

<b>Donor country</b> European Union
<b>Project/programme title</b> Pro-diversity Business in the steppe zones of the Eurasia region – 2006
<b>Project duration</b> 30 months
<b>EC contribution to Project budget</b> €0.6 million
<b>Main proposer</b> The European Community, represented by the Commission of the European Communities, is the Contracting Authority
<b>Main objectives and brief project description</b> <p>During the initial project phase, an assessment of the biodiversity and small business environment in each country will be carried out. The aim will be to identify regions of high natural value land where SMEs show the potential and interest in creating a so-called “Pro-Biodiversity Business”. The relevant national sectors and designated sites will be defined, and a list of potential pro-biodiversity SMEs created through consulting the relevant commercial registers.</p> <p>In the first six months of 2009, a pro-biodiversity integrated investment platform for all project steppe areas will be elaborated to devise the most effective way to channel investments towards SMEs. The project will develop indicators of net ecological benefit to help measure and track potential investments that could be made in steppe ecosystem based SMEs. Towards the second half of 2009, two to three integrated investment studies will be carried out from two or three of the six project sites resulting in the production of SME and upstream secondary and tertiary business plans. The end goal of the project will be to put in place a structure and procedures through which SMEs can be engaged in delivering economically viable biodiversity conservation activities in the Eurasian Steppes.</p>
<b>Technology transferred</b> <p>The project seeks to put in place a structures through which SMEs can be engaged in delivering economically viable biodiversity conservation activities in the Eurasian Steppes. Working in close collaboration with the EC TACIS EuroSteppe project "Sustainable Integrated Land-use of the Eurasian Steppes", the aim is to identify financial structures and instruments that will provide the market mechanism necessary for long-term sustainability of the selected SMEs in the steppe ecosystem</p>