



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



THIRD MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MIDDLE-EUROPEAN POPULATION OF THE GREAT BUSTARD (*OTIS TARDA*)

8-12 April 2013, Szarvas, Hungary

CMS/GB/MoS3/Doc.7.3

Agenda Item 7.3

MEDIUM TERM INTERNATIONAL WORK PROGRAMME ON THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MIDDLE-EUROPEAN POPULATION OF THE GREAT BUSTARD (2013–2016)

(Prepared by Hungary)

1. By signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard, Signatories endeavour to work closely together to improve the conservation status of Great Bustard throughout its breeding, migratory and wintering range. The MoU emphasises the need for exchanging scientific, technical and legal information to co-ordinate conservation measures and for co-operation with other Range States, appropriate international organizations and recognized scientists.
2. According to MoU paragraph 8, the Signatory States shall endeavour to adopt and regularly review a Medium Term International Work Programme for the Great Bustard. This should include (1) subjects for co-operative research and monitoring, (2) measures to implement the MoU and its Action Plan, as well as (3) items for which guidelines are needed to further develop and improve the measures listed in the MoU as well as in international and national work programmes.
3. **The first Medium Term International Work Programme (MTIWP) for the Great Bustard MoU has been adopted** at the First Meeting of Signatories (Illmitz, Austria) in 2004 **for the period 2005-2010** (CMS/GB.1/Report/Annex 6).
4. At the Second Meeting of the Signatories (Feodosia, Ukraine) in 2008, the MTIWP was reviewed and **extended to cover the period 2009-2012**(CMS/GB.2/Report/Annex 7), which now **loses effect** at the Third Meeting of the Signatories.
5. It has been decided that a **new MTIWP should be elaborated to set up new objectives** and to organise it around the new Action Plan to be adopted at MoS3 based on the “International Single Species Action Plan for the Western Palearctic Population of Great Bustard, *Otis tarda tarda*”.

6. Therefore, this draft **MTIWP 2013-2016 has been adapted to the** structure of part 4-FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION of the **new Action plan**, listing “*Results*” and “*Actions*” related to Table 3 thereof, and suggests a set of “*Measures to be taken*”. These are the determined priority objectives covering a number of concrete activities to be achieved in the upcoming intersessional period of 3 years – when it has to be reviewed or a new one adopted as will be decided.

7. **Lead countries** for the particular activities are indicated along with relevant **other Range States and organisations that** would **collaborate** on the Work Programme’s implementation.

8. Funding will be needed to support the activities listed in the Work Programme in the planned **time** of accomplishment. Multilateral, bilateral and other sources of funding will need to be secured through funding applications prepared by lead countries and collaborator.

Action requested:

The Meeting is requested to:

- a. Provide specific comments on the draft work programme. Take note and discuss the findings and proposals of the Scientific Symposium, if any, which are or might be related to future plans and commitments in order to decide on their inclusion.
- b. Consider the desirability of creating a working group to consider the draft work programme in detail and revise as needed for the meeting’s review and subsequent adoption.
- c. Adopt the final version of the MTIWP 2013-2016 with amendments thereof, in replacement of the MTIWP (2009-2012) losing effect.

Outstanding Actions by Range States as part of the MTIWP 2013-2016

Result ¹	Action ¹	Measures to be taken	Priority	Time table	Lead Country and collaborators
<i>1.1 Average annual adult survival rate is above 90% in each population</i>	1.1.1 Reduce collision with powerlines through avoiding key areas for Great Bustard, through marking and, if necessary, even through removal of existing dangerous sections of powerlines				
	1.1.2 Prevent the occurrence of catastrophic winter mortality events through supporting the production of oil-seed rape and alfalfa at suitable undisturbed locations far from existing powerlines within the traditional wintering areas and establish capacity to clear snow from fields in emergency situations	<p>Prepare an emergency plan for situations when the breeding populations in Central Europe migrate off.</p> <p>Establish an internet based reporting system where the responsible people and experts notify each other in such emergency on when and where the birds occur and what measures should be taken.</p>	High	2014	Lead: ? Applicable to: all range states
	1.1.3 Maintain hunting ban in all range states and step up efforts to stop poaching where it still occurs				
<i>1.2 Average productivity exceeds 0.25 chicks per female in each population</i>	1.2.1 Identify and apply adequate compulsory restrictions on breeding sites on agricultural practices that significantly reduce the breeding success of the species, such as mowing of alfalfa or grass according to the local breeding phenology of the species, and provide compensation to farmers	Prepare a habitat management plan and detailed restrictions on farming and hunting for the breeding habitats of the species where agri-environmental provisions have not been applied yet.	High	2014	Applicable to: all breeding range states, but RS, RO and RU in particular (?)

Result¹	Action¹	Measures to be taken	Priority	Time table	Lead Country and collaborators
	1.2.2 Apply complementary nest safeguarding and captive rearing measures where necessary and appropriate	Organize study visits to Range States where nest safeguarding and other conservation measures related to the breeding success of the birds (including the methods of detecting breeding females, timing and location of monitoring, methods of in situ protection, etc.) have longer history in order to share experiences.	Low	2013-2016	Applicable to: all breeding range states
		Organise international action to rescue eggs from emergency situations, where necessary and feasible. In particular: prepare an operational plan for the prompt management and transport of rescued eggs from emergency situations, like mowing, harvesting, grazing or spraying to the Rescue Center in Dévaványa. (?)	Medium	2014	Applicable to RS, HU, RO?
	1.2.3 Restrict grazing on key breeding areas where trampling significantly reduces the breeding success				
	1.2.4 Support extensification of agricultural practices in key areas for Great Bustard, including the promotion of set-aside schemes				
	1.2.5 Monitor impact of predators on breeding success and apply predator control measures if necessary	Prepare a predator control management plan on important Great Bustard sites, including the methodology on monitoring the potential impacts of the predators (trap cameras etc.).	High	2014	Applicable to: all breeding range states

Result¹	Action¹	Measures to be taken	Priority	Time table	Lead Country and collaborators
	1.2.6 Create enclosures in the breeding areas of populations if the main reason of breeding failure is predation		Low	(?)	Applicable to: UA (?)
	1.2.7 Reduce human disturbance by restricting movements at display and breeding grounds as necessary	Prepare a guideline on disturbance factors threatening GB on its habitats including a detailed guideline on restricting hunting activities on GB habitats in particular.	Medium	2015	Lead: (?) Applicable to: all range states
1.3 Extent of suitable habitat maintained across the range of the species	1.3.1 Designate all sites holding internationally important populations of Great Bustards listed in Annex 2 as Special Protection Areas in the EU Member States or under national legislation in other countries	RO? RS? UA?	High	Short	Applicable to: all range states
	1.3.2 Introduce, or continue where they already exist, agri-environmental schemes or similar incentive measures to promote farming techniques compatible with the species' requirements and monitor the effectiveness of such measures				
	1.3.3 Ensure that afforestation, irrigation, wind energy, transport and other projects which can negatively affect the Great Bustard's habitat do not take place in areas with internationally important numbers				
1.4 Knowledge gaps filled	1.4.1 Identify all key areas for Great Bustard across its European range	A systematic monitoring carried out and a detailed distribution map established showing key areas of breeding and migratory sites.	High	2014	Applicable to: RU, UA

Result¹	Action¹	Measures to be taken	Priority	Time table	Lead Country and collaborators
	1.4.2 Monitor the size, sex and age composition and productivity of each internationally important population listed in Annex 2, based on standardised counts in winter, spring and autumn	Organize coordinated counts nationally and between neighbouring countries where common populations exist: AT-HU-SK HU-RS-RO UA-RU	High	On-going	Applicable to: all range states
		Establish a joint Middle-European web-based database and a reporting scheme for Range States to submit monitoring data.	Medium	2015 (?)	Lead: AT
	1.4.3 Monitor and improve the effectiveness of captive breeding, rearing and release programmes	Elaborate a monitoring protocol on the marking of birds and monitoring the survival rate and breeding success of released birds thereof.	Low	2014	Applicable to: HU, DE
		Expand the tracking of birds and carry out satellite telemetry projects to mark reared and released birds for monitoring.	Low	2015	Applicable to: HU, DE
	1.4.4 Study the impact of climatic changes on the productivity and survival of the Great Bustard and on its habitat. If necessary, develop habitat management techniques for mitigating the impacts of climate change				
	1.4.5 Carry out <u>comperative ecological studies</u> on the population dynamics and the genetic structure of populations, on habitat requirements and on the effects of habitat changes and infrastructure on the populations ²	To be completed based on concrete priority studies identified in Session 5 of the Scientific Symposium	Medium		

Result¹	Action¹	Measures to be taken	Priority	Time table	Lead Country and collaborators
	1.4.6 Expand studies to improve the understanding of <u>survival and mortality factors</u> , and promote telemetry studies thereof ²	To be completed based on concrete priority studies identified in Session 5 of the Scientific Symposium.	High		
	1.4.7 Investigate the <u>factors influencing breeding success</u> , including predation, and study key parameters, such as habitat availability and choice, home range and dispersal patterns ²	To be completed based on concrete priority studies identified in Session 5 of the Scientific Symposium.	High		
	1.4.8 Analyze regular and irregular <u>migratory movements, and seasonal movements</u> of birds, promote telemetry and other marking methods thereof ²	To be completed based on concrete priority studies identified in Session 5 of the Scientific Symposium.	Medium		
		Information on the ecology and conservation of Great Bustard shared within the conservational and research communities through the maintainance of a web-based bibliography.	Low	Ongoing	Lead: AT Applicable to: all range states
		Organize the 4th Meeting of the Signatories and the preceding Scientific Symposium.	High	2016	
2.1 Effective habitat management and repatriation methods available to assist restoration of Great Bustard populations	2.1.1 Improve habitat for Great Bustard in formerly occupied sites, where feasible ²	Process archive observation data and elaborate a detailed distribution map on important and potential sites of Great Bustard habitats within its range.	Medium	2014	Applicable to: all range states

Result¹	Action¹	Measures to be taken	Priority	Time table	Lead Country and collaborators
		Create the Central-European GB meta-population system, designate key- and presently unoccupied patches in its course - serving as a base for future decision makings and feasibility studies in restoring and protecting the habitats.	Medium	2015	Applicable to: all range states Collaboration: ES
	2.1.2 Develop feasibility studies and management plans to restore transboundary populations and expanding the habitats in these regions	Prepare a transboundary project for the restoration of the previously occupied and potential habitats for the common Great Bustard populations.	Low	2016	Applicable to : BG (?), RO, HU, RS, SK (?), AT(?)
	2.1.3 Promote eco tourism and bird watching in Great Bustard areas, under the appropriate regulatory framework to improve economic viability of Great Bustard areas ²	Carry out raising awareness activities and elaborate education tools and / or modules for both adult and child target audience.	Low	2016	Applicable to: all range states

¹ **‘Results’ and ‘Actions’ refer to Table 3 / part 4- FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION of the new Action plan of te MoU to be adopted as CMS/GB/MoS3/Doc.7.2 based on the “International Single Species Action Plan for the Western Palearctic Population of Great Bustard, *Otis tarda tarda*”.**

² **Additional amendments** proposed by Signatories (HU, CZ) to the amendment proposal CMS/GB/MoS3/Doc.7.2 for the “Adoption of the new International Single Species Action Plan for the Western Palearctic Population of Great Bustard, *Otis tarda tarda*”.