

AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLATFORM



3rd MEETING OF THE AEWA EUROPEAN GOOSE MANAGEMENT INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP



20-21 June 2018, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EGMP TAIGA BEAN GOOSE TASK FORCE AND WORKPLAN FOR 2018/2019

Prepared by Dr Mikko Alhainen, Coordinator of the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force

Introduction

According to Rule 29 of the European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG) [Modus Operandi](#), the EGM IWG may establish species and/or thematic Task Forces as necessary to deal with the preparation and coordination of decision papers and background documents, as well as to deal with other specific tasks.

At the 2nd Meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG2) in June 2017, both the generic ([AEWA/EGMIWG/Inf. 3.14](#)) and the Agriculture Task Force ([AEWA/EGMIWG/Inf. 3.15](#)) Terms of Reference were adopted and the establishment of the Agriculture Task Force and species-specific Task Forces for the Pink-footed Goose and Taiga Bean Goose were recommended.

The Secretariat was given the task to lead on the establishment of the Task Forces and to identify a Coordinator for each Task Force.

Mr Mikko Alhainen from Finland was identified as the Coordinator for the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force (TBG TF). The current membership of the TBG TF is indicated in Annex 1 to this document. In line with the Terms of Reference, the nomination of additional members to the Task Force is at the discretion of the National Government Representative of each Range State and the Coordinator of the Task Force.

This document provides an overview of the work that has taken place since the establishment of the TBG TF and the recommendations and draft workplan for 2018/2019 for the implementation of the AEWA International Species Single Species Action Plan for the Taiga Bean Goose (ISSAP), pending the incorporation of the outcomes of the first face-to-face meeting of the EGMP Task Forces on 18 June 2018, in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands.

Meetings

Since no funding has been specifically allocated for the work of the TBG TF, communication and information exchange has been conducted either via email or through online meetings.

The first meeting of the TBG TF took place on 18 February 2018. Further two meetings have taken place on 23 March 2018 and 2 May 2018.

To maximise synergies and use of resources, the first face-to-face meeting for the TBG TF is taking place back-to-back with the 3rd annual meeting of the EGM IWG in June 2018 (EGM IWG3). It is envisaged this concept to be likely carried into the following years.

The meeting notes of each online meeting have been (or are still to be) circulated to the EGM IWG shortly after the meetings have been concluded. The main activities and outcomes are summarized in this document.

Key activities

Since the TBG TF was established, the following tasks have been achieved:

- The TBG TF prepared a workplan for spring 2018 leading to the face-to-face meeting on 18 June 2018 followed by EGM IWG3. A total of three online meetings were organized during the spring.
- Preparation of workplan documents at Management Unit-level. The purpose of the documents is to give an overview of all the relevant key issues needed to achieve the goal of the TBG ISSAP. Further, the documents help to prioritize different tasks/actions in order to focus the limited resources to essential activities in respect of making progress in the implementation.
- The TBG TF established two sub-groups to have focused e-mail discussion on Eastern 1&2, and Central and Western Management Units (MUs).
- Based on the MU-level workplans and discussions in the e-mail sub-groups the TBG TF prepared recommendations for the EGM IWG on:
 - 1) Essential areas of focus for 2018-2019 (presented below);
 - 2) MU-level recommendations on priority of actions (presented in each draft workplan).
- An official letter sent by the chair of EGM IWG to YANAO officials in Russia was prepared by the TBG TF and the Secretariat and to support the conservation efforts of TBG in Russia by including them in the Red Book.

Outcomes and Recommendations

The resources and conservation actions within the different MUs of the TBG vary greatly with a major discrepancy between needs and resources. A short summary of the MU-level implementation and key problems/gaps is expressed in the following sections.

Eastern 1&2 Management Units

Key issues

- Key principal Range States yet to be officially involved in the EGMP (Russia, Poland).
- The implementation of a moratorium on TBG is insufficient. In practice understanding of migration patterns of Taiga and Tundra Bean Goose is the prerequisite to implementing sub-species level actions.
- There is no current estimate of the population status or a functional official connection to goose monitoring experts in Poland, and Germany is not actively partaking in the process with no access to existing data.

Opportunities

- The TBG TF has identified a process to involve key people;
- The Lesser White-fronted Goose process is a good opportunity for engaging goose observers to monitor Taiga Bean Goose in the Eastern MUs;
- Alexander Soloka in Russia is collecting harvest data through photographs – a viable possibility to receive harvest data on TBG. He is also working with hunting authorities and is a potential good contact on data and perhaps DNA-sample collection.

Central Management Unit

- All principal Range States are participating in the EGMP;
- The implementation of Adaptive Harvest Management (AHM) is set up and in principle the process is well established;
- The major obstacle in the implementation of AHM is the poor quality of data on 1) harvest, 2) population size and 3) delineation of the sub-species.

Western Management Unit

- All principal Range States are participating in the EGMP;
- Compared to Eastern and Central MUs, the Western MU is relatively well-known and TBG are legally protected;
- Further understanding of the migration patterns and factors limiting the population growth are needed to be able to focus actions on key issues. Potential change of wintering areas is in need of attention and it is important to include this in the development of the monitoring framework.

Recommendations for the EGM IWG

Based on discussions and work in the TBG TF, the following issues/activities have been identified as being essential priority. Please note that the prioritization is made considering the limited resources of the TF and each MU. Accomplishment of these tasks is prerequisite to achieve key results enabling the implementation of the ISSAP.

1. Establishment and adequate resourcing of sub-groups of the TBG TF involving relevant external goose monitoring experts who are not members of the Task Force

Objective: Implementation and further development of the monitoring framework in order to have quality estimates/information of 1) population size, 2) harvest, 3) subspecies delineation in space and time.

Expected essential outcomes in 2018-2019:

- Functional connection to goose monitoring experts established and population size monitoring data from Germany and Poland received (Eastern MUs);
- Population size monitoring methods of the Central/Western management unit are evaluated to receive more accurate data on both MUs in respect to possible short-stopping and cold-weather movements and possibility to use spring/autumn counts is assessed. Further adjustments of monitoring protocols proposed to the 4th meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG4) in 2019;
- Harvest data collection in Denmark and Sweden is developed for the AHM framework. Harvest data collection from Eastern MU countries is explored and developed;
- Guidelines (brochure) for separation of Tundra and Taiga Bean Goose is prepared, disseminated and promoted to goose experts/counters/hunters to generate data on migration patterns and the proportions in harvest of the sub-species;
- Collection of datasets (pictures, DNA etc) on sub-species to increase our understanding how to differentiate between Taiga and Tundra Bean Goose.

- 2. Extension of the life-span of the workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018 to 2020 and further allocation of minimum resources to implement key actions proposed as essential by the TBG TF and listed in the draft workplan for 2018-2020 provided in Appendix 1 to this document.**

The two-year workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018 is still relevant, but lacking full implementation in practice.

It shall be noted that all actions in the ISSAP are subject to implementation which should be assessed at national level in respect to the requirements of each Range State. Range States are encouraged to establish national level working groups in order to plan and implement at national level the prioritization of the ISSAP. The prioritization of TBG TF is focused on the overall goal and objectives of the ISSAP and at each MU level.

Draft Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM related actions of the AEWA Taiga Bean Goose International Single Species Action Plan (2018-2020)

The Taiga Bean Goose Task Force proposes that the workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018 is extended to 2018-2020 with more prioritization on the implementation of certain actions (highlighted in **blue** colour for the Eastern 1&2 MUs and in **orange** for the Central and Western MUs). The importance and relevance of all identified actions is noted while taking into account the limited availability of resources.

It should be noted that the draft workplans will be revised and completed during the 1st face-to-face meeting of the EGMP Task Forces (18 June 2018, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands). Activities foreseen in the draft workplans will be revised against the information provided by Range States in the National Reports 2018. The revised draft workplans will be presented to the EGM IWG3 during the Taiga Bean Goose Session and are expected to be approved by the EGM IWG for implementation.

Draft Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM related actions of the AEWA Taiga Bean Goose International Single Species Action Plan (2018-2020) – Eastern 1 & 2 Management Units (Range States: Belarus, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine)

ISSAP actions ¹	Detailed activities ²	Lead ³	Time-frame ⁴	Budget ⁵	Priority ⁶
<i>Result 1.1. Legal harvest does not jeopardise an increase of adult survival rates</i>					
1.1.1. Develop and implement international adaptive harvest management framework. Obey the principles of sustainable harvest management and decision-	1.1.1.1 Prepare and adopt legislative proposals for the closure of hunting of Taiga Bean Geese (including the use of flexible hunting seasons in Belarus and Russia to allow for Taiga Bean Geese to pass before goose hunting is opened) Range States: ALL	Responsible government authorities	2018-2020		Essential

¹ Taken from the Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018; Essential and High priority activities identified by the Task Force are highlighted in blue

² Taken from the Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018; Essential and High priority activities identified by the Task Force are highlighted in blue

³ Taken from the Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018; The leads on the activities are still to be revised and defined

⁴ To be defined

⁵ To be defined

⁶ Essential and High priority activities identified by the Task Force are highlighted in blue; the priority of the remaining activities will be revised and defined

ISSAP actions ¹	Detailed activities ²	Lead ³	Time-frame ⁴	Budget ⁵	Priority ⁶	
making framework for harvest management as described in the revised AEWA Guidelines for sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds adopted by MOP6. Obtain accurate estimates of (sub) population size, and robust demographic and harvest data.	1.1.1.2 Improve knowledge on the occurrence of Taiga Bean Geese in all Eastern Management Unit Range States	a) Ensure national monitoring of Taiga Bean Geese at all known key sites (including providing identification training & equipment to people carrying out the monitoring where possible) Range States: ALL	Responsible government authorities (Ministries of the Environment etc.)	2018-2020		Essential
		b) Carry out satellite/GPS-tagging of Taiga Bean Geese in the wintering/staging areas to further identify and map potential key sites as well as migratory patterns (potentially tag birds in Eastern Germany, Lithuania, Belarus or in Ukraine) Range States: best location for implementation to be decided	TBG Task Force	2018-2020		High
		c) Increase efforts to engage Poland and Russia (especially Kaliningrad)	Lithuania Finland? Norway?	2018-2020		High
Result 1.2. Illegal harvest is reduced to non-significant levels						
1.2.2. Raise identification skills and awareness of the status of different goose species amongst hunters	1.2.2.1 Prepare and implement an awareness-raising campaign for hunters to complement suggested legislation changes, including guidance on the identification of grey geese. Range States: Belarus, Ukraine	National NGOs and research institutes in cooperation with the TBG Task Force				
	1.2.2.2 Produce and disseminate special publication on the occurrence of Taiga Bean Geese Range States: Ukraine	National NGOs and research institutes				

Draft Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM related actions of the AEWA Taiga Bean Goose International Single Species Action Plan (2018-2020)
– Western and Central Management Units (Range States: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, UK)

ISSAP actions ⁷	Detailed activities ⁸	Lead ⁹	Time-frame ¹⁰	Budget ¹¹	Priority ¹²
Result 1.2. Illegal harvest is reduced to non-significant levels					
Action 1.2.2. Raise identification skills and awareness of the status of different goose species amongst hunters	1.2.2.1 Investigate TBG shooting NE Jutland & Zealand Range States: Denmark		On-going since 2017		High
Result 1.3. Impact of huntable native predators in breeding and moulting areas is reduced					
Action 1.3.1. Maintain and strengthen predator control measures in breeding and moulting areas	1.3.1.1 Undertake annual campaign amongst hunters in the breeding areas to strengthen fox management Range States: Finland	Finnish Wildlife Agency + hunting association			
	1.3.1.2 Communicate to the Forestry & Parks Service the importance of continuing and strengthening fox management in the northernmost Finland Range States: Finland	Finnish Wildlife Agency			
Result 1.4. Impact of alien predators in breeding and moulting areas is reduced					

⁷ Taken from the Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018; Essential and High priority activities identified by the Task Force are highlighted in orange

⁸ Taken from the Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018; Essential and High priority activities identified by the Task Force are highlighted in orange

⁹ Taken from the Workplan for the implementation of non-AHM actions of the TBG ISSAP for 2017-2018; The leads on the activities are still to be revised and defined

¹⁰ To be defined

¹¹ To be defined

¹² Essential and High priority activities identified by the Task Force are highlighted in blue; the priority of the remaining activities will be revised and defined

ISSAP actions ⁷	Detailed activities ⁸	Lead ⁹	Time-frame ¹⁰	Budget ¹¹	Priority ¹²
Action 1.4.1. Maintain and strengthen alien predator control and eradication measures in breeding and moulting areas	1.4.1.1 Carry on the eradication of raccoon dog in Lapland & Sweden Range States: Finland, Sweden	Finnish Wildlife Agency / Swedish Hunters' Association		FI: Secured (150,000 EUR) SE: secured (800,000 EUR)	
Result 2.2. Interspecific competition in spring staging areas is reduced					
Action 2.2.1. Maintain the unharvested-fields-for-birds programme (within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union, if applicable)	2.2.1.1 Continue implementing the fields for geese programme Range States: Sweden	County Administrative Boards		secured	
	2.2.1.2 Ministry of Agriculture to maintain this programme in the national CAP starting form 2020 Range States: Finland	Ministry of Agriculture			
	2.2.1.3 Demonstrate the benefits of the programme to the Agriculture Department of the Ministry of Agriculture Range States: Finland	Finnish Wildlife Agency			
Result 3.1. Impact of forestry works is reduced					
Action 3.1.1. Continue the adaptation of forestry operations to take into account wildlife, in particular Taiga Bean Goose	3.1.1.1 Working models for Wildlife Friendly Forests management and forestry related habitat restorations are developed in co-operation with forestry sector and promoted at large to forest owners and corporations to reach implementation in practice. Actions implement the national management plans for the grouse species and the Bean Goose. Range States: Finland	Finnish Wildlife Agency			

ISSAP actions ⁷	Detailed activities ⁸	Lead ⁹	Time-frame ¹⁰	Budget ¹¹	Priority ¹²
Action 3.1.2. Continue restoring mires used by Taiga Bean Geese that have been affected by past drainage	3.1.2.1 Implement annual goals for mire restoration by Parks & Wildlife Finland set by the Ministry of Environment Range States: Finland	Parks & Wildlife Finland			
	3.1.2.2 Develop and submit LIFE application to the EC Range States: Finland	Parks & Wildlife Finland			
Result 3.3. Breeding, staging and wintering habitats are not further lost due to oil and gas or renewable energy developments					
Action 3.3.1. Take account of Taiga Bean Goose breeding, staging and wintering habitats in the planning of new oil and gas and renewable energy developments	3.3.1.1 Continued monitoring of collision risk posed to Taiga Bean close to the Special Protection Areas identified as their important wintering sites Range States: Denmark	SVANA / Aarhus University/ Windfarming company	Ongoing	Secured	High
Result 3.4. Impact of agriculture on natural Taiga Bean Goose habitats is minimised					
Action 3.4.1. Restore wet grassland habitats in staging and wintering areas	3.4.1.1 Increase the area of managed coastal grassland under CAP Range States: Finland	Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment		secured	

Annex 1 Membership of Taiga Bean Goose Task Force

Table 1 below shows the current membership of the Taiga Bean Goose Task Force per Range State.

Table 1 membership of Taiga Bean Goose Task Force as of 12 May 2018

Country	Representative	Affiliation
Denmark	Prof Anthony Fox	Aarhus University
	Ms Iben Hove Sørensen	Danish Hunters Association
	Mr Niels-Erik Jørgensen	Danish Hunters Association
	Mr Knud Flensted	BirdLife Denmark
Finland	Mr Mikko Alhainen (Coordinator)	Finnish Wildlife Agency
Germany	Mr. Ulrich Hardt	Ministry of Rural Development, Environment and Agriculture of the State of Brandenburg
Norway	Ms Ingunn Tombre	Norwegian Institute for Nature Research, Department of Arctic Ecology
Sweden	Mr Per Risberg	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Ukraine	Ms Olesya Petrovych	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine (Chief Specialist in Dept. Of Protected Areas)
	Dr Vasyl Kostiusbyn	Institute of Zoology NAS of Ukraine, Department of Monitoring and Conservation of Animals
United Kingdom	Ms Morag Milne (rep for Scotland)	Scottish Natural Heritage's Wildlife Policy Officer
	Mr Bart Donato (rep for England)	Natural England
Wetlands International	Mr Szabolcs Nagy	Wetlands International
EGMP Data Centre	Fred Johnson	Wetland & Aquatic Research Center U.S. Geological Survey / USGS
Bird Ringing Center	Sonia Rozenfeld	Bird Ringing Center
EGMP Data Centre	Gitte Høj Jensen	Aarhus University
AEWA Secretariat	Eva Meyers	UNEP/AEWA