



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.7.1

Agenda Item 7.1

EXTENSION OF THE MEMORANDUM'S GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE: RECOGNITION OF ADDITIONAL RANGE STATES

(Note prepared by Hungary in consultation with the Secretariat)

1. The geographical scope of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is the geographical area to which the MoU applies. The geographical scope corresponds to part or all of the range of the species that the MoU targets (as defined by Article I paragraph 1.f of the Convention, i.e. the areas of land or water that a migratory species inhabits, stays in temporarily, crosses or overflies at any time on its normal migration route).
2. The geographical scope of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*) is defined in operational paragraph 1.b, which defines the Middle-European population of the Great Bustard as “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”.
3. The current geographical scope reflects the level of consensus that could be reached at the time the MoU was finalized. However, discussions have been held at a rather early stage on the need for, and desirability of expanding the MoU geographic area of application.
4. During preliminary discussions which took place during the First Meeting of the Signatories (National Park Neusiedler See-Seewinkel, Burgenland, Illmitz, Austria, 17-18 September 2004) a consensus emerged that (a) the MoU should remain focused for the time being on the Middle-European populations of *Otis tarda*; (b) Serbia and Montenegro¹ and Italy should be invited to join the MoU; (c) Russian Great Bustards, overwintering in Ukraine should be considered middle-European and therefore the Russian Federation should be invited to join the MoU; and (d) notwithstanding the fact that the Iberian Great Bustards are outside of the agreement area, Spain and Portugal should be invited to monitor the development and implementation of the MoU and Action Plan and to consider sending observers to future meetings to share experiences.
5. The possible extension of the geographical scope of the MoU was discussed again at the

¹ Reflecting the legal entity status in 2004.

Second Meeting of the Signatories (Feodosia, Crimea, Ukraine, 11-12 November 2008). The desirability of extending the geographic area of application to include Italy, Montenegro, the Russian Federation and Serbia was reaffirmed, and delegates agreed to approach their relevant decision-making bodies to determine in good time for the Third Meeting of the Signatories their position on the various possibilities available for MoU expansion.

6. Following the discussions mentioned above and subsequent further consultation with other Signatories, the Government of Hungary submitted a formal proposal for the extension of the geographical scope of the MoU to include Italy, Montenegro, the Russian Federation and Serbia, to be considered by the Third Meeting of the Signatories under the procedure for the amendment of the MoU defined by operational paragraph 13 of the MoU.

7. Information below on the occurrence of the Great Bustard in the four above-mentioned countries is summarized, as a support to the consideration of the proposal for extension of the geographical scope by the Third Meeting of the Signatories:

- Italy and Montenegro: Birds from the Carpathian Basin previously migrated to Italy and the Balkan during harsh winters with more or less regularity. Even though such movements have not been recorded recently due to the currently small size of these populations, the improved availability of winter crops (e.g. oilseed rape) within their home range and conservation efforts to prevent migration (removal of snow cover from winter crops), Italy and the Balkan, including Montenegro, can be considered a potential wintering area for the Great Bustard.
- Russian Federation: A large population of Great Bustards from Saratov, Russia regularly overwinter in the Ukraine, which is already a MoU range state. The efficient protection of this migrant population is only possible if conservation efforts are harmonized across its breeding, passage and wintering areas. Therefore, this migrant population should be considered middle-European and the Russian Federation should be invited to join the MoU.
- Serbia: A small breeding population exists in Northern Serbia (Jazovo-Mokrin area). This population is probably connected with populations in Southern Hungary. In addition, migrant birds from the Carpathian Basin may migrate through or winter in Serbia in harsh winters, although such migrations are in recent times less regular due to reasons mentioned under “Italy and Montenegro”.

Action requested:

The Meeting is requested to:

- a) Examine the proposal to amend the MoU by extending its geographical scope to include Italy, Montenegro, the Russian Federation and Serbia, and submit any possible comments to the Secretariat by 10 March 2013.
- b) Discuss at the Meeting and, where appropriate, endorse the above proposal to recognise four additional Range States to the MoU.



VIDÉKFEJLESZTÉSI
MINISZTERIUM

Melanie Virtue

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7th January, 2013

Ref. No.: SF - 24 /2013

Subject: Proposal for amendment of the CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard

Dear Ms. Virtue,

Pursuant to the 13th operational paragraph of the agreement text of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Middle-European Population of the Great Bustard and to the 'Procedure for amendment' thereof, hereby, as a Signatory to the MoU and as the organizer of the Third Meeting of the Signatories held on 8-12 April 2013 in Szarvas, Hungary, we would like to submit the following proposals for amendment:

1. **Extension of the geographical scope of the MoU** to cover the following four additional range states: Italy, Montenegro, the Russian Federation and Serbia.
2. The **replacement of the current Action Plan Part 1 (General) and Part 2 (Country Specific)** annexed to the MoU by adopting the "International Species Action Plan for the Western Palearctic Population of Great Bustard, *Otis tarda tarda*" produced in 2010 by BirdLife International – with its possible amendments made by Signatories in the course of the upcoming procedure.

Please be kind to notify all Signatories by including the draft amendment protocol in due course.

Please find attached the draft cover note prepared by Hungary for the 'Adoption of the new "International Species Action Plan for the Western Palearctic Population of Great Bustard, *Otis tarda tarda*"' and be kind to post it on the CMS website, giving the possibility for all Signatories for reviewing and making their comments.

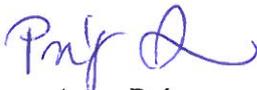
The draft cover note for the 'Extension of the MoU Geographical Scope in recognition of additional Range States' will be prepared and presented shortly.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours Sincerely,


dr. József Viski
Head of Department
of Rural Development Strategy




Anna Práger
Great Bustard MoU Contact Point
for Hungary