

**REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA  
NATIONAL REPORT 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**

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<p><b>List any other agencies, institutions, or NGOs that have provided input</b>  UNESCO from Moldova;  Academy of Science of Moldova and Institute of Zoology of Academy of Science of Moldova  (Adress: MD-2028, Chisinau, 1 Academiei str.)</p>
<p><b>Reports submitted to date:</b>  First: (Period covered)  Second: 2010-2013</p>
<p><b>Period covered by this report</b>  (01) (01) (2010) to (14) (02) (2013):</p>
<p><b>Memorandum in effect in country since:</b>  [Date: 21 / 06 / 2001]:</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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> High (50-75%) <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (10-49%) <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium (10-49%) <input type="checkbox"/> Low (<10%) <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable <sup>1</sup>

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

In the year 2011 the Law on Animal Kingdom (1995) was partially harmonized, according to Council Directive 79/409 EEC on the conservation of wild birds adopted on 2 April 1979.

Where are the remaining gaps?

Management plans are not approved to Ramsar sites?

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

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

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 rape 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%)
- Little (<10%)
- Not at all
- Not applicable<sup>1</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.

Are recently (over the last 20 years) abandoned Great Bustard breeding habitats mapped in your country?  
 Yes  No  Not applicable<sup>1</sup>

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

Government Decision no. 1030 of 2010 Expansion of natural areas of medicinal plants and expanding of representative multifunctional sector with steppe vegetation in Bugeac steppe.

Government Decision No. 834 from 08.11.12 to approve the Parliament Decision on founding the Orhei National Park.

The Draft Strategy and Action Plan on Biodiversity Conservation for the years 2013-2020 is elaborated and will be approved in the nearest future.

Ecological Network Program approved by Government Decision No. 593 of 2011. Implementation of the Programme on National Ecological Network Development(2011) (according the Law on Ecological Network) provides the creation of a national ecological network and its connection to the Pan-European ecological network, which would favor the migration of wildlife. Development of ecological networks contributes to the conservation of global biodiversity through appropriate mechanisms.

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

There is no monitoring in this respect

### 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<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>

If yes, please provide details.

The Republic of Moldova has a wide range of strategies, policies and actions plans in biodiversity conservation and protection, has comprehensive legislative framework which affords statutory protection to all wild animals.

The most important actions that were taken by the Republic of Moldova in the context of biodiversity conservation are:

Government Decision no. 1030 of 2010 Expansion nature reserve of medicinal plants and expanding sectors multifunctional management representative steppe vegetation in Bugeac.

Government Decision No. 834 from 08.11.12 to approve the Parliament Decision on founding the National Park Orhei.

The Draft Strategy and Action Plan on Biodiversity Conservation for the years 2013-2020 is elaborated and will be approved in the nearest future.

Ecological Network program approved by Government Decision No. 593 of 2011. Implementation of the Programme on National Ecological Network Development (2011) (according the Law on Ecological Network ) which provides for the creation of a national ecological network and its connection to the Pan-European ecological network, which would favor the migration of wildlife. Development of ecological networks contributes to the conservation of global biodiversity through appropriate mechanisms.

-In the year 2011 was partially harmonized Law on Animal Kingdom (1995) according to Council Directive 79/409 EEC on the conservation of wild birds adopted on 2 April 1979.

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<sup>1</sup>

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.

Government Decision no. 606 of 15.08.2012 on hunting regulation in the hunting season from 2012 to 2013, which prohibits hunting of endangered species included in the Red Book

Red book of the Republic of Moldova.Ed.II, 2001,  
Munteanu A., T.Cozeni, N.Zubcov, (2006) Lumea animala a Moldovei Păsări III (Animal kingdom of Moldova, Birds III).

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<sup>1</sup>

### **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?

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<sup>1</sup>

**2.3.1 Prevention of predation.**

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

The cultivation of the virgin lands, the application of chemicals in agriculture, insufficient food, illegal hunting. Moldova has the highest population density in Europe.

What are the main predator species?

The main predator is fox. Its optimum density is exceeded

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

Government Decision no. 606 of 15.08.2012 on hunting regulation in the hunting season from 2012 to 2013, which prohibits hunting of endangered species included in the Red Book

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<sup>1</sup>

**2.3.2 Adoption of measures for power lines.**

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

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 applicable<sup>1</sup>

**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)?

What is the size of the populations affected?

Were these habitat losses compensated?  Yes  Partially  No  Not applicable<sup>1</sup>

If yes, please explain how.

Were these measures effective?  Yes  Partially  No  Not applicable<sup>1</sup>

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?

**Any extraction of the natural environment is performed according to the CITES Convention.**

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

#### **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 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 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.

#### **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

\* 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.

What proportion of the national population is monitored?

- All (>75%)
- Most (50-75%)
- Some (10-49%)
- Little (<10%)
- None
- Not applicable<sup>1</sup>

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: \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. of females: \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. immature males: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of adult males: \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. of females: \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. immature males: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Trend:  Declined by \_\_\_% 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<sup>1</sup>

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

Munteanu A., T.Cozari, N.Zubcov, (2006) Lumea animala a Moldovei Păsări III (Animal kingdom of Moldova, Birds III).

What can be learned from these studies?

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

**6.2.1 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<sup>1</sup>

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 applicable<sup>1</sup>

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

What can be learned from these studies?

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

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 applicable<sup>6</sup>

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 applicable<sup>1</sup>

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 applicable<sup>1</sup>

If yes, please describe it.

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

Yes  No  Not applicable<sup>1</sup>

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

**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?

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?

**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<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup>

**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.

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.**