

**UKRAINE**  
**REPORT ON 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**

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<p><b>List any other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input</b>          Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds, BirdLife – Ukraine (USPB)</p>
<p><b>Reports submitted to date:</b>          First: (Period covered) until 2004          Second: 01.01.2004–31.12.2007</p>
<p><b>Period covered by this report</b>          (day) (month) (year) to (day) (month) (year):          1.01.2008–31.12.2012</p>
<p><b>Memorandum in effect in country since:</b>          [Date: dd / mm / yy]:          17/04/2002</p>
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## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low (<10%) <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <sup>1</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully (>75%) <input type="checkbox"/> High (50-75%) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (10-49%) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low (<10%) <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable

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

*The Great Bustard included in the new edition of the Red Data Book of Ukraine in 2009, therefore, according to the Ukrainian legislation, it should be protected throughout its range regardless the conservation status of the territory.*

*- National Nature Park "Charivna havan" (Magic harbor), Landscape Recreation Park "Donuzlav" were established in December 2009 and 2012 accordingly in the western part of AR Crimea and Osovinskiy Landscape Sanctuary of local importance was established in December 2011 in the eastern part of AR Crimea.*

*- There are plans to expand the territory of existed Regional Landscape Park "Karalarsky" and upgrade its protection status to National Nature Park and create Ornithological Sanctuary of state importance "Lost world of birds".*

Where are the remaining gaps?

*General places are on Kerch and Tarhankut peninsulas (AR Crimea), near bay of Syvash (AR Crimea and Kherson oblast`), Pryazovs`ka elevation (Zaporizhzhia oblast`).*

*The wintering places are southeast Khersons`ka oblast`, southwest Zaporizhzhia oblast`, Kerch and Tarkhankut peninsulas.*

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

Yes       No       Not applicable<sup>2</sup>

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

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

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

*These areas are not protected and 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.).

*The USPB rented for long term two steppe sites in AR Crimea, which is important for the Great Bustard breeding (120 ha for 20 years on the Tarkhankut peninsula and 65 ha for 49 years on the Kerch peninsula). USPB Local Conservation Groups in AR Crimea care about key breeding and wintering sites in AR Crimea. Local Farmers are encouraged to use ecologically friendly agricultural practices.*

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 applicable

Are recently (over the last 20 years) abandoned Great Bustard breeding habitats mapped in your country?

- Yes       No       Not applicable

What habitat management measures have been taken to encourage the return of Great Bustard?

*Restoration of degraded steppe areas in Crimea through seed banks establishing and planting*

If there were any measures taken, please provide information on their impact.

*Results are expected in the coming years*

### **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 applicable

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 applicable

If yes, please provide details.

*Impact assessment did not prevent from the construction of the gas pipeline and power line along it from the Sea of Azov shelf to Bagerovo settlement. The constructions crossing the Great Bustard breeding area.*

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

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

*Asphalt road from Maryevka village to Opuk Nature Reserve through in Kerch peninsula had been constructed which crossing the key breeding sites of the Great Bustard.*

*It is planned the wind farms construction near the villages Novonikolaevka, Zavetnoe, Marfovka (Kerch peninsula, AR Crimea).*

## **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.

*As Great Bustard is listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine no hunting is allowed for that species.*

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 applicable

### **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?

*“Charivna gavan” National Nature Park has been established in Tarkhankut peninsula which is a breeding area for the Great Bustard. Nature conservation status of Karalarsky Regional Landscape Park has been upgrade up to National Nature Park. This protected area includes the breeding and wintering areas of the Great Bustard in Kerch peninsula. USPB rented for long term two steppe sites in AR Crimea, on which the nesting Great Bustard (120 ha for 20 years on the Tarkhankut peninsula and 65 ha for 49 on the Kerch peninsula).*

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 applicable

#### **2.3.1 Prevention of predation.**

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

*Predation is the significant factor for the Great Bustard in Ukraine.*

What are the main predator species?

*Great Bustard’s clutches of eggs and hatches are destroyed by Corvidae and Corvus corvax in particular as well as stray dogs. In winter White-tailed (sea) Eagle (Haliaeetus albicilla) occurs near large flocks of the Great Bustard.*

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

*Established network of volunteers, that inform to the USPB about the facts of predation (eggs, chicks)*

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 applicable

### 2.3.2 Adoption of measures for power lines.

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

*There are bird mortality cases due to collisions with power lines in areas of frequent occurrences of the Great Bustard under conditions of poor visibility (rain, fog, and strong wind) and disturbance.*

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

*Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds (BirdLife – Ukraine) has conducted research in the area along the northern coastline of the Sea of Azov in Donetsk oblast' in 2012–2013 aimed at estimation of bird mortality because of collisions with power lines. Azov-Black Sea Ornithological Station has started similar study in 2013 in Crimea (Sivash, Western Crimea and Kerch peninsula). Based on the results of these studies the measures to prevent bird mortality caused by power lines are foreseen.*

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

*The relevant studies are not finalized yet and corrective measures are currently under development.*

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 applicable

### 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)?

*No data available*

What is the size of the populations affected?

*No data available*

Were these habitat losses compensated?  Yes  Partially  No  Not applicable

If yes, please explain how.

Were these measures effective?  Yes  Partially  No  Not applicable

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?

*Enforcement is rather weak. According to some information there are cases of illegal taking of eggs and chicks from the wild Great Bustards to be further traded (changed for other species) for the purposes of keeping in private zoos.*

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

*If an owner of the Great Bustard specimen has all the documents that prove a legal origin of that specimen it is allowed to keep it in captivity.*

#### **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.

*Currently there are no activities on breeding of Great Bustard in captivity.*

##### **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.

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

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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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

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

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

Yes  No  Not applicable<sup>4</sup>

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.

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

<sup>3</sup> No release is taking place in the country.

<sup>4</sup> For countries which do not have any transboundary population.

## **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 applicable

*Mostly wintering birds are monitored*

What is the size and trend in the national population?<sup>5</sup>

Breeding/resident population

Non-breeding population (on passage, wintering)

No. of adult males: around 260-340

No. of adult males: around 3000-3500

No. of females: around 260-340

No. of females: around 3000-3500

No. immature males: no data

No. immature males: no data

Trend:  Declined by \_\_\_% over the last 10 years  
 Stable  
 Increased by \_\_\_% over the last 10 years

Trend:  Declined by 30-40% over the last 10 years  
 Stable  
 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:

### **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 applicable

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

*The results of the project "Study of dependence of wintering birds community on the state of snow and ice cover" (2010–2012 in the south of Kherson oblast and north of Crimea) will be published in the report on implementation of the project "Monitoring of Earth" under financial support of EEC in the framework of the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme in accordance with Grant Agreement № 226740 «Building Capacity for a Black Sea Catchment Observation and Assessment System supporting Sustainable Development».*

What can be learned from these studies?

*In winter the numbers and distribution of birds (including Great Bustard) depend on the state of snow and ice covers. In winter 2010–2011 and 2011–2012 because of deep and solid snow cover that prevents birds from foraging there was low numbers of the birds in their regular winter areas in south of Kherson oblast. A portion of them may has died; other can change traditional wintering areas.*

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

*Further studies in other areas of south of Ukraine are necessary.*

<sup>5</sup> Only for countries where the species occurs regularly.

**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 applicable

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

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What can be learned from these studies?

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

*Joint Russian-Ukrainian study on the factors causing decline of Great Bustard population in European part of Russia (first of all in Saratov oblast') and in wintering areas on the south of Ukraine.*

**6.2.2 Studies on mortality factors.**

Are the causes of Great Bustard mortality understood in your country?  
 Yes  Partially  No  Not applicable

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

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What can be learned from these studies?

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

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**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 applicable<sup>6</sup>

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

1. Andryushchenko Yu. A. Importance of agricultural lands for protection of rare bird species in the south of Ukraine // Scientific Herald of National Agrarian University / Editorial Board: D.O. Melnichuk (Executive Editor) and others. – Kiev, 2006. – Issue 93. – P. 264–273. [Rus.]
2. Andryushchenko Yu. A. New data on ecology of Demoiselle Crane, Great Bustard and Norfolk plover in the south of Ukraine / Ornithological studies in North Eurasia: Proceedings of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Ornithological Conference of North Eurasia. Stavropol, Stavropol State University Press, 2006. [Rus.]
3. Andryushchenko Yu. A. The Great Bustard // Red Data Book of Ukraine. Animal Kingdom / Ed. I.A. Akimov. – Kiev, Globalconsulting, 2009. – P. 444. [Ukr.]
4. Andryushchenko Yu. The Great Bustard in southern Ukraine // Great Bustards in Russia and Ukraine. – Bustards studies, Volume 6 (2007). – P.111–129.

What can be learned from these studies?

*The results of the studies have shown that the Great Bustard has capacity (ecological, population and ethological) to restore former range, however, instability of numbers of nesting birds is currently observed. One of the reasons of that is that not sufficient actions have currently been undertaken in terms of the species habitat management; removal or decreasing of negative impact on it, prevention of taking eggs and chicks. In addition, there are no protected areas of high rank (reserves, national nature parks, regional landscape parks) within the limits of which the Great Bustard is wintered. Apart from withers with extreme conditions (low*

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<sup>6</sup> Only for breeding countries.

*temperatures and solid deep snow) poaching and all-round disturbance can contribute to decline in wintering Great Bustard. Those factors prevent birds from restoring their energetic loss (not enough time for foraging, many forced movements, impossibility to hide from wind etc.).*

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

It is necessary:

1. Habitat management in the Great Bustard nesting areas;
2. To prevent illegal taking of eggs and chicks and;
3. Regulate predators numbers;
4. Create protected areas to protect the species wintering areas especially in the south of Kherson oblast and Kerch peninsula;
5. Take measures to prevent poaching.

#### **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 applicable

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

*Migration stopover sites of the species are known along the northern coastline of the Sea of Azov, however, time for stopover and numbers of birds in such places are not studied.*

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

*Information on migration are confirmed by Melitopol Ornithological Station's data and data from questionnaires and satellite tracking of birds marked by German scientists in Saratov oblast' in the Russian Federation.*

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

*It is necessary to study migrations including by methods of satellite telemetry.*

### **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 applicable

If yes, please describe it.

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

Yes  No  Not applicable

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

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### **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?

The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Red Data Book of Ukraine had been published in 2009 where Great Bustard is listed. In order to make this information publically available an electronic version of the publication was put on official website of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine.  
([http://menr.gov.ua/media/files/Articles/Red\\_book/Red\\_book\\_animals\\_2009\\_031209.rar](http://menr.gov.ua/media/files/Articles/Red_book/Red_book_animals_2009_031209.rar))

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

*Yes, there are farmers and Societies of hunters who support Great Bustard conservation in the AR Crimea.*

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

*Enhancement of relevant public awareness company is needed.*

### **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 applicable

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 applicable

### **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.

#### **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.

<b>Threat name</b>	<b>Threat score</b>	<b>Explanation and reference</b>
Habitat loss	Medium	Own studies
Losses of eggs and chicks	High	Own observations and data of questionnaire
Predation	High	Own observations
Collision with powerlines	Medium	Own observations and data of questionnaire
Human disturbance	High	Own studies
Pesticides	Local	Own observations
Illegal hunting	Critical	Data of questionnaire
Others (specify) Burn of steppe on breeding period	Low	Own observations

## **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.**

*According to Decree No 1030 of 07.11.2012 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine “On level of compensations for illegal taking, killing or damage of animal and plant species listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine as well as for destruction or deterioration of their habitats” the fine for illegal taking, killing or damage of Great Bustard individuals or destruction of their habitats had been lifted from 1000 up to 20,000 UAH.*

*Some country-specific actions have been described above in 2.2, 2.3.2, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4.*