

Albania – National Programme on Great Bustard

Aims and Objectives

This National Programme aims:

- a. In the short to medium term to prevent the further decline of the species
- b. In the medium to long term to increase the population size of the Great Bustard to a level at which it no longer qualifies as Critically Endangered in Albania

The aim and generic objectives are grouped under four headings :

- Improve policy and legislation;
- Ensure the species and habitat protection
- Undertake inventory, monitoring and research
- Raise public awareness

Each generic objective is broken down into a series of prioritized actions followed by a brief description. Priority is classified in three different groups :

- essential : an action that is needed to prevent a large decline in the population which would lead to the species extinction;
- high : an action that is needed to prevent a decline of more than 20% of the population in 20 years or less;
- medium : an action that is needed to prevent a decline of less than 20% of the population in 20 years or less;

1. Policy and legislation

1.1. *Improve and Implement Legislation*

The improvement of legal framework is of primary importance for the conservation of the species in Albania.

Activities:

- Ensure legal protection of the species and its key sites all over Albania

- Promote the designation as protected areas of the southern part of Karavasta and Koplaku (north-east of Lake Shkodra).

Priority : essential

1.2. Prepare and implement the Species Action Plan

A National Action Plan is necessary for identifying the appropriate conservation measures as well as their timing.

Activities :

- Prepare the National Action Plan for the Conservation of the Great Bustard,
- Implement the National Action Plan of the Great Bustard

Priority : essential

2. Ensure the species and habitat protection

2.1. Ensure the protection of migrating/wintering areas

All wintering/migrating areas identified as key or potential key sites should be protected and nature conservation laws strictly implemented.

Activities:

- Ensure the enforcement of nature conservation laws in key and potential key sites

Priority: essential

2.2. Control Hunting

Hunting activity should be strictly controlled. Particular attention should be paid to hunting activity (actual scale, impact and prognosis for the future) especially in identified key sites.

Activities:

- The implementation of the ban on hunting in all wintering and staging areas

Priority: essential

2.3. Carry out appropriate site management

The increased vegetation in Bedati (south of Karavasta area) is very likely to be a limiting factor not only for the Great Bustard but also for other species related with semi-arid habitats.

Activities:

- Carry out appropriate vegetation management in Bedati (south of Karavasta area)

Priority: essential

3. Carry out monitoring and research

3.1. Undertake inventories of wintering/migrating birds

A detailed inventory and further monitoring programs are very important for identifying the precise conservation status of the species as well as the efficiency of the conservation measures

Activities :

- Undertake a national inventory for identifying the number as well as distribution areas of wintering/migrating individuals
- Annually monitor the wintering/migrating individuals in key and potential key sites

Priority : essential

3.2. Monitor ecological change

Habitat changes are of course influencing the abundance of the species.

Activities:

- Monitor habitat changes and identify responsible factors at key sites (Bedati, Kopluku etc).

Priority: high

3.3. Monitor prey populations

Knowledge on the situation of prey population is a good indicator of the availability of wintering/migrating habitats.

Activities :

- Monitor prey populations in key and potential key sites.

Priority : high

4. Raise public awareness and undertake training

4.1. Raise public awareness

Raising awareness among different local stakeholders (local communities, local hunters, local politicians) is a very important step towards effective and long-term conservation of the species.

Activities :

- Inform land-users, decision-makers at local, regional and national level about the importance of the preservation of the Great Bustard,
- Undertake public awareness campaigns with hunters, shepherds, farmers, local communities, local authorities, etc.,
- Organize talks in primary and secondary schools of Bedati (Karavasta) and Kopliku (Shkodra) area,
- Produce publications (leaf-lets, booklets, posters, etc.) about the conservation of the species.

Priority : high

4.2. Undertake Training

Activities :

- Train members of local NGOs on environmental education, conservation and management of the species and its habitats.

Priority : medium

Implementation Calendar

In difference from other Action Plan the one we have proposed for the Dalmatian Pelican is foreseen for a working period of 5 years. There are no objectives falling in the “long” time-scale classification. As stressed in the entrance of this Action Plan, the foreseen objectives and activities should be reviewed and updated every five years.

Activities	Timing
Policy and legislation	
Ensure legal protection of the species and its key sites all over Albania	Next 1-2 years
Promote the designation as protected areas of the southern part of Karavasta and Kopliku (north-east of Lake Shkodra).	Next 1-2 years
Prepare the National Action Plan for the Conservation of the Great Bustard,	Next 1-2 years
Implement the National Action Plan of the Great Bustard	Next 1-2 years
Ensure the species and habitat protection	
Ensure the enforcement of nature conservation laws in key and potential key sites	Next 1-2 years
The implementation of the ban on hunting in all wintering and staging areas	Next 1-2 years
Carry out appropriate vegetation management in Bedati (south of Karavasta area)	Next 1-2 years
Carry out monitoring and research	
Undertake a national inventory for identifying the number as well as distribution areas of wintering/migrating individuals	Next 1-2 years

Annually monitor the wintering/migrating individuals in key and potential key sites	Next 1-2 years
Monitor habitat changes and identify responsible factors at key sites (Bedati, Kopliku etc).	Next 2-5 years
Monitor prey populations in key and potential key sites.	Next 2-5 years
Raise public awareness and undertake training	
Inform land-users, decision-makers at local, regional and national level about the importance of the preservation of the Great Bustard,	Next 2-5 years
Undertake public awareness campaigns with hunters, shepherds, farmers, local communities, local authorities, etc.,	Next 2-5 years
Organize talks in primary and secondary schools of Bedati (Karavasta) and Kopliku (Shkodra) area,	Next 2-5 years
Produce publications (leaf-lets, booklets, posters, etc.) about the conservation of the species.	Next 2-5 years
Train members of local NGOs on environmental education, conservation and management of the species and its habitats.	Next 3-5 years