

REPORTING FORMAT FOR THE GREAT BUSTARD MOU AND ACTION PLAN

This reporting format is designed to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan associated with the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*). Reporting on the Action Plan's implementation will support exchange of information throughout the range and assist the identification of necessary future actions by the Signatory States. The questions presented here go beyond the scope of information already requested from CMS Contracting Parties for national reports to the CMS Conference of the Parties.

GENERAL INFORMATION

<p>Agency or institution responsible for the preparation of this report Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic</p>
<p>List any other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input The Regional Authority of the South Moravian Region Czech Society for Ornithology The Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic</p>
<p>Reports submitted to date: First: (Period covered) Second: 20/09/2008</p>
<p>Period covered by this report (day) (month) (year) to (day) (month) (year): 13/05/2004 to 20/09/2008</p>
<p>Memorandum in effect in country since: [Date: dd / mm / yy]: 18/02/2008</p>
<p>Designated Focal Point (and full contact details): Mgr. Jorga Drábková, Ph.D. Ministry of the Environment Department for the International Conservation of Biodiversity Vršovická 65 100 10 Praha 10 Czech Republic tel.: +420 267 122 470 fax: +420 267 310 328 e-mail: Jorga.Drabkova@mzp.cz</p>

PART I. GENERAL

This questionnaire follows the structure and numbering of the Action Plan annexed to the Memorandum of Understanding to make it easier to read the relevant action points before the form is filled in. In some cases, however, sub-actions were not listed separately for the sake of simplicity and to avoid duplications. They should however be taken into consideration when answering the questions.

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 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?

Designation of protected areas under national law	Classification of Special Protection Areas according to the requirements of Art.4.1 of the EC Birds Directive
<input type="checkbox"/> Fully (>75%) <input type="checkbox"/> High (50-75%) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (10-49%) <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Low (<10%)</u> <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully (>75%) <input type="checkbox"/> High (50-75%) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (10-49%) <input type="checkbox"/> Low (<10%) <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Not applicable</u> ¹

What measures were taken to ensure the adequate protection of the species and its habitat at these sites?

The former military airport – the only protected Great Bustard area - is managed every year to ensure adequate habitat for Great Bustards.

The Great Bustard belongs to the group of critically endangered species which are protected by the law, it means that impact of any projects planned to be realized in the traditional habitats of Great Bustard must be assess according to the Czech legislation.

Where are the remaining gaps?

There is no legal protection of the historical (and irregularly recent) habitats of the Great Bustard in the CR.

Are currently unoccupied, but potential breeding habitats identified in your country?

Yes No Not applicable²

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

They are neither protected nor managed.

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 rape for winter, maintenance of rotational grazing, etc.).

These habitats are protected from realization of projects that could lead to changes in landscape character

¹ The species occurs only irregularly, no regular stop-over or wintering sites identified.

² Countries *outside* of the historic (beginning of 20th Century) breeding range of the species.

(high buildings and structures like wind power stations, new windbreaks, roads, farms, irrigation, afforestation and so on). There is an effort to direct some compensation measures for possible negative effects of some projects to these areas and to change the current intensive farming by creation of less intensive plots of agricultural land in this region.

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

- Fully (>75%)
- Most (50-75%)
- Some (10-49%)
- Little (<10%)
- Not at all
- Not applicable¹

Are recently (over the last 20 years) abandoned Great Bustard breeding habitats mapped in your country?
 Yes No Not applicable¹

What habitat management measures have been taken to encourage the return of Great Bustard?
None (except above mentioned Great Bustard friendly management at the former military airport).

If there were any measures taken, please provide information on their impact.
Impact of the management has not been monitored yet.

1.3 Measures taken to avoid fragmentation of Great Bustard habitats.

Are new projects potentially causing fragmentation of the species' habitat (such as construction of highways and railways, irrigation, planting of shelterbelts, afforestation, power lines, etc.) subject to environmental impact assessment in your country? Yes No Not applicable¹

Is there any aspect of the existing legislation on impact assessment that limits its effective application to prevent fragmentation of Great Bustard habitats? Yes No Not applicable¹

If yes, please provide details.

Projects not reaching fixed limits need not to be assessed according to environmental impact assessment law. Projects with negative environmental impact can be, under some circumstances (i.e. threat to national safety, public health, etc.), realized.

Have there been any such projects implemented in any Great Bustard habitat in your country since signing this Memorandum of Understanding? Yes No Not applicable¹

Please, give details and describe the outcome of impact monitoring if available.

2. Prevention of hunting, disturbance and other threats

2.1 Hunting.

Is Great Bustard afforded strict legal protection in your country? Yes No

Please, give details of any hunting restrictions imposed for the benefit of Great Bustard including those on timing of hunting and game management activities.

The Great Bustard is not included on the list of game species of the CR.

Please, indicate to what extent these measures ensure the protection of the national Great Bustard population?
The national population is covered by restrictions on hunting to prevent hunting-related disturbance:

- Fully (>75%)
- Most (50-75%)
- Some (10-49%)
- Little (<10%)
- Not at all
- Not applicable¹

2.2 Prevention of disturbance.

What measures have been taken to prevent disturbance of Great Bustard in your country, including both breeding birds and single individuals or small flocks on migration?

According to the Czech legislation, the Great Bustard is protected from any disturbance, killing, catching and negative intervention to its life during both migration and breeding.

Please, indicate to what extent these measures have ensured the protection of the national population.
The national population is covered by restrictions on other activities causing disturbance:

- Fully (>75%)
- Most (50-75%)
- Some (10-49%)
- Little (<10%)
- Not at all
- Not applicable¹

2.3.1 Prevention of predation.

What is the significance of predation to Great Bustard in your country?

There are no data about the significance of predation to Great Bustard in the Czech Republic. It is assumed that habitat loss may have much more greater effect on Great Bustard population level than predation in the Czech Republic.

What are the main predator species?

-

What measures have been taken to control predators in areas where Great Bustard occurs regularly?

-

How effective were these measures?

- Effective (predation reduced by more than 50%)
- Partially effective (predation reduced by 10–49%)
- Less effective (predation reduced by less than 10%)
- Not applicable¹

2.3.2 Adoption of measures for power lines.

What is the significance of collision with power lines in your country?

None. There is only one piece of proved evidence that the Great Bustard was killed due to the collision with power lines from the past (2 adults between 1970 – 1990).

What proactive and corrective measures have been taken to reduce the mortality caused by existing power lines in your country?

-

What is the size of the populations affected by these corrective measures?

-

How effective were these measures?

- Effective (collision with power lines reduced by more than 50%)

- Partially effective (collision with power lines reduced by 10–49%)
- Ineffective (collision with power lines reduced by less than 10%)
- Not applicable¹

2.3.3 Compensatory measures.

What is the size (in hectares) of Great Bustard habitat lost or degraded for any reasons since the Memorandum of Understanding entered into effect (1 June 2001)?

Not applicable.

What is the size of the populations affected?

-

Were these habitat losses compensated? Yes Partially No Not applicable¹

If yes, please explain how.

Were these measures effective? Yes Partially No Not applicable¹

Please, give details on the effectiveness or explain why they were not effective if that is the case.

3. Possession and trade

Is collection of Great Bustard eggs or chicks, the possession of and trade in the birds and their eggs prohibited in your country? Yes No

How are these restrictions enforced? What are the remaining shortcomings, if any?

According to the Czech legislation, the law forbids collection, possession of and trade with the birds and their eggs.

Please indicate if any exemption is granted or not all of these activities are prohibited.

Statutory exceptions are possible if some strict conditions (given in the Czech legislation) are fulfilled, however, it is inconceivable for the Great Bustard.

4. Recovery measures

4.1 Captive breeding* in emergency situations.

Is captive breeding playing any role in Great Bustard conservation in your country? Yes No

Please, describe the measures, staff and facilities involved and how these operations comply with the IUCN criteria on reintroductions.

4.2 Reintroduction.

Have there been any measures taken to reintroduce the species in your country? Yes No

If yes, please describe the progress. If there was any feasibility study carried out, please summarize its conclusions.

4.3 Monitoring of the success of release programmes.

Are captive reared birds released in your country? Yes No

If yes, please summarize the experience with release programmes in your country. What is the survival rate

* In effect, “captive breeding” should be read as “captive rearing” according to current practices.

of released birds? What is the breeding performance of released birds?

What is the overall assessment of release programmes based on the survival of released birds one year after release?

- Effective (the survival is about the same as of the wild ones)
- Partially effective (the survival rate is lower than 75% of the wild birds)
- Ineffective (the survival is less than 25% of wild birds)
- Not applicable³

5. Cross-border conservation measure

Has your country undertaken any cross-border conservation measures with neighbouring countries?

- Yes No Not applicable⁴

Please, give details of your country's collaboration with neighbouring countries on national surveys, research, monitoring and conservation activities for Great Bustard. Especially, list any measures taken to harmonise legal instruments protecting Great Bustard and its habitats, as well as funding you have provided to Great Bustard for particular conservation actions in other Range States.

Our country collaborates especially with Austria (less with Slovakia) in exchanging information of movements of birds and habitat management.

6. Monitoring and research

6.1.1 Monitoring of population size and population trends.

Are the breeding, migratory or wintering Great Bustard populations monitored in your country?

- Yes No

What proportion of the national population is monitored?

- All (>75%)
- Most (50-75%)
- Some (10-49%)
- Little (<10%)
- None
- Not applicable¹

What is the size and trend in the national population?⁵

Breeding/resident population

Non-breeding population (on passage, wintering)

No. of adult males: _____

No. of adult males: _____

No. of females: _____

No. of females: _____

No. immature males: _____

No. immature males: _____

Trend: Declined by __% over the last 10 years

Trend: Declined by __% over the last 10 years

Stable

Stable

Increased by __% over the last 10 years

Increased by __% over the last 10 years

For countries where the species occurs only occasionally, please give the details of known observations within the reporting period:

In the Czech Republic, following observations of Great Bustards were recorded:

³ No release is taking place in the country.

⁴ For countries which do not have any transboundary population.

⁵ Only for countries where the species occurs regularly.

2005

- spring: Chlupice - South Moravia, Znojmo district (7063) – 2 M, 1 F
- 4th April: Měnin - South Moravia, Brno-venkov district (6966) - 1 ind.
- 22nd May: Třebětice – Central Moravia, Kroměříž district (6671) - 1 ind.
- 24th May: Kamenka – North Moravia, Nový Jičín district (6272) - 1 M

2006

- 6th May: Ivaň-Pasohlávky – South Moravia, Břeclav district (7065) – displaying M + 1 F
- 29th May – 3rd June: Morašice-H. Dunajovicemi – South Moravia, Znojmo district (7063) – 1 M + 3 F/imm.
- ca 15th June: Morašice-H. Dunajovice – South Moravia, Znojmo district (7063) - 1 M, 2 F/imm.
- 24th August: Morašice – South Moravia, Znojmo district (7063) – 1 F + 1 juv. = confirmed successful breeding of 1 female
- August: Nesvačilka – Moutnice – South Moravia, Brno-venkov (6966) – 1 F + 2 juv., but no evidence of breeding were taken

2007

- 24th April: Vlasatice – South Moravia, Břeclav district (7064) – 1 ind.
- 18th May: Loděnice – South Moravia, Znojmo district (6964) – 1 ind., perhaps M.
- ca 20th October: Hrádek – South Moravia, Znojmo district (7163) – 10-12 ind. at traditional wintering area in the past

2008

- 11th April: Šakvice – South Moravia, Břeclav district (7166) – 2 ind., perhaps a pair

6.1.2 Monitoring of the effects of habitat management.

Is the effect of habitat conservation measures monitored in your country?

Yes Partially No Not applicable¹

Please, provide a list of on-going and completed studies with references if results are already published.

What can be learned from these studies?

What are the remaining gaps and what measures will your country do to address these gaps?

It would be useful to monitor biodiversity of regularly mowing area of former military airport in the centre of historical Great Bustard habitats. This regularly mowed area is protected by the law and is also excluded from application of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

6.2.1 Comparative ecological studies.

Have there been any comparative studies carried out on the population dynamics, habitat requirements, effects of habitat changes and causes of decline in your country in collaboration with other Range States?

Yes No Not applicable¹

Please, provide a list of on-going and completed studies with references if results are already published

What can be learned from these studies?

What are the remaining gaps where the Memorandum of Understanding could assist?

6.2.2 Studies on mortality factors.

Are the causes of Great Bustard mortality understood in your country?

Yes Partially No Not applicable¹

Please, provide a list of on-going and completed studies with references if results are already published.

What can be learned from these studies?

What are the remaining gaps and what measures will your country do to address these gaps?

6.2.3 Investigation of factors limiting breeding success.

Are the factors limiting breeding success in core populations understood in your country?

Yes Partially No Not applicable⁶

Please, provide a list of on-going and completed studies with references if results are already published

What can be learned from these studies?

What are the remaining gaps and what measures are you going to take to address these gaps?

6.2.4 Studies on migration.

Were there any studies on migration routes and wintering places carried out in your country?

Yes Partially No Not applicable¹

Where are the key sites and what is the size of the population they support?

Do you have any knowledge about the origin of these birds supported by ringing or other marking methods?

What are the remaining gaps and what measures will your country do to address these gaps?

7. Training of staff working in conservation bodies

Is there any mechanism in place in your country to share information on biological characteristics and living requirements of Great Bustard, legal matters, census techniques and management practices to personnel working regularly with the species?

Yes No Not applicable¹

If yes, please describe it.

Have personnel dealing with Great Bustard participated in any exchange programme in other Range States?

Yes No Not applicable¹

If yes, please give details on number of staff involved, country visited and how the lessons were applied in your country.

⁶ Only for breeding countries.

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

What measures have been taken to increase the awareness about the protection needs of the species and its habitat in your country since signing the Memorandum of Understanding?

None.

Do farmers, shepherds, political decision makers and local and regional authorities support Great Bustard conservation? Yes Partially No

What are the remaining gaps or problems and how are you going to address them?

To secure adequate protection of the Great Bustard in the Czech Republic, it is necessary to change current intensive farming and establish plots of the land with suitable Great Bustard friendly management. Unfortunately, no funds are available at this moment and it seems that the only possibility is to approve new agro-environmental measures reducing current level of agricultural intensification in Great Bustard's habitats from 2014. Also Czech action plan for the Great Bustard must be updated..

In any case, an information campaign has to be launched to explain the importance of the Great Bustard protection and to secure acceptance of the Czech action plan among farmers, relevant decision makers and local public and the sufficient tools to achieve this goal.

We are lobbying for the preparation of the agro-environmental measures schemes in the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Environment. Meetings with competent officials in the Ministry of Environment responsible for the adoption of the Czech action plan are running.

9. Economic measures

Have there been any initiatives taken to develop economic activities that are in line with the conservation requirements of Great Bustard in your country?

Yes Partially No Not applicable¹

What percentage of the population is covered in total by these measures?

- All (>75%)
- Most (50-75%)
- Some (10-49%)
- Little (<10%)
- None
- Not applicable

How effective were these measures?

- Effective (more than 50% of the targeted area is managed according to the species' needs)
- Partially effective (10–49% of the targeted area is managed according to the species' needs)
- Ineffective (less than 10% according to the species' needs)
- Not applicable¹

10. Threats

Please, fill in the table below on main threats to the species in your country. Use the threat scores categories below to quantify their significance at national level. Please, provide an explanation on what basis you have assigned the threat score and preferably provide reference. Add additional lines, if necessary.

The situation of Great Bustards occurrence in the Czech Republic has been the same over the last 10 years. Birds have occurred irregularly, the structure of land use in their traditional area is not suitable for their breeding or longer surviving.

Threat scores:

Critical: a factor causing or likely to cause **very rapid declines** (>30% over 10 years).

High: a factor causing or likely to cause **rapid declines** (20-30% over 10 years).

Medium: a factor causing or likely to cause relatively **slow, but significant, declines** (10-20% over 10

years.

Low: a factor causing or likely to cause **fluctuations**.

Local: a factor causing local declines but likely to cause **negligible declines at population level**.

Unknown: a factor that is likely to affect the species but it is unknown to what extent.

Threat name	Threat score	Explanation and reference
Habitat loss		
Losses of eggs and chicks		
Predation		
Collision with powerlines		
Human disturbance		
Pesticides		
Illegal hunting		
Others (specify)		

PART II. COUNTRY-SPECIFIC ACTIONS

Please report on the implementation of the country-specific actions listed for your country in Part II of the Action Plan and provide information if that is not already covered by your answers under Part I. Please describe not only the measures taken but also their impact on Great Bustard or its habitat in the context of the objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Action Plan. Where you have already answered on country-specific actions in Part I, please only add a reference to the relevant answer here.

Due to irregular occurrence of Great Bustards in the Czech Republic it is very difficult to find any financial support for required measures. Some local farmers would change their agricultural schemes according to Great Bustard needs, but this change has to bring them financial benefit. Recently, farmers have especially produced cereals, maize and sunflower and, their farming is very intensive. Each demand for any change should be followed by offer of compensations of financial losses and these compensations are very expensive. No national or international programme supporting nature conservation is suitable for funding these requirements. More, none of these programmes (funds) support regular management measures. So, we can not find suitable financial source to alter intensive farming in traditional Great Bustard's areas to the way of farming that would be more friendly for the Great Bustards.

Cross-border cooperation with Austria has been developed – we have changed information about numbers of observed birds and population level. Moreover, we have discussed possibilities of creating bilateral (or trilateral) projects.

It seems impossible to establish a protected area for Great Bustard in South Moravia because of irregular occurrence of birds here nowadays.