

AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



**11th MEETING OF THE
AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT
INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP**
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**REPORT ON THE COORDINATION OF OFFTAKE OF THE E GREENLAND (BR)
POPULATION OF BARNACLE GOOSE IN AUTUMN/WINTER 2025/2026**

Prepared by the United Kingdom and Iceland

Summary:

The results from the Integrated Population Model (IPM) indicated a 4% probability that the March 2025 E Greenland (br) population of Barnacle Goose was below the Favourable Reference Population (FRP) of 54,000. In accordance with their commitment under Article II of AEWA regarding the maintenance of favourable conservation status, it is necessary for Iceland and the United Kingdom to implement measures to keep offtake at a level that will maintain the E Greenland (br) population of Barnacle Goose above the Favourable Reference Population (FRP). The 9th meeting of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG9) agreed that Iceland and the United Kingdom would:

- seek agreement on the maximum level of offtake to be permitted (if any) and the split between the two Range States;
- develop and implement a coordination mechanism to ensure adherence to these limits;
- inform the EGM IWG of the agreed level of offtake and coordination mechanism; and
- submit a written report to EGM IWG10 on the implementation of the coordination mechanism and adherence to the agreed level of offtake.

Following the report that was presented to EGM IWG10 (Doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/10.21), this report provides EGM IWG11 with an updated overview of the measures taken to coordinate the offtake.

Action requested from the EGM IWG:

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

Introduction

In accordance with their commitment under Article II of AEWA regarding the maintenance of favourable conservation status, it is necessary for Iceland and the United Kingdom to implement measures to keep offtake at a level that will maintain the E Greenland (br) population of Barnacle Goose above the Favourable Reference Population (FRP).

To this end, EGM IWG9 agreed that:

1. Iceland and the United Kingdom would seek agreement on the maximum level of offtake to be permitted and the split between the two Range States (taking into consideration the projections of the EGMP Data Centre). Such agreement would be concluded before the start of Iceland's hunting season.
2. Iceland and the United Kingdom would develop and implement a coordination mechanism to ensure adherence to these limits.
3. Iceland and the United Kingdom would inform the EGM IWG in writing on both the agreed level of offtake (if any) and the agreed coordination mechanism immediately after these arrangements had been agreed.
4. Iceland and the United Kingdom would submit a written report to EGM IWG10 on the implementation of the coordinated mechanism and adherence to the agreed level of offtake.

Following the report that was presented to EGM IWG10 in accordance with point 4 above, this report provides EGM IWG11 with an updated overview of the measures taken to coordinate offtake.

1. Actions

Iceland and Scotland, on behalf of the UK, met in May 2025 and reached agreements on the points 1-3 listed above. The details of that agreement are set out below:

1. Iceland and the United Kingdom agreed on the maximum level of offtake to be 3,250 birds total and the split between the two Range States as follows: Iceland - 2,900 birds and Scotland - 350 birds.

In reference to Table 3.5.1 of the [EGMP Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report 2025](#), the modelled probability that the population size would fall below the FRP shows that the maximum offtake of 3,250 proposed by the UK and Iceland is between 0.07 and 0.10 (under a population of 63,000 and 62,000 respectively – the March 2025 population was estimated at 62,438 (52,845-72,986)). We believe that the risk of falling below FRP associated with the maximum offtake being proposed is acceptable, being less than 10%. We look forward to the emergence of guidance from the Technical Committee on such interpretations.

Greenland Barnacle Geese are fully protected in the United Kingdom and, as such, any derogation shooting can only be done under licence for the purpose of preventing serious agricultural damage. To ensure that Scotland can address issues of localised serious agricultural damage, it was proposed to issue licences where necessary, but with limited bag numbers. The total bag across Scotland (and therefore the UK as a whole) would not exceed 350 birds over the winter of 2025-2026. We would reiterate that the figure of 350 is a maximum, and that in recent years considerably smaller offtake has actually been realised in Scotland. We would be happy to provide further justification — if required — of the need to retain the option of very low levels of offtake for the purposes of preventing localised but serious agricultural damage.

When working on the measures, Iceland had two main objectives:

- i. to keep the total catch of Barnacle Geese under 3,250 birds, taking into account the maximum offtake in Scotland, and
- ii. to accommodate stakeholders, especially farmers who have suffered agricultural damage from the species.

The measures that Iceland implemented were as follows:

- i. start the season on the 1 September country wide,
- ii. close the season on the 15 September country wide,
- iii. maintain sales ban on Barnacle Goose meat and products.

Historically, the hunting season for Barnacle Geese in Iceland has opened on 1 September across the country, except in the East and West Skaftafellssýsla counties. In these areas, where the Icelandic breeding population is concentrated, the season has traditionally started later (10–25 September) in order to protect the local breeding birds. However, this approach has led to conflicts with agriculture and considerable dissatisfaction among farmers, who have raised concerns about grazing pressure on both rangeland and cultivated fields.

The primary focus of hunting management measures for the 2025/2026 season was to increase hunting pressure on the Icelandic breeding component of the population, while reducing pressure on birds breeding in Greenland. This reflects differences in population dynamics, as breeding success and recruitment have generally been favourable in Iceland, whereas the Greenland breeding population has experienced poorer performance. Available data indicate that relatively few Greenland birds are present in Iceland in early September, suggesting that these measures are likely to target the Icelandic component more effectively.

In addition, Iceland proposed to maintain the ban on the sale of Barnacle Goose products. Preliminary hunting data from the hunting card database suggest that the measures have been effective, and current estimates indicate that the total harvest is likely to be around 2,000 birds.

2. Iceland and the United Kingdom will develop and implement a coordination mechanism to ensure adherence to these limits.

Because any offtake of Greenland Barnacle Goose in the UK is undertaken under strictly licensed control in Scotland, the UK has complete control of the maximum numbers taken. Discussions with Iceland have resulted in a coordination mechanism that involves:

- a) a summer meeting (August at latest) between the two Range States at which the latest evidence, including that from the Data Centre, is evaluated and offtake levels accordingly set for the forthcoming season;
- b) a post-season evaluation meeting between the two Range States to assess the bag returns as part of the evidence for adherence to the established bag-limits or, if adherence is insufficient, recommendations for future improvements, to be discussed with the relevant Task Force and subsequently with EGM IWG.

3. Notification of decisions and actions in writing to EGM IWG.

The decisions and actions were discussed at EGM IWG10 and were recorded in the EGM IWG10 Decision Table¹ as follows:

¹ EGM IWG10 Decision Table is available at:
https://egmp.aewa.info/sites/default/files/meeting_files/reports/Decision%20Table_EGM%20IWG10.pdf

EGM-IWG10 took note of the agreement between Iceland and the United Kingdom that the maximum offtake will be 3,250 birds, split between the two Range States. This shall not be considered as a precedent in the context of any future EGM IWG decisions or in the broader context of AEWA.

2. Implementation

Iceland and the UK have remained in regular contact over the season to keep each other informed of progress with the agreed actions. E-mails were exchanged in May 2026 to share the latest data and compile the reporting required for EGM IWG.

Final bag returns in both countries are still to be collected but current information is as follows:

1. The final offtake in Scotland will be a maximum of 226 birds.
2. The most recent data in Iceland from the end of March is that just under 70% of hunters have submitted returns and the offtake from these is 1,687 birds. It is estimated that the total offtake will approach 2,000 birds.
3. The total offtake for the winter is currently estimated to be fewer than 2,250 birds.