

<b>PROJECT NAME</b>	<b>Controlled nesting of the precious Northern House Martin on the territory of Slovnaft Refinery</b>
<b>LOCATION</b>	Bratislava, Slovakia
<b>DURATION</b>	2014 – ongoing
<b>OUTCOME</b>	50 artificial nests installed and bird population monitoring activities on going

## Project Description

### ▶ BACKGROUND

Slovnaft invests several million euros in the environmental protection every year. However, the environmental related projects that are important are not only the huge groundwater or air protection projects but also activities related to biodiversity protection, such as the protection of birds.

We have teamed-up with ornithologists for the first time in 2014 in order to help the birds during the sensitive time of nesting and breeding youngsters.

Dry and warm springs are posing a threat for the Northern House Martins which are coming back to Slovakia from their winter sites. In an urban, industrialized environment, they cannot build their new nests due to the lack of puddles with mud or other nest building materials.

The birds are at risk also due to the fact that they are not tolerated by house residents as they are attaching their nests to the building façade. That is why the premises of factories are becoming an appropriate oasis for nesting, where there is a sufficiency of food, safety and material for building up their nests.

### ▶ HISTORY

Based on our employees' initiative, a small-scale project has been developed with the support of the company's management. Financial resources have been allocated and cooperation has been established with the non-governmental organisation SOS BirdLife Slovensko.

In collaboration with experts, the most suitable places for mounting artificial nests have been identified on the refinery's premises – they were mainly places where Northern House Martins used to nest in the past. The nests were installed on administrative buildings in three business days using a mobile elevating work platform.

## Project Results

### ▶ MAIN RESULTS AND OUTCOMES (WHAT CHANGED?)

The increase/conservation of biodiversity on the refinery's premises.

50 artificial nests have been installed, available to Martins after they return from wintering sites.

In addition to artificial nests, the pads which catch droppings, protecting windows and façades against pollution, have also been mounted beneath original nests. It is very easy to install the pads and support the co-existence of the people and the useful Martins, which catch a number of mosquitos, flies and other insects during their stay in Slovakia.

The increase in our employees' knowledge of bird nesting due to awareness rising and volunteering campaigns developed around the bird protection.

Continuous monitoring of the state of bird nests and their occupancy rate.

Mapping of avifauna on the refinery's premises and inclusion of our refinery in the Atlas of Bratislava Birds.

20 bird species have been identified on the premises. One of the most precious of them is the Syrian woodpecker nests on the premises mainly because of preserved old fruit trees providing appropriate nesting conditions. Syrian woodpecker is often referred to as an indicator of a well-preserved state of diversity in the countryside (gardens, fruit trees) of Southern Slovakia.

