

**AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM**



**10<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE  
AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT  
INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP**

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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BARNACLE GOOSE TASK FORCE  
FOR RUSSIA/GERMANY & NETHERLANDS POPULATION AND DRAFT WORKPLAN  
FOR 2025/2026**

*Prepared by Sander Moonen, Coordinator of the Russia Barnacle goose Task Force,  
with contribution from the members of the Russia Barnacle goose Task Force*

**Summary:**

This document provides an overview of the status and key activities that the Barnacle Goose Task Force for the Russia/Germany & Netherlands population has undertaken from June 2024 until May 2025. In addition, a proposed list of recommendations is included as well as the proposed annual workplan for 2025/2026.

**Action requested from the EGM IWG:**

Take note of the Task Force report and recommendations and adopt the annual workplan.

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## **1. Introduction**

At the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG5) in June 2020, the Range States agreed on the establishment and Terms of Reference (ToR) of - amongst others - two Task Forces for the Barnacle Goose – one for the E. Greenland, Svalbard & SW Scotland population and one for the Russia/Germany & Netherlands population (Russia BG TF) ([Doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/5.23](#)). This report focuses on the operations of the Task Force for the latter population.

The role of the Russia Barnacle Goose Task Force (RBG TF) is to:

- 1) assist the EGM IWG in coordinating and catalysing the implementation of the International Single Species Management Plan (ISSMP) for the Barnacle Goose and its corresponding Adaptive Flyway Management Programme (AFMP);
- 2) assist the EGM IWG in stimulating and supporting Range States in the implementation of the ISSMP for the Barnacle Goose and its corresponding AFMP; and
- 3) monitor and report on the implementation of these activities to the EGM IWG, as appropriate.

The RBG TF has been operating since October 2020. Currently, the Task Force has 27 members representing 8 countries, the European Commission and 4 non-governmental organisations. The full list of Task Force members is presented in Annex 1. Since March 2025, Sander Moonen fills the role of the Task Force Coordinator.

## **2. Meetings**

Since EGM IWG9 in June 2024, the RBG TF participated in three joint meetings of the EGMP Task Forces, which were held on 26 November 2024, 12 December 2024 (focusing on protocols for assessing the AFMP indicators for Barnacle and Greylag Goose AFMPs) and 6 March 2025 (focusing on the launch of the EGMP 2025 National Reporting cycle). A separate meeting of the Task Force took place on 8 May 2025. Another meeting of the Task Force is scheduled in hybrid format on 16 June 2025, in Brussels, Belgium, back-to-back with EGM IWG10.

## **3. Report of key activities and outcomes**

### **Workplan**

The RBG TF has updated the workplan for the Task Force, as well as the [national workplans](#) for each individual country.

### **Coordination of derogations**

During EGM IWG8, the Netherlands and Germany agreed that if significant derogation activities were planned in Germany, would coordination take place between the two countries. Otherwise, coordination should primarily take place within the Netherlands, where the national Favourable Reference Population (FRP) has now been distributed across the provinces and a coordinated process is being implemented by the regional Wildlife Councils. In response to population levels approaching the provincial FRP levels, suspension or significant reduction of derogations has already taken place in some provinces in the Netherlands since EGM IWG7 in 2022 (see the [EGMP Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report 2023](#) for details). Prior to EGM IWG10 in June 2025, there has been contact between the Netherlands and Niedersachsen in Germany, which has pointed out that during 2025, no derogation is planned in Niedersachsen. In Schleswig-Holstein,

regulations for derogation have changed and may potentially increase the offtake. However, at this stage (1 May 2025), it is unclear if this also affects the local breeding population belonging to MU3. In addition, there seems to be a huge effort in clutch-management, but usually this measure has little impact. Guided by the decision of the EGM IWG9 the Netherlands and Germany have submitted a report on the coordination of the offtake in the two countries, and this is presented in document AEWA/EGMIWG/10.22.

### **Gaps in monitoring data**

During the preparation of the annual status report, some issues have arisen that call for attention by the respective Range States.

January counts: January counts are conducted across all relevant Range States (Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden). However, it is recommended that the results from Germany—particularly for the Länder of Schleswig-Holstein and Niedersachsen—be made available earlier. At present, only data from two years prior are accessible, whereas having access to data from the previous year would significantly improve the timeliness and accuracy of population assessments. Currently, missing data are interpolated using values from previous years. While this approach provides a temporary solution, subsequent replacement with actual census data may introduce inconsistencies in the assessment of the total flyway population size. Early availability of verified count data would enhance the robustness of population estimates and reduce the reliance on retrospective adjustments.

Summer counts: In MU2, summer counts are taking place in Finland (annually), Sweden (annually, September) and Denmark (biennially, next scheduled for 2025). It is important to achieve high coverage in the Swedish September count and it is advisable to investigate if counts in Sweden (performed a few weeks after the count in Finland) interact (i.e. involve duplicate counts). In MU3, numbers are dominated by the Netherlands, which has a full-covered summer count in July. However, data is lacking from the smaller populations in Niedersachsen and Schleswig-Holstein, which would be important additions to the summer population size (in Germany, only Nordrhein-Westfalen has been covered by an annual count).

Age ratio data: These data are well-covered during autumn (mainly through assessments in the Netherlands and some in northern Germany, with the majority belonging to MU1) and during summer in MU3 in the Netherlands. The main issue is lack of data in MU2, where so far only annual assessments have been made in the Helsinki region, which is likely not representative for the whole of MU2. Assessments should therefore be expanded in Sweden and Denmark.

Derogation data: These data are delivered by the national agencies or by retrieving data from the EU portal. The main issue is that assignment to respective MUs is to some extent done arbitrarily. Especially in MU2 countries, it is important to improve assignment between MU1 and MU2. It is not currently possible to do this based on the available data, but it could be elaborated, based on time of the year and/or regions where derogations take place, if the assignment can be improved.

## **4. Recommendations**

The RBG TF recommends the following to the EGM IWG:

- Implement the activities outlined in the workplan for 2025/2026 (see section 5).
- The Dutch Modelling Consortium has received confirmation for a continuation of funding to coordinate monitoring of Barnacle Goose, provide population estimates by running the IPM and contributing to the annual status report (2025-2028). This is thanks to funding by the Dutch government (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature, the provinces and BIJ12-

agency). It is recommended that the Range States continue to assist the Dutch Modelling Consortium by facilitating the gathering and provision of needed data. The Task Force can assist the work of the consortium by promoting outputs of its work.

- Take action to fill the gaps in monitoring information that is used for the annual assessment of the population.
- Support the assessment of the AFMP indicators.

## 5. Draft Workplan 2025/2026

Table 1. Draft Workplan for 2025/2026 of the Barnacle Goose Task Force for Russia/Germany & Netherlands Population.

Actions from the ISSMP	Priority	Timescale	Barnacle Goose Task Force
2.3 Apply scaring and/or land management techniques to reduce the attractiveness of sensitive areas to geese, monitoring the implications of such local displacement for conflicts at wider scale [3]	High	Short / Rolling	Exchange of experience (Agriculture TF is also dealing with this)
3.1. Reduce risk posed by goose migration to air safety through operational measures such as radar surveillance [4]	High	Short / Rolling	Strengthen collaboration with Flight Safety Task Force
3.2 Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols	High	Short	Liaise with Agriculture TF and EGMP Data Centre. Agriculture TF Coordinator to update the BG TF and exchange information
3.3 Liaise with farmers affected by goose damages to reduce agricultural conflicts	High	Short / Rolling	X
4.2 Assess periodically, and report to the AEWA EGM IWG, the cumulative impact of derogations (as well as hunting in Range States in which derogation is not required) on the development of the population, the likelihood of serious damage to agriculture and risk to air safety and to other flora and fauna (including the Arctic ecosystems), and the non-lethal measures taken to prevent damage/risk, as well as the effectiveness of these. If necessary, coordinate the derogation measures between Range	Essential	Short	The Norwegian authorities do not consider the breeding population in the Oslofjord area as "naturally occurring". However, some data exist scattered in the few municipalities practicing derogation (based on the Norwegian legislation; not population regulating tool, only for damage prevention). With some effort this information can be collected. Discuss and

States to avoid risk to the population and to enhance effectiveness of the measures.			<p>provide recommendations to EGM IWG on the coordination of derogation measures between Range States.</p> <p>The EGM IWG agreed that coordination of offtake will take place on a case-by-case basis for populations and Management Units (MUs) that drop below the 200% threshold (as stated in the AFMP). Should a population or MU drop below this threshold, the role of the EGMP will be to facilitate dialogue, as appropriate and necessary, among the Range States.</p>
4.3 Improve effectiveness of derogation measures through experimenting with different timing and methods and better understanding the relative efficacy of lethal versus non-lethal scaring techniques	High	Medium	Exchange / Coordinate
4.4 Promote best practices of goose population adjustment including timing to minimize damage and significant disturbance to other species	Medium	Medium / Rolling	Exchange information and experience. Collate, summarise results (possibly workshop), time + resources needed
4.5 Maintain low crippling rates	High	Medium / Rolling	Exchange information and experience. Investigate BG crippling rates.
4.6 Improve derogation shooting techniques to further reduce crippling	Medium	Long / Rolling	Exchange information and experience. Collate, summarise results (possibly workshop, time + resources needed) - liaise with PfG TF and share information
A.1 Produce and update periodically, spatially explicit population size estimates based on agreed international monitoring	Essential	Short / Rolling	Consultation, support governments/national coordinators to deliver data - monitoring plan

A.2 Maintain an annually updated bag statistics database including geese taken by any means (whether under derogations or, in those Range States in which it is permissible, hunting)	Essential	Ongoing / Rolling	Consultation
A.3 Maintain a spatially explicit database on goose damage to agriculture, other fauna and flora and fauna and risk to air safety	Essential	Medium / Rolling	Consultation
A.4 Collect demographic (mortality, reproduction, differential migration and connectivity) data from an agreed representative sampling framework across the range	High	Short / Rolling	Consultation
C.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy and plan	Medium	Short / Rolling	Share relevant information
D.1 Develop a specific guidance on the application of Art. 9 of the Birds Directive in the context of the Barnacle Goose Management Plan	Essential	Immediate	A specific bird species guidance has been under consultation among EU countries in 2024, but it will need further elaborations within the EC and with the European Court of Justice, before getting released, likely after summer 2025.
D.2 For Range States in which hunting is legal, review national legislation in the light of the framework legal guidance document developed under the EGMP	Essential	Immediate	X

## Annex 1. Members of the Barnacle Goose Task Force as of May 2025

Country	Representative	Affiliation
<b>Belgium</b>	Floris Verhaeghe	Nature and Forest Agency
	Frank Huysentruyt	Research institute for Nature & Forest (INBO) Flemish Government
<b>Denmark/EGMP Data Centre</b>	Jesper Madsen	Aarhus University
<b>Denmark/Danish Hunters' Association</b>	Lene Midtgaard	Danish Hunters' Association
<b>Denmark</b>	Søren Egelund Rasmussen	Danish Agency for Green Transition and Aquatic Environment
<b>Estonia</b>	Ivar Ojaste	Estonian University of Agriculture
<b>European Commission</b>	Iva Obretenova	Directorate-General for Environment
<b>Finland</b>	Petri Ahlroth	Ministry of the Environment
	Markku Mikkola-Roos	Finnish Environment Institute
	Kiim Jaatinen	Finnish Environment Institute
<b>Germany</b>	Markus Nipkow	Lower Saxony Water Management, Coastal Defence and Nature Conservation Agency
	Nick Warmelink	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature



<b>Netherlands</b>	Verna de Groes	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature
	Kees Koffijberg	Sovon Vogelonderzoek Nederland
	Gerben Mensink	Province of Friesland
	Teresa Kalverboer	Province of Zeeland
	Sofia Kolkman	Provincial Wildlife Council of Noord-Holland
	Sander Moonen (Task Force coordinator)	Wageningen Environmental Research
<b>Norway</b>	Ingunn Tombre	NINA
<b>Sweden</b>	Per Risberg	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
<b>BirdLife International</b>	Christine Verscheure	Natuurpunt
<b>FACE</b>	Cy Griffin	Senior Conservation Manager
<b>Nordic Hunters' Alliance</b>	Olav Greivstad	Consultant
<b>Wetlands International</b>	Szabolcs Nagy	Senior Advisor
<b>EGMP Data Centre</b>	Iben Hove Sørensen	Aarhus University
<b>UNEP AEW Secretariat</b>	Bruno Leles	EGMP Coordinator
	Shenay Huseynova	EGMP Programme Assistant