



**Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species  
of Wild Animals**



**First Meeting of the Signatory States of the Memorandum of  
Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-  
European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*)**

*National Park Neusiedler See-Seewinkel, Burgenland, Illmitz, Austria  
17-18 September 2004*

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CMS/GB.1/Inf.8

**Memorandum of Understanding  
on the Conservation and Management of the  
Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard  
(*Otis tarda*)**

## **Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*)**

among

The National Environmental Agency of the Republic of Albania (Albania)

The Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment, and Water of the Federal Republic of Austria (Austria)

The Ministry of Physical Planning and Environment of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The Ministry of Environment and Waters of the Republic of Bulgaria (BULGARIA)<sup>1</sup>

The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning of the Republic of Croatia (Croatia)

The Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic (CZECH REPUBLIC)

The Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of the Federal Republic of Germany (GERMANY)

The Ministry of Agriculture of the Hellenic Republic (GREECE)

The Ministry for Environment of the Republic of Hungary (HUNGARY)

The Ministry of Environment of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYR MACEDONIA)

The Department for the Protection of the Environment of the Republic of Moldova (Moldova)

The Ministry of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry of the Republic of Poland (POLAND)

The Ministry of Water, Forests and Environmental Protection of Romania (ROMANIA)

The Ministry for the Environment of the Slovak Republic (SLOVAKIA)

The Ministry for Environment and Regional Planning of the Republic of Slovenia (SLOVENIA)

The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine UKRAINE)

The undersigned, acting on behalf of their respective authorities named above,

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<sup>1</sup> Countries listed CAPITALISED were Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention or CMS) as of 20 June 2000

1. **RECALLING** that the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, signed at Bonn on 23 June 1979, calls for international co-operative action to conserve migratory species and that Article IV.4 of that convention encourages Parties to conclude Agreements - including non-binding administrative agreements such as this one - in respect of any population of migratory species;
2. **NOTING** that the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) is listed in Appendix II of that Convention as a consequence of its unfavourable conservation status and because it will benefit from an international agreement for its conservation and management and that the middle-European population of this species is included in Appendix I of the Convention which lists threatened migratory species;
3. **RECOGNIZING** that this population is partly migratory, especially during severe winters, along yet unidentified migratory routes crossing the territory of many of its Range States;
4. **CONCERNED** by the considerable decline of this population which has now reached a very vulnerable level, is on the brink of extinction in certain areas and is already extinct in others;
5. **CONSCIOUS** of the need for immediate and concerted action to reverse this trend;
6. **AWARE** that among the factors which contribute to the continuous decline of the Great Bustard are the loss, degradation or fragmentation of suitable habitats and, in some regions, in addition, hunting pressure;
7. **NOTING** the Action Plan for the Great Bustard developed by BirdLife International approved by the ORNIS Committee of the Commission of the European Union and Recommendation of 26 January 1996 of the Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats which recommends to the respective Parties and Non-Party Range States to that convention to consider carrying out, or, if appropriate, reinforcing national Action Plans for the conservation of the Great Bustard;
8. **NOTING ALSO** that the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy in its Action Theme 8 focuses on conservation of grasslands of high biological and landscape diversity in different types of grassland habitats, and emphasises, *inter alia*, Great Bustard habitats in eastern Europe;
9. **DESIROUS** to implement Resolutions 3.2, 4.2 and 5.4 adopted by the Third (Geneva, 1991), Fourth (Nairobi, 1994) and Fifth (Geneva, 1997) Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and also the Resolutions adopted by the International Workshop on the Protection of the middle-European Population of the Great Bustard held in Kecskemét (Hungary) in 1996;
10. **CONVINCED** that the Great Bustard is a key indicator for the state of the habitat on which it relies and that coordinated and concerted action of the Range States will greatly benefit the recovery of the species itself and many other animal and plant species;
11. **APPEALING** to all Range States of the species that have not yet done so to join or, where appropriate, to confirm and to implement the Bonn Convention and any regional conventions and agreements which serve, *inter alia*, the object of conserving the Great Bustard.

**HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. For the purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding
  - a. “Great Bustard” means the middle-European population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*);
  - b. “middle-European population of the Great Bustard” means the population of *Otis tarda* in Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, BULGARIA, Croatia, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, the Republic of Moldova, POLAND, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, and UKRAINE
  - c. “Convention” means the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, signed at Bonn on 23 June 1979;
  - d. “Signatory” means a Signatory to this Memorandum of Understanding;
  - e. “Secretariat” means the Secretariat of the Convention.
2. This Memorandum of Understanding is an agreement under Article IV, paragraph 4, as defined by Resolution 2.6 adopted at the Second Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 11-14 October 1988).
3. The Action Plan annexed to this Memorandum of Understanding is an integral part thereof.
4. In a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation, and in accordance with the precautionary principle, signatories shall endeavour to work closely together and also with appropriate international organisations to improve the conservation status of the Great Bustard throughout its breeding, migratory and wintering range, (whether actual or potential). To this end, they shall:
  - a. accord the same degree of strict legal protection to the Great Bustard throughout its range as is provided for in Article III, paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Convention;
  - b. endeavour to provide maximum protection to, and where feasible restore, the habitat of the Great Bustard at its remaining breeding sites including all those areas where the females rear their young;
  - c. to the extent feasible and appropriate, identify and monitor processes and categories of activities that are endangering or are likely further to endanger the Great Bustard and take appropriate steps to regulate and manage these processes and categories of activities with a view to improving the conservation status of that bird;
  - d. endeavour to map the recently abandoned Great Bustard breeding habitat and implement in such areas suitable habitat management measures and agricultural practices with a view to encouraging the return of Great Bustard population fragments to those areas in the near future;
  - e. endeavour to identify and conserve potential unoccupied breeding habitats, including display sites and nesting areas, where breeding populations of the Great Bustard could be re-established in the future;
  - f. endeavour to take appropriate measures to protect single individuals or small groups of Great Bustards appearing on migration or on wintering sites in grasslands or agricultural areas;
  - g. implement in their respective countries the provisions of the Action Plan annexed to this Memorandum of Understanding as a basis for the conservation of the Great Bustard; for this

purpose, they shall endeavour to adopt or update, as appropriate, within one year of the entry into force of this Memorandum of Understanding national work programmes which should include, *inter alia*, cross-border measures, agreed between the respective Signatories.

5. Signatories are invited to
  - a. designate an authority or an authorized scientist as a national contact point for all matters relating to the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding, and
  - b. communicate forthwith the name and address of that authority or scientist to the Secretariat.
6. Signatories to this MOU which are also Parties to the Convention should in their national report to the Conference of the Parties make specific reference to activities undertaken in relation to this agreement. At the same time, Signatories not Party to the Convention shall be invited to prepare, after the adoption of their national work programme, a report on the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding both of which they should then communicate to the Secretariat.
7. The Signatories shall endeavour to exchange expeditiously the scientific, technical and legal information needed to co-ordinate conservation measures and co-operate with other Range States, appropriate international organizations and recognized scientists with a view to developing co-operative research and facilitating the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding and its Action Plan.
8. The Signatories shall endeavour to adopt, within two years of the date of entry into force of this Memorandum of Understanding, a medium term international work programme for the Great Bustard taking account of, *inter alia*, the Agricultural and Grasslands Habitat Strategy of BirdLife International and all national work programmes. This programme should include subjects for co-operative research and monitoring, measures to implement this Memorandum of Understanding and its Action Plan as well as items for which guidelines for the further development and improvement of the measures listed in this Memorandum of Understanding and in international and national work programmes should be developed.
9. The Secretariat shall prepare an overview report compiled on the basis of all information at its disposal pertaining to the Great Bustard. It shall communicate this report to all Signatories, signing Organisations and to all other Range States. It shall also communicate to all Signatories and all other Range States all national work programmes and national reports which it will have received from the Signatories pursuant to paragraphs 4.g and 6.
10. Signatories shall endeavour to finance from national sources the implementation on their territory of the measures necessary for the conservation of the Great Bustard. They shall, in addition, endeavour to assist each other in the implementation and financing of key points of the international work programme, and seek assistance from other sources for the financing and implementation of their national work programmes.
11. The Secretariat shall convene a meeting of the Signatories upon request of at least half of the States which are Signatories to this Memorandum of Understanding, subject to the availability of funds. The first meeting should be convened without delay after at least three quarters of the Signatories have submitted their work programmes and their first reports and after the international work programme has been developed. The first meeting shall adopt the international work programme. Every meeting shall review the conservation status of the Great Bustard and the implementation of the Action Plan. It will consider the reports submitted by individual Signatories, the report prepared by the Secretariat

and any recommendation or scientific advice relating to the Great Bustard that may have been made by the Conference of the Parties or the Scientific Council of the Convention. It may recommend to Signatories to take any action that it thinks fit. The meeting shall adopt its own rules of procedure. Meetings should be arranged wherever possible to coincide with other appropriate gatherings where the relevant experts would be present, e.g. Meetings of the Parties of the Convention or annual sessions of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention. The Secretariat should report the outcome of meetings to the Conference of the Parties.

#### **Final clauses**

12. This Memorandum of Understanding is concluded for a period of five years starting from the date of its entry into force. It will be automatically renewed for a period of three years, and thereafter every three years for a further period of three years, unless a majority of the Signatories decide otherwise.
13. This Memorandum of Understanding, including the Action Plan which is appended to it, may be amended at any meeting of the Signatories. Any amendment shall be adopted by consensus at a meeting of the Signatories. It shall become effective on the date of its adoption by the meeting. The Secretariat shall communicate the text of any amendment so adopted to all Signatories and to all other Range States.
14. An amendment to a country-specific provision laid down in Part 2 of the Action Plan may be made by any Signatory to which that provision specifically applies. The text of the amendment shall be communicated by the Signatory concerned to the Secretariat which shall transmit it forthwith to all other Signatories. The amendment will enter into force three months after the date on which the Secretariat has communicated it to other Signatories. A Signatory making an amendment may modify that amendment in the light of comments received from other Signatories during the three months period referred to above. In such a case, the amendment will enter into force three months after the date on which the modified amendment has been communicated to the other Signatories by the Secretariat.
15. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall bind any of the Signatories either jointly or severally.
16. This Memorandum of Understanding shall be open for signature indefinitely, at the seat of the Secretariat, for all Range States of the Great Bustard and for the international organizations which are especially involved in the conservation and management of the Great Bustard.
17. It shall become effective on the first day of the month following the date of signature of the fifth Range State. Thereafter, it will become effective for any other signatory on the first day of the month following the date of signature by that signatory.
18. Any Signatory may denounce this Memorandum of Understanding by written notification to the Secretariat. The denunciation shall take effect for that Signatory one year after the date on which the Secretariat has received the notification.
19. The Secretariat shall be the Depositary of this Memorandum of Understanding.
20. The working language for all matters relating to this Memorandum of Understanding, including meetings, documents and correspondence, shall be English.

On behalf of the respective authorities named above:

Representative of the Republic of  
Albania,

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(Signature)

.....  
(Date)

.....  
(Function)

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Representative of the Federal  
Republic of Austria,

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(Signature)

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(Date)

.....  
(Function)

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Representative of the Republic of  
Bosnia and Herzegovina,

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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(Function)

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Representative of the Republic of  
Bulgaria,

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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(Function)

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Representative of the Republic of  
Croatia,

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(Signature)

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Representative of the Czech  
Republic,

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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Representative of the Federal  
Republic of Germany,

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(Signature)

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Representative of the Hellenic  
Republic,

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Representative of the Republic of  
Hungary,

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Representative of the Former  
Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

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Representative of the Republic of  
Moldova,

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Representative of the Republic of  
Poland,

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Representative of Romania,

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Representative of the Slovak  
Republic,

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Representative of the Republic of  
Slovenia,

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Representative of Ukraine,

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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(Function)

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Signing Organizations:

Representative of the International  
Council for Game and Wildlife  
Conservation, Conseil  
International de la Chasse (CIC)

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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(Function)

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Representative of BirdLife  
International,

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(Signature)

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(Date)

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(Function)

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Representative of the IUCN, the  
World Conservation Union

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(Signature)

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(Function)

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Representative of the UNEP / CMS  
Secretariat,

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(Signature)

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# **ACTION PLAN**

## **Part 1 (General)**

The Signatories should, in terms of legislation and enforcement, undertake all appropriate measures which benefit the Great Bustards, in particular in the field of habitat protection and restoration, prevention of hunting, disturbance and other threats, regulation of possession and trade, recovery measures, cross-border cooperation, monitoring and research, training and awareness raising.

This action plan and the Memorandum of Understanding also represent the implementation of objective 1.1.5 of the Species Action Plan for the Great Bustard approved by the Ornithological Committee and referred to by the recommendation of 26 January 1996 of the Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats.

Numbers in square brackets - [ ] - refer to the objective numbers of the 1996 Action Plan.

## 1. **Habitat protection**

It is essential that key habitats of the Great Bustard be maintained and, where appropriate, restored by means of protected areas and/or otherwise.

### 1.1 Protected areas

#### 1.1.1 Legislative measures

The responsible authorities should provide the species with full legal protection throughout its range to ensure that key habitats will be maintained. *Inter alia*, protected areas for the Great Bustard should include the entire range of semi-natural habitat, such as partly-cultivated land, steppes, semi-steppes and grasslands, in which the movement of juveniles and adults during dispersal occurs. [1.1.3]

Degraded areas which are essential for the reestablishment of Great Bustard populations or for the maintenance of viable populations should also be put under legal protection, as far as appropriate and feasible, in order to restore them.

#### 1.1.2 Enforcement [2.1]

Appropriate measures should be taken for the management of all identified breeding areas of the Great Bustard as well as its key migration and wintering sites. [2.1.1]

Special measures should be taken for the protection of threatened breeding sites. The leasing or acquisition of land for the conservation of important habitat should be considered. [2.1.2]

### 1.2 Maintenance or improvement of habitat quality for the Great Bustard outside protected areas [1.1.1]

#### 1.2.1 Maintenance of Great Bustard habitat

In areas where traditional land use forms still exist or are restorable, the Range States concerned should develop policies and legislation, including the provision of appropriate incentives, to maintain "pseudo-steppe" and "puszta" habitats. Within the European Union and the EU Accession Countries, Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and zonal programmes should be used to encourage the conservation of Great Bustard habitat.

#### 1.2.2 Promotion of set-aside schemes and extensification programmes [2.1.2]

In extensively used farmland areas, agriculture policies and legislation should provide for the establishment of set-aside schemes, extensification and special protection measures for the Great Bustard's breeding areas.

#### 1.2.3 Preservation of traditional agricultural methods [2.1.1]

Signatories should maintain and promote by appropriate measures land uses which are favourable to the Great Bustard, such as rotation of grazing plots, the alternation between cultivation (cereals and legumes) and fallows. The timing of agricultural practices should be adapted to the life cycle of the Great Bustard.

#### 1.2.4 Availability and quality of the habitat in the winter quarters [2.2.1]

Cultivation of rape and alfalfa should be maintained and promoted, through appropriate incentives, in areas preferred by Great Bustards as wintering areas.

### 1.3 Prevention of fragmentation or isolation of the Great Bustard's habitat [1.1.2, 2.2.2]

#### 1.3.1 Afforestation [1.1.2]

Afforestation projects should be subject to an assessment of their effects on the Great Bustard's habitats taking into account the damage to the Great Bustard which may be caused through the fragmentation of extensive farming habitats. Afforestation should be prevented in Great Bustard areas.

#### 1.3.2 Other activities resulting in habitat fragmentation [2.2.2]

The construction of new roads or highways and railways, the planting of shelter belts and irrigation should be avoided as far as possible in Great Bustard areas. All these and other infrastructure measures should be subject to environmental impact assessments which should consider viable alternatives and take into account the special sensitivity of the Great Bustard to disturbance and habitat encroachment. Fences should either be avoided or constructed in a way that permits the free movement of chicks.

## 2. Prevention of hunting, disturbance and other threats

The Great Bustards should be protected from hunting, any disturbance and other threats. [1.1.6]

### 2.1 Hunting [2.14, 2.1.5]

Any hunting should be prohibited in areas where and at times when Great Bustards are expected to occur, where this is considered necessary for the conservation of the bustards. Any hunting restrictions officially imposed should be strictly enforced.

### 2.2 Prevention of disturbance

Any disturbance of Great Bustards should generally be kept low. Necessary interventions into areas where Great Bustards occur should be the least disturbing for the birds.

Disturbance should be prevented at the breeding and display sites of the Great Bustard. Appropriate means to restrict or control access to breeding sites should be developed and their use encouraged.

Immediate action should be taken to manage those breeding sites where females regularly fail to raise their young as a result of agricultural activities or other disturbances. In areas of high Great Bustard density, temporary protection schemes should be put in place and enforced to ensure appropriate breeding conditions.

## 2.3 Other threats to the Great Bustard

### 2.3.1 Prevention of predation [2.1.7]

Foxes and feral dogs should be controlled in areas where Great Bustards occur regularly.

### 2.3.2 Adoption of measures for power lines [2.2.3]

Existing lines which cross Great Bustard areas should be buried or marked prominently. New lines should not be built across Great Bustard areas.

### 2.3.3 Compensatory measures

Any activities which will create new loss or degradation of Great Bustard habitat or longer term disturbance of the species should be compensated by appropriate measures.

## 3. Possession and trade

The collection of eggs or chicks, the possession of and trade in the birds and their eggs should be strictly prohibited and the restrictions controlled. Exemptions should be allowed only in the case of Section 4.1 below.

## 4. Recovery measures

### 4.1 Captive breeding in emergency situations [2.1.6]

If it is not possible to guarantee the successful breeding of Great Bustards at a particular site, the possibility of taking the eggs into captivity for artificial incubation should be carefully evaluated. Dummy eggs can be left in the nest instead and replaced by the real ones shortly before hatching. The taking of eggs for artificial incubation and rearing young animals in captivity for release should be taken into consideration only when it is not possible to guarantee breeding in the wild. Captive breeding and release into the wild should be undertaken only after thorough evaluation with the support of well equipped facilities and be carried out only by well trained professionals following IUCN criteria for re-introductions.

### 4.2 Reintroduction

Reintroduction actions should be undertaken only at those sites where feasibility studies (following the IUCN criteria for re-introductions) have been carried out with success.

### 4.3 Monitoring of the success of release programmes [3.1.4]

The survival of chicks bred in captivity and of chicks hatched from artificially bred clutches should be closely monitored, as well as the survival and breeding performance of adults released into the wild. Release programmes should be permanently reassessed and discontinued if birds are failing to survive under natural conditions.

## **5. Cross-border conservation measures**

Signatories should harmonise their legal instruments in order more efficiently to conserve and manage Great Bustards. [1.1.5]

Great Bustard populations which are shared by two or more countries should be the subject of bi- or multilateral programmes to ensure that there is appropriate co-ordination of national surveys, research, monitoring and conservation activities. [3.1.5]

## **6. Monitoring and research**

### 6.1 Monitoring of population parameters and of the effects of management measures [3.1]

#### 6.1.1 Monitoring of population size and population trends [3.1.2]

Efforts to monitor the basic parameters of all Great Bustard populations, such as size and trends, by applying methods which lead to comparable results, should be made at all breeding and wintering sites.

#### 6.1.2 Monitoring of the effects of habitat management [3.1.3]

Studies should be carried out on the effects of habitat protection measures, implementation of agro-environmental regulations, etc. These studies should preferably be done at sites where the population has been well monitored for a number of years.

### 6.2 Promotion of research which is of direct application to the conservation of the Great Bustard [3.2]

#### 6.2.1 Comparative ecological studies [3.2.1]

A comparative analysis of existing data on population dynamics, habitat requirements, effects of habitat changes and causes of decline between the populations in different Range States should be conducted in order to redefine conservation strategies in the future.

#### 6.2.2 Promotion of studies on mortality factors [3.2.2]

All individuals found dead should be examined for the causes of mortality. This, together with field studies and monitoring of marked individuals, should help to identify the direct or indirect impact of land use on Great Bustard mortality.

#### 6.2.3 Investigation of factors limiting breeding success [3.2.3]

The ecology of core Great Bustard populations in extensive agro-pasture systems should be studied, giving priority to the analysis of those factors which may have influence on breeding success. These should include the use of habitat and space, home range and dispersal patterns.

#### 6.2.4 Studies on migration [3.2.4]

Studies should be made better to identify the migration routes and resting habitats of the Great Bustard and especially of key sites along such routes and in wintering areas. Ringing and studies involving satellite telemetry should be planned and implemented for those purposes.

## **7. Training of staff working in conservation bodies [4.4]**

Personnel working regularly in Great Bustard areas (agronomists, biologists, wardens, etc.) should receive specific training on Great Bustard matters, especially their biological characteristics and living requirements, legal matters, census techniques and management practices. Also, communication and cooperation between the various sectors involved (e.g. farmer, hunter and nature conservation organisations, tourist companies and state authorities) should be intensified.

## **8. Increasing awareness of the need to protect Great Bustards and their habitat**

### **8.1 The Great Bustard as a flagship [4.1]**

The Great Bustard should be used as a flagship for the protection and sustainable use of the entire biodiversity of steppes, dry grasslands and suitable agricultural landscapes across Europe.

### **8.2 Increasing the awareness of farmers and shepherds [4.2, 2.1.4]**

#### **8.2.1 Farmers**

Farmers and landowners, in general, should be targeted by special campaigns designed to raise awareness of the international importance of the Great Bustard. They should also be provided with information on the biological characteristics of the species and the timing of breeding in order to prevent damage by farming activity.

Farmers should be made aware of the presence of Great Bustards in their fields and of the risk of destroying clutches. They should be encouraged to adapt their calendar of farming as much as possible to the breeding cycle of the Great Bustard and to avoid disturbance of the birds during the breeding season.

#### **8.2.2 Shepherds**

Shepherds should be informed of the problem of predation of Great Bustards by dogs and encouraged to train their dogs not to chase or kill Great Bustards.

### **8.3 Improving public awareness [4.3]**

The public should be informed about the problems of the Great Bustard, the need for its protection and the conservation measures being undertaken.

The media as well as the political decision makers and local and regional authorities should be addressed regularly to raise the profile of the Great Bustard as an outstanding feature of European plains and as an invaluable asset to the European natural heritage.

## **9. Economic measures**

State authorities, political decision makers, economic sectors and associations of land users (e.g. farmers, shepherds, hunters) should cooperate with the aim of developing economic activities which are not harmful to the Great Bustard and the biodiversity on which they depend in order to increase acceptance by local communities of Great Bustard conservation measures and to compensate for any damage land users may experience as a result of such conservation measures.

## **ACTION PLAN**

### **Part 2 (Country Specific)**

• **Albania**

Carry out a Great Bustard population survey and winter censuses.

Collaborate with hunting organisations to prevent illegal hunting in the wintering sites in the relevant season.

Develop projects for habitat conservation in co-operation with international experts.

Establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries and international organisations, including nomination of an expert as a member of the Bustard Specialist Group of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Austria**

Endeavour to extend the ongoing set-aside and habitat management schemes.

Ensure the control of all populations locally and the care for breeding females in the field.

Improve and strengthen cross-border co-operation with neighbouring countries by reviewing and coordinating existing and/or developing new programmes for the research, monitoring and protection of Great Bustards.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Carry out a Great Bustard population survey and winter censuses, warden the populations.

Identify and register all Great Bustard habitats and migration routes.

Develop projects for habitat conservation in co-operation with international experts.

Collaborate with hunting organisations to prevent illegal hunting in the wintering sites in the relevant season.

Establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries and international organisations, including nomination of an expert as a member of the Bustard Specialist Group of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Bulgaria**

Carry out co-ordinated and comparable national surveys in Bulgaria as a basis for bilateral co-operation with Romania in the conservation of the species in the whole of Dobrudja.

Develop and promote protection programmes: setting up set-aside schemes and programmes for land leasing and buying of land for extensification and special protection measures in intensively used farmlands in Northeast Bulgaria (and, in particular, Dobrudja) and in Northwest Bulgaria (in particular in the countryside Zlatiata), including supervising the populations and identifying the threats to them.

Ensure that the Great Bustard is given maximum protection - give maximum penalties for causing serious damage to the birds; enforce the conservation legislation in the existing protected area “The Valley of the Bustards”; designate new protected areas.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Croatia**

Provide full protection for individual Great Bustards which arrive mostly incidentally.

Develop projects for habitat conservation in co-operation with international experts.

Establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries and international organisations, including nomination of an expert to be a member of the Bustard Specialist Group of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Czech Republic**

Improve habitat quality in the wintering grounds of the cross-border Great Bustard population by promoting cultivation of rape, work out a system of incentives for farmers.

Improve and strengthen cross-border co-operation with neighbouring countries by reviewing and coordinating existing and/or developing new programmes for the research, monitoring and protection of Great Bustards.

Continue to explore possibilities for establishing a nature reserve in South Moravia to protect the cross-border Great Bustard population and manage its habitat.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Germany**

Continuation and further optimisation of the stock conservation measures through programmes which include rearing and release into the wild in selected areas

Predator and habitat management, with the aim of re-establishing, or continuing to guarantee that there is sufficient reproductive capacity in the wild.

continuation of scientific research into the ecology of the Great Bustard at the Buckow State Ornithological Station.

SIGNATURE    DATE

- **Greece**

establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries and international organisations, including nomination of an expert to be a member of the Bustard Specialist Group of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Hungary**

Promote habitat protection programmes for the Great Bustard through the development of appropriate instruments, including agriculture policy instruments, the payment of incentives to farmers in environmentally sensitive areas, and the maintenance of public ownership of areas of considerable importance for the bird.

Ensure that as much protected grassland and arable land as possible will be owned by the State or conservation organisations in the range of the Great Bustard. Acquire at least minimal areas to ensure that wintering and breeding grounds are managed with special emphasis on the Great Bustard, and investigate the effects of habitat management on the reproductive success and distribution of the Great Bustard.

Possibly damaging alterations in Great Bustard habitats should be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment.

Intensifying scientific supervision: investigate the success of repatriation, evaluate possible effects of artificial insemination programmes, carry out studies on the importance of predators, on migration including mortality factors, carry out synchronised censuses.

Improve and strengthen cross-border co-operation with neighbouring countries by reviewing and coordinating existing and/or developing new programmes for research, monitoring and protection of Great Bustards.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

Carry out a Great Bustard population survey and winter censuses, and warden the populations.

Identify and register all Great Bustard habitats and migration routes.

Develop projects for habitat conservation in co-operation with international experts.

Collaborate with hunting organisations to prevent illegal hunting in the wintering sites in the relevant season.

Establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries and international organisations, including nomination of an expert to be a member of the Bustard Specialist Group of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Moldova**

Carry out a Great Bustard population survey and winter censuses.

Identify and register all Great Bustard habitats and migration routes.

Develop projects for habitat conservation in co-operation with international experts.

Collaborate with hunting organisations to prevent illegal hunting in the wintering sites in the relevant season.

Establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries and international organisations, including nomination of an expert to be a member of the Bustard Specialist Group of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Poland**

Work out feasibility studies for a reintroduction of this species (following IUCN criteria).

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Romania**

Carry out a Great Bustard population survey and winter censuses (in co-operation with Bulgaria).

Identify and register all Great Bustard habitats and migration routes.

Provide full protection for all breeding sites and individual breeding birds.

Develop projects for habitat conservation in co-operation with international experts.

Establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries and international organisations, including nomination of an expert to be a member of the Bustard Specialist Group of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

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• **Slovakia**

Prevent disturbances at breeding sites, warden breeding areas, undertake emergency measures.

Promote habitat protection programmes for the Great Bustard through set-aside schemes, extensification programmes and similar instruments.

Improve and strengthen cross-border co-operation with neighbouring countries by reviewing and coordinating existing and/or developing new programmes for the research, monitoring and protection of Great Bustards.

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• **Slovenia**

Provide full protection for individual Great Bustards which arrive mostly incidentally.

SIGNATURE    DATE

• **Ukraine**

Extension of ongoing set-aside and habitat management schemes is necessary. An ornithological reserve on the Kerch peninsula in the Crimea should be established.

Protect breeding grounds, breeding sites and individual breeding birds by wardening, applying systems of incentives and other appropriate actions.

Collaborate with local hunting organisations to prevent illegal hunting in wintering grounds, provide additional feeding.

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