

Introduction of Proposal to Expand Appendix I listing to Global Populations of Great Bustard
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Thank you Mr. Chairman. Using this opportunity, I would like to express my thanks to the Government of Ecuador for hosting this important event of COP11 of CMS and also the Secretariat for its excellent organization.

Distinguished delegates and colleagues,

Mongolia proposes the global listing of the Great Bustard, *Otis tarda*, on Appendix I. Though the range of the Great Bustard stretches from Portugal to Manchuria, currently only Middle European populations of Great Bustard are listed under Appendix I.

The time has come to extend this protection to populations ACROSS their Eurasian range. I would like to recall that the motto of this CoP 11 is "TIME FOR ACTION!"

Populations in East Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa have experienced declines due to habitat fragmentation, illegal hunting, collisions with power lines, and agricultural intensification.

Not long ago, these same factors threatened populations in Central and Western Europe.

Thanks to strong and effective conservation measures, the Iberian Peninsula now holds the world's largest reserves of this spectacular species.

Thanks to the coordination, cooperation, and communication facilitated in part by the Memorandum of Understanding on Middle-European populations of Great Bustards, populations of this bird in Middle Europe are now increasing in number.

However, across much of this species' range, conditions are worsening and the situation is urgent, with very low reproductive rates and high adult mortality rates.

We estimate that only 2000 individuals of the unique "dybowskii" subspecies remain in East Asia. In Central Asia, only approximately 300 birds remain, and the situation is similar in the Middle East. These populations cross international borders during their migration, juvenile dispersal, and in many cases, daily movements.

The global listing of the Great Bustard on Appendix I will bring these populations under the same level of protection as those in Europe. It is our intention that this listing will facilitate the coordination of action which is necessary to prevent the disappearance of these populations.

The Great Bustard is a species of which all range states can be proud. This is the heaviest bird capable of flight, reaching weights of up to 21 kg. It performs an impressive and beautiful breeding display. And additionally, the Great Bustard provides valuable ecosystem services by consuming large quantities of agricultural pests.

Dear distinguished delegates, having proposed this marvelous species for global listing in Appendix I, with the intention to save populations in Asia from extinction, we request your support.

Moreover, we look forward to fruitful cooperation and exchange of knowledge and best practices from European countries in the spirit of CMS for the sake of all global populations of Great Bustard in years to come.

Thank you.