

**AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM**



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

*20-22 June 2023, Bonn, Germany*



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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GREYLAG GOOSE TASK FORCE AND  
DRAFT WORKPLAN FOR 2023/2024**

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*with contributions from the members of the Greylag Goose Task Force and the EGMP Data Centre*

**Summary:**

This document provides an overview of the status and key activities that the Greylag Goose Task Force has undertaken since June 2022 until May 2023. In addition, a proposed list of recommendations is included as well as the proposed annual workplan for 2023/2024.

**Action requested from the EGM IWG:**

Take note of the task force report and recommendations and adopt the annual workplan.

## **Introduction**

As outlined in Rule 29 in the Modus Operandi adopted for the AEWA European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG), the EGM IWG may establish species Task Forces as necessary to deal with the preparation and coordination of decision papers and background documents for the EGM IWG as well as to deal with other specific tasks as requested by the IWG.

At the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the EGM IWG in June 2020, the Range States agreed on the establishment of an EGMP Task Force for the NW/SW European Population of the Greylag Goose (GG TF) and adopted its proposed Terms of Reference ([Doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/5.15](#)) as well as the first draft of the AFMP (pending several updates and sections).

At the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the EGM IWG in June 2021, the GG TF presented on the work progress since the establishment of the Task Force and presented recommendations to the EGM IWG, referring to document [AEWA/EGMIWG/6.11](#). In its recommendations, the TF urged the Range States to improve the population counts and provide data on offtake and population size as well as to explore options for summer counts and deployment of GPS-tags to obtain a better understanding of population size and movements of the two Management Units. The Range States adopted the report and agreed on an info-gap analysis approach as a temporary solution allowing the launch of management in the absence of accurate data.

At the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the EGM IWG in June 2022, the GG TF presented a set of recommendations to the EGM IWG, all supporting the general and specific recommendations brought forward in the EGMP Population Status and Assessment Report ([Doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/7.10](#)) and with a strong focus on improving data collection and provision. Other recommendations included defining utility (stakeholder satisfaction) as a function of population size and strengthening the exchanges and collaboration between EGMP TFs.

The overall role of the GG TF is to assist the IWG in catalysing and coordinating the implementation of the AFMP workplan and monitoring activities related to the implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Management Plan for the Greylag Goose (NW/SW European Population). This document provides an overview of the work that has taken place since the EGM IWG7 and the Task Force's recommendations and draft workplan for 2023/2024.

## **1. Status of the Task Force Membership**

Presently, the GG TF has 27 members. Members represent nine Range State (including one observer Range State), five Observer Organisations, the Data Centre and the AEWA Secretariat. Ms. Iben Hove Sørensen is coordinating the GG TF. One Range State is still to nominate official representatives in the GG TF but has agreed to provide the data necessary for the AFMP process.

Details of the current membership of the GG TF are indicated in Annex 1 to this document. In line with the Terms of Reference, the nomination of additional members to the Task Force is at the discretion of the National Government Representative of each Range State, observer organisations and the Coordinator of the Task Force.

## **2. Meetings**

Since no funding has been specifically allocated for the work of the GG TF, communication and information exchange is mainly conducted via email and online meetings.

The Task Force has held two meetings since EGM IWG7. These online meetings took place on 21 February and 4 May 2023. The members of the GG TF were also invited to a joint meeting of the EGMP Task Forces held on 2 December 2022.

An in-person meeting is planned on 20 June 2023, in the framework of the EGM IWG8.

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

Main activities of the GG TF have been related to the online meetings described above, where the TF members have discussed and commented on several issues related to monitoring activities and data availability.

The GG TF members have provided feedback during and between meetings of the TF to progress reports presented by Fred Johnson on Coordinating Offtake of the NW/SW European Population of Greylag Geese. There is a growing concern that the quality of data provided is not sufficient to support a shift from the current info-gap analysis to a dynamic model-based decision-making (as previously agreed), especially when it comes to the evaluation of the offtake and the break-down of such offtake between leisure hunting and derogation killing.

The GG TF has also received regular updates from the Data Centre and relevant updates from the Modelling Consortium. The GG TF Coordinator participated in a meeting of the Modelling Consortium on 25 October 2022.

Several members of the GG TF participated in the EGMP Webinar on Geese and Risks to Air Safety held 10 January 2023.

Finally, the GG TF has contributed to the review of the draft EGMP Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report 2023 submitted to EGM IWG8.

### **4. Recommendations**

Based on meetings and discussions in the GG TF, the Task Force has identified the following issues and activities of essential priority and recommends that:

- All Range States strive to provide the necessary data and a description of methods as brought forward in the EGMP Population Status and Assessment Report (Doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8). Specifically, Range States must provide:
  - Reliable offtake estimates by country and biannual period (spring-summer: March-August and fall-winter: September-February) for the most recent five calendar years, clearly separating leisure hunting and derogation killing;
  - Summer or early autumn abundance by country for those conducting such surveys; all years in which they are available;
  - Post-breeding age ratios for all years and countries where available (should include counts of young and total sample size);
  - Winter counts for all years and countries where available;
  - A short description of the methods for collecting such data (except for winter counts, while protocols are well-known). As a minimum, the description should specify how the data are collected and should be sufficient to judge their reliability. The methods should also specify the frequency with which the data are collected and when the most recent estimates will be available.

- All Range States to focus on offtake strategies minimising the need for breeding-season derogation (those with high winter offtake), as long as an agreed protocol for harvest assessment including coordination hereof is lacking. As no unique level and distribution of offtake will meet Management Unit (MU) population targets, there is a need for a discussion and agreement of protocol of how levels and distribution of offtake can/should be evaluated in terms of cost, feasibility, and legal mandates, noting that while derogation is a legal means of alleviating local socio-economic conflicts, it cannot be used in a planned manner to meet a population target.
- The GG TF continues to exchange general information and experiences with other species-specific Task Forces and liaises with the Agriculture Task Force, thus strengthening the relations between EGMP Task Forces and benefitting from the work already carried out on other species. More specifically, TFs seek to collaborate on reducing crippling rates of goose species.
- TF Members actively promote available material such as the recorded EGMP webinars and briefing notes.
- Finally, the GG TF will keep [the online workplan](#) active and updated between meetings.

## 5. Draft Workplan 2023/2024

Table 1. Greylag Goose Task Force Draft Workplan for 2023/2024

Actions from the ISSMP	Priority	Timescale	Greylag Goose Task Force
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	High	Short / Rolling	Sharing experience / Coordination with other TFs
3.2 Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols	High	Short	
3.3 Liaise with farmers affected by goose damages to reduce agricultural conflicts	High	Short / Rolling	Cross-cutting TFs, share information
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	High	Medium	Exchange information and experience through webinar. Collate and summarise results (possibly workshop, if time and resources allow - cross-cutting with Agri TF)
4.4 Promote best practices of goose hunting including timing to minimize damage and significant disturbance to other species	Medium	Medium / Rolling	Exchange information and experience. Collate, summarise results (possibly workshop, time + resources needed)
4.5 Maintain low crippling rates	High	Medium / Rolling	Exchange information and experience with PFG TF. Investigate GG crippling rates.
4.6 Develop hunting techniques to further reduce crippling	Medium	Long / Rolling	Exchange information and experience. Collate, summarise results (possibly workshop, time and resources needed)
A.1 Produce and update periodically spatially explicit population size estimates based on agreed international monitoring	Essential	Short / Rolling	Consultation
A.2 Maintain an annually updated bag statistics database including geese harvested by any means	Essential	Ongoing / Rolling	Consultation
A.3 Maintain a spatially explicit database on goose damage to agriculture, other flora and fauna and risk to air safety	Essential	Medium / Rolling	Liaise with Agri TF. Some Range States already have relevant databases or collated information (France, the Netherlands, Norway).
C.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy and plan	Medium	Short / Rolling	Produce scientific papers - outreach to wider community - then member states can use the info to reach national stakeholders - improve and use the EGMP website news section, publish results, content, scientific results, outputs, not only announce meeting. Continue the outreach activities already taking place in several Range States.

**Annex 1. Members of the Greylag Goose Task Force as of May 2023**

Country	Representative	Affiliation
Belgium	Floris Verhaeghe	Nature and Forest Agency
	Koen Devos	Research institute for Nature & Forest (INBO) Flemish government
Denmark	Søren Egelund Rasmussen	Danish Environmental Protection Agency
Denmark/CIC - International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation	Iben Hove Sørensen (TF Coordinator)	Danish Hunters' Association
Finland	Antti Piironen	University of Turku
	Mikko Alhainen	Finnish Wildlife Agency
	Toni Laaksonen	University of Turku
France	Léo Bacon	Direction de la Recherche et de l'Appui Scientifique Office Français de la Biodiversité
	Charles-Henri de Barsac	Ministère de la Transition Ecologique et de la cohésion des territoires
	Matthieu Guillemain	Direction de la Recherche et de l'Appui Scientifique Office Français de la Biodiversité
Netherlands	Nick Warmelink	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
	Gerben Mensink	Policymaker Ecology, Province of Friesland
	Kees Koffijberg	Sovon Vogelonderzoek Nederland
Norway	Ingunn Tombre	Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA)
	Ove Martin Gundersen	Norwegian Farmers' Union

Spain	Mencía Serrano Ruiz de Dulanto (participating as observer to the GG process)	Subdirección General de Producciones Ganaderas y Cinegéticas DG de Producciones y Mercados Agrarios
Sweden	Per Risberg	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
FACE	Cy Griffin	Senior Conservation Manager
Nordic Hunters' Alliance	Olav Greivstad	Consultant
OMPO	Thibaut Powolny	Project Manager
Wetlands International	Szabolcs Nagy	Senior Advisor
Wildlife Management Unit Noord-Holland (Netherlands)	Nikkie van Grinsven	Ecologist
	Sofia Kolkman	Project Manager
EGMP Data Centre	Gitte Høj Jensen	Aarhus University
	Fred Johnson	Aarhus University
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat	Eva Meyers	EGMP Coordinator
	Shenay Huseynova	EGMP Programme Assistant