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AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

6th MEETING OF THE AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP

21-23 June 2021, Online conference format

SUMMARY OF EGMP NATIONAL REPORTS 2021

Prepared by the EGMP Secretariat

Introduction

As outlined in Rule 32 of the Modus Operandi of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG) adopted at the 1st Meeting of the International Working Group (EGM IWG1) in December 2016, reports on the implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans within the remit of the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP) shall be prepared by each Range State, according to a format agreed by the EGM IWG, and be submitted to each face-to-face meeting of the EGM IWG.

These National Reports are also expected to provide the basis for the reporting obligations of the EGM IWG to the AEWA bodies (Modus Operandi Rule 33).

The scope of the National Reports is on activities foreseen in the respective Action and Management Plans in the remit of the EGMP, as well as the implementation of adaptive harvest management programmes. In addition, reporting on other tasks as decided by the EGM IWG in terms of implementation, is included as necessary.

The reporting cycle was launched by the Secretariat on 13 March 2021, and access credentials to the Online Reporting System (ORS) were provided to the Range States. The deadline for submission of the EGMP National Reports 2020 was set for 30 April 2021, seven weeks before the annual meeting of the EGM IWG (21-23 June 2021).

The majority of Range States submitted their reports within the deadline provided. The Secretariat continued accepting late submissions until 10 May 2021. After this date, all submitted reports were analysed; 12 out of 14 National Reports, or 86% of the due reports, were submitted through the ORS. All submitted EGMP National Reports 2021 are available on the EGMP website.

The summary of the EGMP reports was compiled by the Secretariat. A comparative analysis between information provided in the previous reporting cycles (2019, 2020) and the current cycle (2021) was not undertaken. The main reason for this is the limited amount of new information that was provided in this year's reporting cycle.

Based on the feedback received from Range States, the Secretariat has submitted a proposal to EGM IWG6 for a revised EGMP national reporting process and format. The suggested revision aims to include the newly added ISSMPs for the Barnacle Goose and Greylag Goose as well as to produce a more straightforward and optimised reporting format. Following the decisions of EGM IWG6 on the reporting template and periodicity of the national reporting cycle, the Secretariat and the Data Centre together with the Task Forces will develop revised templates to be submitted to the EGM IWG7 in June 2022.

The 6th Meeting of the AEWA European Goose Management International Working Group is taking place remotely in an online conference format.

Action requested from the EGM IWG

The EGM IWG is invited to take note of the summary of EGMP National Reports for the Period 2020-2021 and take its conclusions and recommendations into account in the decision-making process.

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Overview of report submission rate

As of 31 May 2021, 86 % (12 out of 14) of the EGM IWG Range States submitted a National Report for 2020 - 2021 (Figure 1).

Submitted:

Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Ukraine und UK

Not submitted:

Belarus and Denmark

Non-participating Range States:

Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Spain

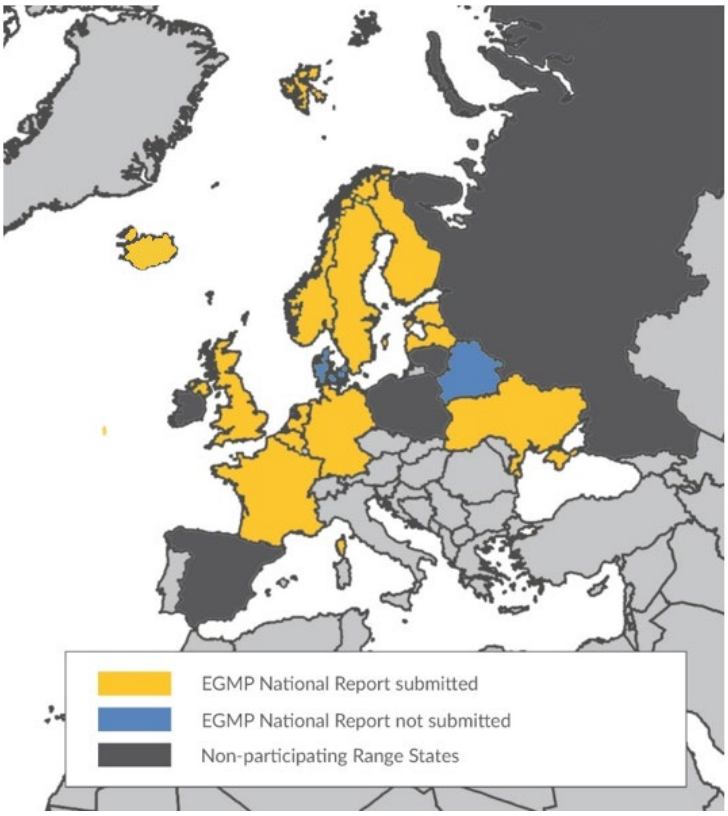

Figure 1. *Overview of reports submitted by EGMP Range States*

General non-species-specific reporting

This section summarizes the main information provided by the Range States on general issues, mainly agricultural damage and conflict and the type of management measures that area applied in each country to reduce the damage and conflict.

Level of Monitoring Agricultural Conflict

Range States were asked to report on the level of agricultural conflict (damage, complaints) with geese in their country.

Eight Range States (57%) are monitoring the level of agricultural conflict, while three Range States (22%) stated not to monitor agricultural conflict (Latvia, Norway, UK), and one (7%) stated the issue not relevant (France) (Figure 2).

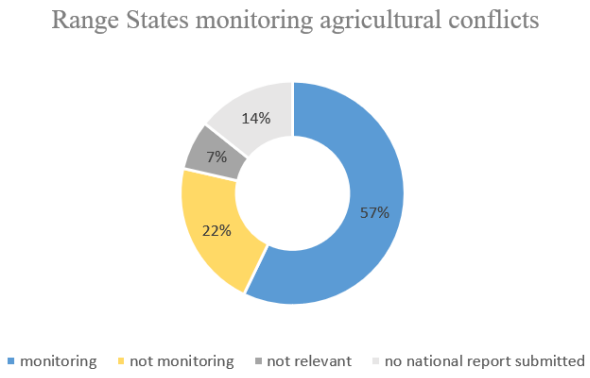

Figure 2*. Range States monitoring agricultural conflicts*

Range States gave details of the monitoring methods, units, frequency and coverage, including compensation schemes, the use of questionnaires for farmers and formal complaints about conflicts between wildlife and

agriculture and monitoring activities conducted by scientific institutions. Although regular monitoring has not been established in Iceland, the damage can be reported by farmers through a centralised service gateway and is subsequently verified in some cases. Finland reported that the coverage of the agricultural conflict monitoring is based on annual compensations applied and paid to farmers to cover damage done by geese. Meanwhile, in Estonia the reported damage is compiled into inspection papers by the Environmental Board and used as a basis for monitoring.

When it comes to regional monitoring, in Belgium it is limited to Flanders, where most geese are wintering. Farmers are compensated for significant damage from wintering geese, with total number of cases and compensations centralised. The monitoring of birds on a regional level is conducted by scientific institutes in Ukraine. For instance, the bird counts in the Azov-Black Sea flyway, in the southern region, are carried out by Azov-Black Sea Ornithological Station during migration and wintering periods, and results are published in Branta magazine.

In Germany, application of remote sensing data to quantify goose grazing damage has been assessed through a project launched in Schleswig-Holstein in 2021. Goose damage has been mapped in an area of 20 km^2 and compared with satellite-data, with results of the study expected by the end of 2021.

Sweden, Ukraine and the Netherlands have established certain mechanisms for local monitoring of agricultural damage. In Sweden, the farmers report crop damage to the County Administrative Boards (CABs) to be verified according to a standardised procedure by trained and authorised inspectors. The damage assessment methodology varies slightly between crop types but is in general based on a comparison between damaged and undamaged parts of the same field. After the affected crops are verified and the species responsible are identified, the damage is registered and the economical compensations are calculated based on the annual crop market price. While in Ukraine, the monitoring at the local level is carried out by workers of protected areas and published in the annual volumes of reports and scientific articles, in the Netherlands the information on the damage by specific species (Greylag Goose, Greater White-fronted Goose, Barnacle Goose and Pink-footed Goose) is delivered to the National Fauna Fund.

Table 1 outlines the level and detail of monitoring activities taken by each Range State.

***Table 1**. Level of monitoring agricultural conflict per Range State*

Level	Detail	# of Range States	Range States
National	species-specific activities	1	Iceland
	non-species-specific activities	2	Estonia, Finland
Regional	species-specific activities	2	Iceland, Norway
	non-species-specific activities	4	Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ukraine
Local	species-specific activities	4	Netherlands, Sweden, UK, Ukraine,
	non-species-specific activities	1	Germany

Management Measures applied to Manage Agricultural Conflicts Related to Geese

Reporting on the management measures that are applied to address agricultural conflict, an overview is given in Table 2 for each individual Range State. For the 12 reporting Range States, Figure 3 indicates the

management measures that are applied to manage agricultural conflicts related to geese and how many countries are evaluating the effectiveness of each of these measures.

More detail on the types of measures specified by each Range State is outlined in Tables 3-7 below for the 12 Range States reporting agricultural conflicts present in their country (no conflict reported in France).

***Table 2**. Overview of management measures per country (● measure applied; ○ measure not applied)*

	Belgium	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Iceland	Latvia	Netherlands	Norway	Sweden	Ukraine	UK
Compensation schemes	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●
Subsidy schemes	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	●	○	○	●
Scaring schemes	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●
Goose foraging areas	●	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	○	●
Derogation shooting	●	○	●	○	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	●
Other measures	○	○	●	○	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	○
Not relevant	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

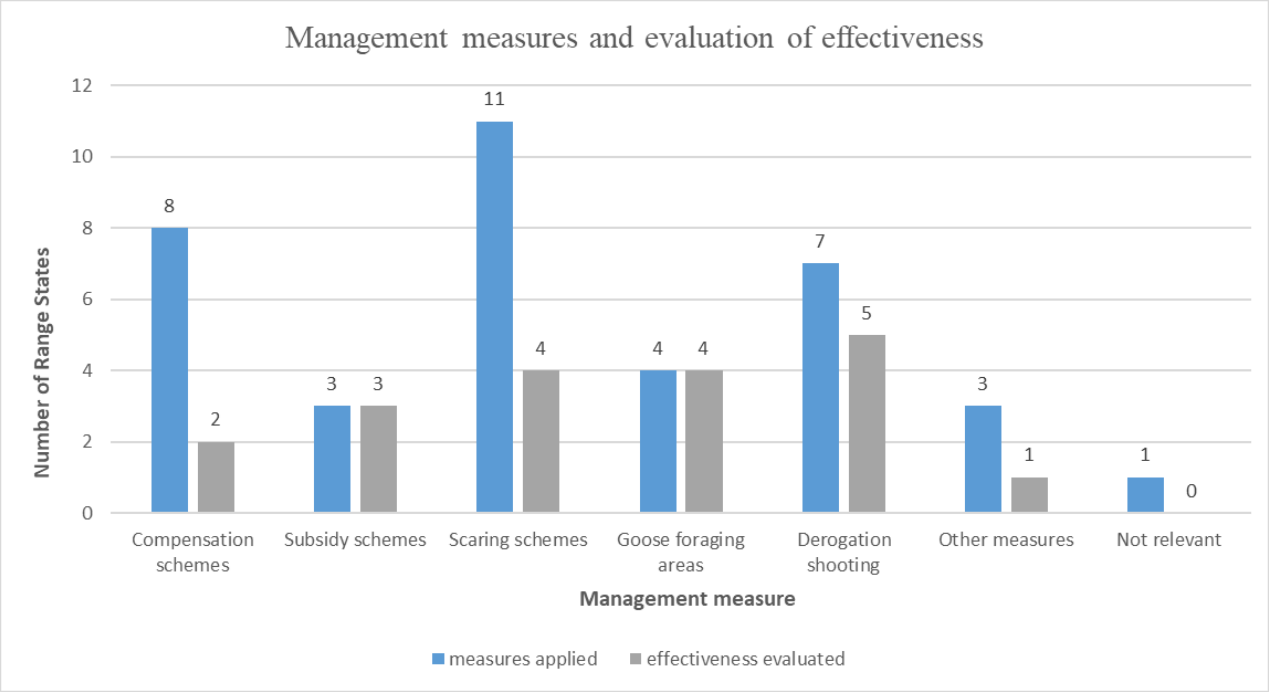

***Figure 3**. Measures applied to manage agricultural conflicts related to geese*

Compensation Schemes

Compensation schemes (payments to farmers for losses e.g. crop damage) are implemented on national (Estonia, Iceland and Latvia), regional (Belgium, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and UK) and local (Finland and Sweden) level, with effectiveness monitored only in the Netherlands and Sweden.

Financial compensation is calculated by the agricultural authorities with varying formulas (per kg dry matter, reduction of yield in comparison to reference plots, etc.). For example, in Finland, the loss and its monetary value is estimated by agricultural authorities.

In Belgium, the compensation is assessed according to the type of damage (e.g., damage to buildings, damage to crops). For protected non-huntable species, the modus operandi is not species-specific. In Flanders, the crop damage is assessed during the growing season – the reduction in the harvest is measured and compared to reference fields and then paid out on base of market prices at the moment of harvest.

In Estonia, farmers report the damage by filling in a form to get compensation. Damage scale is fixed in the field by Environmental Board officers during inspection, following which yield loss is calculated based on damaged areas, scale, real or expected yield and medium purchase prices during the season.

More details on reporting on compensation schemes in the Range States is found below in Table 3.

***Table 3**. Compensation schemes*[1]

Level	Detail	# of Range States	Range States	# Range states evaluating effectiveness	Range States evaluating effectiveness
National	species-specific compensation	1	Iceland		
	non-species-specific compensation	2	Estonia, Latvia		
Regional	species-specific compensation	2	Sweden, UK	2	Sweden, UK
	non-species-specific compensation	4	Belgium, Finland, Germany, Netherlands	1	Netherlands
Local	species-specific compensation	1	Sweden	1	Sweden
	non-species-specific compensation	1	Finland		

Subsidy Schemes

Subsidy schemes to farmers (payments to support farmers to provide for/tolerate geese on their land, replacing agricultural use) are provided in Norway, Germany and the UK. Germany reported that the subsidy schemes for fields in Schleswig-Holstein mainly consist of providing forage for geese during winter months. In April summer crops are grown on the fields; therefore, the subsidy schemes for tolerating geese do not replace agricultural use. Agri-environment schemes for tolerating wintering geese on grasslands and crops are also applied in the main wintering areas in Lower Saxony. These main wintering areas are protected under the EU Birds Directive and act as accommodation areas for the birds. In addition, Lower Saxony compensates for extraordinary high damages which by far exceed the compensatory payments through subsidy schemes.

[1] E.g. payments to farmers for losses e.g. crop damage

As for UK, subsidy schemes are in place for Barnacle Goose in Islay, Tiree and Coll, Uist, South Walls and Solway, and in Islay and Kintyre for the Greenland population of Barnacle Goose. All schemes stipulate provision of undisturbed grazing areas by farmers. The evaluation of schemes take place on a regular basis, in consultation with stakeholders.

Table 4 below provides an overview on the use of subsidy schemes by Range States.

Table 4. *Subsidy schemes*[2]

Level	Detail	# of Range States	Range States	# Range states evaluating effectiveness	Range States evaluating effectiveness
National	species-specific subsidies				
	non-species-specific subsidies				
Regional	species-specific subsidies	2	Norway, UK	2	Norway, UK
	non-species-specific subsidies	1	Germany	1	Germany
Local	species-specific subsidies				
	non-species-specific subsidies				

Scaring Schemes

Scaring schemes or preventive measures designed to actively keep geese away from farmland are widely used by Range States on national, regional and specifically local level. Visual and acoustic scaring devices are used, as well as repellents and other measures. In some Range States, scaring is an obligatory first step in order to be able to get compensation or derogation (e.g., Belgium, Estonia). In Netherlands, it is obligatory to scare geese twice per week in combination with derogation shooting, while additional non-lethal, measures can be implemented by individual farmers. However, effectiveness is only evaluated in half of the Range States that have provided information about scaring schemes (4 out of 8). In Finland, the effectiveness of various scaring methods is currently being estimated as part of a larger scale study on minimising the damage to agriculture by Barnacle Geese. Belgium reported that scaring schemes are often not effective enough to prevent the damage as the geese get used to scaring devices quite quickly.

Designation of Accommodation Areas (goose foraging areas)

The designation of accommodation areas is a viable non-lethal method to ease the widespread grazing pressure on agriculture fields. Germany reports that some areas have been specifically allocated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Birds Directive and are regularly monitored. In Lower Saxony, Germany, farmers tolerate geese in these SPAs and have joined agri-environmental schemes under which they are paid for the loss of biomass caused by foraging geese.

Table 6 outlines Range States reporting on accommodation areas. In the Netherlands, designation of goose accommodation areas is done by provincial authorities, responsible for goose management in their provinces. The guiding principles of the provinces with accommodation areas are based on important night roosts and surrounding farmland as well as the specific history of damage claims in the past. In this way, only areas with frequent occurrence of agricultural damage are taken into consideration.

[2] E.g. payments to support farmers to provide for/tolerate geese on their land, replacing agricultural use

Table 5. *Scaring schemes or other preventive measures*[3]

Level	# of Range States	Range States	# Range states evaluating effectiveness	Range States evaluating effectiveness
National	2	Estonia, Latvia		
Regional	4	Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden, UK	3	Belgium, Netherlands, Sweden
Local	6	Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, UK, Ukraine	3	Finland, Netherlands, Sweden

Table 6*. Accommodation areas*[4]

Level	# of Range States	Range States	# Range states evaluating effectiveness	Range States evaluating effectiveness
National	0			
Regional	4	Belgium, Germany Netherlands, UK	3	Belgium, Germany, Netherlands
Local	2	Germany, Sweden	2	Germany, Sweden

Derogation Shooting

Derogation shooting to keep geese away from sensitive crops and/or to reduce population is used as another measure to contain agricultural conflict with geese in some of the Range States. Reporting on derogation shooting is compiled in Table 7 below. Range States report derogation shooting to be applied in line with the EU Birds Directive. Licenses for shooting under derogation are granted upon application and assessment of the related conflict and damage to crops. Germany reported that in Schleswig-Holstein derogation shooting of Barnacle Geese to prevent considerable damage to crops and grassland is allowed in selected districts on the Wadden Sea coast and along the river Elbe, outside protected bird areas, in a specific timeframe. On grassland the severe damage has to be proven by an independent expert to get permission for derogation shooting. In general, it is possible to apply for permissions for derogation shooting of all goose species outside the hunting seasons that are limited in time, space and number of geese.

In Belgium, derogation shooting is only allowed for Greylag Goose and Canada Goose during the hunting season, whereas in the Netherlands, it is obligatory to scare geese twice per week in combination with derogation shooting.

[3] Measures designed to actively keep geese away from farmland
[4] Designation of goose foraging areas

***Table 7**. Derogation shooting*[5]

Level	# of Range States	Range States	# Range states evaluating effectiveness	Range States evaluating effectiveness
National	1	Latvia		
Regional	3	Belgium, Netherlands, UK	2	Belgium, Netherlands
Local	4	Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden	3	Norway, Sweden,

Other Measures

Other measures that are species-specific in some cases are also being implemented in some countries at the national, regional and local level. For example, in Finland the hunting season on Greylag Goose and Canada Goose is opened already on 10th August only in agricultural fields from year 2019 (in other habitats the hunting season opens on 20th August). Hunting of Greylag Goose was banned by Ministerial Degree (902/2019) for one hunting season (2019-2020) in inland counties. For Barnacle Goose, the ongoing study on minimising the damage to agriculture, as a key component, includes the piloting of so-called "goose fields" on farmland, which will specifically be set aside for foraging and resting,

Germany also reported that in Schleswig-Holstein grassland for feeding husbandry is provided in selected areas, where the first cut is lost due to goose grazing.

In the Netherlands, during moulting seasons, individuals of Barnacle Goose, Greylag Goose, Egyptian Goose, Canada Goose and hybrids are corralled and killed using CO_2.

New or Adjusted Existing Legislation for Implementation of Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM)

The EGM IWG adopted a Guidance on Implementation of Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) through Domestic Legal Regulations at their 3rd meeting (EGM IWG3). The purpose of this guidance is to provide model legal approaches for transposing annual international decisions concerning harvest quotas and season opening/closure into national decision-making processes and collecting comprehensive harvest data to suit the AHM process annually.

Range States were asked to report if this guidance was used to create new or adjust existing legislation for the implementation of AHM, within the framework of the EGMP.

Finland regulates hunting of Taiga Bean Goose on annual basis via ministerial decree, in accordance with EGMP Adaptive Harvest Management Framework. Following EGM IWG4 meeting, a ministerial decree (946/2019) on ban of hunting was adopted for 2019-2020 hunting season, to support recovery of the national breeding population as a priority. In Norway, the ongoing revision of hunting regulations is to be concluded by the end of 2021 and published prior to the new five-year period, starting March 2022. Belgium is not planning to increase or adapt hunting quota since the current hunting legislation and damage compensation schemes suffice to address the existing problems. In UK, any review of the current legislation will take place once the AFMPs for the Greenland and Svalbard populations of the Barnacle Goose have been adopted.

[5] Derogation shooting to keep geese away from sensitive crops and/or to reduce population size

Pink-footed Goose International Species Management Plan (PfG ISMP)

Three Range States to the Svalbard population of the PfG (Belgium, Netherlands and Norway) have reported on the implementation of the International Species Management Plan (ISMP) for the population. In addition, three Range States (Germany, Sweden and Finland), which have been admitted as observers to the PfG ISMP implementation process, have also provided relevant information.

National, Regional or Local Management Plans for the PfG

According to the PfG ISMP, Range States should endeavour to produce national/local management plans, ensuring recreational activities are established and evaluated at local level (economic and cultural value) *(PfG ISMP, p.29)*. Range States were asked to report on the establishment of any national, regional and/or local management plan/s that are in place to implement the PfG ISMP.

Of the three reporting Range States only Norway stated the adoption and implementation of a regional (sub-national) management plan for the PfG in mid- and north-Norway. The plan also promotes recreational uses such as tourism and hunting, organised through the ongoing research and hunting organisation project and involving the hunters' union and farmers' union coordinator.

Belgium has indicated that the regional targets are worked out in more detail in the specific conservation targets for the relevant SPA Polder Complex (Decision of the Flemish Government from 23 April 2014). On the regional level (Flanders), there has been a decision on the population targets and the surface of habitat to accommodate this population target (Decision of the Flemish Government of 23 July 2010 on the regional conservation targets for the European Birds and Habitats Directives species and habitats). Both parameters are decided from a species conservation point of view, in order to keep the wintering sites in a good state for the species.

The Netherlands reported that no species-specific management plans are being implemented in the country. The responsibility for fauna management lies with the provinces. PfG occur only in Friesland in larger numbers, but not sufficient to act in a management context.

Finland and Belgium have indicated that the PfG is not a huntable species, while in Sweden it is a new species in the country, with only few birds spread over large areas.

National, Regional or Local Working Group for the Implementation of the PfG ISMP

Range States were asked whether a national, regional and/or local working group to support the implementation of the PfG ISMP had been established in their countries. Only Norway and Belgium have confirmed establishment of a working group. An overview is provided in Table 8.

***Table 8**. Overview of national, regional or local working groups (● yes; ○ no)*

Range State	Working Group
Belgium	●
Finland	○
Germany	○
Netherlands	○
Norway	●
Sweden	○

In Belgium, the regional working group comes together in spring to evaluate Flemish situation with regards to wintering geese and goose damage and prepares the national point of view for the EGM IWG meeting. The

group consists of representatives of nature conservation NGOs, farmer organisations, hunters, government representatives dealing with goose damage and goose experts.

The Dutch working group is conducted by national coordinators and farmers' union representatives, while the meetings are attended by the national BirdLife partner and national hunter organisations. The working group aims to share information on best practices, research activities, local management plans and on EGMP processes and their results.

PfG ISMP Objective 1. Maintain a Sustainable and Stable PfG Population and its Range

Key sites identified for PfG

Range States were asked to provide a list of key sites that have been identified for PfG. Out of the five countries that responded to this question, four countries have identified key areas for the PfG (Figure 4). Belgium, Finland, Netherlands and Norway provided details on these sites, including location, habitat types and protection status.

Sweden reported PfG being a relatively new species with no key sites determined yet.

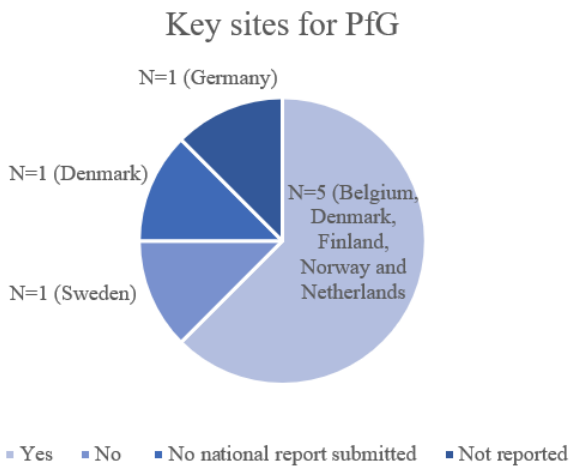

***Figure 4**. Key sites identified for the Pink-footed Goose in Range States*

Measures to Restore/Rehabilitate PfG Roosting and/or Feeding Habitats

Range States were asked to provide information on measures taken to restore and/or rehabilitate PfG roosting and/or feeding habitats and to give information if these measures are being implemented in staging and wintering areas.

Measures in the wintering sites in Belgium mostly focus on the restoration of wet polder grasslands in order to provide good foraging opportunities for PfG in nature reserves and to reduce agricultural damage in the surrounding areas.

In Finland, habitat restoration and recurring management measures (removing the reed, grazing and mowing of coastal meadows) were carried out as an ongoing activity, including the most important roosting areas for PfG. In Sweden, no former roosting or feeding habitats are known.

PfG ISMP Objective 2. Keep Agricultural Conflicts to an Acceptable Level

Level of Agricultural Conflicts

Range States were asked to provide information on the level of agricultural conflicts (e.g. crop damage) in their countries and how potential conflicts have been addressed.

Two Range States (Belgium and Netherlands) as well as Finland and Sweden, have indicated that agricultural conflicts related to PfG are at an acceptable level (Figure 5).

In Belgium, damage caused by PfG is compensated and habitat restoration is undertaken in nature reserves to accommodate wintering PfG and keep them away from agricultural lands.

Netherlands indicated that, compared to other species, agricultural damage by PfG is hardly an issue. Sweden has stated that so far, there have not been any reports from farmers on damages caused by PfG.

Only Norway has reported that agricultural damage in the country is not at an acceptable level.

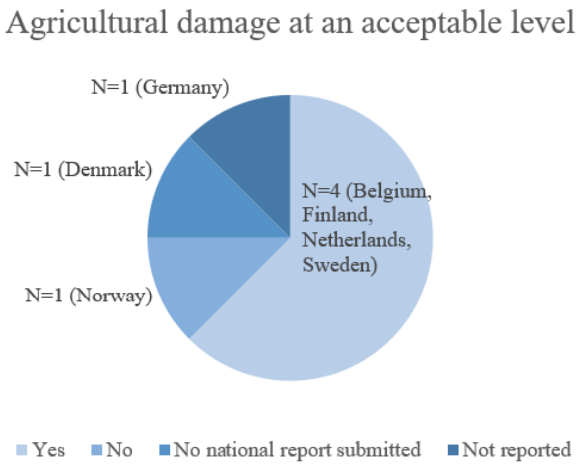

Figure 5. *Agricultural conflicts at an acceptable level*

PfG ISMP Objective 3. Avoid Increase in Tundra Vegetation Degradation in the Breeding Range

Monitoring the Extent of Arctic Tundra Degradation on Svalbard Caused by PfG

Norway indicated that the extent of arctic tundra degradation on Svalbard caused by PfG is continuously being monitored and reported an increase in the level of degradation over decades.

PfG ISMP Objective 4. Allow for Recreational Use that does not Jeopardize the Population

Hunting is Conducted in a Sustainable Manner

Denmark and Norway, as the only Range States with open hunting seasons, were asked to report on the promotion and/or implementation of any national or regional hunting-related campaigns, training programmes and/or management activities.

Denmark did not submit an EGMP National Report in the 2021reporting cycle. As for Norway, the Range State reported that self-organisation and coordination of local hunting as well as best practices to reduce crippling rates and wise use of hunting practices are being promoted. In 2020, a course on goose hunting has been established, together with a new video on goose hunting. Moreover, a course for training with clay pigeons to reduce crippling has been organised. It was also noted that collaboration with the organisation of local hunters is beneficial, in particular for information sharing and compliance with the targets of the ISSAP.

Taiga Bean Goose International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP)

Reporting on Taiga Bean Goose has been split in two sections:

- Section A: Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP – Eastern 1 Management Unit (MU)
- Section B: Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP – Western and Central Management Units (MUs)

(A) Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP – Eastern 1 MU

Participating Range States in the EGMP for the Eastern 1 MU of the TBG are **Belarus, Estonia, Germany, Latvia** and **Ukraine**. Of these Range States four (Estonia, Germany, Latvia and Ukraine) have reported in this section.

TBG ISSAP Objective 1. Increase Survival Rate of Adults

Legal Harvest does not Jeopardize an Increase of Adult Survival Rates

Three Range States - Germany, Latvia and Ukraine – have developed and adopted a legislation for the closure of hunting of TBG to allow the birds to pass before the goose hunting season is opened (see Figure 6 below), **whilst** Estonia has not passed a legislation yet.

In Germany legislation varies regionally with some federal states having closed the hunting of TBG in general and others not having adopted the legislation for closure yet.

In Latvia hunting of TBG is restricted from 15 September to 30 November to provide safe passage to TBGs on their autumn migration. Ukraine prohibits spring hunting to allow the large numbers of TBG passing at this time of the year through the northern part of Ukraine. The State Forestry Agency developed the Instruction on the inventory of harvested game. Instructions will improve the quality of the data about the results of hunting. Due to the adoption of the new Instruction, an appropriate information campaign and trainings will be held.

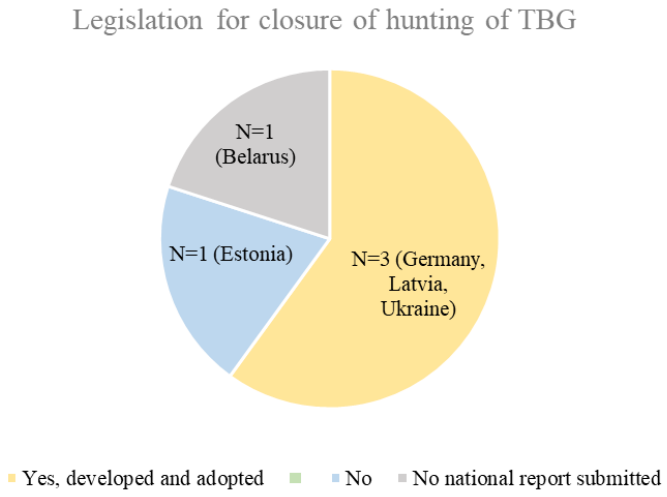

***Figure 6**. Development and adoption of legislation for the closure of TBG hunting to let migrating birds pass*

Knowledge is Improved on the Occurrence of TBG in all Eastern MU Range States

Four Range States reported on the following activities to improve knowledge of the occurrence of TBG in their countries:

- Ensuring national monitoring at all known key sites;
- Providing identification training to people carrying out the monitoring activities;
- Providing equipment to people carrying out the monitoring activities;
- Carrying out a satellite/GPS tagging project on TBG in the wintering/staging areas;
- Any other relevant activities.

Table 9 below shows activities that have been carried out by each of the Range States.

***Table 9**. Activities to improve the knowledge of occurrence of TBG in the Eastern 1 MU (● yes; ○ no)*

Activities	Estonia	Germany	Latvia	Ukraine
Ensuring national monitoring at all known key sites	●	○	●	●
Providing identification training to people carrying out the monitoring activities	○	●	○	●
Providing equipment to people carrying out the monitoring activities	○	○	○	○
Carrying out a satellite/GPS tagging project on TBG in the wintering/ staging areas	○	○	○	○
Any other relevant activities	○	●	○	○

In Latvia all key sites of the TBG are covered by Natura 2000 designation and are monitored through the sub-programme of Biological Diversity Monitoring within the State Environmental Monitoring Programme 2015-2020.

Ukraine reports that there is no special national monitoring system, but in protected areas monitoring is carried out within the framework of the Programme of the Chronicle of Nature, scientific organisations and within the framework of the IWC. Moreover, a booklet for hunters on the distinction of species of geese during hunting, which was prepared as part of the Life project on the Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*, and other information materials prepared in previous years were disseminated during a seminar for Ramsar site managers in February 2021.

Germany indicated that as part of the activities to improve TBG monitoring, specific information on identification of TBG for volunteer monitoring in Germany will be compiled and communicated to volunteers involved in goose monitoring. Germany also reported that existing data on satellite tracking of TBG will be analysed to learn more about diurnal movement patterns between feeding and roosting sites. Results will be used to improve monitoring conception and data analysis. The aim is to find out, if or how a combination of count data from feeding and roosting sites is feasible.

Result 1.2 Illegal Harvest is Reduced to non-Significant Levels

Ukraine was asked to report on the implementation of an awareness-raising campaign for hunters to complement necessary legislation change. An awareness-raising campaign is being implemented by the staff of forestry and hunters' organisations and Protected Areas administrations. Also, an article reviewing the results of studies on the migration of geese through Ukraine was published in 2009. The new publication on the occurrence of the Taiga Bean Goose is under preparation.

Reducing Taiga Bean Goose Crippling

No specific measures have been undertaken to date to reduce TBG crippling in the Range States. Latvia reports that no activities are necessary since training is part of the education programme for hunters.

Raising Identification Skills and Awareness Amongst Hunters

Only Estonia reported that training programmes to develop identification skills amongst hunters have been organised by the national hunting association.

Latvia stated only a very rare presence of TBG during the hunting season. The analysis of hunted bird photos organised by the Latvian Hunters Association in cooperation with scientists confirmed one bird during 2019.

Other Information Provided, Relevant to the Implementation of the TBG ISSAP

Range States of the Eastern 1 MUs of the TBG reported no further **information** on the implementation of the TBG ISSAP.

(B) Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP – Western and Central Management Units

Range States for the Western and Central MUs of the TBG are **Denmark, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the UK.** The following participating Range States have reported on this section: Finland, Norway, Sweden and UK. No report was submitted by Denmark.

TBG ISSAP Objective 1. Increase Survival Rate of Adults

Illegal Harvest is Reduced to non-Significant Levels (Denmark)

No report submitted by Denmark.

Impact of Huntable Native Predators in Breeding and Moulting Areas is Reduced (Finland)

Finland was asked to report on the annual campaigns that are being undertaken amongst hunters in breeding areas to strengthen fox management.

The issue was discussed between the Finnish Wildlife Agency and Forestry and Parks service in 2017 and effective fox management by Forestry and Parks service is continued in the northernmost part of the country primarily for the conservation of the endangered Arctic Fox.

The breeding areas of TBG cover roughly half of Finland, whilst fox management is relevant for the entire country. The importance of small predator management has been promoted to hunters though magazines and social media to strengthen management activities. In practice there is on-going work under this subject, but it has been carried out at more general level considering ground nesting birds at large, not specifically specified to TBG, while providing largely the same end result.

Impact of Alien Predators in Breeding and Moulting Areas is Reduced (Finland and Sweden)

Finland and Sweden were asked to report on the implementation of programmes for the eradication of the Raccoon Dog (*Nyctereutes procyonoides)* and the effectiveness of these programmes.

In Finland the Racoon Dog is listed as invasive species. Hunting is allowed year-round. There is an on-going project to stop the dispersal of Raccoon Dog to Scandinavia. The objective in Northern Finland is to decrease the population size of Raccoon Dog. Annual funding for the project in Finland is around 150,000 euros plus significant amount of volunteer efforts from local hunters.

The Finnish Wildlife Agency operates the Nordic Raccoon Dog project in Finnish Lapland to stop the dispersal of Raccoon Dog. The Finnish Wildlife Agency has a 2-year development project to find solutions for large-scale effective Raccoon Dog management in areas of dense populations. Both projects are co-financed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Finland reported that the Raccoon Dog was removed from the list of huntable species and listed as invasive alien species, providing more effective approaches to management.

In Sweden the situation is similar to the previous year. Sweden reported on the Raccoon Dog project, commissioned by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and lead by the Swedish Association for Hunting and Wildlife Management. In 2019, 30 adult Raccoon Dogs and 2 pups were captured. Since 2010, when the first monitoring system was set up in Norrbotten, the population has declined considerably and is now kept at a very low level.

TBG ISSAP Objective 2. Increase Reproductive Rates

Intraspecific Competition in Spring Staging Areas is Reduced (Sweden, Finland)

Sweden was asked to provide updates on the implementation of the "fields for geese" programme. The County Administrative Board (CAB) continues with the "fields for geese" programme. There have been some uncertainties regarding financing due to rules in the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Finland reported that implementation of the "unharvested-fields-for-birds" programme within CAP is being discussed in the preparation of the next CAP period.

TBG ISSAP Objective 3. Stop Ongoing Loss, Fragmentation and Degradation of Habitats, and Restore Lost, Fragmented and Degraded Habitats

Mire restoration

Finland reported that two new habitat restoration programs HELMI and SOTKA provide significant resources to restore mire and wetland complexes also benefiting the Taiga Bean Goose. In Norway, a ban on draining of mires has been adopted by the Government in Norway. For the last decade funds have been allocated for rehabilitation and restoration of mires. Annual allocation is ca. 1.5 million euro. A plan for continuation of the program is developed and will include restoration in general of wetlands other than bogs/mires.

Impact of Forestry Works is Reduced (Finland)

Finland was asked to report on working models for wildlife-friendly forest management. The concept and working models of Wildlife Friendly Forest Management (WFFM) in Finland is well developed and was established largely based on the national management plan for grouse species. Since the brood habitat of grouse and TBG have significant overlap in forested areas, mire restorations for Willow Grouse *Lagopus lagopus* can have potential benefits for TBG, depending on site-specific features. The WFFM is communicated and taught to forest owners, forestry professionals and corporations via a set of projects. Recently a handbook for WFFM was published and is available online.

Moreover, a recent project identifying forested sites with potential / favourable structures for wildlife and highlighting them in the national forest database, based on LIDAR-scanning data, covering almost the whole country, has been concluded. The database can be accessed online by landowners to view their properties.

Finland further reported about on-going active media work and education events to all relevant sectors and all means by Finnish Wildlife Agency and Finnish Forest Centre. It is gaining momentum. there is a close co-operation with major forestry corporations in terms of example sites and information activities. The principles of WFFM largely overlap with requirement of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certificate, which is rapidly increasing coverage in Finland. Generally, the Finnish Wildlife Agency and the Finnish Forest Centre undertake active media work and education events on an ongoing basis and cooperate closely with major forestry corporations in their activities.

Take Account of TBG Breeding, Staging and Wintering in the Planning of new Oil, Gas or Renewable Energy Developments (Denmark)

No report submitted by Denmark.

Impact of Agriculture on Natural TBG Habitats is Minimised (Finland)

According to activity 3.1.1.1 of the TBG implementation workplan 2019-2020 (agreed at EGM IWG3 in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, June 2018), Finland was requested to increase the area of managed coastal grassland under CAP. Finland reported that compared to 2017 there was no meaningful increase of managed coastal grasslands within the current CAP period coming to an end. However, the area could be further increased if new funding is allocated under the new CAP.

Review of Factors Possibly Contributing to the Declines of TBG in Eastern England and Implementation of Appropriate Management Responses (UK)

No information provided by the UK.

Reducing TBG Crippling

All Range States to the Western and Central MUs were asked to report on activities undertaken in the past three years to reduce TBG crippling rates. An overview of the responses is provided in Figure 7.

In Finland, the issue on adequate shooting distance to reduce crippling was raised in article in Metsastaja/Jagaren magazine informing the restrictions on the reopened Bean Goose hunting season, which was restricted in time and space to focus the harvest on Tundra Bean Goose. Crippling issues and approaches to reduce it was presented by Jesper Madsen in January at the National Wildlife Management Conference. Furthermore, the Finnish Wildlife Agency published a webpage and an educational portal.

An education programme for goose hunters by the Swedish Association for Hunting and Wildlife Management is in place. Educational activities are currently under development.

In Norway, the TBG is not a quarry species. However, crippling is a problem for other huntable species of geese in the country, and is dealt with for those species.

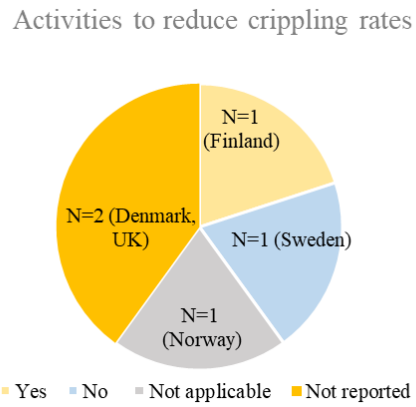

***Figure 7**. Activities undertaken by Range States to reduce crippling rates*

Training Programmes to Raise Identification Skills and Awareness Amongst Hunters

Range States were asked to indicate if any training programmes to develop identification skills amongst hunters have been organised, in particular by national hunting associations, in their respective countries (see Figure 8).

Finland Sweden and Norway indicated that training programmes have been organised (in Norway, in cooperation with the national BirdLife partner). Norway reported that it is part of the general training of hunters and included in guidance documents on ID skills. Identification materials were also developed by the TBG Task Force (spring 2020). Finland reported that the issue of adequate shooting distance to reduce crippling was raised in article in Metsastaja/Jagaren magazine informing the restrictions on the

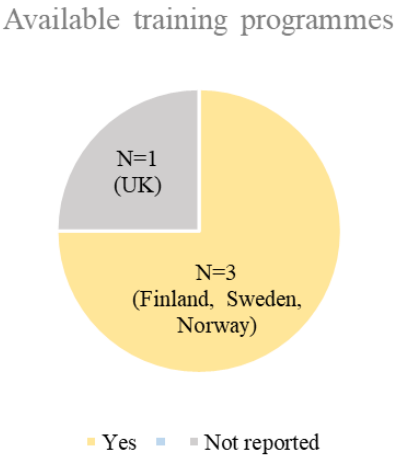

***Figure 8.** Available training programmes to raise identification skills among hunters*

reopened Bean Goose hunting season, which was restricted in time and space to focus the harvest on Tundra Bean Goose. The article was published by the Finnish Wildlife Agency.

Sweden reported that it is a part of the Hunter's exam and a part of the educational activities that currently are under development in the country.

Conclusions and Recommendations

On the basis of this analysis of EGMP National Reports 2021, the following conclusions and recommendations have been identified for consideration by the EGM IWG.

Submission Rate

Overall, the submission rate (86 % (12 out of 14)) of the EGMP National Reports 2021 is positive, but less than in the previous year. Most reports were submitted within the deadline and the rest within the period of extension to solve technical issues. However, the finalisation of the document was significantly delayed due to technical issues with the online reporting tool. The servicing of the tool is provided by a third party, hence, the Secretariat had no means to resolve the issues in house. As in the previous reporting cycle, in case the Range States decide to continue using this tool for the EGMP National Reporting, the information that has been provided by Range States will be saved in the online reporting system and re-used in the next reporting cycle, when it can be updated accordingly.

The level of detail provided varied greatly amongst Range States. Some Range States have taken advantage of the opportunity to provide detailed information and evidence, including links and documents on the implementation of certain activities or explanations why activities were not undertaken, whilst others have provided less information. Overall, there was only a small proportion of new and/or updated information compared to the previous reporting cycle. This is also due to the fact that the National Reporting format has not been updated to include the Greylag Goose and Barnacle Goose Populations.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the format is updated according to the workplans that have been developed by the EGMP Task Forces and to include a section for the Barnacle and Greylag Goose respectively. Moreover, it is also recommended to take note of document AEWA/EGMIWG/6.5, and the proposal for a new process and format. Since there have been technical issues with the online reporting tools for several years now, it is recommended to consider moving away from this tool and using a more reliable and simplified tool.

Agricultural Conflict

Various management measures are applied throughout the flyways to resolve agricultural conflicts; however, most Range States opted for implementing scaring schemes followed by compensation schemes and derogation shooting. However, the effectiveness of these measures is monitored in only very few Range States and not many results have been provided. More specific details about agricultural conflict and management measures was also included in more detail in document AEWA/EGMIWG/Inf.4.15 which was produced by the EGMP Agriculture Task Force in 2019 (An overview of the Management Measures for Geese in Range States of the European Goose Management Platform) and submitted to EGM IWG4.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Range States monitor the effectiveness of the management measures that are applied, and that experiences are shared within EGM IWG through the EGMP Agriculture Task Force. Moreover, Range States should consider the recommendations provided in document AEWA/EGMIWG/Inf.4.15 (An overview of the Management Measures for Geese in Range States of the European Goose Management Platform).

Implementation of the PfG ISMP

Although reporting on the implementation of the PfG ISMP was only requested from four Range States (Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands and Norway), Finland and Sweden, observers to the PfG ISMP, have also provided relevant information.

As it is one of the Range States, the missing reporting from Denmark leaves a gap in the overview of PfG ISMP implementation. However, efforts and activities towards achieving the objectives of the PfG ISMP have been made by the remaining three Range States, including Finland and Sweden. These activities include the identification and protection of key sites for PfG, the implementation of measures to restore/rehabilitate PfG roosting sites and feeding habitats and the improvement of hunting practices such as wise use practices, species identification and self-organisation of local hunting.

Recommendation

Awareness raising, in particular amongst the local hunting communities on their role and responsibility to participate in the management of the population, is being worked on and has improved, but can be further strengthened, for example through a common EGMP communication strategy.

Implementation of the TBG ISSAP – Eastern 1 MU

A key activity identified for the Eastern 1 MU is the improvement of knowledge on the occurrence of TBG in all Range States. Increased knowledge on the occurrence, distribution and migration patterns is essential for the development of appropriate hunting legislation. Although most Range States have reported monitoring of TBG at some key sites, there is still need for improvement and development of more dedicated monitoring programmes.

Overall, Range States have reported that the lack of financial resources is hindering the implementation of measures to improve the knowledge of TBG. Identification training to people carrying out monitoring activities, provision of adequate monitoring equipment and tagging studies in wintering/staging areas are still lacking and should remain priority activities to be implemented the Eastern 1 MU.

Illegal harvest in the Eastern 1 MU is considered to occur mainly due to misidentification of goose species. Awareness-raising campaigns for hunters to complement legislation changes, including guidance on the identification of geese are essential, yet due to lack of funding they have not yet been developed or implemented.

In general, the Eastern 1 MU lacks sufficient funding as well as reliable data and expertise in the region. Raising identification skills and awareness amongst hunters and reducing crippling rates are still to be tackled in order to increase the survival rate of adults.

Recommendation

Based on the information provided in this reporting cycle, there is still a need to ensure that the agreed activities included in the TBG non-AHM implementation plan submitted to the EGM IWG6 as part of the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force report (document AEWA/EGMIWG/5.9/Corr.1) are implemented in the Eastern 1 MU. Range States should consider developing or funding projects aiming at increasing understanding of migratory patterns and developing the monitoring capacity for Taiga Bean Geese in the Eastern 1&2 MUs to provide data for further development of a monitoring framework for assessing the population status of the Eastern 1&2 MUs.

Implementation of the TBG ISSAP – Western and Central MU

Most activities of the TBG non-AHM implementation plan 2021-2022 (agreed at EGM IWG5 in June 2020) for this MU were identified for Denmark, Finland and Sweden. The implementation of these activities is similar as in the previous reposting cycle (either implemented or ongoing in most cases).

There is still a need to raise identification skills (between Tundra and Taiga Bean Goose) and awareness of the status of different goose species amongst hunters. The Taiga Bean Goose Task Force produced an identification guide for Bean Geese in 2020, aiming at improving the ID skills of hunters.

Further progress has been made in Finland and Sweden on reducing the impact of huntable native predators and alien predators in breeding and moulting areas.

Furthermore, efforts have been made to increase the reproductive rates of TBG in Finland and Sweden. Activities have been undertaken to minimise the impact of forestry works and agriculture in TBG habitats.

In addition, Range States have reported on activities that have been undertaken to reduce TBG crippling rates and to raise the identification skills and awareness amongst hunters. Most Range States have been very active, either by initiating an education programme for goose hunters or publicising articles in relevant hunting magazines.

Recommendation

Although various activities of the TBG non-AHM implementation plan 2021-2022 (agreed at EGM IWG5 in June 2020) related to the Western and Central MU have been successfully implemented or are currently under implementation, similar to last year, there is further need to strengthen the identification skills and raise awareness of the status of different goose species amongst hunters, and to communicate the activities and results that have been achieved in terms of TBG conservation. Thus, it is recommended to prioritise the development of a shared EGMP communication strategy in addition to strengthening knowledge and continuing the monitoring activities in these MUs.