



Kiskunsági Nemzeti Park

The Great Bustard in Hungary - overview about the present situation, recent happenings and future plans

Miklós Lóránt

Kiskunsági National Park Directorate, Hungary

MoS4 /Scientific Symposium : “Advances in the research and conservation of the Great Bustard in Europe”

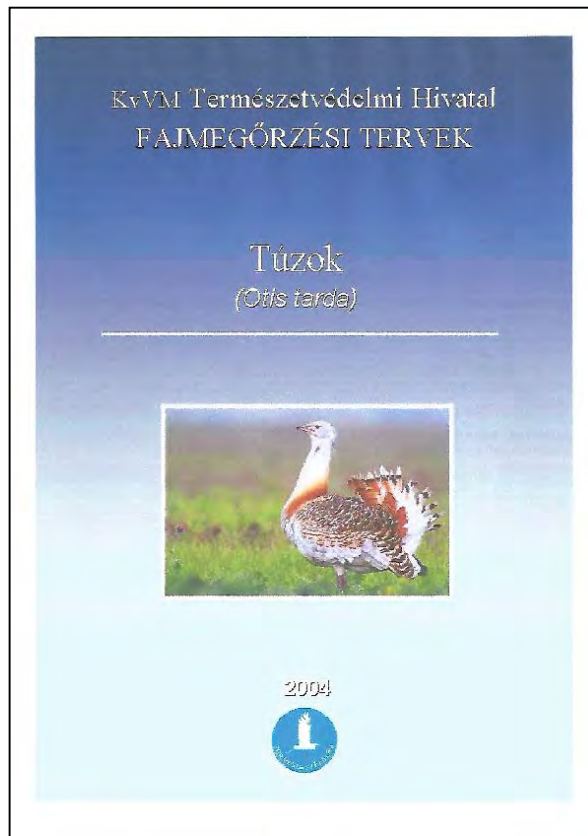
12-15 March 2018, Bad Belzig, Germany



Action plans as guidance - 9 threats listed -



2004.



2010.

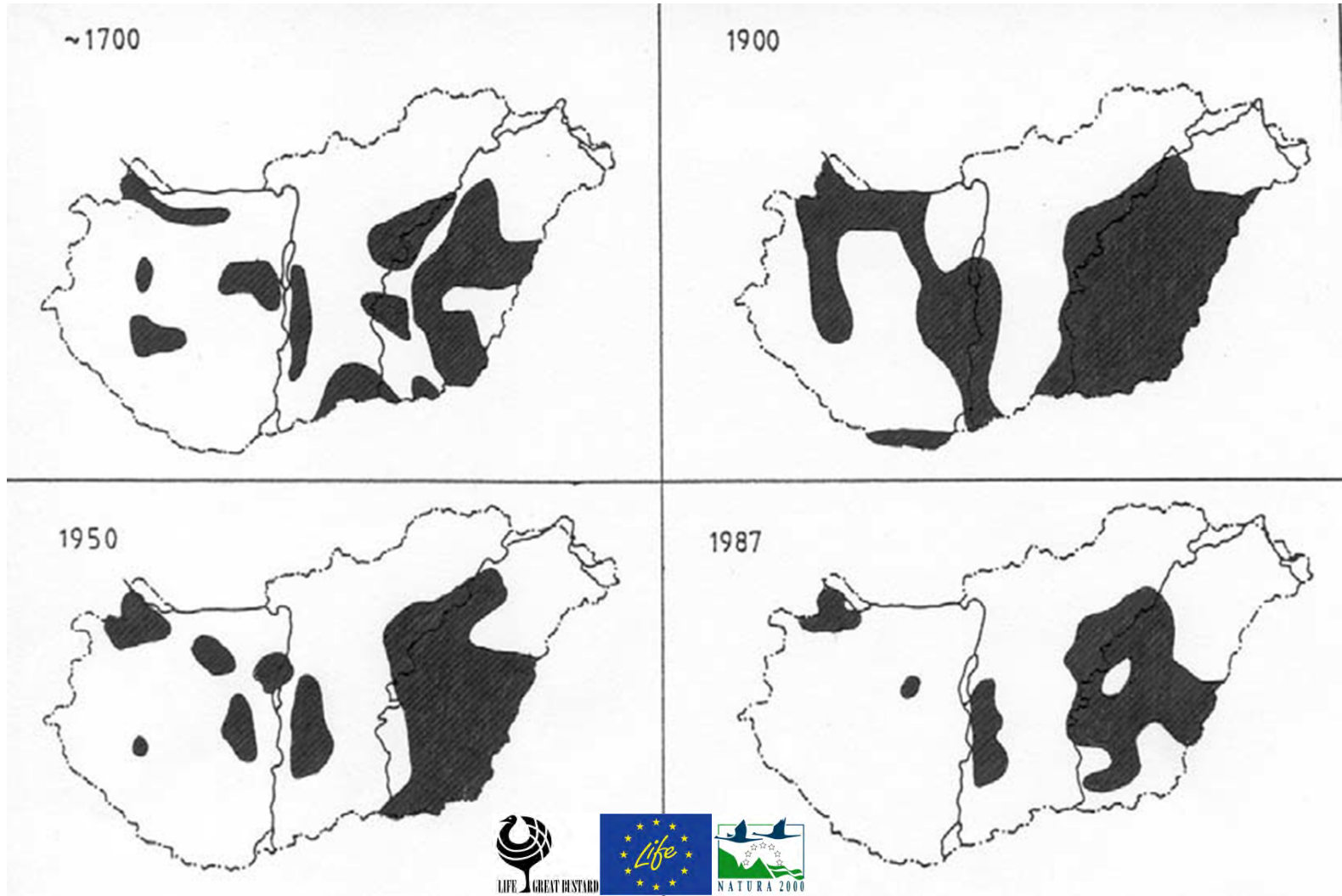


1. Loss of undisturbed open habitats with suitable vegetation structure – critical

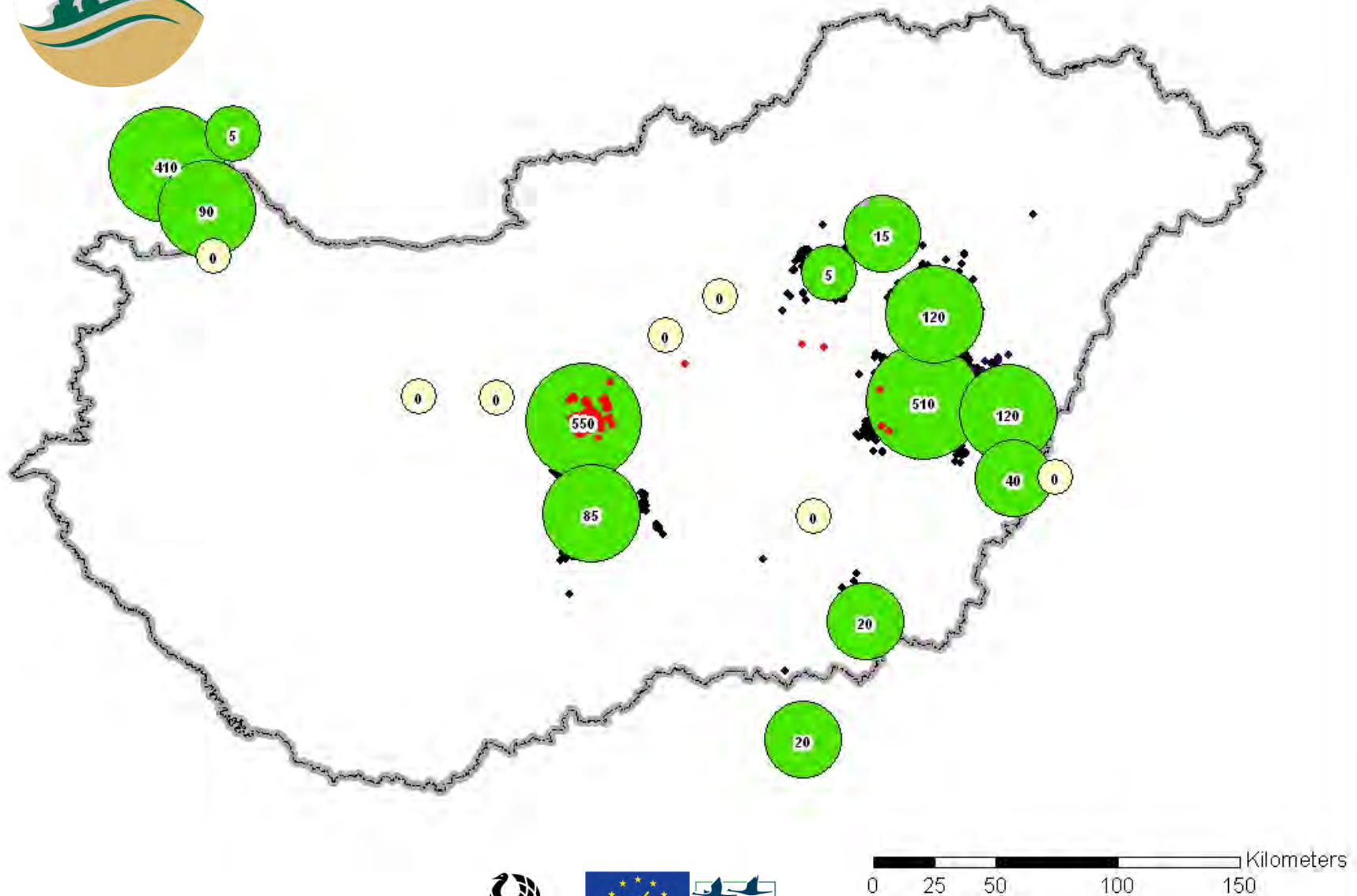


- Importance in Hungary: low
 - Infrastructural developments:
 - Installation of power lines
 - Opening new gravel pits
 - Development of trainline (e.g. Budapest-Beograd)
 - Inadequate cultivation (temporary loss)
 - Irrigation
 - Gain ground of unfavourable crops
 - Increase of disturbance

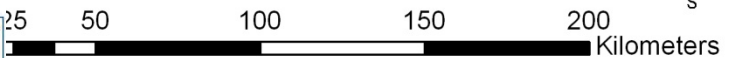
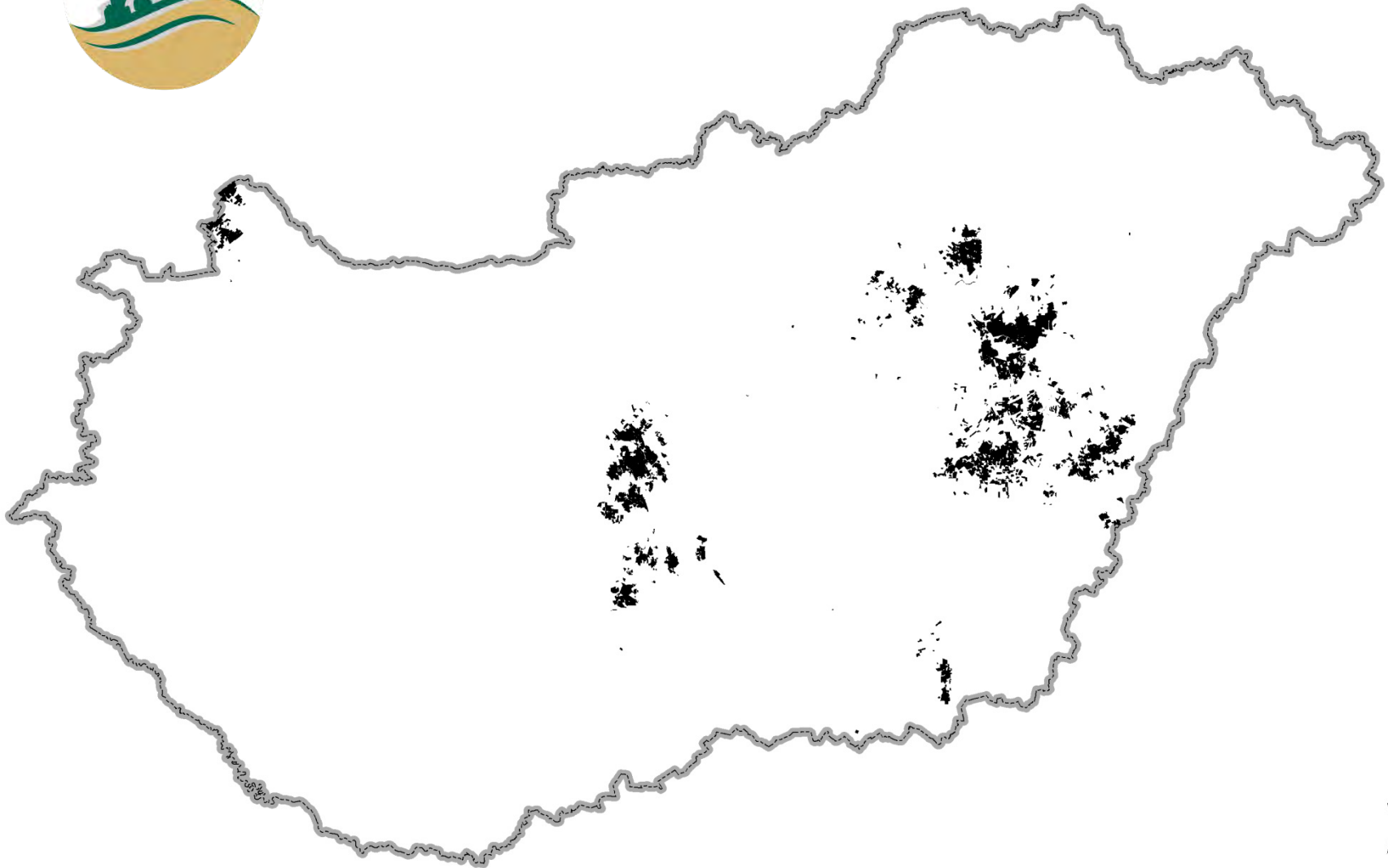
Less and less suitable habitats left



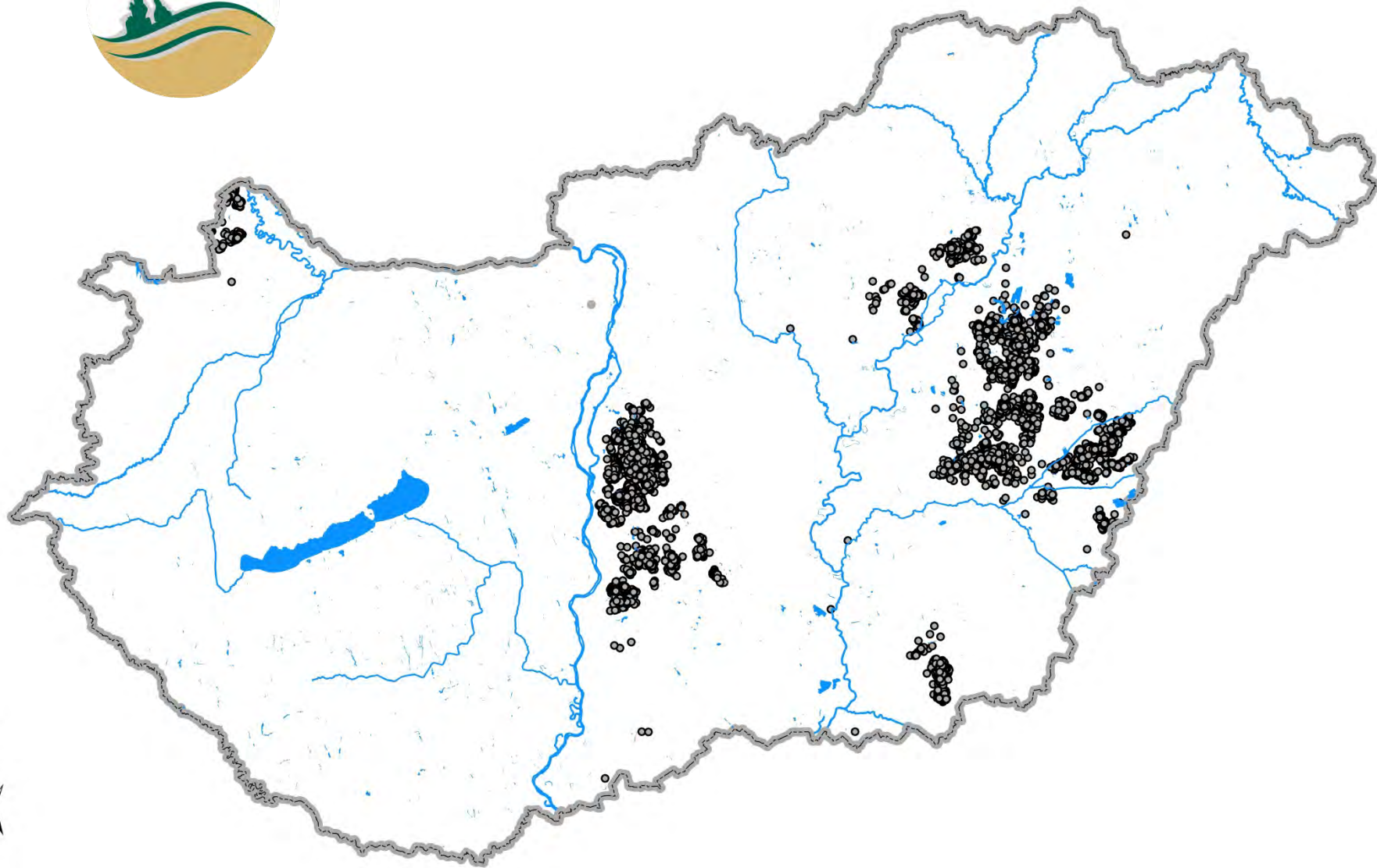
Meta-population system of GB within the Carpathian Basin



Approx. 2% of Hungary is used by Great Bustards



Gb observations (visual)

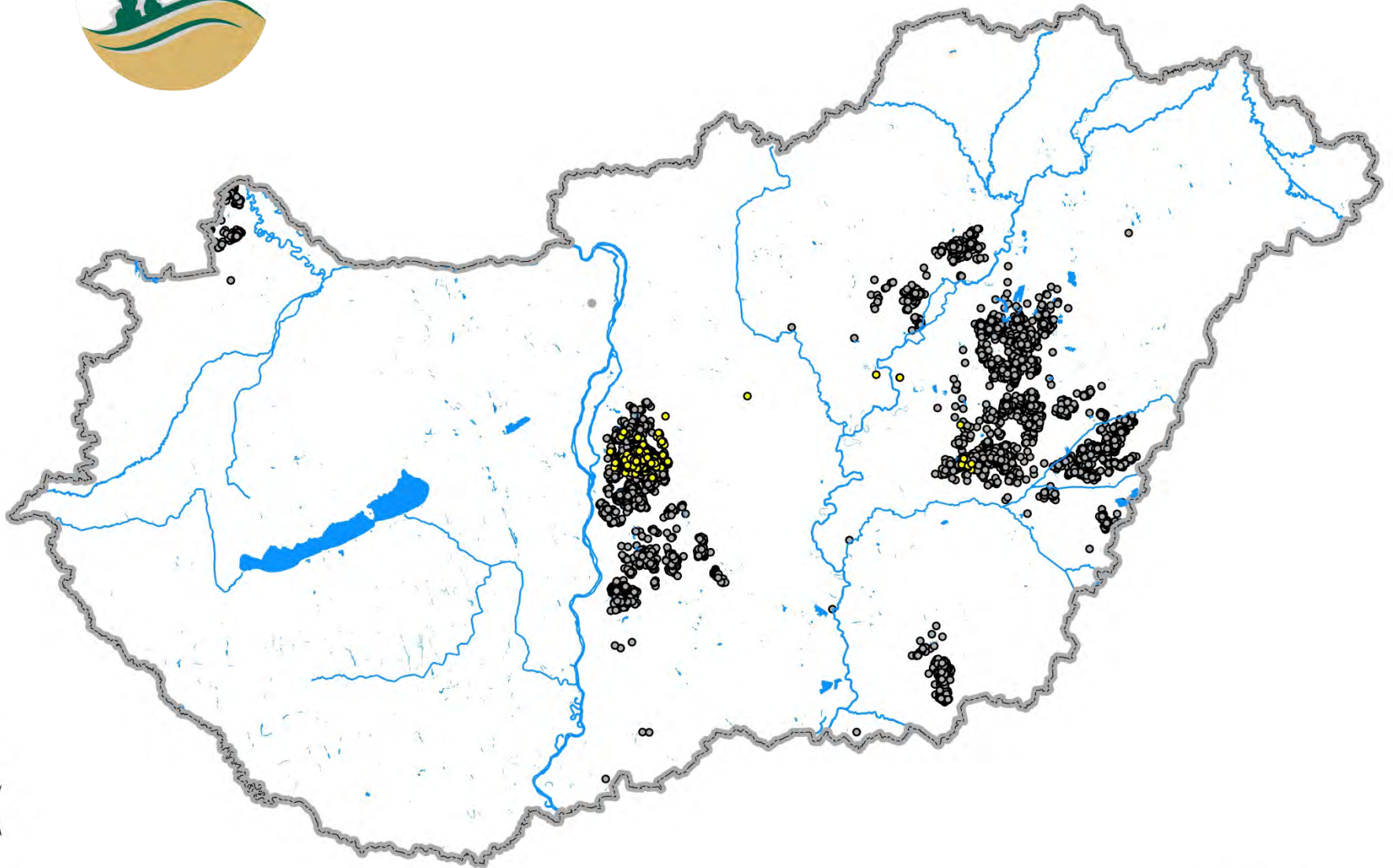


0 25 50 100 Kilometers



○ GB observation

GB observations (visual and PTT)

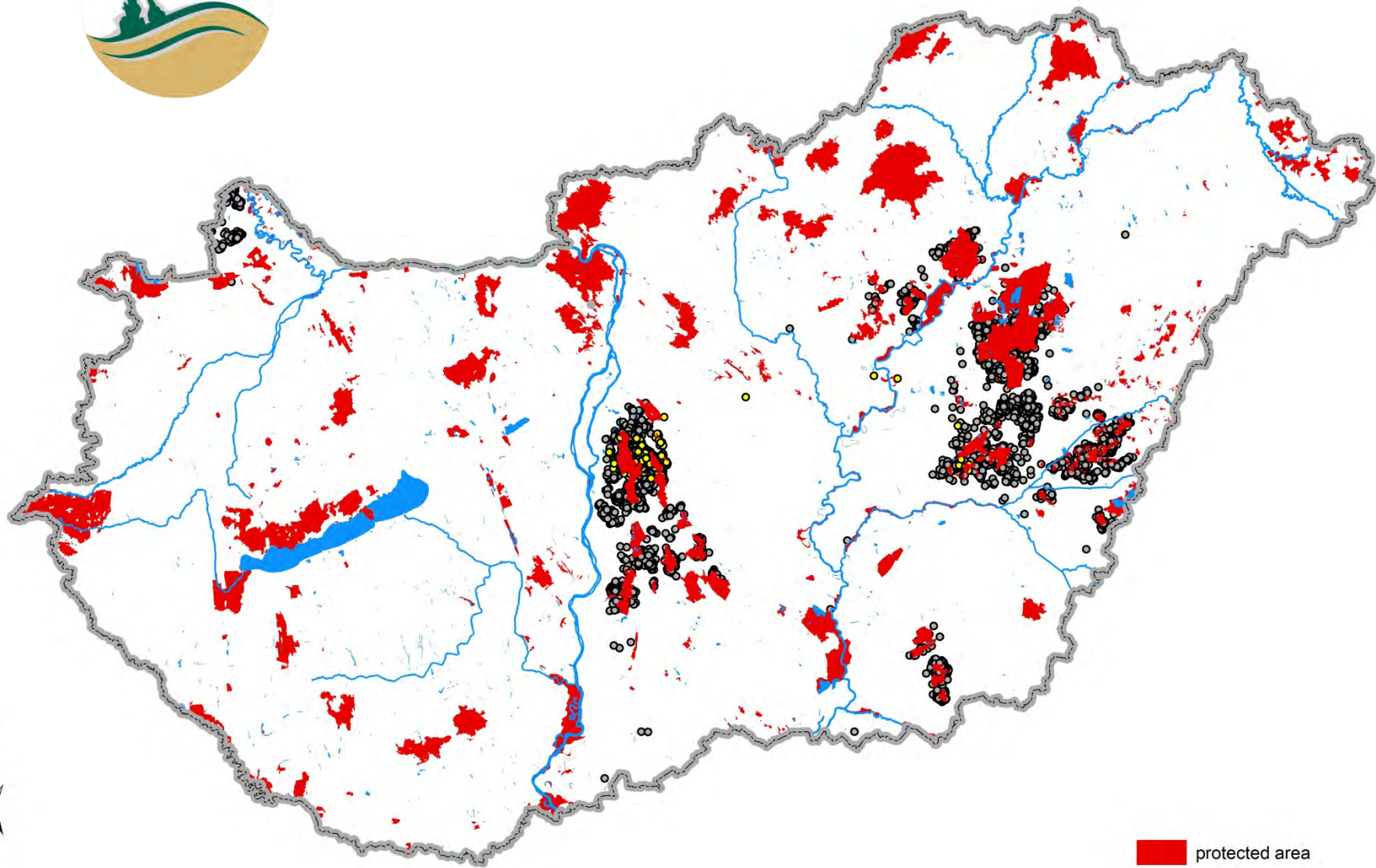


0 25 50 100 Kilometers






- GB with PTT
- GB observation

Protected areas (national level)

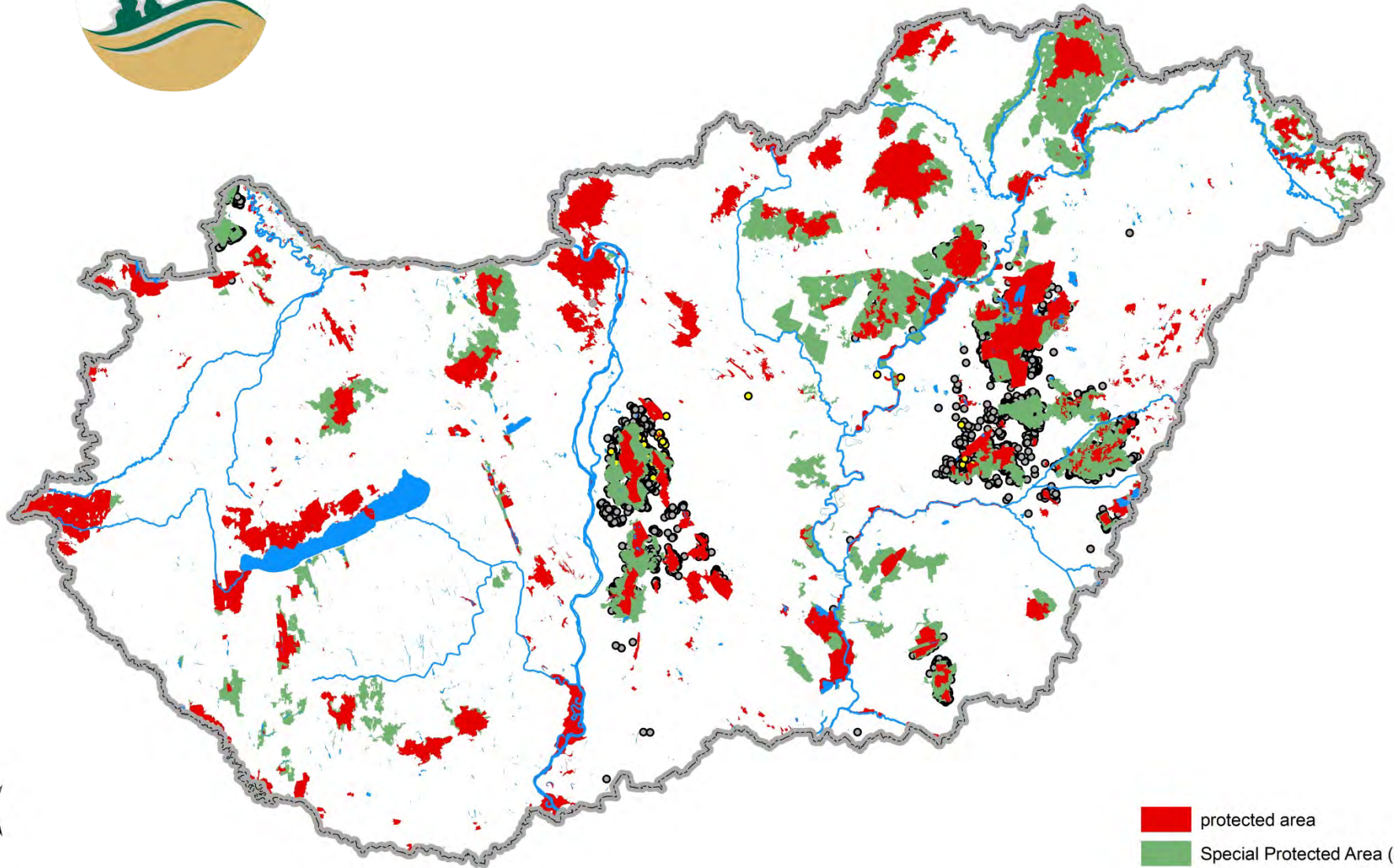


0 25 50 100 Kilometers

-  protected area
-  GB with PTT
-  GB observation



Protected areas (SPAs)



- protected area
- Special Protected Area (SPA)
- GB with PTT
- GB observation



Site protection – „knowing where”



- Reason of site-protection: site fidelity of GB
 - GBs can be protected only on GB habitats
- Purpose of protection is:
 - Maintain GB populations
 - Ensure breeding success (see threat 3.)
- Protection of presently occupied habitats depends on:
 - Quality of monitoring data
 - Location of the particular parcel

2. Collision with powerlines – high



- Importance in Hungary: high
- Prior mortality case, resulting 80% of known casualties at fully grown GBs
- Good progress in the last years and promising expectations for the future nationwide

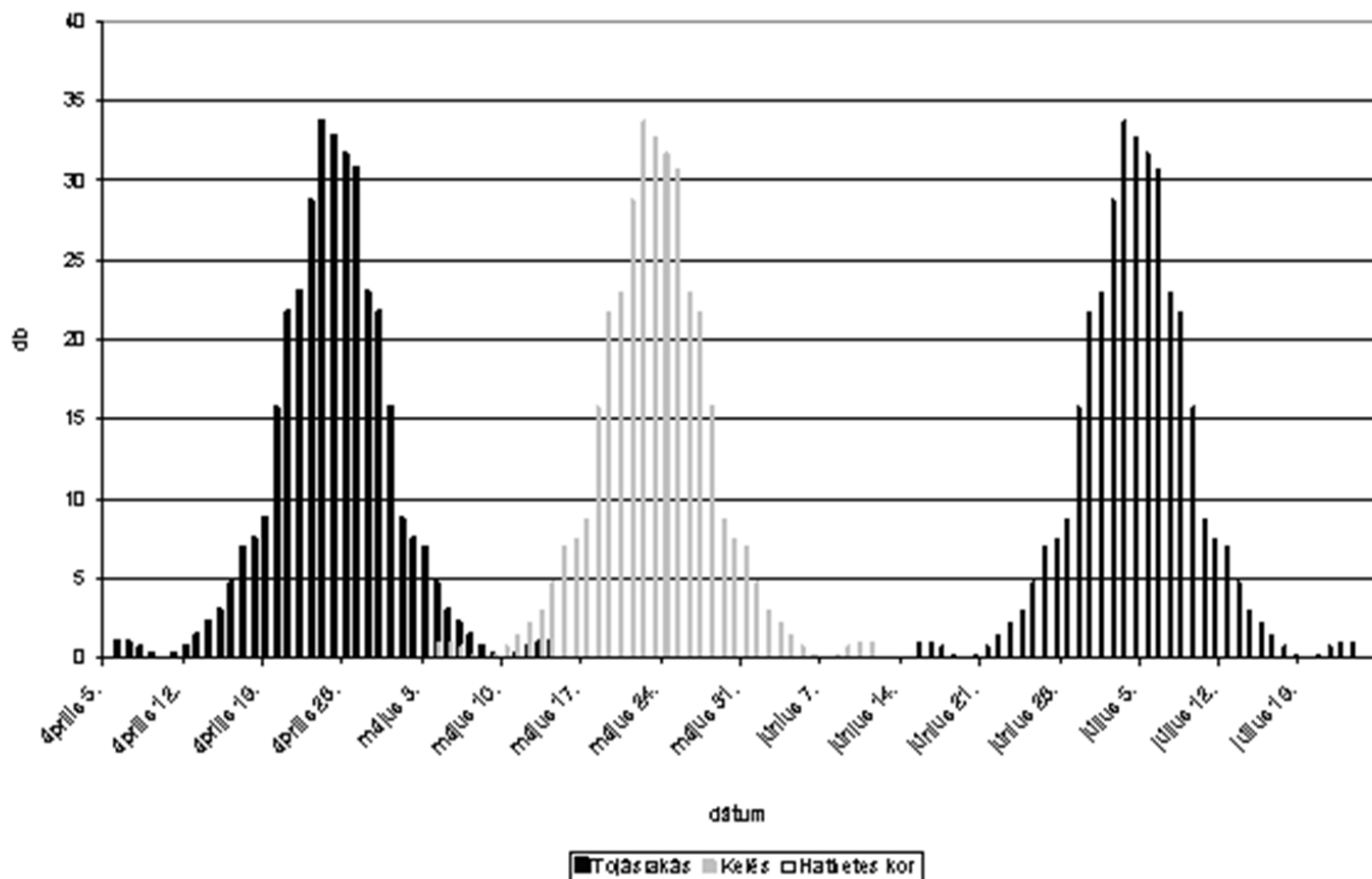


3. Destruction of eggs or chicks during agricultural works - high



- Importance in Hungary: high
- Habitat management
- Regulation depends on the location of the particular parcel
 - Owned by the Hungarian state (National Park Directorate or National Land Manager)
 - Parcels protected on national level
 - Parcels within Natura 2000 sites
 - Parcels involved in the agro-environmental program (AKG) as environmentally sensitive area (MTÉT)
 - Last chance: individual rescue

Habitat management – „knowing what, how and when”



Western Hungary



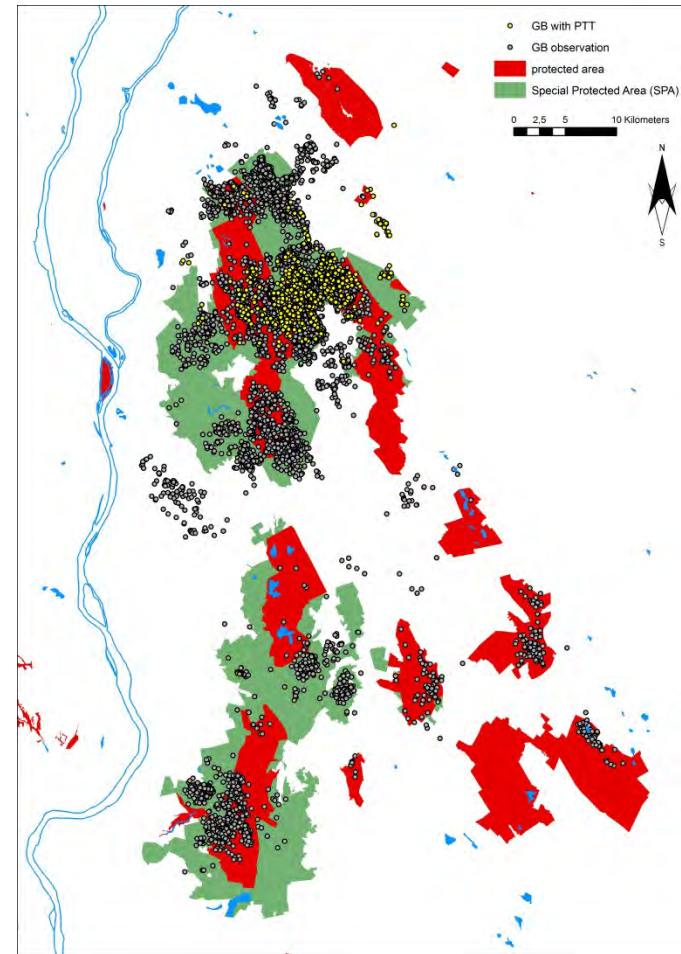
- The core area is in Austria
- Marginal sub-population, if any...
- No protected area on national level (apart from *Adonis vernalis* site)
- GBs outside of SPAs
- (West-pannonian) population **increasing!**



Central Hungary - Kiskunság



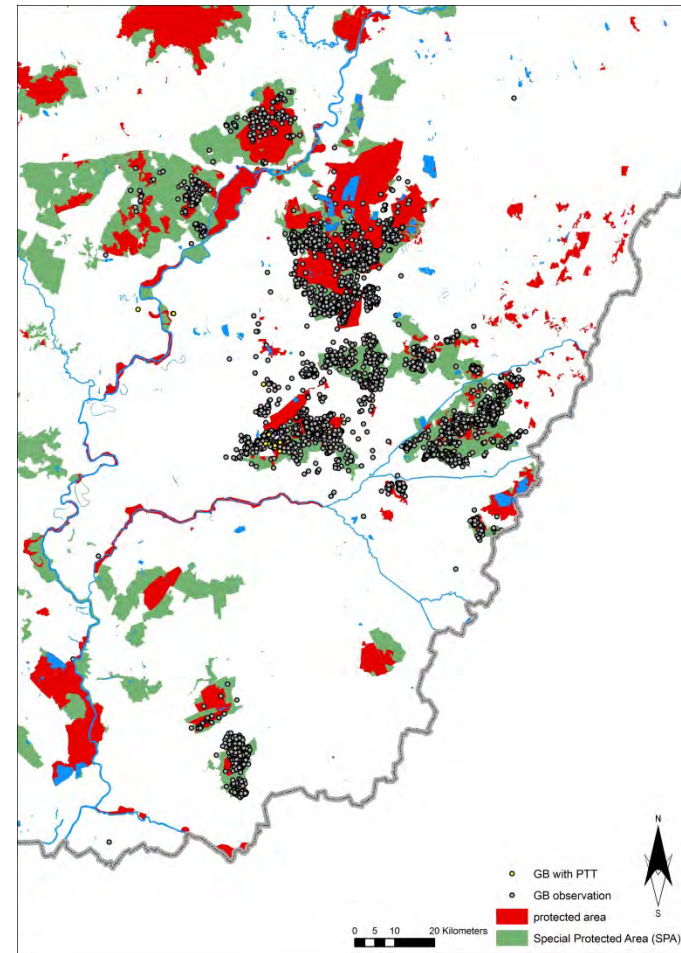
- The core area is in the Upper-Kiskunság
- More or less separated
- Various features of environment (e.g. legislation, ownership, distribution of GBs)
- GBs outside of SPAs
- More or less stable



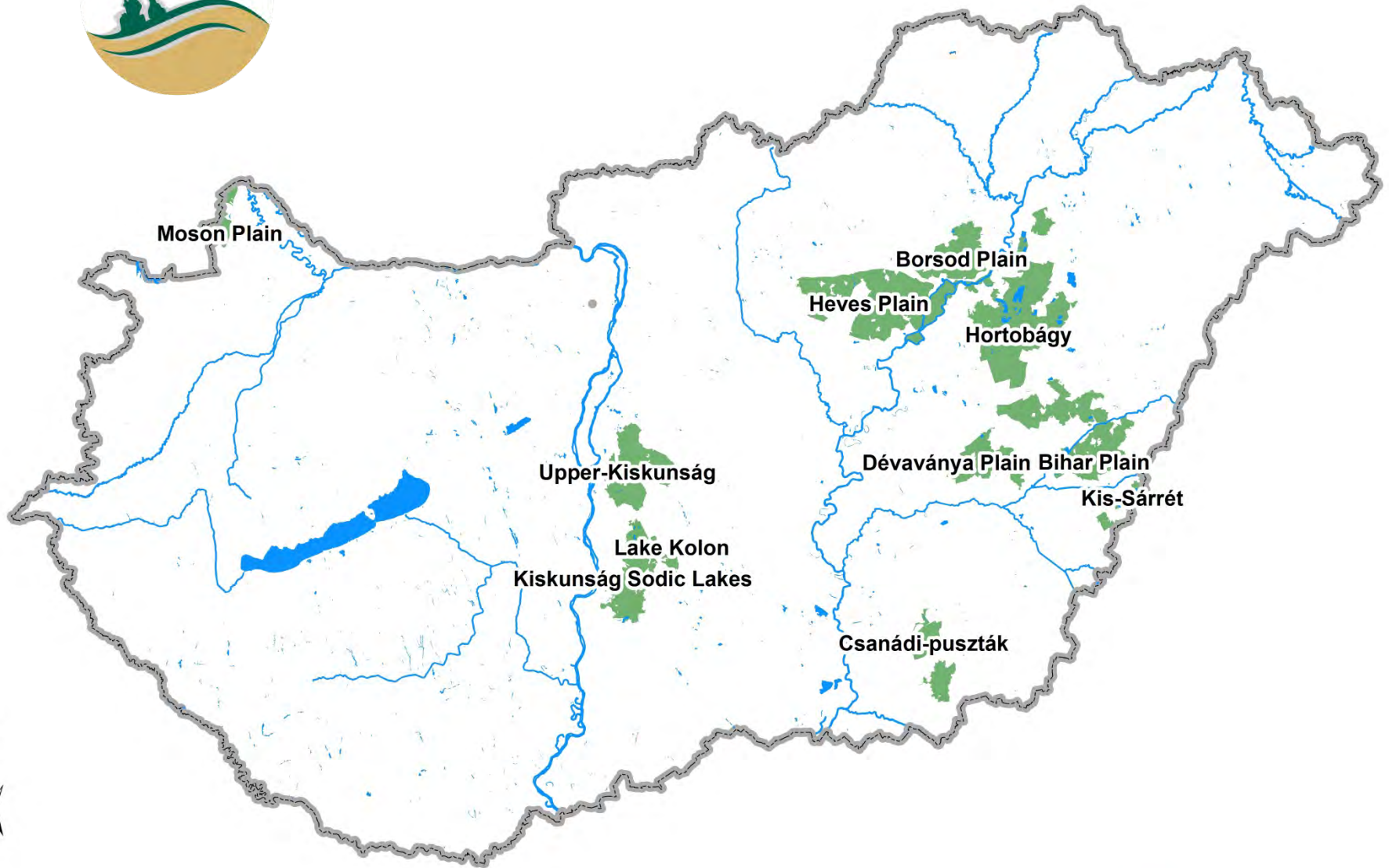
Eastern Hungary



- The core area is the Dévaványa Plain
- GBs outside of SPAs
- Cross border expansion
- Moderate increase (conspicuous aggregation)




SPAs – not that special...



0 25 50 100 Kilometers

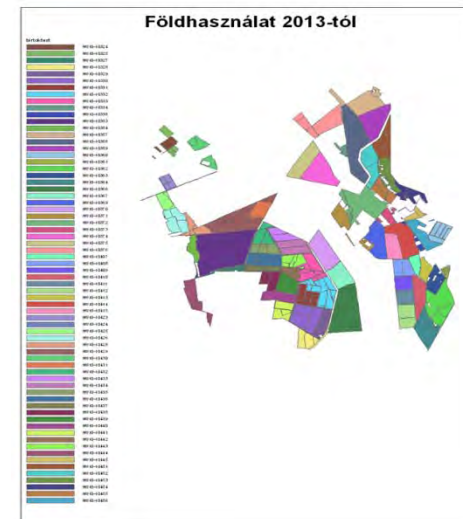


 SPAs hosting GB populations

Within SPAs



- Changes in ownership (e.g. very important parcels owned by the state have been sold)
- The inadequate legislation on grasslands (e.g. lack of regulation the timing of mowing)
- The lack of legislation on arable lands

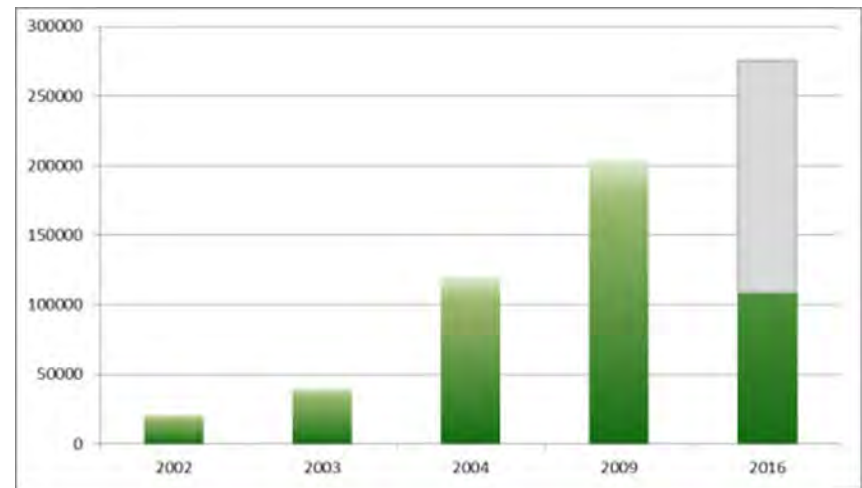


Agro-environmental schemes - could be an answer, but...-



- 2002-2003: National Agro Environmental Program (NAKP)
- **01. May 2004.: Hungary joins to the European Union**
- 2004-2009: National Rural Development Plan (NVT)
- 2009-2014: New Hungarian Rural Development Program (ÚMVP)
- **2015 : No GB schemes implemented**
- 2016-2020: Rural Development Program (VP)

2016-2020



4. Predation of eggs, chicks or juveniles – high



- Importance in Hungary: high
- Key predators: red fox, badger, hooded crow
- Other predators: wild boar, golden jackal, magpie, stray dog and cats, etc.
- The question of protected predators: marsh harrier, raven, eagle species
 - Eagles: disturbance
- Primer and secondary predation



Regional cooperation - hunters motivated



5. Insufficient invertebrate food supply - medium



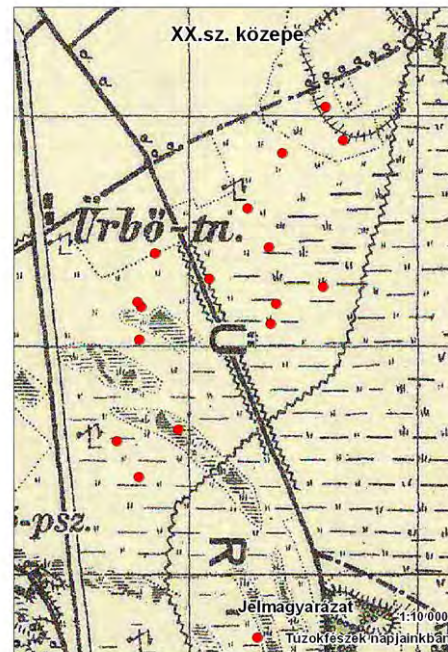
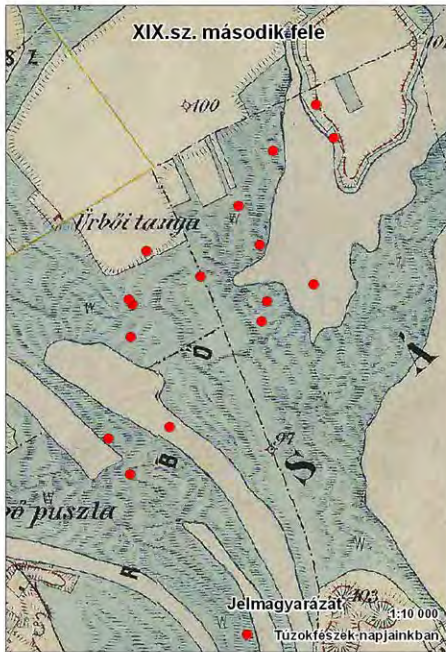
- Importance in Hungary: unknown
- Use of chemicals on arable lands
- Lack of grazing on grasslands
- Ecological farming (like lands managed by the National Park Directorates)
- Some researches in progress...



6. Climate change - medium



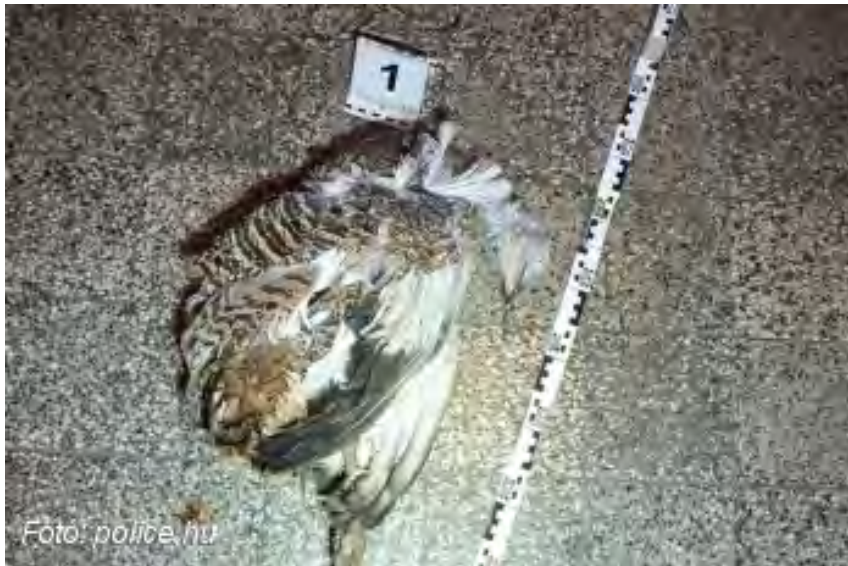
- Importance in Hungary: unknown
- In addition: changes in the last 150 years



7. Poaching - low



- Importance in Hungary: low (not relevant)
- 1 female was shot in Zsáka (Bihar Plain) at 27.12.2014



8. Catastrophic mortality in harsh winters – low



- Importance in Hungary: low
 - Unpredictable effects if occurs
- No harsh winter in the last 15 years
 - Back to threat 6.: Climate change

9. Disturbance - low

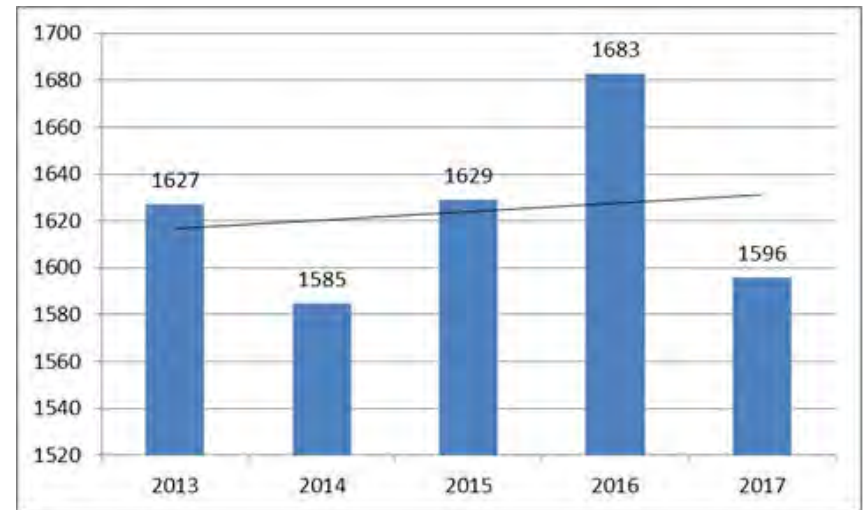


- Importance in Hungary: low
- Typical human disturbance:
 - Farming activities
 - Hunting activities
 - Traffic by cars, on foot, by plane, etc.
 - Water management
 - Recreation (incl. fishing)
- Key displaying grounds (arenas) are protected from human disturbance
- Natural disturbance (e.g. increase of eagle populations)

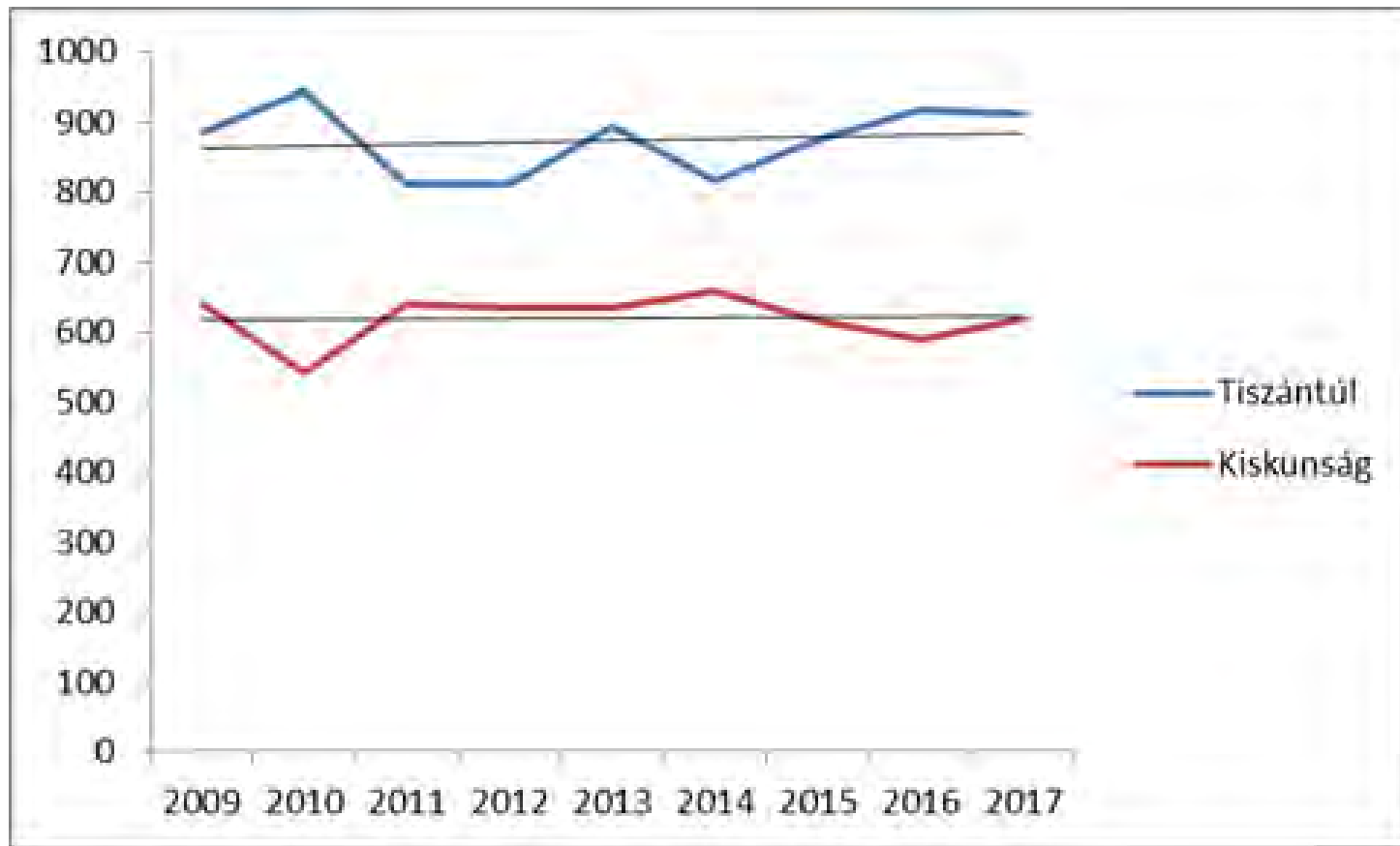
The last 5 years



- Moderate increase with some fluctuations
- An average of 1624 GBs
- BUT:
 - West-Pannoinian population
 - How many birds belong to Hungary?
 - Local declinings (e.g. Heves Plain, Borsod Plain)



Paralell changes at the population size in Central- and Eastern Hungary

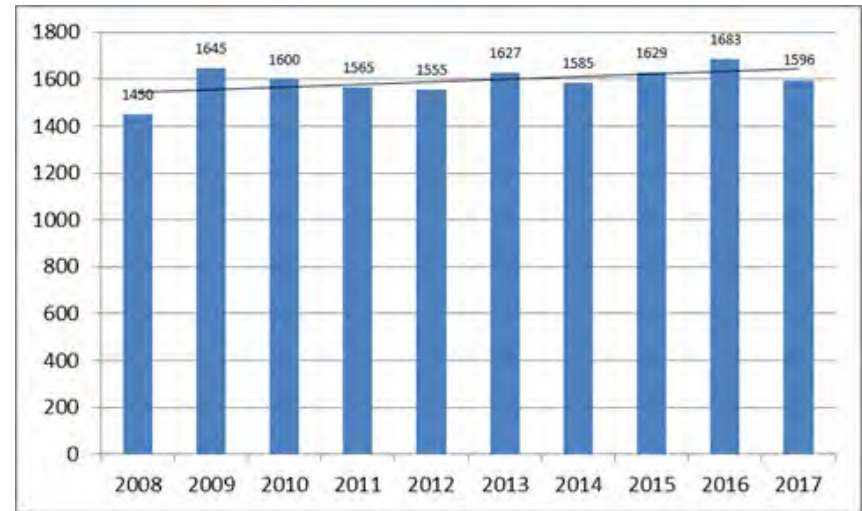
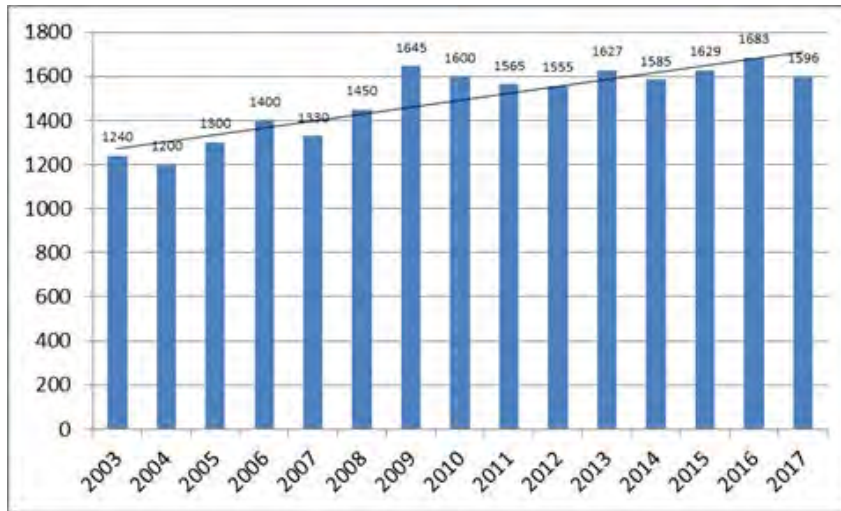


The estimated population size shows positive trend



**LIFE OTISHU
results and monitoring**

**Moderate increase in the last 10 years;
the size of the Hungarian population is:
approx. 1600 birds**

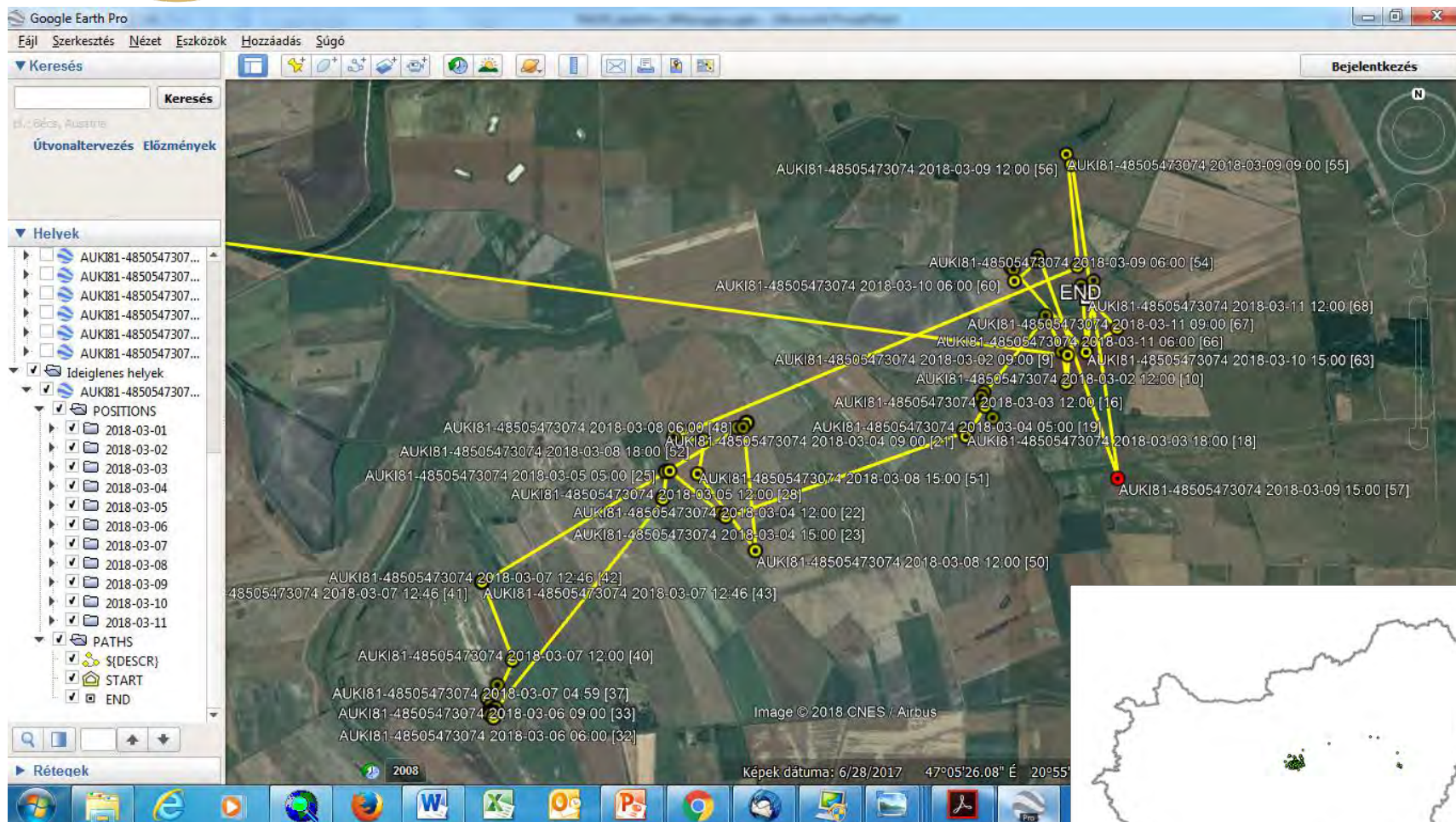


Future plans – LIFE Great Bustard



- Continuation of the work programme... AND
- Underground cabling of medium-voltage powerlines
- Predator management; cooperating with hunters
- Intensive information of stakeholders and general public:
 - Establish GB visitor centre
 - Publishing and scientific activity (e.g. tracking GBs)
 - Spread out knowledge (www.tuzok.hu)
- More people involved...

Tracking GBs (a total of 24 birds)



Cooperating with:



ELMŰ Hálózati Kft.



**MINISTERIUM
FÜR EIN
LEBENSWERTES
ÖSTERREICH**



**FÖLDMŰVELÉSÜGYI
MINISZTERIUM**



Kiskunsági Nemzeti Park

Thank you for your attention!

