

International Single Species Action Plan for the Western Palearctic Population of the LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, *Anser erythropus*

Comments from FINLAND on Version 3.0. - Third and Final Draft, May 2008

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- General comment: as defined in the plan, the main priority is to conserve the wild populations. In relation to this, issues regarding the reintroduced population and future plans for reintroduction are clearly overrepresented in the text. We propose to move most of the lengthy text chapters about the reintroduction (in chapters 1.3, 3.3 d, Table 2b) in annexes and to keep only short summaries in the body text.
- p. 2, Introduction and acknowledgements: affiliation for Anna-Carin Lundqvist (formerly Andersson) should be Uppsala University (Sweden)
- p. 7, Table 1: Finland/ Breeding: remove the words “wild population” (i.e, it should be written only “[YES] (possibly extinct)” – the reference to wild population may lead to the erroneous conception that there would be also a reintroduced population in Finland.
- p. 11, Figure 2: it should be pointed out in the figure legend that the seemingly increasing size of the Swedish re-introduced population is partially because the re-introductions were still ongoing during the period 1990-2004 (until 1999).
- p. 18 “*In contrast to the poor adult survival rate in the wild Fennoscandian population, adult survival within the reintroduced/restocked Swedish population appears to be high, though further published data/analyses are required to indicate the underlying reasons for this. On the other hand, there appears to be evidence that productivity of the reintroduced population is lower than that of the wild Fennoscandian population.*” These two sentences should be deleted (because there are no real analyses available); just state that “More research is needed to compare the survival and productivity of the reintroduced and wild populations”.
- p. 29, Hunting / Staging and wintering grounds: the (still legal and common) spring hunting of geese and waterfowl in Russia and other ex-Soviet countries should be mentioned as a particular issue.
- p. 30 “*Similarly poor weather on the wintering grounds, with deep snow cover, may result in no foraging areas being available to geese, thereby leading to **malnutrition**, while unusually dry weather in autumn can mean that grass/cereal crops are in poor condition during the winter, again resulting in poor foraging for geese.*” Use the term “**poor body condition**” instead of malnutrition. Feeding conditions during spring are especially critical for the breeding success.
- p. 45, Table 5. National action plan column. The national single species action plans in Finland and Estonia are under preparation, to be adopted by the national authorities during the year 2008. Also in Norway, a new updated and more comprehensive single species action plan is under preparation, to be adopted by the national authorities during the year 2008
- p. 46, Transboundary EU Life project
 - First paragraph: the project period is April 2005 – March 2009 (i.e. the project will not be concluded in 2008)
 - Specific project activities, 2nd bullet point: actually radio transmitter tracking is not carried out in the project (only satellite tracking)
- p. 49, Table 1 / Result 1 / Objectively Verifiable Indicator: The percentage of 2nd calendar-year individuals at spring staging areas **is not** a suitable indicator. At the regular spring monitoring sites the percentage of 2nd calendar-year individuals is typically lower than what would be expected from the juvenile production in the previous summer (taking also into account the mortality during the first winter), and it seems likely that (at least part of) the 2nd calendar-year / subadult individuals have a

different migration pattern than adults. Thus, the only really useful indicator for this would be the (5-year running average) number of individuals at regularly monitored spring staging sites.

- Annex 2. Finland

Range State	Breeding Season						Passage and Wintering					Baseline Population ³	References
	No. of breeding pairs	Quality ¹	Year(s) of Estimate	Trend ²	Quality ¹	Year(s) of Estimate	No. of individuals staging (S) or wintering (W)	Quality ¹	Year(s) of Estimate	Trend ²	Quality ¹		
Finland	0-5	G F	2008	0	G F	2008	10 (S)	G O	2008	-2	G O	10000	Finnish National Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose, 2008, final draft submitted to the Ministry of the Environment for adoption

- Annex 2. Greece: information for passage and wintering missing
- Annex 5. Finland / Annual bag size: The correct estimate is 0(-1) (not 0-5); there is no recent reported cases of LWfG being shot in Finland (but theoretically occasional cases of accidental shooting / poaching may happen)
- Annex 7. Finland/ research and conservation efforts

Annual monitoring of the spring staging areas on the Finnish Bothnian Bay coast and in northern Finnish Lapland. Surveys of potential breeding areas in Lapland. Research on population genetics. Management of the coastal meadows in the spring staging area on the Finnish Bothnian Bay coast. Public awareness work in Finland and abroad, mainly directed for hunters. Ecological research at spring staging areas and breeding grounds. Population elasticity analysis for the Fennoscandian population. EU LIFE Nature project "Conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose in Finland" in 1997-1999. International (Finland, Norway, Estonia, Hungary, Greece) EU LIFE Nature project "Conservation of Anser erythropus on European migration route" in 2005-2009. Various international conservation work, including e.g. several satellite tracking projects; a WWF project for the conservation of the Kostanay region wetlands in Kazakhstan (2000-2003); field surveys of breeding, staging and wintering areas in Russia (many areas), Kazakhstan (1996-2003), Estonia, Lithuania, Ukraine (Crimea), China; active participation in the international conservation co-operation and meetings.