

**AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM**



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



*18-20 June 2024, Tromsø, Norway*

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

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**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 OF THE 8<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF  
THE AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT  
INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Report finalised after written consultation with the meeting participants.

## **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

<b>AEWA</b>	Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds
<b>AFMP</b>	Adaptive Flyway Management Programme
<b>AHM</b>	Adaptive Harvest Management
<b>BG E. Greenland population</b>	East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland Population of the Barnacle Goose
<b>BG Russia population</b>	Russia/Germany & Netherlands Population of the Barnacle Goose
<b>EGM IWG</b>	European Goose Management International Working Group
<b>EGMP</b>	European Goose Management Platform
<b>FRP</b>	Favourable Reference Population
<b>FRVs</b>	Favourable Reference Values
<b>GG</b>	Greylag Goose
<b>HPAI</b>	Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza
<b>IPM</b>	Integrated Population Model
<b>ISSMP</b>	International Single Species Management Plan
<b>AEWA MOP</b>	Meeting of the Parties to AEWA
<b>MU</b>	Management Unit
<b>PfG</b>	Pink-footed Goose
<b>TBG</b>	Taiga Bean Goose
<b>TC</b>	Technical Committee

AGENDA ITEM	DECISION	AGREED ACTION
<b>Adoption of the agenda</b>	The EGM IWG adopted the provisional agenda ( <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.2/Rev.1</a></i> ).	
<b>Admission of permanent observers and individual expert observers to EGM IWG8</b>		
<b>Report of the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre (2022-2023)</b>	The EGM IWG took note of the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre report ( <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.3</a></i> ).	
<b>EGMP National Reports</b>	The EGM IWG took note of the summary of EGMP National Reports ( <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.4</a></i> ).	<p>The EGMP TFs continue updating and keeping an overview of the workplans corresponding to the ISSMPs and ISSAPs.</p> <p>The Secretariat and the Data Centre further conceptualise the process for national reporting and submit a proposal to EGM IWG after the next national reporting cycle in 2025. TBG and PfG sections can be included after the revised ISSMP/ISSAP have been approved at AEWA MOP9 in 2025.</p>
<b>Introduction to the evaluation and revision of AEWA Species Action and Management Plans</b>	The EGM IWG took note of the process for the evaluation and revision of AEWA Species Action and Management Plans.	

<p><b>Status of the TBG ISSAP. Evaluation and review process</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the status of the TBG ISSAP evaluation and revision process.</p>	<p>The TBG TF Coordinator will keep the EGM IWG informed about the next steps in the evaluation and revision process.</p>
<p><b>TBG Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the TBG Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report (<i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1</a></i>).</p>	
<p><b>Report and Recommendations from the TBG TF</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the TBG TF report and recommendations (<i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.10</a></i>) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.</p> <p>The EGM IWG agreed on a total annual harvest of 1,000 birds (580 birds for Finland, 300 birds for Sweden and 120 birds for Denmark) in the former Central MU for the next two seasons: 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.</p>	<p>Based on the TBG TF Report, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen and continue January counts in all MUs.</li> <li>• Continue October and March counts in CMU and prepare to extend the coordinated counts to Finland and Denmark.</li> <li>• Implement the ISSAP evaluation data collection and analysis.</li> <li>• Plan, raise funds and prepare the workplan for the ISSAP update/revision.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Status of the PfG ISSMP. Evaluation and review process.</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the status of the ISSMP evaluation and revision process.</p>	
<p><b>PfG Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report.</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the PfG Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report (<i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1</a></i>).</p>	

<p><b>Report and Recommendations of the PFG TF</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.</p> <p>EGM IWG agreed, in light of the data uncertainties, to postpone until its next annual meeting in June 2024 the decision on a new regulation of harvest while the Data Centre attempts to better estimate the magnitude and reasons for the biases in the May and November counts. However, the harvest for 2023/2024 should not exceed the total harvest during the last two years averaging to 9,577 (with the following allocation between Norway and Denmark: 2,873 and 6,704). EGM IWG also agreed that this postponement is an exceptional one-off action and shall not be considered as a precedent for any future decisions when facing comparable circumstances.</p>	<p>Based on the PFG TF Report, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start the evaluation and revision process, including planning a dedicated workshop to undertake the revision of the ISSMP in 2024.</li> <li>• Engage in further dissemination initiatives to promote the EGMP flyway approach and uptake by national stakeholders.</li> <li>• Internal review of annual reports.</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, following the postponement of harvest regulations, the following actions shall be taken, as soon as possible, to address the data uncertainties and provide an example of how to tackle significant uncertainty in model estimates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Data Centre to investigate biases in May and November counts and outline possible options for tackling them;</li> <li>- The Range States and the Data Centre to maintain close communication as soon as the Data Centre has concluded the investigation and has proposed possible actions;</li> <li>- The RSs to implement the preferred actions as soon as possible.</li> </ul> <p>Denmark pledged to provide an in-kind contribution of 200 hours of staff time necessary to investigate and analyse the biases in the counts.</p>
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		Finally, Denmark will communicate with Danish hunters to reduce hunting bag in Denmark on a voluntary basis.
<b>Status Report of the AFMP for the BG E. Greenland Population</b>	The EGM IWG took note of the AFMP Status Report and acknowledged the proposed timeline for the activities in Table 1 in <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.5</a></i> .	
<b>BG E. Greenland Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report</b>	The EGM IWG took note of the BG E. Greenland Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report ( <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1</a></i> ).	Ireland shall submit census data from 2023 as soon as possible, so that the pending assessment can be done.
<b>Report and Recommendations of the BG TF for E. Greenland Population</b>	The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations ( <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.11</a></i> ) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.	Based on the BG TF Report for E. Greenland Population, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During the next meeting of the BG TF for the E. Greenland population, offtake scenarios including possible levels of avian flu will be discussed further.</li> <li>- Furthermore, coordination of offtake between the UK and Iceland will be discussed as soon as Ireland submits flyway data and the results from the assessment are available.</li> <li>- Finally, the impacts of HPAI in new and ongoing work will be considered, and how this might impact on the AFMP and the agreed management activities.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Status Report of the AFMP for the BG Russia Population</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the AFMP Status Report and acknowledged the proposed timeline for the activities in Table 1 in <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.6</a></i>.</p>	
<p><b>BG Russia Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report (<i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1</a></i>).</p>	<p>The EGM IWG agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an HPAI Contact Group across EGMP populations to liaise with the multi-institutional Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds. This would offer suggestions to the EGM IWG for integrating HPAI considerations into goose management (Secretariat to circulate to RSs and observers an invite for the contact group and establish a link with the Scientific TF). The Data Centre will help facilitate the work of the contact group.</li> <li>• Continue to work on getting systematic monitoring in place for variables used in the population model, e.g. summer and winter counts, proportion of juveniles and offtake information.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Report and Recommendations of the BG TF for Russia Population</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations (<i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.12</a></i>) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.</p> <p>In terms of coordination of offtake, the Netherlands and Germany agreed that if significant derogation activities were planned in Germany, there would be coordination in place between the two countries. Otherwise, coordination should mainly take place within the Netherlands, where the national FRP has now been distributed across the provinces. In response to population levels approaching the provincial FRP levels suspension or significant reduction of derogations has already taken place in some provinces in the Netherlands since EGM IWG7 in 2022.</p>	<p>Based on the report of BG TF for Russia population, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024 (see further details in the report):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate a TF Coordinator, as soon as possible. The Netherlands is willing to guide the next TF meeting and will look into the possibility of finding a candidate and funding for the TF coordinator, post-EGM-IWG9 in 2024.</li> <li>• Implement activities in the workplan.</li> <li>• The Dutch Modelling Consortium confirmed that they will do the intermediate assessment of the population status, including all three management units in 2024.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Status Report of the GG AFMP</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the AFMP Status Report and acknowledged the proposed timeline for the activities in Table 1 in <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.7</a></i>.</p>	
<p><b>GG Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report.</p>	

<p><b>Report and Recommendations of the GG TF</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the Task Force report and recommendations(<i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.13</a></i>) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.</p> <p>The EGM IWG acknowledged that due to data quality issues, at present the population cannot be managed in a coordinated manner across the Range States. As agreed previously, the management approach based on info-gap analysis has ceased as of now. Considering that the population shows no declining trend, until data quality issues are resolved, the Range States can, as a minimum, maintain the current level of offtake.</p> <p>The EGM IWG agreed that all Range States will mainly/where possible focus on offtake strategies with proportionally higher non-breeding season offtake thus minimising the need for breeding-season derogation (Figure 3.3-10 in <i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8</a></i>), and within their respective national law.</p> <p>The EGM IWG noted that the average annual offtake of such strategies in the range of 134,000 is projected to bring the population closer to the target level by 2030.</p> <p>While taking into account this reference offtake and the FRP, Range States will be setting offtake regulations independently. The Range states will however continue working together with the Data Centre, and report on their activities, both number, methods and actions taken in relation to offtake management at national and regional level.</p>	<p>Based on the GG TF Report, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2023 (see further details in the report):</p> <p>Range States strive to provide the necessary data and a description of methods for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• Summer or early autumn abundance by country for those conducting such surveys; all years in which they are available;</li> <li>• Post-breeding age ratios for all years and countries where available (should include counts of young and total sample size);</li> <li>• Winter counts for all years and countries where available.</li> </ul> <p>The GG TF continues the discussion on the use and way forward of how levels and distribution of offtake can/should be evaluated in terms of cost, feasibility, and legal mandates. Specifically, take into account that derogation cannot be prescribed in a planned manner.</p> <p>The GG TF continues to exchange general information and experiences with other species-specific TFs and liaises with the Agriculture TF, thus</p>
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		<p>strengthening the relations between EGMP TFs and benefiting from the work already carried out on other species. More specifically, TFs seek to collaborate on reducing crippling rates of goose species.</p> <p>The GG TF members actively promote available material such as the recorded EGMP webinars and briefing notes.</p> <p>The GG TF will keep the online workplan active and updated between meetings.</p>
<b>Monitoring and Data Collection</b>	<p>The EGM IWG supports a face-to-face monitoring and data-collection workshop during autumn 2023 (~ November) to be hosted by the Data Centre and attended by key individuals responsible for monitoring as well as the TF coordinators.</p>	<p>The Data Centre will plan for a workshop in the autumn of 2023, provided that funding is made available for hosting the arrangement.</p>
<b>Goose impact assessments (for BG, GG, PfG)</b>	<p>The EGM IWG agreed that the task (as defined in the ISSMPs and AFMPs for BG and GG), has been delivered and provides compelling evidence for the correlation between goose numbers (BG and PfG) and agricultural damage, with a focus on grasslands.</p>	<p>The EGM IWG agreed that the assessment has provided valuable input to the forthcoming evaluation and revision processes of the PfG ISSMP. Range States can use the information for adjustment of their national goose management schemes. For topics where the information is limited, e.g. the grazing impacts of GG, especially during the summer period, and grazing consequences for the delayed harvest and on other crops, Range States may wish to encourage, at their own discretion, that further research is undertaken.</p>

<p><b>Report and Recommendations of the Agriculture TF</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations (<i>doc.</i> <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.14</a>) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.</p> <p>The EGM IWG agreed that 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 and be incorporated into the EGMP website.</p>	<p>The AEWA Secretariat will investigate how to incorporate studies and technical reports into the EGMP website.</p>
<p><b>Proposal for the establishment of a Flight Safety TF</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the motivation for the establishment of a Flight Safety TF and approved the proposed Terms of Reference (<i>doc.</i> <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.15</a>).</p> <p>Albert de Hoon from the Netherlands was welcomed as the coordinator of the TF.</p>	<p>The Secretariat will reach out to the EGM IWG and permanent observers requesting nominations for TF representatives.</p> <p>NGRs and permanent observers are encouraged to identify and designate a representative to join the TF and communicate nominations to the Secretariat.</p> <p>The TF Coordinator Albert de Hoon will convene a meeting in autumn 2023.</p>

<p><b>Report from the EGMP Communications Contact Group and future work</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the work done by the EGMP Communications Contact Group.</p> <p>It was agreed that a communications focal point for each EGMP TF would be beneficial for the communications work under the EGMP.</p> <p>Mr. Ove Martin Gundersen volunteered to become a communications focal point for either the GG or PfG TF.</p>	<p>The Secretariat will add a section or page on the EGMP website that provides information about the species population flyway and MUs.</p> <p>Moreover, the Secretariat together with the TFs will develop species fact sheets. These fact sheets will be drafted jointly by the Secretariat and the respective EGMP TFs.</p> <p>The Secretariat will reach out to the TF members to identify volunteers for the communications focal point roles. Mr Ove Martin Gundersen has agreed to be a communications focal point for both Pink-footed Goose Task Force and Greylag Goose Task Force.</p>
<p><b>EGMP Finance Report for 2022/2023</b></p>	<p>The EGM IWG took note of the EGMP finance report for 2022-2023 (<i>doc. <a href="#">AEWA/EGMIWG/8.16</a></i>).</p> <p>The UK will endeavour to seek the remaining 50 % of their indicated voluntary contribution towards the EGMP budget 2023. Moreover, Belgium pledged EUR 35,000 for the Data Centre and the Netherlands clarified that their contribution was delayed, but underway.</p>	<p>The Secretariat will liaise with the Range States and revise the guidance on reporting in-kind contributions in advance of circulation before EGM IWG9.</p> <p>Additional EGMP-related projects and EGMP-related activities will be integrated and listed in the TF reports to reflect the wider commitments of range states on a national level.</p>

<b>EGMP budget and costed Programme of Work for 2024</b>	<p>The Range States agreed on the proposed EGMP budget for 2024 (Annex 1 of this report) and adopted the suggested costed Programme of Work for 2024 (Annex 2 of this report).</p> <p>The Range States agreed for budget 2024 to use the revised indicative scale of voluntary contributions that was agreed in 2022 (Annex 3 of this report).</p>	
<b>Election of the new Chair of EGM IWG</b>	<p>Sweden was elected as the next Chair of the EGM IWG until June 2025. Prof. Petter Kjellander was introduced to the EGM IWG and will assume the role of the Chair for the next period.</p>	
<b>Date and Venue of the next EGM IWG meeting in 2024</b>	<p>Norway kindly offered to host the next EGM IWG meeting, which was welcomed by the IWG. The dates for the EGM IWG9 were set for the week of 17-21 June 2024.</p>	

## **Day 1 (20 June 2023)**

### **Opening of the Meeting and Welcome**

1. The Chair of the AEWA European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG), Prof. Des Thompson from the United Kingdom, opened the meeting noting that important discussions based on the documents drafted by the Secretariat and Data Centre lay ahead for the participants.
2. The AEWA Executive Secretary, Dr Jacques Trouvilliez, welcomed the participants, noting the progress made in the implementation of the action and management plans coordinated under the EGMP and highlighting the pioneering nature of the Platform's work in the flyway. Dr Trouvilliez expressed confidence that the Platform would continue maintaining a balance between conservation as a first priority and other aspects, building on the experience gained over the years of its existence. He went on to thank the EGMP Task Force coordinators and the EGMP team for their great work throughout the year and in preparation to the EGM IWG meeting as well as Prof. Thompson, whose term as EGM IWG Chair was coming to an end, for a fantastic job done.

### **Adoption of the Agenda**

3. In the absence of further comments from the meeting participants, the proposed meeting agenda was adopted.

### **Decision:**

The EGM IWG adopted the provisional agenda (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.2/Rev.1](#)*).

### **Admission of Permanent Observers and Expert Observers to EGM IWG8**

4. No new permanent observers attended the meeting. It was noted that a number of participants who were unable to travel to Bonn were provided with the option to attend the meeting virtually. More details about the attendance, whether in person or virtual, can be found in the list of participants (Annex 4 of this report).

### **Report of the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre (2022/2023)**

5. Introducing *doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.3](#)*, The EGMP Coordinator, Ms. Eva Meyers and the Head of the EGMP Data Centre, Prof. Jesper Madsen, presented a brief overview of the current structure of the Secretariat and the Data Centre, along with a summary of the activities carried out over the past year. The Platform has 16 participating Range States while Spain is participating in its work as an observer to the GG process.
6. The structure of the Platform remains the same, with the AEWA Secretariat and Data Centre sharing its coordination. Ms Meyers is moving on to a new position outside of the AEWA Secretariat, leading to the EGMP Coordinator post vacancy as of July 2023. Once published, the Secretariat will share the job vacancy announcement with the EGMP network, hoping they can disseminate it further in order to facilitate applications of a larger pool of suitable candidates for the role.
7. Prof. Madsen thanked all the partner organisations and RSs for their cooperation, in particular, the Netherlands (SOVON) for their contribution to the Data Centre work as well as NatureScot and Wetlands International for their contributions to data collection and analysis. He also acknowledged the support of

the EGMP Modelling Consortium, including institutions from Belgium, France, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK, and thanked them for their in-kind contributions to the Data Centre's modelling work.

8. Following EGM IWG7, a virtual Joint Meeting of EGMP TFs was held for the first time in October 2022. The meeting provided the TF members with updates on ongoing and upcoming activities after the latest decisions of the EGM IWG. Moving forward, the organisation of more joint TF meetings is planned to discuss cross-cutting issues.
9. The Data Centre has dedicated a significant amount of its time to GG-related work – organisation of summer counts in the MUs and development of the GG model framework, which is ready for use lacking only input data. In addition, a report has been produced on the relationship between goose abundances and grazing impacts, in collaboration with the Agriculture TF and the Modelling Consortium. As in previous years, the Data Centre continued working on the annual population update and assessment report and supporting the Secretariat and TFs in their work.
10. The work of the Secretariat and Data Centre has been presented at various international meetings such as the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of Parties to AEWA (MOP8), a Wadden Sea Forum webinar, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the ENETWILD Project, 'Colloque gestion Adaptative Pour une gestion concertée des espèces, de leurs habitats et de leur exploitation' organized by the French Biodiversity Agency in Paris.
11. The Netherlands congratulated the Secretariat and the Data Centre on the presented achievements noting that the extensive work done is very much appreciated.

#### **Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre report (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.3](#)*).

#### **EGMP National Reports 2021/2023**

12. The summary of national reports (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.4](#)*) was compiled by Mr. Thomas Eske Holm from Aarhus University, who had been hired as a consultant to produce the document, and Dr. Gitte Hoj Jensen, EGMP Goose Monitoring Coordinator, who presented the document. Dr. Jensen specified that the document was a summary of the submitted national reports rather than their analysis. The reason for this was the illness of Mr. Holm in the run-up to the document deadline as well as delays in national report submissions by the Range States.
13. 13 out of 15 Range States submitted their national reports, six out of which have been submitted past the set deadline of 5 May 2023. Only the NW/SW population of GG and two populations of the BG (East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland population and Russia/Germany & Netherlands population) are covered in the reports as the TBG ISSAP and the PFG ISSMP are up for evaluation and revision and the questionnaires concerning those two species will be sent out at a later date.
14. There is a good collection of population-specific measures, such as population size, demographic variables and offtake data. However, lack of data from a single Range State can mean that the assessment cannot be done as in the case of missing data from Ireland for the BG E. Greenland population. The majority of Range States reported on indicators such as damage to agriculture and flight safety.
15. In general, across the three populations concerned, there is a lack of:
  - information on predators;



- analysis of the impact of various agricultural policy scenarios and measures on goose populations and on goose damage;
- monitoring related to the assessment of risk to other flora and fauna;
- promotion of goose-based eco-tourism at selected key sites;
- production of best practice guides on establishing refuge areas;
- development and implementation of communication strategies and plans;
- guidance on the implementation of population management protocols at the national level.

16. In conclusion, Dr. Jensen recommended to all Range States to include English summaries into all studies relevant to EGMP, as is done in the Netherlands.

17. It was noted that as the TBG ISSAP and the PfG ISSMP will be in the process of revision next year, the questions related to these species are not to be included to the national reporting process just yet.

#### **Decision and Actions:**

The EGM IWG took note of the summary of EGMP National Reports ([doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/8.4](#)).

The EGMP TFs continue updating and keeping an overview of the workplans corresponding to the ISSMPs and ISSAPs.

The Secretariat and Data Centre further conceptualise the process for national reporting and submit a proposal to EGM IWG after the next national reporting cycle in 2025. TBG and PfG sections can be included after the revised ISSMP/ISSAP have been approved at MOP9 in 2025.

#### **Introduction to the evaluation and revision of AEWA Species Action and Management Plans**

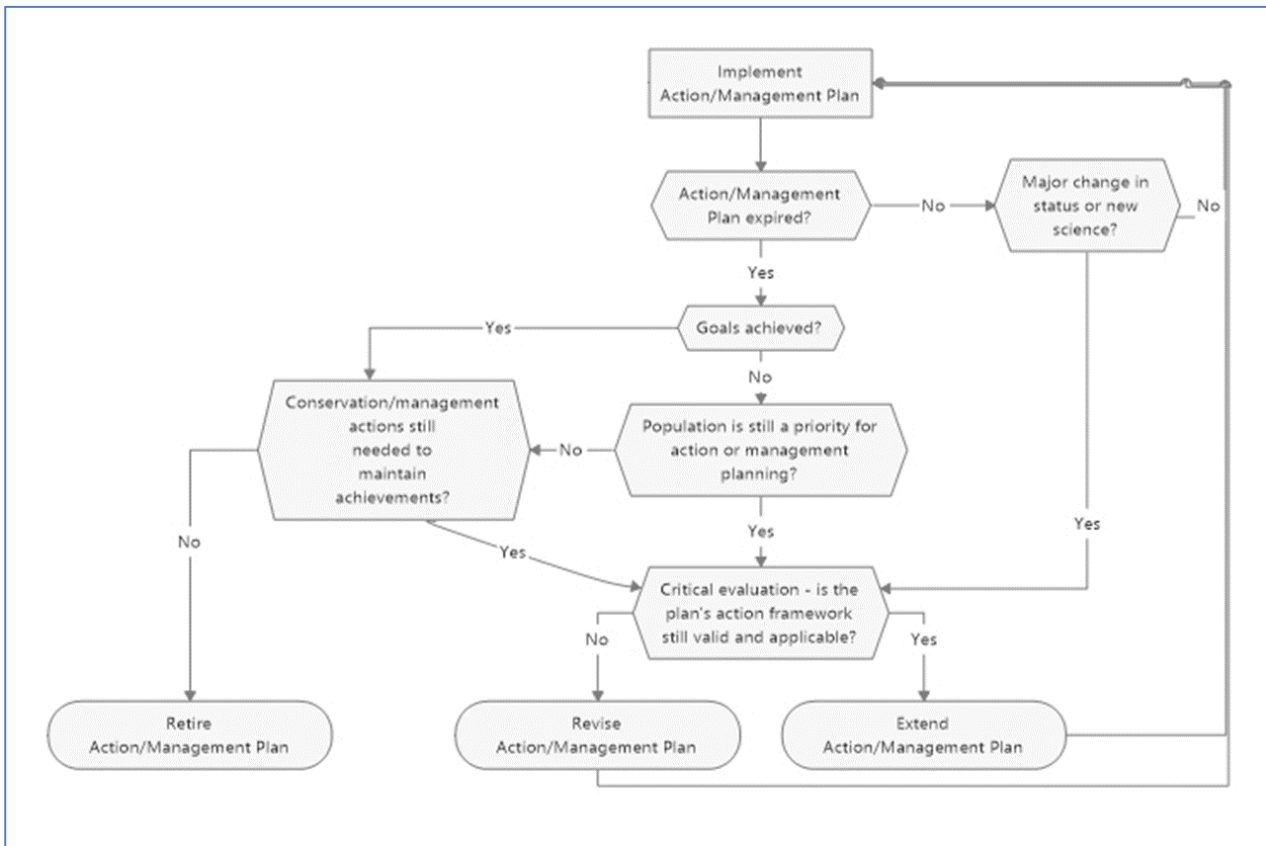
18. The agenda item was presented by the Head of Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit at the AEWA Secretariat, Mr. Sergey Dereliev. Species action and management plans are mandated by [AEWA Annex 3](#). The action plans (paragraph 2.2.1/Annex 3) are always recovery plans while management plans (paragraph 4.3.4/Annex 3) can both be aimed at recovery of huntable species and reduction of conflicts such as the PfG and GG ISSMPs. The AEWA TC prioritises species and populations for action and management planning.

19. The action plans have a lifespan of 10 years while the duration of management plans has been extended from 10 to 12 years by the AEWA MOP8. Once the plan has reached the end of its lifespan, the TC recommends whether to retire, extend, update or revise the plan. This recommendation should be based on a comprehensive evaluation – an international review for all AEWA species action and management plans to MOP or a stand-alone evaluation report (to be compiled for the PfG ISSMP and the TBG ISSAP).

20. For the evaluation of the plans, the TC is developing an evaluation workflow and report template. The evaluation workflow includes 2 steps:

1. Define whether the plan shall be retired or continued for implementation;
2. If it shall be continued for implementation, then define whether the plan shall be extended, updated or revised.

21. The evaluation process is based on the following flowchart already agreed and used by the TC:



22. Mr. Dereliev explained that for the upcoming evaluation of the PfG ISSMP and the TBG ISSAP, the TC will provide guidance in an annex regarding the evaluation of implementation performance and result attainment. The annex will follow the approach used in the Report on the progress of implementation of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027 (doc. [AEWA/MOP8.11](#)). The approach evaluates all levels of the action framework: goal, purpose, objectives, results, actions.

23. Post evaluation, the TC will decide between the three following options for the plans:

- Extend – no changes, decision by MOP on 10/12 years validity extension;
- Update – update the background chapters of the plan to be submitted to MOP (the implementation is uninterrupted);
- Revise – full revision of background and action framework to be submitted to MOP.

While the update requires some resources, which may be in-kind, the revision requires a fully-fledged process similar to drafting a new plan. The findings of the evaluation inform the revision. The AHMP development can be run in parallel to the revision of the plans.

#### Decision:

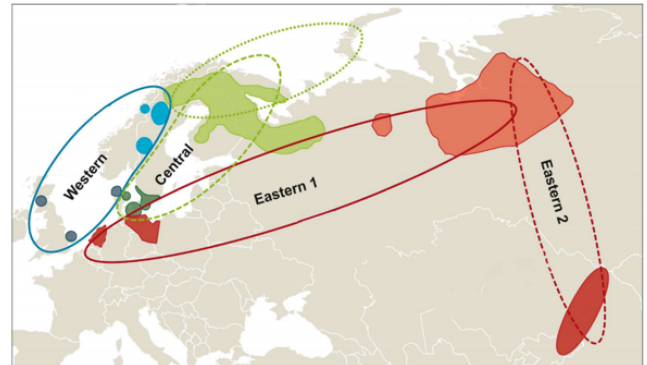
The EGM IWG took note of the process for the evaluation and revision of AEWA Species Action and Management Plans.

**Status of the Taiga Bean Goose International Single Species Action Plan. Evaluation and review process.**

24. The TBG TF Coordinator, Mr. Mikko Alhainen informed the participants about the upcoming evaluation and review process of the TBG ISSAP. Four MUs were identified by the current action plan. Based on new knowledge, the MUs were delineated as separate flyway populations by AEWA MOP8 in September 2022:

From **MU's** to populations and from 3c\* category to various categories

- Western MU → **Scandinavia/Denmark and UK population**
  - Category 1c in Column A
- Central MU → **Finland and NW Russia/Sweden, Denmark and Germany population**
  - Category 3c\* of Column A
- Eastern 1 → **West Siberia/Poland and Germany population**
  - Category 2 of Column A
- Eastern 2: This management unit is currently recognised as the *johanseni* subspecies of Bean Goose



25. These changes from MUs to flyway populations of the Bean Goose will lead to conceptual changes in the structure of the ISSAP – the objectives and actions need to be adjusted to meet the new status of the populations. On a practical level, however, the implementation is foreseen to remain the same. The revised plan is to be submitted for adoption by AEWA MOP9 in 2025.

26. The TBG TF has started working on the evaluation of the ISSAP and is currently developing a questionnaire for the data collection for evaluation and review. The questionnaire is based on the structure of the action framework.

27. The plan has been very successful for the former Central MU while some challenges persist for the former Western and Eastern MUs. The TF plans to finalise and send out the questionnaire to the Range States and prepare for the next steps of revision in the autumn of 2023. Once the evaluation is done, the TF will move on to revision and preparations for the planned Range State workshop in winter 2023.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the status of the TBG ISSAP evaluation and revision process.

The TBG TF Coordinator will keep the EGM IWG informed about the next steps in the evaluation and revision process.

**Taiga Bean Goose Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report**

28. Dr. Fred Johnson from the Data Centre introduced this agenda item (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)*). There was a low count in the Western MU in 2023, possibly due to difficulties with counts in Denmark. For the Eastern MU, the last fragmentary information was received in 2021. As for the Central MU, it shows a very dramatic decline in harvest rate coinciding with a dramatic increase in the population based

on the IPM. The annual survival rates have increased concurrently. The strategy aiming to recover the population to around 70,000 in spring has succeeded due to the reduction of harvest.

29. For the Central MU population, which is the only huntable MU, a harvest of 1,000 birds per year for 2023/2024 is expected to maintain the population near its current level of 67,000. The forecasts are intended to reflect the dramatic reductions in harvest over the last two years. Of concern is that the estimate of the carrying capacity for the breeding population is 70,194, which is identical to the population target of 70,000. The problem is that at a carrying capacity, the population has no harvestable surplus, as it is producing just enough to offset the natural mortality. The maximum sustainable harvest of 8,900 birds could be achieved at a population level of 45,000 in spring, which wasn't known at the time when the population target was set at 70,000. The challenge now is deciding how to handle the issue in the revision of the TBG ISSAP.
30. On behalf of BirdLife International, Ms. Barbara Herrero asked whether the lack of available habitat was the limiting factor in the carrying capacity of the TBG. Responding to the question, Mr. Alhainen indicated that the breeding grounds stretch through Sweden, Finland and Northwest Russia. In the Finnish context, mire restoration could help to increase TBG habitat, while in Russia and Sweden, the habitats are in relatively good condition. In addition, issues of high predation levels on nests and competition between species make this a multi-faceted issue. He pointed out that there was a possibility of an underestimation in the counts, which would change the picture in terms of carrying capacity. Despite the possibility of the ceiling being driven by increasing predation in the breeding grounds, there is no opportunity to distinguish between the predation control and carrying capacity in the model.
31. Mr. Jeremie Crespin introduced himself, informing the participants that together with his colleague, Ms. Iva Obretenova, he will be stepping in to represent the European Commission (EC) in the EGMP, replacing their former colleague Mr. van der Stegen. Mr. Crespin stated that due to its insecure status, the TBG has been selected as one of the species for the EC Task Force on Recovery of Birds. The EC will therefore be following the revision of the TBG ISSAP and further TBG-related work.
32. Mr. Alhainen thanked everyone for their contributions and called on the Range States to continue a more in-depth discussion after the meeting, in order to reach a decision on the issue.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the TBG Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report ([doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)).

**Report and Recommendations from the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force**

33. The agenda item ([doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/8.10](#)) was presented by the TF Coordinator, Mr. Mikko Alhainen. The work in the TF will intensify for the revision of the TBG ISSAP. The counts have been continued in the Range States as recommended by the TF.
34. Mr. Alhainen hoped to rebuild a connection with the former Eastern 2 MU, as currently, no information is available about the MU. In addition, there is emerging contradictory evidence on the taxonomy of the population in this MU, raising a question on whether the species present is Tundra Bean Goose or Eastern Taiga Bean Goose.
35. The TF recommended an annual total quota of 1,000 birds (580 birds for Finland, 300 birds for Sweden and 120 birds for Denmark) in the former Central MU for the next two seasons: 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.

### **Decisions and Actions:**

The EGM IWG took note of the TBG TF report and recommendations and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.

The EGM IWG agreed on a total annual harvest of 1,000 birds (580 birds for Finland, 300 birds for Sweden and 120 birds for Denmark) in the former Central MU for the next two seasons: 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.

Based on the TBG TF Report, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024:

- Strengthen and continue January counts in all MUs.
- Continue October and March counts in CMU and prepare to extend the coordinated counts to Finland and Denmark.
- Implement the ISSAP evaluation data collection and analysis.
- Plan, raise funds and prepare the workplan for the ISSAP update/revision.

### **Status of the Pink-footed Goose International Single Species Management Plan. Evaluation and review process**

36. In his capacity as PfG TF Coordinator, Prof. Jesper Madsen provided an update on the PfG ISSMP, with a particular focus on the evaluation and potential revision process of the plan. The evaluation will follow the timelines and steps for evaluation of the AEWA Species Action and Management Plans. The PfG TF has started working on a set of indicators against which the plan is to be evaluated.
37. Most of the indicators of the ISSMP are quantifiable, making it easier to measure the success rates of the ISSMP. The evaluation process will also include population target justification. As the target was set in 2012, it was agreed to revisit the target during the evaluation of the plan. Considering that most of the indicators are quantifiable, there is an opportunity to conduct a Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) where the relationships are rated against the social values amongst the stakeholders allowing to formalize the setting of the target in a way that balances different interests against the drivers of the target.
38. Two of the main issues that led to the current population target were agricultural conflict and tundra degradation. Thanks to funding received from the Norwegian Environment Agency, the Data Centre is currently compiling all the latest research and monitoring work on these two issues into a synthesis and the Norwegian Environment Agency will host a workshop in September 2023 to be attended by international experts working on tundra degradation caused by Pink-footed Geese. The synthesis report will be finalised by the end of 2023.
39. Another development to be taken into account in the evaluation of the PfG ISSMP is the new migration route of a group of PfG. Within the last 10-15 years, thanks to neckbanding and GPS-tagging of PfG, it was discovered that a growing number of birds is occurring in Southern Sweden and Western Finland. Half of the GPS-tagged birds taking up the new route rejoin the Svalbard group from Oulu in Finland while the other half goes to Novaya Zemlya in Northern Russia to breed. Although on their route back these birds mixed again with the Svalbard birds, they consistently followed the new route every spring. This discovery will have implications for the future of the PfG ISSMP as the new route qualifies as a separate biogeographic population according to the AEWA

definition. The new population also brings in new Range States: Sweden, Finland and Russia, of which the latter is not a participating EGMP Range State.

40. Another issue to be discussed is development of an AFMP for PfG to be in place by the time the new revised ISSMP is adopted by AEWA MOP9 in 2025.
41. Prof. Madsen emphasised that the ISSMP is likely to be revised. A Range State workshop is to be funded and organised to discuss the evaluation of the management plan. The PfG TF is working on the evaluation planning to present the results of its work in January 2024.

#### **Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the status of the PfG ISSMP evaluation and revision process.

#### **Pink-footed Goose Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report**

42. Referring to document [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#), Dr. Fred Johnson from the Data Centre stressed the monitoring issues that had come to light. The IPM shows some conflict in the monitoring data, indicating that there is bias in population size estimates. The spring population estimate for 2023 is close to the population target of 60,000 but with large uncertainty. At the same time, there is a considerable decrease in harvest in Denmark for which reasons remain unknown.
43. The harvest quota for the 2023/2024 hunting season, based on the estimated population size of approximately 62,800 and 9 days above freezing in Svalbard in May 2023, is 7,300 individuals. Harvest quotas for Norway and Denmark this year would be 2,190 and 5,110, respectively. Because of the greater uncertainty in population size encountered over the last years, there is only 80% certainty that the total quota lies between 0 and 15,650. The total harvest during the last two years averaged 9,577, well within the 80% credible interval of the allowable harvest for 2023.
44. The Data Centre hopes to be in a position next year to better estimate the magnitude of bias in the biannual counts by exploring the use of GPS-tagged birds to estimate detection probabilities. Dr. Johnson also pointed out that the population being apparently near its target will require higher precision in annual harvest quotas. Considering the predicted fluctuations in population size, the variability in year-to-year quotas may make it difficult for the Range States to adapt with high precision. The Data Centre and Range States will need to explore how to explicitly account for this lack of precise control over harvests.
45. Denmark reported that one of the latest developments was that PfG started using widespread maize stubble fields making it very difficult to hunt them. This may be one of the reasons leading to the harvest decrease in the county. In addition, the PfG has been changing its distribution from Western Denmark to different parts of the country, where hunters are inexperienced in hunting the species.
46. Representing BirdLife International, Ms. Herrero inquired about reasons causing difficulties for Norway and Denmark in adapting to bigger variations in year-to-year harvest quotas. Prof. Madsen explained that the best practice in order to adjust the harvest quotas would be shortening hunting seasons in both Range States. If these measures will not prove sufficient, the next step might be through changes in daily harvest bag limits. Dr. Johnson added that an effective AHM programme did not require precise regulation of harvest. The most important thing is to predict the expected

variability in harvest from year to year and take it into account. The more uncertainty there is about hitting the quota, the more conservative the optimal harvest strategy tends to be.

47. Belgium underlined that a smoother way of accommodating variations around quota should be carefully discussed and considered during the evaluation and revision of the PfG ISSMP in order to avoid reoccurrence of the issue on an annual basis.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the PfG Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)*).

**Report and Recommendations of the PfG TF**

48. Reporting on document [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.9/Rev.1](#), Prof. Madsen noted that the TF had been very helpful in writing reviews of the annual monitoring and harvest assessment report and contributing to discussions on the adjustment of the monitoring programme that had to be made due to cuts in funding. The TF is planning for the evaluation and revision of the PfG ISSMP, currently discussing the indicators and themes to include into the evaluation.
49. The TF has been producing scientific work. The following papers have been co-authored by the Data Centre and members of the PfG TF:
- Jensen, G. H., Johnson, F. A., & Madsen, J. (2023). Sources of variation in estimating breeding success of migratory birds from autumn counts. *Ecological Solutions and Evidence*, 4, e12212. <https://doi.org/10.1002/2688-8319.12212>
  - Johnson, F. A., Madsen, J., Clausen, K. K., Frederiksen, M., & Jensen, G. H. (2023). Assessing the value of monitoring to biological inference and expected management performance for a European goose population. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 60, 132–145. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.14313>
  - Madsen J, Schreven KHT, Jensen GH, Johnson FA, Nilsson L, Nolet BA, Pessa J. Rapid formation of new migration route and breeding area by Arctic geese. *Curr Biol*. 2023 Mar 27;33(6):1162-1170.e4. doi: 10.1016/j.cub.2023.01.065.
50. In terms of the workplan for 2023-2024, the TF is planning to continue the work on the dissemination platform along the PfG flyway, which involves the establishment of a visitor's center in western Jutland showcasing the migration routes and breeding grounds of PfG among other goose species. A big amount of the TF work will revolve around the evaluation of the PfG ISSMP together with the Data Centre and partners in the Climate Observatory of Arctic Tundra programme of the Norwegian Polar Institute. The TF will continue conducting internal reviews of annual EGM IWG documents and providing recommendations for harvest quotas.
51. With regard to harvest regulation needs for the coming hunting season, the TF proposed two following options, with the majority of TF members recommending Option 2:

Option 1: Reducing the level of harvest in accordance with the quota of 7,300 individuals (2,190 for Norway and 5,110 for Denmark)

**Option 2:** In light of the data uncertainties, postponing a regulation while the Data Centre attempts to better estimate the magnitude and reasons for the biases in the May and November counts. In this case, the offtake should not exceed 9,600 individuals, which is the average total harvest during the last two years averaged, and not a modeled quota.

52. Representing Belgium, Mr. Floris Verhaeghe clarified voting for option 2, assuming that the reasons for biases in counts would be disclosed already during the EGM IWG8 meeting. The Data Centre explained that investigating the bias would take at least a few more months.
53. Mr. Warmelink from the Netherlands noted that although the country initially voted for option 1, having heard the presentations and discussions on the analysis, they now support option 2. The presence of legitimate data concerns makes it uneasy to make the decision based on the IPM outputs. In addition, the Netherlands expressed concerns about the precedence this might set for the future. Mr. Warmelink went on to ask for good communication on the reasons for not adhering to the model output now and discussion of the issue in the evaluation process for the PfG ISSMP, so that the situation can serve as an example of dealing with similar discussions on model outputs.
54. On behalf of Denmark, Mr. Soren Egelund supported option 2, suggesting that as an alternative to shortening the hunting season, the Danish Hunting Association can reach out to the PfG hunters with a recommendation to voluntarily decrease the hunting intensity, which could be measured through the harvest bag. Prof. Madsen endorsed the suggestion but expressed uncertainty regarding the direct effects of this measure. Norway joined Denmark in supporting option 2.
55. On behalf of the Secretariat. Mr. Dereliev highlighted that in case the Range States decide for option 2, the population will remain within the bounds of higher satisfaction which is 55,000-65,000 birds. In addition, he echoed Mr. Warmelink's statement, noting that the decision was not to be taken as a precedent as it could lead to more contentious decisions in the future. Deviation from recommendations is taken solely due to the relatively minor nature of the uncertainty and is to be accepted as a one-off decision. The concerned Range States were encouraged to cooperate on investigating the PfG data issues.
56. Ms. Sorensen from the Danish Hunters Association expressed readiness to support any measures to be taken in case November counts were low.
57. BirdLife International urged the Range States to act with care in order to avoid setting precedents and to communicate very clearly the exceptional nature of the decision taken as well as any findings that will come to the surface regarding the PfG data bias.

#### **Decisions and Actions:**

The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.9/Rev.1](#)*) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.

EGM IWG agreed, in light of the data uncertainties, to postpone until its next annual meeting in June 2024 the decision on a new regulation of harvest while the Data Centre attempts to better estimate the magnitude and reasons for the biases in the May and November counts. However, the harvest for 2023/2024 should not exceed the total harvest during the last two years averaging to 9,577 (with the following allocation between Norway and Denmark: 2,873 and 6,704). EGM IWG also agreed that this postponement is an exceptional one-off action and shall not be considered a precedent for any future decisions when facing comparable circumstances.



Based on the PFG TF Report, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024:

- Start the evaluation and revision process, including planning a dedicated workshop to undertake the revision of the ISSMP in 2024.
- Engage in further dissemination initiatives to promote the EGMP flyway approach and uptake by national stakeholders.
- Internal review of annual reports.

Furthermore, following the postponement of harvest regulations, the following actions shall be taken, as soon as possible, to address the data uncertainties and provide an example of how to tackle significant uncertainty in model estimates:

- The Data Centre to investigate biases in May and November counts and outline possible options for tackling them;
- The Range States and the Data Centre to maintain close communication as soon as the Data Centre has concluded the investigation and has proposed possible actions;
- The Range States to implement the preferred actions as soon as possible.

Denmark pledged to provide an in-kind contribution of 200 hours of staff time necessary to investigate and analyse the biases in the counts.

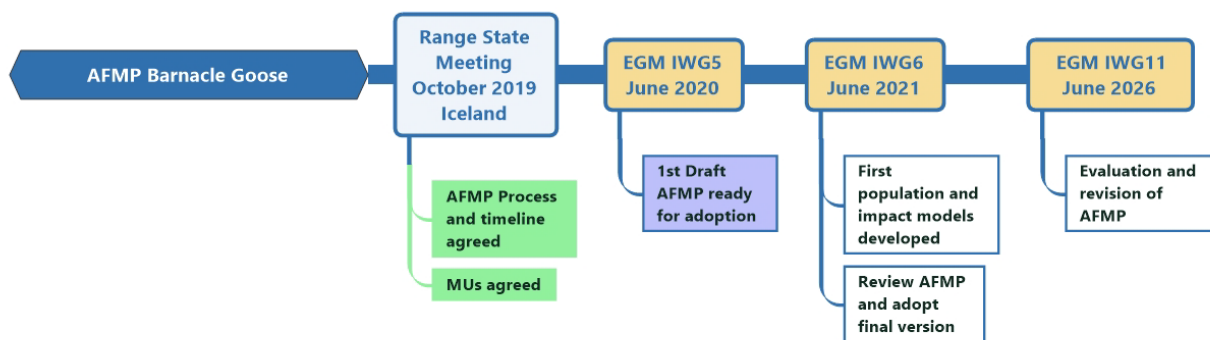
Finally, Denmark will communicate with Danish hunters to reduce hunting bag in Denmark on a voluntary basis.

**Day 2 (21 June 2023)**

**Status Report of the Adaptive Flyway Management Programme for the East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland Population of the Barnacle Goose**

58. Ms. Eva Meyers informed the participants that the purpose of this document ([AEWA/EGMIWG/8.5](#)) was to keep an overview of the AFMP implementation status and ensure that progress, as well as any issues, are tracked and identified. The document includes an overview of the activities that are conducted on an annual and triannual basis and is to be updated periodically and submitted to each EGM IWG meeting within the six-year cycle.

59. Ms. Meyers presented the following timeline of development and implementation of the AFMP for BG E. Greenland Population:



60. Dr. Gitte Hoj Jensen specified that fiscal and personnel resources were in place for the six-year cycle evaluation and adaptation of the AFMP, and the elements were only to be evaluated and adapted if the Range States saw a compelling reason for doing so and/or new scientific knowledge suggested a re-evaluation.

61. A decision needs to be made on the protocols for damage, offtake, and indicator assessments. The Range States should note that data on the state of indicators and evaluation towards achieving objectives for each year from the period between 2020-2024 is to be reported to the Data Centre.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the AFMP Status Report and acknowledged the proposed timeline for the activities in Table 1 in *doc.* [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.5](#).

**Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report for the East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland Population of the Barnacle Goose**

62. Dr. Jensen elaborated on this agenda item (*doc.* [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)), providing an overview of all the dynamic tasks for the population. The FRP for the population is 19,400 breeding pairs and 54,000 individuals for the whole population in winter. The AFMP does not aim to maintain the population at a certain target level as it is Annex 1 species of the EU Birds Directive. However, the

Range States have agreed to coordinate<sup>2</sup> the offtake when the size of the population is below 200% of the FRP (108,000 individuals). There has been no decision, however, on how the coordination shall take place.

63. The assessment is done using the IPM and investigating a range of scenarios using different levels of offtake and HPAI mortality to predict the population trajectories. However, the assessment could not be conducted this year due to a lack of data from Ireland and no decision on which projection scenario to implement. Due to the above-mentioned reasons, the Data Centre could only present the raw data at the meeting.
64. The flyway total is not available for 2023. The latest flyway total from 2020 is 73,391 individuals, while the latest IPM estimates from 2019 stand at 66,000 individuals. Both estimates indicate that the count for the total flyway population is below the 200% threshold triggering coordination of offtake between the UK and Iceland. The UK reacted quickly to the HPAI outbreak with only 58 birds shot under derogation. Hunting in Iceland has also been decreased by half in comparison to previous years. Dr. Jensen concluded reminding the Range States that coordination of offtake between Iceland and the UK was recommended until new information showed otherwise.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the BG E. Greenland Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)*).

**Report and Recommendations of the Greenland/Svalbard Barnacle Goose Task Force**

65. In her capacity as E. Greenland/Svalbard BG TF coordinator, Ms. Rae Mckenzie acquainted the participants with the summary of the TF report (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.11](#)*). One meeting of the TF took place since EGM IWG7. TF members have also contributed to the Agriculture TF meetings and webinars over the past year and most notably to the EGMP webinar dedicated to air safety. A considerable amount of work has focused on finalising the impact model for the population. The TF activities have been impacted by the HPAI outbreak in the UK – both in terms
66. of data and understanding of the outbreak and staff capacity available to drive TF work forward (especially TF coordinator time). Ms. Mckenzie reminded the Range States that the development of the AFMP for the Svalbard/Southwest Scotland population of BG had been postponed at EGM IWG7 until there was a better understanding of the impacts of HPAI.
67. Ms. Mckenzie has been dealing with grave consequences of the HPAI outbreak in Scotland. Work is underway in Scotland to better understand the genetics of the virus. NatureScot has been working closely with the Animal & Plant Health Agency in the UK on recording, mapping and swabbing of carcasses to monitor the spread of the disease in wild birds. The outbreak has had a dramatically larger impact on the BG E. Greenland population compared to other bird species, with an estimate of 5,000 BG falling dead over winter 2022/2023. No information is available from Ireland. The reason for this high mortality is yet to be determined.

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<sup>2</sup> As clarified at EGM IWG6, “coordination” in this context does not mean that RSs will be expected to *de facto* coordinate their use of derogations under the EGMP. EU Member States, in particular, maintain their full rights to make use of derogations as provided under the EU Birds Directive.

68. A full census of BG E. Greenland population across Scotland and Ireland was carried out in February 2023. Counts were undertaken but, to date, no data have been received from Ireland. The Scottish part of the survey found 48,332 birds, a decline of 16.8% compared to counts made in March 2020. There have been no changes in the BG distribution range in Scotland.
69. As for the workplan for 2023/2024, the TF tasks will include considering the impacts of HPAI on both populations, using the impact model, and on the AFMP. The IPM will be used to inform management decisions across the range, providing that the Irish data are submitted. Meetings will be organised as necessary, especially for the evaluation of the IPM.
70. On behalf of the UK, Mr. Matt Parsons, highlighted that the Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds, co-convened by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) would be issuing a guidance on the matter covering topics such as assessment and monitoring, which the TF could benefit from.
71. Responding to a request from the Data Centre about the possibility of conducting another population count in 2024, Ms. McKenzie indicated that given the availability of funds, it would be possible. To address the absence of Irish representatives at the EGM IWG and the lack of monitoring data, the Secretariat will send an official communication to Ireland.

#### **Decision and Actions:**

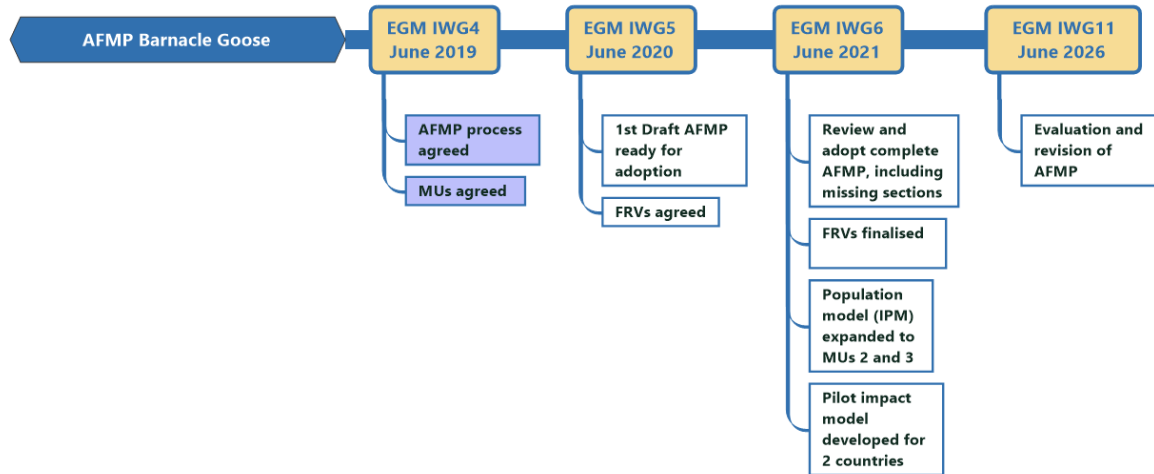
The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.11](#)*) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.

Based on the BG TF Report for E. Greenland Population, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024:

- During the next meeting of the BG TF for the E. Greenland population, offtake scenarios including possible levels of avian flu will be discussed further.
- Furthermore, coordination of offtake between the UK and Iceland will be discussed as soon as Ireland submits flyway data and the results from the assessment are available.
- Finally, the impacts of HPAI in new and ongoing work will be considered, and how this might impact on the AFMP and the agreed management activities.

#### ***Progress report on the Adaptive Flyway Management Programme for the Russia/Germany & Netherlands Population of the Barnacle Goose***

72. Outlining the main milestones of the Russia BG AFMP (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.6](#)*), Ms. Eva Meyers explained that similar to the BG E. Greenland process, the document was meant to be a dynamic overview of the AFMP implementation process updated periodically and submitted to each EGM IWG meeting within the six-year cycle. She went on to present the following timeline of the Russia BG AFMP development process:



73. Dr. Gitte Hoj Jensen reported that most of the static elements of the six-year cycle of evaluation and adaptation were in place. However, the RSs were reminded to take note of missing gaps in FRVs to be submitted before the EGM IWG meeting in 2026 and protocols of damage and indicator assessment. For the Range States of the BG Russia population, indicator data are to be collected on an annual basis and reported to the Data Centre by the end of 2025.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the AFMP Status Report and acknowledged the proposed timeline for the activities in Table 1 in *doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.6](#)*.

**Population Status and Assessment Report of the Russia/Germany & Netherlands Population of the Barnacle Goose**

74. Representing SOVON, Mr. Kees Koffijberg guided the participants through this agenda item (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)*). The management strategy for the population is aimed at preventing the flyway population or the population of any MU from declining below the FRP, with caution measures to be taken when the population is below 200% of the FRP. Assessments on whether the cumulative impact of derogations (and hunting, outside EU) affects FRPs, are conducted every three years, starting from 2022. At EGM IWG7, it was decided to have an intermediate assessment every year, which consists of estimating the population size and other demographic variables. Small changes have been made in the IPM set up after a review in autumn 2023.

75. The abundance estimates for the flyway population stood at 1,4 million in January 2022 with results from the IPM corresponding very well with census data. After a long-term increase, the population growth seems to have levelled off. Approximately 90% of the flyway is represented by the Russian MU1 breeding population. In terms of abundance on the MU level, only MU3 is within 200% of the FRP, while MU1 and MU2 are well above the 200% threshold.

76. Combined derogation offtake rates for the North Sea population appear to have increased steeply after 2013, up to approximately 34% for juveniles and 32% for adults in 2020/21. HPAI impacted the population through major outbreaks in 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, but far less in the past year. It is difficult to get a full picture of the numbers affected as no systematic searches took place. In

combination with the derogations, HPAI may have contributed to the current stabilization of the population. However, this assumption is still to be investigated.

77. Talking about monitoring data, Mr. Koffijberg highlighted the main gap in summer count data from Sweden. The data could potentially be replaced by data from September counts if the issue of overlap with birds from Finland can be resolved. For MU2, there is no productivity data, with the exception of the Helsinki region. There are smaller gaps in summer count data for MU3 from the federal states of Schleswig-Holstein in Germany. In addition, earlier publication of German winter counts would be helpful as there is a current delay of two years in data submission.
78. In collaboration with SOVON, the German monitoring organisation DDA has published a [manual](#) on performing breeding success counts in the field and identifying young birds. The manual is currently only available in German but will be translated into English and Dutch by autumn 2023.
79. In conclusion, Mr. Koffijberg highlighted that for the MU3 North Sea population, the current level of offtake has brought the population close to the FRP level and well within the 200% threshold. Therefore, there is a need for coordination among the MU3 Range States – Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. In terms of monitoring, Mr. Koffijberg reiterated that insufficient coverage of summer populations and patchy productivity data in MU2 was a major issue.
80. Representing the EC, Mr. Crespin expressed appreciation for the conducted work, particularly in regard to respecting Article 9 of the Birds Directive. He praised EGMP as a helpful tool to keep favourable conservation status while addressing the need for damage prevention and urged for the restoration of suitable habitats to be among the actions implemented.
81. The EGM IWG Chair suggested the establishment of an HPAI Contact Group on a voluntary participation basis, in order to exchange relevant information across species and address the integration of HPAI impacts into the management of the EGMP species. The Secretariat supported this suggestion stating that it was a matter of urgency to pay particular attention to HPAI spread and its impacts. Mr. Dereliev highlighted the informal nature of the contact group and noted that the Secretariat will facilitate the establishment of collaboration with the CMS/FAO-convened Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds. The Data Centre, the UK and the Netherlands endorsed the establishment of the contact group.
82. The Netherlands and Germany presented the following report on the coordination of offtake between the MU3 RSs:

*At IWG7 in Helsinki, it became clear that the numbers of the North Sea MU3 Barnacle Geese had reached below the set 200% threshold. In line with the provisions of the AFMP, the EGM IWG concluded that any derogation offtake targeting the breeding population should be undertaken with caution and that coordination was needed between the MU3 countries, being Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. The EGM IWG requested that the MU3 countries reported back on the progress of this coordination in the BG TF, and here, at EGM IWG8. The Netherlands has taken the lead on this coordination and will also be providing the reporting.*

*After EGM IWG7, a trilateral discussion was started. The first conclusion reached was that – in line with statements made at EGM IWG7 – the task for coordinating offtake is not relevant for Belgium, as the breeding population here (approx. 500 individuals) is considered non-naturally occurring as it originates from birds that escaped from captivity (waterbird collections, petting zoos, etc.). Consequently, the international coordination consisted of exchanges on developments in management and BG offtake between the two German Länder with BG (Niedersachsen and Schleswig-Holstein) and the Netherlands. These exchanges clarified that*

since EGM IWG7 no derogations are taking place in Niedersachsen whilst in Schleswig Holstein no derogation is taking place after the wintering birds of MU1 and MU2 have left the area – and thus hardly affecting local breeding populations – and in low numbers, compared to offtake in the Netherlands.

Since the majority of MU3 offtake takes place in the Netherlands, it was jointly concluded that the need for coordination on derogation offtake activities should primarily be translated to a coordinated approach within the Netherlands. Consequently, the topic was put on the agenda of the Dutch Provincial Working Group on Geese Management, which resulted in a project with SOVON aimed at establishing a distribution of the Dutch FRPs amongst the provinces. This distribution has been accepted by the provinces and the Wildlife Management Councils; the implementation is still in progress. We feel the translation of our national FRP to provincial FRPs provides a strong safeguard for sustainably managing BG MU3 populations.

As long as the MU3 BG population remains below the set 200% threshold, Germany and the Netherlands intend to continue to coordinate on local management and offtake numbers.

83. Mr. Warmelink added that in three Dutch provinces, the measures taken resulted in either a complete stop of derogation of BG or a severe cutback of the derogation numbers.

#### **Decision and Actions:**

The EGM IWG took note of the Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report ([doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)).

The EGM IWG agreed to:

- Establish an HPAI Contact Group across EGMP populations to liaise with the multi-institutional Scientific Task Force on Avian Influenza and Wild Birds in view of potentially bringing suggestions to the EGM IWG for integrating HPAI considerations into goose management (Secretariat to circulate to RSs and observers an invite for the contact group and establish a link with the Scientific TF). The Data Centre will help facilitate the work of the contact group.
- Continue to work on getting systematic monitoring in place for variables used in the population model, e.g. summer and winter counts, proportion of juveniles and offtake information.

#### **Report and Recommendations of the Barnacle Goose Task Force for Russia/Germany & Netherlands Population**

84. Outlining the summary of this agenda item ([doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/8.12](#)), the Secretariat emphasised that in the absence of a TF Coordinator, the TF had not been active. There have been no meetings of the TF since EGM IWG7. Ms. Meyers alerted the Range States again about the urgent need to identify a TF coordinator. As an alternative, she suggested a rotation in chairing the TF meetings in order to keep the TF active. Another option would be keeping the TF dormant, with the Secretariat and Data Centre convening meetings only if the immediate need arises.

85. The Netherlands reported that an internal meeting will be arranged later in 2023 to discuss the possibilities of setting up a new programme to continue funding the Dutch Modelling Consortium's support to the Data Centre in the forthcoming years. Mr. Warmelink also noted that the search for a TF coordinator was ongoing and that the Netherlands was looking into the possibility of arranging funding for the TF coordinator, post-EGM-IWG9 in 2024.

86. Mr. Koffijberg agreed to chair the next meeting of the Russia BG TF with the support of the Secretariat and the Data Centre.

## Decisions and Actions:

The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.12](#)*) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.

In terms of coordination of offtake, the Netherlands and Germany agreed that if significant derogation activities were planned in Germany, there would be coordination in place between the two countries. Otherwise, coordination should mainly take place within the Netherlands, where the national FRP has now been distributed across the provinces. In response to population levels approaching the provincial FRP levels, suspension or significant reduction of derogations has already taken place in some provinces in the Netherlands since EGM IWG7 in 2022.

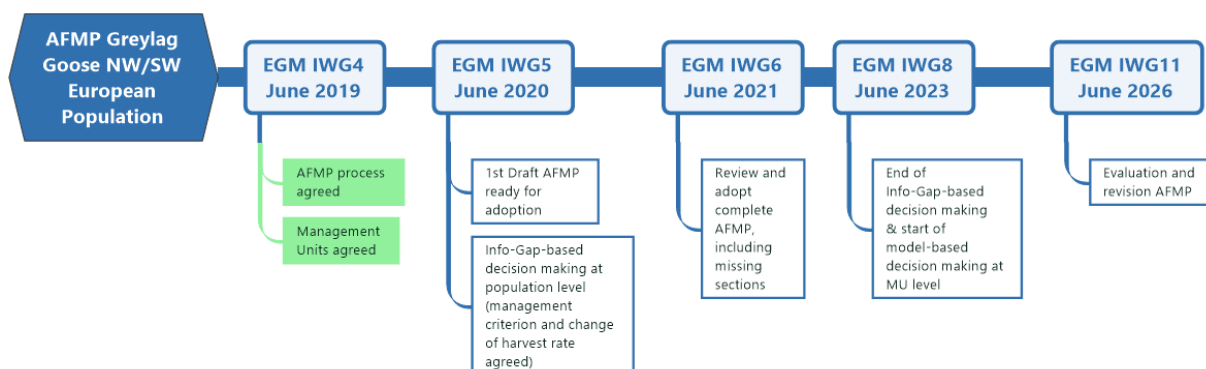
Based on the report of BG TF for Russia population, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2024 (see further details in the report):

- Designate a TF Coordinator, as soon as possible. The Netherlands will be willing to guide the next TF meeting and will look into the possibility of finding a candidate and funding for the TF coordinator, post-EGM-IWG9 in 2024.
- Implement activities in the workplan.

The Dutch Modelling Consortium confirmed that they will do the intermediate assessment of the population status, including all three management units in 2024.

## **Progress report on the Adaptive Flyway Management Programme for the NW/SW European Population of the Greylag Goose**

87. The Secretariat explained that similar to the Russia and the E. Greenland populations of BG, this document ([AEWA/EGMIWG/8.7](#)) is meant to reflect progress made in the GG AFMP process. It lists the activities implemented on an annual and triannual basis. Ms. Meyers walked the participants through the development timeline of the GG AFMP below:



88. The elements for the six-year cycle of evaluation and adaptation related to Box 1 analysis of the GG ISSMP, the range of methods for indicators and programs and the flyway decision model including population target and population models are settled. The AFMP elements to take note of are the gaps in FRVs to be submitted before the EGM IWG meeting in 2026. The Data Centre will approach those Range States where information is missing. The information on the GG damage impact is limited and further research is needed. The decision is pending on how to use the protocol for damage,



offtake and indicator assessment moving forward. Dr, Jensen alerted the Range States that the indicator data for each year from 2020-2024 are to be reported to the Data Centre.

89. Mr. Warmelink went on to note that doc.8.7 makes use of the wordings “harvest protocol” and “harvest assessment”. If these also involve Dutch offtake, he urged that the term “offtake” is used, so it also covers – in wording - Dutch offtake by derogation. If the document cannot be amended, the Netherlands would like their input to be reflected in the notes of this meeting.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the AFMP Status Report and acknowledged the proposed timeline for the activities in Table 1 in *doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.7](#)*.

**Population Status and Assessment Report of the NW/SW European Population of the Greylag Goose**

90. The Data Centre provided information on this agenda item (*doc. [AEWA/EGMWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)*). There are both FRPs and targets set for GG. FRPs are 31,100 breeding pairs for MU1 and 72,980 breeding pairs for MU2. The targets are 70,000 breeding pairs for MU1 and 80,000 breeding pairs for MU2.
91. As for the management strategies, the use of the information gap decision model ended in 2022. An internationally coordinated population management programme for both MUs, including offtake under hunting and, if necessary, under derogations, encompassing monitoring, assessment and decision-making protocols was planned to start in 2023. However, due to missing data, particularly summer counts and productivity estimates, apparently high bias in the offtake estimates and lack of offtake assessment protocol, the move to dynamic decision-making has not been possible.
92. Nevertheless, there has been a lot of progress in terms of developing models and setting up the whole framework, meaning that once the data is in place, it would be possible to take optimal decisions. The flyway model developed by Dr. Johnson is a post-breeding projection matrix model. It has a summer component (MU1, MU2) and a winter component divided based on the distribution of geese in winter (north, south). The breeding season is defined from March to August and wintering from September to February. In addition, a utility function has been developed in collaboration with the Range States to look into the satisfaction level of RSs depending on the population size for each MU.
93. The International Waterbird Count (IWC), using imputed values for the population, produced a total of 999,148 individuals in 2022. Excluding estimates for Spain produced a total of 794,318. The summer abundance estimate for MU1 is 389,000 excluding the missing data from Norway. For MU2, this number is estimated at 649,000 without data from several federal states in Germany. The offtake data is present for all Range States. Data suggests a minimum offtake of 441,000 GG in 2021. There seems to be a bias in offtake data from the Netherlands as the estimates are quite high. Efforts are underway to identify the bias.
94. According to the Data Centre’s calculations for management guidance, the optimal offtake strategy is either one with relatively high spring/summer derogation and low winter offtake and a total mean offtake of 180,000 birds, or a strategy with low spring/summer derogation and relatively high winter offtake and a mean offtake of 134,000 birds. Compared to the current estimated offtake of 450,700, this would mean large reductions in offtake data. However, the bias in the current data makes this guidance unreliable.

95. Dr. Jensen explained that even with all the data in place, the model could not be used to prescribe derogation level, as the derogation level depends on agricultural damages. Furthermore, when developing management guidance, the strategy must likewise be evaluated in terms of legal mandate, feasibility and cost.

**Decision:**

The EGM IWG took note of the Population Status and Offtake Assessment Report ([doc. AEWA/EGMWG/8.8/Rev.1](#)).

**Report and Recommendations of the Greylag Goose Task Force**

96. As GG TF Coordinator, Ms. Iben Hove Sorensen introduced this agenda item ([doc. AEWA/EGMIWG/8.13](#)). The TF activities in the past year revolved around providing feedback to progress reports presented by the Data Centre on coordinating GG offtake and assisting Range States in defining utility (i.e., stakeholder satisfaction) as a function of population size in both MUs. As in previous years, the TF contributed to the internal review of EGM IWG meeting documents.
97. The TF recommended for all Range States to strive to provide the necessary data and a description of methods as brought forward in the EGMP Population Status and Assessment Report. All Range States should 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.
98. According to its workplan for 2023/2024, among other activities, the TF will seek to collaborate on reducing the crippling rate of goose species, investigate GG crippling rates, participate in and contribute to TF webinars.
99. The Netherlands made a statement in regard to the role of derogations and the role of the Dutch offtake data bias. Mr. Warmelink reiterated that the planned use of derogations to meet population targets was not possible as the derogation system prescribed that offtake under derogation should be explicitly linked to damage. The Netherlands has always intended to contribute to the AFMP processes within the bounds of relevant national and international legislation and would therefore have a different position in the utility model where size and distribution of offtake would be prescribed. The Netherlands believes that the different role of Dutch derogations does not hamper the further development and use of the model and does not see the need to change anything regarding the utility model in the future. The country cannot receive a prescribed level and distribution of offtake in the same way as for countries involved in sports hunting.
100. As for offtake bias and its implications for the AFMP process, the Netherlands is aware that the Dutch GG offtake data are biased high and recognises that this has implications for the AFMP process and the flyway-level population model that is being developed. Work is underway on solutions to improve the quality of Dutch GG offtake data. The conclusion for now is that developing and implementing these solutions requires more time and that giving a definitive prospect on when the data bias can be reduced to a level acceptable for the AFMP process is currently not possible. Mr. Warmelink emphasised, however, the willingness to work towards the AFMP goal of establishing model-based decision-making at the MU level and the need for a joint decision on how to proceed in the coming three years of the AFMP, now that the information gap analysis period has ended, and model-based decision making is not possible yet. The Netherlands considers for the period to come,

to address its data issues and make use of the FRP values to monitor offtake and will report back on developments in the GG TF.

101. As the Range States were clearly not in the position to take coordinated measures and decisions at this point in time, Mr. Dereliev invited the countries to act independently at this point in the process while observing certain reference values, such as FRPs, and report back to EGM IWG on annual basis. At the same time, the Range States should strive to develop better approaches to data collection in order to be able to move to dynamic decision-making. He expressed hope that all Range States maintain the commitment and intention to work collaboratively to establish a proper adaptive management process.

### **Decisions and Actions:**

The EGM IWG took note of the Task Force report and recommendations (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.13](#)*) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.

The EGM IWG acknowledged that due to data quality issues, at present the population cannot be managed in a coordinated manner across the Range States. As agreed previously, the management approach based on info-gap analysis has ceased as of now. Considering that the population shows no declining trend until data quality issues are resolved, the Range States can, as a minimum, maintain the current level of offtake.

The EGM IWG agreed that all Range States will mainly/where possible focus on offtake strategies with proportionally higher non-breeding season offtake thus minimising the need for breeding-season derogation (Figure 3.3-10 in *doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.8](#)*), and within their respective national law.

The EGM IWG noted that the average annual offtake of such strategies in the range of 134,000 is projected to bring the population closer to the target level by 2030.

While taking into account this reference offtake and the FRP, Range States will be setting offtake regulations independently. The Range states will however continue working together with the Data Centre, and report on their activities, both number, methods and actions taken in relation to offtake management at national and regional level.

Based on the GG TF Report, the EGM IWG agreed to the following actions for 2023/2023 (see further details in the report):

Range States strive to provide the necessary data and a description of methods for:

- 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.

- The GG TF continues the discussion on the use and way forward of how levels and distribution of offtake can/should be evaluated in terms of cost, feasibility, and legal mandates. Specifically, take into account that derogation cannot be prescribed in a planned manner.
- The GG TF continues to exchange general information and experiences with other species-specific TFs and liaises with the Agriculture TF, thus strengthening the relations between EGMP TFs 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 members actively promote available material such as the recorded EGMP webinars and briefing notes.
- The GG TF will keep the online workplan active and updated between meetings.

### **Monitoring and Data Collection**

102. Talking about this agenda item, Dr. Fred Johnson stated that flyway-based management required a highly coordinated and efficient monitoring programme. As so many people are involved in data collection, this is especially challenging in the European context. The Data Centre alerted EGM IWG that it was experiencing difficulties in meeting its responsibilities under current data reporting conditions, accompanied by undue stress on its limited staff.
103. To facilitate these processes, the Data Centre is sending reminders for data submission and tracking receipts of data, providing raw data and methods of data collection on online catalogues and providing freely available modeling and assessment code and results on Gitlab.
104. Dr. Johnson emphasised that the current spring schedule for submission of data, assessment and reporting to EGM IWG was too compressed with Data Centre being held to overly tight deadlines, especially when data is rarely reported on time.
105. The Data Centre offered the following solutions to the issue:
- Moving the EGM IWG meeting to later in the summer. This solution might not be feasible for populations that require an annual decision prior to autumn.
  - The data deadlines can be moved back in time (e.g. end of January). In those cases where spring data is used, methods to make informed decisions absent that data are quite complicated.
  - For some populations (now or in the future), it would be possible to conduct annual stock assessments at any time of the year other than in spring.
106. Moreover, it is crucial for the Data Centre to understand data collection methods in Range States to ascertain their precision and accuracy (particularly for GG and BG). Ideally, no country should unilaterally change data collection methods without prior vetting with the appropriate TF and the Data Centre.
107. Dr. Johnson went on to suggest a move to an online reporting system in which those collecting the monitoring data can post them directly. To improve the situation, Range States could also appoint national coordinators for overseeing monitoring who could quality-check data before submitting them to the Data Centre.

108. In conclusion, the EGM IWG was invited to consider supporting a face-to-face monitoring and data collection workshop in autumn 2023 to be hosted by the Data Centre and attended by key individuals responsible for monitoring. The workshop will aim to review data collection methods in RSs, seek consistent reporting formats and assess the implications of changing data deadlines for current populations.

109. The Netherlands supported the initiative of organizing the monitoring and data collection workshop.

**Decision and Action:**

The EGM IWG supports a face-to-face monitoring and data-collection workshop during autumn 2023 (~November) to be hosted by the Data Centre and attended by key individuals responsible for monitoring as well as the TF coordinators.

The Data Centre will plan for a workshop in the autumn of 2023, provided that funding is made available for hosting the arrangement.

**Report and Recommendations of the Agriculture Task Force**

110. Presenting the TF report (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.14](#)*), the TF Coordinator, Dr. Ingunn Tombre, underlined the cross-cutting nature of the Agriculture TF. There is one new member in the TF – Ms. Barbara Herrero, representing BirdLife International. The TF has had one meeting since EGM IWG8, in addition to several meetings of the Webinar Planning Group within the TF.

111. In her capacity as Agriculture TF Coordinator, Dr. Tombre has presented in the Wadden Sea Forum webinar dedicated to EGMP. She highlighted this opportunity as an excellent way to spread information to various stakeholders.

112. One ongoing task for the TF is an overview of EGMP-relevant papers and reports classified by species, site, country, theme and publication type. Dr. Tombre encouraged the participants to contribute to this overview in order to facilitate 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.

113. Introducing the TF workplan for 2023/2024, Dr. Tombre noted that the majority of actions in the workplan are being addressed through the organisation of webinars and liaising with the local farmer communities.

**Decisions and Action:**

The EGM IWG took note of the TF report and recommendations (*doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.14](#)*) and adopted the annual workplan for 2023/2024.

The EGM IWG agreed that 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 and be incorporated into the EGMP website.

The AEWA Secretariat will investigate how to incorporate studies and technical reports into the EGMP website.

**Day 3 (22 June 2023)**

**Proposal for the Establishment of an EGMP Flight Safety Task Force**

114. This agenda item (*doc.* [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.15](#)) was jointly introduced by Mr. Warmelink, representing the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, and Mr. Albert de Hoon, representing the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment of the Netherlands.
115. Together with the government of Denmark, the Netherlands has submitted to the EGM IWG8 a proposal for the establishment of a Flight Safety Task Force. The TF is to coordinate, catalyse and support the implementation of activities related to goose management in relation to flight safety under the EGMP, and to monitor and report on the implementation of these activities to the IWG. The AFMPs and ISSMPs for BG and GG, together with a recent webinar underpin the relevance of the EGM IWG and demonstrate the importance of jointly tackling the flight safety issues caused by collision risk with geese.
116. Mr. Warmelink thanked Prof. Madsen, Albert de Hoon, and the EGMP Secretariat for their efforts in establishing this proposal and drafting the relevant documents to facilitate the establishment of the TF. Together with the government of Denmark, the Netherlands proposed Albert de Hoon as coordinator for the TF. Albert has been working on the topic of flight safety and wildlife since 1998 and has been involved in developing policies and guidelines at global, European and national level. Mr. Warmelink invited the EGMP countries to contribute to a work plan for the TF suggesting for the drafting of the workplan to be coordinated by the EGM IWG Chair. After introducing himself, Mr. de Hoon listed raising awareness for the prevention of aircraft-geese strikes, exchanging data about goose-related safety issues at airports and sharing experiences and best practices among actions to be taken by the TF.
117. The UK expressed support for the establishment of the TF and reported being in discussions with airport safety managers in the country to identify representation for the TF.
118. Prof. Madsen underlined that the EGMP webinar on air safety raised great interest in the establishment of the dedicated TF from airport operators and experts. The Secretariat stated that the designation of representatives to the TF is to be made through NGRs, and it would be the responsibility of each RS to identify relevant experts to the TF. The TF is also open to observers who do not need to go through national representatives in order to participate in the TF.

**Decisions and Actions**

The EGM IWG took note of the motivation for the establishment of a Flight Safety TF and approved the proposed Terms of Reference (*doc.* [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.15](#)).

Albert de Hoon from the Netherlands was welcomed as the coordinator of the TF.

The Secretariat will reach out to the EGM IWG and permanent observers requesting nominations for TF representatives.

NGRs and permanent observers are encouraged to identify and designate a representative to join the TF and communicate nominations to the Secretariat.

The TF Coordinator Albert de Hoon will convene a meeting in autumn 2023

**Report from the EGMP Communications Contact Group and future work**

119. Ms. Shenay Huseynova, EGMP Programme Management Assistant, provided an update on the work of the Communications Contact Group established at EGM IWG7 in order to help improve EGMP communication efforts. She reminded the participants that the membership of the Contact Group is open for those interested.
120. The Contact Group has been working on developing an EGMP communication strategy based on surveys filled out by TF members. Communication and outreach materials have been developed such as EGMP Highlights 2022, briefing notes on population status and management recommendations, GG AFMP and major discussion points to be taken at EGM IWG8. Two webinars were organised since EGM IWG7 dedicated to geese and air safety and goose damage impact. The Range States were invited to reach out to the Secretariat and Data Centre with suggestions for webinar topics. Finally, the EGMP website upgrade is in progress including changes in structure, layout and design. TF members were encouraged to support the population of the new website with content once it is ready for launch.
121. The Netherlands thanked everyone involved in the production on communication materials noting that they were very helpful.
122. Mr. Cy Griffin from FACE thanked the Secretariat and the Data Centre for the conducted work and suggested for the new website to provide an overview of management units directly under species information. Mr. Koffijberg noted that fact sheets on basic concepts such as MUs, FRVs would also be quite helpful in making this important information easily accessible.
123. Dr. Jensen reminded the participants that draft briefing notes and fact sheets on different topics are available on the [EGMP workspace](#).
124. The UK commended the design of the new EGMP website and inquired if a similar design would be applied to the other AEWA websites. Dr. Trouvilliez pointed out that the update of the AEWA website was also underway which will include changes in structure.
125. The Chair mentioned that the EGMP description on the website could be revised to highlight the unique nature of the platform and its work.

**Decisions and Actions:**

The EGM IWG took note of the work done by the EGMP Communications Contact Group.

It was agreed that a communications focal point for each EGMP TF would be beneficial for the communications work under the EGMP.

Mr. Ove Martin Gundersen volunteered to become a communications focal point for either the GG or PfG TF.

The Secretariat will add a section or page on the EGMP website that provides information about the species population flyway and MUs.

Moreover, the Secretariat together with the TFs will develop species fact sheets. These fact sheets will be drafted jointly by the Secretariat and the respective EGMP TFs.

The Secretariat will reach out to the TF members to identify volunteers for the communications focal point roles. Mr Ove Martin Gundersen has agreed to be a communications focal point for both Pink-footed Goose Task Force and Greylag Goose Task Force.

### **EGMP Finance Report 2022/2023**

126. Mr. Sergey Dereliev outlined the summary of document [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.16](#). 2022 was the most successful year for EGMP in terms of income, with a gap of only 6% against the agreed budget. The Secretariat thanked the Range States for their commitment, highlighting this big achievement for the Platform. Contributions have been received from all but one paying EGMP Range States.

127. As of 31 March 2023, the status of budget contributions for 2023 stood at € 117,722 with an additional pledge of € 11,000. This led to a funding gap of € 337,278 for 2023. Contributions have been received from four Range States so far.

128. In terms of additional funding for project-based activities, Denmark (Jægerens Naturfond) donated € 35,326 for the development of a flyway model for GG.

129. The Secretariat also presented the following overview of in-kind contributions made in the 2022/2023 cycle:

- **Netherlands** € 214,747 (Modelling Consortium)
- **Norway** € 72,460 (PfG ISSAP evaluation)
- **UK** € 7,000 (Greenland BG population model)

Mr. Dereliev specified that only activities that otherwise need to be implemented by the Secretariat or the Data Centre can be classified as in-kind contributions. The Secretariat agreed to update the guidance on reporting in-kind contributions prior to distributing it for the EGM IWG9, to eliminate any further ambiguity regarding the definition of the in-kind contributions.

130. The projection for the budget expenditure for 2023 is € 416,684, thus creating a projected “saving” by the Secretariat of € 49,316 against the agreed budget. The EGMP Coordinator post will be vacant for several months in 2023, thus reducing the projected annual expenditure.

131. Prof. Madsen acknowledged EGMP is a driver of a huge amount of research work ongoing in the Range States.

132. Ms. Sorensen and Mr. Koffijberg suggested that moving forward, monitoring efforts and a list of running projects from all Range States are added as an appendix to the TF reports.

### **Decisions and Actions:**

The EGM IWG took note of the EGMP finance report for 2022/2023 (doc. [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.16](#)).

The UK will endeavour to seek the remaining 50 % of their indicated voluntary contribution towards the EGMP budget 2023. Moreover, Belgium pledged EUR 35,000 for the Data Centre and the Netherlands clarified that their contribution was delayed, but underway.

The Secretariat will liaise with the Range States and revise the guidance on reporting in-kind contributions in advance of circulation before EGM IWG9.



Additional EGMP-related projects and EGMP-related activities will be integrated and listed in the TF reports to reflect the wider commitments of range states on a national level.

**EGMP Budget and costed Programme of Work (cPOW) for 2024**

133. Mr. Sergey Dereliev introduced document [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.17](#). The proposed Secretariat budget is the same as before – € 282,000, most of which is allocated to staffing capacity in the Secretariat and some operational costs related to communication, office maintenance, contractual services and travel. The same applies for the Data Centre budget. The proposed amount of € 184,000 mostly covers staff costs with small amounts allocated for operating costs.
134. The indicative scale of contributions (Annex 3 of this report) has been updated in 2022 to include the new participating Range State – Ireland – and to reflect updates in the UN scale of assessment.
135. The EGMP costed Programme of Work (Annex 2 of this report) for 2024 covers the following scope of activities:

- A** Overall EGMP Coordination and Programme Management
- B** EGMP Meetings and Workshops
- C** International Species Action and Management Plans under the EGMP
- D** Communication and Information Management
- E** Further Management and Administrative Processes according to UN Rules
- F** Staff Costs

**Decisions:**

The Range States agreed on the proposed EGMP budget for 2024 (*doc.* [AEWA/EGMIWG/8.17](#)), (Annex 1 of this report) and adopted the suggested costed Programme of Work for 2024 (Annex 2 of this report).

The Range States agreed for budget 2024 to use the revised indicative scale of voluntary contributions that was agreed in 2022 (Annex 3 of this report).

**Election of new Chair / Venue and dates of the next EGM IWG meeting**

136. Sweden announced that it will be pleased to chair the EGM IWG for the next biannual period and that Mr. Petter Kjellander, Professor of Wildlife Ecology at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, will be acting as Chair of the EGM IWG on behalf of Sweden. Prof. Kjellander introduced himself and thanked the EGM IWG for the warm welcome. Mr. Matt Parsons from the UK welcomed the Swedish chairmanship of the EGM IWG.
137. Mr. Arild Espelien kindly extended an invitation to host the next meeting of EGM IWG in Norway. The meeting will take place in the week of 17-21 June 2024.

**Decisions:**

Sweden was elected as the next Chair of the EGM IWG until June 2025. Prof. Petter Kjellander was introduced to the EGM IWG and will assume the role of the Chair for the next period.

Norway kindly offered to host the next EGM IWG meeting, and this was welcomed by the IWG. The dates for the EGM IWG9 were set for the week of 17-21 June 2024.

**EGM IWG8 Decisions Table**

138. The Secretariat shared the table of agreed decisions from the meeting with the EGM IWG9 participants. Following a review of the decisions table, it was approved by the Range States, with the final version being disseminated to all meeting attendees.

**Summary, next steps and closure of meeting**

139. The Chair noted that Ms Meyers would be leaving the Secretariat to undertake research on Angel Sharks. On behalf of participants he thanked her for outstanding work, characterized by painstaking accuracy, diligence, care and humour. The Chair thanked the Secretariat more widely for excellent work preparing for and during the meeting, and participants for lively and engaging discussions.

140. Dr. Trouvilliez thanked the Chair for the tremendous work and guidance. He noted that it was in the spirit of AEWA bringing stakeholders together to decide the future of waterbird conservation.

141. The Chair declared the meeting closed.

**Annex 1**

**EGMP Secretariat and Data Centre Budget for 2024**

<b>EGMP Secretariat Budget for 2024 (in EUR)</b>	
<b>Staff Costs (incl. UMOJA costs)</b>	
EGMP Coordinator (100%; P2)	142,000
Programme Management Assistant (100%; G5)	80,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>222,000</b>
<b>Operating Costs</b>	
Communication – design and printing services	5,000
Miscellaneous (e.g. office supplies and equipment, training)	5,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Implementing Partner Direct Costs and Consultancies</b>	
Small Scale Funding Agreements/ Consultancies substantive work	15,000
Communication – website and social media services	5,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>20,000</b>
<b>Travel</b>	
Travel (staff, experts and funded delegates)	15,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Contractual Services (Meetings)</b>	
EGM IWG meeting (catering & venue, if hosted in Bonn)	15,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Total Budget, incl. Programme Support Costs</b>	<b>282,000</b>

<b>EGMP Data Centre Budget for 2024 (in EUR)</b>	
<b>Object of expenditures</b>	
<b>Staff Costs</b>	
Goose Monitoring Coordinator (100%)	96,000
Population Modelling Experts (50%)	48,000
Lead Compiler (22,5%)	30,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>174,000</b>
<b>Operating costs</b>	
Travel, meetings, miscellaneous	10,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>184,000</b>

## EGMP Costed Programme of Work for 2024

Activity No.	Activities	Priority ranking*	Timeframe	Total Budget (€) Secretariat & Data Centre	AEWA Secretariat Budget (€)	Data Centre Budget (€)	Additional funding needs
<b>A Overall EGMP coordination and programme management</b>							
1	Provide overall coordination of the EGMP	core	rolling	-	-	-	
2	Undertake administrative and financial management of the EGMP	core	rolling	-	-	-	
3	Coordinate the work of the International Modelling Consortium	core	rolling	-	-	-	
4	Coordinate monitoring networks, databases and workflow with data holders and NGR	core	rolling	-	-	-	
5	Undertake fundraising activities (project proposals, identify and approach potential donors)	core	rolling	-	-	-	
6	Maintain the rolling costed Programme of Work for 2023	core	rolling	-	-	-	
7	Develop and revise a draft costed Programme of Work for 2024	core	spring/autumn	-	-	-	
8	Represent the EGMP at relevant meetings, conferences and workshops	core	rolling	-	-	-	
9	Staff travel on official business	core	rolling	20.000	10.000	10.000	
10	Consultancies and SSFAs	core	rolling	15.000	15.000	-	
11	Other operational costs e.g. procurement, office supplies, office equipment, telephone, etc.	core	rolling	4.000	4.000	-	
	<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>39.000</b>	<b>29.000</b>	<b>10.000</b>	
<b>B EGMP Meetings and Workshops</b>							
1	Organise and support the EGMP International Goose Modelling Consortium Meetings	core	spring	-	-	-	
2	Organise and support the EGMP Task Force Meetings	core	rolling	-	-	-	
3	** Organise the 9th Meeting of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG9)	core	June	15.000	15.000	-	
4	Travel funded experts and delegates to EGMP related meetings (travel, visa, DSA, etc.)	core	rolling	5.000	5.000	-	
5	Prepare meeting documents for EGM IWG9	core	rolling	-	-	-	
6	*** Organise other meetings and workshops as necessary	medium	as required	-	-	-	
	<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>20.000</b>	<b>20.000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>C International Single Species Action and Management Plans under the EGMP</b>							
<b>Taiga Bean Goose ISSAP</b>							
1	Coordinate monitoring networks, databases and workflow with data holders and NGR for Taiga Bean Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
2	Produce Population Status and Assessment Report for Taiga Bean Goose	core	Jan-May	-	-	-	
3	Coordinate and support the work of the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force	core	rolling	-	-	-	
4	Coordinate TBG ISSAP evaluation process	high	until Spring 2024	-	-	-	15.000
5	Coordinate TBG ISSAP revision process	high	Jan-Dec	-	-	-	5.000
<b>Pink-footed Goose ISSMP</b>							
6	Coordinate monitoring networks, databases and workflow with data holders and NGR for Pink-footed Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
7	Produce Population Status and Assessment Report for Pink-footed Goose	core	Jan-June	-	-	-	
8	Coordinate PFG ISSMP evaluation process	high	until Spring 2024	-	-	-	15.000
9	Coordinate PFG ISSMP revision process	high	Jan-Dec	-	-	-	5.000
10	Coordinate and support the work of the Pink-footed Goose Task Force	core	rolling	-	-	-	
<b>Barnacle Goose ISSMP</b>							
<b>Russian/Germany and Netherland population (in collaboration with Sovon, the Neherlands)</b>							
11	Coordinate the Implementation of Adaptive Flyway Management Programmes for the Barnacle Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
12	Coordinate monitoring networks, databases and workflow with data holders and NGR for Barnacle Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
13	Produce Population Status and Assessment Report for Barnacle Goose	core	Jan-April	-	-	-	
14	Coordinate and support the work of the two Barnacle Goose Task Forces	core	rolling	-	-	-	
<b>Greenland/Scotland and Ireland population (in collaboration with NatureScot, UK)</b>							
15	Coordinate the Implementation of Adaptive Flyway Management Programmes for the Barnacle Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
16	Coordinate monitoring networks, databases and workflow with data holders and NGR for Barnacle Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
17	Produce Population Status and Assessment Report for Barnacle Goose	core	Jan-April	-	-	-	
18	Coordinate and support the work of the Barnacle Goose Task Force	core	rolling	-	-	-	
<b>Greylag Goose ISSMP</b>							
19	Coordinate the implementation of Adaptive Flyway Management Programme for the Greylag Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
20	Coordinate monitoring networks, databases and workflow with data holders and NGR for Greylag Goose	core	rolling	-	-	-	
21	Produce Population Status and Assessment Report for Greylag Goose	core	Jan-April	-	-	-	
22	Coordinate and support the work of the Greylag Goose Task Force	core	rolling	-	-	-	
<b>Crosscutting</b>							
23	Coordinate and support the work of the Agriculture Goose Task Force	core	rolling	-	-	-	
24	Coordinate and support the work of the Flight Safety Task Force	core	rolling	-	-	-	
	<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>D Communications and information management</b>							
1	Produce, maintain and update website and social media content	high	rolling	5.000	5.000	-	
2	Maintain EGMP workspaces (sharepoint)	core	rolling	-	-	-	
3	Maintain EGMP Contact Database	core	rolling	-	-	-	
4	Maintain EGMP Database	core	rolling	-	-	-	
5	Maintain EGMP GitLab	core	rolling	-	-	-	
6	Organise EGMP webinars	medium	rolling	-	-	-	
7	Develop and produce publications and information materials (design, printing)	medium	rolling	5.000	5.000	-	

Annex 2

	<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>10.000</b>	<b>10.000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>E</b>	<b>Further management and administrative processes according to UN rules</b>						
<b>1</b>	Provide staff management, including regular team meetings	core	rolling	-	-	-	
<b>2</b>	Trainings, staff meetings, stand-in and other tasks within the AEWa Secretariat	core	rolling	1.000	1.000	-	
	<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>1.000</b>	<b>1.000</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>F</b>	<b>Staff Costs</b>						
<b>1</b>	AEWA Secretariat staff costs (incl. UMOJA costs)			222.000	222.000		
<b>2</b>	Data Centre staff costs	core		174.000		174.000	
	<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>396.000</b>	<b>222.000</b>	<b>174.000</b>	

<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>466.000</b>	<b>282.000</b>	<b>184.000</b>	<b>40.000</b>
				including programme support costs (13%) and overheads	including programme support costs (13%)	including overheads	

\* Priorities: Core = included in agreed EGMP Budget ; High-Low = additional funding needed

\*\* Budget to host the meeting in Bonn, in case no host can be identified

\*\*\* Activities and projects not included in the EGMP core budget, for which additional funding is needed

### Annex 3

#### Indicative Scale of Voluntary Contributions towards the EGMP annual budget

The indicative scale of voluntary contributions was initially agreed by the EGM IWG at EGM IWG4 in June 2019, in Perth, Scotland, UK. The scale was calculated based on 50% UN scale of assessment / 50% number of populations per country and with a 15% cap.

With new Range States joining the EGMP, i.e. Ireland in 2022, and taking into account the current UN scale of assessment, the scale was recalculated and adopted at EGM IWG7.

Scenario 5 50% by population / 50% by UN scale 15% cap- 10 states	
Range State	full budget
(Belarus)**	
Belgium	53,644 €
Denmark	53,056 €
(Estonia)**	
(EU)**	
Finland	48,497 €
France	43,580 €
Germany***	
Iceland	9,836 €
Ireland	23,345 €
Latvia**	
(Lithuania)*	
Netherlands	60,839 €
Norway	57,279 €
(Poland)*	
(Russia)*	
(Spain)*	
Sweden	63,715 €
UK	52,209 €
(Ukraine)**	
<b>Total</b>	<b>466,000 €</b>

\* non-member range states

\*\* non-paying range states

\*\*\* Germany has a reservation on the proposed budget and the scale of contribution and will decide on its contributions on the basis of a Cpow

**Annex 4**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS<sup>1</sup>**

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