

Project Update: October 2005

Field research of seven fire-places occurred in different years and the contiguous control sites are surveyed in the region of Eastern Rhodopes.

Workshop with the local control institutions, NGO, local communities and media was carried out. The control institutions made tangible commitments regarding tortoises' conservation in the region, as a result of the workshop.

Sixteen control raids are realized and thirty-two places are checked, including gypsy camps, private houses, public places and kinder gardens. Eighty-seven tortoises are confiscated as eleven of them are voluntarily delivered by citizens.

At the same beginning the project was broadly promoted by the regional media. By this moment more than thirty-six articles are realized in the press and electronic media as well as three radio - and five TV transmissions, which gave a vast publicity to the tortoises' conservation problems.

Coloured poster in a total print of four thousands was printed and spread in the key Eastern Rhodopes regions of tortoises' conservation, around eight municipalities and more than one hundred-seventy villages.

Theoretical activities for identification of the two species, tortoises' biology and ecology, as well as threats on them, are carried out with pupils in the cities of Ivajlovgrad and Majorovo during the summer, afterwards the theory learned was proved on the field as part of the field activities.

Presentation of the project was made during a course for "Management and conservation of threaten by distinction species" carried out (16.07-07.08.2005), in the International Education Center by Jersey Zoo, organized by Durrell Wildlife conservation trust.

Thirteen volunteers and more than ten experts by regional and national institutions had taken part in the project activities implementation by this moment.