Activities on Biodiversity conservation and protection of habitats

National Railway Infrastructure Company
- Responsible for the environmental protection

11th UIC Sustainability Conference, Madrid

17 June 2010
The company is responsible for the maintenance of:

- rail track and structure (tunnels, bridges, level crossings, stations, etc.);
- signaling and telecommunications equipment;
- power supply equipment and catenary.
The Bulgarian rail network

• 4,071 route-km with standard rail gauge;

• main lines - 2,915 km of the railway network;

• 24 percent is double track;

• 67 percent is electrified
The electrical poles of the NRIC’s catenary are often a preferred place by the white storks, for building their nests.
The White Stork (Ciconia ciconia) is a waterfowl family species Storks (Ciconiidae), protected by the Bulgarian Biodiversity Act.
In case of the insulation system breakdown the heavy overhanging branches cause serious short-circuits:

• the nests ignite and burn together with the eggs or young birds;

• traffic interruption;

• costs for damages recovering and the power supply reactivation
The solution

- Detour on the entire grid system.

- Location of All White stork nests on the poles along the NRIC’s.
The solution

- Development of high-voltage insulated platform on which to lay the Stork nest.
The solution

- Pilot placing on in randomly selected nest.
In September 2009 NRIC prepared all the necessary documentation and submitted it to the Ministry of Environment and Waters in order to receive a permission for destroying and re-building 54 White Stork nests on platforms.
The solution

According to the Permission terms and conditions the platforms shall be placed not later than March 1, 2010.
Joint actions

- National Railway Infrastructure Company
  - development of the design of the platform;
  - obtaining the necessary permits by the competent authority - Ministry of Environment and Waters and Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Waters;
  - platforms installation.
The Bulgarian Society for Birds Protection was responsible for:

- the monitoring of the installed platforms

- birds reaction.
Joint actions

The necessary funds for the platforms materials were provided by;

- NRIC

For those nests in the Plovdiv and StaraZagora regions were received donations from

- Plovdiv municipality
- UBB bank.
The implementation of activities on the nests destruction and re-building on the platforms was conducted by the teams for the power supply equipment maintenance and monitored by the relevant Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Waters.
The work implementation was accompanied by a number of difficulties;

• Nest own weight (a single nest weighs over 100 kg)

• Unsuitable weather conditions (winter situation)

• Even cases of the workers superstitious prejudices to destroy the White Stork nest.
In April 2010 was made the first monitoring of the platforms, and most of the nests were occupied.

The official monitoring report for the success of the platforms still have to be prepared, and is expected to be published in July 2010.
Thank you for your attention

National Railway Infrastructure Company

110 Maria Luiza Blvd,
Sofia 1233, Bulgaria
tel.: (+359 2) 932 6001
fax: (+359 2) 932 6444

www.rail-infra.bg
office@rail-infra.bg