



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

> Estonia

Contracting Party to AEWA

Yes

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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

Minimum

> 31

Maximum

> 52

Year

> 2012

Population trend

Please select from the list

Fluctuating

Source(s) of information

Please list any published or unpublished sources of information on passage population size and trend estimates.

> Spring monitoring 2012, preliminary data, WWF Finland LWfG team report

2.3. Species Status - wintering (individuals)

Does the species winter in your country?

No

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:

> 2

Out of the above total, number of protected sites:

> 2

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

> 2

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.

> No major gaps. Sites have been protected and managed satisfactorily.

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?

No

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):

Low

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

Stable

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

> LWfG are staging mostly inside the protected areas during the spring migration period when geese hunting is forbidden everywhere. There is also no verified information about poaching of LWfG. During hunting season in autumn we have only a few observation of LWfG on a few days.

Please list any published or unpublished sources on hunting pressure on LWfG in your country.

> Field observations, geese monitoring, oral date and hunting bag reporting from hunters.

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

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

Please provide more information (when is hunting banned, at which sites etc.)

> Important key sites for staging LWfG are Matsalu National Park and Silma Nature Reserve where geese-hunting is banned all year round.

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

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

Please provide more information.

> Two training seminars for hunters were implemented during the Life project at key sites in Läänemaa and Pärnumaa counties. Presentations introducing LWfG occurrence in Estonia, identification and threats were presented and information materials disseminated. As the possible hunting pressure considered to be low, it is no need to conduct this kind of meetings every year.

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.

Yes

Please provide more information on the implementation of training for hunters.

> Before getting the hunting licence hunters have to give an exam to prove his/her knowledge concerning the game species, including LWfG.

Trainings for hunters are regularly conducted by Estonian Hunters Society.

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.

Not applicable

Please explain why this activity is not applicable in your country.

> There has been no registered cases of illegal hunting within the protected areas important for LWfG.

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

Not applicable

Please explain why this activity is not applicable in your country.

> LWfG occur outside of the key areas rarely, mostly during spring migration when hunting is not allowed. Only some few juveniles (1-3) are observed each year. Some years there are no juveniles at all.

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

Not applicable

Please explain why this activity is not applicable in your country.

> We have too few observations of LWfG during the hunting season.

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):

Unknown

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

Unknown

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

> There is no date of poisoning of LWfG or other waterbird in Estonia. In some occasions the White-tailed Eagles (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) have been found poisoned by led pellets: during last 5-6 years ca 15 eagles with poisoning symptoms have been found and anatomised, led pellets found in their stomach and muscles.

Please list any published or unpublished sources on poisoning of LWfG or waterbirds in general in your country.

> Unpublished data from "Kotkaklubi" (Eagle Club).

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):

Medium

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.

> Human disturbance (bicycles, dogs, farming machines and traffic) has been observed mostly on the arable fields near or inside the villages where LWfG are feeding early in the morning and before sunset. Few occasions of disturbance by ATV-s and hang-glider on the coastal meadows have been registered.

Please list any published or unpublished sources on human disturbance and LWfG in your country.

> Field observations, LWfG monitoring reports 1999-2012.

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:

Not applicable

Please explain why this activity is not applicable to your country.

> Not breeding in Estonia

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:

Yes

Please provide more information on the measures being undertaken.

> Human activity and development of infrastructure on coastal meadows on the key sites are limited with the protection rules of the protected areas. Building of new houses is prohibited. Tourists/visitors are allowed to use only birdwatching towers outside the coastal meadow area, walking and birdwatching on the meadows is not allowed.

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

Please explain why this activity is not applicable to your country.

> Not breeding in Estonia

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):

Low

Please indicate the trend of predation as a threat to the LWfG in your country:

Stable

Please describe the threat from predation to the LWfG in your country.

> There are no registered occasions of predation of LWfG.

Please list any published or unpublished sources concerning predation of LWfG in your country.

> Field observations, LWfG monitoring reports 1999-2012.

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

Please explain why the activity is not applicable in your country.

> Not a significant limiting factor

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):

Medium

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.?).

> Land abandonment and overgrazing were a significant threat in the end of the last century. Major part of coastal areas were overgrown by reed and bushes and not in suitable condition for staging geese. During the last decade the situation has been improved significantly, mostly in connection of the agrienvironmental supports. The key staging areas for LWfG are in favorable condition and managed satisfactorily at least in major parts.

Please list any published or unpublished sources on habitat loss/degradation and the LWfG in your country.

> Coastal meadow inventories and monitoring reports of Estonian Environmental Board, Life-project reports,

semi-natural landscape management reports.

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:

Yes

Please provide more information on the measures being implemented.

> Monitoring and inventories of coastal meadows are conducted at all key sites and on some of the potential sites for LWfG according to the national monitoring scheme for coastal meadow vegetation and selected species of waders.

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:

Yes

Please provide more information on the measures being implemented.

> A former roosting and feeding site for LWfG was restored on the small islands in Matsalu Bay during the Life project in 2006. Afterwards the area has been managed by beef cattle grazing and reed cutting. LWfG have used the site in several occasions after restoration, at least in spring 2007 and 2010.

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.

> Estonian Nature Conservation Act, enforced by Ministry of Environment

<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/130122011013>

List of protected species under category I and II, enforced under Nature Conservation Act by Ministry of Environment, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/13360504>

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

Please tick the appropriate box:

Yes

Please provide further information.

> LWfG is a protected species under category I. It is forbidden by law to kill or harm in other ways any specimens of this species.

Also bird hunting is banned in several sites important for LWfG

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 legislation provides protection for LWfG, but effective hunting control needs more efforts, also more human and financial resources. In principle hunters obey the law but in practice the distinguishing of geese species (LWfG from LWG) is difficult or even impossible. Also the hunting bag control would need some further development.

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 and being implemented

Please add a weblink or a file by using the buttons on the right.

> <http://www.envir.ee/orb.aw/class=file/action=preview/id=1098151/laukhane+kaitsekava.pdf>

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:

Not applicable

5.2.3. Additional information (optional)

Please add any additional information concerning NSSAPs not covered in the questions above.

> Update for national action plan is planned to be compiled in 2013.

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.

> Responsible body for protection of LWfG is the Environmental Board. As one of the members of the National Working Group has left the organization, the group will be reorganized in the near future.

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?

Yes

Please provide more information on monitoring activities during passage/migration season.

> Staging LWfG have been monitored annually by constant methods during spring and autumn migration period since 1999 in cooperation between Matsalu National Park and WWF Finland. The LWfG individuals have been recorded on digital video through high-definition spotting scope in order to identify and follow the LWfG individually. This method allows to compare similar recordings from other staging sites along the migration route, which provides possibilities for analysis on which part of the total Fennoscandian population is actually migrating along European migration route, and also useful information about individual birds and the reasons for choosing a migration route.

At the moment the monitoring scheme in Estonia is under the evaluation and readjustment.

During the wintering season?

Not applicable

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?

Not applicable

During wintering/non-breeding season?

Not applicable

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 2011-2012 no new projects conducted.

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

[Conservation of Anser erythropus on European migration route](#) - Life-Nature project LIFE05NAT/FIN/000105, 2005-2009. Beneficiary of the project WWF Finland, Estonian partner Matsalu National Park Administration (the following State Nature Conservation Center) and co-financier the Ministry of Environment. The main objectives in Estonia were preparing the National Action Plan for LWfG, restoration and management of the former roosting sites of LWfG on Haeska Islets in Matsalu Bay, public awareness campaign among hunters and monitoring of staging population of LWfG.

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

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

[Boreal Baltic Coastal Meadow Preservation in Estonia](#) - Life-Nature project LIFE00NAT/EE/7083,2001-2004, project partner Matsalu National Park Administration

[Wings Over Wetlands](#) - The UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project, 2007-2009. The main focus of the WOW Demonstration project in Estonia was the development of a management plan (including one of the key sites of LWfG in Silma Nature Reserve) that will integrate ecotourism activities, nature conservation measures and human activities at the local level. Responsible for executing of the project was Estonian State Nature Conservation Centre.

Raising of grazing pressure on Haeska coastal meadows in Matsalu National Park. - ERDF project 2010-2015.
Beneficiary NGO Upkeepers of Väinameri Seminatural Habitats. The main focus is to obtain the beef cattle in order to graze the coastal meadows in the northern part of Matsalu National Park more efficiently.

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.

> During the Life project in 2005-2009 awareness rising meetings/seminars for hunters were conducted in Matsalu and Pärnu regions in western and south-western Estonia where LWfG regularly occur during the migration period. During the reporting period in 2011-2012 there have been no additional awareness raising campaign.

5.6.2. Has your country developed/produced LWfG information materials to this end (i.e. posters, leaflets etc.)?

Please select from the list:

Yes

Please provide further information and upload any files using the button on the right hand side.

> Information materials were produced during Life-project "Conservation of Anser erythropus on European migration route". Stickers and booklets are still available and being distributed in small amounts mostly to hunters every year.

You have attached the following documents to this answer.

[Kleeps.jpg](#) - LWfG sticker

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

[LWfG Booklet](#) - A booklet describing the species, recognition and migration published during Life-project 2005-2009.

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.

> Funding source is the State Budget and the Environmental Investments Center. Relevant authority is Estonian Environmental Board.

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:

Not applicable

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:

Yes

Please provide further information on the measures being undertaken.

> Field surveys are used to locate the key staging and also potential staging sites for the Fennoscandian population. We have not registered any birds with satellite transmitter so far.

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 when the previous national report was submitted:

> 25.11.2010

Please insert the date of submission for this report:

> 11.09.2012