

AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



**9th MEETING OF THE
AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT
INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP**



18-20 June 2024, Tromsø, Norway

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TAIGA BEAN GOOSE TASK FORCE
FOR 2023/2024 AND DRAFT WORKPLAN FOR 2024/2025**

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with contributions from the members of Taiga Bean Goose Task Force

Summary:

This document provides an overview of the status and key activities that the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force has undertaken since June 2023 until May 2024. In addition, a proposed list of recommendations is included as well as the proposed annual workplan for 2024/2025.

Recommendations:

- Continue and strengthen January counts in all populations¹ for the delineation of the populations in overlapping wintering areas & population size estimates;
- Continue October and March counts in *Finland and NW Russia/Sweden, Denmark and Germany* population (*previously Central Management Unit*) in foreseeable future for the data generation for the IPM. Prepare to extend the coordinated counts to Finland during 2024-2026 and Denmark if relevant for robust population monitoring;
- In co-operation with the AEWA Secretariat, implement the ISSAP evaluation data collection and analysis;
- In co-operation with the AEWA Secretariat, plan, raise funds and prepare the workplan for the ISSAP extension/update/revision for 2024-2025;

For improved population size estimates, understanding of migration patterns and breeding distribution an annual pool of 30-50 GPS tags per population would be beneficial to be delivered by international funding in a form of a long-term monitoring project.

¹ In accordance with the decisions of the 8th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (MOP8) held in Budapest, Hungary in September 2022, the Western, Central and Eastern 1&2 Management Units of Taiga Bean Goose are now each regarded as individual populations ([AEWA/MOP8/ Res.8.2](#))

Adaptive Harvest Management

- Based on the bias-corrected population estimate the TBG of the *Finland and NW Russia/Sweden, Denmark and Germany* population is at the upper half of the target range of 60,000-80,000 birds. An estimated harvest of around 1,000 birds would likely keep the population stable, noting that this represents almost twice the reported average take. Based on the modelling the stabilizing harvest at a population level of 70,000, the harvestable surplus would be around 5,200 (+/- 2,200). It can be argued that any harvest below 5,200 is likely to keep the population above 70,000, while we are satisfied with a population of 60,000-80,000.

Noting the related uncertainties, the Task Force recommendation for harvest is less than 3,000 birds to ensure stable population development while providing opportunities for sustainable harvest.

Action requested from the EGM IWG:

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

Introduction

According to Rule 29 of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG) Modus Operandi, the EGM IWG may establish species and/or thematic Task Forces as necessary to deal with the preparation and coordination of decision papers and background documents, as well as to deal with other specific tasks.

The Taiga Bean Goose Task Force (TBG TF) was established in early 2017, following the recommendations of the 2nd Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG2) in June 2017, in Copenhagen. Mr Mikko Alhainen was identified as the Coordinator for the TBG TF. The current membership of the TBG TF is 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 and the Coordinator of the Task Force.

At the 3rd Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG3) in June 2018, in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, the TBG TF presented on the work progress since the establishment of the TF and presented recommendations to the EGM IWG, referring to document [AEWA/EGMIWG/3.13/Rev.1](#). Range States agreed on the extension of the period of the Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM related actions of the AEWA Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP from 2017-2018 until 2020 with small amendments, as recommended by the TBG TF. Moreover, the EGM IWG agreed on the establishment of a thematic sub-group to the Task Force including external goose monitoring experts not currently members of the Task Force, for the development of a monitoring framework.

At the 4th Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG4) in June 2019, in Perth, Scotland, UK, the TBG TF presented on the work progress since the EGM IWG3 and presented recommendations to the EGM IWG, referring to document [AEWA/EGMIWG/4.11](#). Range States agreed on the development steps on monitoring and population assessment at each Management Unit, based on the work of the thematic sub-group's work between IWG3 and IWG4.

At the 5th Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG5) in June 2020, online meeting, the TBG TF presented on the work progress since the EGM IWG4 and presented recommendations to the EGM IWG, referring to document [AEWA/EGMIWG/5.9/Rev.1](#). Range States agreed on the new non-AHM workplan, continuation of at least October and March counts for Central Management Unit and adopted the Integrated Population Model as the basis for Adaptive Harvest Management decisions.

At the 6th Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG6) in June 2021, online meeting, the TBG TF presented on the work progress since the EGM IWG5 and presented recommendations to the EGM IWG, referring to document [AEWA/EGMIWG/6.8](#). Range States agreed on the extension of the non-AHM workplan and adopted the final Integrated Population Model as the basis for Adaptive Harvest Management decisions.

At the 7th Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG7) in June 2022, in Helsinki, Finland, the TBG TF presented on the work progress since the EGM IWG6 and the recommendations to the EGM IWG, referring to document [AEWA/EGMIWG/7.12](#).

At the 8th Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG8) in June 2023, in Bonn, Germany, the TBG TF presented on the work progress since the EGM IWG7 and presented recommendations to the EGM IWG, referring to document [AEWA/EGM IWG/8.10](#).

This document provides an overview of the work that has taken place since the EGM IWG8 and the recommendations and workplan for the implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP) for the Taiga Bean Goose for 2024/2025.

1. Status of the Task Force Membership

Presently, the TBG TF has 18 members. Members represent six Range States, one observer organisation, the Data Centre and the AEWA Secretariat.

Mr. Mikko Alhainen, representing the Finnish Wildlife Agency, remains the current Coordinator of the TBG TF.

Details of the current membership of the TBG 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 organizations and the Coordinator of the Task Force.

2. Meetings

The meetings of the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force were held online involving the Task Force Coordinator and members, together with the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre.

As of 30 May 2024, the Task Force has had one online meeting and participated in two joint meetings of the EGMP Task Forces during the period between EGM IWG8 and EGM IWG9. Another meeting of the Task Force prior to EGM IWG9 is scheduled to take place in person, in the framework of the EGMP Task Force Day to be held on 17 June 2024 in Tromsø, Norway.

3. Report of key activities and outcomes

The EGM IWG agreed on following recommendations at the EGM IWG8:

- Strengthen and continue January counts of all populations for their delineation in overlapping wintering areas & population size estimates;
- Continue October and March counts of *Finland and NW Russia/Sweden, Denmark and Germany population (previously Central Management Unit)* in foreseeable future for the data generation for the IPM. Prepare to extend the coordinated counts to Finland and Denmark by 2023;

- In co-operation with the AEWA Secretariat, implement the ISSAP evaluation data collection and analysis.
- In co-operation with the AEWA Secretariat, plan, raise funds and prepare the workplan for the ISSAP extension/update/revision for 2024-2025.
- Recommendation for Adaptive Harvest Management.

The ten-year lifespan of the Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP is coming to an end in 2025. The evaluation of the ISSAP implementation has been progressed by the AEWA Secretariat and the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force. The process has been delayed due to lack of staff time. The TF Coordinator and the AEWA Secretariat are working to catch up on the process. The evaluation will provide the basis for the development of the next plan in form of an extension, update or revision, aiming at an adoption at AEWA MOP9 in 2025.

4. Recommendations

The Taiga Bean Goose Task Force would like to recommend the following to the EGM IWG:

- Continue and strengthen January counts of all populations for the delineation of the populations in overlapping wintering areas & population size estimates;
- Continue October and March counts of *Finland and NW Russia/Sweden, Denmark and Germany population (previously Central Management Unit)* in foreseeable future for the data generation for the IPM. Prepare to extend the coordinated counts to Finland during 2024-2026 and Denmark if relevant for robust population monitoring;
- In cooperation with the AEWA Secretariat, implement the ISSAP evaluation data collection and analysis;
- In cooperation with the AEWA Secretariat, plan, raise funds and prepare the workplan for the ISSAP extension/update/revision for 2024/2025 and for the following development of the Adaptive Harvest Management;
- For improved population size estimates, understanding of migration patterns and breeding distribution an annual pool of 30-50 GPS-tagged Taiga Bean Goose per population would be beneficial to be delivered by international funding in a form of a long-term monitoring project. The Range states are encouraged to fund monitoring project(s).
 - (This would take an initial investment of perhaps ~50 tags to be followed by annual addition of around 10-20 tags to keep up with the level of 30-50 tags)

Adaptive Harvest Management

- Based on the bias-corrected population estimate, the population size of the *Finland and NW Russia/Sweden, Denmark and Germany population* is at the upper half of the target range of 60,000-80,000 birds. An estimated harvest of around 1,000 birds would likely keep the population stable at around 75,000 birds, noting that this represents almost twice the reported average take. Based on the modelling the stabilizing harvest at population size of 70,000 would be around 5,200 (+/- 2,200). It can be argued that any harvest below 5,200 is likely to keep the population above 70,000, while we are satisfied with a population of 60,000-80,000.
- Noting the related uncertainties, the Task Force recommendation for harvest is less than 3,000 birds to ensure maintaining population at the target range, while providing opportunities for sustainable harvest.

5. Draft Workplan 2024/2025

The Taiga Bean Goose Task Force foresees to continue actively working to support the implementation of the ISSAP following the non-AHM workplan activities of previous years and recommended activities.

Total of at least three meetings is planned for the period between EGM IWG9 and EGM IWG10.

- 1) September-October 2024:
 - a. Organization and further planning of the TF activities based on outcomes of the EGM IWG9;
 - b. Evaluation and revision of the ISSAP.
- 2) February-March 2025:
 - a. Update on agreed tasks and progress and other agreed work.
 - b. ISSAP Workshop
- 3) June 2025: An in-person meeting back-to-back with EGM IWG10.

Additional meetings will be organised as necessary, especially for the evaluation and revision of the ISSAP.

Annex 1. Members of the Taiga Bean Task Force as of May 2024

Country	Representative	Affiliation
Denmark	Anthony Fox	Aarhus University
	Lene Midtgaard	Danish Hunters' Association
	Knud Flensted	BirdLife Denmark
Finland	Mikko Alhainen (<i>TF Coordinator</i>)	Finnish Wildlife Agency
	Toni Laaksonen	Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)
	Markus Piha	Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)
	Antti Piironen	University of Turku
Norway	Ingunn Tombre	Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, Department of Arctic Ecology
Sweden	Per Risberg	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Ukraine	Vasyl Kostyshyn	Institute of Zoology NAS of Ukraine, Department of Monitoring and Conservation of Animals
United Kingdom	Morag Milne (<i>representative for Scotland</i>)	Scottish Natural Heritage
	Bart Donato (<i>representative for England</i>)	Natural England
	Gillian Fisher	Natural England
Wetlands International	Szabolcs Nagy	Wetlands International
Data Centre	Iben Hove Sørensen	Aarhus University
	Fred Johnson	Aarhus University
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat	Bruno Pereira Leles	EGMP Coordinator
	Shenay Huseynova	EGMP Programme Assistant