

# Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

## Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	15-008
<b>Project Title</b>	Agricultural Development & Environmental Protection in Transylvania
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Romania
<b>UK Organisation</b>	ADEPT Foundation UK
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Fundatia ADEPT, Universities of Sibiu, Cluj, T. Mures and Oxford Brookes
<b>Report date</b>	31 October 2007
<b>Report No.</b>	HYR2
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.fundatia-adept.org">www.fundatia-adept.org</a>

### 1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project.

Nr.	Actions	Due date	Progress	Description of performance to date: November 2006
<b>1</b>	<b>1. Biodiversity assessment and protection.</b>			
1.1	Romanian government proposes Natura 2000 designation	mid-2007	Yes: May 07	Ministerial Order 776 of 5 May 2007. <b>Explanation requested in Review of Annual report:</b> under MO776/2007, the Romanian Government has presented the list of pSCIs (potential Sites of Community Interest) to Brussels. There follow the biogeographical seminars (late 2007/early 2008) and formal approval by Brussels of the SCI status of the area expected mid 2008. Meanwhile, according to the “precautionary principle”, any proposed areas benefit from protection (of habitats/species) as if already an approved SCI.
1.2	Grassland management guidelines published	July 2007	Delayed – expected early 2008	Basic guidelines have been drafted by Andrew Jones and others, and have been incorporated in the draft agri-environment schemes under the National Rural Development Plan. However, it is essential to coordinate grassland management guidelines with NRDP Agri-environment incentives. Since NRDP is still under discussion between Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) and Brussels, publication is delayed.
<b>2</b>	<b>Education/awareness.</b> Publish materials for schools and wider public. Produce information boards. Design web site to inform about project, promote products and tourism services. Establish information centre to serve local people and visitors.			
2.1	Information boards in place	May 07	Sept 07	One in place Sept 07, others to be installed by Feb 08. Also the first of a series of new village signs, promoting the area brand, have been installed at Saschiz which have noticeably increased visitor numbers
2.2	Newsletters printed/distributed to schools and general public	Jan, April, July, Oct 07	Completed on schedule	Monthly community newspaper established in October 06, printed quarterly in 2007 in Saschiz (January, April, July, October 07). Includes articles on Rural Development programme to explain opportunities/responsibilities in simple terms
2.3	Presentations on environmental issues to schools	Sept 06	ongoing	Will continue in 2007/08 with Milvus Group: regular classes plus summer camp on environmental issues
2.4	Information Centre active	Sept 06	ongoing	The information centre is permanently manned, is selling local products, publications and postcards, and distributing information about the area, where to stay etc.
2.5	Web-site established and operative	March 06	ongoing	ADEPT website in English and Romanian offers information on ADEPT activities and links to other producers/services in the area, <a href="http://www.fundatia-adept.org">www.fundatia-adept.org</a> .

3	<b>Establish incentives, reduce poverty.</b>			
3.1	Minutes of LSG meetings, and regularly 2007-2008.	Sept 2006	March 2007	<b>Explanation requested in Review of Annual report:</b> In the original action plan, a Local Steering Group (LSG) was proposed. This has now been superseded by the Local Action Group under the LEADER axis. We will therefore call this group the LAG, not LSG, in future. The actual structure and activity of the LAG (as defined under LEADER) fulfills all the requirements for an LSG. The LAG has now been established legally after a series of meetings (late 2006/early 2007. We had proposed to kick-start the LAG with our own small biodiversity fund, but our budget did not permit this. The activity of LAG is delayed until funding possibilities are clarified by MADR. However, in the meantime, Local Action Groups from UK and Ireland visited the Tarnava Mare LAG in August 2007, giving useful advice on various rural development aspects including farmers' markets.
3.2	Biodiversity-friendly agriculture courses	Feb, March, April 06	Continuing in 2007	12 course modules delivered (list of locations available), including one in the Tarnava Mare area (list of students available), others widespread around the country, in collaboration with MADR.
3.3	Info centre active providing ag extension advice.	March 2006	Continuous	ADEPT information centre serving 9 communes, has helped with inspections: 190 farmers have received their first SAPARD 3.3 grants for 2007 (year one of 5). This has received national publicity. ADEPT has been consulted by MADR on lessons learned from SAPARDC3.3, to feed back into NRDP.
3.4	Training courses in food and crafts marketing, with UK specialist 2006-2008.	April 06	Continuous	<b>Explanation requested in Review of Annual report:</b> we were asked to clarify sustainability/local benefit from conservation. Logo created for area, assisting marketing using biodiversity brand image. Farmers' Market has been established for small producers in Bucharest, involving at least 6 Tarnava Mare producers. This has had active support from EU delegation. Financial benefits are now real for small producers, linked to the image of the area, and have been the subject of media interest at national level (press cuttings available). Two training visits by Sue Prince from Peak District. Active involvement in creation of Transylvania Authentica brand for sustainable products/services. Working closely with Food Standards Agency (ANSVSA) to provide guidance to small producers of minimum hygiene standards.
3.5	Sustainable tourism strategy assisted by UK specialist.	April 06	June 2007	Sustainable tourism strategy delivered after two visits by Oxford Brookes University (copy available). Second local consultation stage under way late 2007.
3.6	Ecotourism courses	Oct 06	April-June 2007	The second rural tourism course was held April-June 2007, in Sighisoara. 46 villagers attended in 2 groups, from throughout the Tarnava Mare area. All except one passed the modular exams and obtained diplomas. List of students available.
3.7	Pilot guest houses active	May 2006	Continuous	3 new guesthouses in use in Saschiz as result of training
3.8	Producers visit Slow Food gatherings in Italy	Sept 06	Continuous	ADEPT director Cristi Gherghiceanu has attended 4 Slow Food meetings in 2007, accompanied by local producers, with great success: Montpellier, Warsaw, Turin, Sicily. Another group of local producers was invited by the Peasant Museum Bucharest to represent Romania at a conference in Tel Aviv. The Tarnava Mare Slow Food group (the name has been changed from Sighisoara Slow Food group to a name more representative of the area, not just one town) has become the representative Slow Food group for Romania and is regarded by Slow Food as one of the most dynamic groups to be established anywhere in the last 5 years (Slow Food International comments to Cristi Gherghiceanu)
3.9	Forest assessment		Delayed:	Follow up to May 2007 meeting will be analysis by regional forest agency of High Conservation Value Forests - preliminary

	including NTFP carried out by WWF	March 2007	early 2008	assessment of HCVF 3 category (rare, threatened and endangered ecosystems) and HCVF 4 category (forests providing ecological services - anti-erosion, etc). The forestry elements of this programme have slipped, partly owing to the fact that forest ownership and forest area management are in a state of flux at the moment. However, we will work hard to get the assessment process completed by early 2008.
3.10	Forestry workshops including inputs from WWF-DCP	May 2007	June 07	First workshop and subsequent technical meeting with Sighisoara Forest District, Apold Forest District and WWF-DCP in June. Further workshops will not be held until assessments have taken place, early/mid 2008

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

a. There is considerable delay in the approval process of Romania's National Rural Development Plan (2007-13). NRDP is still under discussion between MADR and Brussels, and is likely to be approved only in late 2007/early 2008. Implementation of NRDP measures including agri-environment will not be until May 2008, and Natura 2000 measures under NRDP are further delayed until 2009/10. Since grassland management guidelines must be coordinated with NRDP, in order to give positive incentives, this will delay implementation of grassland management and more general Natura 2000 management in the area.

b. LEADER measures (NRDP Axis 4) will not come on stream in Romanian until 2010. However, proposals from some pilot areas will be accepted by MADR in 2008/9. It is hard to get the LEADER process going without funding - having funds to spend is a very important incentive for community participation in LEADER. However, we hope that Tarnava mare can be one of the pilot areas.

c. three outputs are delayed owing to delays at national level: publication of grassland management guidelines (see 1.2 above), activity of the steering committee/Local Action Group (3.1) and forest assessment (3.9). To compensate for these delays, we would like to add that we have performed beyond expectations in other aspects of the project (especially 1.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.8)

**Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

**Discussed with the DI Secretariat: no**

**Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no**

**3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

Shift of project leader from Grasslands Trust to ADEPT Foundation has been clarified with the secretariat, as recommended in the Review of Annual Report

**If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.**

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.**

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, [stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk](mailto:stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk). The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**