





SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM

"PROGRESS IN THE RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION OF THE GREAT BUSTARD IN EUROPE"

18-21 September 2023, Bratislava, Slovakia

Experiences and best practice from Austria

Rainer Raab, Hannah Böing, Eike Julius, Péter Spakovszky, Jochen Steindl & Manuel Wojta



The aim of this part of the talk is to inform about conservation activities within LIFE Projects in Austria and to show some results from the Austrian LIFE Projects and other projects for the protection of the Great Bustard in the period 2018 to 2023.



Within the last 20 years in Austria, Slovakia and Hungary 6 LIFE Projects are being/have been done with LIFE support especially for the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*):

- 1. LIFE04 NAT/HU/000109; OTISHU-Conservation of Otis tarda in Hungary (2004-2008)
- 2. LIFE05 NAT/SK/000115; Conservation of Otis tarda in Slovakia (2005-2009)
- 3. LIFE05 NAT/A/000077, Cross-border Protection of the Great Bustard in Austria (2005-2010)
- 4. LIFE09 NAT/AT/000255, Cross-border Protection of the Great Bustard in Austria continuation (2010-2015)
- 5. LIFE15 NAT/AT/000834, LIFE Great Bustard Cross-border protection of the Great Bustard in Central Europe (2016-2023)
- 6. LIFE20 NAT/SK/001077, LIFE STEPPE on border (2022-2027)



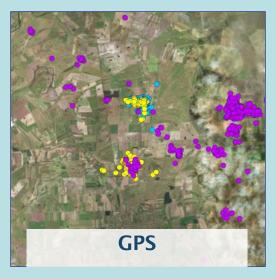
© Franz Josef Kovacs





Actions

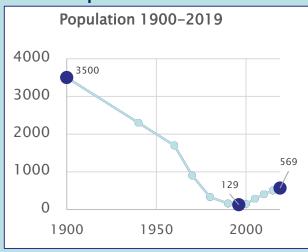




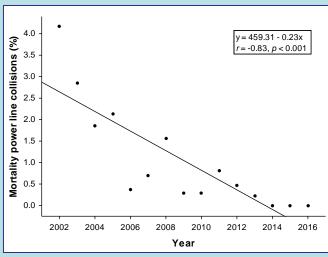




Population increase



Decrease of collisions









Best practice

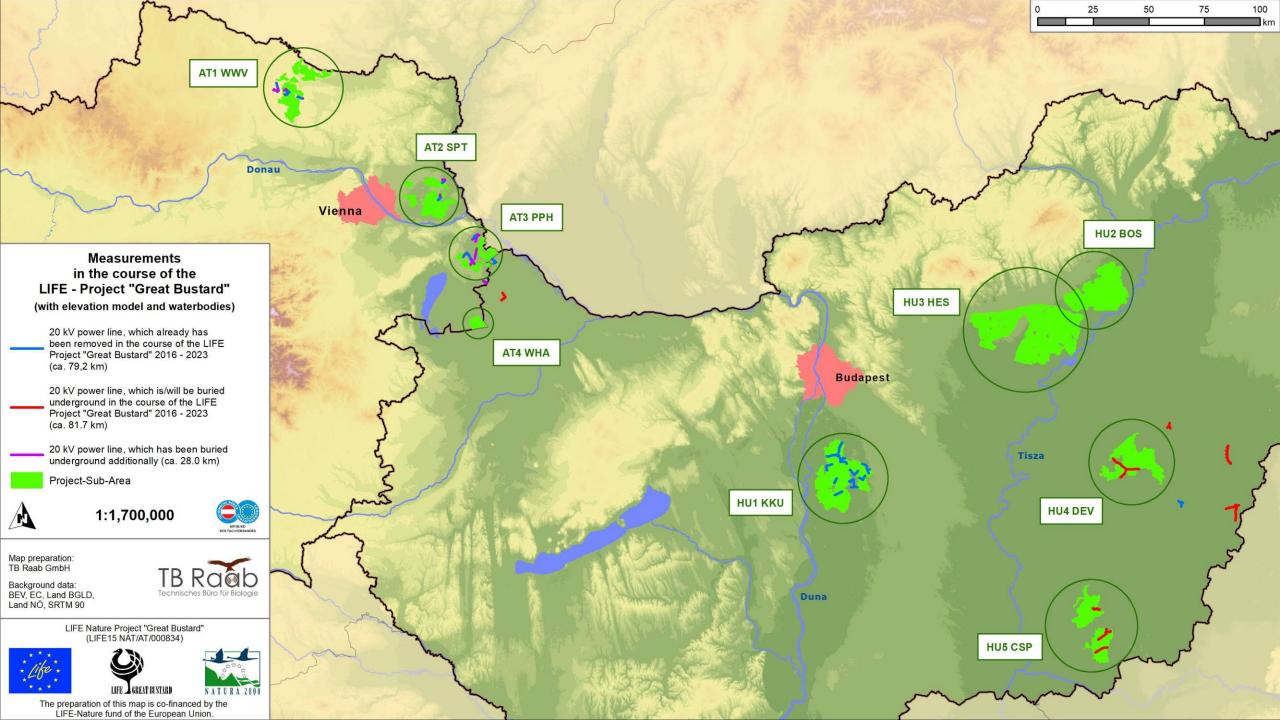


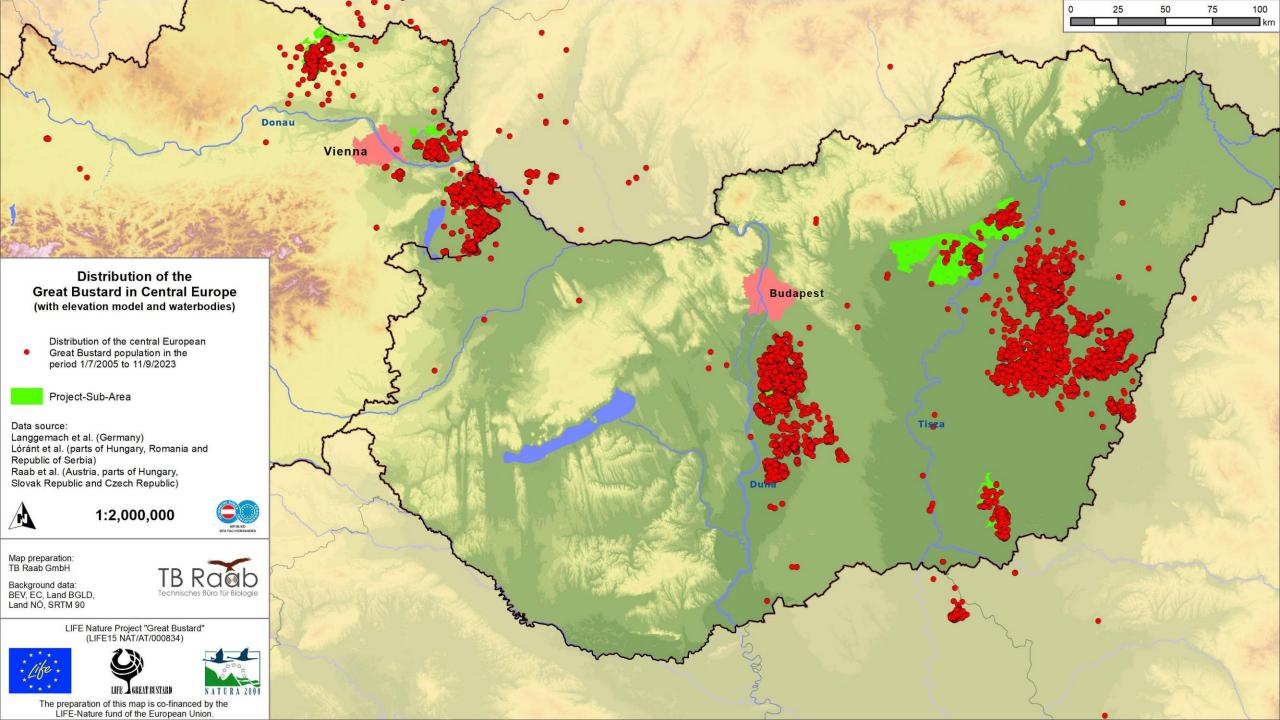


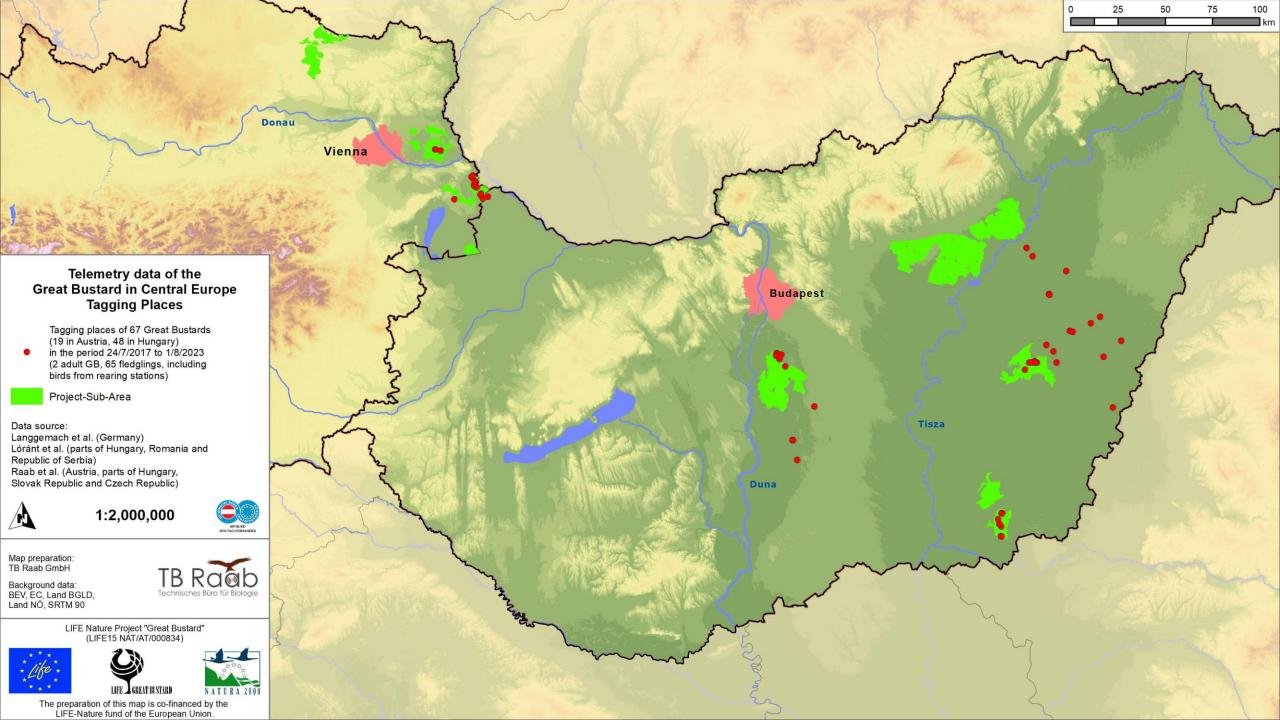


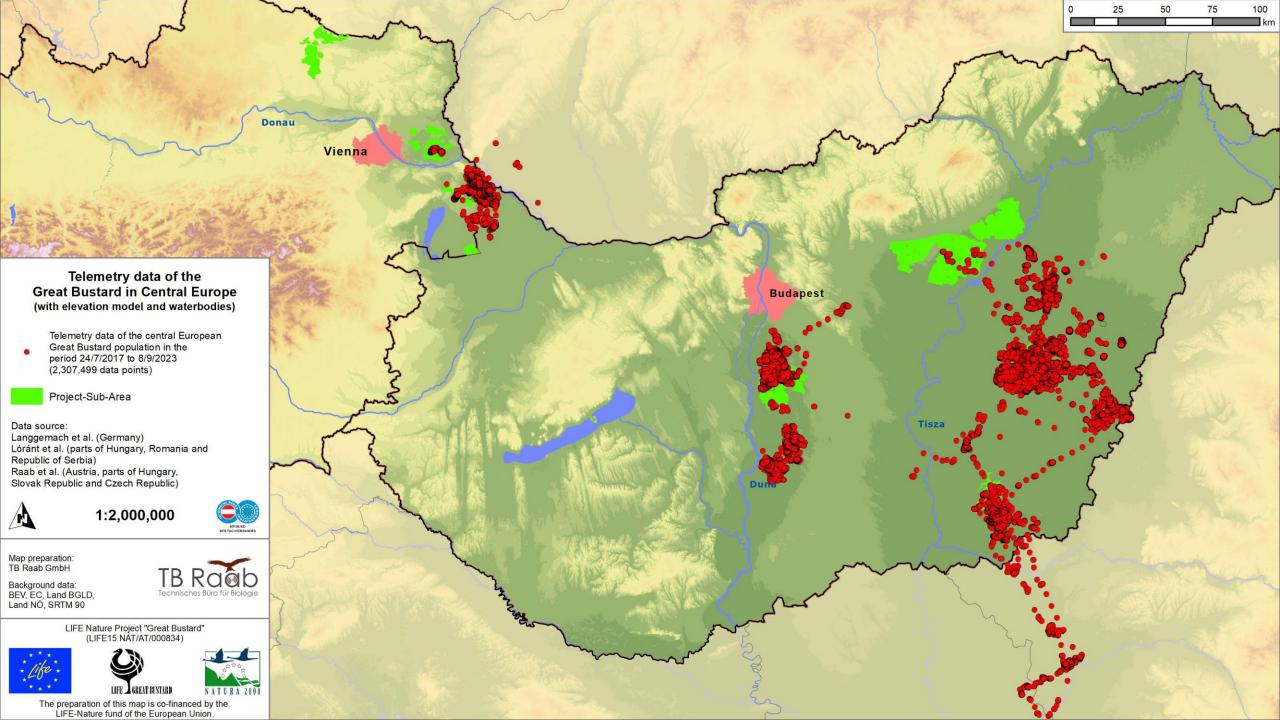


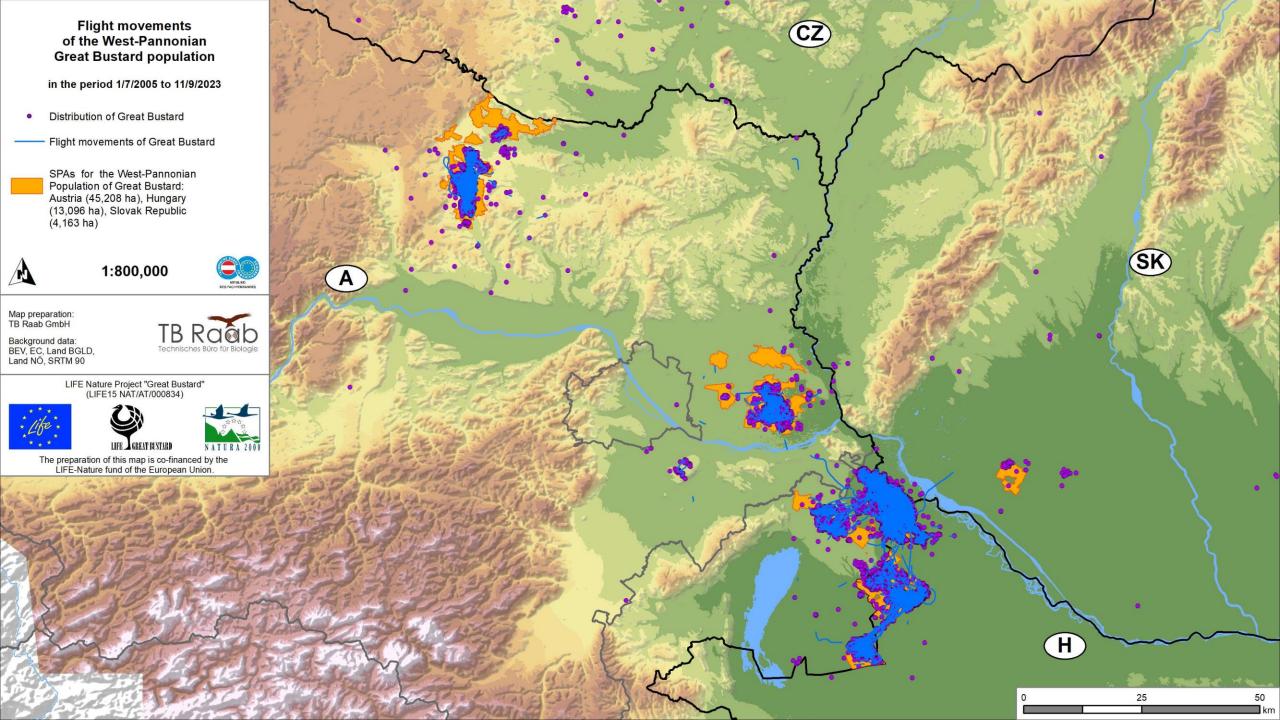


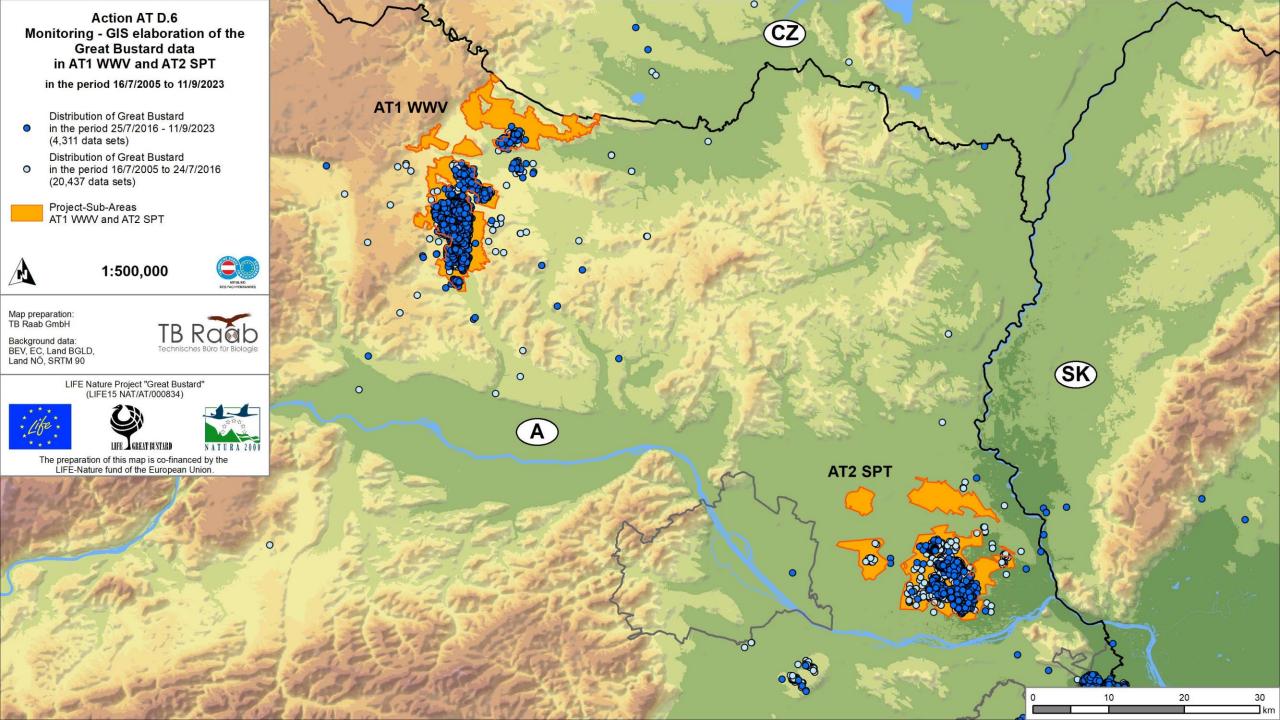


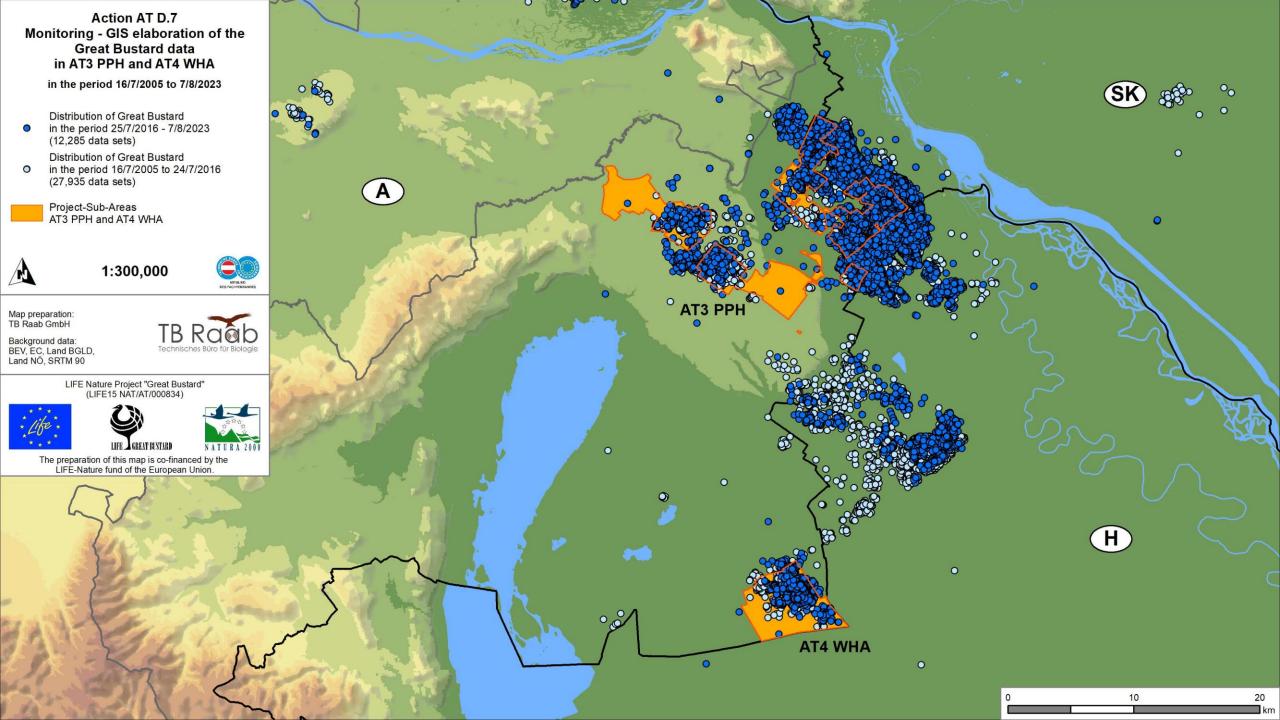


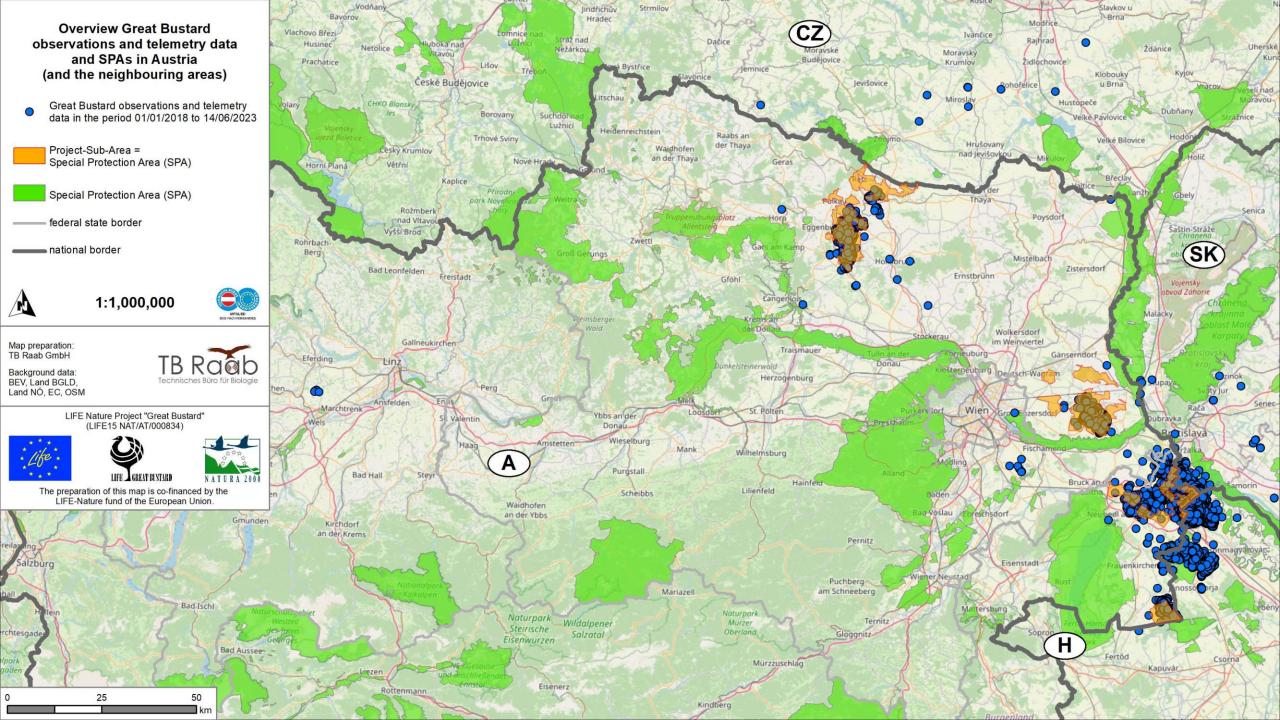














Project-Sub-Area = Special Protection Area (SPA)

Special Protection Area (SPA)

federal state border

national border



1:400,000



Map preparation: TB Raab GmbH

Background data: BEV, Land BGLD, Land NÖ, EC, OSM



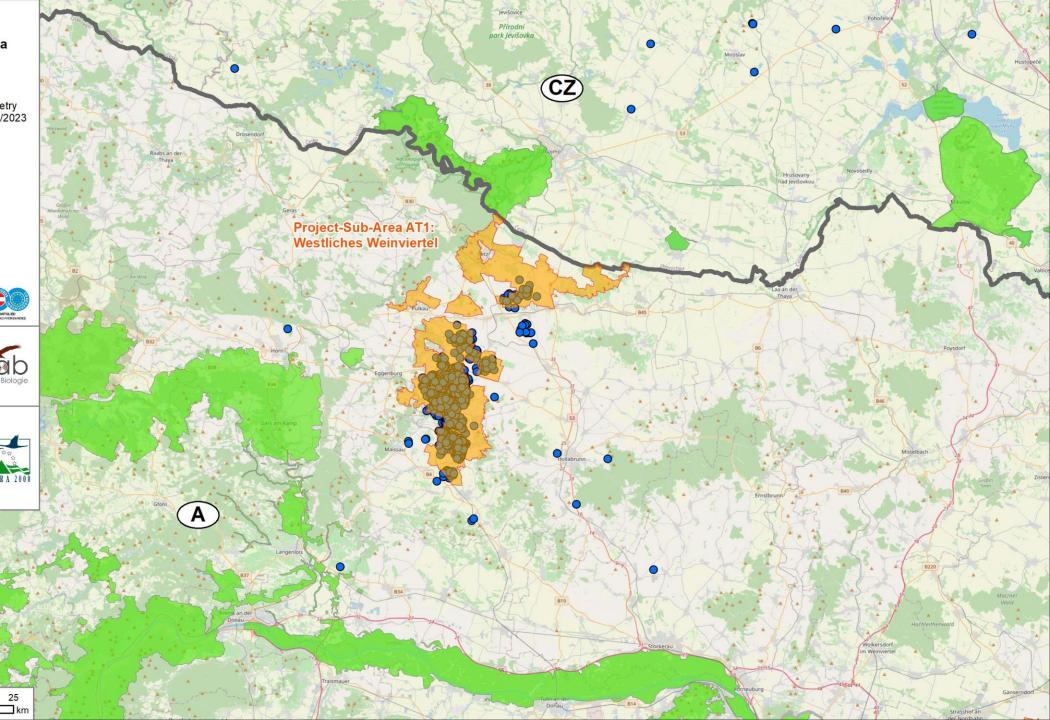
LIFE Nature Project "Great Bustard" (LIFE15 NAT/AT/000834)







The preparation of this map is co-financed by the LIFE-Nature fund of the European Union.



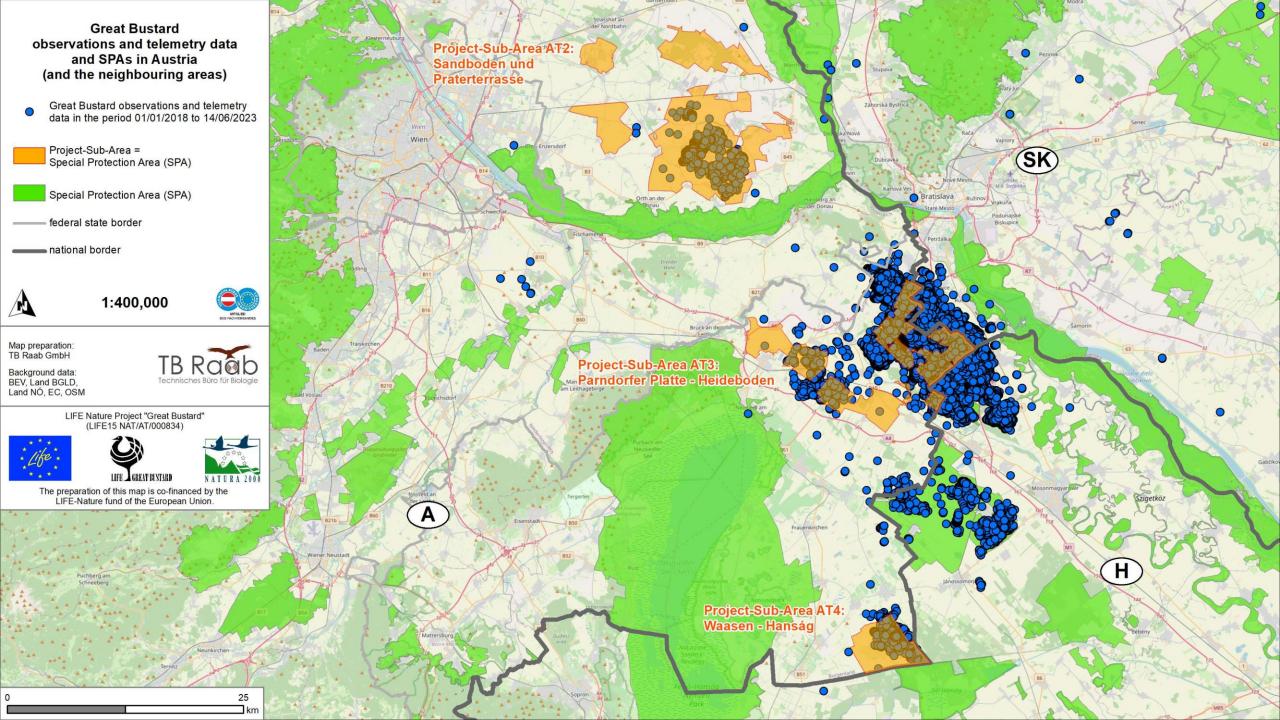
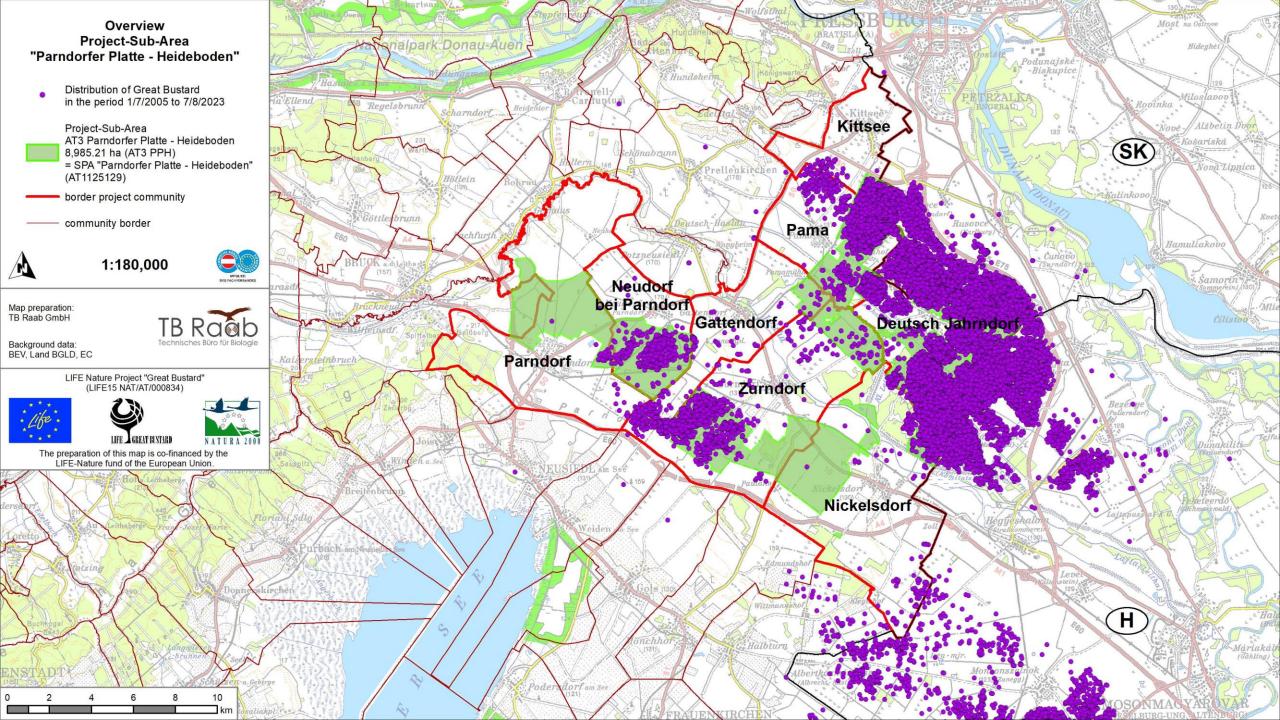
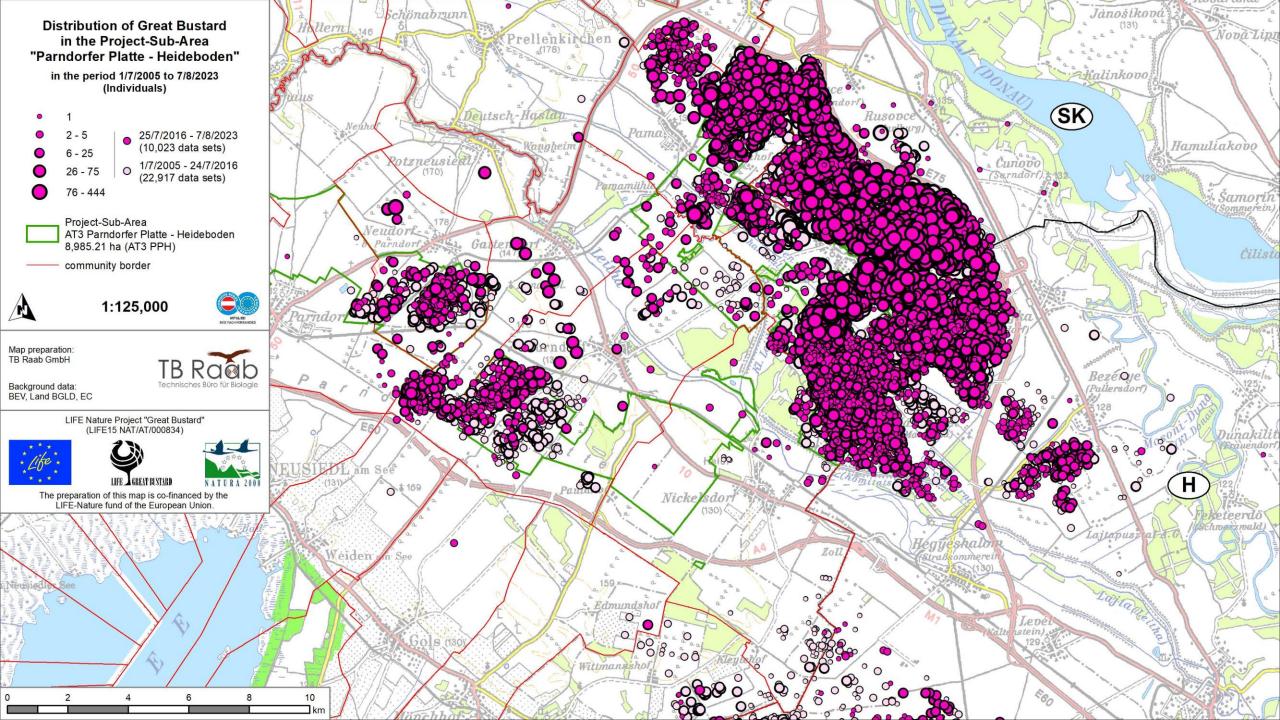


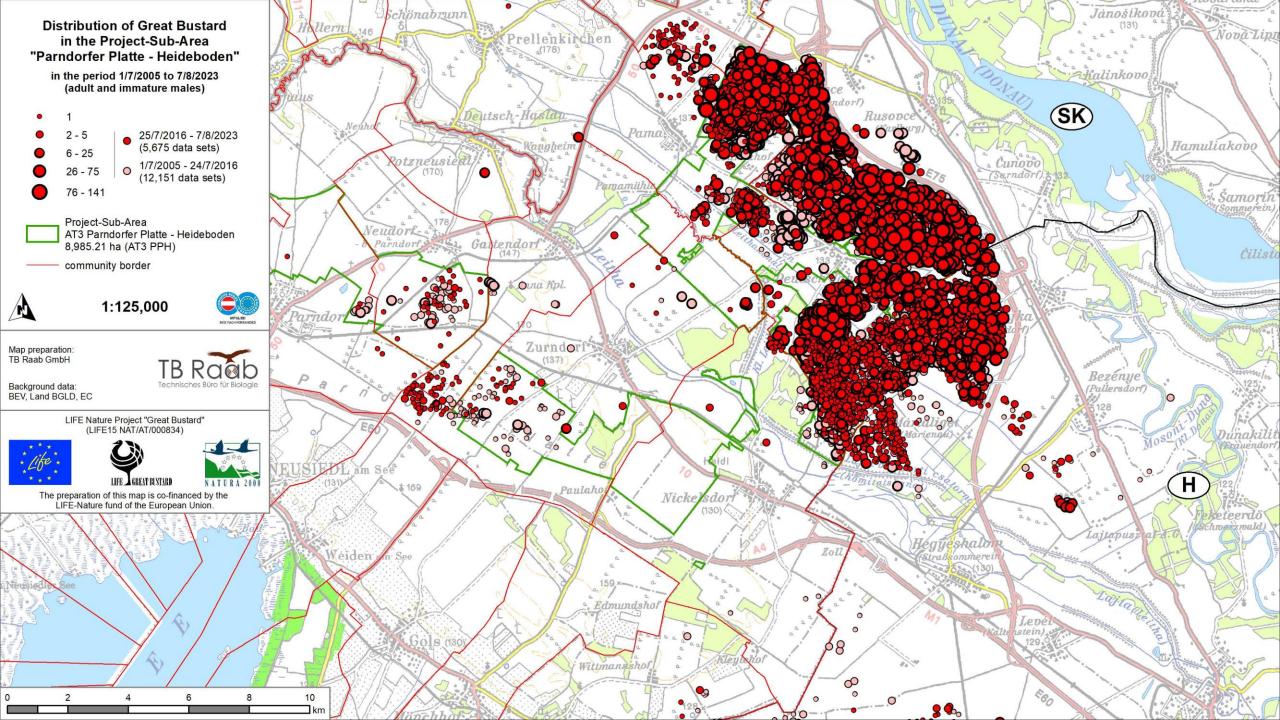


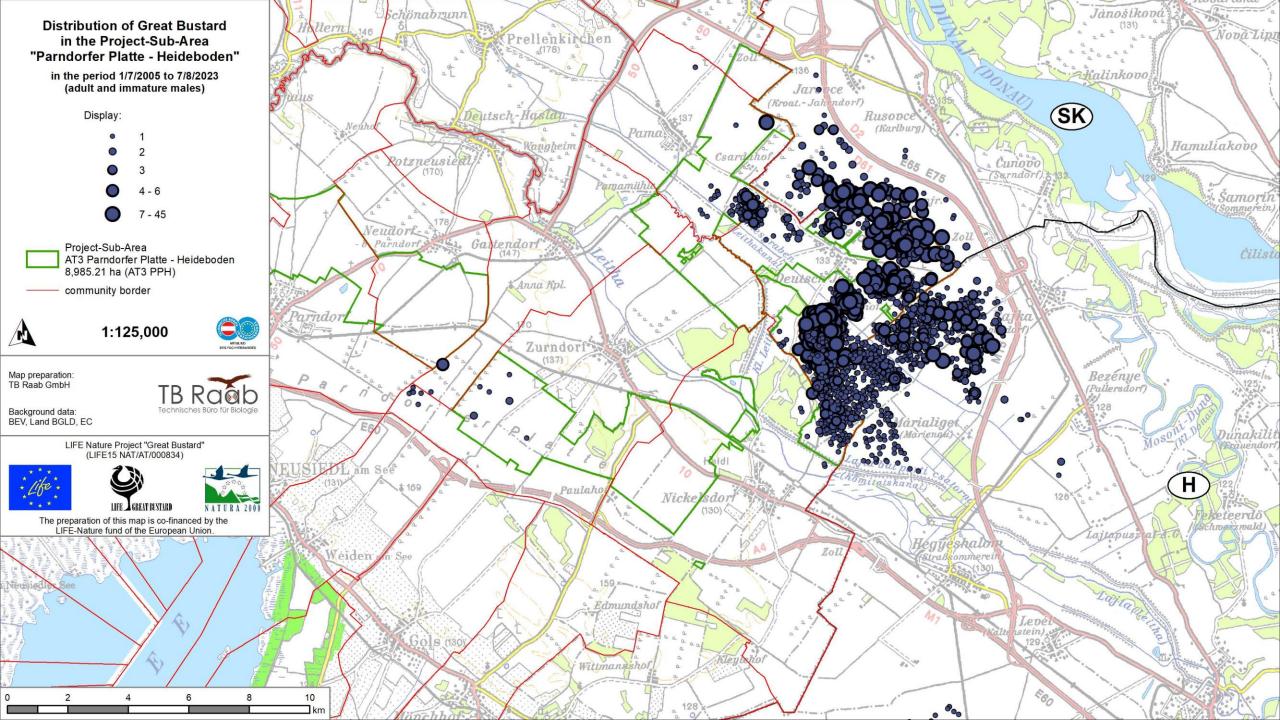


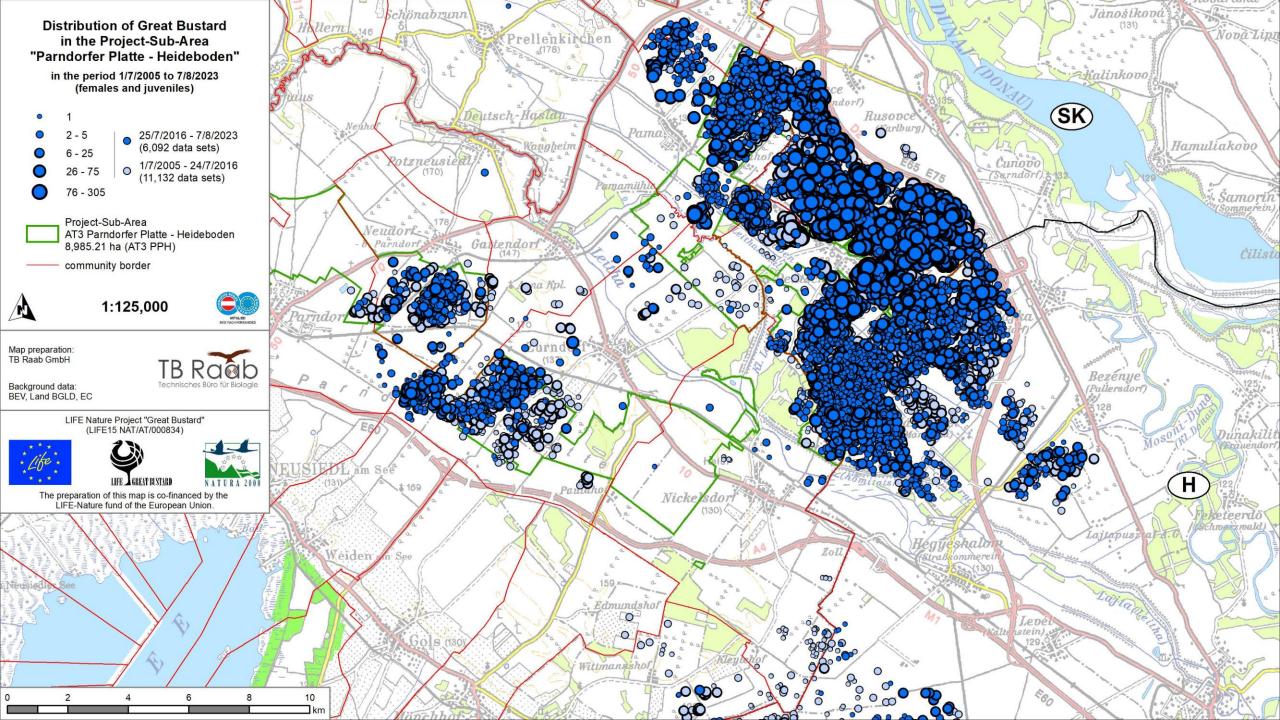
Foto: G. Rotheneder

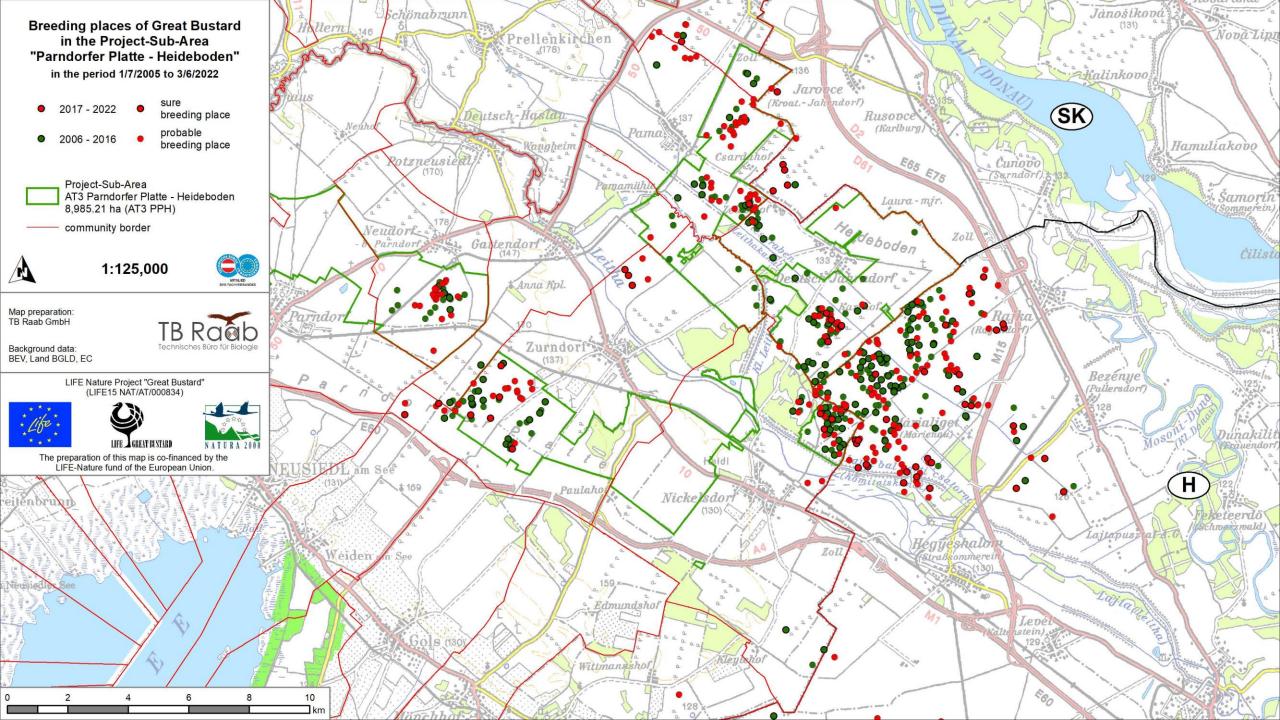


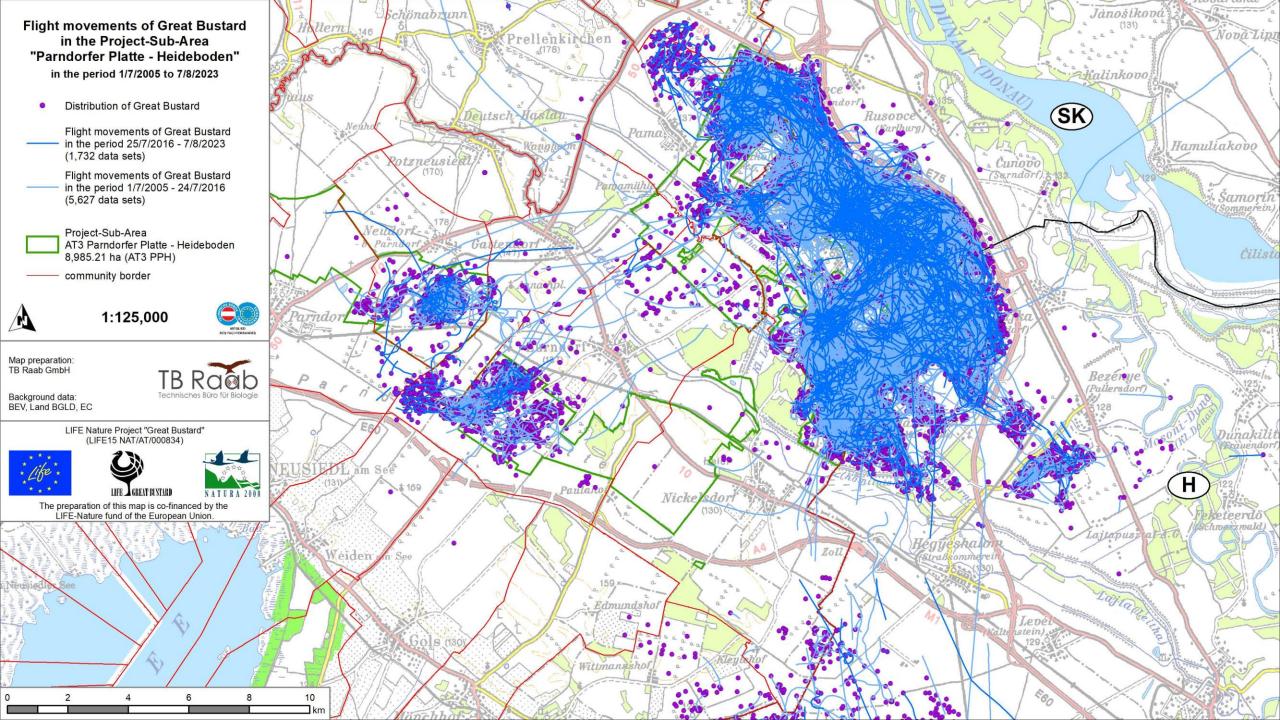


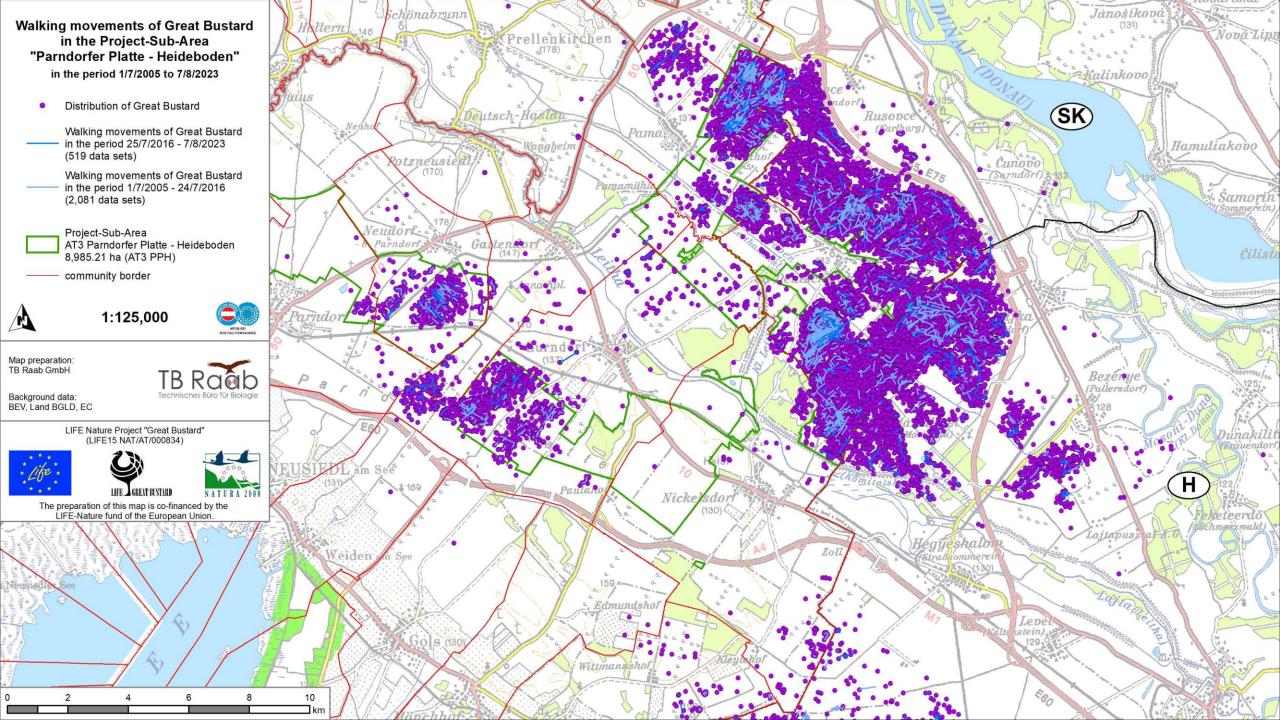












The characteristics of the Great Bustard's flight



The male Great Bustard is the heaviest flying bird in the World (together with the male Kori Bustard, Alonso et al. 2009).

Alonso, J. C., Magaña, M., Alonso, J. A., Palacín, C., Martín, C. A. & Martín, B. (2009): The most extreme sexual size dimorphism among birds: allometry, selection, and early juvenile development in the Great Bustard. Auk 126: 657–665.

Collisions with overhead power lines

 Collision with power lines is indeed the main mortality factor for fully grown great bustards in many areas (e.g. Martín et al. 2004; Palacín et al. 2004, Raab et al. 2012).

Martín, B., Martín, C. A., Palacín, C., Magaña, M., Alonso, J. & Alonso, J. C. (2004): Effect of collision with power lines on the viability of the Great Bustard metapopulation in Madrid province. International Symposium on Ecology and Conservation of Steppe-land Birds, Lleida. Poster.

Palacín, C., Alonso, J. C., Martín, C. A., Magaña, M., Martín, B. & Alonso, J. A. (2004): La Avutarda. In: Madroño, A., González, C. & Atienza, J. C. (Eds.): Libro Rojo de las Aves de España, 209–213. SEO/Birdlife-Ministerio de Medio Ambiente, Madrid.

Raab, R., Schütz, C., Spakovszky, P., Julius, E. & Schulze, C. H. (2012): Underground cabling and marking of power lines: conservation measures rapidly reduced mortality of West-Pannonian Great Bustards Otis tarda. Bird Conservation International 22: 299–306.



Main measures of the 3 LIFE and LIFE+ Project in Austria



transfer ca. 150 km of 20 kV
 power lines that run through
 important bustard areas below
 the soil (costs: ca. 50.000 100.000 Euro/km)

mark ca. 150 km of 110 kV,
 220 kV & 380 kV power lines
 to make them better visible to
 bustards (costs: ca. 10.000 30.000 Euro/km)









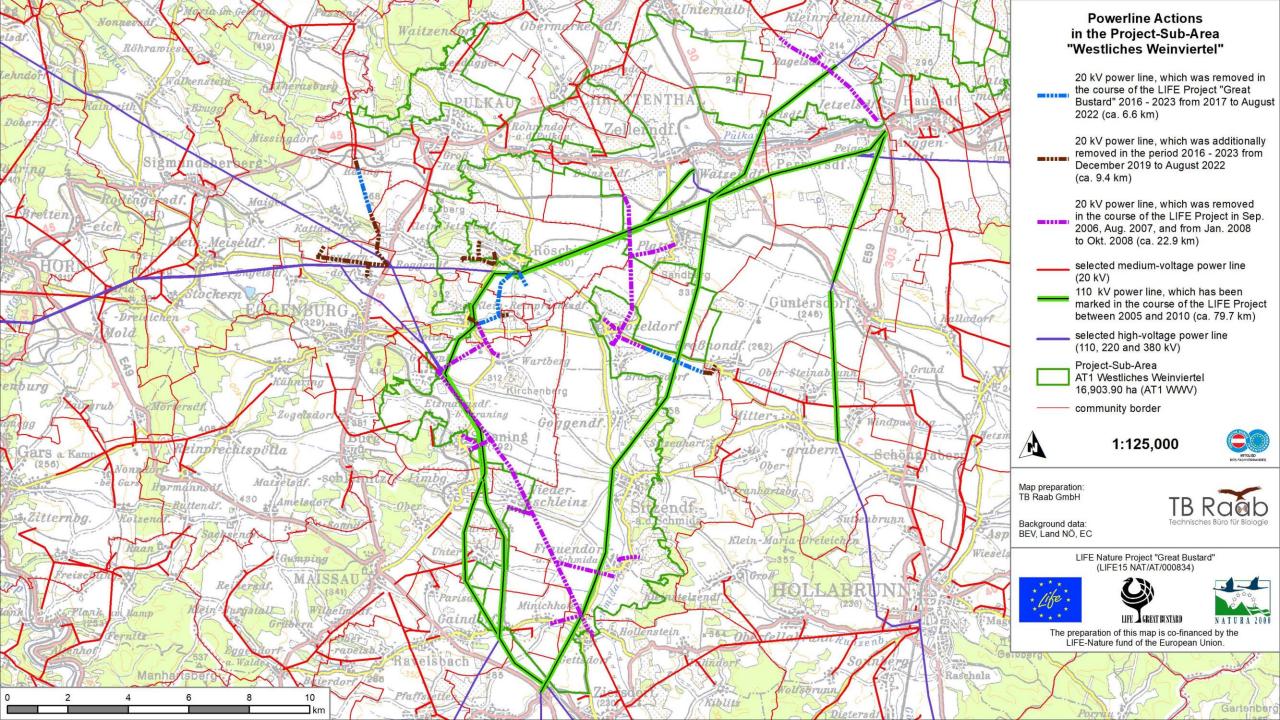


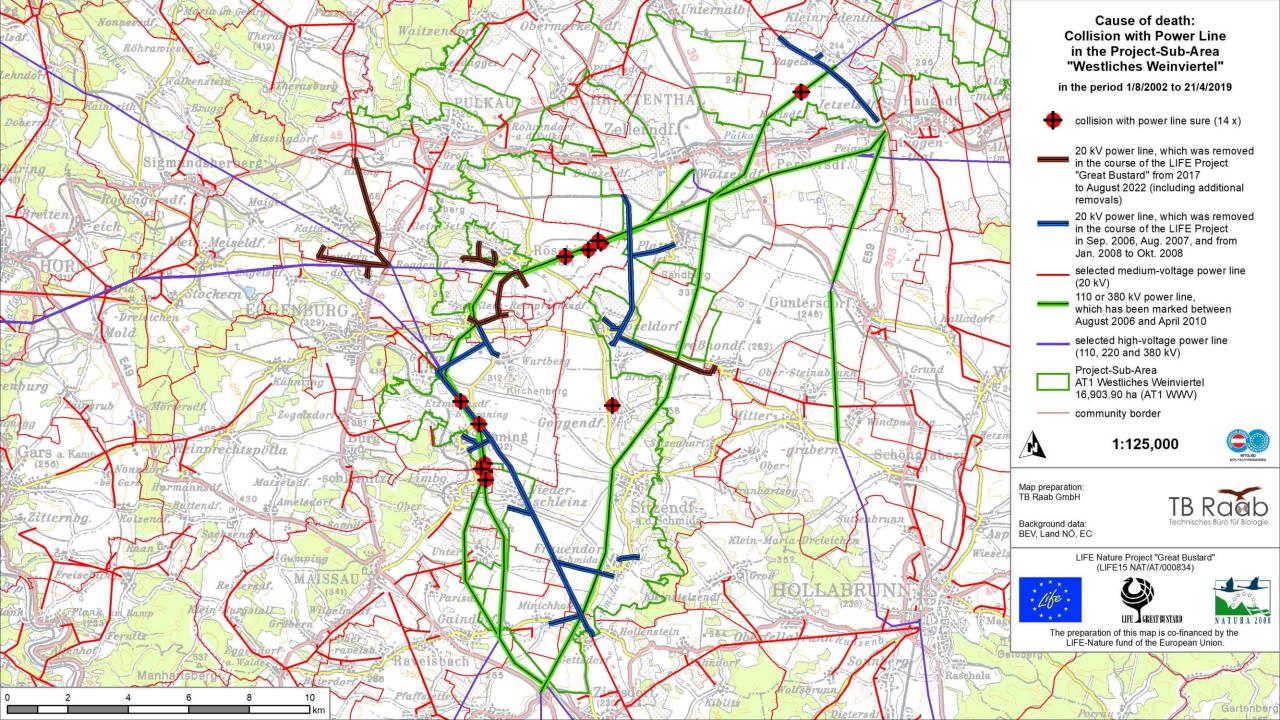


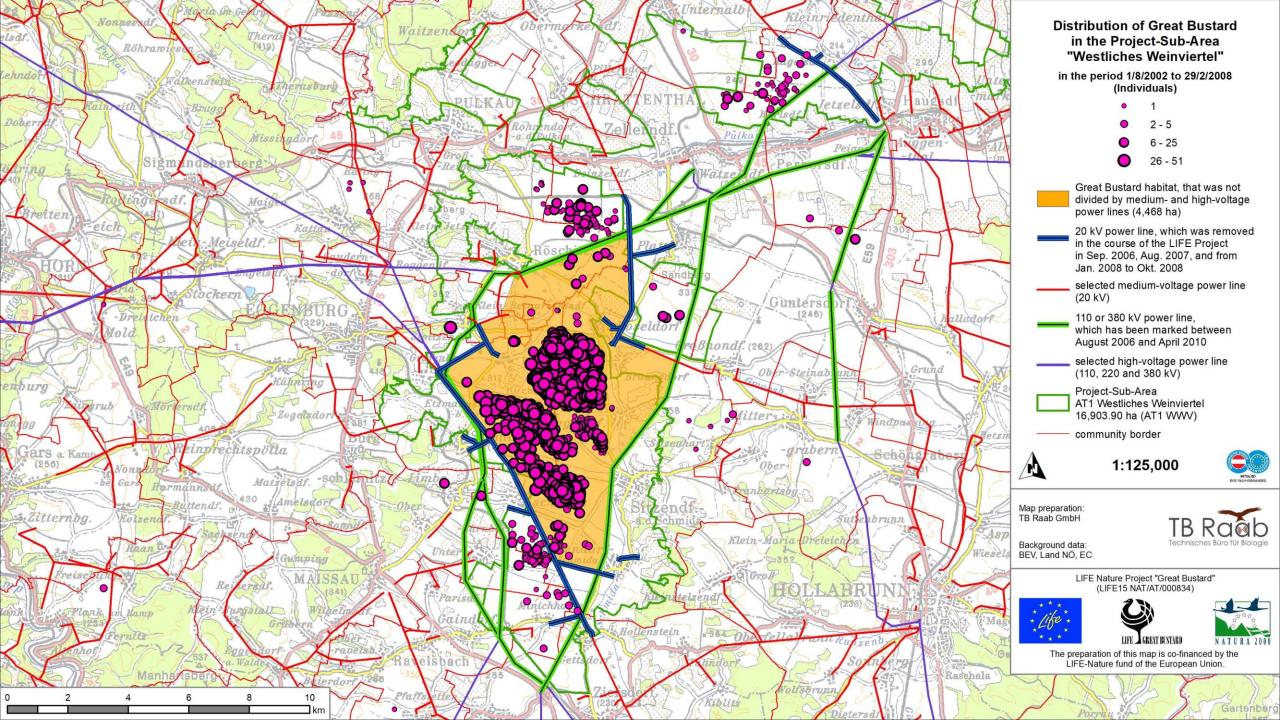


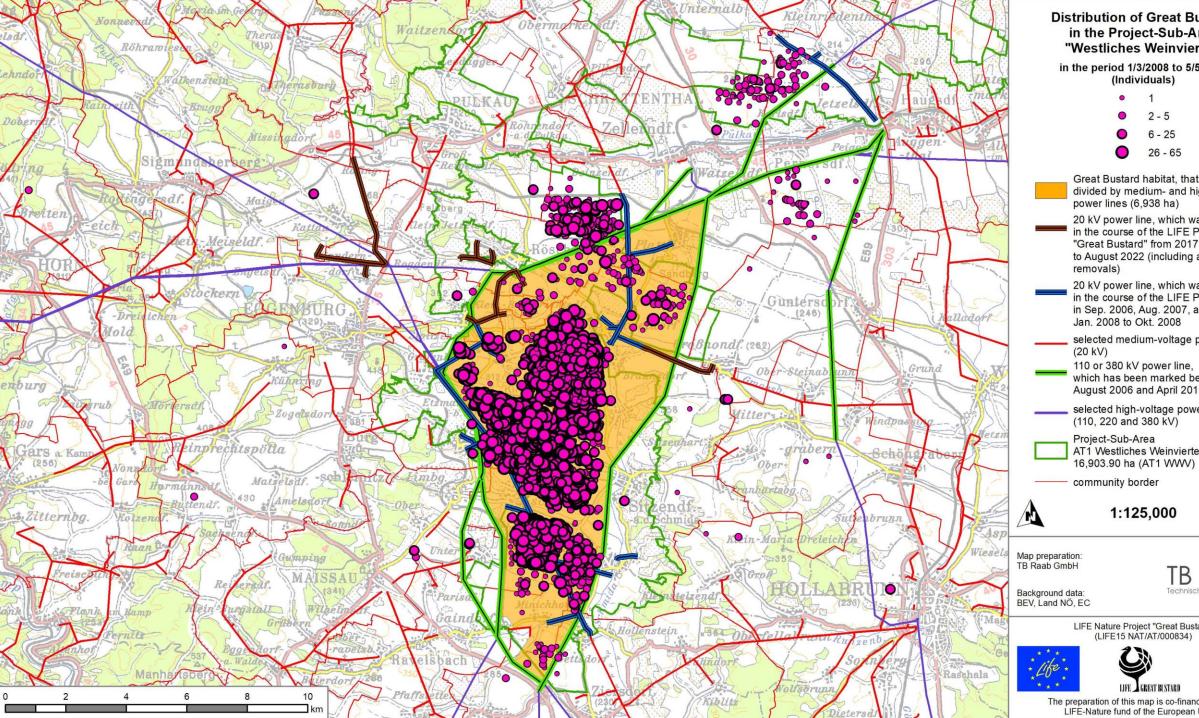












Distribution of Great Bustard in the Project-Sub-Area "Westliches Weinviertel"

in the period 1/3/2008 to 5/5/2023 (Individuals)

- 2 5
- 6 25
- 26 65
- Great Bustard habitat, that is not divided by medium- and high-voltage power lines (6,938 ha)
 - 20 kV power line, which was removed in the course of the LIFE Project "Great Bustard" from 2017 to August 2022 (including additional
- 20 kV power line, which was removed in the course of the LIFE Project in Sep. 2006, Aug. 2007, and from Jan. 2008 to Okt. 2008
- selected medium-voltage power line
- 110 or 380 kV power line, which has been marked between August 2006 and April 2010
 - selected high-voltage power line (110, 220 and 380 kV)
- AT1 Westliches Weinviertel





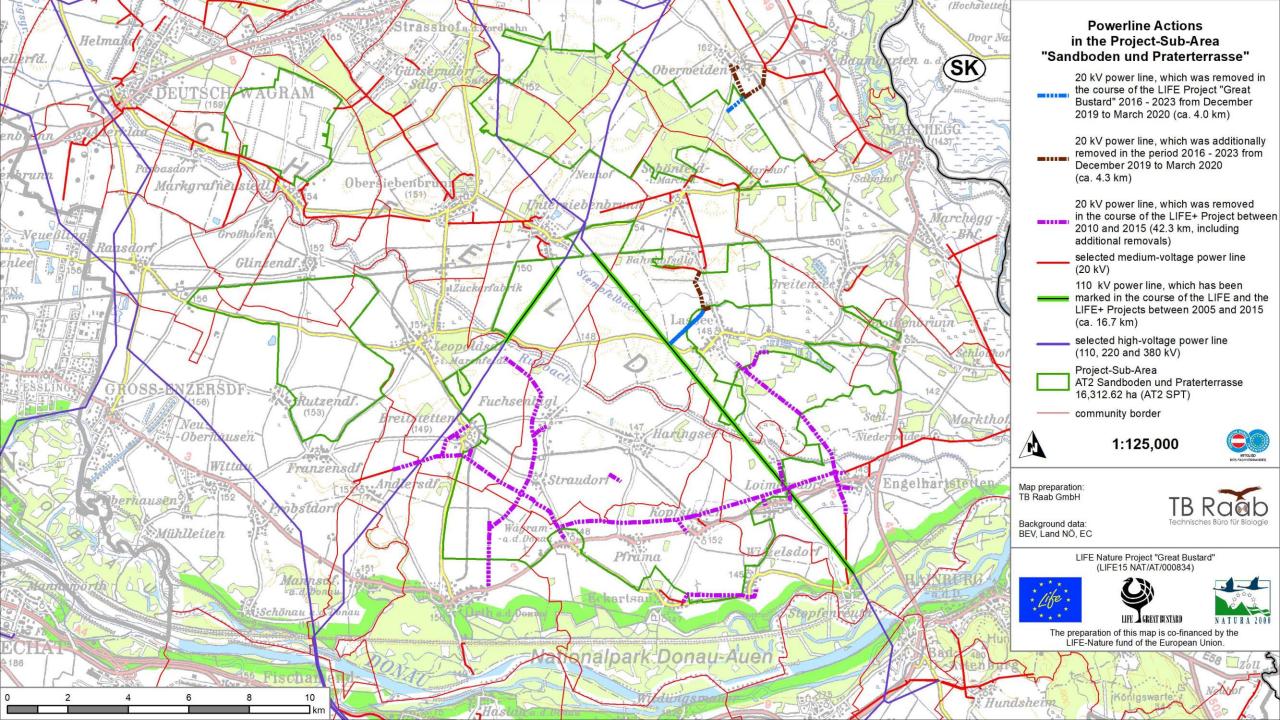


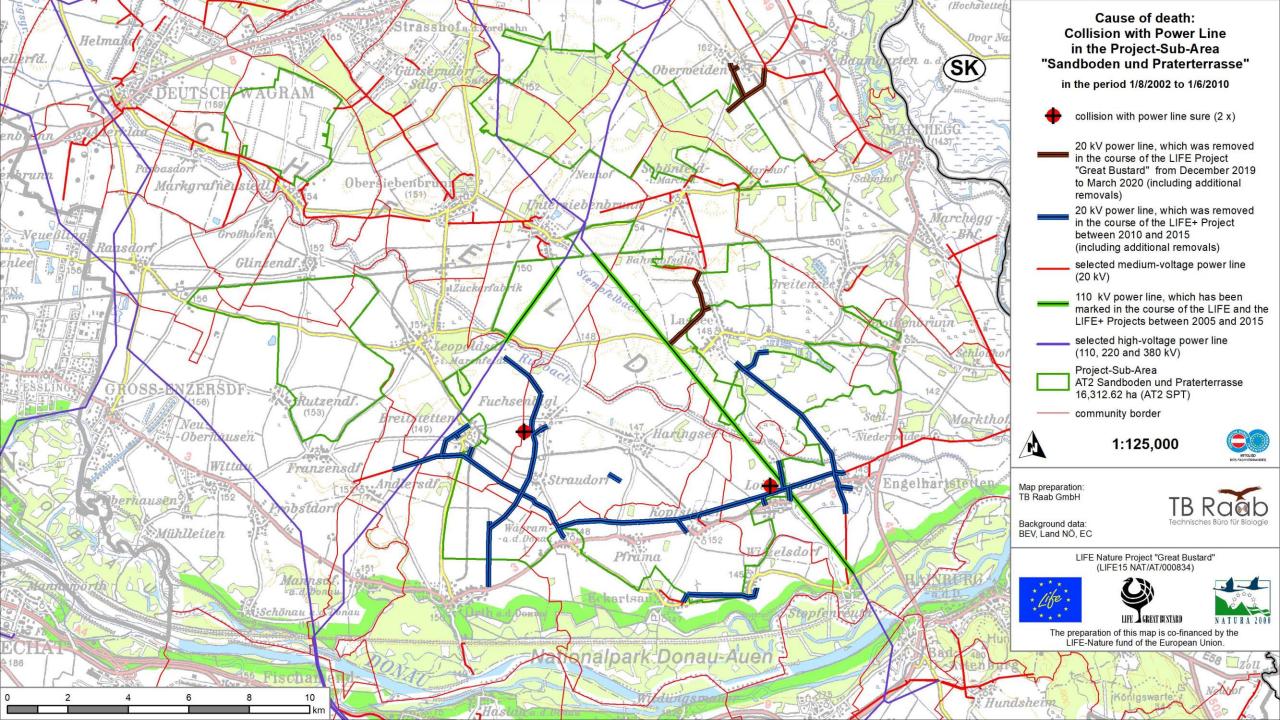
LIFE Nature Project "Great Bustard" (LIFE15 NAT/AT/000834)

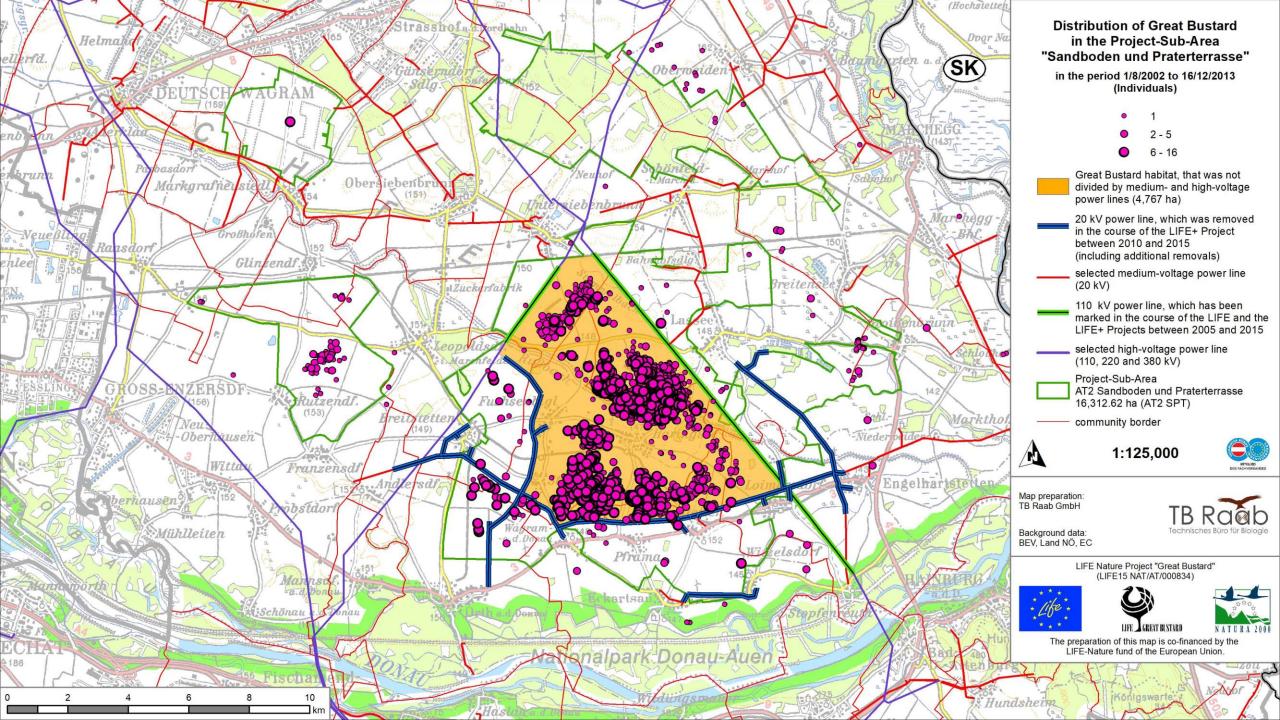


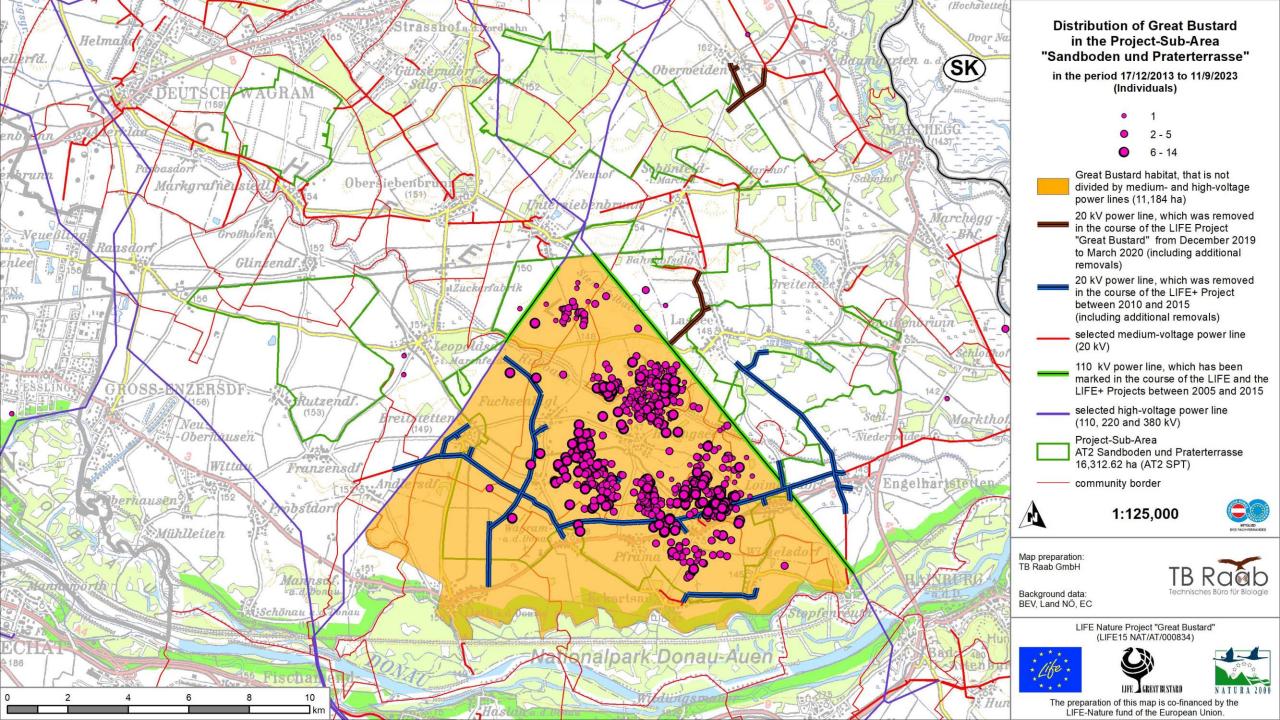


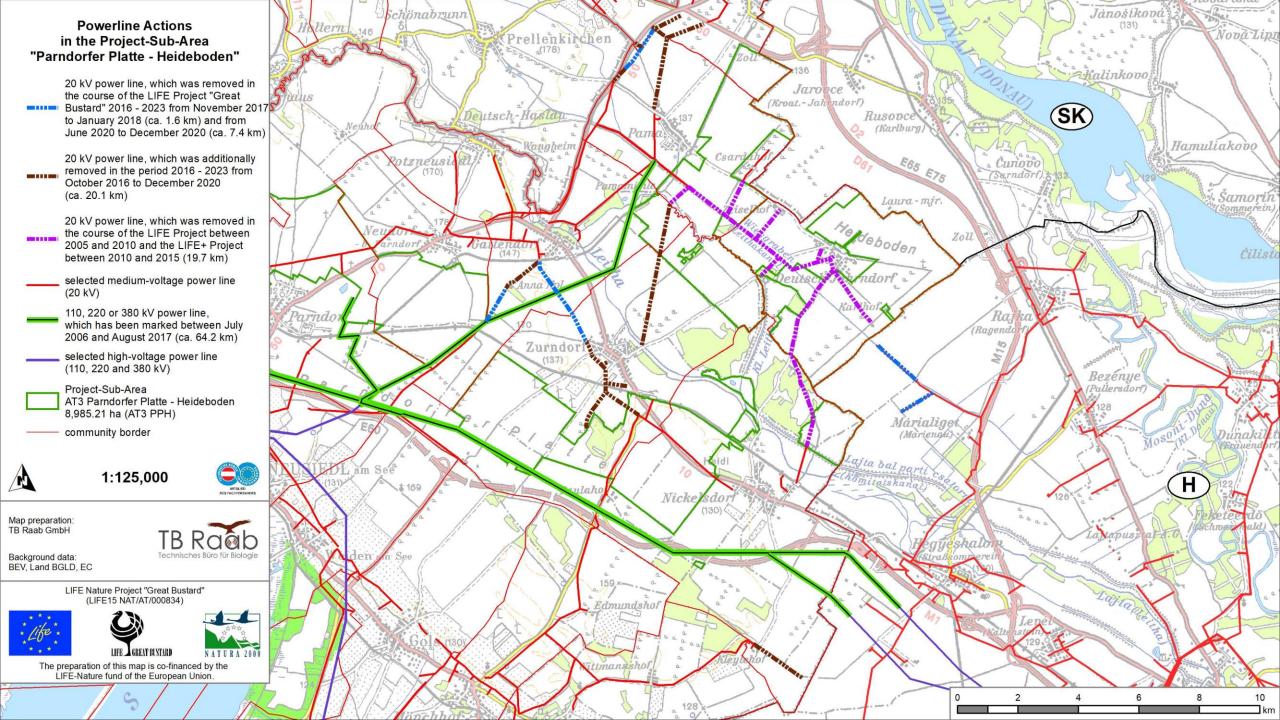
The preparation of this map is co-financed by the LIFE-Nature fund of the European Union.

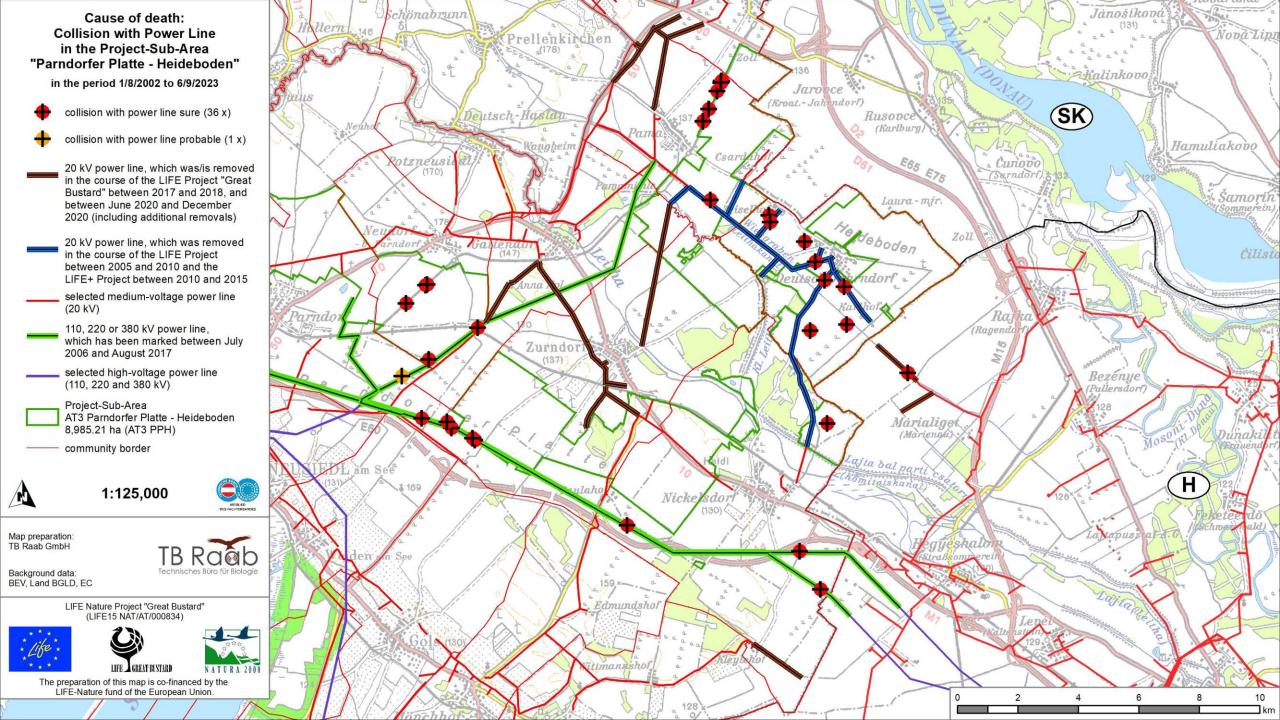


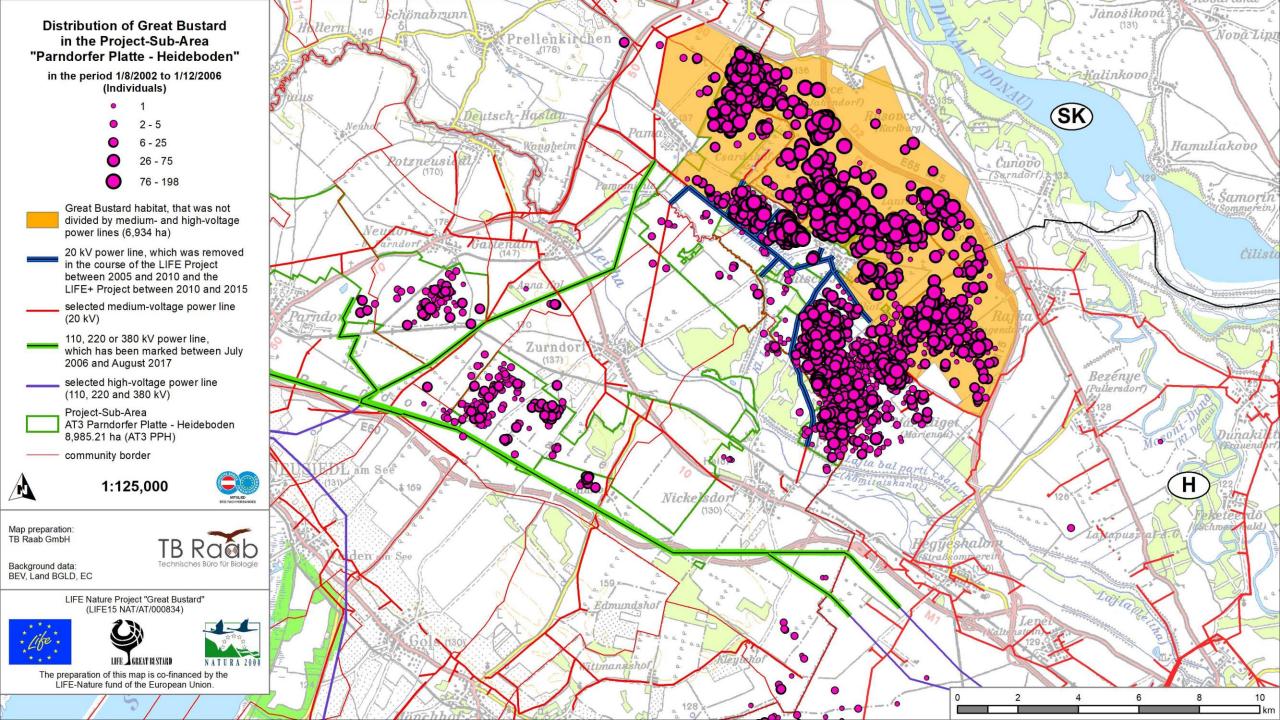












Distribution of Great Bustard in the Project-Sub-Area "Parndorfer Platte - Heideboden"

in the period 2/12/2006 to 7/8/2023 (Individuals)

- 1
- 0 2-5
- 6 2
- 0 26 75
- 76 504
- Great Bustard habitat, that is not divided by medium- and high-voltage power lines (12,756 ha)
- 20 kV power line, which was/is removed in the course of the LIFE Project "Great Bustard" between 2017 and 2018, and between June 2020 and December 2020 (including additional removals)
- 20 kV power line, which was removed in the course of the LIFE Project between 2005 and 2010 and the LIFE+ Project between 2010 and 2015
- selected medium-voltage power line (20 kV)
- 110, 220 or 380 kV power line, which has been marked between July 2006 and August 2017
- selected high-voltage power line (110, 220 and 380 kV)



1:125,000



Map preparation: TB Raab GmbH

Background data: BEV, Land BGLD, EC



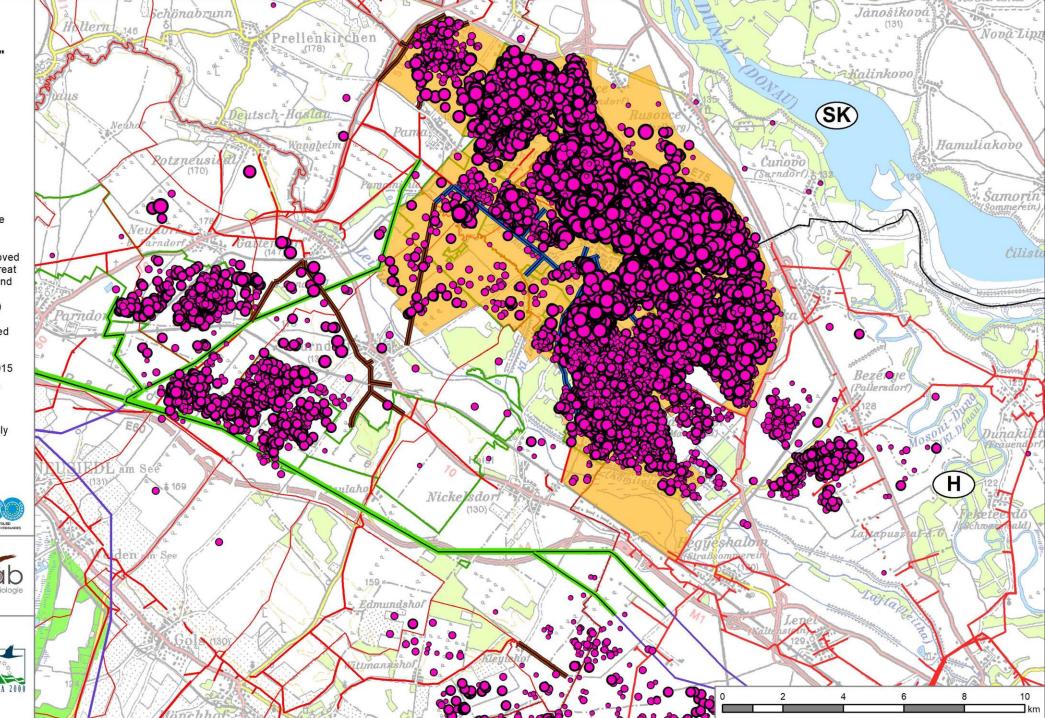
LIFE Nature Project "Great Bustard" (LIFE15 NAT/AT/000834)



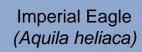




The preparation of this map is co-financed by the LIFE-Nature fund of the European Union.

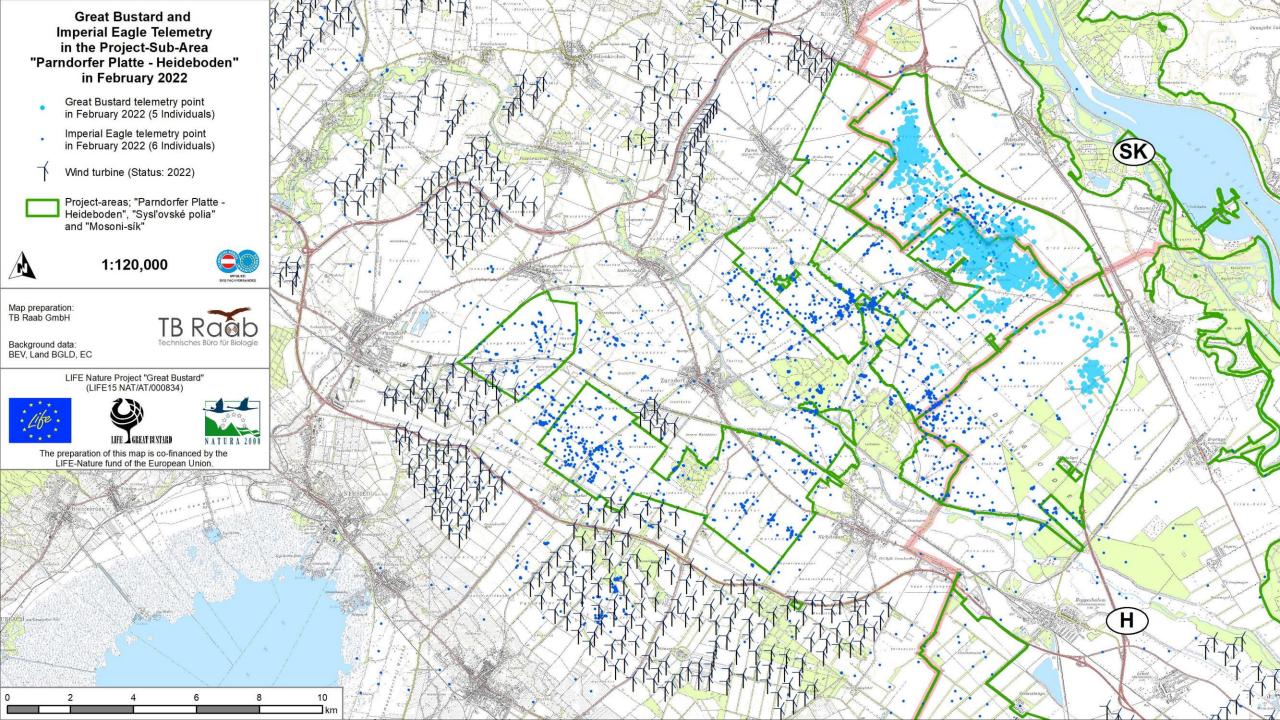


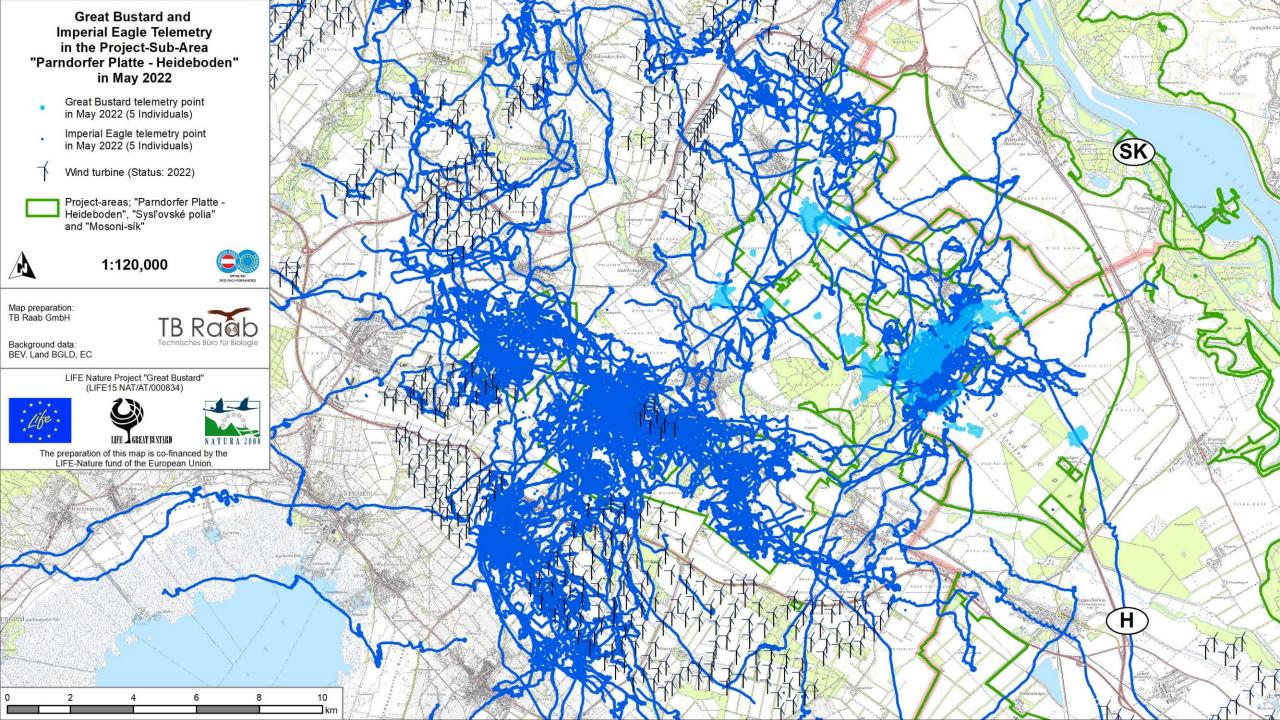


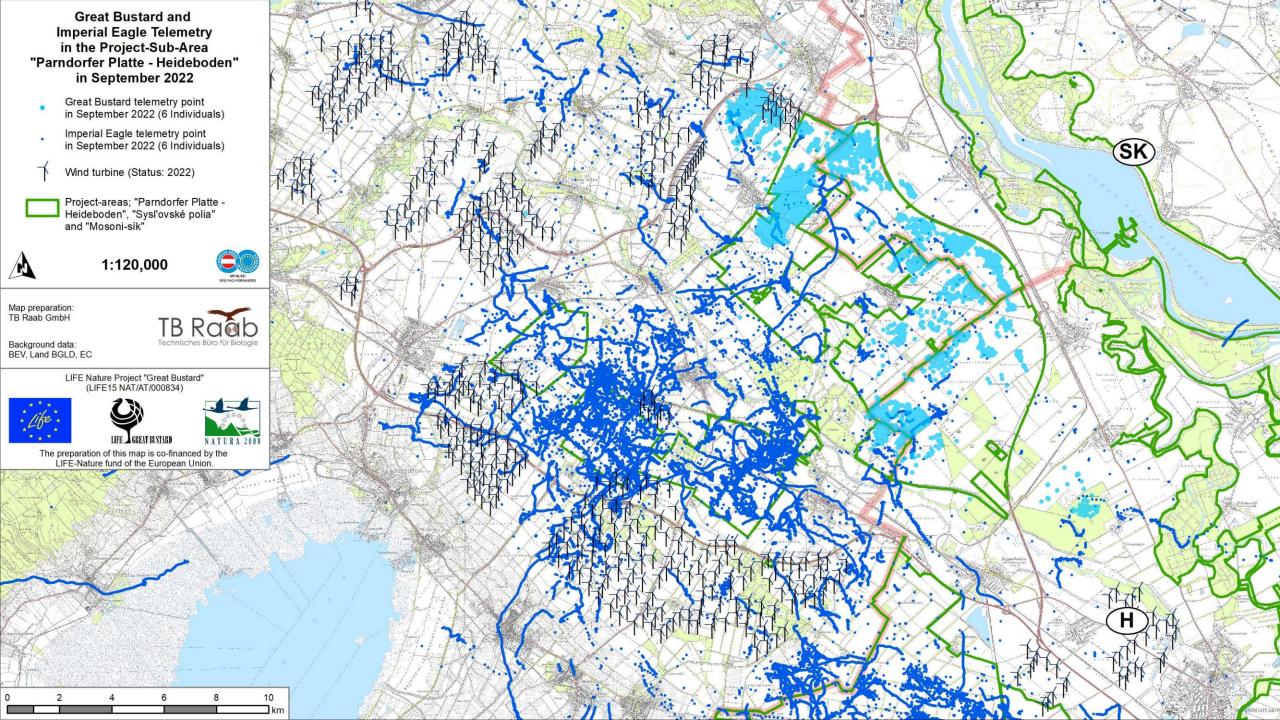




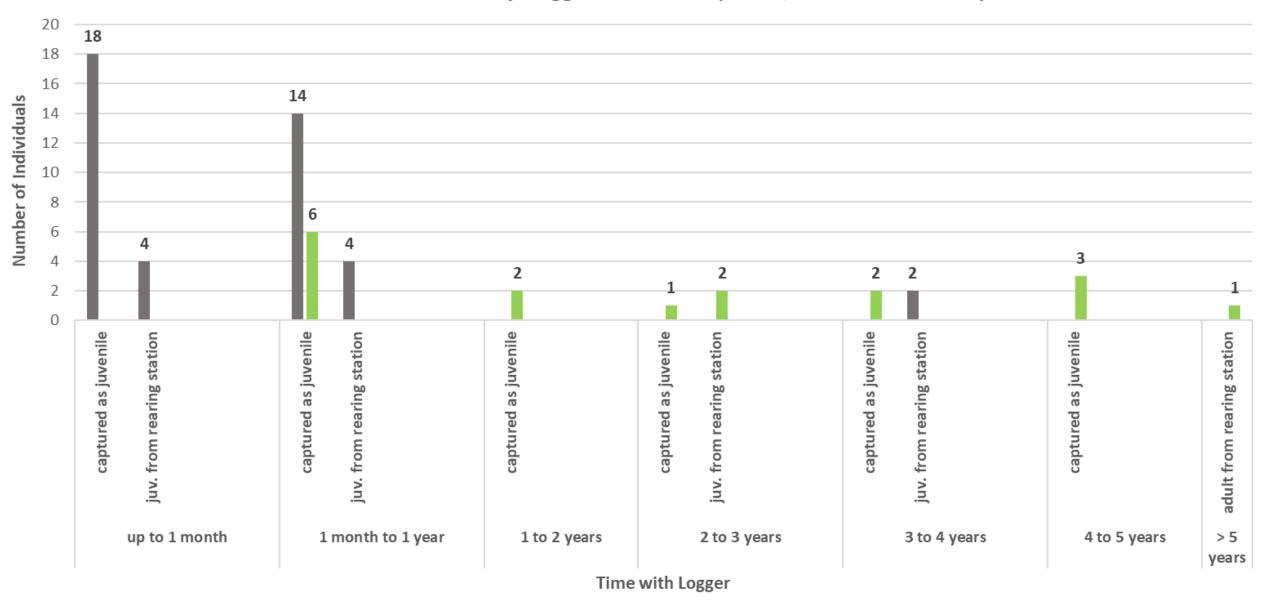




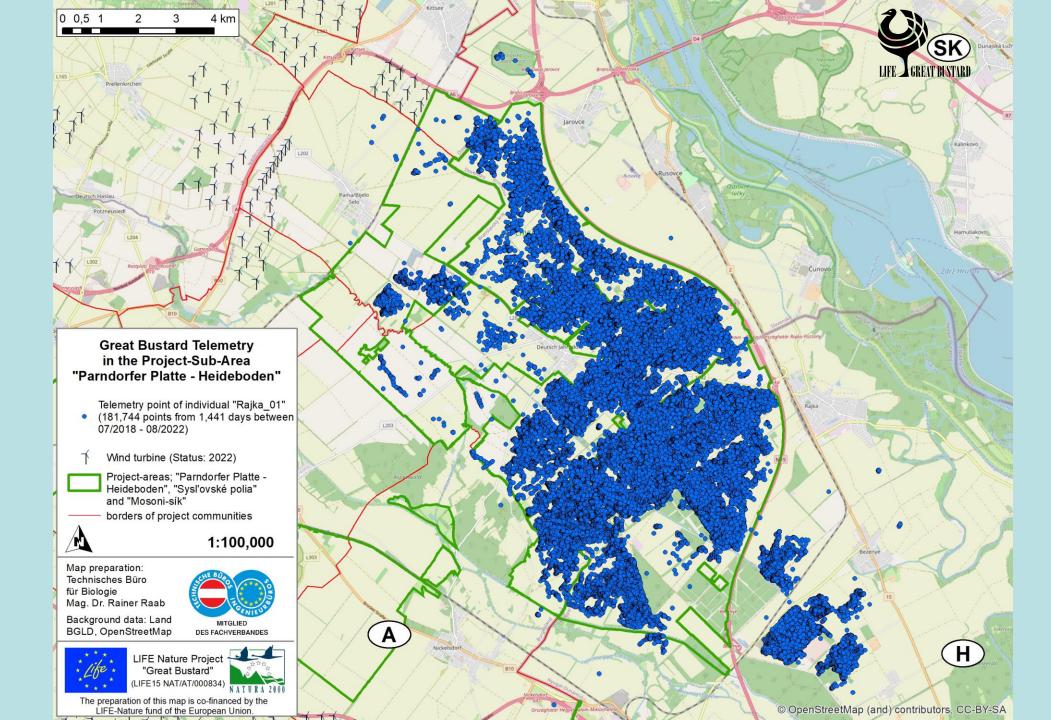


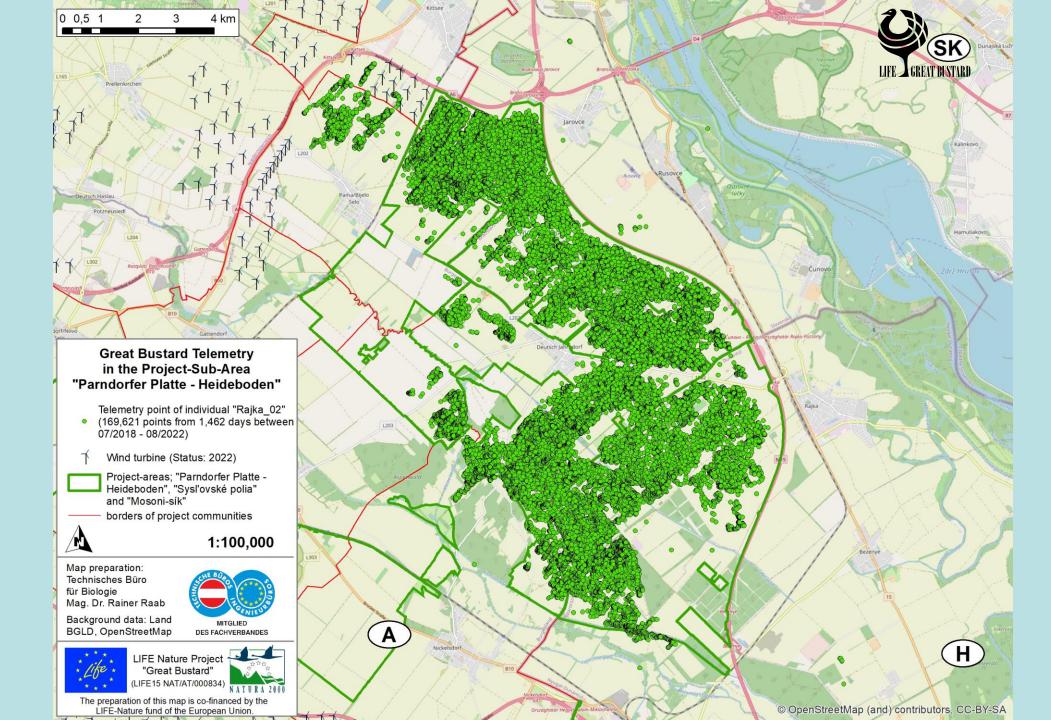


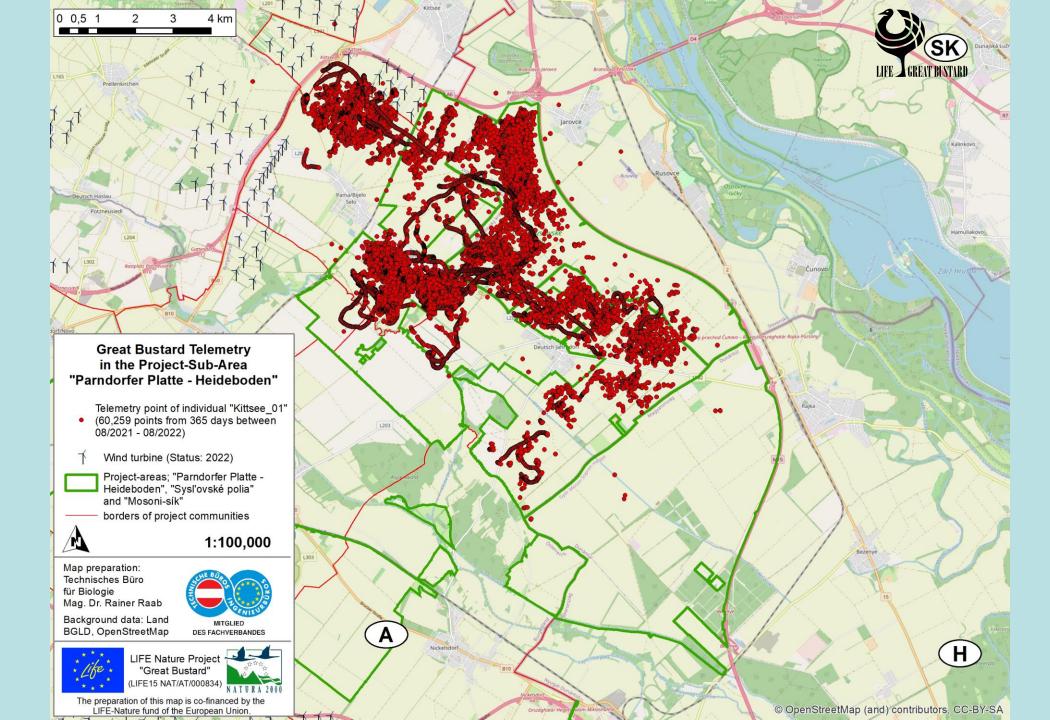
Great Bustard Telemetry: Tagged Individuals (n = 59, Status: 24.05.2023)

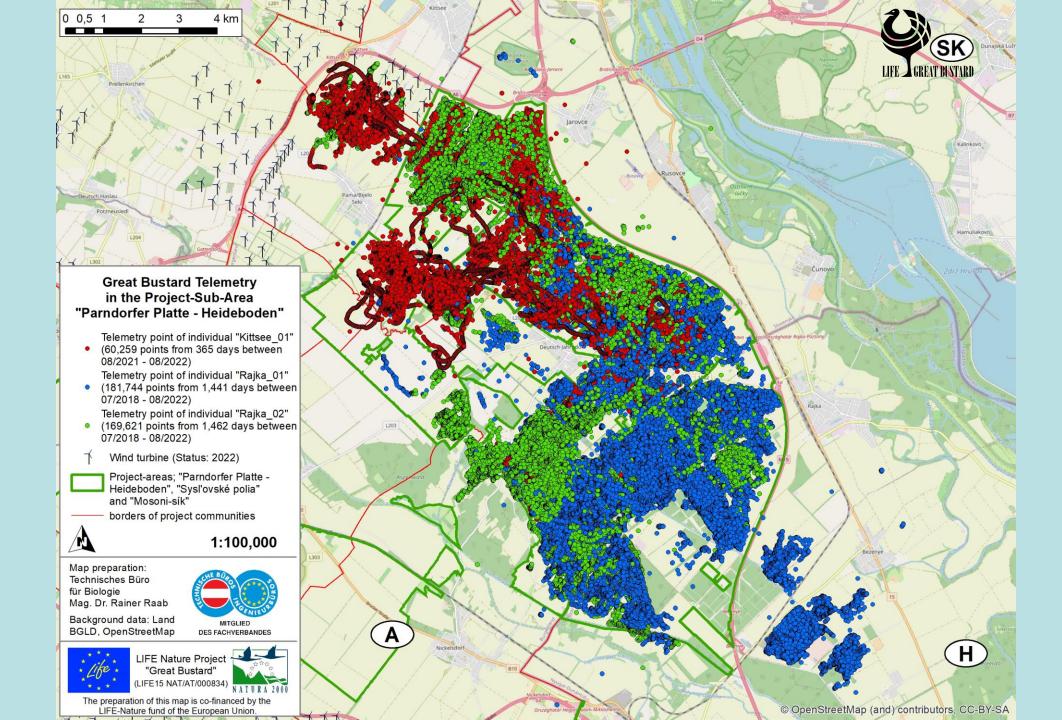


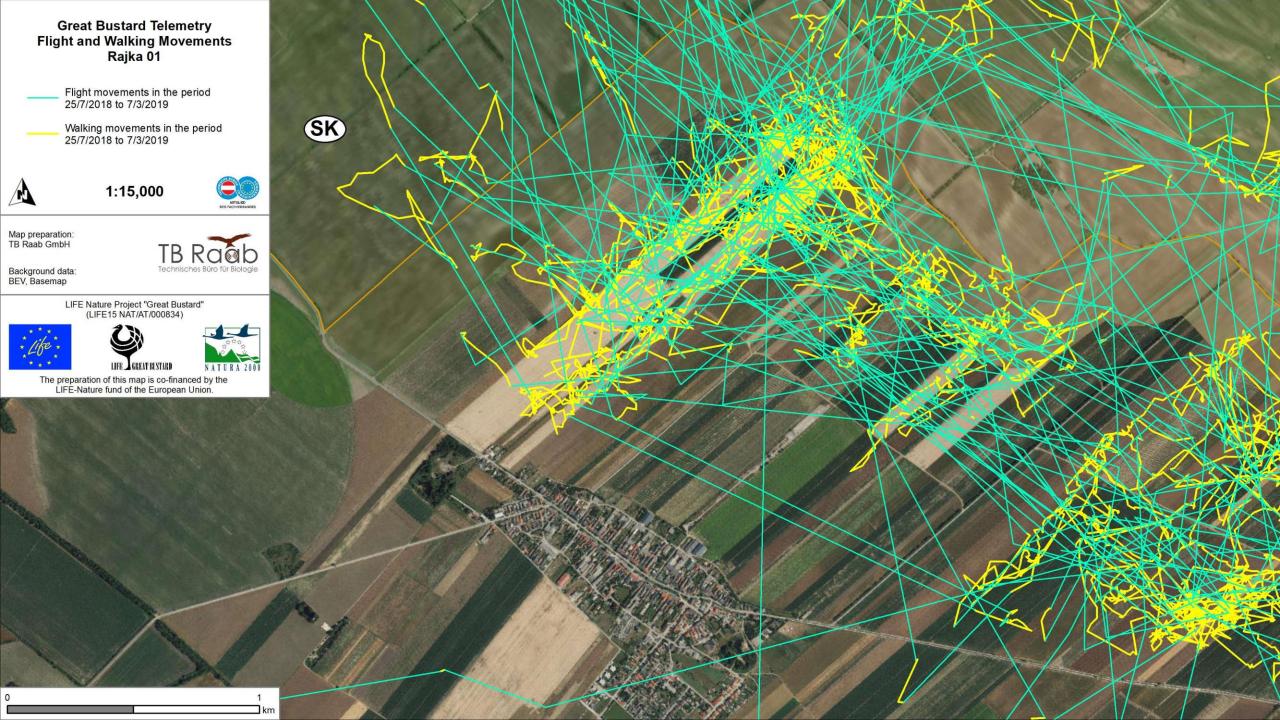
■ dead ■ alive





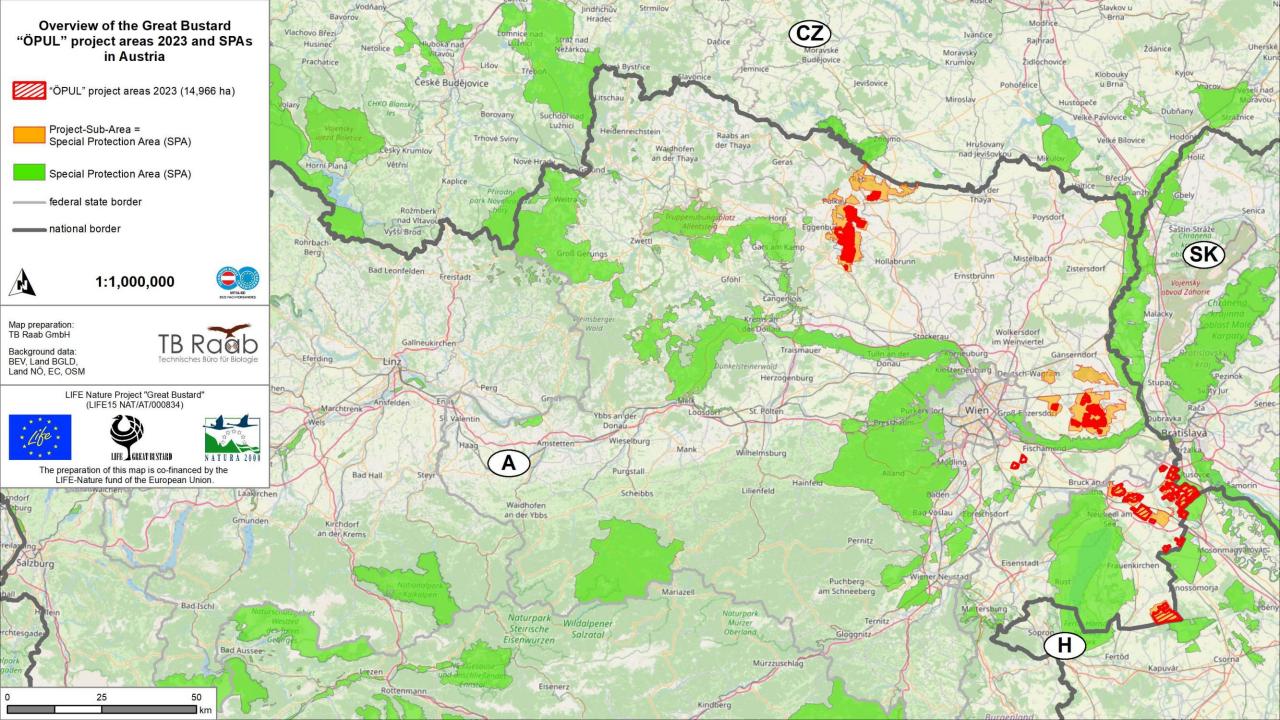


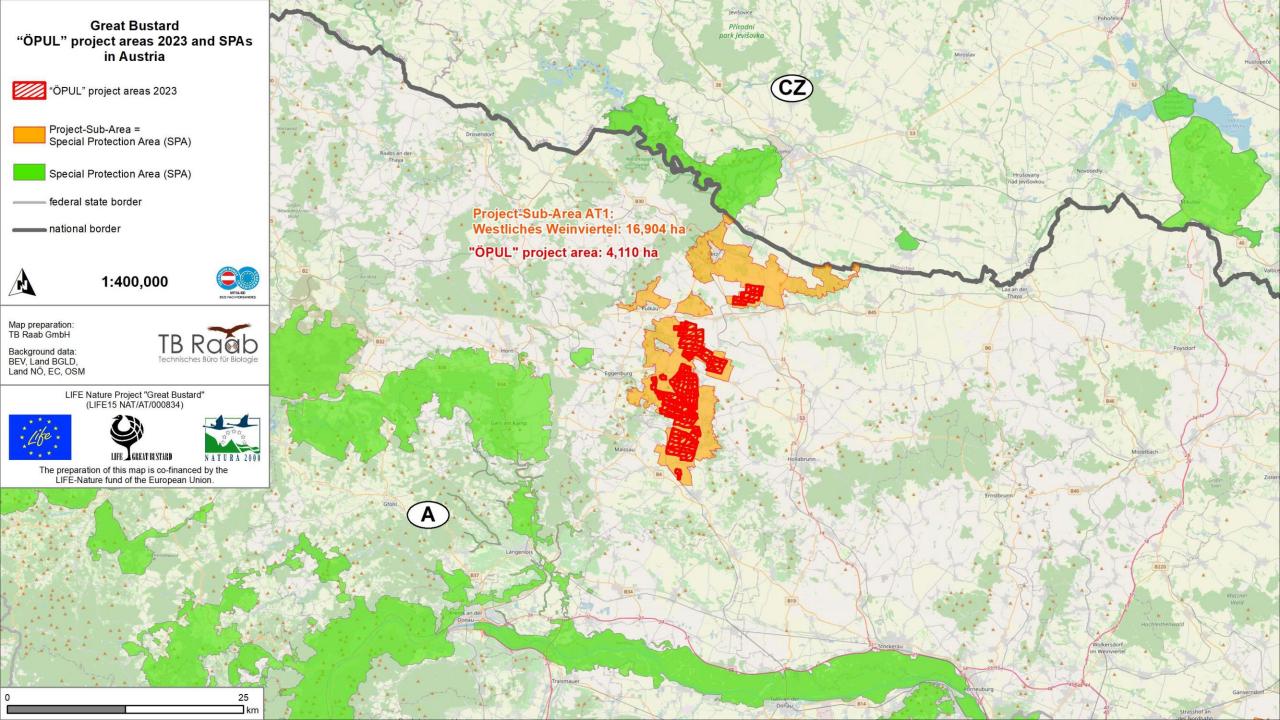


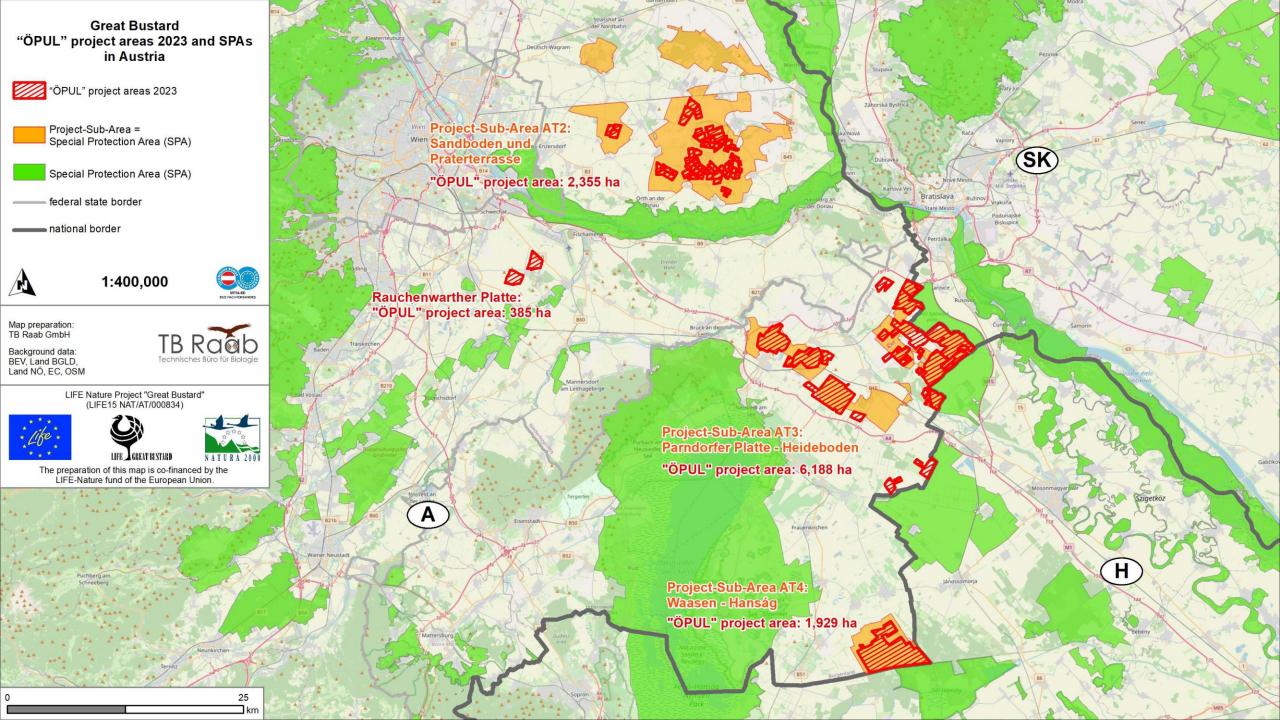


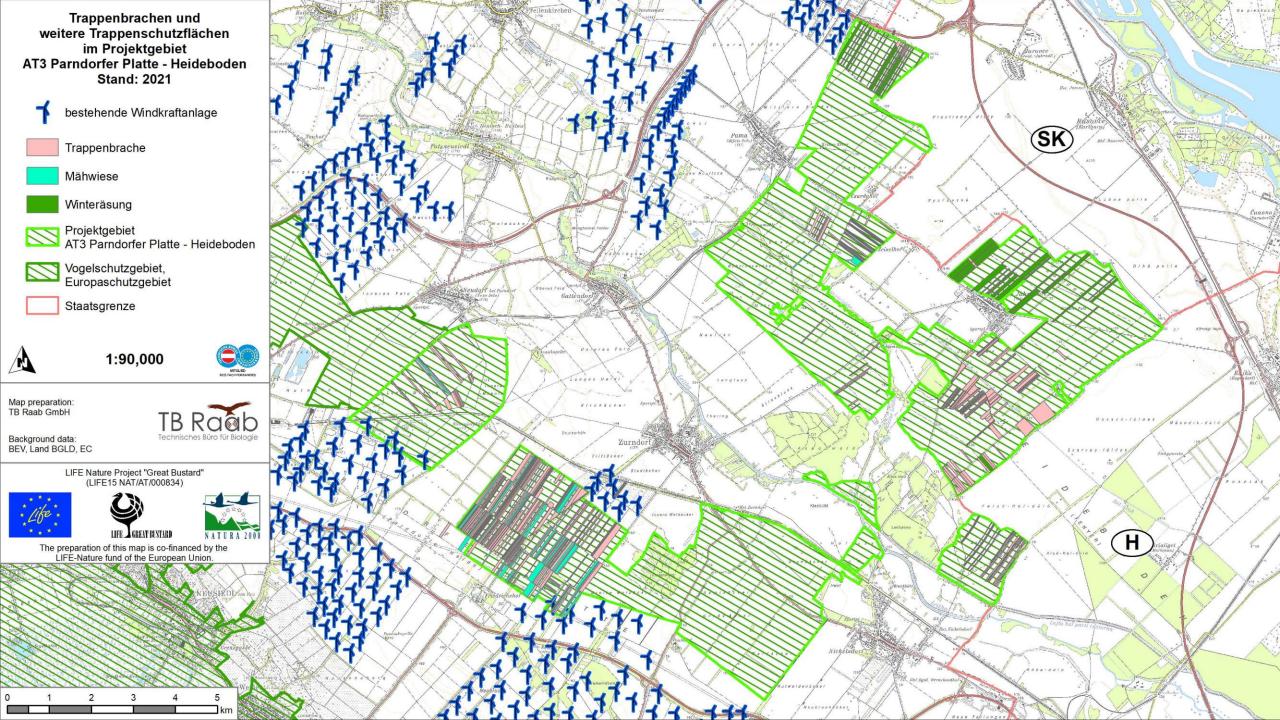


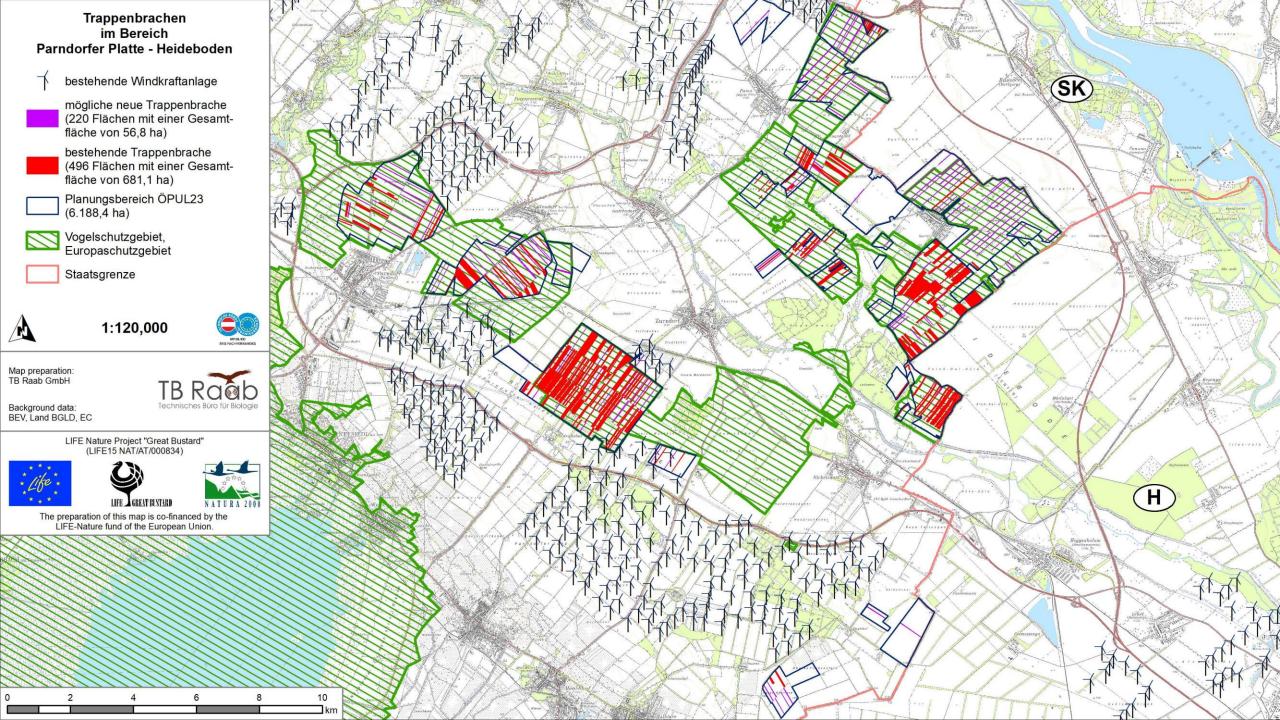


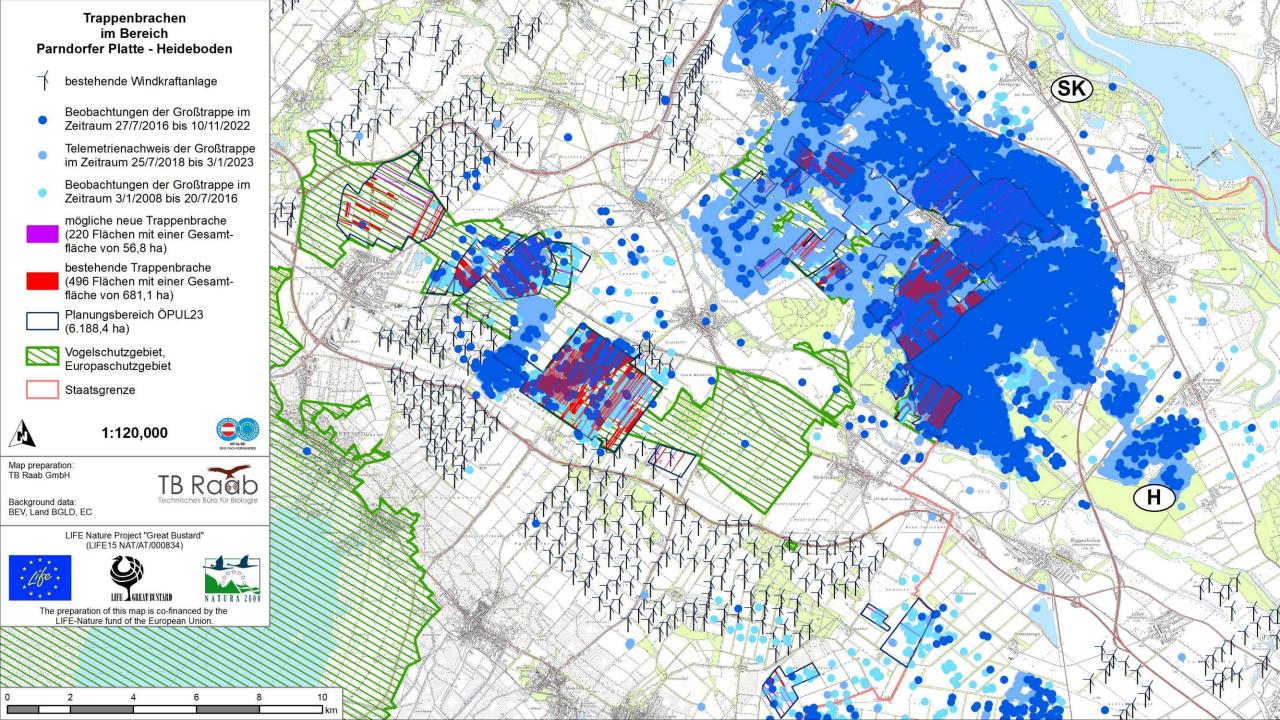


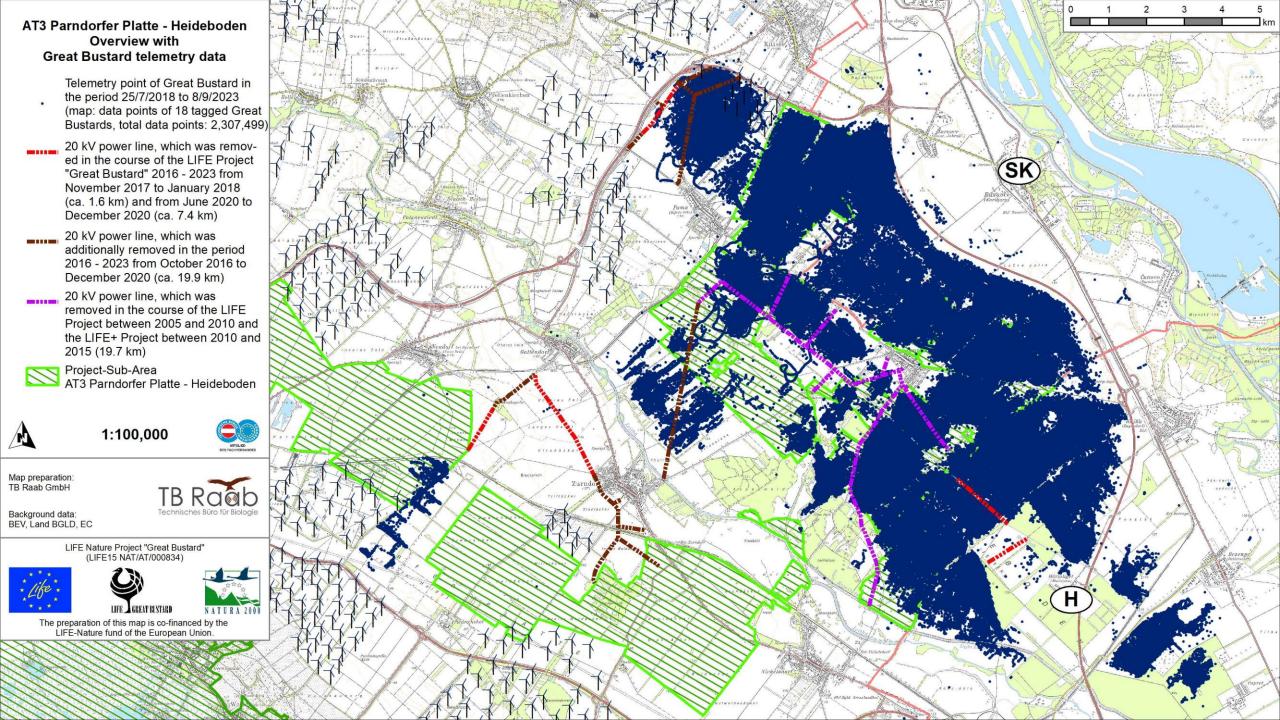


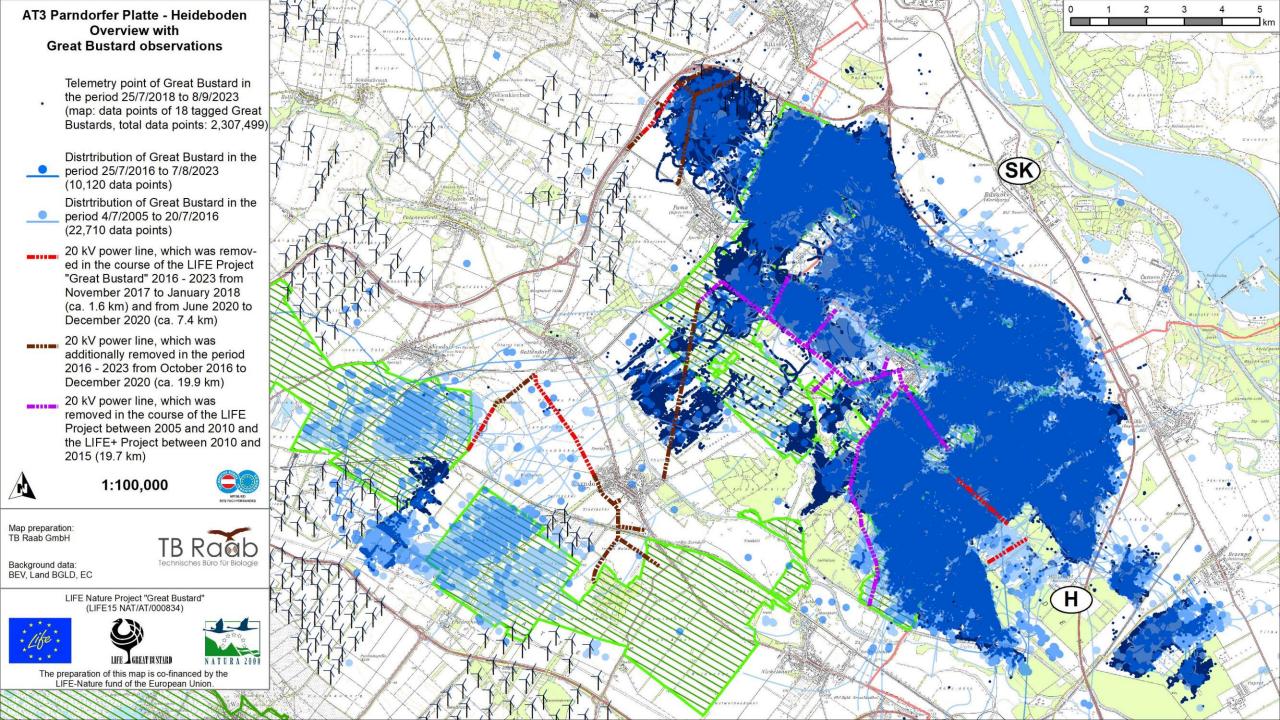












AT3 Parndorfer Platte - Heideboden Overview with **Great Bustard observations**

Dead individual of Great Bustard in the period 1/6/2002 to 7/8/2023:

+ collision, power line + other causes

+ predation

Breeding places of Great Bustard in the period 4/2005 to 7/2022

Distrtribution of Great Bustard in the period 25/7/2016 to 7/8/2023 (10,120 data points)

Distrtribution of Great Bustard in the period 4/7/2005 to 20/7/2016 (22,710 data points)

20 kV power line, which was removed in the course of the LIFE Project "Great Bustard" 2016 - 2023 from November 2017 to January 2018 (ca. 1.6 km) and from June 2020 to December 2020 (ca. 7.4 km)

20 kV power line, which was additionally removed in the period 2016 - 2023 from October 2016 to December 2020 (ca. 19.9 km)

20 kV power line, which was removed in the course of the LIFE Project between 2005 and 2010 and the LIFE+ Project between 2010 and 2015 (19.7 km)



1:100,000



Map preparation: TB Raab GmbH

Background data: BEV, Land BGLD, EC



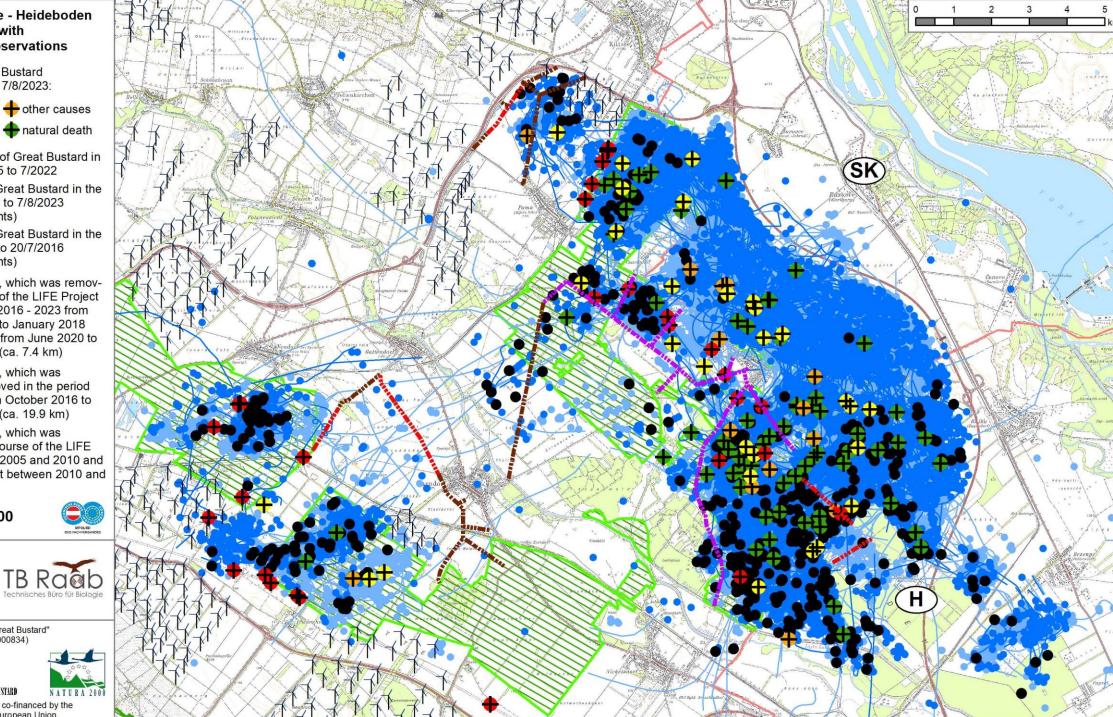
LIFE Nature Project "Great Bustard" (LIFE15 NAT/AT/000834)

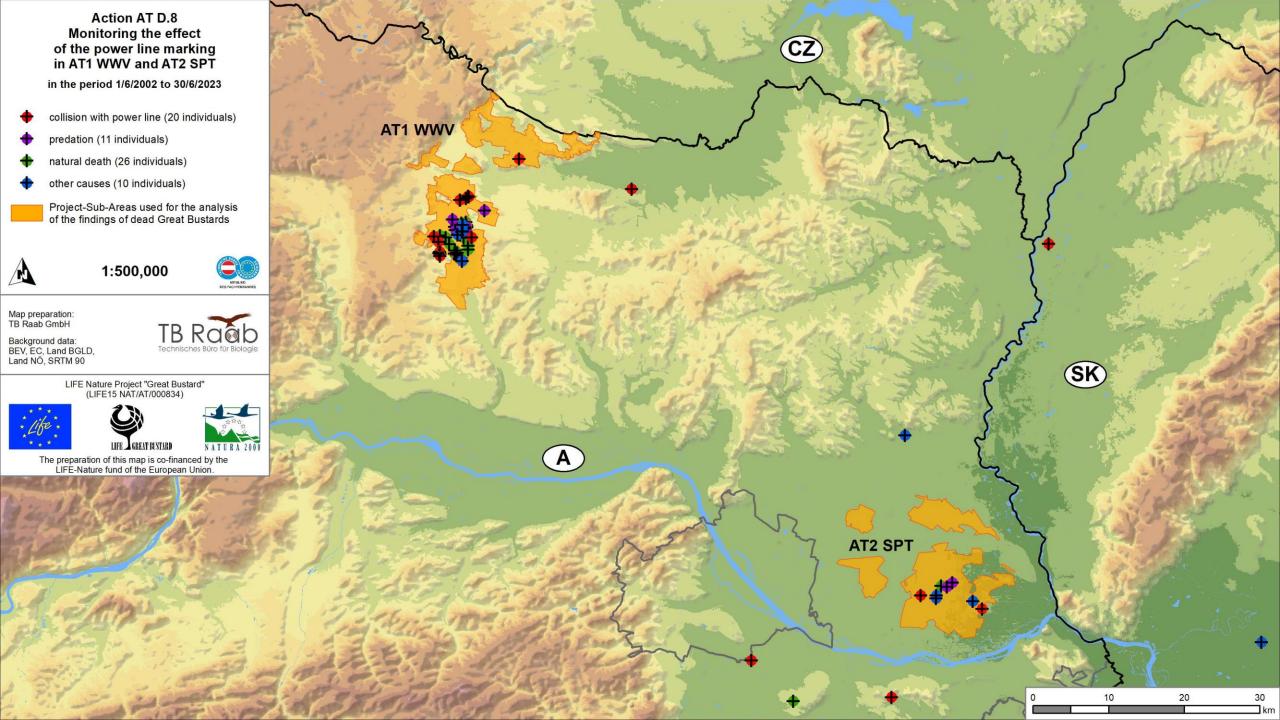


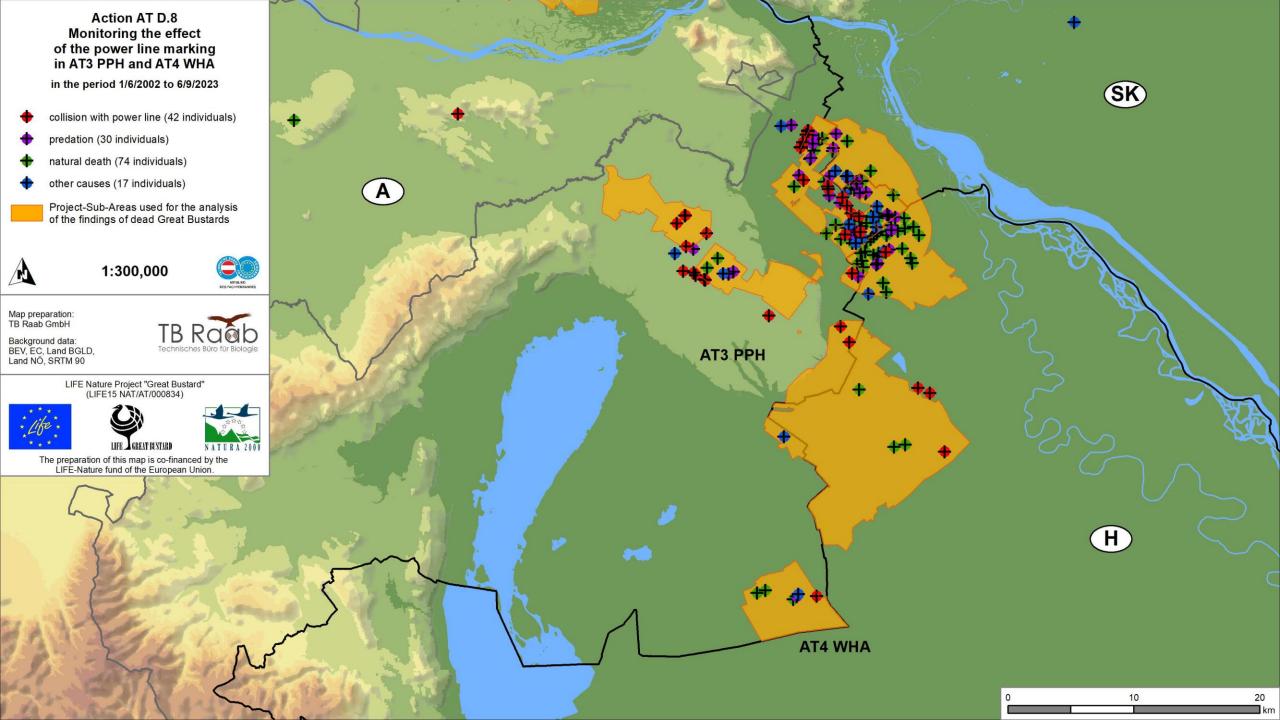




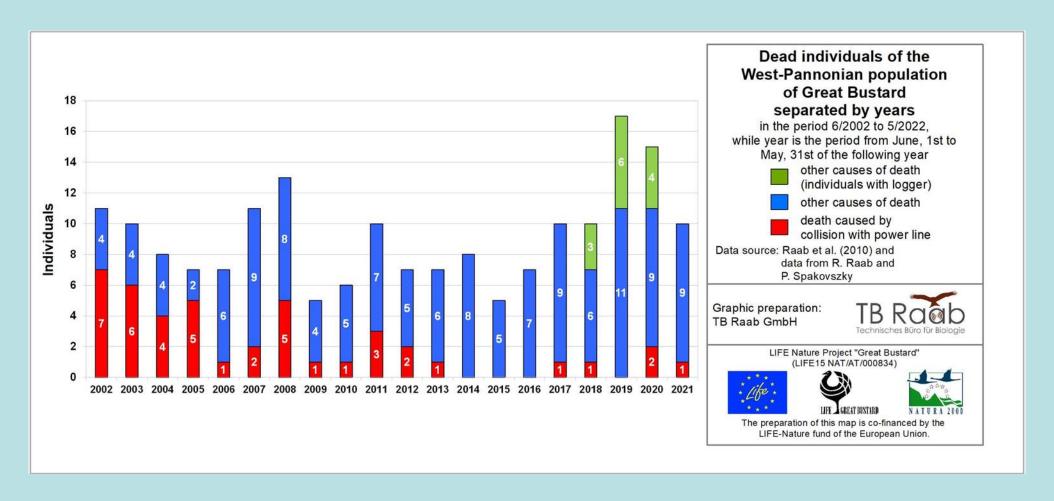
The preparation of this map is co-financed by the LIFE-Nature fund of the European Union.



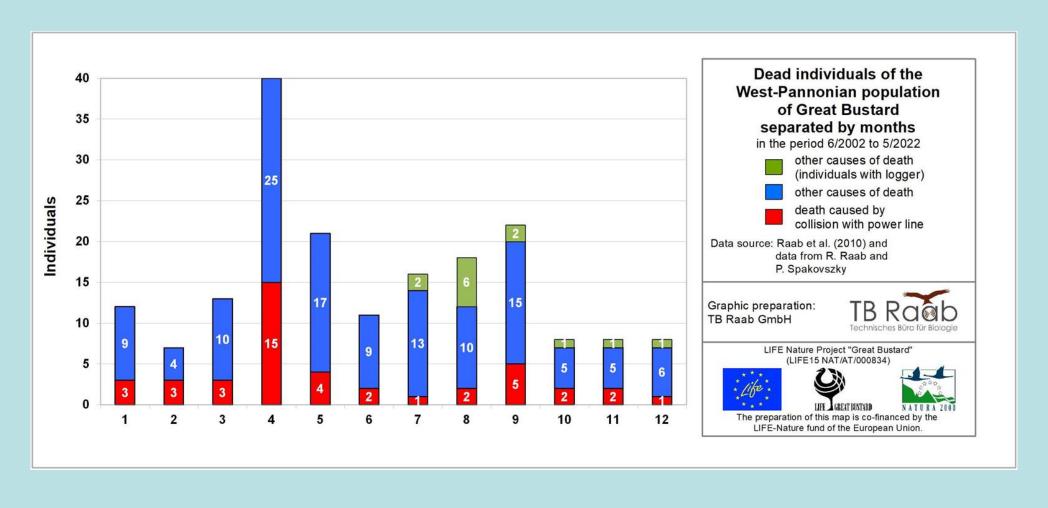




Monitoring the effect of the power line marking



Monitoring the effect of the power line marking





Public relations of the 3 LIFE Projects in Austria



• From 2005 to 2023 an information- and observation point as well as 5 observation towers were built for the observation of the Great Bustard, which are still used every year by several thousand visitors and therefore are a visible long-term sign of the two LIFE Projects for the protection of the Great Bustards.















40 years of the Birds Directive: a European success story

By the end of the 20th Century, the Austrian population of the Great Bustard had fallen to just 60 individuals. Large-scale agricultural intensification and collisions with overhead power lines had all but decimated the population here. However, with the launch of a series of EU LIFE funded projects, and the introduction of a major bustard friendly' agrientiforment scheme, the Austrian population has grown again. It now stands at some 320 individuals and efforts are underway to promote its recovery throughout Central Europe.













LIFE 28. April · 🚱

How to safeguard and protect a bird species? The #Lifeproject Großtrappe Otis tarda - Rotmilan Milvus milvus und Co.knows the answer! A joint effort by ≥ teams to preserve the Great Bustard in Central Europe Nature knows no borders!

Learn more ↑ https://bit.ly/2XAJMj6 #EUelections2019 #EP2019 #EUprotects

Europäische Kommission - Vertretung in Österreich Európai Bizottság Magyarországi Képviselete Zastúpenie Európskej komisie na Slovensku EU Environment Übersetzung anzeigen



European Commission 29. Mai 2017 - 6

25 years ago the EU's LIFE for the environment and climate action was born. More than 4.300 nature conservation, green technology and climate action projects have been co-funded since then.

One of them is the LIFE Great Bustard cross-border project: In Austria and Hungary, NGOs, regional authorities and utility companies join forces to save the rare bird from extinction, for example, by putting power lines underground: http://www.grosstrappe.at/en/homepage.html

#LIFE25NATURA #LIFE_programme #investEU #EUGreenWeek Übersetzung anzeigen



LIFE 21. Januar · 🚱

👍 Seite gefällt mir

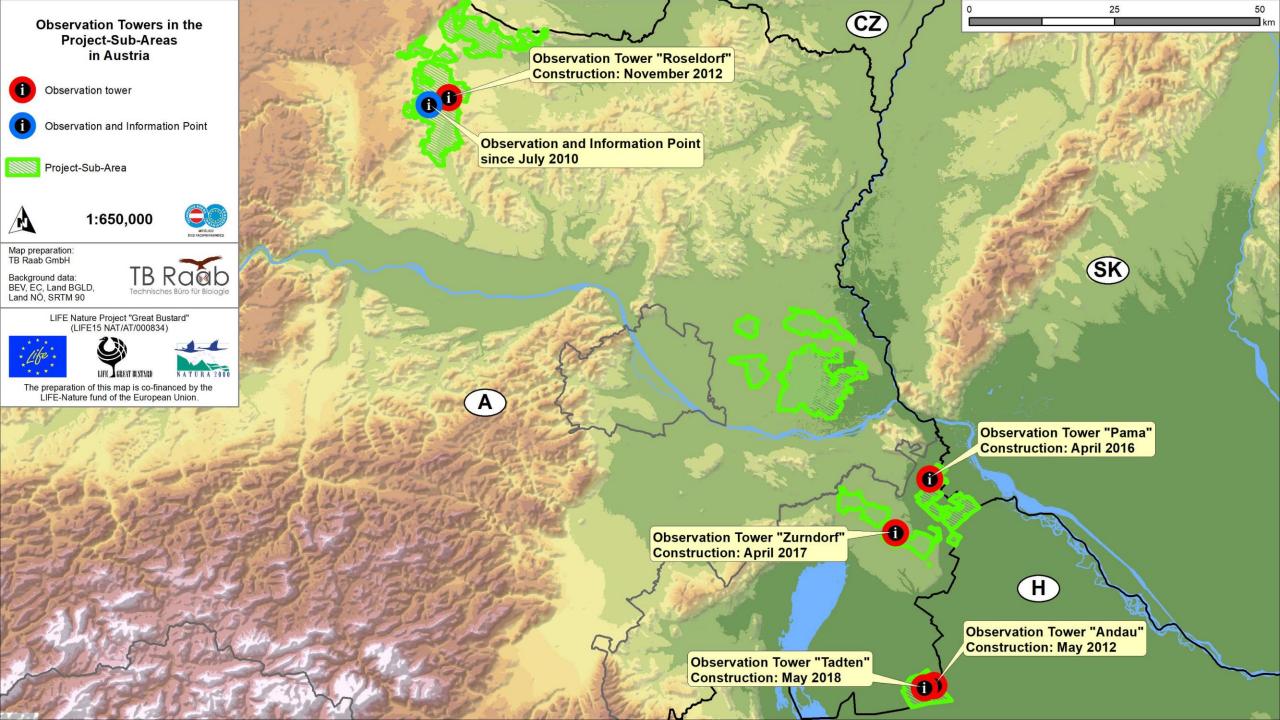
Großtrappe Otis tarda - Rotmilan Milvus milvus und Co. Land Burgenland Unser Niederösterreich ELMŰ - ÉMÁSZ Bükki Nemzeti Park Igazgatóság Für ein nachhaltiges Österreich Magyarország Kormánya Európai Bizottság Magyarországi Képviselete Europäische Kommission - Vertretung in Österreich EU Environment Übersetzung anzeigen













Numerous television spots, radio and newspapers or magazines and press conferences







Within the Crossborder protection of the Great Bustard in Austria more than 700 people (550 farmers and more than 100 hunters) are involved in the Great Bustard conservation projects.







Lass uns spielen!

Krabble durch den Zieseltunnel oder leg dich in den Adlerhorst. Klettere auf meinen Rücken und rutsche hinunter! Hier kannst du nach Herzenslust herumtollen, bevor du dich auf die Suche nach den Naturschätzen des Westlichen Weinviertels begibst. Mit etwas Glück kannst du auf deinem Weg ein paar von uns entdecken und beobachten!

























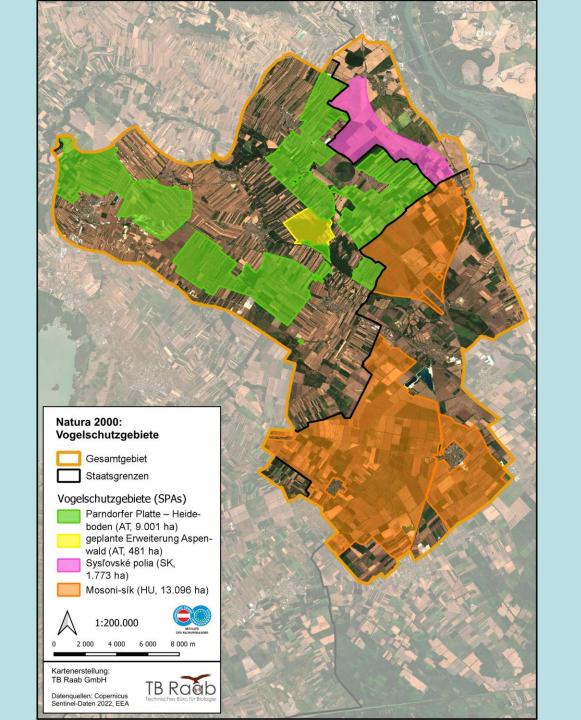


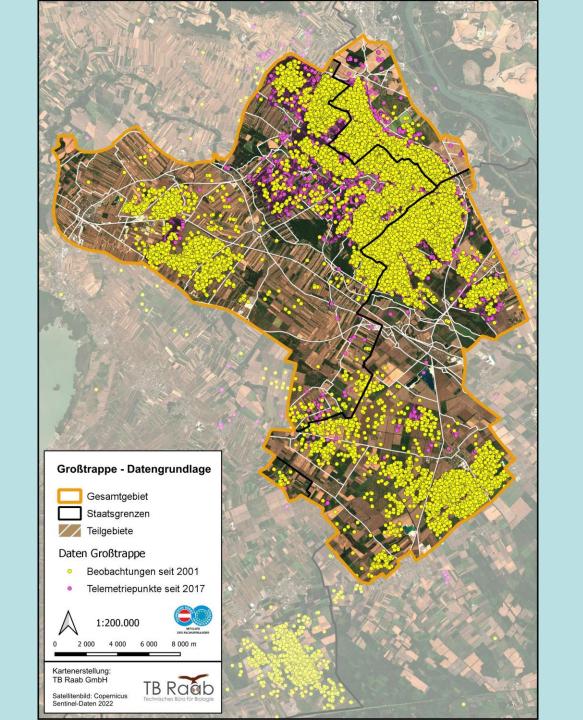


















Measures of the other projects



Only through the collaboration of farmers, hunters and local politicans within the conservation project Great Bustard it was possible to create suitable breeding sites and protect them against disturbance.





Measures of the other projects







Basics Great Bustard protection – most important measures:

- Planting of greenery or cultivation of winter rapeseed at least twice
- No driving on the area if a Great Bustard clutch is found within a radius of 50 m
- Chopping or mowing of arable land only in consultation with the area manager
- Participation in the monitoring project and events







"Winter wheat"

- No driving or walking on winter wheat after April 20th until harvest
- Avoiding the application of rodenticides and eliminating field mice is prohibited



"Avoid corn"

No cultivation of corn

Bonuses:

If you do not use pesticides (with the exception of Regulation No. 834/2007), an additional bonus will be paid



"Bustard fallow"

- No driving on the area except for management purposes
- Fertilization, the use of pesticides and the use of growth are prohibited
- Annual chopping between September 1st and October 15th
- An area of at least 10% and max. 20% of the should be not chopped or mowed for more structure on the field









"Green arable land"

- Green arable land with hay meadow or hay pasture use
- No fertilizer
- Delayed cutting time with earliest mowing on August 20th





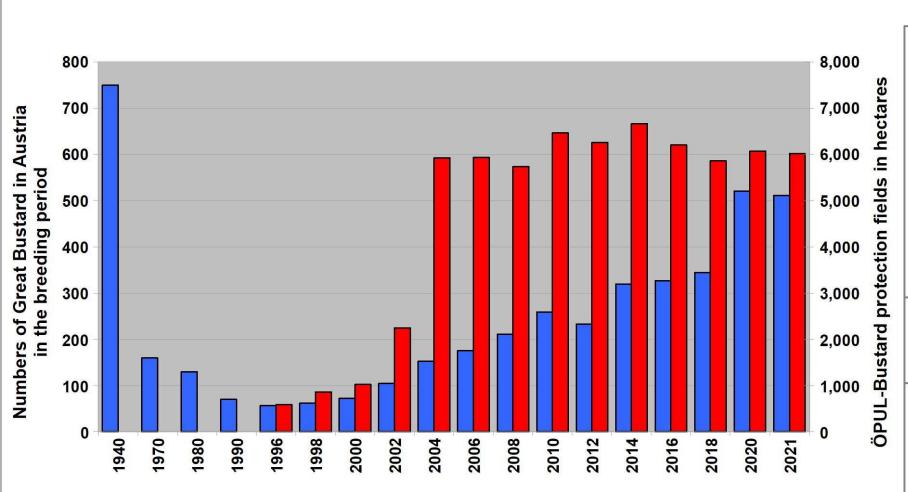






Numbers of the Austrian population of Great Bustard from 1940 to 2021 and the ÖPUL-Bustard protection fields





Size of the Austrian population of Great Bustard and the ÖPUL-Bustard protection fields

Numbers of the Austrian population of Great Bustard

ÖPUL-Bustard protection fields in hectares (including ÖPUL-meadows in Hanság)

Data source: Raab et al. (2010) and data from R. Raab and P. Spakovszky

Graphic preparation: TB Raab GmbH



LIFE Nature Project "Great Bustard" (LIFE15 NAT/AT/000834)







The preparation of this map is co-financed by the LIFE-Nature fund of the European Union.

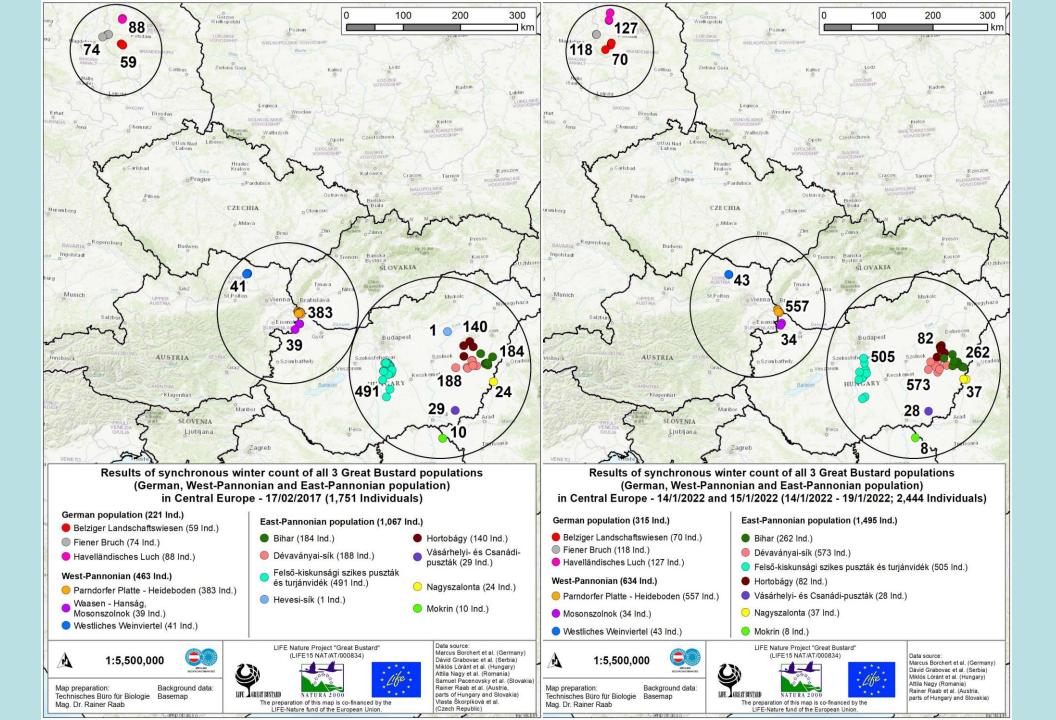


Results of the "3rd Synchronous Winter Count of the Great Bustard in Central Europe on the 14th & 15th of January 2022" within the LIFE project "Great Bustard"

(extended period 14th – 19th of January 2022)

Efforts to protect the great bustard are showing success throughout Central Europe









LIFE GREAT BUSTARD

Project-Team of the TB Raab GmbH







Mag. Dr. Rainer Raab



Hannah Boeing, MSc.



Rainhard Raab, BSc.



Mag. med. vet. Verena Strauß



DI Maximilian Raab, BSc.



DI Jochen Steindl



Eva Indruchova



Blanka Raab



DI Alexander Bek, BSc.



DI Manuel Wojta



DI Péter Spakovszky



Eike Julius, MSc., MSc.





Thank you for your attention!



























