

AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



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



21-23 June 2021, Online conference format

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE AND
THE DRAFT WORKPLAN FOR 2021/2022**

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with contributions from the members of the Agriculture Task Force



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Introduction

The role of the Agriculture Task Force is to assist the Working Group, Task Forces and processes in the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP). In this document, an overview of activities since the 5th meeting of the AEWA European Goose Management International Working Group 15-18 June 2020 (virtual) is given. A draft workplan for 2021/2022, pending on the incorporation of the outcomes of the 3rd meeting of the Agriculture Task Force being held before the 6th meeting of the AEWA European Goose Management International Working Group 21-23 June 2021 (also virtual), is also presented.

1. Status of the Task Force Membership

The Agriculture Task Force consists of 28 members as at 15 April 2021, representing ten Range States and representatives from Birdlife International, Copa Cogeca, FACE, the Wadden Sea Forum, Wetlands International, the EGMP Data Centre and the EGMP Secretariat (Annex 1).

2. Meetings

All the members of the Task Force have met twice in online meetings: 4 September 2020 and 12 March 2021. At these meetings various issues from the workplan have been discussed. As we are aiming for transparent processes, we have also thrived to inform about, and discuss, activities in the other Task Forces as well as administrative and operational issues under AEWA, the EGMP Data Centre and the Secretariat. This was achieved by important contributions from the Data Centre and the Secretariat.

Another online meeting was held on 26 March 2021 in a sub-group/organising committee to plan a specific webinar on agricultural issues (details are provided in section 3 of this document).

3. Report of key activities and outcomes

Activities in the Task Force reflect the workplan for 2020-2021, and the different activities are listed below.

Metadata overview

In order to create a file providing information about relevant activities/projects with themes at the interphase between geese and agriculture, various access options and platforms have been discussed. As the main aim for such an overview is to share knowledge about relevant information (goose impacts, species-, crop- and site-specific patterns and trends), contact persons and available publications/outreach should be easily available. It has now been decided that the document with information about all the activities will be kept in the **GitLab platform**, a platform already in use by the Modelling Consortium for various data files, scripts, etc. The overview can be found following this link <https://gitlab.com/aewa-egmp/agriculture-task-force/list-of-activities> and is open access. If we need to add a new activity, or something needs to be edited (e.g. add a publication reference linked to one of the activities) the document should be downloaded, edited, new data added and then the document must be uploaded again. If more files from the Agriculture Task Force need to be stored and made available in this dynamic way, they may be uploaded here as well.

Cost assessments

Cost assessments will make the goose problems for agriculture visual and justify the various actions implemented in the different Range States. This will be the outcome of impact models and the Modelling

Consortium has work in progress with several members also being members of the present task force. Processes will be coordinated, and results will be evaluated and discussed in the coming year. Some initiatives have also been initiated by other Task Forces (the Task Force for the Svalbard/SW Scotland population of Barnacle Goose), but progress needs funding.

Cross-cutting actions in the EGMP

As the different International Single Species Management Plans (ISSMPs) progress in their implementation phase, several cross-cutting actions emerge. In response to this, the Agriculture Task Force will organise webinars in order to move forward in the management platform. This has been discussed in the previous months. At webinars, speakers can present themes responding to the three levels of objectives in the ISSMPs:

1. **Fundamental** objectives (*what is most important for certain interest groups*)
2. **Means** objectives (*what are we going to do to achieve the fundamental objectives*)
3. **Process** objectives (*how to actually implement the other objectives*)

Relevant for the Agriculture Task Force is the **Fundamental objective II. Minimise agriculture damage and conflicts**, with two related means objectives: **Geese are kept away from sensitive areas** and **Conflicts and risks in sensitive areas are managed**. For these objectives, several actions are identified and are relevant for an Agriculture Task Force organised webinar:

Action 2.2.

Provide accommodation areas to reduce risks and conflicts at sensitive areas through e.g. subsidies.

Action 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.

Action 3.2

Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols.

Action 3.3

Liaise with farmers affected by goose damages to reduce agricultural conflicts.

An organisation committee has been established with the following members: Heinz Düttmann (Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Protection of Lower Saxony), Frank Ahlhorn (the Wadden Sea Forum), Johan Månsson and Lovisa Nilsson (both from Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences/Wildlife Damage Centre), and Ingunn Tombre (Norwegian Institute for Nature Research). Two webinars, led by the Agriculture Task Force, will be arranged:

1. ***At the interphase between geese and agriculture: Setting the Scene***
2. ***At the interphase between geese and agriculture: How to manage the damage and conflicts***

The first webinar will be arranged in late May 2021, and one speaker from each Range State in the task force (all speakers identified and have accepted) will give a presentation focusing on **where** the damage occurs in their Range State, **when** it occurs, **what** is damaged, and by **who**. This is information already partially available in the EGMP national reports, but we anticipate that oral presentations including maps, figures and photos will reach an even broader audience as in principle there are no limits for the number of participants in this format. All EGMP members will be invited and we have decided that each Task Force member can invite two relevant

participants. We find this “semi-open” webinar most feasible at this stage, and as pdf-files of the presentations will be available afterwards, messages will reach an even broader audience.

The second webinar will be arranged in autumn as a direct follow-up to the first webinar, and details will be decided and finalised at a later stage. Being arranged in this format, at the same day (three-hour webinars) with information from several EGMP Range States, we anticipate that it will be easier to compare the situation among Range States, sharing knowledge and guidance in goose management.

The Task Force also hopes to organise a face-to-face workshop in November, but content and details remain to be discussed depending on the pandemic situation.

4. Recommendations and Draft Workplan 2021/2022

Activities in the Agriculture Task Force continue in 2021/2022, and will focus on the following:

- A continuation of the collection of information and present overviews of **ongoing and relevant activities** (the metadata-file in GitLab). Coordinates will also be added to each activity producing a map demonstrating where the different activities are implemented. A map like this can be presented at the EGMP webpage, where we also can produce a short note describing the content of the file and its availability and use.
- Arrange the two webinars as described above.
- Arrange a face-to-face workshop in November, but details must be finalised at a later stage (early autumn).
- Any other matters that may arise during the various processes in EGMP.

Table 1. Agriculture Task Force Draft Workplan 2021/2022 (based on relevant actions from the Greylag Goose and Barnacle goose ISSMPs)

Actions from the ISSMP	Priority	Timescale	Agri TF
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	Webinars (one in spring and one in the autumn 2021) will be arranged by the Agri TF, where this will be dealt with. Presentations will be from each range state, opening for experience and knowledge sharing.
3.2 Establish an internationally coordinated programme to assess agricultural damage including monitoring and assessment protocols	High	Short	1) Support the DC and MC as consultants in the process, both during the development of the impact models, as well as afterwards. 2) Discuss and share experience in a possible workshop to be organised in autumn 2021
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 also has representatives from this stakeholder group, and farmers' representatives are invited to Webinars (where pdf-files of the presentations are distributed afterwards).
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 file with available information in a metadata overview about ongoing projects/activities regarding geese and agriculture is compiled (available via GitLab).
B.1 Produce best practice guide on establishing refuge areas (size, management, subsidies)	Medium	Short	Meet online, share experience and knowledge. This will also be an issue to consider at a webinar in 2021.
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
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. This will also be an issue to consider at a webinar in 2021.
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	Discuss and share experience in a possible workshop to be organised in autumn 2021. This will also be an issue to consider at a webinar in 2021.
C.1 Develop and implement a communication strategy and plan	Medium	Short/Rolling	Continue the outreach activities by all members of the AGRI TF.

Annex 1. Members of the Agriculture Task Force as of April 2021

Country/Organisation	Representative	Affiliation
Belgium	(Joost Vanpeteghem)	Agriculture damage expert Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Flemish Government
	Bram D'hondt	Expert species damage Agency for Nature and Forests, Flemish Government
	Frank Huysentruyt	Institute for Nature and Forest Research, Flemish Government
Denmark	Soren 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 Duettmann	Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Protection of Lower Saxony
Iceland	Bjarni Jónasson	Environment Agency of Iceland
Netherlands	Bart Nolet	Animal Ecology, Netherlands Institute of Ecology
	Mark Westebring	The Fauna Fund
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 Center
	Lovisa Nilsson	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences /Wildlife Damage Center
Ukraine	Olesya Petrovych	Chief Specialist in Department of Protected Areas Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine
	Vasyl Kostyushyn	Institute of Zoology NAS of Ukraine, Department of Monitoring and Conservation of Animals
United Kingdom	Rae McKenzie	Scottish Natural Heritage
BirdLife International	Ariel Brunner	BirdLife Europe/BirdLife International
Copa Cogeca	Klaus Borde	Copa Cogeca
FACE	Cy Griffin	FACE

FACE	David Scallan	FACE
Wadden Sea Forum	Frank Ahlhorn	Wadden Sea Forum Secretariat
Wetlands International	Szabolcs Nagy	Wetlands International
EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre	Henning Heldbjerg	EGMP Data Centre
	Gitte Høj Jensen	EGMP Data Centre
	Eva Meyers	UNEP/AEWA Secretariat
	Shenay Huseynova	UNEP/AEWA Secretariat