

BALTIC ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM LITHUANIA



ACTIVITY REPORT 2019



PROTECTING NATURE TOGETHER WITH PEOPLE!

WWW.BEF.LT



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PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED




AQUATIC WARBLER CONSERVATION

(LIFE MAGNI
DUCATUS ACROLA)
2016-2023
In Lithuania and
Belarus

www.meldine.lt





Year 2019 was very intensive in Aquatic Warbler conservation - they were full of challenges, support and great results.

SUCCESSFUL AND EFFECTIVE AQUATIC WARBLER TRANSLOCA- TION

Join the
Journey
of Aquatic Warbler
babies from Belarus to
Lithuania
via weekly video diary at
www.meldine.lt/en
f / Aquatic Warbler



The second phase of Aquatic Warbler translocation that we implemented in the summer required enormous amount of energy and dedication. This year we transported 50 more bird chicks of this rare species from Belarus to Lithuania (in 2018 we had already brought 50). Since this was already the second year of translocation, we had a lot of experience and everything went with more knowledge, experience, a clearer understanding of our roles. Therefore, this year we paid a lot of attention to spreading the message about this unique experience - we created a video blog, organized tours for journalists, invited people to open day event or discussions.



We are very happy that the work of the dedicated team gave great results - all the birds survived (we managed to strengthen and raise up even the sick bird) i.e. a **100% survival rate** has been achieved! Also, with the help of colleagues from Belarus and Lithuania, we managed to find **11 translocated Aquatic Warbler (22%)** from the last year that came back from Africa to the Žuvintas Biosphere Reserve. This rate exceeds even the natural survival rate of the first-year birds (20%). During the monitorings, naturalists also observed translocated females with juveniles. This proves to the great success of the world's first such conservation method applied with this species. Our experience will be followed by colleagues from Germany. Our special cages created by us – aviaries – were transported there. They will receive new rare inhabitants in Germany in the near future.

ART SCHOOL OF AQUATIC WARBLER

During the growing of Aquatic Warbler chicks in Žuvintas, a great initiative was born – Aquatic Warbler Art School. The symbolic name of the Aquatic Warbler was given to Alytus Art School, whose community was very interested in the protection of this species and saw the deep meaning of such a symbolic name.

“Across the street there is Adolfo Ramanauskas Vanagas Gymnasium (according to the name of our famous fighter for freedom). What makes the Aquatic Warbler worse? I will ask differently - are other forms of nature inferior to a man? I think that they are much better than us, we can learn a lot from them,” says Redas Diržys, the director of Alytus Art School.



BIOMASS PROCESSING FACILITY

The biomass processing facility in Dreverna, where grass from areas important for Aquatic Warbler and other birds is processed into pellets, has started accepting farmers' grass. The marketing of the products has also begun. The “Nine voices” brand was created for the facility and the “Hygge pellet” brand - for the animal bedding products.



TRANSLLOCATION IN PICTURES

More and more children discovered the webplatform of Young Nature Rangers gamtosreindzeris.lt, where they solve fun tasks about nature.

Within a little bit more than a year:

48 tasks

7793 visitors

1141 registered users

860 approved their registration

70 active children who solved >5 tasks.

This year also we completed creating the Russian version of the platform natureforkids.by for Belarusian children. It already has 38 tasks.



WEBPLATFORM OF YOUNG NATURE RANGERS



AQUATIC WARBLER POPULATION IN LITHUANIA INCREASED

After summarising the final results of Aquatic Warbler counting in 2019, it became clear that the population of these rarest European songbirds in Lithuania increased by 26% compared to the previous year. 172 Aquatic Warbler singing males were counted. This is the result of work of many years. According to experts, the population of Aquatic Warblers in Lithuania has been stabilized due to successfully applied nature conservation measures. After Poland, Lithuania is the second country that has managed to stop the extinction of the species nationally.



HABITAT RESTORATION WORKS, COOPERATION WITH FARMERS CONTINUE

Traditionally, after we got to know about Aquatic Warbler breeding sites, we visited farmers and negotiated a postponement of mowing. Also, this year we invited them to raise the flags of Aquatic Warbler. By this gesture we wanted to welcome the rare singers who returned to our country and express support for their chicks who were already cheeping in their nests. We hope to continue this beautiful tradition on June 1st to commemorate both children of humans but also of birds.



We continued to analyse all potential key-stone habitats for Aquatic Warblers in Lithuania (former and existing peatlands). We visited the most promising places where the habitat network could be expanded, and collected additional data.



In 2019 habitat restoration works continued in both Lithuania and Belarus. Reed and bush removal work took place in Tyrai, Apvardai, Žuvintas and Zvanets. In Servech we prepared the site for water level regulation, in Zvanets - for controlled burning, and in Dokudovskaja - for sowing sedge seeds. Also, in both Zvanets and Šyša (Nemunas delta), water level regulators have been installed to help ensure proper water regime.



RESEACH OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT PROVED THE PROJECT IS TRANSPARENT

In 2019 a new minister K.Mažeika started his position in the Ministry of Environment. Shortly afterwards, he announced in the media that he would cut the funding for Aquatic Warbler conservation project. Any specific arguments explaining this position we have not heard. We immediately contacted the Ministry, provided them with

progress report (which had been reviewed and approved by representatives of European Commission), sent the findings of independent audit, we visited the ministry ourselves and told about the progress and results of the project. After these efforts of ours, the Minister finally admitted that the project was being implemented as planned and assured that no decisions had been taken to cut national funding.

LIES

about bird that
costs
EUR 40 000



In 2019 the absurd lie that we were buying 100 of Aquatic Warblers for EUR 4 million continued to be spread in the media. Despite our efforts to communicate the facts that refute this lie, this myth is still alive, so we are once again providing all the information.



The total value of the project is EUR 4 mln. (EUR 4,097,038), but the project does much more than just transferring 100 Aquatic Warblers. Aquatic Warbler translocation is just one of many actions of this 7 years-long species' conservation project in Lithuania and Belarus, and translocation uses only 5% of the total budget. During the project, 20,000 ha of habitats, in which many Aquatic Warbler neighbours such as Great Snipes, Common Redshanks, and Corncrakes live, will also be restored. Additionally, water level control infrastructure will be installed and biomass processing facility in Dreverna will be built, helping solve the long-lived issue of disposing of leftover harvest biomass. The project also calls for wildlife education and communication.



RESULTS reached so far

It is also important to note that the project is at it's biggest share supported by the European Commission directly through the LIFE program. It's contribution is EUR 3,072,778 (75%). Contribution of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania (only activities carried out in Lithuania are partially supported): EUR 736,000. The remaining part is the contribution of all project partners.



NATURALIT

**OPTIMIZING THE
MANAGEMENT
OF NATURA2000
NETWORK IN
LITHUANIA**

(LIFE IP PAF-
NATURALIT)
2018-2027
IN LITHUANIA

WWW.NATURALIT.LT



NATURALIT





MEASURES OF A NEW GENERATION

agro-
environmental
measures oriented
to the result

SHEPHERDING IN MODERN TIMES

In an effort to test unconventional ways of preserving biodiversity (especially open habitats), the "Naturalit" project team has set itself the goal of trying to revitalize herding traditions in Lithuania, which have unfortunately been forgotten. Pastoralism, when a large herd of animals is put on a small area providing an intense but brief affect (grazing and trampling) and is herded to another area after a specific period of time, is the closest grazing method you can get to mimic the affect of big wild herbivores (Bison and Taurus) which are now extinct. In this way, open mosaic habitats are formed and maintained, which are particularly valuable for preserving a large amount of biodiversity.



As the pastoralism tradition in Lithuania has vanished, a study of foreign pastoralism practitioners was conducted. While the results of the study are encouraging as the image of pastoralists in the world is increasingly recovering as well as the knowledge and acceptance of benefits of such practices, unfortunately, there is no living example of pastoralism in countries similar in their geography (plains) to Lithuania.

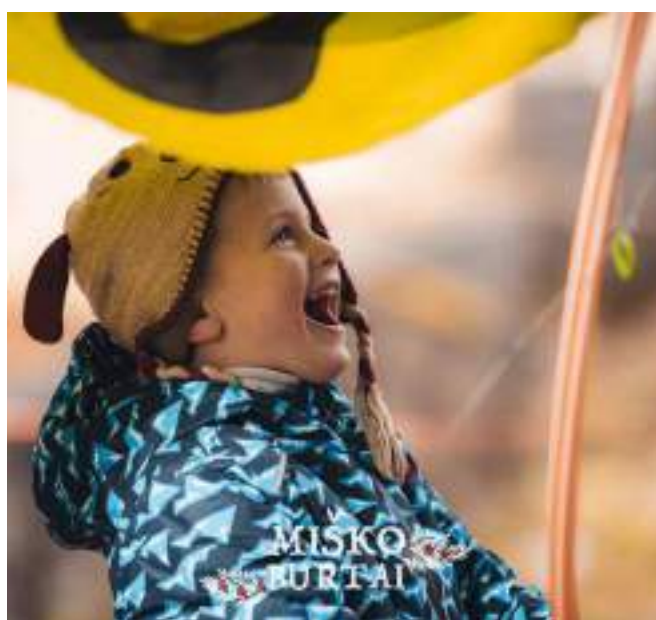
In other countries, such as Bulgaria, Spain, France, pastoralism is a supported activity, and in the latter two there are even several shepherding schools where professional shepherds are trained. It is obvious that in order to revive pastoralism in Lithuania, unconventional and innovative measures will have to be implemented. There is no need to look far for inspiration: "Shepherding weeks", a model created in Finland, attracts hundreds of people to spend time in beautiful protected areas, devoting part of their time to shepherding animals.

Considering the innovative experience of the EU countries, together with our colleagues from the surrounding countries, we have started to develop new agri-environmental measures that are not process-oriented but rather result-oriented, i.e. farmers participating in these new measures will get payments according to their environmental result achieved and the added value created for society, rather than receiving money for automatically applied restrictions. We started to develop a description of the first such measure.



NATURE FESTIVALS

In 2019 we organized 3 festivals in nature – “In the middle of woods”, “In the middle of lakes” “Forest spells”. They encourage visitors’ personal experiences in nature, invited to get to know more about nature values and also showed the benefit of protected areas for local community.



In comparison with 2018, all festivals had more visitors and actively engaged more local people. “In the middle of woods” offered very diverse programme, which started with the lecture of famous nature photographer Marius Čepulis at the train Vilnius-Marcinkonys and was followed by many different tours and activities in nature of Dzukija region. “In the middle of lakes” this year cozily joined a nature camp organized by the locals. This encouraged extremely close cooperation with the residents of the protected area and helped to share the organizational burden of the event. The theatrical festival for young families “Forest Spells” has become an exceptionally big event. It’s number of participants exceeded 600, the event was assisted by 90 volunteers! It is also important to mention that the local community voluntarily initiated the campaign collecting old cups that people are no longer using for the festival. 320 cups were collected to be reused by festival visitors!

	<p>467 registered 257 participants (in the list) 8 locals in programme 13 locals in market</p>
	<p>149 registered 105 participants (in the list) 2 locals in programme 4 vietiniai turgelyje</p>
	<p>1166 registered 646 participants (in the list) 34 locals in programme 12 locals in market</p>

LABEL OF PROTECTED AREAS



In 2019 we have completed the first round of discussions with specialists on the further development of Protected areas label. We held 4 meetings in different regions. They were attended by two thirds of all directorates of protected areas (22/33), 15 label holders and 5 municipal organizations. In discussions it was agreed how the label will be further developed and how the label will be promoted in a near future. It was decided to start with a single system (webpage) where all label holders will be listed. While this system is being developed, a pilot page with basic information about this label has been created at www.gamtoje.org and special Christmas offers have been made.

CHOOSE SUSTAINABLE PRODUCT FROM PROTECTED AREAS

It is labeled by the ethnographic bird symbol - label of protected areas.



PROTECTED AREAS BECOME MORE ACCESSIBLE

In the national parks of Žemaitija, Dzūkija and Aukštaitija, together with our partners, we have installed infrastructure that helps people with disabilities to get acquainted with the values of protected areas. The new infrastructure elements complement the already existing system that helps to explore parks for this target group.

In Dzūkija nacional park near visitor centers in Merkinė and Marcinkonys we have set up 2 tactile information stands, in Aukštaitija national park we installed a smart station, which can provide various information in audible form. In Žemaitija national park we adapted one of the most popular nature trails – Šeirė trail – by setting up tactile stand, constructing safety fence and by building special joining wooden parts that allows people with moving disabilities to get on bridge.



LIFE VIVA GRASS

INTEGRATED
PLANNING TOOL TO
ENSURE VIABILITY OF
GRASSLANDS

2014-2019 IN
LITHUANIA, LATVIA,
ESTONIA

WWW.VIVAGRASS.EU





LIFE
Viva
Grass



SUCCESSFUL END OF THE PROJECT



The year 2019 marks the successful end of the LIFE Viva Grass project. Although officially the project ended in 2019 April 30th, the biggest project event of the year took place on February 27-28, 2019. This was the international closing conference of the project, where the results of the project were presented as well as the main achievement of the project - The Integrated Planning Tool. Conference participants from various European countries also discussed further directions for the development of ecosystem services and ways to apply this concept to different sectors of government activity.

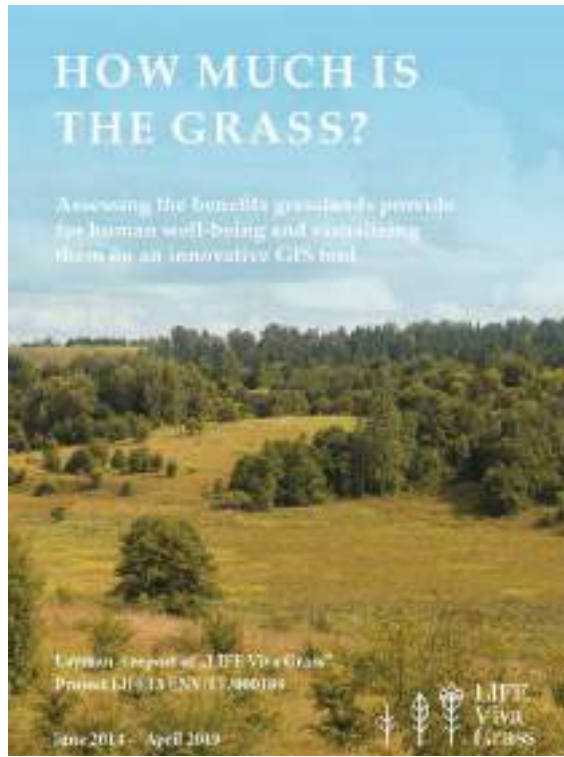


The conference participants were presented in detail with potential examples of Integrated Planning Tool as the main outcome of the project. The final version of the tool (its three modules) is available to everyone. Along with it, an online self-learning platform, which was developed to help people familiarize with the tool itself, its principles and applications. It is gratifying that the Tool is also of interest after the project and its results are used in other projects or scientific work. The Estonian Ministry of Environment is also actively interested in the Tool and possibilities to take over its administration.



ECOSYSTEM SERVICES ARE GETTING MORE POPULAR

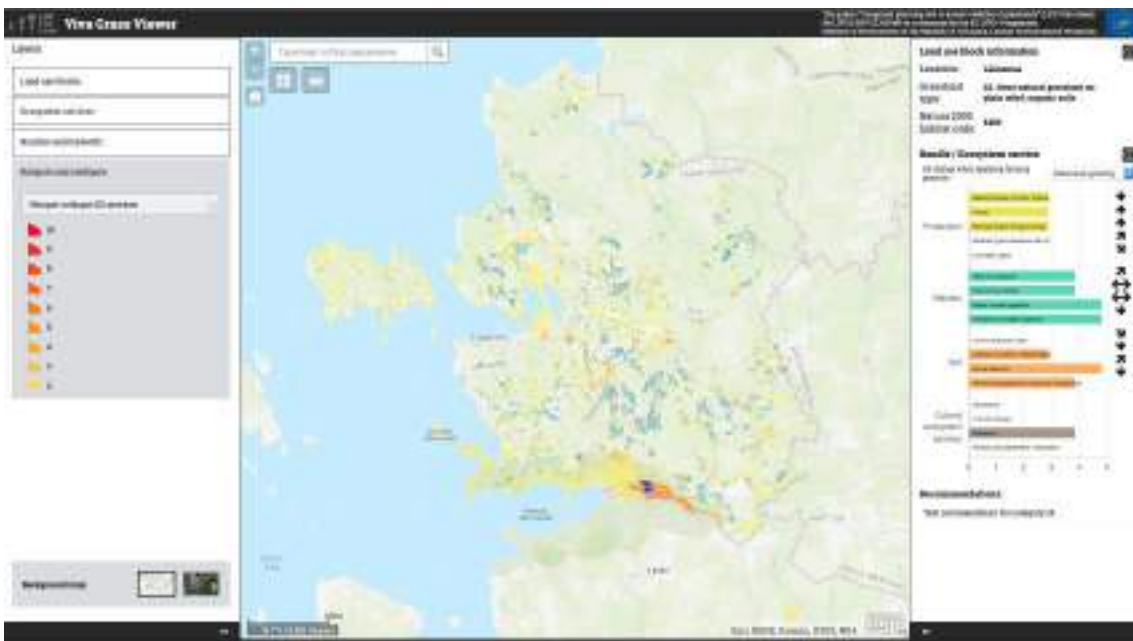
However, almost 5 years of project implementation were not devoted solely to the development of the Tool. The project produced a number of publications, and organized events and visitors days that were very successful. All of this was intended to promote and educate the public and professionals on the concept of ecosystem services. You are welcome to see the results of the project in detail or read a summary of the results prepared specifically for the public.



HOW MUCH IS THE GRASS?

We believe that the LIFE Viva Grass project has made a significant contribution to understanding grasslands and their benefits for us. So we invite you to take a walk in our beautiful meadows, take a deeper look, and maybe you will be able to answer our snappy project question-slogan - "How much is the grass?"

INTEGRATED PLANNING TOOL



Check for project achievements

RESULTS

UNISECO

Understanding and
improving the
sustainability of agro-
ecological farming
systems in the EU

2018-2021
in Lithuania and 15
other European
countries

[WWW.UNISECO-
PROJECT.EU](http://WWW.UNISECO-PROJECT.EU)



UNISECO



INCREASING SUSTAINABI- LITY OF FARMING



UNISECO is international Horizon 2020 research project aiming to develop innovative approaches to enhance the understanding of socio-economic and policy drivers and barriers for further development and implementation of agro-ecological practices in EU farming systems. In Lithuania we work to achieve this ambition by researching how Lithuanian milk and cheese farms could maintain extensive grazing practice but remain competitive in the market without intensifying the farming.



This year we collaborated with farmers and stakeholders and researched economic, social, environmental and farm management aspects for milk and cheese farms. We also analysed not only environmental but also wider social and political environment conditioning farming practices. Together with farmers and other stakeholders we identified and analysed the social network of actors associated with our research dilemma, as well as existing political measures and instruments driving or restricting survival of extensive milk farms and discussed their effectiveness.

During this year we also continued our communication about agro-ecology, project activities and results in social media and UNISECO newsletters.



READ NEWSLETTER
The most recent newsletter of the project

WATERDRIVE

Water driven rural
development in the
Baltic sea region

2019-2021
in Lithuania and in 8
other Baltic Sea
Region countries

[WWW.WATER-DRIVE.
EU](http://WWW.WATER-DRIVE.EU)

Waterdrive

The logo graphic consists of a horizontal bar with a blue-to-green gradient, positioned below the word 'Waterdrive'.



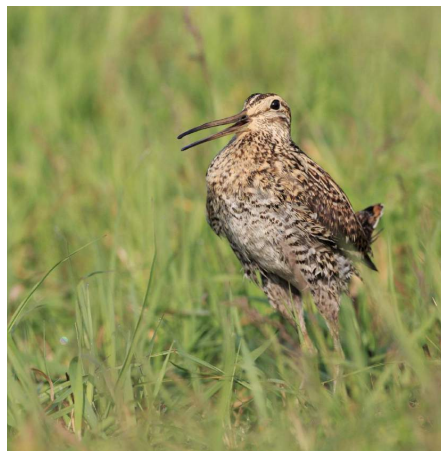


IMPROVING WATER QUALITY

WATERDRIVE is an INTERREG Baltic Sea Region project which is implemented by Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania together with 19 partners from 9 Baltic Sea Region Countries. The main objective of WATERDRIVE is to implement new and smarter water management practices in agricultural landscapes of the Baltic Sea Region through innovative means of collaboration across sectors and in a context of ecosystem productivity, rural development and resource efficient growth.



In Lithuania we seek to encourage transdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration to reduce nutrient run-off in Žuvintas Biosphere Reserve and its surrounding territories.





WATER RESEARCH, ANALYSIS

Over this year we participated in many meetings and consultations with stakeholders and experts, collected and analysed historical water quality data in the case study area and started water quality monitoring in Dovinė catchment. We also hosted project partner meeting and organised exchange of best practice experience in water management between the partners and Lithuanian stakeholders. We also analysed Lithuanian water management decision-making and political measures and instruments for water protection.



EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND



GRAZELIFE

Grazing for wildfire prevention,
ecosystem service provision, nature conservation and landscape management

2019-2021
in Lithuania and 5 European countries

WWW.GRAZELIFE.COM





IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR LIVESTOCK GRAZING



GRAZELIFE is a LIFE preparatory project which aims on improving implementation possibilities of different grazing models – both by domestic and wild/semi-wild herbivores – to identify the most (cost)effective means to maximise / promote wildfire prevention, climate adaptation, the provision of multiple ecosystem services, landscape and nature conservation, and to minimize human-wildlife conflicts, by maintaining long-term stable and resilient ecosystems.



ANALYSIS OF GRAZING AREAS

Over this year, we analysed and selected project territories for Lithuanian case study, communicated with intensively and extensively grazing farmers and collected data and farmers experience on intensively and extensively grazed territories in different soil types.



**THINK
BEFORE YOU
BUY**

**NONHAZCITY
2016-2019**

AND

**NONHAZCITY2
2019-2021**

**IN LITHUANIA AND
OTHER CITIES OF
BALTIC SEA REGION**

THINKBEFORE.EU





SUCCESSFUL END OF THE PROJECT AND A NEW BEGINNING



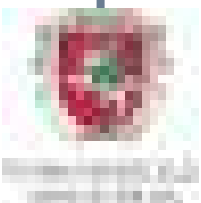
NonHazCity

The project "Innovative management solutions for minimizing emissions of hazardous substances from urban areas in the Baltic Sea Region" (NonHazCity) was successfully finished in 2019.

During the four years of the project, a lot of work was done. As many as 18 partners worked in different countries of the Baltic Sea region.

In Lithuania, we cooperated with Šilalė and Kaunas district municipalities. At the beginning of the project, research on chemicals in municipalities helped to identify the main sources of hazardous chemicals and to identify what actions municipalities should take. One of the results of the project is the development of chemical action plans in these municipalities, which will be implemented in the future. We have also paid close attention to green procurement, one of the main tools for avoiding hazardous chemicals.

During the project, we also cooperated intensively with companies located in these municipalities. Not only have we advised various companies on chemical management issues, but we have also helped find cleaner and healthier alternatives. We also held seminars for various business groups.



We did a similar job with the residents. We held dozens of lectures where we shared the latest knowledge, tips on how to create a safe and healthy home environment without hazardous chemicals. During the project, we also worked with 10 volunteer families in whose homes we identified hazardous chemicals and shared tips on how to change them. The families were not only happy with the knowledge provided, but at the end of the project they also informed about the changes actually implemented at home.

We shared information at various events, we actively filled in the page Pagalvok.lt and the FB page "Pagalvok, kai perki". We have published various information materials, such as a brochure for hairdressers or magazine for the general public about everyday life without hazardous chemicals. The results were shared at an international final conference in Riga.

PROJECT RESULTS WERE PRESENTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL FINAL CONFERENCE IN RIGA



NonHazCity2

We have received good news after the end of the project, the results of the NonHazCity project will continue to be successfully implemented, as the ongoing project "Capitalizing key elements of NonHazCity: empowering private and professional users for better risk management and use reduction of chemical products in their cities" (NonHazCity 2) has started.

During the project, it is planned to disseminate the experience gained during NonHazCity more widely and to involve various municipalities of the countries. It is planned to create a convenient online training platform where municipal specialists could gain knowledge about chemicals management.

Various publications are also being produced, including guidebooks on how to check products containing chemicals at home or in the office and find simple alternatives. In Lithuania, it is also planned to organize special trainings for selected project ambassadors, who will later be able to conduct inventories at home on their own.

The information campaign focuses on hazardous chemicals in plastic products. The information will be provided in various publications, on the FB "Pagalvok, kai perki" and on the updated page of Pagalvok.lt.



LIFE FIT FOR REACH

**BALTIC PILOT
CASES ON
REDUCTION OF
EMISSIONS BY
SUBSTITUTION OF
HAZARDOUS
CHEMICALS AND
RESOURCE
EFFICIENCY**

**2015-2020
IN LITHUANIA,
LATVIA AND
ESTONIA
FITREACH.EU**



LIFE / FIT FOR REACH

ReSolve

CHEMICALS
IN OUR LIFE

HOW CAN I USE
CHEMICALS SAFELY?

WHY ARE
CHEMICALS
IMPORTANT?

HOW CAN I
REDUCE MY
CHEMICAL EXPOSURE?

WHAT ARE
THE BENEFITS
OF CHEMICALS?



REACH

REGULATION OF
CHEMICALS
IN THE
EU

FESENSE

AN ALTERNATIVE TO CANNED MILK HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY TESTED



THE PROJECT HAS BEEN EXTENDED

In 2019, the project was extended until 2020 and continued to work with companies and small scale changes until the end of the year.

The number of such companies in the three Baltic States has reached 82 this year. As many as 30 of the companies are located in Lithuania. Dozens of other companies were consulted.

Consultations and assistance in chemical inventory were provided to companies in different business fields.

Some companies undertook changes on their own after consulting, some had the opportunity to fund a project to test various alternatives to hazardous substances or equipment to help them abandon them.

CHANGES IN PARTNER COMPANIES

The changes in the main companies of the project partners in Lithuania - "Marijampolės pieno konservai" and "Vakarų metalgama" are almost completed. Companies have even tried a few possible alternatives and found low-risk alternatives.

Companies are currently carrying out environmental impact assessments to replace hazardous chemicals with less hazardous ones, as well as socio-economic analysis.

WORK
WITH
COMPANIES



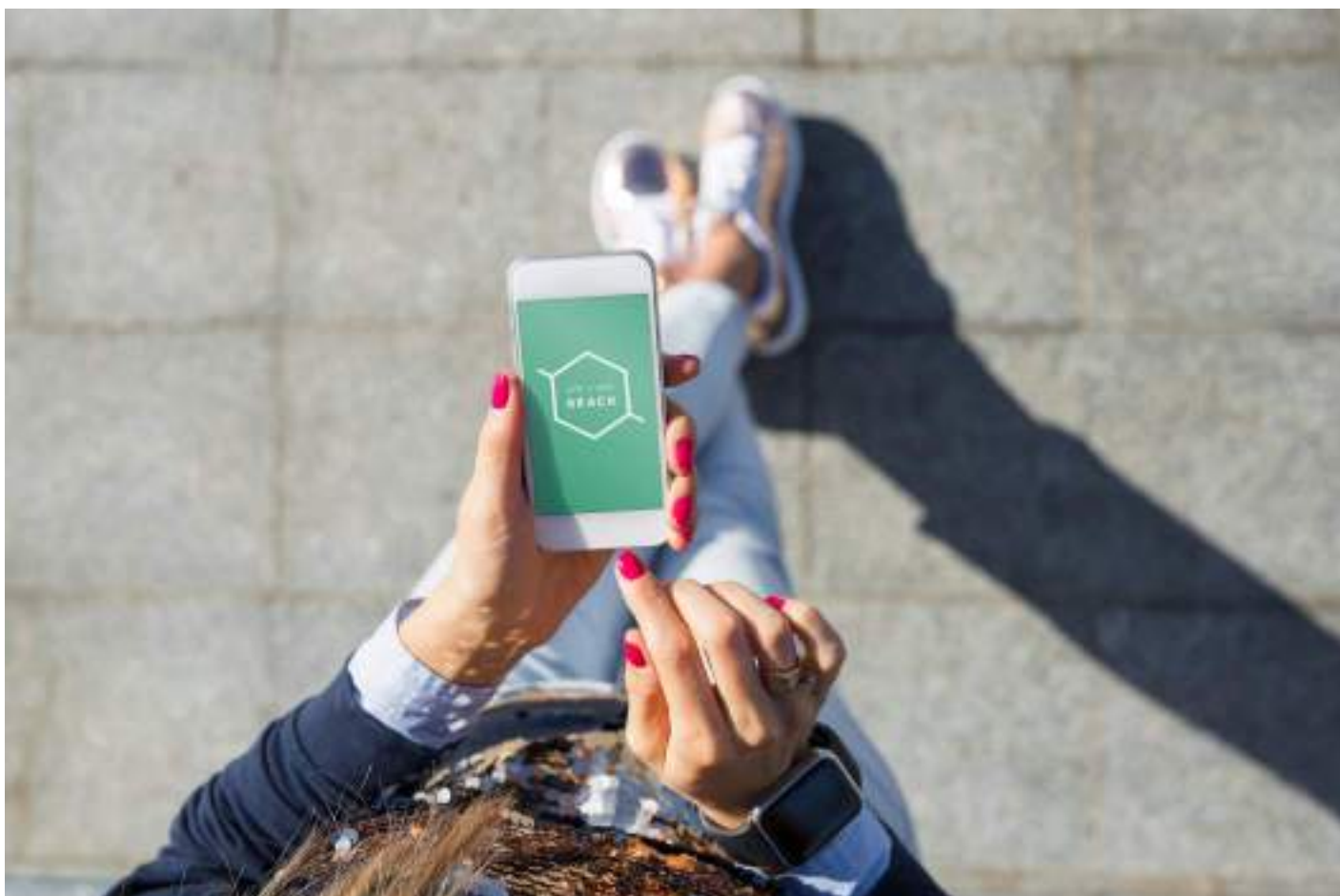
**PROJECT TEAM
MEMBERS
PRESENTED
STORIES OF
SUCCESSFUL
SUBSTITUTIONS
AT VARIOUS
EVENTS**

In the autumn, a large international event was held in Vilnius, where the topical issues of hazardous chemicals were discussed by representatives of various LIFE chemical projects implemented in Europe. The event also attracted the attention of top EU officials. It was attended by Kęstutis Sadauskas,

Head of the European Commission's Directorate for Green Economy, Arnoldas Milukas, Head of the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Environment and Resources Program, and Angelo Salsi, Head of the European Commission's LIFE Program.



**IN THE AUTUMN, A
HUGE
INTERNATIONAL
CHEMICAL PROJECT
EVENT HELD IN
VILNIUS**



RIGHT TO KNOW

In 2019 the project “Enabling REACH consumer information rights on chemicals in articles by IT-tools” (LIFE AskREACH) was launched. The Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania will adapt the mobile app to the Lithuanian market.

The project is developing a database where article suppliers will be able to provide information on substances of very high concern (SVHC). The database will be connected to a mobile app that users will be able to use to obtain information about SVHC in products. If the desired data is not already in the database, the information request can be sent automatically to the product supplier. Suppliers will also be provided with other IT tools to help them communicate information correctly.

The mobile application has already been launched in various countries. An English version of the “Scan4Chem” app was presented and publicly tested during a meeting of the Chemicals Project Platform in Vilnius. It will be adapted to the Lithuanian market in the coming years. The launch of the app will be accompanied by an information campaign to encourage users to exercise their right to know.



ASKREACH



SUSTAGR

2019-2020
IN LITHUANIA,
LATVIA,
ESTONIA

PESTICIDE-FREE FARMING

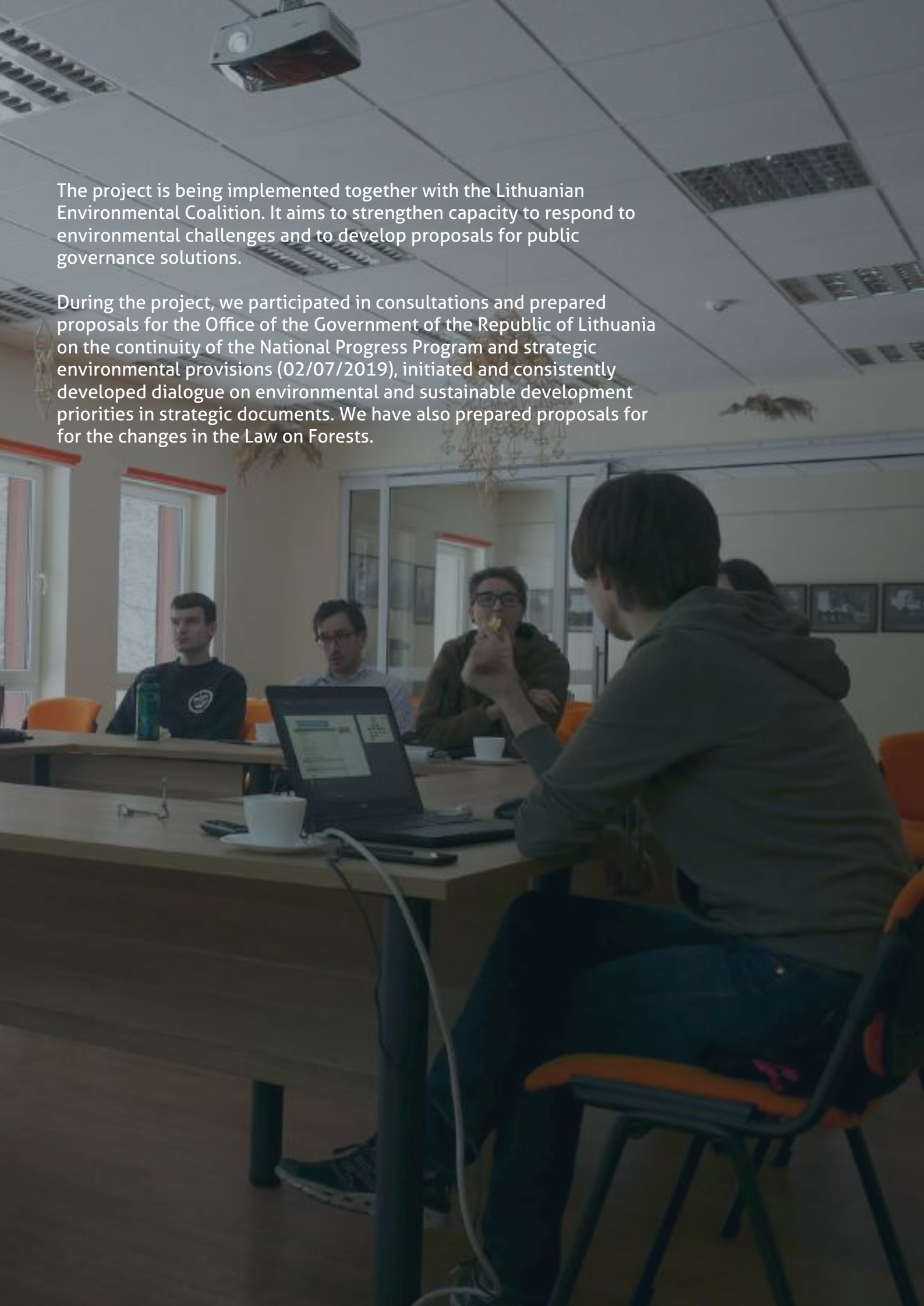
The project was inspired by the example of the only city in Europe that banned pesticides. Mals is a town in northern Italy where a united community has expressed a desire to live in a cleaner environment free from plant protection products (PPPs). This has led to a significant negative impact of pesticides on nature and a significant impact on human health in the area. In the project, the partners organize photo exhibitions in their countries. The exhibitions illustrate the case of the town of Mals, where farming is cleaner without the use of PPE. The exhibition was held in Kaunas, Lithuania. The partners also analyzed the current situation regarding the use of pesticides and their residues in the environment and sought to identify needs for action on the sustainable use of pesticides in the field of environment and human health. Information sheets for farmers and farmers' neighbors are also being prepared.



**STRENGTHENING
THE
PARTICIPATION
OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
NGOS IN PUBLIC
GOVERNANCE
PROCESSES**

2018-2021
In Lithuania



A group of people are seated around a long wooden table in a meeting room. In the foreground, a person is seen from the back, sitting on a blue and orange chair, looking at a laptop on the table. The laptop screen displays a website with a grid of images. Other people are seated further down the table, some looking towards the laptop. The room has large windows on the left, a projector on the ceiling, and a modern, minimalist aesthetic. The lighting is soft and even.

The project is being implemented together with the Lithuanian Environmental Coalition. It aims to strengthen capacity to respond to environmental challenges and to develop proposals for public governance solutions.

During the project, we participated in consultations and prepared proposals for the Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the continuity of the National Progress Program and strategic environmental provisions (02/07/2019), initiated and consistently developed dialogue on environmental and sustainable development priorities in strategic documents. We have also prepared proposals for for the changes in the Law on Forests.

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN 2019

*- note that this column (total budget) contains the total budget of all the partners involved in the project.

Duration	Total budget*	Financed by	Project name	Partners/ executors	Project's website
2014-2019	2 751 426 EUR	ES LIFE+ programme, Republics of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and project partners.	Integrated planning tool to ensure viability of grasslands (LIFE Viva Grass)	Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania (Coordinating Beneficiary), Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia, University of Latvia, Municipality of Cesis, SOVITES Farm, Baltic Environmental Forum Estonia, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Municipality of Lääne- Saare, Farm Kurese, Paviļņiai and Verkiai Regional Park, Dubysa Regional Park, Silute District Municipality, JSC Hnit-Baltic, Institute for Environmental Solutions.	vivagrass.eu
2015-2020	4 458 762 EUR	LIFE programme, Republics of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and project partners.	Baltic pilot cases on reduction of emissions by substitution of hazardous chemicals and resource efficiency (LIFE FitForREACH)	Baltic Environmental Forum Estonia (Project coordinator), Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia, KTU Institute of Environmental Engineering (APINI), Center of Environmental Policy, JSC Marijampolės pieno konservai, JSC Vakarų Metalgama, REACH helpdesk in Lithuania, REACH helpdesk in Latvia, REACH helpdesk in Estonia, Hendrikson & Ko OÜ, Ecodesign competence centre, TENACHEM, Ltd., Henkel Makroflex AS, Epokate OÜ, Mayeri Industries AS.	fitreach.eu/lt
2016-2019	3 541 797 EUR	European Union European Regional Development Fund, Interreg Baltic Sea Region, Republic of Lithuania and project partners.	Innovative management solutions for minimizing emissions of hazardous substances from urban areas in the Baltic Sea Region (NonHazCity)	City of Stockholm (lead partner), City of Västerås, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Turku University of Applied Sciences, Pärnu City Government, Pärnu Water, Baltic Environmental Forum Estonia, Riga City, Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia, University of Gdańsk, Municipality of Gdańsk, Gdańsk Water Utilities, Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Klaipėda regional environmental department, Kaunas District Municipality, Šilalė District Municipality, Institute of Applied Ecology, Baltic Environmental Forum Germany.	pagalvok.lt
2016-2023	4 097 038 EUR	LIFE Programme, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania and project partners.	Stepping stones towards ensuring long-term favorable conservation status of Aquatic warbler in Lithuania (LIFE MagniDucatusAcroia)	Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania (Project coordinator), Kretinga State Forest Enterprise, Zuvintas Biosphere Reserve Directorate, State Scientific and Production Amalgamation "Scientific and Practical Center of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus for Biological resources".	meldine.lt
2018-2027	17 000 044 EUR	EU LIFE Programme and Republic of Lithuania.	Optimizing the management of Natura2000 network in Lithuania	Environmental Projects Management Agency (coordinating beneficiary), Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania, State Service for Protected Areas, Aukštaitija National Park and Labanoras Regional Park Headquarters, Dzūkija national park and Cepkeliai nature reserve Directorate, Žemaitija National Park Directorate, Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Faculty of Forest Sciences and Ecology of Aleksandras Stulginskis University, Varena State Forest Enterprise, Druskininkai State Forest Enterprise.	naturalit.lt

Duration	Total budget*	Financed by	Project name	Partners/ executors	Project's website
2018-2021	4 925 146 EUR	European Union's H2020 research and innovation programme.	Understanding and improving the sustainability of agro-ecological farming systems in the EU (UNISECO)	Johann Heinrich von Thünen-Institut Bundesforschungsinstitut für Ländliche Räume, Wald und Fischerei (coordinator), Consiglio per la Ricerca in Agricoltura e l'Analisi dell'Economia Agraria, Agricultural University of Athens, Universität für Bodenkultur Wien, The James Hutton Institute, The University Court of the University of Aberdeen, Institut Supérieur d'Agriculture Rhone Alpes, Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia, Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau Stiftung, Geonardo Environmental Technologies, Luonnonvarakeskus, Sweriges Lantbruksuniversitet, Gestion Ambiental de Navarra, Asociatia WWF Programul Dunare Carpati Romania, Ustav Zemedelske Ekonomiky a Informaci, European Landowners Organization, Bioinstitut.	uniseco-project.eu
2019-2021	2 711 587 EUR	Baltic Sea Region Interreg programme, the Republic of Lithuania and project partners.	WATERDRIVE – water driven rural development in the Baltic Sea Region.	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), South Baltic Water District Authority/Kalmar County Administrative Board, Swedish Board of Agriculture, Västervik Municipality, Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Natural Resources Institute Finland, Finnish Environment Institute, ProAgria Southern Finland, Finnish Field Drainage Association, Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn Centre, Jelgava Local Municipality, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Union Farmers' Parliament, Agricultural Advisory Service in Brwinow, European Regional Centre for Ecohydrology, PhenoHorizon OLP SP, Agency for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs of the German Federal State Schleswig Holstein, L&F SEGES, Baltic Sea Action Group (BSAG), Federal State Budgetary Scientific Institution "Northwest Research Institute of Agricultural Economics and Organization" (NWRIAEO), St. Petersburg-Pushkin, Institute for Engineering and Environmental Problems in Agricultural Production – branch of Federal State Budgetary Scientific Institution "Federal Scientific Agroengineering Center VIM" (IEEP), St. Petersburg-Pushkin, Administration of Guryevsk City District.	water-drive.eu
2019-2021	833 325 EUR	EU LIFE programme and project partners.	Grazing for wildfire prevention, ecosystem service provision, nature conservation and landscape management (GRAZELIFE)	Rewilding Europe, The Netherlands, ARK Nature, The Netherlands, University of A Coruna, Spain, University of Leipzig, Germany, Rewilding Ukraine, Ukraine, Rewilding Rhodope Foundation, Bulgaria, Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Lithuania.	grazelife.com
2019-2021	171 042 EUR	2014-2020 Investment Action Program of EU Funds.	Strengthening the participation of environmental NGOs in public governance processes.	Association "Environmental Coalition", Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Nature conservation association "Baltic wolf", "Lithuanian Society of Entomologists".	-
2019-2021	1 107 175 EUR	Baltic Sea Region Interreg programme, the Republic of Lithuania and project partners.	Capitalizing key elements of NonHazCity: empowering private and professional users for better risk management and use reduction of chemical products in their cities (NonHazCity 2)	Riga city, Baltic Environmental Forum Latvia, Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania, Gdansk Water Utilities Ltd., City of Västerås, Pärnu City Government, Baltic Environmental Forum Estonia, Baltic Environmental Forum Germany, Turku University of Applied Sciences, Association Polish Forum ISO 14000, Saint-Petersburg State University of Aerospace Instrumentation, Ecological union.	pagalvok.lt
2019-2020	13 110 EUR	Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM).	Sustainable, healthy agriculture – SustAgr	Ecodesign Competence Centre (LV), The Danish Ecological Council (DK), Estonian Green Movement (EE), Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania (LT).	-



**WE PROVIDE
SERVICES FOR
BUSINESS AND
PUBLIC
INSTITUTIONS**




We made the progress assessment of nature conservation measures that were implemented using EU financial support in 2014–2020.



In cooperation with “Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK Limited” we made integrated assessment of 2 Lithuanian river basin management plans.



We consulted public authorities and companies in the fields of green (public) procurement, management of chemical substances and environment protection.



We consulted public authorities and organisations in Albania about adaptation of the nature protection sector to EU environmental policy.

We organised seminars and consultations in topics of environmental communication and environmental education.

We consulted various enterprises (such as "Konekesko Lietuva" or "Nasdaq Baltic") about sustainable business and other topics related to environment protection.

A photograph of a deer with large, dark antlers in a forest. The deer is positioned on the right side of the frame, facing right. The background is a dense forest with green foliage and tree trunks. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image, within a semi-transparent dark green vertical bar. The text is in white, bold, uppercase letters. There are two white horizontal bars above and below the text.

**VOLUNTEER
INITIATIVES**

**PUNIA FOREST
MOVEMENT**



Together with the theater director Gintaras Varnas, many members of the public and naturalists, we joined to defend the ancient Punia forest.

LET'S SAVE PUNIA FOREST

THE MOST VALUABLE ANCIENT FOREST OF LITHUANIA



On July 12, on the same day that the newly elected Lithuania's President Gitanas Nausėda took the oath, the Minister of the Environment K. Mažeika delegated the State Service for Protected Areas to suspend the expansion process of the Punia Forest Strict Reserve, which had been started almost two years ago (November 2017). We were outraged by such an unfounded, unmotivated order from the Minister, which poses a threat to Lithuania's most valuable ancient forest, and we took active steps to stop it:



- We created a website punioossilas.lt, where we constantly provided the most relevant information;
- Together with more than 100 famous Lithuanian people from the fields of nature conservation, art, culture we addressed the President G. Nausėda urging to defend Punia forest;
- We have prepared a petition signed by 15,000 people;
- At the discussion festival "Picnic of freedom" we organized a discussion about the Punia Forest;
- We brought together the most prominent Lithuanian scientists, who distributed an open letter about the protection of the Punia forest;
- We went to the court trying to cancel the unjustified decision to suspend the expansion of the Punia Forest Strict Reserve;
- We organized a press conference;
- We have created an opportunity to support our fight in court by donating the desired amount of money;
- We actively communicated with the media about the situation in Punia forest;
- We joined the protest "Forests are coming to Vilnius";
- We organized 5 tours to Punia forest, which were visited by more than 200 people;
- We attended a meeting of the Committee on Petitions;
- We attended the first court hearing.

ONLY THE STATUS OF STRICT RESERVE CAN PROTECT PUNIA FOREST

Currently, only a small part of the Punia forest (456.94 ha) has the status of a strict reserve. The other part (2249.39 ha) is a botanical-zoological reserve. Unfortunately, the status of the reserve is not sufficient for the protection of the ancient forest, as it allows various types of tree cuttings, which impoverishes the forest, disturbs its ecological balance, and prevents the spread or restoration of ancient forest species. The status of the reserve also allows intensive hunting, which disturbs the natural ecological balance of species and natural processes. The existing strict reserve occupies a small area and is too small to maintain a live ancient forest. The status of the strict reserve would also ensure the long-term protection of this forest, since the status cannot be changed so easily with the change of a new minister.



RESULTS

At the end of 2019, the fate of the Punia forest remained unclear. We had mobilized a great number of people and raised EUR 5,998 support for the court costs, but there is still no clear decision what will happen with this ancient forest. We were disappointed by the meeting of the Commission on Petitions, after which it became clear that the commission would not take any decision until the court will say its verdict. And we were inspired by the first court hearing, in which the judges were extremely active and involved in the process.



**VOLUNTEER
INITIATIVES**

TEACHING





In 2019, BEF LT employees, Žymantas Morkvėnas and Rita Grinienė, continued teaching an environmental communications course at Vilnius University, Center of Life Sciences. Our colleague's students, for the third year, were biodiversity master's students. Throughout the whole semester, students went deep into the nuances of communication, prepared press releases, analyzed selected environmental issues and created campaigns to solve them. The course's culmination was an event "Butterfly Day" at Kairėnai Botanical garden.

Another colleague, Audronė Alijošutė-Paulauskienė shared her many years of experience in the social responsibility sphere with master's students of International Communication at Vilnius University.



**VOLUNTEER
INITIATIVES**

**DISCUSSIONS
& JURY**

Christauretopt
Gustavo Pinheiro

We participated in the discussion of the Lithuanian Annual Business Responsibility Conference.

We participated in the Grand Jury of the European Innovation and Technology Accelerator "Climate-KIC", which promotes the development of climate-neutral startups.





OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

A close-up photograph of a tree trunk covered in moss and lichen. The tree bark is dark and textured, with patches of bright green moss and light-colored lichen. On the left side, a person's hand is visible, holding a green leaf. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the tree and the surrounding environment.

OUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRON- MENT

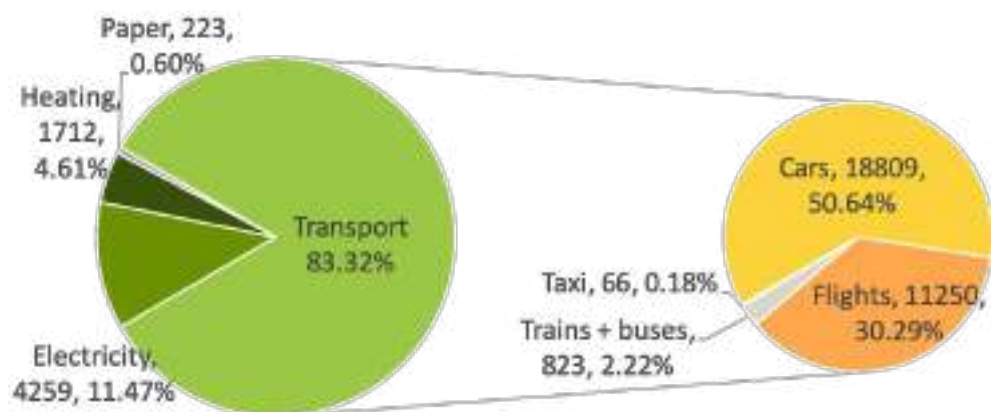
Inevitably, each of us generate a certain trace of CO2. As an environmental organization, we believe that it is important to monitor our impact on the environment, to see the areas that contribute most to it, to find the causes and to take actions in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For this reason, since 2011 we have been calculating the amount of CO2 generated during our work, expressed in terms of emissions equivalent, and estimating the amount of generated waste.



Every year in our organization is very different. The last - 2019 was no exception. Depending on the activities in different areas, we generate different amounts of CO2. This year also had it's own challenges, such as moving to a new office, the second translocation of Aquatic warblers, festivals in nature and many more. The moving to a new office resulted in the fact that we switched from gas heating to electricity heating, therefore gas consumption decreased, but, naturally, electricity increased. Water consumption also increased. This may have been due to moving and repair work. This year we also had more employees than ever before - on average about 19!



COMPOSITION OF TOTAL CO2 FOOTPRINT IN 2019, KG



11%



As every year, we have generated the most CO2 during our travels. We have had many seminars, meetings with experts, farmers, performed the translocation of Aquatic warblers, as well as organized festivals in nature, but compared to last year, the amount of carbon dioxide generated by transport is 11% lower. We flew with planes less and also traveled less by car.

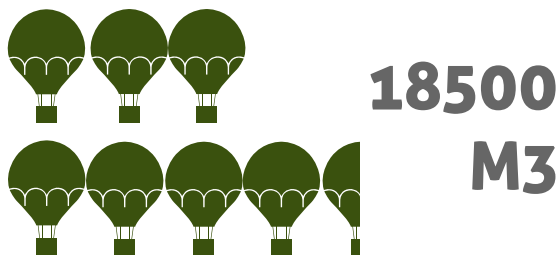
37,1 T

The total amount of generated CO2 gas is 37,1 tons, which is 7% less than last year.

64 HA



Approximately 64 ha of forest in Lithuania would absorb this amount of CO2 per year, this would represent 2,5% of Punia forest area.



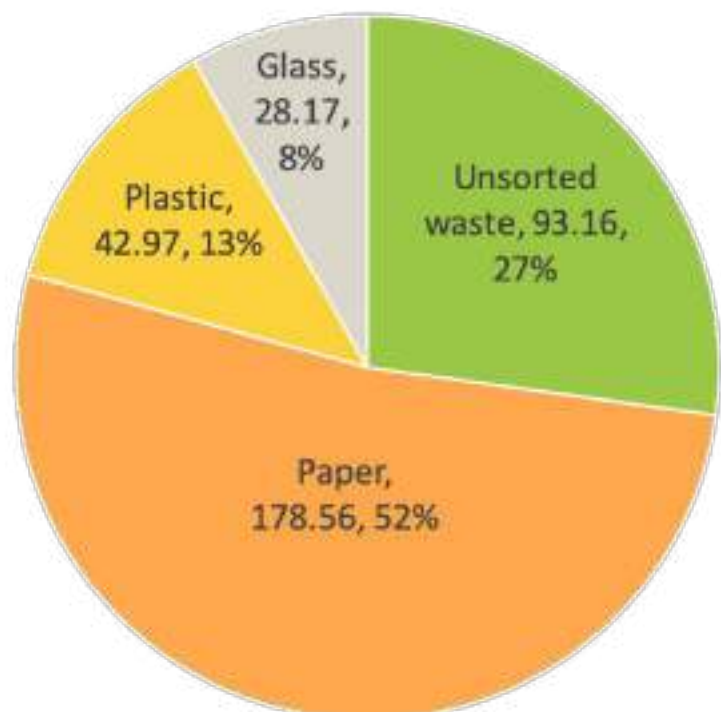
37 tons of CO2 gas has a volume of approximately 18,500 m3. This amount of gas would fill the domes of about 7,5 medium-sized air balloons.

WASTE

This year, we generated approximately 129 kg less household waste than last year. This year, the same as the last, the biggest amount of our generated waste was paper, but this may be due to the moving, during which we reviewed all of our shelves and cleaned them thoroughly.

It is important to mention that we use recycled paper with lower CO2 footprint. As a result, we have managed to avoid an additional 1,1 t of greenhouse gases. This year we also encouraged participants of nature festivals to have their own reusable utensils, and those who didn't have it were able to purchase nature friendly, compostable ones. This action has greatly reduced the use of slowly degradable plastic during festivals.

OUR HOUSEHOLD WASTE GENERATED IN 2019, KG



OUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRON- MENT

WE DID NOT EVALUATED WASTE THAT WAS GENERATED DURING MOVING TO THE NEW OFFICE

The amount of waste generated this year was difficult to calculate accurately as we moved to a new office and renovated it. During this intensive period it was not possible to trace all of the waste, but it is worth noting that all of the generated construction waste was properly utilized - taken to the designated waste sites. We did not include construction waste, as it is very different and cannot be compared to the rest of waste, and we believe that moving is a one-time action that we have not had for many years and we will not have for many years to come, so it is hard to make a conclusion and a comparison in the long run.



It is important to note that we have renovated and set up the new office using the most environmentally friendly materials as possible. For example, under the guidance of a specialist, we made the floor ourselves from clay and other natural materials. So, now we're excited about our great, modern floor and some enthusiasts of such clay floors come to see it. We also painted, more precisely - covered the walls with putty. We used a mixture of lime and quartz sand for them. We only bought the missing furniture and adapted all the others from the old office. We had to cut a few shelves ourselves, and our experienced seamstress Rita J. even adapted the linen curtains we had.





NINE VOICES

BIOMASS PROCESSING FACILITY "NINE VOICES"



In the autumn of the last year (2018), the biomass recycling center "Nine" voices" started operating, where late-cut grass from the most important habitat of Aquatic warbler in Lithuania (Tyrai and other habitats of this bird in Nemunas Delta) is processed. The work of this facility is still gaining momentum, discovering it's own rhythm, so it would not be expedient to estimate the amount of CO2 generated so far. With more data, we will be able to make a more detailed assessment of the impact of the facility. It is important to mention that the activities of the biomass facility help the biodiversity to flourish, and we do not use any hazardous substances in production, our products are completely natural.



FINANCIAL REPORT



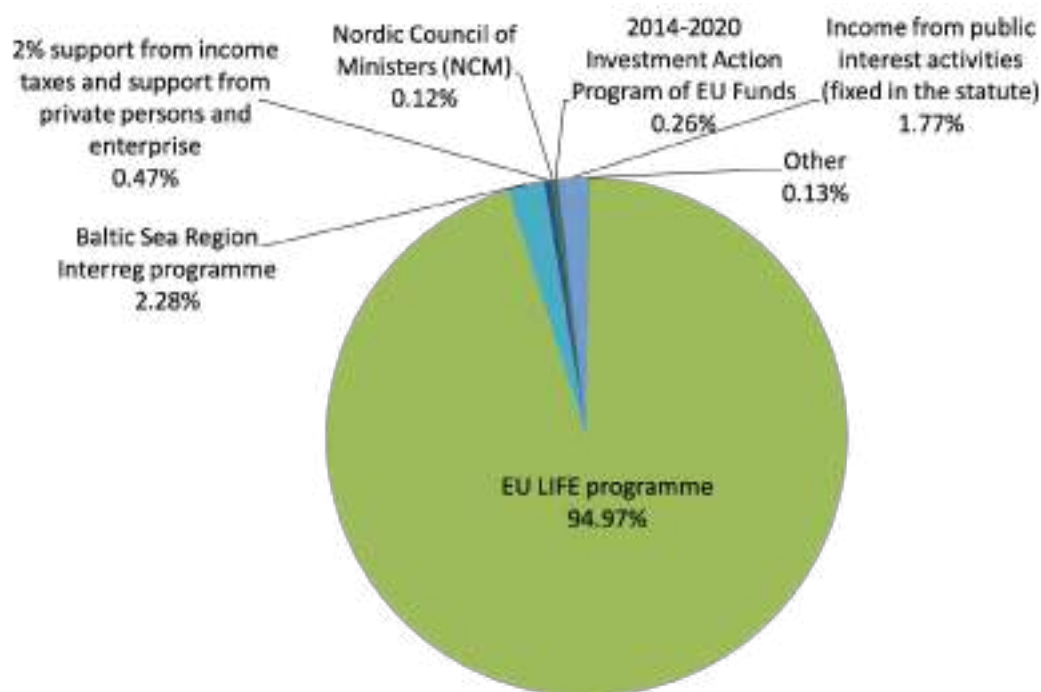
FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME

Total income for 2019 year was 1 614 897 euro*. Part of this sum was related with Project expenses reimbursement from 2018 and another part with Project expenses from 2019, support and income from public interest activities.

*A remark. According to the LR public organizations legislation, the activity report has to indicate the received income, and this amount does not match with the financial turnover in the balance sheet, because the turnover in the balance sheet is counted cumulatively.

INCOME BY SOURCES



In diagram "Income by sources" income from EU LIFE programme was calculated together with national co-funding sum, as Lithuania is committed to contribute to the implementation of projects funded by this programme. National co-funding income was 73 485 euro in 2019. It means 4,55 % from all income of the year.

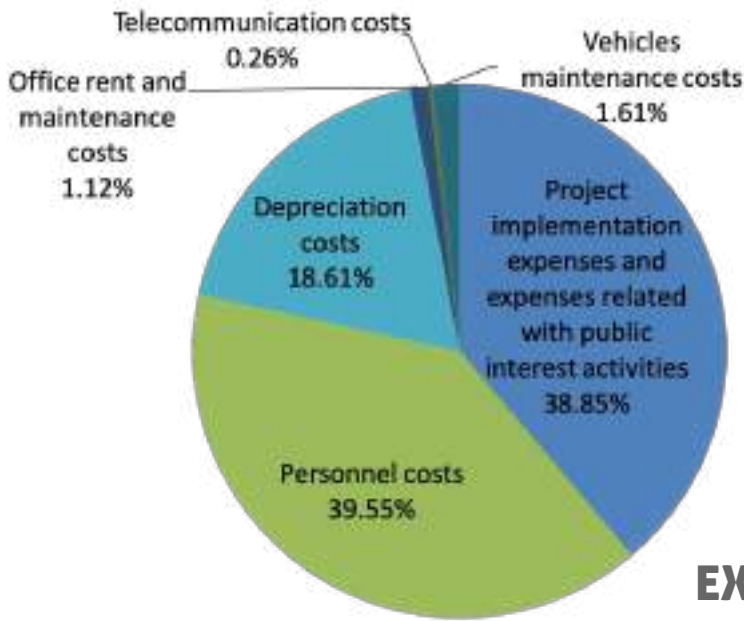
Part of income from EU LIFE programme was distributed among Project partners – 21,88 % from such income. Institutional part here was 78,12 %, but part of this sum will be distributed among project partners in 2020.

2% support from taxes was 1 002 euro in 2019. Support from private persons and enterprise was 6 645 euro.

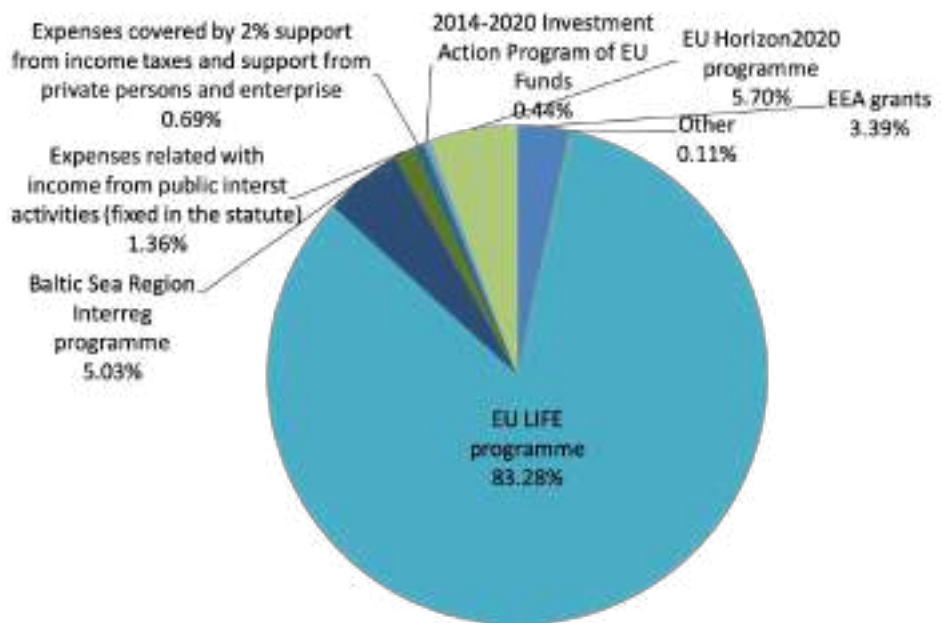
EXPENSES

Total expenses for 2019 year was 971 052 euro. Part of these expenses will be reimbursed from receivable funding income on 2020. In diagrams below you can see "Expenses by categories" and "Expenses by sources".

EXPENSES BY CATEGORIES



EXPENSES BY SOURCES



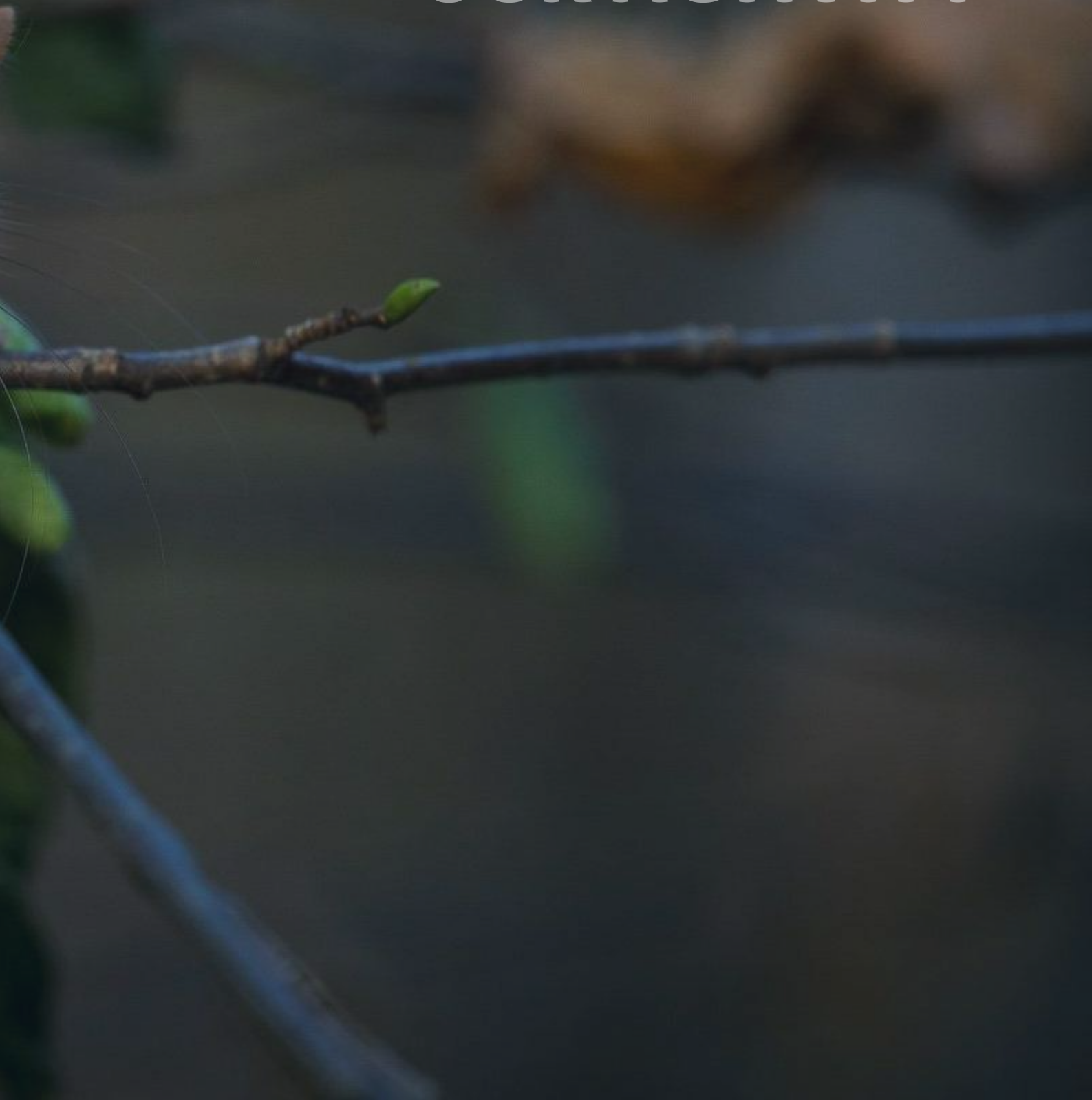
EMPLOYEES AND SHAREHOLDERS

At the beginning of the year 20 employees worked in organization, 6 of them were part-time employees and 3 persons were on Maternity leave. At the end of the year 19 employees worked in organization, 4 of them were part-time employees and 1 person was on Maternity leave.

In 2019 shareholders structure hasn't changed. The shareholders contribution is 1 539 euro (with the proportions 97%, 2% and 1 %). Because the organization is public (non-governmental) institution all of shareholders has one vote right (information about public organization shareholders can be found at the State Enterprise Centre of Registers).



PUBLIC'S SUPPORT FOR OUR ACTIVITY



In total, in 2019, we received EUR 7,647 from donations! Thank you for supporting us! Together, we can make more significant works and of a greater extent.



SUPPORT FOR PUNIA FOREST PROTECTION

In 2019 we started a movement to preserve the Punia forest. To fund the ongoing legal process, we collected targeted public donations into a dedicated bank account. During 2019, we received EUR 5,998. Despite the fact that this is a really large amount, these donations will not be enough to cover all the court costs. Therefore, we continue to collect donations. We believe that with your support we will win in court, which will ultimately lead to adequate protection for the most valuable Lithuanian ancient forest.

PUBLIC SUPPORT

7 647 Eur

SUPPORT DURING NATURE FESTIVALS

Dedicated donations were also collected during the "In the Middle of Forests" and "In the Forest Spells". We will use this support to fund future festivals. In total EUR 137 was collected during the events.



OTHER RECEIVED DONATIONS

In other ways we collected EUR 510 of donations.

DONATIONS FROM INCOME TAXES

In 2019 we received EUR 1002 from 2 % from income taxes. Compared to donations in 2018, this support has increased by almost 40 %.



SUPPORT BALTIC ENVIRON- MENTAL FORUM LITHUANIA



Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania protects nature for people. Together, this is much easier to do that.

Many of our initiatives that protect nature and promote human personal experience in the nature could not exist without public support. Help us support existing and implement new ideas.



In 2020 we will allocate the support collected for the conservation of the Punia forest, environmental education and activities that promote children's experiences in nature.





LIFE PROJECTS ARE INVESTMENT TO LITHUANIAN NATURE & ECONOMY

Currently our main projects are financed by EU LIFE programme. The most important goal of the LIFE projects is, of course, practical work for Lithuania's nature. The LIFE programme significantly contributes to the implementation of Lithuania's commitments to the EU in the field of nature conservation. A big part of nature management and research that is very much needed for our county is done thanks to this programme. EU investments (60-75 %) constitute the biggest part of the LIFE projects' budget. Project partners contribute to the projects with their own financing and Lithuania (Ministry of Environment) also provides a share of general co-financing.

91-98 % NATIONAL CO-FINANCING RETURNED

Last year we wrote that event 91 % of money that Lithuania gave as general co-financing for the first Aquatic Warbler project ("Baltic Aquatic Warbler", no. LIFE09 NAT/ LT/000233), came back to the budget of our country. So, the realized national co-financing for the project, excluding the money that came back for the country as taxes, was 36 755 Eur, while the project attracted 1,47 mln. Eur of Europe's investments to Lithuania and made a lot of good works for the nature. From an economic point of view only, 1 euro from Lithuania's budget generated 40 euros of European investment.

In this year another LIFE project "LIFE Viva Grass" (no. LIFE13 ENV/LT/000189) has ended. After counting taxes Lithuanian partners paid to the national budget it became clear that even 98 % of money that Lithuania provided for the project as general national co-financing were return to it's own budget. So, the realized national co-financing for the project, excluding the money that came back for the country as taxes, was 4 101 Eur, while the project attracted 408 982 Eur to our country as Europes investment. From an economic point of view only, 1 euro from Lithuania's budget generated 100 euros of European investment.

During the implementation of projects, project money is spent not only to create jobs, purchase services and goods from Lithuanian producers, i.e. money enters Lithuanian market, income is generated for other economic entities, but also a significant part of the co-financing that was provided by the state is returned to the state's budget in the form of taxes (social insurance, VAT and others).

The LIFE programme is specifically dedicated to environmental protection and it cannot finance projects in any other field or sector. The decision on funding projects within the program is made by the European Commission after applying with your project idea to the international project contest. Every year, many project applications from all over the Europe are submitted to the contest. The LIFE programme is recognised as one of the European Union's most effective measures for protecting nature and the environment.



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Dragonfly
飛

VOLUNTEERING

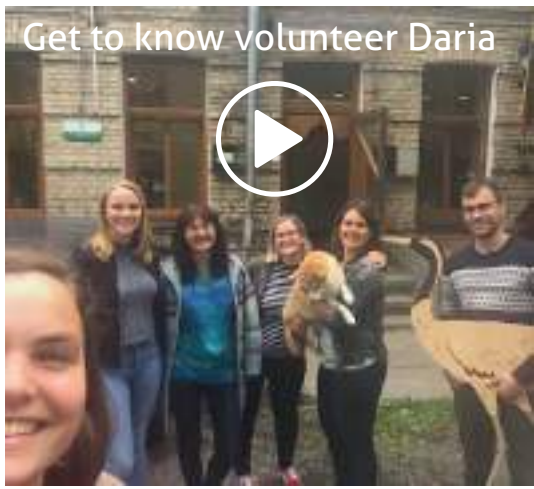
Meldinēs nendrinukēs
SAVANORIS



**VOLUNTEER-
ING HELPING
SAVE THE
ENVIRONMENT**



Get to know volunteer Vidmante



Get to know volunteer Daria



Get to know volunteers from Šilutė- Raminta, Gabija, Greta



Get to know volunteer Tomas

We give motivated individuals the opportunity to work to protect the environment with us. If you are enthusiastic and want to make a difference, and environmental protection is an important area for you, we welcome you to join us.

In 2019 we really had a lot of volunteers. For the second year in a row, we had volunteers from the USA. This year we were assisted by Daria. She helped us with both in going up the Aquatic Warbler chicks and in preparing various information in English.

Volunteers Akvilė and Rita also helped us a lot this year. Akvilė helped with the festival "In the Middle of Woods" and the platform for Young nature rangers. She also participated Aquatic Warbler translocation. Rita put most of her heart into helping us with the "Forest Spells" festival, but also contributed to other activities.

We also had a lot of Aquatic Warbler volunteers, who mostly helped us this year during the translocation - they helped to catch insects and prepare food for the growing birds. There were over 50 volunteers this year! Thank you! We would especially like to thank to the volunteer Tomas, who tirelessly took care of our juveniles and ensured that they always had enough food. He spent almost a whole month with the birds.



VOLUNTEER



**TEAM OF
BALTIC
ENVIRONMEN-
TAL FORUM
LITHUANIA**



**MOMENTS
FROM OUR
LIFE**



**WE WORK FROM
ANYWHERE**



**TOGETHER WE
CELEBRATE AND HELP
FOR EACH OTHER**





MOVING TO A NEW OFFICE



**MOMENTS
FROM OUR
LIFE**





NEW OFFICE- NEW ARCH TO FIND US



GIFTS FROM CHINA

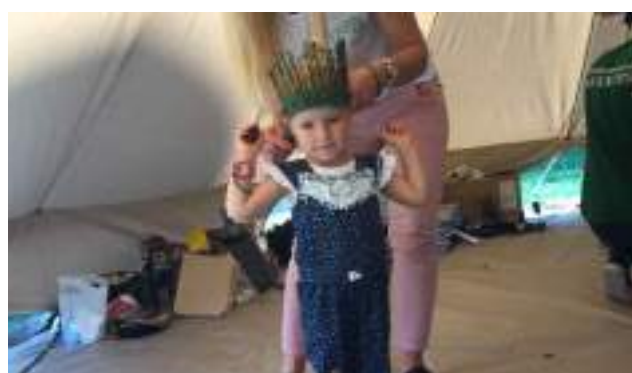


**MOMENTS
FROM OUR
LIFE**





WE ATTENDED "FREEDOM PICNIC" IN KAUNAS



THE WHOLE TEAM JOINED THE TRANSLOCATION OF AQUATIC WARBLER



MOMENTS FROM OUR LIFE





THE WHOLE TEAM HELPED IN NATURE FESTIVALS



MOMENTS FROM OUR LIFE





WORKING WORKING



MOMENTS FROM OUR LIFE





BALTIC ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM LITHUANIA
WWW.BEF.LT
2020

