



AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group - National Report 2011-2012

Welcome to the online reporting template for the 2011-2012 national report on the implementation of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose Single Species Action Plan under the framework of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group.

Reporting on the implementation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose Single Species Action Plan was established at the first Meeting of the Working Group, which took place on the 30.11.-1.12.2010 in Helsinki, Finland. The meeting also adopted the format reflected in this online template.

Please submit the completed form to the AEWA Secretariat by **Friday the 31st of August 2012 at the latest**, by pressing the **submit button** on the top right of the questionnaire **once you have completed all questions**.

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact Nina Mikander, Coordinator for the Lesser White-fronted Goose:

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Single Species Action Plan in English

Single Species Action Plan in Russian

Happy reporting!

1. General Information

Name of reporting Range State

> Ukraine

Contracting Party to AEWA

Yes

National Focal Point

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2. Status Update

2.1. Species Status - breeding (pairs)

Does the species breed in your country?

No

2.2. Species Status - passage (individuals)

Does the species occur in your country on passage?

Yes

Latest population estimate

No information

Tick only if no information is available

Population trend

Please select from the list

Unknown

2.3. Species Status - wintering (individuals)

Does the species winter in your country?

Yes

Latest population estimate

Minimum

> 25

Year

> Dec 2011

Population trend

Please select from the list

Unknown

Source(s) of information

Please list any published or unpublished sources of information on wintering population size and trend estimates.

> Report from Biosphere Reserve "Askania-Nova". Near that area in Nov-Dec 2011 were found 565 dead geese and ducks, among which 24 *Anser erythropus*. The reason of waterbirds death is poisoned graine, used on agriculture fields for regulation of number of rodents

3. Update on Critical Sites

3.1. Critical sites identified in the SSAP

Which sites that have been identified in the LWfG SSAP as important for the species in your country have been designated as protected areas under the national legislation and have management plans that are being implemented?

Total number of sites identified in the SSAP:

> 4

Out of the above total, number of protected sites:

> 2

Number of protected sites with management plans that are being implemented:

> 0

3.2. Gaps in protection

Please point at any major gaps in the protection and management of critical sites which will need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

> Protected areas just partly cover wetlands important for this species : Dniester delta - Low Dniester National Nature park, Sivash - Sivashskii National Nnature park, Yagorlytskii& Tendrovskii Bays - Black Sea Strict Nature Reserve (zapovednik) and some others. At the same time, the most dangerous places for *A.erythropus* are agriculture fields, which are feeding places for the birds, but not protected and is under high pressure of hunting.

3.3. Identification of new sites

Have any new sites which are currently not mentioned in the SSAP been identified as possible critical sites for the species?

Yes

Please list these sites

> There is no any agreed list of critical sites for *A.erythropus* in Ukraine. From Ukrainian scientific publications and IWC results it is possible to select several important wetlands - Dniester Delta (1), Yagorlytskii&Tendrovskii Bays (2), Sivash (3), Molochnyi Liman (4), wetlands of Kerch Peninsula (Eastern Crimea)(5), wetlands of Western Crimea (6) and Askania-Nova ponds (7). Critical Site Network Tool (<http://dev.unep-wcmc.org/csn/default.html#state=species&SpcRecID=377>), developed by Birdlife and Wetlands International, mentioned as a critical, only numbers 1,2,3,5. It is possible to add - 4,6,7.

Of those listed above, please specify which ones are protected and/or managed.

> Molochnyi Liman (4) - partly protected by Priazovskii National Nature Park, wetlands of Western Crimea (6) - are not protected, and Askania-Nova ponds (7) - within Askania-Nova Biosphere Reserve

3.4. Additional information (optional)

Please add any additional information concerning critical sites not covered by the previous questions.

> Main problem is that critical sites are mainly wetlands used by birds only as roosting places, but agriculture fields - feeding places - are under strong hunting/poaching pressure and agriculture impact. That is why feeding birds are shot y hunters or die from poisoning, eating poison grain, which is used for rodents control.

4. Update on Pressures/Threats and Responses

4.1. Hunting

4.1.1. Please rate the magnitude of hunting as a threat to the LWfG in your country.

Please select from the list (for guidance "hover" over the question mark button on the right):

High

Please indicate the trend of hunting as a threat to the LWfG

Increasing

Please describe the hunting situation with respect to LWfG in your country (For example: when and where does hunting occur? Who hunts and why?)

> Hunting on wintering geese is very popular in Ukraine. Mainly these are areas at the south of the country where birds are wintering - 5 administrative oblasts and AR Crimea. Today many hunters have good off-road cars, guns and other equipment. As results legal and illegal hunting pressure is very high. Due to quite big number of off-road cars used by hunters, in fact geese don't have safety places for feeding and forced nearly constantly fly from one agriculture field to another.

Please list any published or unpublished sources on hunting pressure on LWfG in your country.

> There is no special publications on this issue based on real investigation, but in different scientific/conservation publications this is mentioned. Beside this, our own (my and my colleagues) field experience, even for geese count 2011/ 2012, prove that hunting pressure is high.

4.1.2. Has hunting been banned at all key sites used by LWfG when LWfG are present?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please explain why hunting has not yet been banned at key sites.

> Hunting is banned just within protected areas. In relation to key sites, protected areas mainly cover wetlands (roosting places), but is not cover agriculture fields (feeding places)

4.1.3. Have efforts been made to assess the hunting pressure at key sites?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please provide more information on why efforts have not yet been made to assess the hunting pressure at key sites.

> For today hunting is prohibited within protected areas (this quite new regulation at state level and there is strong hunting lobby to cancel this regulation). Outside protected areas - on agriculture fields - is rather difficult to reduce hunting pressure since hunting society is quite strong in Ukraine, and includes rich people and people from different levels of state administration. Beside this agriculture companies is not interested in waterbirds conservation.

pressure

4.1.4. Has obligatory training of hunters as outlined by the Hunting Charter of the Bern Convention been implemented?

Please tick the appropriate box.

No

Please provide more information on why training for hunters has not yet been provided.

> According to legislation hunters should pass special test on hunting rules, which includes some components on waterbirds, but in reality this test is just formality, and its conservation component (rare species etc.) is

very weak.

4.1.5. Has the level of protection from illegal hunting been increased within existing protected areas through training and improved enforcement?

Please tick the appropriate box.

No

Please provide more information on why training and improved enforcement have not been implemented in order to increase the level of protection from illegal hunting.

> Officially hunting is prohibited within protected areas, but it work only to some extent. Only some categories of protected areas (for example - national parks) have guards, other categories (for example - zakazniks) have no any staff. In fact it means that there is no any control what happen within these areas. Even in protected areas with staff (guard) poaching still often is a problem.

Training of hunters in Ukraine in fact is absent.

4.1.6. Has an effort been made to redirect hunting from adults to juveniles in areas where LWfG occur outside of the key sites?

Please tick the appropriate box

No

Please provide more information on why no measures have been taken.

> First of all it is necessary to agree what are key sites, what are their borders, to evaluate hunting pressures within key sites and outside them etc.

4.1.7. Have lure crops been planted (or similar steps been taken) to direct LWfG away from areas where hunting pressure is known to be high?

Please tick the appropriate box

No

Please provide more information on why such measures have not been undertaken.

> There no an appropriate mechanism to do this - there is no sources of funding, hunting culture is very low, agriculture sector is not interested in it etc.

4.2. Poisoning

4.2.1. Please rate the magnitude of poisoning as a threat to the LWfG in your country.

Please select from the list (for guidance "hover" over the question mark button on the right):

High

Please indicate the trend of poisoning as a threat to the LWfG in your country.

Increasing

Please describe the situation with regard to the threat from poisoning to the LWfG in your country.

> Using of agriculture chemicals, including pest (rodents) control are growing in Ukraine last 5-10 years. That is why even only recorded cases of birds death show strong impact of agriculture on migratory and wintering geese and ducks. Several years ago in Eastern Ukraine (Kharkivska obl) was found about 1300 dead geese. During Dec 2011 counts, on the shore and in shallow waters of the Kartkazak Bay (AR Crimea), V.Kostiushyn and Yu.Andryushenko have found more than 70 B.ruficollis died from poisoning (the actual number of dead birds could not be determined, but it is supposed that total amount reached several hundred individuals). The fact of poisoning indicated that all the remains were discovered at the same place and they were in the same conditions. All of them have been gnawed by predators (probably fox, raccoon dog, white-tailed eagle, crows), which are likely to collect the bodies in shallow water and brought them to the shore According to local hunters, in January 2012, in the same area, they found about 300 dead A.albifrons, craws of which were full of grain. According to information from V.Gavrilenko and A.Mezinov, another mass death of geese was observed in Biosphere Reserve "Askania-Nova" (Kherson oblast) in the Nov-Dec 2011 - 565 waterbirds died, among which 25 A.erythropus and 10 Branta ruficollis.

4.3. Human disturbance

4.3.1. Please rate the magnitude of human disturbance as a threat to the LWfG in your country.

Please select from the list (for guidance "hover" over the question mark button on the right):

High

Please indicate the trend of human disturbance as a threat to LWfG in your country.

Increasing

Please describe the situation with regard to the threat from human disturbance and the LWfG in your country.

> mainly this is due to movement of hunters' cars

4.3.2. Are you taking measures to avoid infrastructure development and other sources of human disturbance, including recreation/tourism, liable to have an adverse impact on the known core breeding areas?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please provide further information on why no measures are being undertaken.

> there is no mechanism how to reduce hunting disturbance of wintering birds outside the protected areas

4.3.3. Are you taking measures to avoid infrastructure development and other sources of human disturbance, including recreation/tourism, liable to have an impact on known key sites for the LWfG?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

4.3.4. Are you taking measures to avoid overgrazing and nest trampling if/where this is known to be a problem?

Please tick the appropriate box:

Not applicable

4.4. Predation

4.4.1. Please rate the magnitude of predation as a threat to the LWfG in your country.

Please select from the list (for guidance "hover" over the question mark button on the right):

No threat

4.4.2. Are you taking measures to minimize predation, where this has been shown to be a significant limiting factor (particularly in the breeding grounds)?

Please tick the appropriate box:

Not applicable

4.5. Habitat loss/degradation

(Such as agricultural intensification, construction of dams etc., wetland drainage, climate change, land abandonment, overgrazing, pollution of wetlands/water bodies etc.)

4.5.1. Rate the magnitude of habitat loss/degradation as a threat to the LWfG in your country.

Select from the list (for guidance "hover" over the question mark button on the right):

Low

Please indicate the trend of habitat loss/degradation as a threat to the LWfG in your country.

Stable

Please describe the situation with regard to habitat loss/degradation as a threat to the LWfG in your country (particular areas effected etc.).

> Areas with winter wheat is still not so extensive as it was during Soviet times, before economic depression in 90th of 20 century.

4.5.2. Are you monitoring the habitat quality at key sites in order to identify any anthropogenic pressures as early as possible?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please provide more information on why the habitat quality at key sites in not being monitored.

> There is no special programme for this, as well as source of funding and responsible organization (coordinator)

4.5.3. Are you taking measures to restore and/or rehabilitate Lesser White-fronted Goose roosting and feeding habitat in the staging or wintering areas?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please provide more information on why such measures are not beng implemented in your country.

> There is no special programme for this, as well as source of funding and responsible organization (coordinator)

5. Update on National Legislation and Activities

5.1. National legal protection

5.1.1. Is the LWfG legally protected in your country?

Please tick the appropriate box.

Yes

Please list the year and title of the legislation concerned as well as the enforcing institution.

> this species is included in the Red Data Book of Ukraine, which is part of Ukrainian conservation legislation

5.1.2. Does the national hunting legislation, in principle, provide adequate protection of the LWfG?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please explain why the current hunting legislation does not provide adequate protection of the species.

> Legislation is not developed enough in relation to rare species protection, incl. A.erythropus, and, in general, legislation enforcement is not much efficient in Ukraine

5.1.3. Are sufficient human and financial resources being allocated to the enforcement of hunting legislation in order to control hunting effectively?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please explain why.

> Hunting lobby is strong in Ukraine and there is no serious attempts to change hunting legislation from any side - GO, NGOs etc

5.2. National Single Species Action Plan

5.2.1. Has your country drafted a National Single Species Action Plan for the LWfG?

Please select from the list:

NSSAP in place, but not being implemented

Please explain why your developed NSSAP is currently not being implemented.

> NSSAP is prepared in 2000 by national experts within the project of Ukrainian Bird Protection Society (Birdlife partner in Ukraine). NSSAP has no official status and is quite general. NSSAP even is not includes list of key sites. In fact it is more close to Vision, then to National Action Plan.

include

5.2.2. If your country does not have or is still in the process of developing its LWfG NSSAP, would you be interested in assistance from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in this work?

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

Please specify what kind of assistance would be needed.

> More comprehensive, more detail NSSAP is needed for Ukraine

5.3. National Working Group

5.3.1. Does your country have a National Working Group for the LWfG?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please explain why no National Working Group has yet been established.
 > there is a small set of experts, but not formally organized in a working group

5.4. Monitoring

5.4.1. Does your country have a monitoring scheme in place for the LWfG?

During the breeding season?

Not applicable

During passage/migration period?

Partial

Please provide more information on the monitoring activities during the passage/migration season.
 > there is no special monitoring programme for the species in the country, at minimum covered key sites. For today, there are only occasional investigations devoted to migratory waterbirds in certain areas/wetlands. In 2010, Black Sea office of Wetlands International, on the basis of IWC methodology, have organized in Azov-Black Sea region of Ukraine waterbird counts at all key wetlands, but this was done just one time and there is no funding to continue this initiative.

During the wintering season?

Partial

Please provide more information on the monitoring activities during the non-breeding/wintering season.
 > Regarding to wintering birds, IWC counts, which covers all key wetlands of Azov-Black sea region of Ukraine, is quite traditional for the region (more than 20 years), but is not specially devoted to *A.erythropus*

If your country does not have a monitoring scheme in place for the LWfG please explain why.

Please fill in the text box:

> There is no special funding for this. Area for counts is quite huge - Azov-Black Sea coast is about 1000 km length, and counts needs 4x4 cars etc.

5.4.2. If there is no scheme on a national level, is LWfG monitoring conducted on a regular basis by other means?

During breeding season?

Not applicable

During passage/migration?

No

During wintering/non-breeding season?

Partial

Please provide more information on how the monitoring is being done and by whom.

> IWC, mentioned above, which cover Azov-Black sea region of Ukraine, where concentrate migratory and wintering waterbirds

5.5. LWfG conservation/research projects

Provide links to any national and/or international LWfG conservation or research projects being conducted in your country by using the buttons on the right hand side. Please list the project title, goals and objectives, period of implementation, implementing organisation, contact details and short description.

> In winter 2011-2012 National Ecological Centre of Ukraine have implemented project "Monitoring of Lesser White-fronted Geese (*Anser erythropus*) and Awareness raising among Hunters in the Ukraine" supported by UNEP/ AEWA

In accordance to the planned activities in frame of the project was done the following:

1) To involve hunters and birdwatchers in the monitoring of *A. erythropus*, special web-pages were developed on web-site <http://biomon.org/projects/piskulka/>. First information on this species was received via web-site;

2) 10 000 of leaflets devoted to field identification, monitoring and conservation of *A. erythropus* were printed and disseminated among hunting organizations, NGOs, national parks and other protected areas etc. Part of copies was passed to the Ministry of Environmental Protection of Ukraine and Hunting department of the State Agency on Forestry of Ukraine;

3) Existing data on *A. erythropus* in Ukraine was collated. Information on *A.erythropus* in Azov-Black Sea region of Ukraine is very scarce. Only part of existed data is reliable and based on a few shot birds and birds identified using good telescopes. Findings of big flocks *A.erythropus* (300 -1000 individuals) are doubtful, since experts reported on them had used only binoculars or identified birds by voice, without having good experience in this;

4) Two field counts of *A.erythropus* in 4 areas were conducted in Dec 2011 and Jan 2012. The total length of counting routs was 4423,4 km. During two counts were recorded 114389 water birds of 68 species, among which 58487 were geese. Unfortunately *A.erythropus* was not found. At the same time, 6133 individuals of another protected species – *B.ruficollis* was counted.

Beside unusual weather during the winter, additional problem for field identification of *A.erythropus* was a strong disturbance of the geese by hunters and poachers, and, as result, big distance of the birds escaping – they took wing from 300 m and more.

5) Within the project also it was collected information on negative impact of agriculture on migratory and wintering geese in the region. Due to increasing of agriculture activity many geese in the region, including protected species *B.ruficollis* and *A.erythropus*, die from chemicals for rodents control. Scale of the problem is not clear enough, but in frame of the current project was collected data on about 900 dead birds, among which at least 80 *B.ruficollis* and 25 *A.erythropus*

You have attached the following Web links/URLs to this answer.

<http://biomon.org/projects/piskulka/>

5.6. Awareness Raising

5.6.1. Has your country developed and implemented methods for raising awareness and understanding on LWfG and LWfG conservation, in particular with relation to hunters?

Please select from the list:

Yes, being implemented

Please provide further information on methods and how they are being implemented.

> Within above mentioned project “Monitoring of Lesser White-fronted Geese (*Anser erythropus*) and Awareness raising among Hunters in the Ukraine” have been printed poster and special web-page were developed

6. Funding

6.1. Are there any national funding possibilities for LWfG conservation measures in your country?

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

Please list the relevant funding programmes and relevant authorities.

> In principle small funding could be possible through the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, but in practice due to several, mainly, bureaucratic reasons it is not working well

6.2. If your country does not yet have a National Single Species Action Plan, would national funding be available for the drafting and implementation of the NSSAP?

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

6.3. Additional information (optional)

Please add any additional information concerning the funding of LWfG conservation measures in your country not covered by the questions above.

> Procedure for obtaining budget funding for a development a National Single Species Action Plan is quite complicated

7. Update on Key Knowledge

7.1. Are satellite tracking and/or field surveys being used in your country to locate the breeding, staging and/or wintering sites of the Western main population?

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

Please provide more information.

> In winter 2011-2012 National Ecological Centre of Ukraine have implemented project "Monitoring of Lesser White-fronted Geese (*Anser erythropus*) and Awareness raising among Hunters in the Ukraine" supported by UNEP/ AEWA. Within the project, team of ornithologists from Azov-Black-Sea ornithological station and Institute of zoology of the NAS of Ukraine, collated existed data on the species and two field counts of *A.erythropus* in 4 areas were conducted in Dec 2011 and Jan 2012. The total length of counting routs was 4423,4 km. During two counts were recorded 114389 water birds of 68 species, among which 58487 were geese. Unfortunately *A.erythropus* was not found. At the same time, 6133 individuals of another protected species - *B.ruficollis* was counted.

Beside unusual weather during the winter, additional problem for field identification of *A.erythropus* was a strong disturbance of the geese by hunters and poachers, and, as result, big distance of the birds escaping - they took wing from 300 m and more.

Within the project also it was collected information on 900 geese and ducks poisoned on the agriculture fields, among which were 80 *B.ruficollis* and 25 *A.erythropus*.

7.2. Are satellite tracking and/or field surveys being used in your country to locate the breeding, staging and/or wintering sites for the Fennoscandian population?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

Please explain why no satellite tracking or field surveys are currently being undertaken.

> Field survey was not specially devoted to any *A.erythropus* population.

7.3. Are further field studies of suitable breeding habitat and staging areas being undertaken in order to update the estimate for the Fennoscandian population (Kola peninsula etc.)?

Please tick the appropriate box:

Not applicable

7.4. Are there any further knowledge gaps not covered by this report critical for LWfG conservation in your country which would require further research?

Please tick the appropriate box:

No

9. Submission

Please insert the date of submission for this report:
> 17 October 2012