multi-skilled workers seem to be the norm rather than the exception. My colleagues and I discussed this in reference to the "transfer of knowledge and skills", and we both arrived at the same conclusion that it is easy to fall in to the trap of colonial thinking and assuming that our methods are superior. During our trips to Bulgaria, we have all been amazed by the accomplishments of the

team over there, and their high levels of skills, knowledge and competence at all levels and in a large variety of subject areas. During discussions with Elena Tsingarska, she related to me some of the problems that they have faced with funders from Germany, who did take a more “arrogant” approach to the project and attempted to force their “expertise” on biologists in particular working at the project. This led to some friction and had a negative impact on project work, holding up some of the biological research. The lesson to be learned is that UK project staff need to keep an open mind, they need to explore what is actually happening out in the field at the projects, and to understand this in the context of the different value and belief systems. The transfer of knowledge and skills is also a two-way process, and the benefit from this is that both parties are richer for this experience, and it can be transferred to working with other projects in the future.

## **5. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)**

The previous report requested the Annual Reports produced by the Bulgarian Team. These are attached to this report, and cover the years 2004, 2005, and 2006. They cover in some detail the biological research carried out, as well as the education initiatives undertaken.

## **6. Sustainability**

The project has good prospects for being sustainable. The partnership between Balkani Wildlife Society and BBPS Semperviva has brought new life to the village of Vlahi.

One of the major breakthroughs achieved recently is for the municipality to agree to putting in a water supply to the village. This decision has been directly influenced by the work that the project has been carrying out in the village, and the capacity building that has taken place.

With regard to the Centre itself, there will be a shop, a café, accommodation for up to 18 people, and stables. Already the project is attracting eco-tourists who are spending time horse-riding. During our recent visit, two groups of visitors arrived to participate in a half-day trek into the mountains. These activities will go a long way towards financing the project in the future.

The project will continue to raise funding from European funders to support specific project work, including biological research, and education activities. The Centre and the other work undertaken to regenerate the village of Vlahi is impressive in its scale and professionalism, and has already attracted international attention. This makes the prospect of attracting future grant funding more positive.

## **7. Dissemination**

A brochure which will be sent out to schools nationally has been prepared, but has been delayed in distribution because of the focus on the building. The brochure will be distributed a little later this year.

June 2006 – A group of 6 German journalists were brought to the project by one of the funders, Euronatur. At least 10 articles were published in a number of German newspapers and magazines.

There have been numerous articles in the local press.

The Bulgarian National newspaper, Monitor, visited the Centre to research the project. They published a full page spread on the project.

Elena was interviewed on national radio to talk about wolves and about the project in a live broadcast.

Elena has also been interviewed twice on national TV channel 1. In June, there was a programme about animals and their conservation, which covered the LCEC and the project work. There was a further broadcast later in the year, but Elena is unsure of the exact date.

The UK team have published articles in Wolf Print, Darwin publications, and on the internet and in email newsletters. They have also given presentations giving information about the Bulgarian project.

## 8. Project Expenditure

Please expand and complete Table 3.

**Table 2 Project expenditure during the reporting period (Defra Financial Year 01 April to 31 March)**

Item	Budget (please indicate which document you refer to if other than your project schedule)	Expenditure	Balance
Rent, rates, heating, overheads etc	n/a	n/a	
Office costs (eg postage, telephone, stationery)	2,550	2,550	
Travel and subsistence	5,800	5,800	
Printing	1,000	1,000	
Conferences, seminars, etc	3,000	3,000	
Capital items/equipment	n/a	n/a	
Others – Accountants fees, insurance	1,500	1,500	
Salaries (specify)	10,080 - UK 9,940 - Bulgaria	20,020	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35,320</b>	<b>35,320</b>	



**9. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes**

[I agree for ECTF and the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section](#)

The opening of a Large Carnivore Education Centre in the Pirin Mountains, Bulgaria is the culmination of the work carried out by a number of international partners committed to the conservation of large carnivores in a country where they are perceived negatively, and, in the case of the wolf, are still hunted for a bounty.

The new Centre is based in Vlahi, which forms the gateway to the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Pirin mountain range. The area is rich in biological diversity, and cultural heritage.

Balkani Wildlife Society and BBPS Semperviva have worked with international funding bodies and agencies to regenerate Vlahi, a village that has been neglected and abandoned since the collapse of the communist regime. Between them, they have saved the rare and ancient breeds of Karakachan livestock guarding dogs, sheep and horses, undertaken valuable biological research and implemented and delivered education and outreach programmes to over 9,000 schoolchildren and adults.

The impressive new education centre provides a perfect location for future education activities and will attract visitors to the area, bringing economic benefit to the local community.

## Annex 1 Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year: 2006/07

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2006 - March 2007	Actions required/planned for next period
<p><b>Goal:</b> <i>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources to achieve</i></p> <p><i>The conservation of biological diversity,</i></p> <p><i>The sustainable use of its components, and</i></p> <p><i>The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</i></p>		<p><i>The project and its partners are having a positive impact on biodiversity in a number of ways:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>increasing knowledge about the science and ecology of large carnivores. This will go a long way to supporting species management plans. In particular a Wolf Management Plan is currently being drawn up with the aim of obtaining future legal protection for the wolf (in Bulgaria there is currently a bounty on wolves).</i></li> <li>- <i>Raising awareness of large carnivore conservation and educating children and adults. Hunting is still a popular pursuit in Bulgaria, and large predators, especially the wolf, are still perceived negatively. Behaviours towards them reflect these negative perceptions and attitudes.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>(do not fill not applicable)</i></p>

		<p><i>The project is continually striving to change perceptions and attitudes, not only through activities at the centre, but also through active participation in hunting associations, etc.</i></p> <p><i>- the project team lobby and campaign for changes in legislation to protect and conserve large carnivores and their habitats.</i></p>	
<p><b>Purpose</b> Long-term and effective public education about large carnivore species and the ecosystems in which they exist in Bulgaria.</p>	<p>Large Carnivore Education Centre to be built and equipped by Year 2.</p> <p>Throughput of visitors (school groups and adults) to the Education Centre</p> <p>Evidence of raised public awareness</p>	<p>Although the building work on the centre has been delayed due to a delay in funding for capital works, there have nevertheless been a number of visitors to the Centre in Year 2. These include school groups from around the region, and Bulgarian and international visitors and ecotourists.</p> <p>The Centre is already becoming known locally, with visitors from the town of Kresna, 5km away, regularly making their way to the Centre, often bringing food for Medo the bear.</p> <p>The project has attracted media attention from international news and film companies, and magazines and press.</p>	<p>(Highlight key actions planning for next period)</p>
<p><b>Output 1.</b> Staff from the Centre attend professional development and training courses to equip them with</p>	<p>Upto 4 members of staff attend 2 workshop courses or seminars in UK during first two years of the</p>	<p>A team from Bulgaria visited the UK in November 2006 to follow up on their previous visit in Year 1. They were particularly interested in gathering research on interactive and interpretive education displays, and specifically</p>	

<p>the skills required to deliver conservation education programmes.</p>	<p>project.</p>	<p>requested that they be able to spend time at London Zoo and the Natural History Museum in London. They also spent time at the UK Wolf Conservation Trust. Three members of the team have been proactively involved in the design work for the centre itself, as well as the education materials and displays.</p>
<p><b>Activity 1.1.</b></p> <p>To plan, develop, and produce the education and information materials for the LCEC. To equip the centre.</p>		<p>The design work for the exhibition displays was carried out, and the majority of the interactive and interpretive displays were developed and produced. Some of the larger displays will remain in storage until the Centre is finally completed. One of these displays is a large interactive map. Additional funding was obtained through the UKWCT from a sponsor (Bacardi) who donated £10,000 towards additional equipment for the centre. This has been put towards equipping the café and the accommodation rooms.</p>
<p><b>Output 2.</b></p> <p>Visitors attend the Centre – school groups and adults.</p>	<p>At least 25 groups of pupils (each group about 50 pupils) from different parts of Bulgaria and at least 300 other visitors have visited the LC centre by Yr 3.</p>	<p>Due to the delays in the building work, and the time commitments this has placed on the Bulgarian team, the outputs on visitor numbers have not been achieved in Year 2. However, despite the building work not being completed there have still been significant numbers of visitors to the Centre, and one teacher we spoke to, indicated that this was their school's third visit. His feedback on the Centre was extremely positive, and he said that their school would be using the centre for future visits and as an Environmental Education resource.</p>
<p><b>Activity 2.1.</b></p> <p>To advertise the LCEC to schools in the whole country. To undertake a marketing campaign to raise awareness of the centre to the general public using different media – local and national TV/radio/press</p>		<p>A brochure has been produced which will be sent out to all schools. The time constraints on the Bulgarian team has delayed this into Year 3, but having spoken with the project leader during our visit in early May, the brochure will be printed and distributed within the next few weeks.</p> <p>The marketing of the centre is ongoing, and has attracted continual media attention both from within Bulgaria and internationally.</p>

Activity 2.2.

To accept school groups from all over the country. To accept visitors from the general public. To host meetings/workshops.

The centre now has the capacity to accept visitors. School groups are now able to use the seminar hall for workshops. The first of these was held during the first phase opening in early May.

## Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

### LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Large Carnivore Education Centre, Bulgaria - Project : 14-021

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Means of verification	Important Assumptions
<b>Goal:</b> <b>To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to achieve the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources</b>			
<b>Purpose</b>  Long-term and effective public education about large carnivore species and the ecosystems in which they exist in Bulgaria.	Large Carnivore Education Centre to be built and equipped by Year 2.  Throughput of visitors (school groups and adults) to the Education Centre  Evidence of raised public awareness	Large Carnivore Education Centre and partner institution reports  Visitors' Book and Attendance Records  Pre and post education programme surveys	Schools express interest in the centre and the activities it offers  The number of visitors to the national park is stable or growing.
<b>Outputs</b>  An old building is rebuilt and refurbished.  The Centre is equipped with exhibition and education materials.	Plans drawn up by architects, building and refurbishment work undertaken. Equipment put in place	The Centre is opened and ready to be used.	The local municipality issues all restoration permits in time.
Staff from the Centre attend professional development and training courses to equip them with the skills required to deliver conservation education programmes.	Upto 4 members of staff attend 2 workshop courses or seminars in UK during first two years of the project.	Partnership institution reports.  Completed course material.	Necessary visas can be obtained to attend UK.  Trained staff will remain with project to use the skills and experience gained.

<p>Visitors attend the Centre – school groups and adults.</p>	<p>At least 25 groups of pupils (each group about 50 pupils) from different parts of Bulgaria and at least 300 other visitors have visited the LC centre by Yr 3.</p>	<p>Positive feedback from visitors. The pupils' groups and all visitors are satisfied with their experience, evidenced through Satisfaction Surveys and comments in Guest Books, and observations made by Centre staff.</p>	<p>Schools and other groups express sufficient interest in the Centre and the activities being offered.</p>
<p>Different meetings, workshops and seminars on environmental and nature protection issues are held in the LCEC in the seminar hall.</p>	<p>At least 4 seminars/workshops held in the Centre by yr3</p>	<p>Results of the pupils' attitude survey prove that their knowledge about large carnivore species has improved and their attitude is more favourable</p> <p>Visitors' attendance and assessment recorded by the guest book</p> <p>Minutes, results, declarations, etc. from the meetings held in the LCEC.</p>	<p>Various organisations find the locality attractive for holding meetings at the centre.</p>
<p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>To complete architectural plans, carry out construction and refurbishment of the building. To obtain all the necessary permissions from the local municipality. To appoint the company which will build/refurbish the new Centre.</p>	<p>Activity Milestones (Summary of Project Implementation Timetable)</p> <p>Yr 1: Meetings with the specialists to clarify the ideas and the final architectural project. Visit municipality to apply for and get the permissions for building, etc. (2 months May, June 05);  Yr 1: Collect offers from different companies and choose one (1 wk June 05);</p>		

To plan the education programmes that are to be delivered at the new centre.	Yr 1: Centre staff to attend first professional development courses in UK. Yr 1: Collect information about the way of presenting /exhibiting the information and the materials used in other information centres, museums, etc., using different sources (internet, personal contacts, other information materials) (July – September 05); Yr 1: Meetings with a designer to work out the plan for the way the information will be presented in the present LC centre and the type of materials to be used (September – October 05).
To plan, develop, and produce the education and information materials for the LCEC. To equip the centre.	Yr 1: Order the different materials required. (November 05 – February 06); Yr 1: Arrange all the education materials in the LC centre (April – May 06); Yr 2: Update education and information materials.
To advertise the LCEC to schools in the whole country. To undertake a marketing campaign to raise awareness of the centre to the general public using different media – local and national TV/radio/press	Yr 2: Opening the LC centre inviting representatives of GOs, NGOs, Institutes, etc. Inviting media (June 06); Yr 2: Prepare a brochure and distribute throughout schools in Bulgaria (September – October 05); Invite the media including TV and radio channels, newspapers and magazines) to present the new LCEC.
To accept school groups from all over the country. To accept visitors from the general public. To host meetings/workshops.	Yr 2 & 3 and ongoing: At least four school groups to visit LCEC per month. (Sep – Nov 06; Mar – June 07; Sep – Nov 07; Mar – May 08); Yr 2 & 3 and ongoing: Accept visitors daily throughout for different activities according to seasonal conditions; Yr 2 & 3: Host at least 4 workshops per year.
To estimate the results of the project by undertaking surveys with the school groups and others who visit the LCEC.	Yr 2 & 3 and ongoing: Carry out surveys with all the pupil groups before and after the education process in the centre. Yr 2 & 3 and ongoing: Collect opinions, assessments and recommendations by visitors of the centre through the guest book

<b>Project implementation timetable</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Key milestones</b>
	Apr-Mar 2005/6 Apr-Mar 2006/7 Apr-Mar 2007/8	
May 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Obtain initial grant funding from Darwin Initiative and other funders.
May/Sep 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Plans drawn up and permits obtained. Appoint contractors. Building work commences. Planning of education programmes and initiatives



Jul/Sep 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	started. Research undertaken about the presentation of information at the Centre. Design and Production commences on print-based information and exhibits.
Oct/Dec 2005	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Project Leader and staff to attend first workshop / seminar in the UK. Materials ordered for Education Materials and Aids and Exhibits. Equipment and furniture for Centre sourced and ordered. Staff recruited to work at Centre.
Jan/Mar 2006	Apr-Mar 2005/6	Refurbishment of Education Centre completed. Materials, Furniture and Equipment laid out in new Centre. Planning of PR and Marketing to be undertaken to launch the Centre. Brochure produced for schools and distributed.
Mar/Jun 2006	Apr-Mar 2006/7	Centre opens. Media, government organisations, NGOs, local community invited to launch.
Jun/Sep 2006	Apr-Mar 2006/7	Visitors and groups start to attend Centre. First of the school groups attend Centre. First series of workshops planned and delivered. Staff from Centre attend 2 <sup>nd</sup> seminar/workshop in UK.
Sep 2006 to Mar 2007	Apr-Mar 2006/7	Centre starts to become more established. School groups start to attend on regular basis. Centre attracts other visitors to the region. Activities reviewed and monitored. Revisions to plans implanted as a result of evaluation meetings. Surveys carried out to evaluate impact of education programmes and Centre activities.

## 9.1 PROJECT OUTPUTS

Year/Month	9.2 Standard output number (see standard output list)	9.3 Description (include numbers of people involved, publications produced, days/weeks etc.)
Oct 2005	6a / 6b	Upto 3 Centre staff to attend training programme in the UK. This workshop/seminar based programme will be held over a 4-day period at the University of Nottingham.
Jun 2006	6a / 6b	Upto 3 Centre staff to attend training programme in the UK. This workshop/seminar based programme will be held over a 4-day period at the University of Nottingham.
Apr 2007 to Mar	14a / 14b	4 workshops to be held at the Centre in Year 3

2008		
Sep/Dec 2005	15a / 15b/ 15c /15d	At least 4 press releases to be distributed in both the host country and the UK prior to the opening of the Centre
Mar/Jun 2006	15a / 15b / 15c / 15d 18a / 18b / 18c / 18d 19a / 19b / 19c / 19d	At least 4 press releases to be distributed in both the host country and the UK prior to the opening of the Centre. Radio and TV to be invited to launch of the Centre
May/Apr 2008	16a	Newsletters to be sent each quarter to already established international network of 500+ conservation organisations and biologists
Mar 2008	21	Large Carnivore Education Centre established as a permanent facility in the Pirin Mountains providing education and research facilities on a long-term basis.

## **Annex 3 onwards – supplementary material (optional)**

Annual Reports from 2005 and 2006 from Balkani Wildlife Society are attached via email, and also on the CDROM.

Attached to this report is a CDROM with photographs from the visits to Bulgaria in 2006/7, and the Bulgarian team visit to the UK.

The following websites have photographs from visits to the project:

[www.education4conservation.org](http://www.education4conservation.org)

[www.pbase.com/pawsforthought](http://www.pbase.com/pawsforthought) - Click on Pirin Mountains, Bulgaria

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/luperca/sets/72157600195556416/detail/>

[www.ukwolf.org](http://www.ukwolf.org)

### **Checklist for submission**

	Check
<b>Is the report less than 5MB?</b> If so, please email to <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk">Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk</a> putting the project number in the Subject line.	
<b>Is your report more than 5MB?</b> If so, please advise <a href="mailto:Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk">Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk</a> that the report will be send by post on CD, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
<b>Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report?</b> If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table?	
Do not include claim forms or communications for Defra with this report.	