

AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



10th MEETING OF THE AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP



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EGMP NATIONAL REPORT SUMMARY 2025

Prepared by the EGMP Secretariat

Summary:

Rule 32 of the Modus Operandi of the European Goose Management International Working Group provides that reports on the implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans (ISSAPs and ISSMPs) within the remit of the European Goose Management Platform shall be prepared by each Range State. At EGM IWG6 in 2021, a two-year reporting cycle was introduced. This was followed by the adoption of Document AEWA/EGMIWG/7.5 at EGM IWG7 in 2022, which outlined the reporting workflow and template.

A reporting cycle was initiated in 2025 following these procedures and covering the period 2023-2024. However, since the Pink-footed Goose ISSMP and the Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP have reached the end of their 10-year cycle and an evaluation process to inform the revision of these plans was finalised in 2024 and 2025 respectively, the present national reporting cycle has focused only on the implementation of the Barnacle Goose ISSMP and the Greylag Goose ISSMP.

This document presents a summary of the information reported by Range States for each action of the respective Management Plans.

Action requested from the EGM IWG:

The EGM IWG is invited to take note of the report and provide advice, as necessary.

List of Acronyms

AEC - Agri-environmental climate

AEWA - African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement

AFMP - Adaptive Flyway Management Programme

CAB - County Administrative Boards

CAP - Common agricultural policy of the European Union

EGM IWG - European Goose Management International Working Group

EGMP - European Goose Management Platform

FCS - Favourable Conservation Status

FRV - Favourable Reference Values

HABIDES - Habitats and Birds Directives Derogation System

HELMI - Health and Early Life Microbiota

IBA - Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas

ISSAP - International Single Species Action Plan

ISSMP - International Single Species Management Plan

LUKE - Finnish Institute of Natural Resources

NINA - Norwegian Institute for Nature Research

OFB - French Biodiversity Agency

SEPA - Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

SLU - Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

SPA - Special Protection Areas

TF - Task Force

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Background

As outlined in Rule 32 of the Modus Operandi of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG), adopted at its first meeting in 2016, each Range State is required to submit reports on the implementation of AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans (ISSAPs and ISSMPs) under the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP). These reports must follow a format agreed by the EGM IWG.

The EGMP National Reports focus on activities outlined in the relevant Action and Management Plans. To improve the reporting process, EGM IWG6, in 2021, endorsed a two-year reporting cycle and tasked the Secretariat and Data Centre, in collaboration with the Task Forces, with developing a new reporting format and workflow. This was formalized in Document AEWA/EGMIWG/7.5, adopted at EGM IWG7, in 2022, which outlined the reporting template and submission process for Range States.

The current reporting cycle follows this framework. The proposed workflow was presented at the joint Task Force meeting on 26 November 2024. Given that the Pink-footed Goose ISSMP and the Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP reached the end of their 10-year cycles and were evaluated in 2024, it was agreed that the 2025 national reporting would focus solely on the implementation of the Barnacle Goose and Greylag Goose ISSMPs. Indeed, EGM IWG8 had, in 2023, already agreed that the Pink-footed Goose and Taiga Bean Goose sections can be included in the process for national reporting after the revisions of these plans are adopted by the AEWA Meeting of the Parties.

The 2025 reporting cycle was launched on 21 February 2025 and consisted of two phases:

- 1 21 February – 17 March: Task Force members updated national workplans with the latest information, in consultation with National Government Representatives (NGRs).
- 2 18 March – 18 April: NGRs reviewed and formally submitted the updated reports to the Secretariat.

Following the updates by Task Force members, draft reports were generated based on the relevant ISSMPs and submitted to NGRs on 20 March 2025 for review and approval. Approved reports received until 5 May 2025 were included in the analysis presented below.

Overview of report submission rate

As of the deadline 5 May 2025, 13 out of 15 of the EGM IWG Range States submitted a National Report for 2023-2025 (Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom). Two Range States have not submitted a report (Belarus and Ukraine).

General non-species-specific reporting

This section summarizes the main information provided by the Range States on legislation to facilitate the implementation of adaptive harvest management and the establishment of national working groups to support the implementation of the management and action plans under EGMP.

New or adjusted existing legislation

In reviewing the legislative developments across various countries regarding the implementation of adaptive harvest management within the framework of an ISSAP or ISSMP, most countries have not introduced new legislation, citing that their existing frameworks are already adequate to support the necessary actions.

Finland passed new legislation in 2020 and 2022. Ministerial Degree on Ban on hunting of Bean Goose (768/2022) established a total hunting ban in certain areas and partial closing of the hunting season, an annual quota and restriction on hunting methods (bait feeding banned) in Lapland. <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2022/20220768>. Ministerial Degree on Ban on hunting of Bean Goose during hunting seasons 2020-2023 (531/2020) established a total hunting ban in some inland and coastal areas,

a daily quota (2 geese/day/hunter) and restriction on hunting methods, including bait feeding being banned during 10-20 August for hunting over agricultural fields.

Iceland has implemented a sales ban on Greylag geese and shortening of the hunting season for Barnacle geese to reduce hunting pressure as a measure to prevent the population going below agreed targets. Estonia and France are currently engaged in discussions about potential legislative adjustments although no specifics on the type of adjustments were reported.

Establishment of national working groups

Several countries have been proactive in the establishment of national working groups to support the implementation of management and action plans under the EGMP. Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the UK have all established national working groups or forums. These groups typically include a diverse range of stakeholders such as farmers, hunters, nature conservation organizations, government representatives, and national experts. Regular meetings are held to discuss, develop, and coordinate national goose action plans and EGMP-related matters.

For example, Belgium has formed a working group with representatives from various sectors, ensuring a collaborative approach on the implementation of goose-related policies. Estonia's national working group meets at least twice a year, involving relevant stakeholders to support national goose action planning. Finland conducts written stakeholder consultations on EGMP documents in advance of annual meetings, engaging NGOs, hunters, birdwatchers, and farmers. Germany's working group consists of representatives from both the federal government and federal states, addressing EGMP matters as needed. Iceland has set up an informal expert working group focused on implementation and monitoring, with plans for stakeholder involvement. The Netherlands has established a working group on AEWA goose policy (WAG) and a provincial Geese Task Force to enhance coordination and implementation at the provincial level. Norway's national group meets annually, including members from the Environment Agency, Farmers Union, BirdLife Norway, The Norwegian Hunters and Anglers Association, and NINA. Additionally, five county-level forums address goose-related agricultural challenges. Sweden's national group meets one or two times per year, involving relevant authorities and stakeholders. The UK utilizes an existing National Goose Forum, which includes various stakeholders and government involvement, supporting goose management efforts in Scotland. Denmark is planning to revitalize its national working group, involving farmers, hunters, airport operators, and BirdLife, prior to the EGMP meeting in June 2023.

Barnacle Goose Russia/Germany and Netherlands Population

All eight participating Range States of the Russia population of the Barnacle Goose (Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden) have reported on the implementation of the International Species Management Plan for the Barnacle Goose. Russia is a non-participating Range State and has not reported.

Below, we present a summary of the information reported by Range States for each action of the Management Plan.

1.1 Provide adequate protection and management to key sites of international importance under Article 4(1) of the Birds Directive in the EU and other relevant instruments in other Range States throughout the range of the populations and maintain them in good ecological status

Several countries have demonstrated compliance with the protection and management of key sites of international importance. For example, Belgium has not designated specific sites for Barnacle Geese, but the areas with significant concentrations of these geese overlap with sites designated for other wintering waterbirds and geese, ensuring adequate protection. Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, and the Netherlands reported adequate protection and management of key sites. These sites are protected under national legislation, such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Natura 2000 sites. In the Netherlands, for example, 40% of feeding geese and 90% of night roosts are within SPA boundaries, highlighting the extensive coverage.

Germany's key sites for arctic geese species, including Barnacle Geese, are protected under national legislation, ensuring their ecological status is maintained. Similarly, Sweden regulated conservation of key sites through nature conservation and hunting jurisdiction. Norway does not specifically monitor Barnacle Geese in the Oslofjord area, but where their range overlaps with Greylag geese, some monitoring figures are available, indicating partial compliance.

1.2 Promotion of goose-based eco-tourism at selected key sites

Countries have used different methods to promote goose-based eco-tourism at important sites. In Belgium, the focus is on Pink-footed and White-fronted Geese, but Barnacle Geese also benefit from these efforts. Denmark attracts visitors to established areas like the Wadden Sea National Park, and events like the annual "Goose Days" at Nisum Fjord add to the appeal. In Estonia, well-known staging areas are often visited by birdwatching guides. Finland benefits from large flocks of geese that support local tourism and boost the economy. Germany runs goose-watching tours in North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony, focusing on key wintering areas. In the Netherlands, private tour companies lead eco-tourism, especially in popular regions like Friesland and Zeeland. Sweden offers public accommodations in key areas and includes Barnacle Geese in broader nature tourism packages. Norway did not report any specific eco-tourism activities for Barnacle Geese.

2.1 Take key sites for geese into account in land use planning and growing of sensitive crops

Belgium has protected grasslands in SPAs designated for other wintering waterbird species, ensuring the sustenance of wintering goose populations. Specific measures for sensitive crops are not needed due to the limited presence of breeding Barnacle Geese. Estonia's first geese management plan, accepted in 2021, proposes considering geese staging sites in land use planning, though implementation remains to be seen. Finland has conducted a large-scale study in Eastern Finland at the main spring and autumn staging sites of the population, but land use planning for these sites still needs implementation. Germany and the Netherlands have protected key sites as SPAs, though many feeding areas in farmland are not covered. Sweden protects most key sites and provides guidelines and compensation for damages near these sites.

2.2. Provide accommodation areas to reduce risks and conflicts at sensitive areas through e.g. subsidies

In Belgium, designated areas for wintering waterbirds ensure that scaring is not required for crop-damage compensation, and hunting is closed after November 15th to support these areas as wintering accommodations. Since wintering Barnacle Geese leave before the growing season starts, no additional measures are necessary.

Denmark has developed accommodation areas near Copenhagen Airport and is conducting a scientific project on habitat restoration, including salt marshes. Annual public "goose days" at Nissum Fjord further enhance eco-tourism and awareness. Estonia's new geese management plan (2021) describes the practice of providing accommodation areas, particularly in connection with scaring geese from sensitive fields, but no activities have been implemented yet.

Finland has conducted a large-scale study at key staging sites, planning to provide specific fields for feeding and resting, known as "goose fields," to steer birds away from sensitive agricultural fields. Implementation is still ongoing. Germany uses agri-environmental schemes and subsidies in SPAs to provide accommodation areas and reduce conflicts with farmers. An initiative to change the CAP-regulation for co-financing damage payments failed, but agri-environmental schemes are offered outside SPAs, and damage compensation on summer crops has started in 2023. The Netherlands has established accommodation areas in most provinces, with some areas having periods of winter rest where derogation shooting is restricted unless geese feed on sensitive crops. This approach has helped to balance conservation efforts with agricultural needs. Sweden provides accommodation areas for resting and grazing birds in most counties where geese appear, supported by guidelines and compensation for damages near key sites. Norway did not report specific activities related to this action.

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

Countries have implemented various scaring and land management techniques to reduce the attractiveness of sensitive areas to geese. In Belgium, scaring is required outside accommodation areas for crop-damage compensation, but since wintering geese are present outside the growing season, crop-damage issues are minimal. Denmark mandates scaring to comply with derogation conditions and is conducting a scientific project on integrated goose management.

Estonia practices scaring without providing alternative feeding areas and has not monitored the effects. Derogation hunting has been critically discussed in society and court. Finland has conducted studies at key staging sites, planning scaring and alternative feeding fields, with ongoing monitoring of these measures.

Germany allows farmers outside SPAs to use scaring techniques and is trialing a new breed of *Festuca arundinacea* to improve grassland dry mass, with results expected in 2025.

The Netherlands stimulates farmers to use scaring techniques on valuable crops before compensation or lethal intervention, applying land management techniques locally, such as around Schiphol airport to reduce collision risks. Sweden performs scaring on a large scale by farmers, supported by subsidies, trials, information, and education from the Wildlife Damage Center. Norway overlaps its actions with those for Greylag Geese.

3.1. Reduce risk posed by goose migration to air safety through operational measures such as radar surveillance

Countries have adopted diverse strategies to mitigate the risks posed by goose migration to air safety, utilizing operational measures such as radar surveillance and scaring techniques. Denmark and the Netherlands have taken extensive steps to manage the risk of geese to air safety. Denmark has implemented local measures around each airport, with Copenhagen Airport employing a new radar system to enhance surveillance and response. Additionally, a scientific study is underway to evaluate the effectiveness of derogation shooting outside the airport. The Netherlands employs a comprehensive approach, including radar surveillance, population management, scaring, and land management techniques for crop residues. Sweden does not consider geese a major problem for air safety, using various scaring devices at airports.

Risk to air safety is reported to be low in other countries. In Belgium, the absence of nearby wetlands means geese do not pose a significant threat near airports, and Bird Control Units manage geese alongside other birds. Estonia has not faced major issues with geese at airports, although Tallinn Airport employs personnel dedicated to bird scaring. Similarly, Finland has not reported significant problems, with Helsinki-Vantaa Airport authorities conducting general bird monitoring and scaring activities.

3.2 Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols

Efforts to establish programmes for assessing agricultural damage caused by geese varied across countries. Belgium collected data through a compensation scheme for crop damage from wintering geese, often including mixed damage from other species. Denmark has not taken specific action.

The Finnish Institute of Natural Resources (Luke) participates in a research programme in collaboration with the EGMP Agriculture Task Force. Germany has successfully used satellite data to estimate geese damage for different crop types in a 2021 project. The Netherlands has a national routine for damage compensation managed by BIJ12, complemented by exchanges within the EGMP via the Agriculture Task Force. Sweden's Wildlife Damage Center contributes to these efforts as part of the EGMP Agriculture Task Force.

Finland and Germany focus on research to enhance damage assessment accuracy, while Sweden supports coordinated actions through its Wildlife Damage Center.

3.3 Liaise with farmers affected by goose damages to reduce agricultural conflicts

In Belgium, the compensation scheme is effective, providing fair compensation for crop damage. Since wintering geese leave before the growing season, agricultural conflicts are minimal. Denmark's wildlife managers from the Nature Agency offer advice and guidance to farmers, complementing actions outlined in previous sections. Estonia lacks a robust practice for liaising with farmers, though about half of scaring expenses are currently compensated. However, there is no guidance on minimizing damage rates. Finland has engaged in studies in Eastern Finland that include communication with farmers, and regional goose working groups have been established in key areas to facilitate dialogue and cooperation.

Germany has local and regional groups in Schleswig-Holstein discussing conflict reduction strategies between geese and farmers. In Lower Saxony, a round table with farmers, hunting, and nature conservation organizations led to the development of a goose management strategy. This strategy focuses on establishing accommodation areas for wintering arctic geese and implementing agri-environmental schemes and subsidies for farmers affected by goose damage. Additionally, scaring techniques are used to limit damage outside these areas.

The Netherlands has comprehensive compensation schemes in place. In designated foraging areas on agricultural land for migrating management units, all crop damage is compensated, sometimes combined with subsidy schemes. On other agricultural land, generally 80% to 95% of damage is compensated. Sweden has established national, regional, and local management groups in relevant areas to address these issues.

4.1 If necessary and if there is no other satisfactory solution, apply lethal population control under derogations according to the provisions of the Birds Directive, the Bern Convention and AEWA, for preventing serious damage to crops

Countries have adopted specific measures for lethal population control under derogations, adhering to the Birds Directive, the Bern Convention, and AEWA to prevent serious crop damage. In Belgium, the legislation addresses the feral breeding population, which is distinct from the migrating geese and primarily originates from waterbird collections. Denmark issues derogation permits for Barnacle Geese from September to May, with conditions varying by season. Estonia frequently employs derogation hunting in autumn but requires a legally sound justification that complies with international directives for spring hunting. Finland grants autumn derogations for shooting Barnacle Geese under Article 9 of the EU Birds Directive, managed by the national

authority. Germany incorporates the Birds Directive into national law, with Schleswig-Holstein managing derogations through hunting legislation and issuing separate permissions for cases outside hunting law. The Netherlands mandates non-lethal scaring techniques on valuable crops before escalating to lethal control, in line with the Birds Directive. Norway considers lethal population control when necessary. In Sweden, County Administrative Boards make decisions based on the Swedish Hunting Act and Ordinance, guided by SEPA. Private farmers can protect individual fields under specific conditions.

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 States to avoid risk to the population and to enhance effectiveness of the measures.

Coordination between Range States is crucial for managing the cumulative impact on the population and mitigating associated risks. Belgium issues derogations only for the feral breeding population, which does not impact migrating populations. Denmark provides detailed data on derogation schemes. The effectiveness of derogation compared to other scaring methods has been tested in a scientific study and derogations shooting measures to reduce goose numbers around Copenhagen Airport are currently being evaluated. Estonia grants derogations to shoot Barnacle Geese in the autumn under Art. 9 of the EU Birds Directive, with monitoring using aerial counts every third spring. However, there is no monitoring for the effectiveness of non-lethal measures. Finland follows a similar approach, granting derogations under Art. 9 with required reporting.

Germany has a varied approach: Lower Saxony maintains a hunting ban, while Schleswig-Holstein monitors the winter population closely and coordinates with the Netherlands. North Rhine-Westphalia also maintains a hunting ban without derogations. The Netherlands collects derogation figures and uses summer counts to monitor impacts, coordinating with Germany and Belgium since 2022. Norway does not monitor Barnacle Geese in the Oslofjord area but provides figures where they overlap with Greylag geese. Sweden handles derogation measures through national reporting and the Wildlife Damage Center.

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

Belgium focuses its derogation measures on feral populations in parks. Denmark has scientific projects that contribute to understanding the effectiveness of different methods. Estonia monitored the effectiveness of derogation hunting from 2019 to 2021, finding no difference between lethal and non-lethal scaring. A new approach involving regular geese scaring (5-6 times per day) and nominating alternative feeding/resting areas was proposed in the 2021 geese management plan, but its effectiveness has not yet been researched.

Finland's efforts are covered under a study in Eastern Finland. The Netherlands regularly performs studies into non-lethal scaring techniques and compares them to lethal methods, setting up multiple studies to gain insights into non-lethal methods. Norway does not have relevant information available. Sweden's efforts include a goose project by SLU and Kristianstads University.

4.4 Promote best practices of goose population adjustment including timing to minimize damage and significant disturbance to other species

Belgium allows only caging/trapping as a derogation measure, limited to the feral breeding population from 1 May to 30 September. Denmark includes best practices in national legislation on derogation permits, with frequent discussions in national working groups. Estonia considers this issue in its new geese management plan (2021), but no research activity has been conducted so far. Finland uses less invasive methods of scaring in spring versus autumn to minimize disturbance to other species during the pre-breeding season. The Netherlands has established an inter-provincial Geese Task Force (2022) to share best practices, with results of evaluations shared via seminars to all potential stakeholders. Norway's actions will overlap with Greylag

Goose measures. Sweden addresses concerns regarding the effect on waders in a guidance for the management of grazing birds, aimed at the CAB.

4.5 Maintain low crippling rates

Belgium's standard derogation measures do not involve shooting, focusing instead on caging and trapping. Denmark completed an awareness campaign on reducing crippling rates in 2015 with very positive results and has resumed monitoring crippling rates from 2023 onwards. Estonia emphasizes the ethics of hunters but has not implemented specific measures to reduce crippling rates. Finland plans to address this issue in the communication and education of hunters as part of the ongoing draft of the Strategy for Responsible Waterfowl Hunting.

The Netherlands has not taken specific actions yet, but scientific output and attention from AEWA have sparked interest from educators to improve hunter training courses in the future. In Sweden, maintaining low crippling rates is part of the hunters' exam, and the Swedish Hunters Association offers education for goose hunters. Additionally, X-rays are regularly conducted when catching birds for marking.

4.6 Improve derogation shooting techniques to further reduce crippling

Denmark emphasized the importance of shooting distance, with ethical rules limiting shooting to a maximum of 25 meters. This focus on ethical hunting practices is important for reducing crippling rates. Finland has observed that geese can be scared from fields using blank shots instead of killing methods, suggesting potential non-lethal alternatives. However, more studies are needed to confirm the efficiency of different derogation methods. Belgium's standard derogation measures do not involve shooting, focusing instead on caging and trapping. Estonia highlights the ethics of hunters but has not implemented specific measures to reduce crippling rates. This indicates a need for further development in this area. Sweden's efforts to improve shooting techniques are managed by the Swedish Hunters Association, which includes education on ethical hunting practices. This proactive approach has been important for minimizing crippling rates and promoting responsible hunting practices.

A.1 Produce and update periodically, spatially explicit population size estimates based on agreed international monitoring

Denmark, Estonia, and Finland have ongoing monitoring efforts to produce and update spatially explicit population size estimates based on agreed international monitoring. Germany has comprehensive monitoring programs in Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia for breeding and wintering Barnacle geese, with results collected by the State Office for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Consumer Protection (LANUV). Schleswig-Holstein also has monitoring based on agreed international schemes.

Belgium estimates its summer goose population through mid-July counts, while the wintering population is assessed from October to March via mid-monthly waterbird censuses. The Netherlands employs a national governmental monitoring scheme compatible with EGMP needs, collecting data on numbers, habitat, distribution, and age-ratio. Summer counts are conducted in cooperation with Regional Wildlife Councils. Sweden's monitoring is carried out by Lunds University, with yearly counts during late summer and autumn, and staging birds monitored in January.

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)

Denmark requires hunters to report game bags annually for all species, including those taken under derogation, with data provided by landowners or hunters for each permit. Estonia's Environment Agency provides an annual bag statistics database, with data collected and reported under the EU Birds Directive. Finland collected data on derogation shooting in autumns 2021 and 2022, but ceased this practice after research suggested non-lethal methods are equally effective. Germany regularly reports Barnacle geese derogated under Art. 9 of the Birds Directive to the EU Commission and the EGMP, with data published by Schleswig-Holstein. Belgium

reports derogations to the EU and the EGMP. The Netherlands reviews all aspects of the derogation system periodically and applies new reporting methods, such as apps, to improve data quality. Sweden has hunters report conditional hunting to the Swedish Hunters Association, while CAB reports other derogations in HABIDES. There is an ongoing project to improve and secure bag statistics.

A.3 Maintain a spatially explicit database on goose damage to agriculture, other fauna and flora and fauna and risk to air safety

Denmark reports bird strike statistics annually for civil airports but has no specific actions for agricultural damage. Estonia's efforts are ongoing. Finland has limited air safety risks, with rough estimations calculated but not spatially explicit. Annual damage estimations are needed for farmer compensation.

Germany conducts experimental studies in Lower Saxony to track changes in agricultural damage, with annual expert estimations for major biomass losses. Schleswig-Holstein has some results but no yearly updates. The Netherlands has detailed spatial information on agricultural damage and a bird strike database for air safety, with periodic review of flora and fauna damages. Belgium collects spatial references for wintering bird damage through its compensation scheme. Norway has no relevant actions currently. Sweden's Wildlife Damage Centre gathers information on damages and air safety risks, with a goose damage database under development.

The diverse approaches highlight the importance of spatially explicit databases for managing goose damage. Germany's studies and the Netherlands' detailed information are proactive measures, while Sweden's database development shows ongoing improvement efforts.

A.4 Collect demographic (mortality, reproduction, differential migration and connectivity) data from an agreed representative sampling framework across the range

Belgium, Denmark, and Estonia have not taken actions yet, with Belgium suggesting alignment with other Range States. Finland has ongoing efforts to enhance monitoring. The Netherlands conducts productivity counts in summer, uses a neckband scheme to study survival and spatial site-use, and performs age-ratio counts in autumn among migratory geese. Sweden has an ongoing project by Lund University. The lack of actions in some countries highlights the need for coordinated efforts across Range States to ensure comprehensive demographic data collection.

A.5 Analyse the impact of various agricultural policy scenarios and measures (Nitrate Directive, agri-environmental measures, various production incentives including biofuels) on goose populations and on goose damage

This has not been done in any of the Range States. Belgium notes that the impact of agricultural policies on Barnacle Geese is minimal due to their relatively small wintering population compared to other goose species. Denmark, Estonia, the Netherlands, and Sweden have not taken any actions to analyse the impact of agricultural policies on goose populations and damage. Finland also has not conducted such analyses. The lack of action across most Range States highlights a significant gap in understanding how agricultural policies affect goose populations and damage. This gap underscores the need for coordinated efforts and research to assess the impact of policies like the Nitrate Directive, agri-environmental measures, and production incentives, including biofuels, on goose populations and their interactions with agricultural landscapes.

A.6 Assess the role of predators (e.g. White-tailed Eagle, Red Fox, Polar Bear, Arctic Fox) in regulating goose populations

Belgium considers the role of predators irrelevant for its feral breeding population. Denmark has no current actions but plans to study White-tailed Eagle predation on Barnacle Geese at Saltholm. Estonia and the Netherlands have not taken any actions. Finland has ongoing studies on White-tailed Eagle predation on the breeding population. Norway has not considered this issue, though there may be spin-off results from other projects. Sweden has no actions in place.

A.7 Monitor and assess the impact of the populations on other flora and fauna and ecosystems in the Arctic

The lack of actions across all Range States highlights a significant gap in understanding the impact of Barnacle Goose populations on Arctic ecosystems. This gap underscores the need for cooperation with Russia and coordinated research to assess how these populations affect other flora, fauna, and ecosystems in the Arctic.

B.1 Produce best practice guide on establishing refuge areas (size, management, subsidies)

Germany is reviewing the use of goose accommodation areas, with results expected in the second half of 2025. This review will evaluate the size, management regulations, and impact on reported damage. Finland is considering the question in a study in Eastern Finland to understand the need for refuge areas.

Belgium benefits from initiatives targeting other more abundant goose species, with no specific actions for Barnacle geese. Denmark's efforts are covered by previously mentioned projects, while Estonia has proposed activities in its new geese management plan (2021) but has not yet taken action. Norway has no relevant actions at present. Sweden's Wildlife Damage Centre is collaborating with CAB on this issue.

B.2 Provide guidance on conflict resolution and how to make this consistent with the European legal framework, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Belgium's damage-compensation scheme effectively limits agricultural conflict to a satisfactory level. Denmark is conducting an ongoing demonstration project on integrated conflict resolution in Guldborgsund Municipality. Estonia has not taken any actions in this area.

Finland offers guidance through Pro Agria on resolving conflicts with Barnacle Geese. Germany provides general guidance on conflict resolution through provincial authorities and initiatives like damage prevention kits to assist farmers. Norway has no relevant actions at present. Sweden's Wildlife Management Center and CAB offer guidelines for CAB and farmers, available online.

B.3 Create a toolbox for decisions in relation to determining significant damage (including metrics, benchmarking, verification, monitoring, various management techniques to prevent damage, compensation)

In Flanders, Belgium, significant damage is defined by legislation as €250 per case or 5% of the total crop yield, with minimum scaring levels set by Ministerial Decree. Denmark provides guidance to the EGMP Agriculture Task Force, ensuring informed decision-making. Estonia has a juridical document detailing methods for determining significant damage, promoting consistency. The Netherlands includes these methods in its damage assessment regulations, ensuring standardization. Sweden has developed a digital application for damage registration, enhancing efficiency and accuracy.

B.4 Provide guidance on implementation of population management protocols at national level

Belgium has no ambition to support population management for the migrating population, focusing solely on the resident feral population, which is not part of the broader management plan. This limited scope may overlook comprehensive strategies that could benefit both resident and migrating populations. Denmark and Estonia currently have no population management protocols in place, indicating a gap in structured approaches to managing wildlife populations. This absence of protocols could lead to uncoordinated and reactive measures rather than proactive and systematic management.

Finland relies on derogations to prevent serious damage, but derogation shooting is not allowed at the moment. The Netherlands applies all derogations within the context of existing EU regulations, specifically Article 9. Sweden has developed guidelines for managing large bird populations, providing a structured approach to population management. These guidelines, detailed in their publication (<https://www.slu.se/globalassets/ew/org/centrb/vsc/vsc-dokument/vsc-publikationer/riktlinjer-forvaltning-stora-faglar-2023-vers3-1.pdf>), offer a model for other countries to develop their own protocols.

B.5 Share experience concerning methods to prevent damage to agriculture and risks to air safety as well as to other flora and fauna

Belgium does not foresee species-specific actions due to the minor contribution of the species to overall goose damage, focusing resources on more impactful species. Denmark is actively involved through the EGMP agricultural taskforce and supported the establishment of a flight safety taskforce. Estonia's proposed activities in its 2021 geese management plan have yet to be implemented, indicating a need for action to translate plans into effective measures. Finland participates in the EGMP Agriculture Task Force, showing engagement in collaborative efforts, though specific actions are not detailed.

Germany's long-term study on goose-dependent yield loss in Lower Saxony, published in the Journal of Applied Ecology (<https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/1365-2664.14340>), includes agri-environmental schemes to reduce farmer conflicts, highlighting evidence-based approaches. The Netherlands has conducted studies and established the inter-provincial Geese Task Force in 2022, sharing experiences within the country. Outcomes related to air safety under AEWA are communicated with aviation platforms, coordinated by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. Norway's actions overlap with those concerning Greylag Geese. Sweden's Wildlife Damage Centre focuses on agriculture, and an ongoing project at Kristianstads Högskola studies effects on other flora and fauna, demonstrating a commitment to understanding broader ecological impacts.

C.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy and plan

Belgium conducts annual communications during the breeding season to address the removal of alien and feral goose populations. Estonia has proposed this activity in its 2021 geese management plan but has yet to implement it. Finland is actively working on this nationally. The Netherlands lacks a formal strategy but discusses communication in the National Working Group and organizes seminars to share knowledge. Sweden has a general communication strategy for wildlife issues managed by SEPA.

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

The European Commission has not reported on this task.

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

The Range States report that this is not relevant and/or that shooting is only possible under derogation.

E.1 Range States strive to provide voluntary contributions to the budget of the EGMP on a regular basis

Range States have contributed consistently to the EGMP budget.

E.2 National and regional governments secure the necessary funds for the implementation of the actions at national and subnational levels

Belgium has secured the necessary funds. The Netherlands ensures implementation through provincial support to Wildlife Councils. Sweden's national system for monitoring, compensation, and subsidies is fully financed.

Barnacle Goose East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland population

All three participating Range States to the East Greenland population of the Barnacle Goose (Iceland, Ireland and UK) have reported on the implementation of the International Single Species Management Plan (ISSMP) for the Barnacle Goose. Greenland is not participating in the work of the platform.

Below, we present a summary of the information reported by Range States for each action of the Management Plan.

1.1. Provide adequate protection and management to key sites of international importance under Article 4(1) of the Birds Directive in the EU and other relevant instruments in other Range States throughout the range of the populations and maintain them in good ecological status

All three reporting countries have established formal protection and management frameworks for key sites used by the population. Iceland has designated two breeding and four staging sites as Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), supported by national legislation and a network of protected areas. Ireland ensures substantial coverage through 22 SPAs, with 81–92% of the Barnacle Goose population occurring within these sites, according to the results of 2020 and 2023 BG censuses in Ireland. The UK confirmed that its SPA network sufficiently meets criteria for population, range, and ecological sufficiency, based on the findings of its [Third Network Review](#). The responses indicate that comprehensive site protection is in place, with both spatial coverage and habitat management measures contributing to conservation objectives for the population.

1.2. Promotion of goose-based eco-tourism at selected key sites

Both Iceland and the United Kingdom reported that promoting eco-tourism is not a government responsibility, with such activities typically led by non-governmental organisations.

2.1 Take key sites for geese into account in land use planning and growing of sensitive crops

All three countries report that key sites are factored into land use decisions, though the extent of formal government oversight and legislative integration varies. Both Ireland and Iceland make use of agri-environmental schemes, while Ireland employs a range of additional regulatory tools—including planning regulations, environmental impact assessments, and the Birds and Habitats Regulations and Iceland integrates goose sites into land use planning primarily through IBA designations and the Nature Conservation Register, with relevant legislation currently under review. In the United Kingdom, although not directly controlled by the government, designated key sites for the Barnacle Goose are generally considered during the planning process.

2.2. Provide accommodation areas to reduce risks and conflicts at sensitive areas through e.g. subsidies

While the UK has implemented concrete, location-specific measures by providing designated feeding and protected roost sites in Islay, Coll and Tiree, Uist, and South Walls, Iceland relies on financial compensation without designated areas, planning to address the issue through the currently ongoing review of national legislation.

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

In Iceland, and the UK, scaring is carried out by individual farmers, with no systematic monitoring of its effects in place. Ireland reported that no licences were issued for the killing or scaring of barnacle geese in recent months.

3.1. Reduce risk posed by goose migration to air safety through operational measures such as radar surveillance

Both Iceland and the UK confirmed that air safety is monitored and reported by the national aviation authorities, not providing any references to the use of radar surveillance or targeted goose-related measures. Bird strike data are publicly available via the authority's online platform: [CAA Birdstrike Data](#).

3.2 Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols

Iceland and the UK indicated that efforts are being undertaken—or are planned—in collaboration with the Agriculture Task Force, with Iceland noting that data collection is currently underway using GPS/GSM loggers on birds to assess the extent of agricultural damage.

3.3 Liaise with farmers affected by goose damages to reduce agricultural conflicts

Both Ireland and the United Kingdom implement targeted schemes to address potential conflicts between agriculture and goose conservation, providing support to farmers and facilitating coordination. Ireland does so through the National Parks and Wildlife Service Farm Plan Scheme and the ACRES agri-environment programme, which offer financial incentives for land management benefiting barnacle geese and other species, while the UK uses local goose management groups and targeted goose schemes.

4.1 If necessary and if there is no other satisfactory solution, apply lethal population control under derogations according to the provisions of the Birds Directive, the Bern Convention and AEWA, for preventing serious damage to crops

In Iceland, the measures are to be considered under forthcoming national legislation. While Ireland reported that no licences were issued for the killing of Barnacle geese during the 2024–2025 winter season in the United Kingdom, where lethal control is only applied under derogation on Islay, with a maximum of 60 birds shot due to strict limits linked to the population's proximity to the Favourable Reference Value (FRV).

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 States to avoid risk to the population and to enhance effectiveness of the measures.

Under national legislation, Barnacle geese are not huntable in Ireland. While the species is not of concern for air safety, Iceland collects annual hunting reports and is actively gathering data on agricultural impact and effects on wild flora. In the United Kingdom, cumulative impacts of derogations have not yet been defined but are slated for discussion in 2025. The recent outbreak of HPAI has contributed to a population decline, leading to a decrease in derogation shooting; farmers on Islay have observed a potential reduction in crop damage during this time.

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

Iceland and Ireland reported no activity under this action. The United Kingdom uses a targeted and precautionary approach, applying the derogation shooting selectively in areas with high crop damage, with additional restrictions to limit disturbance to other species, especially Greenland White-fronted Geese. Early-season shooting is also limited in certain locations.

4.4 Promote best practices of goose population adjustment including timing to minimize damage and significant disturbance to other species

Iceland applies stricter shooting regulations for Barnacle geese compared to other goose species. Both Iceland and the UK demonstrate efforts to align population control measures with ecological sensitivity, particularly by limiting disturbance to non-target species.

4.5 Maintain low crippling rates

Iceland does not monitor crippling rates systematically but promotes low rates through hunter education on best practices. In the United Kingdom, most shooting is conducted by trained marksmen, and flocks are monitored for signs of crippling.

4.6 Improve derogation shooting techniques to further reduce crippling

While this does not apply to Iceland and Ireland, the UK have not provided any information.

A.1 Produce and update periodically, spatially explicit population size estimates based on agreed international monitoring

Ireland, Iceland and the United Kingdom all participate in the coordinated international Greenland Barnacle Goose population census, with the next round planned for early 2026. In addition, Iceland conducts annual breeding surveys at Skúmey, while the UK collects annual productivity data on Islay.

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)

Iceland has maintained detailed bag records by hunting area since 1995, with data publicly available via the Nature Conservation Agency. No derogation licences were granted during the 2024–2025 winter season. All derogation shooting in Scotland is documented by NatureScot.

A.3 Maintain a spatially explicit database on goose damage to agriculture, other fauna and flora and fauna and risk to air safety

Iceland is gathering spatial data on agricultural impact using GPS/GSM loggers. The United Kingdom reported no relevant data for air safety or biodiversity impacts, and agricultural damage to grass crops has not been measured in the past two years.

A.4 Collect demographic (mortality, reproduction, differential migration and connectivity) data from an agreed representative sampling framework across the range

All three countries contribute to demographic monitoring, with the UK and Iceland already conducting regular assessments and Ireland working to enhance data quality and coverage.

A.5 Analyse the impact of various agricultural policy scenarios and measures (Nitrate Directive, agri-environmental measures, various production incentives including biofuels) on goose populations and on goose damage

At present, no country has advanced to the stage of systematically analysing agricultural policy impacts on geese, though the UK has signalled future intent to do so.

A.6 Assess the role of predators (e.g. White-tailed Eagle, Red Fox, Polar Bear, Arctic Fox) in regulating goose populations

No formal evaluations have been carried out by any of the Range States to date. While in the UK, White-tailed Eagle may influence goose populations in the future, current population levels are too low to have a regulatory effect.

A.7 Monitor and assess the impact of the populations on other flora and fauna and ecosystems in the Arctic

No monitoring or assessments have been undertaken to evaluate ecosystem-level impacts in the Arctic among the reporting countries.

B.1 Produce best practice guide on establishing refuge areas (size, management, subsidies)

Iceland intends to implement this action through a forthcoming national management plan, which is not yet in place. The United Kingdom has established refuge areas under schemes on Islay, Tiree and Coll, Uist, and South Walls, as well as within SPAs, with no best practice guide developed, however. While the UK has practical examples of refuge implementation, no country has yet developed a formal best practice guide.

B.2 Provide guidance on conflict resolution and how to make this consistent with the European legal framework, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

No guidance has yet been produced or implemented by the reporting countries, with Iceland planning to address this action through a national management plan.

B.3 Create a toolbox for decisions in relation to determining significant damage (including metrics, benchmarking, verification, monitoring, various management techniques to prevent damage, compensation)

While no standalone toolbox has been developed yet, Iceland and UK reported contributions to the Agriculture Task Force as part of efforts under this action, suggesting early-stage collaborative work toward this objective.

B.4 Provide guidance on implementation of population management protocols at national level

In Iceland, this is also expected to be implemented through an upcoming national management plan. In the United Kingdom, NatureScot is responsible for all licensing, but no additional national guidance was reported.

B.5 Share experience concerning methods to prevent damage to agriculture and risks to air safety as well as to other flora and fauna

Work in progress through input into the work of the Agriculture Task Force.

C.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy and plan

Initial steps have been taken in the UK, while Iceland's progress is pending the development of its national plan.

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

Two of the Range States are not members of the European Union. In addition, the European Commission has not reported on this task.

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

This is only currently relevant for Iceland where hunting takes place, which replied that national legislation has been reviewed and hunting season updated.

E.1 Range States strive to provide voluntary contributions to the budget of the EGMP on a regular basis

Both Ireland and the UK are contributing financially to the EGMP, demonstrating ongoing support for its implementation.

E.2 National and regional governments secure the necessary funds for the implementation of the actions at national and subnational levels

Iceland reported that the government provides annual funding to support national monitoring activities. Ireland and the United Kingdom did not provide updates.

Greylag Goose NW/SW European population

All seven participating Range States to the NW/SW European population of Greylag Goose (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden) have reported on the implementation of the International Species Management Plan (ISSMP) for the population. Germany and Spain are non-participating Range States and have not reported.

Below, we present a summary of the information reported by Range States for each action of the Management Plan.

1.1 Provide adequate protection and management to key sites of international importance under Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive in the EU and other relevant instruments in other Range States throughout the range of the population and maintain them in good ecological status

All reporting countries have established legal protections for key sites used by the Greylag Goose population, primarily through designations under the EU Birds Directive or national conservation frameworks. Belgium has identified important sites in both Flanders and Wallonia, supported not only by legislation but also by voluntary nature agreements with farmers to maintain and improve habitat conditions. Denmark, Finland, and France reported that relevant areas are designated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs); France added that management plans are being prepared for some of these sites. The Netherlands reported full SPA designation of key sites, although many of the actual feeding areas fall outside protected boundaries. Norway protects important farmland and coastal areas under national conservation and hunting regulations, with site-specific management in place. Sweden similarly reported that most key sites are protected and managed, supported by national legislation and ecological monitoring frameworks.

In addition to formal designations, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden integrate agri-environmental schemes or farm-level arrangements to maintain or enhance the ecological quality of these areas. While all countries ensure formal site protection, only a subset actively extend management to unprotected feeding areas through farm-level cooperation or environmental schemes.

1.2 Promote goose-based eco-tourism at selected key sites

Most countries report limited or indirect promotion of goose-based eco-tourism. Only Norway and Sweden report tangible examples of goose-focused eco-tourism infrastructure, while other countries mention broader wildlife tourism or minimal targeted activity. In Belgium, eco-tourism activities are more general in scope, focused on wetland areas and integrated into broader regional nature tourism strategies. Denmark stated that existing eco-tourism activities are already well-established and require no further promotion. Finland and France noted the presence of large goose flocks in areas of interest to birdwatchers, though without specific reference to organised eco-tourism initiatives. The Netherlands reported minimal goose-specific eco-tourism activity. In Norway, goose-related tourism is reported from both protected and non-protected sites, particularly around stopover and moulting areas. Sweden mentioned that goose viewing occurs in areas with large concentrations, supported by infrastructure such as bird towers and public information boards.

2.1 Take key sites for geese into account in land use planning and growing of sensitive crops

Belgium reported that key wintering areas are designated as SPAs, where planning decisions must comply with Natura 2000 objectives. Additional measures have included voluntary nature agreements with farmers that address land use around sensitive crops. Denmark applies conservation regulations to relevant habitats but considers Greylag Geese to have limited impact on land use priorities. Finland includes goose presence in land use planning through environmental impact assessments and nature protection legislation. France takes key goose areas into account in planning frameworks, though Greylag-related crop damage is currently low. The Netherlands confirmed that all key sites are SPAs, but many feeding areas fall outside these zones and are addressed through provincial planning and agricultural policy. Norway incorporates goose activity into planning at regional and local levels, particularly where farmland overlaps with staging areas. Sweden uses a

combination of SPA designation and wildlife damage prevention measures to guide land use in areas frequented by geese.

2.2. Provide accommodation areas to reduce risks and conflicts at sensitive areas through e.g. subsidies

Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden have implemented or subsidised designated areas to redirect geese away from conflict zones, while other countries either lack formal schemes or consider current conflict levels too low to warrant intervention. Belgium reported that designated areas for wintering waterbirds are managed with targeted agri-environmental measures to mitigate damage and reduce disturbance, particularly in regions where Greylag Geese concentrate. Denmark indicated that accommodation areas are not currently established, citing Greylag Geese as a low-priority issue. Finland has created ‘bird fields’—designated accommodation areas managed under agri-environment schemes—to divert geese from sensitive farmland. France reported low levels of conflict and confirmed that no specific accommodation areas are in place. The Netherlands stated that nine out of twelve provinces have provided refuge areas or subsidy-supported fields for geese to reduce agricultural conflicts. Norway currently has no nationally organised accommodation areas but noted ongoing discussions on potential local implementation. Sweden reported the use of dedicated grazing and resting areas for geese, supported by subsidies to farmers.

2.3 Apply scaring and land management techniques to reduce the attractiveness of sensitive areas, monitoring the implications of such local displacement for conflicts at wider scale

All countries acknowledge the role of scaring in mitigating local damage, but only Sweden, Belgium, and Norway combine its use with coordination, monitoring, or evaluation. Broader-scale displacement effects are not systematically tracked in any Range State. In Sweden, scaring is widely applied by farmers, supported by compensation schemes, and accompanied by some degree of regional monitoring of effectiveness. Belgium requires scaring as a condition for compensation, with implementation coordinated at the provincial level and supported by administrative guidance. The Netherlands combines scaring with subsidy-backed accommodation zones under provincial policies, though monitoring of broader-scale effects is not conducted.

France and Denmark allow the use of scaring where needed, but do not monitor implications beyond the local scale. Denmark additionally noted that Greylag geese are not considered a significant concern. In Finland, new scaring methods are under development through work led by Metsähallitus, although implementation is not yet nationally coordinated. Norway is experimenting with both scaring and land-use adjustments at local conflict sites, accompanied by research and site-level monitoring.

3.1. Reduce risk posed by goose migration to air safety through operational measures such as radar surveillance

Norway reported that data on bird collisions are collected and evaluated by the Avian Bird Office of Norway. A new project is being launched at Trondheim Airport in collaboration with Avinor, the Farmers Union, Stjørdal municipality, and BirdLife Norway. Norway also contributes actively to the Flight Safety Task Force with three members. The Netherlands noted that multiple measures are in place at both civilian and military airports to reduce bird-strike risks, including geese. Denmark has localised measures coordinated by airport and municipal authorities. Finland stated that geese are not a major safety issue, though lethal control is allowed near airports under specific conditions. France applies general bird-strike prevention measures that include geese but has no goose-specific protocols. Sweden reported that goose migration does not currently present a significant problem, so no targeted actions have been adopted. Belgium does not implement specific measures for geese, as they are not considered a particular air safety concern.

3.2 Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols

Belgium collects data on goose-related agricultural damage as part of its compensation scheme, which feeds into broader monitoring efforts. The Netherlands has a national routine in place for damage assessment and financial compensation, supported by provincial implementation. Norway reported that the Norwegian

Environment Agency funds a national compensation system, with data collection linked to EGMP Agricultural Task Force activities. Sweden participates in the EGMP Agricultural Task Force through the Wildlife Damage Center. Denmark also referenced engagement with the Agricultural Task Force but did not provide details on national monitoring practices. Finland reported that no such programmes have been established. France stated that no goose-related crop damage has been declared by farmers so far.

3.3 Liaise with farmers affected by goose damages to reduce agricultural conflicts

Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands have established structured channels for engagement with farmers. Norway has established five “goose forums” at the county level involving farmers and their representatives. The Environment Agency also funds a position within the Norwegian Farmers’ Union to act as a liaison between national management and local implementation. This role includes supporting sustainable farming, informing about preventive measures, and sharing EGMP-related updates with farmers. Sweden has formed local, regional, and national management groups in areas where goose-related conflicts occur. The Netherlands compensates all crop damage in designated foraging areas and offers 80–95% compensation on other agricultural land; in some cases, this is combined with subsidies. Belgium operates a compensation scheme that covers damage—mainly from wintering birds coming from nature reserves—and notes that the regulated hunting of the breeding population helps maintain it at an acceptable level. However, no formal liaison structure with farmers is mentioned. Denmark provides advisory support through wildlife managers from the Nature Agency. Finland relies on CAP mechanisms to provide compensation in prioritised areas but did not report direct engagement with farmers. France stated that no conflicts have been identified to date.

4.1 Establish hierarchical population targets at flyway, management unit and national levels iteratively to ensure national targets are consistent with the flyway targets and with legal requirements at all levels

Belgium has set population targets at the subnational level since 2010 and provided these as input to the EGMP process to support consistency. The Netherlands has based its actions on derogations on Article 9 of the Birds Directive, using FRVs from the Adaptive Flyway Management Plan to define Favourable Conservation Status at the provincial level. Finland hasn’t set a population target, the focus has been on expanding the distribution inland. Sweden and Norway reported that no national targets are currently in place.

4.2 Establish an internationally coordinated population management programme (including both hunting and, if necessary, killing under derogations) for the transboundary management units encompassing monitoring, assessment and decision-making protocols

Belgium supports the international programme but does not intend to take a leading role in population management. Its national focus remains on regulating the breeding population to minimise agricultural damage and impacts on flora and fauna. France collects agreed national data as part of its support for the programme. Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Sweden and Norway reported participation in the international management programme.

4.3 Improve effectiveness of population control measures through experimenting with different timing and methods and better understanding the relative efficacy of lethal versus non-lethal scaring techniques

The Netherlands reported ongoing research comparing non-lethal and lethal scaring techniques, with multiple studies aimed at improving method selection. Norway noted that while no large-scale evaluations have been conducted, several case studies exist, and new initiatives to test conflict-reduction strategies are underway. The country also highlighted the need for a dedicated research project to evaluate derogation effectiveness.

Denmark has introduced hunting in January and August, with plans to assess the impact on total offtake. Sweden referenced current research projects and involvement of the Wildlife Damage Centre but stated that no national-level population control is in place. Belgium considers its current combination of scaring and derogation effective for limiting agricultural and biodiversity-related conflicts. Finland is developing improved practices through the Natural Resources Institute, mainly in the context of Barnacle Goose. France reported that agricultural damage has not been identified, and no related measures were described.

4.4 Promote best practices of goose hunting including timing to minimize damage and significant disturbance to other species

Belgium restricts the hunting season to early autumn to avoid disturbing wintering waterbirds, targeting primarily the breeding population. Denmark allows hunting in August only on farmland and at least 300 meters from open water, with closer hunting permitted under strict derogation rules to minimise disturbance near roost sites. Finland permits early-season hunting (10–20 August) only on agricultural land, encouraging hunters to focus on conflict zones and avoid areas where geese do not cause damage. Finland also reported that CAP-funded bird fields serve as refuge areas where crop damage is compensated. Norway has conducted several goose hunting projects to optimise timing and minimise disturbance; hunter education and cooperation with landowners are ongoing. France reported no goose-related damage and noted that hunting dates align with the broader waterfowl season, posing no added disturbance. The Netherlands indicated this action is not applicable due to the absence of hunting—only derogation shooting is allowed. Sweden referenced a recently completed research project.

4.5 Maintain low crippling rates

Norway integrates crippling reduction into both theory and practice in a dedicated goose hunting course and promotes awareness through hunting magazines. Sweden includes this topic in the national hunters' exam and offers targeted education via the Swedish Hunters Association; X-rays are also used during bird marking to monitor injury. Finland plans to address crippling through communication and education as part of its forthcoming Strategy for Responsible Waterfowl Hunting. The Netherlands has not taken formal action but reports growing interest among educators to strengthen hunter training in response to AEWA and scientific input. Belgium does not consider crippling a significant issue, noting that geese can usually be approached closely during hunting. Denmark and France have no current plans or actions in place.

4.6 Develop hunting techniques to further reduce crippling

Denmark emphasised the importance of awareness around shooting distance and ethical hunting practices. Norway and the Netherlands referred to their responses under Actions 4.4 and 4.5, noting that only derogation shooting applies in the Dutch context. Finland plans to address this issue as part of its draft Strategy for Responsible Waterfowl Hunting. Sweden indicated that relevant practices are already being promoted by the Swedish Hunters Association. Belgium reported no actions foreseen, stating that crippling is already minimal. France reported that this has not yet been addressed.

A.1 Produce and update periodically, spatially explicit population size estimates based on agreed international monitoring

The Netherlands operates a national monitoring scheme aligned with EGMP requirements, covering numbers, habitat, distribution, and age ratios. Data are collected in cooperation with Regional Wildlife Councils. France assesses the wintering population via the Wetlands International mid-January count and the breeding population every six years through a national scheme (first conducted in 2021–22). Belgium estimates the summer population through mid-July counts and the wintering population via monthly waterbird surveys. Norway developed a national estimate in 2023 using monitoring, hunting data, and modelling, but noted that this effort will not be repeated in 2025 due to resource constraints. Finland is developing a monitoring scheme coordinated by LUKE, which is collaborating with the EGMP Data Centre and Nordic countries. Denmark contributes with summer and mid-winter counts. Sweden conducts annual monitoring led by Lund University during late summer, autumn, and January staging periods.

A.2 Maintain an annually updated bag statistics database including geese taken by any means

Belgium collects hunting bag data annually from hunters and maintains a separate database for derogation-related reporting, with some overlap where scaring by shooting is involved. Finland requires mandatory reporting of both harvest and derogation activity. Denmark mandates annual reporting of all game bags from hunters. Norway has an established reporting system processed by Statistics Norway. While general hunting

data are well covered, efforts to improve derogation reporting are ongoing. Goose control is regulated through national legislation and used mainly for scaring. Sweden collects harvest data through the national hunters' organisation and reports derogations via HABIDES. An ongoing project aims to improve data accuracy and coverage. France encourages hunters to report their bags using the "Chassadapt" app, though this is not mandatory. The Netherlands is exploring new digital tools for in-field reporting and periodically reviews all aspects of its derogation system to improve data quality.

A.3 Maintain a spatially explicit database on goose damage to agriculture, other fauna and flora and fauna and risk to air safety

The Netherlands maintains a comprehensive national database with detailed spatial information on agricultural damage caused by geese and also has a bird strike database; however, there is no spatial database on impacts to flora and fauna. Belgium collects spatial data for fields receiving compensation under its damage scheme. Sweden is developing a database for goose-related agricultural damage, while data on flight safety are compiled by the Swedish Transport Agency. Denmark reports annual bird strike statistics for civil airports but has no system in place for agricultural or biodiversity-related damage. Norway does not currently have a database, though some fragmented data exist. Finland and France indicated that the scale of damage is too limited to justify developing or maintaining a dedicated database.

A.4 Collect demographic (mortality, reproduction, differential migration and connectivity) data from an agreed representative sampling framework across the range

Finland is collecting data on mortality and movement through GPS tagging and neckbanding and will estimate productivity alongside population monitoring. This work is coordinated by LUKE and partially funded by the Finnish Wildlife Agency. The Netherlands conducts summer productivity counts and runs a neckbanding scheme to assess survival and spatial use, though no age assessments are done for migratory Greylag geese due to timing limitations. Belgium is establishing a statistically sound sampling of juvenile–adult ratios at core breeding sites via mid-July counts. Norway performs juvenile assessments in early August in Oslofjord and Vestrålen. Sweden reported an ongoing demographic research project by Lund University. Denmark noted that a research project is currently underway, and France stated that no demographic data collection has been initiated.

A.5 Analyse the impact of various agricultural policy scenarios and measures (Nitrate Directive, agri-environmental measures, various production incentives including biofuels) on goose populations and on goose damage

This has not been done in any of the Range States.

A.6 Assess the role of predators (e.g. White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*) in regulating goose populations

Finland indicated that ongoing GPS tagging may help clarify predator-related mortality over time. Norway reported that no formal assessment has been conducted, though some fragmented data exist. France noted that such assessments are not underway and that the White-tailed Eagle occurs only occasionally. Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden all stated that no actions have been taken to assess predator impacts.

B.1 Produce best practice guide on establishing refuge areas (size, management, subsidies)

Belgium applies general wintering waterbird measures, such as ending hunting by 15 November and exempting scaring as a condition for crop-damage compensation in designated areas. Specific guidance for Greylag geese is not considered necessary due to their early spring departure. Finland noted that important sites have been designated as Natura 2000 areas with management plans, and CAP-supported artificial refuges on farmland are planned. The Netherlands is currently reviewing the use of goose accommodation areas, with results—covering size, management, and damage mitigation—expected in late 2025. Sweden referenced national guidelines issued by the Wildlife Management Center and County Administrative Boards (CABs), including

practical guidance for farmers. Norway has not yet implemented this action but noted that related elements are included in a research funding application. France and Denmark reported no activities under this action.

B.2 Provide guidance on conflict resolution and how to make this consistent with the European legal framework, including the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Structured conflict resolution efforts are underway in Denmark and Sweden, while most other countries either report no current conflict or rely on compensation without formalised guidance. Denmark is conducting a demonstration project on integrated conflict resolution in Guldborgsund Municipality. Sweden has issued guidance to County Administrative Boards for handling conflict-related issues. Belgium reported that compensation is generally accepted by farmers, but no agri-environmental measures under CAP are used to address goose-related damage. Norway referred to its input under Action 3.2. Finland stated that no guidance is needed at this stage, and France reported no declared agricultural conflicts. The Netherlands indicated that no action has been taken under this item.

B.3 Create a toolbox for decisions in relation to determining significant damage (including metrics, benchmarking, verification, monitoring, various management techniques to prevent damage, compensation)

Belgium has legally defined benchmarks for significant damage in Flanders: €250 per case or 5% of total crop yield. Minimum scaring requirements are set by Ministerial Decree as a condition for compensation or derogation. Sweden has developed standardised protocols for crop damage inspection, with technical improvements underway. The Netherlands includes assessment guidelines and damage regulations in its procedures. Denmark contributes to the EGMP Agricultural Task Force as part of toolbox development. Norway referred to its response under Action 3.2. Finland stated that no toolbox is currently needed. France reported no significant damage and therefore no related actions.

B.4 Provide guidance on implementation of population management protocols at national level

Sweden has published national guidelines for the management of large birds, accessible through the Wildlife Management Center. Finland reported that the Ministry of Forestry and Agriculture monitors game species and manages hunting pressure based on input from the Finnish Wildlife Agency and its sustainable hunting expert group. Belgium stated that no specific guidance has been developed, but hunting is used to manage breeding populations and is not permitted during migration or wintering periods. The Netherlands applies derogations in line with Article 9 of the EU Birds Directive but does not have national management protocols. Denmark, France, and Norway reported that no actions have been taken under this item.

B.5 Share experience concerning methods to prevent damage to agriculture and risks to air safety as well as to other flora and fauna

Belgium has codified best practices, including a ministerial decree establishing minimum scaring thresholds as a basis for derogation and compensation outside designated accommodation areas. The Netherlands highlighted ongoing studies (referenced under Action 4.3) and coordination through the inter-provincial Geese Task Force established in 2022. It also contributes to best practice exchange via the National Bird Strike Committee. Norway participates actively in EGMP processes and supports local-level outreach through a liaison position in the Norwegian Farmers' Union. Sweden engages through the EGMP and the Wildlife Damage Center. Denmark referenced its involvement in the EGMP Agricultural Task Force and the Flight Safety Task Force. Finland stated that best practices are shared among relevant national organisations. France reported no significant conflict or damage to justify such exchanges.

C.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy and plan

Belgium reported that in Flanders, best practices have been shared, and communication focuses on managing the breeding population, including moult-season captures; minimum scaring levels are also communicated as

part of derogation and compensation requirements. Norway does not have a formal strategy but engages in regular outreach through county-level goose forums and local presentations to farmers, hunters, and managers.

Sweden has a general communication strategy for wildlife issues managed by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). The Netherlands has no formal plan but incorporates communication into its National Working Group discussions and seminars. Finland addresses communication on geese at a general level in its draft strategy for sustainable waterfowl hunting. France has not developed a communication strategy.

D.1 Range States review their national legislation in the light of the framework legal guidance document developed under the EGMP

Belgium and Denmark indicated they have reviewed their legislation. Finland specified a Ministerial Decree (2023–2025) introducing a total hunting ban in inland areas, daily quotas in coastal areas, and a ban on baiting during August for agricultural field hunting. France noted that relevant legislation is in place, with bag statistics collected and no conflicts or damage recorded. Sweden reported that its open and conditional hunting seasons are scheduled for review in 2025–2026. Norway has not yet completed the review but plans to develop it.

E.1 Range States contribute on a regular basis to the budget of the EGMP

Range States have contributed consistently to the EGMP budget.

E.2 National and regional governments secure the necessary funds for the implementation of the actions at national and sub-national levels

Sweden reported that its national system for compensation and subsidies is fully financed. The Netherlands secures implementation through provincial support to regional Wildlife Councils. Denmark highlighted national funding for projects such as summer population counts. Finland and Norway indicated partial implementation, primarily through population monitoring. Belgium stated that funding is in place.