

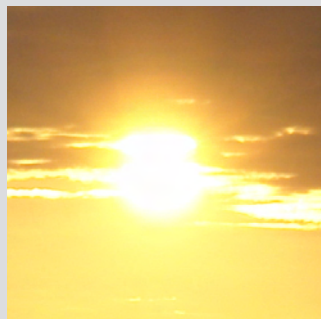
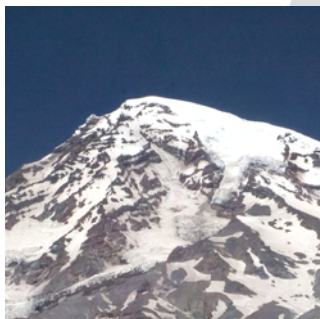
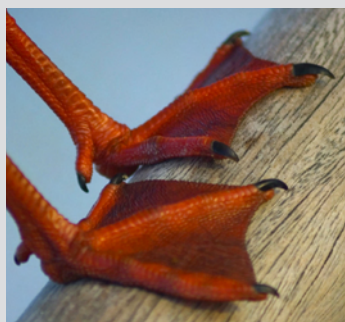
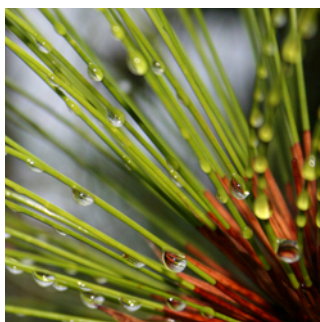
Directorate General Environment, Unit E.4. LIFE

Ex-Post Evaluation of Projects and Activities Financed under the LIFE Programme

Country-by-country analysis

Cyprus

July 2009



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The views expressed are those of the Consultant and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Commission.

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1 Executive summary

The LIFE programme has financed 18 projects in Cyprus over the past 13 years. Of these, the LIFE programme has co-financed 14 projects in Cyprus in the time period 1996-2006. One LIFE Nature project was carried out after the accession of Cyprus to the EU in 2004. The thirteen other projects were TCY projects¹. The LIFE Nature project 'Conservation management in Natura 2000 sites of Cyprus' can be said to be highly effective as well as addressing EU-priorities.

2 Introduction

This country report on the implementation of the LIFE Programme in Cyprus is part of the overall ex-post evaluation of the LIFE Programme. The evaluation was commissioned in July 2008 and covers all LIFE projects initiated during the period 1996-2006. The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance and impact of the activities and projects financed under the LIFE Programme. The evaluation comprises country studies in all Member States, except Bulgaria, which has never had any LIFE projects. This report documents the analysis carried out concerning the implementation of the LIFE Programme in Cyprus. The ex-post evaluation focuses on assessing the effect of the LIFE Programme on Europe's nature and environment through looking at results and impacts of LIFE projects implemented under the Nature (NAT) and Environment (ENV) components. The results and impacts have further been assessed along three main evaluation criteria:

- Effectiveness, i.e. the extent to which planned objectives have been reached
- Sustainability, i.e. the extent to which positive impacts have continued or are likely to continue
- Utility, i.e. the extent to which impacts address key environmental needs and priorities in the EU and for the stakeholders concerned.

3 Environmental policy overview

The island of Cyprus, with the model of economic development followed over the past years, is facing challenges in a number of environmental sectors. Freshwater resources (both surface and groundwater) are a limited resource in Cyprus, where agriculture accounts for about 63 per cent of the total consumption and the rest is attributed to human use (increasing significantly during summer due to influx of tourists). The country relies increasingly on quantities of desalinated or recycled water to cover its needs. The quality of the atmosphere in urban areas exhibits high concentrations of NO_x, ozone and particulate matter due to over-reliance on private cars and the relatively weak structure of public transport. Emissions from energy generation are also an issue due to the use of oil as a fuel but the impacts are localised. Solid waste management is also an issue. Over 100 existing landfills will have to be closed and reinstated and new, properly engineered landfills will have to be constructed. The current waste management practices on the island, with the over-reliance on landfills, are clearly unsustainable. In response to these challenges, the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment has adopted the principles of sustainable development in line with the sustainable development strategy of the EU. A number of policies and action plans have been devised for areas where existing practice is unsustainable, such as energy, transport, tourism, agriculture, natural environment and biodiversity, natural resources management, waste management, etc.

¹ The country reports produced under this evaluation concern the Nature and Environment projects. The TCY projects are dealt with in a separate report (Part 5 of the evaluation report).

3.1 Biodiversity and Nature protection

The natural environment and biodiversity is varied due to the geographical position of the island. 36 sites of Community Interest have been designated and seven Special Protection Areas classified so far and others are expected to follow. In Cyprus, 1.2 per cent of the total land area is designated for the protection of birds while 5 per cent is designated for rare species and habitats, with some overlap between some designated areas. Management of these sites is still not in place however, management and action plans are currently being devised (in part due to one of the LIFE Nature project discussed below).

4 Overview of LIFE projects in Cyprus

The LIFE programme has financed 18 projects in Cyprus over the past 13 years, including 1 Nature project and 17 TCY projects². Some information on the Nature project is provided in Appendix 1, while a brief summary is included in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Overview of LIFE projects 1996-2006 in Cyprus

	Number of projects	Total LIFE contribution (million EUR)	Main themes covered ³	Project duration (years)
Nature	1	1.5	Habitats 100%	5

Source: BUTLER

The **LIFE Nature** project co-financed by the LIFE Programme comprises a range of conservation management activities including: the elaboration of specific management plans and related national guidelines; effective conservation and pilot preservation of all habitats targeted by the project (e.g. expansion of *Zizyphus lotus matorral**, detailed mapping and signposting of Vernal pools* and Serpentinophilous grasslands, installation of a floating anchoring system for vessels for the protection of *Posidonia beds**, etc). It also included the preparation and maintenance of a systematic monitoring and data storage scheme, as well as the generation of experience in the competent administration units and raising of awareness amongst site users and the general public. The beneficiary in the case of Cyprus was the Environmental Service, Ministry of Agriculture Natural Resources and Environment, which took a very active role in coordinating all the competent authorities for the effective implementation of the project.

One of the TCY projects implemented assisted in preparing the ground for the implementation of the current LIFE Nature project. The previous TCY project managed to designate sites suitable for protection and for which management plans were then developed under the LIFE Nature project.

² Covering wide-ranging environmental themes (management systems for high priority waste streams: WEEEs, C&DW, ELVs; management of pigwaste; spatial urban development and planning; traffic emissions, amongst others) which aimed at building capacities to achieve EU environmental approximation. The TCY component is evaluated in Part 5 of the ex-post evaluation report.

³ For the purpose of this evaluation, the LIFE projects were categorised according to the thematic structure of the LIFE+ Programme (ref. Regulation EC No. 614/2007, Annex II). The themes included for LIFE Nature: Habitat Directive, Birds Directive and Biodiversity. For LIFE Environment: Climate change, air, water, soil, forests, natural resources and waste, chemicals, urban environment, strategic approaches.

5 Effects of projects implemented

5.1 Results and impacts for Nature projects

To date, there has been one LIFE Nature project implemented in Cyprus, which explains the concentration on the results of this particular project in the following description. All stakeholders (focal point, monitors, project manager) underline that the results and impacts of this project are key to nature protection in Cyprus, to the approximation of EU nature protection legislation and related administrative procedures (implementation of Natura 2000). The project on “Conservation management in Natura 2000 sites of Cyprus” is the first comprehensive nature conservation project of its kind in Cyprus assisting in the implementation of the Natura 2000 network. The collective actions are being implemented in five pilot SCIs in order to secure a favourable conservation status for certain habitat types and species, which will set standards and create experience in the management of Natura 2000 sites. Specific management plans have been developed and national management guidelines drafted. This project is a comprehensive first approach towards meeting the obligation of the EU nature protection legislation. It not only led to (i) crucial targeted species protection in a specific period of four years, (ii) familiarised the competent authorities with the interpretation in practice of the birds and habitats directives, but also (iii) developed the necessary cooperation between the varied competent authorities for future implementation. It allowed for the government departments to work within a set framework and methodology and understand the obligations arising from the directives.

6 The effectiveness of projects

Effectiveness can be assessed at two levels: The project level, which compares achievements with project objectives, and at programme level, which compares achievements with LIFE Programme objectives⁴. The Nature project implemented in Cyprus was effective in both respects. It was the first comprehensive approach towards implementation of the EU nature conservation legislation and the specific practical obligations related to the Natura 2000 network. The Nature project has been described by stakeholders as being highly effective in achieving its objective which was to develop key management and monitoring tools to assist Cyprus in meeting its obligations under EU legislation. It has developed management plans for its SCIs and SPAs, implemented urgent actions in five threatened SCIs (three of which are SPAs) and developed these nature conservation concepts and priorities in close cooperation with all the diverse partners responsible for the implementation of the Natura 2000 measures.

7 The sustainability of projects

Sustainability of the project can be categorised as high considering the fact that follow-up actions from the project have already been proposed and financing has been secured from national and other budgets, in order to continue developing management plans for other sites. The fact that the beneficiary developed and set up regular coordination and cooperation networks with the other competent authorities responsible for implementation of the management plans (Forestry Department, Game Fund Service from Ministry of Interior for example, ensures sustainability to a significant degree. The project

⁴ Specific objective for: LIFE Nature: To contribute to the implementation of Council Directive 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive) and Council Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive); LIFE Environment: To contribute to the development of innovative and integrated techniques and methods and to the further development of Community environmental policy.

therefore provides a solid basis for future cooperation between competent authorities and relatively smooth and effective implementation of Natura 2000 measures in Cyprus.

8 The utility of projects

The utility of this project towards addressing EU and national priorities is unquestionable. In the case of this particular LIFE Nature project, the Environmental Service of the Ministry of Agriculture Natural Resources and Environment took the initiative to coordinate and lead the implementation of the Natura 2000 network within the country. The fact that the project included and involved partners from among other competent authorities was an important asset and one which strengthen the project. The current project was in general, well accepted as the ground had already been laid by a previous LIFE –TCY project. The TCY project involved the designation of sites for protection. Acceptability among the stakeholders grew throughout the project according to the beneficiary.

Appendix 1 Comprehensive overview of LIFE Projects in Cyprus

In connection with the ex-post evaluation, data was extracted from the BUTLER database of the LIFE Unit. Table 1 and Table 2 below provide an overview of the information available on each project as well as the LIFE+ theme attached by the evaluation team to the project. The budget figures for LIFE co-financing do not necessarily correspond to the actual payments made.

Table 1 Overview of LIFE Nature Projects in Cyprus

Id.	Title	LIFE generation	Funding year	Start year	End year	Total budget (EUR)	LIFE co-financing (EUR)	Beneficiary type	International partners (yes/no)	Directive (Birds, Habitats) or biodiversity
LIFE04 NAT/CY/000013	Conservation management in Natura 2000 sites of Cyprus	LIFE III	2004	2004	2009	2,551,277	1,530,766	National au- thority	No	Habitats

Appendix 2 Summary tables on LIFE Nature projects in Cyprus

Table 2 Overview of LIFE NAT projects in Cyprus, 1996-2006

Generation	Year	Number of projects	Total budget (EUR million)	Total LIFE co-financing budget (EUR million)	Average duration (years)	Average LIFE funding per project (EUR million)
LIFE II	1996	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	1997	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	1998	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	1999	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
LIFE III	2000	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2002	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2003	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2004	1	2.6	1.5	5.0	1.5
	Total	1	3	2	5.0	1.5
LIFE III extension	2005	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	2006	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grand total		1	2.6	1.5	5.0	1.5
Comparative figures for all NAT projects		771	1,224.1	637.2	4.2	0.8

Table 3 Categories of LIFE NAT projects in Cyprus, 1996-2006

LIFE NAT themes	No. of projects	In % of total	Total budget (EUR million)	In % of total	LIFE contribution (EUR million)	In % of total
Habitats Directive	1	100%	2.6	100%	1.5	100%
Birds Directive	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Biodiversity projects	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Total	1	100%	2.6	100%	1.5	100%

Table 4 Cyprus LIFE NAT projects 1996-2006 according to beneficiary type

Beneficiary type	No. of projects	In % of total	Total budget (EUR million)	In % of total	LIFE contribution (EUR million)	In % of total
Public entities						
National authority	1	100%	2.6	100%	1.5	100%
Regional authority	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Local authority	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Development agency	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Intergovernmental body	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Park-reserve authority	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Sub-total	1	100%	2.6	100%	1.5	100%
Public and private enterprises						
International enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Large enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
SME Small and medium sized enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Mixed enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Public enterprise	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Sub-total	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
NGOs and research						
NGO-Foundation	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Research institutions	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
University	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Training centre	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Sub-total	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
None indicated	0	0%	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Total	1	100%	2.6	100%	1.5	100%