

AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



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



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

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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 2023 until May 2024. In addition, a list of recommendations is included as well as the proposed annual workplan for 2024/2025.

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 of the Modus Operandi adopted for the AEWAs 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 EGM IWG.

At the 5th 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. AEWAsEGMIWG/5.15](#)) as well as the first draft of the AFMP (pending several updates and sections).

At the 6th 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 [AEWAsEGMIWG/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 7th 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. AEWAsEGMIWG/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.

At the 8th Meeting of the EGM IWG in June 2023, the GG TF presented its recommendations and workplan for 2023/2024 ([Doc. AEWAsEGMIWG/8.13](#)), supporting the recommendation from the Data Centre to postpone coordinated management across the range, maintaining the current level of offtake until data issues are resolved. Range States were recommended to focus mainly on offtake during the non-breeding season, thus minimising the need for breeding-season derogation. Furthermore, Range States were recommended to strive to provide the necessary data and a description of methods for reliable offtake estimates, post-breeding population size and post-breeding age ratios.

The overall role of the GG TF is to assist the EGM IWG in catalysing and coordinating the implementation of the AFMP workplan and monitoring activities related to the implementation of the [AEWAs 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 IWG8 and the Task Force's recommendations and draft workplan for 2024/2025.

1. Status of the Task Force Membership

Presently, the GG TF has 27 members. Members represent nine Range States (including one observer Range State), four observer organisations, the EGMP Data Centre and the AEWAs Secretariat. Iben Hove Sørensen was coordinating the GG TF from 2020 to 2023 and was succeeded by Malin Åhl in early 2024. One Range State is still to nominate official representatives to 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 one online meeting since EGM IWG8, which took place on 14 December 2023, and was also invited to participate in two joint meetings of the EGMP Task Forces on 26 September 2023 and 4 March 2024. An online TF meeting will take place on 16 May 2024, and an in-person meeting is planned on 17 June 2024 back-to-back with the EGM IWG9.

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 also provided feedback, during and between meetings of the TF, to various initiatives related to the management of the NW/SW European Population of Greylag Goose.

In December 2023, Sofia Kolkman presented a new system for monitoring the number of geese killed under derogation in the Netherlands, and Andreas Lindén and Tuomas Seimola presented their work on using GPS-tagged individuals to estimate population size and detect bias in monitoring of Greylag Goose in Finland. This inspired a discussion on wider use of GPS-tagged birds to monitor migratory movements and reduce bias in Greylag Goose population counts. At the joint TF meeting in March 2024, Jesper Madsen touched on this again, this time for Pink-footed Goose.

The GG TF has also received regular updates from the Data Centre, and in May 2024 Doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/9.10 was presented and discussed. On 22-23 November 2023, the GG TF Coordinator (then Iben Hove Sørensen) participated in the Monitoring and Data Collection Workshop held in Dragør, Denmark (see AEWA/EGMIWG/Inf.9.14).

Finally, the GG TF has contributed to the review of the draft EGMP Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report 2024 (Doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/9.8) submitted to EGM IWG9.

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/9.8). Specifically, Range States must provide:
 - Reliable seasonal offtake estimates by country and by biannual period (spring-summer: March-August and fall-winter: September-February) for the most recent five calendar years, clearly separating recreational hunting and derogation killing;
 - Summer or early autumn abundance by country, for those conducting such surveys, covering 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.
- All Range States to focus on offtake strategies minimising the need for breeding-season derogation (those with high winter offtake). As no unique level and distribution of offtake will meet Management Unit (MU) population targets, various ways of distributing offtake over areas and seasons must be evaluated, not only in terms of their ability to meet populations targets, but also in terms of cost, feasibility, and legal mandates. It is important to note that while derogation is a legal means of alleviating local socio-economic conflicts, it should not be used in a planned manner to meet a population target.
- Range States are urged to discuss practical considerations and constraints they may have in mitigating socio-economic conflicts and in managing recreational hunting so that trade-offs and limitations associated with efforts to coordinate offtake can be better understood by the EGM IWG.
- The GG TF continues to exchange general information and experiences with other species-specific Task Forces and liaises with the Agriculture and Flight Safety Task Forces, 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.
- The GG TF should take note of the deadline for agreeing on the protocols for the assessment of indicators and reviewing draft protocols produced by the Data Centre. The procedure is to be agreed on at EGM IWG10.
- 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 2024/2025

Table 1. Greylag Goose Task Force Draft Workplan for 2024/2025

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 and the Netherlands).
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 2024

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	Lene Midtgaard	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	Province of Friesland
	Kees Koffijberg	Sovon Vogelonderzoek Nederland
	Sofia Kolkman	Wildlife Management Unit Noord-Holland
Norway	Ingunn Tombre	Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA)
	Ove Martin Gundersen	Norwegian Farmers' Union

Spain	Mencía Serrano Ruiz de Dulanto (Temporarily replaced by Daniel Toro González) (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
	Malin Åhl (TF Coordinator)	
FACE	Cy Griffin	Senior Conservation Manager
Nordic Hunters' Alliance	Olav Greivstad	Consultant
OMPO	Thibaut Powolny	Project Manager
Wetlands International	Szabolcs Nagy	Senior Advisor
EGMP Data Centre	Iben Hove Sørensen	Aarhus University
	Fred Johnson	
	Ryan Germain	
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat	Bruno Leles	EGMP Coordinator
	Shenay Huseynova	EGMP Programme Assistant