

**NATIONAL REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREAT BUSTARD MOU
AND ACTION PLAN IN MACEDONIA
(2001-2004)**

General information

Agency or institution responsible for the preparation: *Environmental Protection Agency/ DBD
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning*

List of other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input: *Zoological Department, Institute of Biology, FNSc.
Bird Study and Protection Society of Macedonia*

Report submitted to date: First : 30.07.2004
Second: 20.08.2004

Period covered by this report: (I.2001- 30.VII.2004)

Memorandum in effect in country since: (07.X.2000).

Designated Focal Point

(full contact details): Prof. Dr Branko Micevski, President of the Macedonian Committee of Migratory Species and Bird Study and Protection Society in Macedonia.
Address: Zoological Department, Institute of Biology, Faculty of Natural Sciences, University "Sv.Ciril i Metodij" Skopje
Ul. "Gazi Baba" p.box: 162
1000-Skopje MACEDONIA
Tel.: (+389 2) 3117 055 ext. 614 / or 2432 071
Fax: (+389 2) 2430 927
E-mail:brankom@unim.edu.mk

Part I. General

0. National work programme

Is there a national work programme or action plan already in place in your country for the Great Bustard pursuant to Paragraph 4(g) of the Memorandum of Understanding? __ Yes x No

1. Habitat protection

1.1 Designation of protected areas.

To what extent are the display, breeding, stop-over and wintering sites covered by protected areas?

- Fully (>75%)
 High (50-75%)
 Medium (10-49%)
 Low (<10%)
 None

What measures were taken to ensure the adequate protection of the species and its habitat at these sites?
Measures for integral protection and conservation fauna species (including birds) and its habitats.

Where are the remaining gaps?

Are currently unoccupied, but potential breeding habitats identified in your country? Yes No

If yes, please explain how these areas are protected or managed to enable the re-establishment of Great Bustard?

1.2 Measures taken to ensure the maintenance of Great Bustard habitats outside of protected areas.

Please describe what measures have been taken to maintain land-use practices beneficial for Great Bustard outside of protected areas (e.g., set-aside and extensification schemes, cultivation of alfalfa and oilseed for winter, maintenance of rotational grazing, etc.).

To what extent do these measures, combined with site protection, cover the national population?

- Fully (>75%)
- Most (50-75%)
- Some (10-49%)
- Negligible (<10%)
- Not at all.

an./OBD 04.

**NATIONAL REPORT
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREAT BUSTARD MOU
AND ACTION PLAN IN MACEDONIA
(2001-2004)**

I. Action Plan of Macedonia

1. Carry out a Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) population survey and winter census, and warden the populations.
2. Identify and register all Great Bustard habitats and migration routes.
3. Develop project for habitat conservation in co-operation with international experts.
4. Collaborate with hunting organisations to prevent illegal hunting in the wintering sites in the relevant season.
5. Establish and maintain contact with neighbouring countries.
6. Establish and maintain cooperation with international organisation.
7. Activity for nomination of an science expert to be a member of the Bustard Specialist Group (BSG) of IUCN-SSC and BirdLife International.

II. Implementation of Action Plan

1. Habitat protection

1.1 *Designation of protected areas*

The Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) is only irregular winter visitor in Macedonia. During severe winters it appears in different part of Macedonia. There are no regular wintering nor stopover sites.

1.2 *Measures taken to ensure the maintenance of Great Bustard habitats outside of protected areas*

None. There are no national population of Great Bustard in Macedonia.

1.3 *Measures taken to avoid fragmentation of Great Bustard habitats*

All projects causing fragmentation of the specie's habitat are subject to environmental impact assessment (EIA) in Macedonia. Last year, MOEPP has organised signed one Memoranda of sub-regional cooperation for establish trans-boundary monitoring of the migration of birds (partners: NGOs- ornithological and ecological organisations in CEE).

2. Prevention of hunting, disturbance and other threats

- 2.1 *Prevention of disturbance:*** Great Bustard is protected from hunting through the year by the Act of Hunting, Act of Protection of Natural Heritages; Act of Environment Protection and Nature Conservation (joint protection of biological diversity of Macedonia).

2.2 *Prevention of predation*

There are no areas in Macedonia where population of Great Bustard occurs regularly.

3. **Possession and trade**

The Great Bustard is include on CITES (App. II), and any international trade should be regulated under CITES procedure.

No data about private or legal entities in Macedonia (possessing birds or eggs).

4. **Recovery measures**

4.1 *Monitoring of the success of release programs*

None.

5. **Cross-border co-operation**

Bilateral cross-border cooperation for integral protection and conservation of flora and fauna species and its natural habitats with: Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and NGOs, Greek Ministry of Environment and NGOs, Albanian Ministry of Environment and NGOs and Serbian and Montenegro Ministry of Environment and NGOs.

6. **Monitoring and research**

6.1 *Monitoring of population*

The Great Bustard is regular winter vision in Macedonia.

6.2 *Monitoring of the effects of habitat management*

Memorandum of sub-regional cooperation (Balkan Region) for establish monitoring of the migration of birds and its habitats. (partners: NGOs-ornithological and ecological organisations in SEE).

6.3 *Studies on migration*

7. **Training of staff working in conservation bodies**

None.

8. **Increasing awareness of the need to protect GB and their habitat**

None.

9. **Economic measures**

None.

10. **Threats**

No data of changes in the conservation status of this species in Macedonia.

THE GREAT BUSTARD (*Otis tarda* L.) IN MACEDONIA

Branko Micevski

**Zoological Dpt., Institute of Biology, Faculty of Natural Sciences
Skopje 1000, Republic of Macedonia**

According to the known literature for the avifauna of Macedonia, the Great Bustard was first mentioned by Drummond (1846) as a very common bird, found especially in marshlands. Unfortunately, he did not give the exact locations of his sightings, which would have helped pinpoint them within the present territory of the Republic of Macedonia. Elwes and Buckley (1870) mentioned it as common in Macedonia, then a part of Turkish Empire, but again without any precise location given. On 7 April 1918, Chasen (1918) recorded one individual overflying the area of Aleksia, located south of Lake Dojran.

Within the territory of Macedonia, the first record with an exact location given dates from Karaman (1928/29). He wrote that every winter he recorded a few individuals on the lowest hills around Skopje, near the village of Bardovci. They were loitering in the Skopje basin but, when winters became severe, they moved to the lowlands. On 16 February 1927, three individuals appeared on the ploughed fields near Ajvatovacko Lake, one of which was killed. More were found in the vicinity of Skopje in 1928. One adult male was killed for the Macedonian Museum of Natural History collection on 12 February at Drachevo.

Karaman (1949) stated that the Great Bustard appears in the Skopska Kotlina basin at the beginning of every winter. He wrote:

It is seen about the lowland but prefers the rolling hillocks from Rzanichino toward Katlanovo. If the winter is mild they stay here right through. Since they are much prized by hunters, the majority come to grief, and I saw a shot specimen or two every year. Spring migrants are seen more rarely but these too I would encounter at the same place, in small flocks. It migrates in the same time as the little bustard. It does not occur in summer.

The last data for this species are from 1969, when Dangel (1973) recorded one male near Lake Dojran on 15 February. This same author added that the birds were coming from the Vardar River toward the northern shore of Lake Dojran.

These are all the known data for this species in Macedonia. It is obvious that there have been no new recorded sightings in recent years. This could be either a result of the birds' total absence in winter or the absence of a monitoring program or project for the study of bird fauna in Macedonia, possibly due to lack of financial resources for such activities.

Chasen, F. 1921. Field notes on the birds of Macedonia with special reference to the Struma plain. *Ibis*, Vol. XI.

Dangel, M. 1973. Ornithologische Beobachtungen am Dojran-See. *Orn. Mitt.*, 25:73-75.

Drummond, H. M. 1846. List of the birds observed to winter in Macedonia, 1845-1846. *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.* 18.

Elwes, H. J. and Buckley, T. E. 1870. A list of the birds of Turkey. *Ibis*, Vol. VI.

Karaman, S. 1928/1929. Ptice okoline Skoplja. *Glasn. Skop. Naucnog Drustva VI*, 2:177-211.

Karaman, S. 1949. Ornithofauna of the Skopska Kotlina Basin. *Larus*, 3:155-221.