

AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



8th MEETING OF THE AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP



20-22 June 2023, Bonn, Germany

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE FOR 2022/2023 AND DRAFT WORKPLAN FOR 2023/2024

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with contributions from the members of the Agriculture Task Force



Summary:

This document provides an overview of the status and key activities that the Agriculture 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 2022/2023.

Recommendations:

The Task Force continues to work with the activities referred to in the Workplan (see Table 1).

The EGMIWG should discuss and decide whether the overview of studies compiled in the Google Docs should include a broad range of goose studies, hence facilitating the general knowledge on goose-related research for all EGMP members and beyond. This will also respond to the various actions in the ISSMPs aiming to share knowledge and experiences about a range of issues, extending from management measures such as scaring techniques to damage assessments and best practice guides.

Action requested from the EGM IWG:

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

Introduction

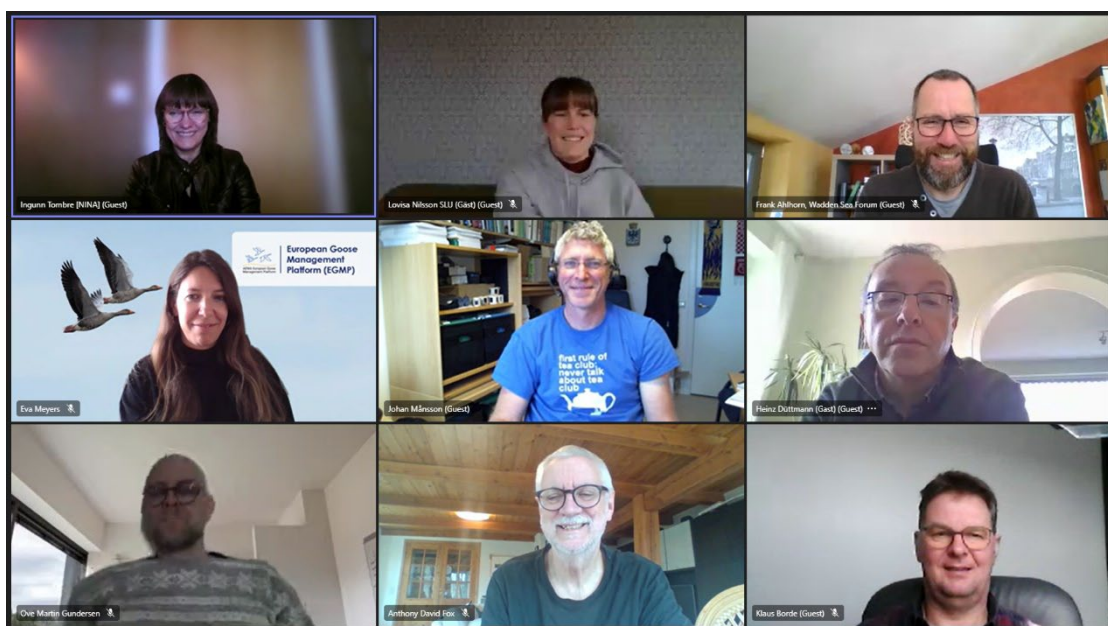
The role of the Agriculture Task Force is to assist the working group, the species-specific Task Forces and processes in the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP). In this document, an overview of activities since the 7th Meeting of the AEWA European Goose Management International Working Group, which took place on 21-23 June 2022 in Helsinki, is given. A draft workplan for 2023/2024 is also presented.

1. Status of the Task Force Membership

The full list of members is presented in Annex 1. Currently, the Task Force has 27 members representing (I) ten Range States, (II) five non-governmental organisations (BirdLife International, Copa Cogeca, FACE, Wadden Sea Forum and Wetlands International), (III) the Data Centre and (IV) the AEWA Secretariat.

2. Meetings

The meetings of the Agriculture Task Force were held online, involving the Task Force Coordinator and members, together with the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre. In addition to the meetings in the smaller Webinar Planning Group, one meeting of the Agriculture Task Force took place in this period, on 17 March 2023. There has also been some email correspondence between group members.



Task force members attending an online meeting (Photo: Shenay Huseynova ©)

3. Report of key activities and outcomes

Communication, outreach and webinars

Update on progress and prospects of the Agriculture Task Force was presented by the Task Force Coordinator at a webinar in the Wadden Sea Forum Goose Management Group on 21 February 2023. The presentation can be found at <https://www.waddensea-forum.org/en/topics-mobile/goose-management>, where two other EGMP-presentations can be found as well. Various presentations with information about the Agriculture Task Force as well as the EGMP as such have been given locally by Task Force members. There is an increasing interest in the platform and the ongoing processes.

Since an EGMP webinar was already held in the first part of 2023 (*Geese and Risks to Air Safety*, 10 January 2023), the Task Force is planning to arrange a webinar in the autumn of 2023. The Webinar Planning Group maintains a long list of suggestions for webinar topics. For the next webinar, the members of the Task Force agreed to focus on ways of improving the stakeholder involvement as a topic. For the Agriculture Task Force, that means farmers and farmers' representatives. In Table 1, this is specified as a response to the issues of the cross-cutting actions in the ISSMPs. Based on discussions in the previous online meeting of the Task Force, it became evident that the Agriculture Task Force should have an active role in the EGMP webinar to be held during the Joint Meeting of EGMP Task Forces on 19 June 2023. The webinar will be organized in hybrid mode, allowing both the presenters and the audience to opt between participating in person or joining the session online. The webinar will focus on impact models, with the impact of goose foraging on crops playing an essential role.

Information about relevant studies on geese

The overview of information about relevant studies on geese and farmland has gone through a "cleaning process", now providing relevant information such as:

- Species
- Site of the study
- Country
- Theme (a set of categories has been suggested, and new categories can be added as desired)
- Publication type (scientific paper, technical report, project in progress)
- Contact person
- Email to the contact person
- Title of the study
- Link to online publication (if any)

Hopefully, this will lower the threshold for adding new studies as the aim is to keep such an overview relatively updated. The list is available on Google Docs:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10VRUPxA9UIFo6FxbZi_EQTRDckDteyZh8XXalehVvao/edit#gid=655288406

There has been a brief discussion in the Task Force whether this list should also include other EGMP studies, as there already are some studies that are relevant for EGMP, but not necessarily directly linked to agricultural aspects. This may open for more entries also from other members of EGMP network.

4. Recommendations

The Agriculture TF would like to recommend the following to the EGM IWG:

- The Task Force continues to work with the activities referred to in the Workplan (see Table 1).
- The EGM IWG should discuss and decide whether the overview of studies compiled in the Google Docs should include a broad range of goose studies, hence facilitating the general knowledge on goose-related research for all EGMP members and beyond. This will also respond to the various actions in the ISSMPs aiming to share knowledge and experiences about a range of issues, extending from management measures such as scaring techniques to damage assessments and best practice guides.



Protection of the lettuce crops through fences preventing goose families from entering the field from the seaside. (Photo: Ingunn Tombre ©).

5. Draft Workplan 2023/2024

Below is an overview of Agriculture Task Force related issues of the cross-cutting actions in the ISSMPs, copied from the AFMP Annual Workplan.

Table 1. Draft Workplan for 2023/2024 of the Agriculture Task Force

Actions from the ISSMP	Priority	Timescale	Agriculture TF
1.2 Promote goose-based eco-tourism at selected key sites	Medium	Medium	
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[3]	High	Short / Rolling	Webinars with relevant information and experiences have been arranged, including a webinar 10 June 2022. Here, knowledge and experiences were presented about restoration of grasslands (Belgium), the establishment of accommodation fields (Finland) and crop damage inspection and compensation (Sweden). The webinar had more than 50 participants. The AGRI TF has a webinar organising committee which is planning more events for 2023. A seminar/webinar will be arranged at the Task Force Day 19 June in Bonn. Thereafter another webinar will be arranged in the coming year. Arrangements will be announced when details (timing and content) are ready. See 3.3 below.
3.2 Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols	High	Short	Support the DC and MC as consultants in the process, both during the development of the impact models, as well as afterwards.
3.3 Liaise with farmers affected by goose damages to reduce agricultural conflicts	High	Short / Rolling	Communication and information about preventive measures in order to reduce crop damage and conflicts are important tasks in the AGRI TF, and it is expected that activities by members are communicated to the farmer communities in each range state. The AGRI TF has representatives from this stakeholder group, and farmers' representatives are invited to Webinars. Presentations are available afterward at the EGMP website (as pdf-files or recorded presentations). In 2023, a webinar tailored to stakeholders (farmer perspectives) is planned where how to include stakeholders more actively in processes will be a central topic.
A.3 Maintain a spatially explicit database on goose damage to agriculture, other flora and fauna and risk to air safety	Essential	Medium / Rolling	A document listing relevant reports and papers containing information about goose damage to culture, flora and fauna and risk to air safety will be available as Google document. Metadata added is: goose species, site and country, theme, publication status (a report or a scientific paper), contact person with email-address, title of the reference and an active link to the reference. All EGMP-members are encouraged to add items here. About goose impacts to other flora and fauna, this will be dealt with in a presentations at the Task Force Day 19 June in Bonn.
B.1 Produce best practice guide on establishing refuge areas (size, management, subsidies)	Medium	Short	Meet online, share experience and knowledge. Some experience and knowledge were presented at webinars in 2022. More relevant information on the topic is planned for 2023. See above.
B.2 Provide guidance on conflict resolution and how to make this consistent with the European legal framework, including the Common Agricultural Policy	High	Short	Meet online, share experience and knowledge. Consulting other activities in EGMP.
B.3 Create a toolbox for decisions in relation to determining significant damage (including metrics, benchmarking, verification, monitoring, various management techniques to prevent damage, compensation)	High	Short	Meet online, share experience and knowledge. Webinars with relevant content were arranged in 2022 and more is planned for 2023 (including presentations at the Task Force Day before IWG8).
B.5 Share experience concerning methods to prevent damage to agriculture and risks to human health, air safety as well as to other flora and fauna	Medium	Medium	Meet online, share experience and knowledge. Webinars with relevant content were arranged in 2022 and more is planned for 2023 (including presentations at the Task Force Day before IWG8).
C.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy and plan	Medium	Short / Rolling	Continue the outreach activities by all members of the AGRI TF and support the EGMP Communication Group. A fact sheet for the AGRI TF will be developed in the autumn 2023.

Annex 1. Members of the Agriculture Task Force as of May 2023

Country	Representative	Affiliation
Belgium	(Joost Vanpeteghem)	<i>Agriculture damage expert, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries</i>
		<i>Flemish Government</i>
	Frank Huysentruyt	Institute for Nature and Forest Research Flemish Government
Denmark	Søren Rasmussen	Danish Environment Protection Agency
	Anthony Fox	Aarhus University, Department of Bioscience
	Lene Midtgaard	Danish Hunters Association
Finland	Jukka Forsman	Natural Resource Institute Finland
Germany	Heinz Düttmann	Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Protection of Lower Saxony
Iceland	Bjarni Jónasson	Environment Agency of Iceland
Netherlands	Bart Nolet	Netherlands Institute of Ecology
		Animal Ecology
	Mark Westebring	The Fauna Fund
	Sofia Kolkman	Provincial Fauna Management Unit, Noord-Holland
Nikkie van Grinsven	Provincial Fauna Management Unit, Noord-Holland	
Norway	Ingunn Tombre (Coordinator)	Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, Department of Arctic Ecology
	Ove Martin Gundersen	Norwegian Farmers' Union
Sweden	Johan Månsson	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences /Wildlife Damage Centre
	Lovisa Nilsson	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences /Wildlife Damage Centre
Ukraine	Vasiliy Kostiusyn	Institute of Zoology NAS of Ukraine, Department of Monitoring and Conservation of Animals
United Kingdom	Rae McKenzie	NatureScot
BirdLife International	Ariel Brunner	BirdLife Europe/BirdLife International
Copa Cogeca	Klaus Borde	Copa Cogeca
FACE	Cy Griffin	FACE
FACE	David Scallan	FACE (Based in Belgium)
Wadden Sea Forum	Frank Ahlhorn	Wadden Sea Forum
Wetlands International	Szabolcs Nagy	Wetlands International
	Gitte Høj Jensen	Data Centre
	Eva Meyers	AEWA Secretariat
	Shenay Huseynova	AEWA Secretariat