

## MEETING REPORT

### 1. Introduction

The AEWA international action-planning process for the Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) is supported by the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Regional Government of Åland. The action-planning workshop was organized online and moderated by the Finnish Wildlife Agency and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat on the 15.-17. September 2020.

### 2. Opening and Welcome

Janne Pitkänen from the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry opened the meeting and welcomed participants on behalf of the host government of Finland followed by Robin Juslin from the Regional Government of Åland, Mikko Alhainen from the Finnish Wildlife Agency and Nina Mikander from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

### 3. Adoption of the Agenda

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat presented the agenda (document CE ISSAP 1 rev.1). There were no requests for changes to the agenda or for any other business.

**Decision:** *The agenda was adopted with no changes.*

### 4. Background Information

Participants were provided with overviews of the AEWA action-planning process (UNEP/AEWA Secretariat), the status, trends, basic data and biological assessment of the AEWA-listed populations of the Common Eider (Petteri Lehtikainen/Lead Compiler) and on the IUCN threat assessment process (Szabolcs Nagy/Wetlands International).

### 5. Action Plan Development

#### Outcome:

*Agreement was reached on the central elements of the draft Action Plan (threat assessment and action framework - document CE ISSAP 2). The agreed revisions and modifications will be reflected in the 3<sup>rd</sup> revised draft Action Plan, which will be circulated to workshop participants for final comments before the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat launches the formal consultation process with range state governments.*

### 6. Establishment of an Adaptive Harvest Management Programme

**Decision:** *The establishment of the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme for the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit of the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population of the Common Eider as presented in document EC ISSAP 3 rev. 1 (Annex I) was adopted with the following clarifications/additions, which are also captured in endnote 4, Table 1 of Annex I below:*

- *The introduction chapter of the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme (see Annex I – as described under 2.1.1. therein) will make reference to the legal obligations of EU Member States under the Birds Directive, including the letter issued by the European Commission asking its Member States to temporarily suspend the hunting of Common Eiders (as well as 8 other bird species) until a valid management plan (including an adaptive harvest programme) is in place and implemented.*

- Under the Annex I: Population Model (2.1.4.), the main activity is to produce regular harvest models to inform decision making, which may have additional elements accounting for male-only harvest during the autumn/winter hunting season. References to the Rulings of the European Court of Justice concerning the harvest of Woodcocks in Austria<sup>1</sup> as well as Common Eiders on the Åland Islands<sup>2</sup> will be included.
- Also, in reference to the proposed Annex I: Population Model (2.1.4.), it will be clearly stated that no harvest shall take place if sustainability is not ensured, i.e. it should not be taken for granted that there will be any harvest.
- The population harvest level quota division to national level increments (if applicable) will be provided as an annex to the Population model. The harvest quota division will be discussed and defined between the Principle Range States concerned.
- The list of countries referenced in endnote (ii) will be corrected to reflect that the Common Eider is not listed for the UK in Annex II/B of the Birds Directive.

## 7. Favourable Reference Values

**Decision:** *The methodology for establishing favourable reference values for all three AEWA-listed populations of the Common Eider as proposed in document EC ISSAP 4 (Annex II) was adopted with the following clarifications/additions:*

- With respect to determining viable populations clear references to the relevant EU and BirdLife guidance will be provided to range states when the FRV process is started.
- A more specific conversion factor between breeding and wintering numbers for the Common Eider still needs to be determined and will be a result of the population models developed under the AHMP (current initial estimate 3,5-4).
- Doubts were raised about the possibility to set wintering FRPs (p.3 & table 4 – said as not possible in the previous version of the document) considering that birds move between Management Units in different seasons (as stated in the text about migration patterns). Therefore, there is not necessarily a consistent relationship between the breeding and wintering numbers in a country, as some breeding birds variably move to other countries' waters in winter. How to set wintering FRPs should be explained.
- With regard to setting favourable reference values in accordance with the legal reference values established under the EU Birds Directive and AEWA, the Commission clarified that this is a general principle for the EU, but that there might be cases when populations have been unnaturally high due to artificial reasons (for example due to lack of natural predation, high nutrient levels leading to unnatural food availability etc.) In such cases, flexibility should be applied. Going forward in the FRV process, it will therefore be considered carefully, if Directive and Agreement values should not be applicable for the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population.

## 8. Monitoring

**Outcome:** *Based on the overview presentation by Morten Frederiksen (Aarhus University) on monitoring needs and challenges and the following discussion, the Technical Working Group to be established under the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme will map out the monitoring needs for all three AEWA-listed populations of the Common Eider in consultation with national experts, will propose a prioritization of these, propose coordinated approaches where applicable and map which priority needs can potentially be covered through existing monitoring schemes and activities.*

## 9. Workplan

<sup>1</sup> [Authorisations for spring hunting of male specimens of the 'woodcocks' bird species \(Scolopax rusticola\) in Lower Austria \(Austria\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Authorisations for spring hunting of male specimens of the 'common eider' bird species \(Somateria mollissima\) in the province of Åland \(Finland\)](#)

**Outcome:** *In addition to next steps agreed for the establishment of the adaptive harvest management programme and for mapping the monitoring needs, participants planned additional activities to be implemented in the short term (2020-2021) on the basis of the actions agreed for the ISSAP Action Framework (document CE ISSAP 5). The agreed activities are reflected in the rolling workplan in Annex IV.*

## 10. Next steps

Workshop participants will receive the following documents for review:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> revised draft of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Common Eider;
- Draft meeting report (containing agreed modifications/clarifications to AHMP and FRV docs);
- Draft workplan 2020-2022.

Formal consultation of the draft Action Plan with all principle range states will be run by the AEWA Secretariat during October-November 2020<sup>3</sup>. Subsequent approval of the draft Action Plan for submission to the AEWA MOP by the AEWA Technical and Standing Committees is expected to take place in January 2021 and April/May 2021 respectively. Final adoption of the Action Plan is foreseen to take place at the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties in October 2021.

Work on the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme as well as the agreed workplan priority actions will continue in parallel as agreed under the AEWA European Seaduck International Working Group and the short term AHMP Technical Working Group.

## 11. Annexes:

- Annex I: Adaptive Harvest Management Programme (CE ISSAP 3 rev. 1)
- Annex II: Favourable Reference Values (CE ISSAP 4)
- Annex III: Workplan (CE ISSAP 5 rev. 1)
- Annex IV: Final List of Participants (CE ISSAP Inf. 3 rev. 1)

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<sup>3</sup> Due to workload backlog at the Secretariat the consultation will be run in November 2020 – January 2021.



AEWA Single Species Action Planning Workshop for the  
Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)  
15-17 September 2020 - online via GoToMeeting

Doc: CE ISSAP 3  
Date: 2.11.2020 rev. 1

**Proposal for the Establishment of an Adaptive Harvest Management Programme  
for the Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) - Baltic and North Seas Management Unit  
of the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population**

## 1. Introduction

Three populations of the Common Eider are currently listed on AEWA Annex 3 Table 1:

- Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population (*Somateria m. mollissima*);
- Norway & Russia population (*Somateria m. mollissima*);
- Svalbard & Franz Josef Land population (*Somateria m. borealis*)

As all three populations are listed in Column A, Category 4 of Table 1, the hunting of these populations may continue on a sustainable use basis under the provisions of the Agreement, by way of an exception. Further, this sustainable use shall be conducted within the framework of an international species action plan, through which Parties will implement adaptive harvest management (AEWA Action Plan, Annex 3, paragraph 2.1.1).

In addition, management processes under AEWA shall also comply with relevant provisions under other legal frameworks which cover the species concerned. In case of the Common Eider, as a species in decline, it is important that adaptive harvest management also ensures the compliance of EU Member States with Article 7(1) of the EU Birds Directive i.e. "*Member States shall ensure that the hunting of these species does not jeopardize conservation efforts in their distribution area*".

The AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Common Eider is currently under development and is foreseen to be adopted at the 8<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP8) to the Agreement in October 2021. Included therein is a dedicated result to increase the survival of the species by ensuring that any legal harvest is sustainable.

This is foreseen to be achieved by developing and agreeing on an Adaptive Harvest Management Programme for the Common Eider in order to assess and manage the sustainability of hunting where applicable. The Programme is being developed in parallel to the Action Plan in order to ensure that the provisions for coordinated sustainable use of the populations are in place as soon as possible after adoption at AEWA MOP8.

As regular harvest of the AEWA-listed populations currently only occurs within a sub-set of the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population<sup>i</sup>, the proposed Adaptive Harvest Management Programme is only foreseen to be developed for this sub-set (the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit) at this time. This may be subject to change, should other Range States wish to open harvest in future<sup>ii</sup>.

Adaptive harvest management involves the definition and adjustment of possible harvest quotas in relation to the population status thus ensuring the sustainability of harvest on a flyway level. Adaptive harvest management involves both dynamic decision-making and a comparison of predicted outcomes and observations from ongoing monitoring to reduce model uncertainty and improve future management decisions

Input from all Range States and relevant stakeholders in the Management Unit will be crucial for the establishment of the population estimate as well as for carrying out continued population assessments on a regular basis to inform the iterative adaptive harvest management process.

Therefore the Principle Range States<sup>iii</sup> for the Common Eider in the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit are requested to proceed with the first step in the development of the Adaptive Harvest Management



This AEWA action-planning process for the Common Eider is kindly being supported by the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the regional Government of Åland and is being organized by the Finnish Wildlife Agency and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

Programme as foreseen in the draft Action Plan by reaching an agreement on the Programme elements as well as the coordination structure, workflow and tentative timelines for its development.

Until an internationally agreed adaptive harvest management process is established to ensure sustainability of harvest, all hunting of the Common Eider must be suspended in order to be in compliance with the provisions of AEWA. Range States that have entered reservations on the current listing of the Common Eider under the Agreement are invited to introduce a voluntary temporary restriction on hunting.

## **2. Proposed Adaptive Harvest Management Programme for the Common Eider**

In accordance with the various processes developed under the AEWA European Goose Management Platform and the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Taiga Bean Goose in particular, the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme for the Common Eider is proposed to consist of the following two phases, containing eight elements.

It should be noted that the same scientific rigour, standards and transparency which have been established under the AEWA European Goose Management Platform shall also apply to any other AEWA taxa for which adaptive harvest management processes are being developed and implemented.

### **2.1. Phase 1: Interim Adaptive Harvest Management Programme<sup>iv</sup>**

Following the example of the Taiga Bean Goose process, the interim harvest strategy which endeavours to implement the principles of adaptive harvest management, establishes the initial fundamental elements on the basis of which coordinated harvest management within the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit will be possible in the short to medium term. In this initial phase the sustainability of any possible harvest will be assessed against the purpose of the Action Plan, i.e. to halt the decline and to begin the recovery of the population.

#### *2.1.1. Introduction*

Description of the purpose and the scope of the Programme, including the mandates pertaining from the AEWA legal text as well as the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the species.

#### *2.1.2. Reconfirmation of the provisional Management Unit(s)*

During the Action Plan development process the following preliminary delineation of three management units within the Baltic, North and Celtic Seas population was proposed and supported by the range states and stakeholder organisations:

- Baltic and North Seas management unit (Management Unit 1);
- Wadden Sea management unit (Management Unit 2), and;
- UK/Ireland management unit (Management Unit 3).

As noted in the introduction above, regular harvest of the AEWA-listed populations currently only occurs within the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit. As such the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme proposed is only foreseen to be developed for Management Unit 1 at this time. This may be subject to change, should other Range States wish to open harvest in future. As also noted in the draft Action Plan, changes to the delineation of the management units may also be necessary in future on the basis of new knowledge on Common Eider distribution.

#### *2.1.3. Protocols for the iterative phase (decision-making, monitoring and assessment)*

Management actions are evaluated systematically and adapted accordingly for improved management. The monitoring protocols will determine when, where and how the population is monitored, including the monitoring of harvest. The detailed protocols are added as an Annex to the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme (Annex II below). The structure of the iterative phase shall follow the processes established in the EGMP.

#### *2.1.4. Annex I: Population Model*

This section will include the Common Eider population model to inform harvest management decisions in the iterative phase of the AHMP.

The population modelling work will follow the example of the Taiga Bean Goose, whereby the Adaptive Harvest Management is started with an interim harvest strategy possibly allowing some limited harvest – if considered sustainable - while halting the decline of the population and enabling it's recovery. In the modelling the specific conditions and tradition of male-focused harvest of the Common Eider in some Range States shall be accounted for. Data supporting the harvest models are developed further to fully meet the needs of Adaptive Harvest Management.

#### 2.1.5. – *Annex II: Protocols for the iterative phase (decision-making, monitoring and assessment)*

Protocols for the iterative phase will be presented in this section, in order to systematically evaluate management actions and adapt them accordingly for improved management (see 2.1.3. above).

#### 2.1.6. *Annex III: Workplan*

A rolling workplan focusing exclusively on the priority activities related to adaptive harvest management of the Common Eider will be included as an annex to the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme and reviewed annually. The institutional arrangements for undertaking the adaptive harvest management process through coordinated AHMP implementation are to be discussed and agreed (in relation to the EGMP). One possible option is outlined under point 3 below.

All other identified priority conservation activities related to habitat and/or predator management etc. as foreseen in the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Common Eider will remain under the remit of the inter-governmental AEWA European Seaduck International Working Group and the rolling workplans adopted by the group.

A Coordinator (*to be identified*) will be charged with ensuring that both workplans are in sync and that reporting between both bodies (i.e. the AEWA Seaduck IWG and the body coordinating the AHMP) is carried out, as necessary.

## 2.2. Phase 2: Adaptive Harvest Management Programme

In Phase 2, additional data acquired will inform the setting of objectives and there will be a shift from the interim harvest modelling to fully adaptive harvest management on the basis of agreed favourable reference values and conservation targets. In this phase both the dynamic decision-making and the comparison of predicted outcomes and observations from ongoing monitoring can reduce model uncertainty and improve future management decisions.

### 2.2.1. *Definition of the Favourable Reference Values for the population*

The long-term goal of the draft AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Common Eider is to restore the three AEWA-listed migratory populations of the Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) to a favourable conservation status.

There is a need to determine at what stage all three populations can be considered to be in a Favourable Conservation Status by determining the Favourable Reference Values for each population. The methodology and timelines for setting the FRVs are expected to be agreed collectively by all the Principle Range States for the three AEWA-listed populations at the Common Eider action-planning workshop in September 2020. The Favourable Reference Values will be developed in parallel to phase 1 above.

### 2.2.2. *Definition of Conservation Targets at/or above the Favourable Reference Values*

In order to ensure that the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit achieves and is maintained at a Favourable Conservation Status in the long-term Conservation Targets with respect to population, range and habitat at or above the Favourable Reference Values need to be established and agreed once sufficient data is available.

Coordinated sustainable use and harvest management of the Management Unit for the purpose of enhancing the propagation or survival of the populations concerned shall allow the recovery of the species towards the conservation target. Agreement will also be required on what timelines for reaching these targets will be acceptable.

### 3. Coordination and oversight

Overall coordination of the adaptive harvest management process for the Common Eider will be provided by the AEWA Secretariat and technical facilitation of the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme outlined above will be provided by Aarhus University under an existing agreement with the Secretariat. The fulfilment of the roles of both the Secretariat and Aarhus University is dependent on sufficient additional resources and capacity.

A temporary, time-limited Technical Group will further develop the elements of the Programme in more detail and subsequently deliver on the necessary technical work under the supervision of Aarhus University. The Technical Group will be convened by the Finnish Wildlife Agency in coordination with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. Range States and observer organisations will be invited to designate their experts to the Group.

The iterative phase is proposed to involve annual decision-making for the adaptive harvest management related decisions in conjunction with the meetings of the AEWA European Goose Management Platform International Working Group as all key range states concerned are also members of the EGMP. Decisions related to the wider implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Common Eider are proposed to remain under the auspices of the AEWA European Seaduck International Working Group in close cooperation with the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme institutional mechanism.

### 4. Provisional steps and timeline

Depending on the availability of resources as well as the agreed workflow and steps involved, it is anticipated that the proposed Adaptive Harvest Management Programme could potentially be established and implemented to a degree by which relevant information would be available by mid-2022 in time to inform a decision regarding the 2022/2023 hunting season.

ACTIVITY	LEAD	NOTE
<b>September 2020</b>		
Outline of the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme agreed at the Action Planning Workshop  Agreement on the approach to set Favourable Reference Values (FRV's)	Range states	Not all range states will be present/represented at government level at the ISSAP workshop. The Secretariat will seek their approval following the meeting via correspondence.
<b>September-October 2020</b>		
Technical Group convened	Finnish Wildlife Agency  AEWA Secretariat	AHMP preparation foreseen to be covered by project funding of Finland. Technical group will convene an online meeting including experts from countries involved in AHMP  Deadline for expert designations October 1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>November 2020-January 2021</b>		
Technical Group meeting	Technical Group	Discuss in detail all elements of the AHMP requiring technical input, incl. data and resource needs and availability; review and revise the AHMP development process timelines, as necessary
<b>February 2021</b>		
Technical Group meeting	Technical Group	Agreement on the detailed structure of the iterative phase, monitoring protocols and plans and interim harvest strategy
<b>March 2021 – December 2021</b>		

Development of the elements of the AHMP	Technical Group	Development of the iterative phase, monitoring protocols and plans and interim harvest strategy
First interim population models developed by September 2021	Technical Group	
Finalization of the work by December 2021	Technical Group	The models are ready to be used to inform decision making in June 2022
<b>June 2022</b>		
Interim Adaptive Harvest Management Programme ready for adoption to inform forthcoming hunting season	AEWA Secretariat Technical Group Range States	
<b>2023-2026</b>		
Data allowing:		
Development of the FRV's	Range states AEWA Secretariat Arhus University	
Favourable Reference Values agreed	Range states AEWA Secretariat Arhus University	
Conservation Targets agreed	Range states AEWA Secretariat Arhus University	

## 5. Provisional funding requirements

An initial indication of the foreseen additional costs of the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme is provided below in order of expected magnitude (thousands, tens of thousands etc.). Along with the more precise timeframe, more detailed calculations will only be available once the Technical Group breaks down and assesses needs as well as available capacity in more detail.

The funding provided by Finland will cover most of the costs until end of 2021.

<b>Programme step/element</b>	<b>Additional funding required (Euro)</b>
Overall coordination and compilation of the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme	<i>to be determined</i>
Aarhus University: coordination of the Technical Group and technical supervision, development of the population model and monitoring protocols	tens of thousands
Definition of the Favourable Reference Values	In-kind contribution from each Range State Thousands
Technical Group: participation of national experts, provision of data	In-kind funding from the range states and observer organisations (expertise, provision of data, staff time, meeting participation etc.)
Communication and outreach	Range state specific + possible coordinated communication (thousands)

<sup>i</sup> Of the identified Principle Range States for the Common Eider within the AEWA geographic range, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and France currently have open hunting seasons for the species. Denmark and Finland have harvest restrictions in place and a moratorium on harvest has been proposed in Sweden. The French harvest bag is very low. In Norway hunting is allowed only in southern municipalities within the range of the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit

<sup>ii</sup> The species is listed as huntable on Annex II/B of the EU Birds Directive also for Ireland, Estonia and Latvia which means that these countries have the same legal right to hunt the species, even if in accordance with Article 7(1) of the Directive, they currently choose not to do so.

iii The Principle Range States currently assessed as regularly hosting birds from the Baltic and Northern Seas Management Unit during some part of their annual life cycle are: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Russia, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

iv Table 1: *Revised Adaptive Harvest Management Programme Outline*

*Final revised outline of the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme for the Common Eider, as agreed at the action-planning workshop:*

## 2.1. Phase 1: Interim Adaptive Harvest Management Programme

### 2.1.1. Introduction

Description of the purpose and the scope of the Programme, including the mandates pertaining from the AEWA legal text as well as the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the species with reference to the legal obligations of EU Member States under the Birds Directive, including the letter issued by the European Commission asking its Member States to temporarily suspend the hunting of Common Eiders (as well as 8 other bird species) until a valid management plan (including an adaptive harvest programme) is in place and implemented.

### 2.1.2. Reconfirmation of the provisional Management Unit(s)

During the Action Plan development process the following preliminary delineation of three management units within the Baltic, North and Celtic Seas population was proposed and supported by the range states and stakeholder organisations:

- Baltic and North Seas management unit (Management Unit 1);
- Wadden Sea management unit (Management Unit 2), and;
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Regular harvest of the AEWA-listed populations currently only occurs within the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit. As such the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme proposed is only foreseen to be developed for Management Unit 1 at this time. This may be subject to change, should other Range States wish to open harvest in future. As also noted in the draft Action Plan, changes to the delineation of the management units may also be necessary in future on the basis of new knowledge on Common Eider distribution.

### 2.1.3. Protocols for the iterative phase (decision-making, monitoring and assessment)

Management actions are evaluated systematically and adapted accordingly for improved management. The monitoring protocols will determine when, where and how the population is monitored, including the monitoring of harvest. The detailed protocols are added as an Annex to the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme (Annex II below). The structure of the iterative phase shall follow the processes established in the EGMP.

### 2.1.4. Annex I: Population Model

This section will include the Common Eider population model to inform harvest management decisions in the iterative phase of the AHMP. It will be clearly stated that no harvest shall take place if sustainability is not ensured, i.e. it should not be taken for granted that there will be any harvest.

The main activity is to produce regular harvest models to inform decision making, which may have additional elements accounting for male-only harvest during the autumn/winter hunting season. References to the Rulings of the European Court of Justice concerning the harvest of Woodcocks in Austria as well as Common Eiders on the Åland Islands will be included. Data supporting the harvest models are developed further to fully meet the needs of Adaptive Harvest Management.

The population harvest level quota division to national level increments (if applicable) will be provided as an annex to the Population model. The harvest quota division will be discussed and defined between the Principle Range States concerned.

### 2.1.5. – Annex II: Protocols for the iterative phase (decision-making, monitoring and assessment)

Protocols for the iterative phase will be presented in this section, in order to systematically evaluate management actions and adapt them accordingly for improved management (see 2.1.3. above).

#### 2.1.6. Annex III: Workplan

A rolling workplan focusing exclusively on the priority activities related to adaptive harvest management of the Common Eider will be included as an annex to the Adaptive Harvest Management Programme and reviewed annually. The institutional arrangements for undertaking the adaptive harvest management process through coordinated AHMP implementation are to be discussed and agreed (in relation to the EGMP).

All other identified priority conservation activities related to habitat and/or predator management etc. as foreseen in the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Common Eider will remain under the remit of the inter-governmental AEWA European Seaduck International Working Group and the rolling workplans adopted by the group.

A Coordinator (*to be identified*) will be charged with ensuring that both workplans are in sync and that reporting between both bodies (i.e. the AEWA Seaduck IWG and the body coordinating the AHMP) is carried out, as necessary.

### 2.2. Phase 2: Adaptive Harvest Management Programme

In Phase 2, additional data acquired will inform the setting of objectives and there will be a shift from the interim harvest modelling to fully adaptive harvest management on the basis of agreed favourable reference values and conservation targets. In this phase both the dynamic decision-making and the comparison of predicted outcomes and observations from ongoing monitoring can reduce model uncertainty and improve future management decisions.

#### 2.2.1. Definition of the Favourable Reference Values for the population

The long-term goal of the draft AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Common Eider is to restore the three AEWA-listed migratory populations of the Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) to a favourable conservation status.

There is a need to determine at what stage all three populations can be considered to be in a Favourable Conservation Status by determining the Favourable Reference Values for each population. The methodology and timelines for setting the FRVs are expected to be agreed collectively by all the Principle Range States for the three AEWA-listed populations at the Common Eider action-planning workshop in September 2020. The Favourable Reference Values will be developed in parallel to phase 1 above.

#### 2.2.2. Definition of Conservation Targets at/or above the Favourable Reference Values

In order to ensure that the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit achieves and is maintained at a Favourable Conservation Status in the long-term Conservation Targets with respect to population, range and habitat at or above the Favourable Reference Values need to be established and agreed once sufficient data is available.

Coordinated sustainable use and harvest management of the Management Unit for the purpose of enhancing the propagation or survival of the populations concerned shall allow the recovery of the species towards the conservation target. Agreement will also be required on what timelines for reaching these targets will be acceptable.



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## Proposal for setting Favourable Reference Values for the AEWA-listed populations of Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Szabolcs Nagy

### Background

The long-term goal of the ISSAP is to restore the three AEWA-listed populations of Common Eider to Favourable Conservation Status (FCS). To be able to assess the progress towards this goal, it is necessary to define the FCS. The FCS is described by the Favourable Reference Values (FRVs), which include the Favourable Reference Population (FRP), the Favourable Reference Range (FRR) and the assessment whether there is sufficient habitat extent and quality to sustain the FRP (Favourable Reference Habitat, FRH). The AEWA format and guidelines for AEWA International Single and Multispecies Action Plans (AEWA Secretariat 2018) recommends following the guidelines for defining FRVs under the EU Habitats Directive (DG Environment 2017).

### Spatial scale of functioning

Populations	Migratory behaviour
<i>Somateria mollissima mollissima</i> , Baltic, North & Celtic Seas	Birds breeding in Finland, Estonia and Sweden perform cyclic, directed movements, birds in Southern Norway, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, France, UK and Ireland are dispersive. Hence, the population is only partially migratory. Consequently, the FRVs are to be set at national level by Range States and aggregated to management unit and population level.
<i>Somateria mollissima mollissima</i> , Norway & Russia	Birds breeding in Novaya Zemlya, Russia, perform cyclic, directed movements, birds breeding along the Murmansk coast in Russia and in Norway are mainly dispersive. Consequently, the FRVs are to be set at national level by Range States and aggregated to population level as no management units are proposed.
<i>Somateria mollissima borealis</i> , Svalbard & Franz Josef Land	Birds breeding on Svalbard winter c. 70% near to Iceland and 30% near to mainland Norway. The population is migratory. Consequently, the FRVs are to be set at flyway level in consultation amongst Range States.

### Proposed approach to set FRVs

Range States are requested to apply the EU Habitats Directive Article 17 reporting guidance to set the FRVs (DG Environment, 2017, pp. 110-128). As the population size and, to a lesser extent, also the breeding range of the species has increased from the late 19th century to the period of 1990 – 2000 and then both have started declining again, the application of the reference-based approach would be appropriate in most cases.

### Setting the Favourable Reference Range in the breeding and non-breeding seasons

As the reference-based approach (DG Environment 2017) can be applied, Range States should define the FRR considering the following conditions:

1. The FRR cannot be less than the current (2013 - 2018) range if it has not been reduced compared to the past range;
2. The extent of FRR cannot be smaller than the Directive Value (DV, i.e. around 1980<sup>1</sup>) or the Agreement Value (AV, i.e. around 2000), whichever one is the larger.
3. If the current range is smaller than the past range, Range States need to assess whether the current range is large enough and well distributed to accommodate the population that is viable in the long-term. If not, they need to identify areas necessary to re-establish the range while taking into account technical and ecological feasibilities including the shift in distribution due to climate change.

The natural range describes roughly the spatial limits within which the habitat or species occurs. According to Article 1 of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), which provides the definition of Favourable Conservation Status applicable in the context of AEWA, the range means all the areas of land or water that a migratory species inhabits, stays in temporarily, crosses or overflies at any time on its normal migration. Consequently, the range should be defined both for the breeding and the non-breeding seasons (including moulting, staging and wintering areas). However, vagrant or occasional occurrences (in the meaning of accidental, erratic, unpredictable) would not be part of the natural range.

Information on the breeding distribution of the species in the 1990s is available in Hagemeyer and Blair (1997) at 50 x 50 km resolution or at finer scale in national atlases. The current breeding distribution is available in Keller *et al.* (in print) at the same 50 x 50 km scale with comparison of distribution in Hagemeyer and Blair (1997), in national atlases or in EU Member States Birds Directive Article 12 reports to the European Commission.

Non-breeding distribution data can be obtained from various national monitoring schemes and surveys including impact assessments for offshore wind farms and other investments as well as from on-line bird observation portals. In case of the Baltic Sea, comprehensive winter survey data is available in Durinck *et al.* (1994), Skov *et al.* (2011) and the 2016 coordinated Baltic waterbirds at sea survey.

If the distribution of different populations or Management Units (MUs) cannot be separated in the non-breeding season in a country, the distribution of both population or MU should be mapped together and the national range will be considered in calculating the range of both population or management unit.

In both seasons, the FRR is to be defined using the range method described in DG Environment (2017), i.e. regular breeding and non-breeding occurrences shall be generalised to distribution using the 10 x 10 km ETRS89 grid cells in the ETRS LAEA 5210 projection<sup>2</sup>, then distribution should be generalised to range using the Range Tool<sup>3</sup> and then excluding the 10 x 10 km grids with unsuitable areas such as deep sea or inland areas in case of the Common Eider. The applicable gap distance is estimated at 144 km following the method described in Bijlsma *et al.* (2019) and using a body mass of 1.86 kg.

## Setting the Favourable Reference Population in the breeding season

As the reference-based approach (DG Environment 2017) can be applied, Range States should define the FRP considering the following conditions:

1. The FRP cannot be less than the current (2013 - 2018) population size if the population has not undergone reductions;
2. The FRP cannot be smaller than the Directive Value (DV, i.e. around 1980<sup>4</sup>) or the Agreement Value (AV, i.e. around 2000), whichever one is the larger.
3. If the current population size is smaller than the past population size, the Range States need to identify how the population can be restored to the earlier levels. As the long-term goal of the action plan is to recover the population to its past favourable level before the recent declines, it is recommended to use reference values from the period of 1990 – 2000.
4. The national FRPs should be also larger than the upscaled minimum viable population (MVP) value. Range States can choose to produce a PVA, determine a necessary scaling factor and set the FRP using the operators

<sup>1</sup> Although the Birds Directive is not applicable in some of the Range States, it is proposed to use 1980 as a common reference point in conjunction with the Agreement Value also outside of the EU.

<sup>2</sup> European Terrestrial Reference System 1989; Lambert Azimuthal Equal Area Latitude of origin 52N, Longitude of origin (central meridian) 10E. <http://www.eionet.europa.eu/gis>. [The standard grid system for reporting under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives](http://www.eionet.europa.eu/gis).

<sup>3</sup> Accessible to experts appointed by the Competent National Authorities responsible for reporting under the EU Habitats Directive and under the Bern Convention.

<sup>4</sup> Although the Birds Directive is not applicable in some of the Range States, it is proposed to use 1980 as a common reference point in conjunction with the Agreement Value also outside of the EU.

suggested in Step 3 in DG Environment (2017). If no population viability analysis is available, 2,500 pairs can be used as an approximation of the upscaled MVP value for a species like the Common Eider with a body mass of 1,192 – 2,895 g (Bijlsma *et al.*, 2019) with the exception of countries where the species has a marginal occurrence<sup>5</sup>.

To assist the process of setting the breeding FRPs, some population size estimates from international reviews are presented in Table 1. Geometric means of minimum and maximum breeding population estimates for the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population without Norway. Sources of estimates: 1970-1990 trend & 1990: (Heath, Borggreve *et al.* 2000), 1991, 2001 & 2009: (Ekroos, Fox *et al.* 2012), 2000: (BirdLife International 2004), 2010: (BirdLife International 2015), 2015: (Lehikoinen, Alhainen *et al.* 2020), Range in the 1990s: (Hagemeijer and Blair 1997) complemented with distribution data from (Keller and Hario *in prep.*) but more detailed census data might be available at national level and would be preferred.

### Setting Favourable Reference Population for the non-breeding season

National non-breeding FRPs at national level can be derived using the reference-based approach. However, such national non-breeding FRPs cannot be added up to produce non-breeding FRPs for the individual MUs or populations because of the mixing amongst them (i.e. between the Russia & Norway and Svalbard & Franz Josef Land populations in Norway and between the Svalbard & Franz Josef Land and Icelandic populations in Iceland or between the birds breeding in the Netherlands and Germany with the Baltic segment of the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population). Therefore, the non-breeding FRPs for each of the MUs or flyway populations should be still derived from the breeding numbers using conversion factors between breeding pairs and mid-winter population sizes.

### Habitat for the species in the breeding and non-breeding seasons

The following questions should be answered based on assessing the area, quality and spatial organisation of habitat for the species following the guidance of DG Environment (2017) for both the breeding and the non-breeding seasons for segments of the population staying in the country:

1. *‘Are area and quality of occupied habitat sufficient (for long-term survival)?’* and
2. *‘If NO, is there a sufficiently large area of unoccupied habitat of suitable quality (for long-term survival)?’*

The national information will be summarised for each MU and flyway population.

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<sup>5</sup> For the definition of marginal occurrence, see page 110 in DG Environment DG Environment (2017). Reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive: Explanatory notes and guidelines for the period 2013-2018. Brussels, European Commission: 188..

## Summary

The table below summarizes the suggested approach for each population

Populations	Season	Favourable Reference Range	Favourable Reference Population	Favourable Reference Habitat
<i>Somateria mollissima mollissima</i> , Baltic, North & Celtic Seas	Breeding	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRRs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRPs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	National assessment is needed to determine whether the extent and quality of the available habitat is sufficient to support the FRP.
	Non-breeding	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRRs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	National FRPs to be Range States using the reference-based approach. FRPs for the whole flyway population or its MUs are to be derived from the breeding numbers using a conversion factor.	National assessment is needed to determine whether the extent and quality of the available habitat is sufficient to support the FRP.
<i>Somateria mollissima mollissima</i> , Norway & Russia	Breeding	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRRs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRPs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	National assessment is needed to determine whether the extent and quality of the available habitat is sufficient to support the FRP.
	Non-breeding	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRRs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	The non-breeding FRP cannot be set separately for this population in Norway; it can be set only in combination with the Svalbard & Franz Josef Land and the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas populations. The non-breeding FRP at population level is to be derived from the breeding numbers using a conversion factor.	National assessment is needed to determine whether the extent and quality of the available habitat is sufficient to support the FRP.
<i>Somateria mollissima borealis</i> , Svalbard & Franz Josef Land	Breeding	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRRs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	To be defined by Norway & Russia in consultation with Iceland using the reference-based approach.	National assessment is needed to determine whether the extent and quality of the available habitat is sufficient to support the FRP.

	Non-breeding	To be defined by the Range States using the reference-based approach. National FRRs will be summed up at MU and flyway population level.	Non-breeding FRPs cannot be set separately for this population in Norway and Iceland, only in combination with the other populations their wintering range overlaps with in Norway and Iceland respectively. At flyway population level, the FRP is to be derived from the breeding numbers using a conversion factor.	National assessment is needed to determine whether the extent and quality of the available habitat is sufficient to support the FRP.
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## Tables

Table 1. Geometric means of minimum and maximum breeding population estimates for the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population without Norway. Sources of estimates: 1970-1990 trend & 1990: (Heath, Borggreve et al. 2000), 1991, 2001 & 2009: (Ekroos, Fox et al. 2012), 2000: (BirdLife International 2004), 2010: (BirdLife International 2015), 2015: (Lehikoinen, Alhainen et al. 2020), Range in the 1990s: (Hagemeijer and Blair 1997) complemented with distribution data from (Keller and Hario in prep).

Row Labels	1970-1990 trend								Range in the 1990s
	1990	1991	2000	2001	2009	2010	2015		
DE	+1	1,140	971	1,449	1,166	1,200	1,183	1,500	27,500 km <sup>2</sup>
DK	+1	21,909	25,000	25,000	24,000	25,000	23,000	18,383	70,000 km <sup>2</sup>
EE	+2	10,000	12,000	17,321	12,000	5,000	2,828	1,936	40,000 km <sup>2</sup>
FI	+2	173,205	165,000	149,666	170,000	80,000	111,644	103,232	92,500 km <sup>2</sup>
FR	+1	11	11	1	1	1	1	3	32,500 km <sup>2</sup>
IE	+1	250	250	500	250	160	160	160	10,000 km <sup>2</sup>
NL	-1	3,742	7,621	8,944	9,000	4,650	4,637	6,070	22,500 km <sup>2</sup>
SE	+1	346,410	270,000	311,769	315,000	161,000	96,286	57,061	140,000 km <sup>2</sup>
UK	+1	32,496	32,000	31,600	31,600	27,000	27,000	35,000	137,500 km <sup>2</sup>
RU (Baltic)									20,000 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>589,163</b>	<b>512,853</b>	<b>546,251</b>	<b>563,017</b>	<b>304,011</b>	<b>266,740</b>	<b>223,346</b>	<b>592,500 km<sup>2</sup></b>

## Annex 1: Data form for assessing the conservation status of the national breeding and non-breeding populations of the Common Eider<sup>6</sup>

### 0. Range State:

#### 0.1 Report completed by: *name, email and phone number*

#### **2 Distribution map for the non-breeding season\***

\* in case of Norway and Russia mapping also for the breeding season will be needed

*Mapping the non-breeding distribution of the population requires obtaining standardised distribution maps for this period. Unfortunately, this information is not collected as part of the reporting under Article 12 of the Birds Directive and therefore we have to ask for this here. Please refer to Section 4 of the [Birds Directive Article 12 reporting guidelines](#) (page 31) or for more detailed guidelines to pages 24-26 in DG Environment 2017).*

#### Complementary note to the European Commission's guidance:

*The non-breeding season includes moulting, staging and wintering areas. Some locations support the species only in one of these annual cycle stages, while others in multiple ones. However, all these areas should be included in mapping of the non-breeding distribution.*

*Non-breeding distribution data can be obtained from various national monitoring schemes and surveys including impact assessments for offshore wind farms and other investments as well as from on-line bird observation portals. In case of the Baltic Sea comprehensive winter survey data is available in Durinck et al. (1994), Skov et al (2011) and the 2016 coordinated Baltic waterbirds at sea survey.*

**2.2 Year or period:** *Please, indicate the period data presented in the map is valid for. The map should represent the situation as close to the current one as possible and not a period older than 10 years.*

**2.3 Non-breeding distribution map:** *Submit a map together with relevant metadata following the technical specifications in the Explanatory Notes and Guidelines. The standard for species distribution is 10x10km ETRS grid cells, projection ETRS LAEA 5210.*

**2.4 Distribution map, method used:** *Select one of the following methods:*

- a) Complete survey or a statistically robust estimate
- b) Based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data
- c) Based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data
- d) Insufficient or no data available

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<sup>6</sup> For the sake of consistency, this data form is based on the Report format for reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive for the period of 2013-2018 developed by DG Environment Ibid., but has been shortened to avoid gathering information that has been already gathered through the reporting under Article 12 of the Birds Directive and adapted to ensure consistency of assessment periods with the Birds Directive (i.e. the long-term covers the period of 1980-2018 and not 1994-2018). The numbering follows the Article 17 report format to make it easier to follow the guidance provided by DG Environment DG Environment (2017). Reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive: Explanatory notes and guidelines for the period 2013-2018. Brussels, European Commission: 188..

**5.5 Additional maps:** *Optional. Range States can submit additional maps (e.g. for different annual cycle stages such as moulting, staging and wintering, deviating from standard submission map under 2.3).*

## **5 Range**

**5.a Range within the country (breeding season).** *The breeding range should be defined applying the range concept the same way as described in DG Environment (2017, pp: 124-128). Based on Box 3.2 in Bijlsma (2019, p. 40) the recommended gap distance for Common Eider is 145 km (after rounding) using a body mass value of 1.86 kg.*

**5.a.10 Favourable Reference Range (breeding season):** *in km<sup>2</sup>, please describe the method used to set the reference value. This process should be informed by the results of mapping of the breeding range in past atlas works.*

**5.a.12 Additional information:** *Please provide references and the rationale used to establish the FRR.*

**5.b Range within the country (non-breeding season).** *The non-breeding range should be defined applying the range concept the same way as described in DG Environment (2017, pp: 124-128). Based on Box 3.2 in Bijlsma (2019, p. 40) the recommended gap distance for Common Eider is 145 km (after rounding) using a body mass value of 1.86 kg.*

**5.b.10 Favourable Reference Range (non-breeding season):** *in km<sup>2</sup>. Please describe the method used to set the reference value. This process should be informed by the results of mapping of the non-breeding range under Point 2 above.*

**5.b.12 Additional information:** *Please provide references and the rational used to establish the FRR.*

## **6a Population in the breeding season**

**6.15 Favourable Reference Population:** *in breeding pairs. Please describe the method used to set the reference value.*

**6.17 Additional information:** *Please provide references and the rationale used to establish the FRP.*

## **6b Population in the non-breeding season**

**6.15b Favourable Reference Population:** *in individuals. Please describe the method used to set the reference value.*

**6.17b Additional information:** *Please provide references and the rationale used to establish the FRP.*

## **7.a Habitat for the species in the breeding season**<sup>7</sup>

### **7.a.1 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat**

*Please answer the questions below:*

a) Are area and quality of occupied habitat sufficient (for long-term survival)?

YES/NO/Unknown

b) If NO, is there a sufficiently large area of unoccupied habitat of suitable quality (for long-term survival)?

YES/NO/Unknown

**7.a.9 Additional information.** *Please provide references and the rationale for your assessment.*

## **7.b Habitat for the species in the non-breeding season**

### **7.b.1 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat**

*Please answer the questions below:*

a) Are area and quality of occupied habitat sufficient (for long-term survival)?

YES/NO/Unknown

b) If NO, is there a sufficiently large area of unoccupied habitat of suitable quality (for long-term survival)?

YES/NO/Unknown

**7.b.9 Additional information.** *Please provide references and the rationale for your assessment.*

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<sup>7</sup> Refer to the guidance in DG Environment DG Environment (2017). Reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive: Explanatory notes and guidelines for the period 2013-2018. Brussels, European Commission: 188. as 7.1, etc.

## ANNEX III

Annex III – Rolling Workplan 2020-2022 for the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Common Eider

<b>Objective 1: Increase survival rates (all stages)</b>						
<b>Project/activity</b>	<b>Range states</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Budget needed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Result 1.1. Predation by non-native predators (e.g. American mink, Raccoon dog) is minimised and eliminated where possible.</b>						
1.1.1. Breeding Range States to develop and implement control plans for non-native invasive carnivores.	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK	immediate		Countries and stakeholders to share existing information and best practice on how to manage non-native predators.	n/a	One volunteer organization/person needed to send out a call for information and to collate it.
		ongoing	FI, SE, DK	Continue and increase collaboration amongst neighbouring range states to diminish the threat from non-native predators by stopping their spread.	Yes – possible LIFE project already in the making	National hunting authorities to continue taking the lead in collaboration with relevant national stakeholders.
<b>Result 1.2. Predation by native predators is reduced, at breeding sites where a local population level effect has been identified.</b>						
1.2.1. Breeding Range States to develop and apply methods to manage native predator pressure taking into account applicable national and international legislation and the conservation status of the predator species.	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK					
<i>(Result 1.3. The sustainability of legal hunting is ensured, will be covered under the agreed Adaptive Harvest Management Programme.)</i>						

<b>Objective 1: Increase survival rates (all stages)</b>						
<b>Project/activity</b>	<b>Range states</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Budget needed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Result 1.4. By-catch is minimised and where possible, eliminated</b>						
1.4.1. Develop and test seaduck-friendly fishing gear suitable for Common Eider as part of overall efforts for seaducks. Deploy seaduck-friendly fishing gear at key Common Eider sites if and when such is available.	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK	2021	AEWA Secretariat, ES IWG Coordinator	Assess possibilities and options during planned session on bycatch of seaducks at upcoming 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the AEWA European Seaduck IWG.	n/a	This could be a general action under the AEWA European Seaduck IWG in collaboration with other organizations already working on bycatch.
1.4.2. Implement (temporary) closures of gill nets at key sites for Common Eider during times when they are present unless other effective mitigation measures (such as seaduck-friendly fishing gear) are available and being used.	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK	2021		Collect experience from countries on gill net closures and their effectiveness in reducing bycatch of seaducks – Common Eiders in particular.	n/a	This could be a general action under the AEWA European Seaduck IWG in collaboration with other organizations already working on bycatch.

<b>Objective 2: Increase breeding success</b>						
<b>Project/activity</b>	<b>Range states</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Budget needed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Result 2.1. Sufficient high-quality food is available both on wintering and breeding grounds.</b>						
2.1.1. Work with HELCOM and OSPAR to implement agreed provisions in order to reduce	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK	2021	UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, ES IWG	Information on HELCOM/OSPAR provisions and processes are made available to Common Eider range states and stakeholders also through the AEWA ES IWG.	n/a	Better exchange of information and collaboration between AEWA, HELCOM,

<b>Objective 2: Increase breeding success</b>						
<b>Project/activity</b>	<b>Range states</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Budget needed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
pollution in the Baltic Sea, North & Celtic Seas particularly in the vicinity of breeding areas.						OSPAR processes identified as a priority for seabird work in the Baltic and North Seas.
<b>Result 2.2. Human harvesting of key shellfish species (i.e. Blue Mussel and Cockle) is regulated to ensure sufficient food availability for Common Eiders.</b>						
2.1.2 Regulate shellfish harvest in identified key areas to ensure that sufficient food is available.	DE, DK, NL, UK					
<i>Result 2.3. Disturbance and predation by both non-native and native predators is reduced where it is having a local population level effect – covered above under 1.1.1 and 1.1.2.</i>						
<b>Result 2.4. Detrimental access to key moulting, staging and breeding areas is in particular regulated (shipping, boating and other outdoor activities)</b>						
2.3.1. Identify internationally and nationally important moulting, staging and breeding areas where anthropogenic disturbance is a high threat.	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK					
2.3.2. Implement appropriate management actions to minimize disturbance in the key areas identified in 2.3.1 above.	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK					

<b>Objective 3: Close knowledge gaps</b>						
<b>Project/activity</b>	<b>Range states</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Budget needed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Result 3.1. Research and monitoring work on priority issues are undertaken</b>						
3.1.1. Develop non-lethal methods to reduce predation and disturbance by protected native predators.	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, RU, SE, UK	ongoing	FI	Pull together an overview of ongoing efforts to develop non-lethal methods to inform research and implementation of measures elsewhere. Potentially create a mailing list linking up field practitioners working specifically on Common Eiders.	n/a	Development and testing of non-lethal methods is underway in FI, NL, SE, NO, IS.
3.1.2. Assess the cumulative impact of harvest related mortality on the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population (harvest, disturbance, lead poisoning, crippling etc.).	DE, DK, EE, FI, FR, NL, NO, SE					Overall assessment of impact could be undertaken as part of the AHM process.
3.1.3. Develop monitoring programmes to collect and share standardised data on by-catch, fishing effort and capacity for all relevant fishing gears for both commercial and non-commercial fisheries (including	All range states	2020-	AEWA ES IWG	Influence the relevant frameworks/organizations which already have this on their agendas/mandates. Reinforce the need to develop and implement this monitoring.	n/a	Strategizing on how to approach this can be undertaken in the AEWA European Seaduck IWG in collaboration with other organizations already working on bycatch.

**Objective 3: Close knowledge gaps**

Project/activity	Range states	Timeframe	Lead	Actions	Budget needed	Comments
vessels <12m); data analysed for accurate by-catch estimates and identification of the most problematic fishing gears, vessels, locations. Report Common Eider by-catch and fishing effort (as required under the EU CFP, the EU Seabird Plan of Action, EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, OSPAR and HELCOM ) and collaborate on by-catch research with HELCOM, OSPAR, ICES and CAFF, as relevant.		2021-	AEWA ES IWG	Develop more automatic reporting systems for the fishing vessels (cameras, automatic recognition, app) to increase reporting	YES	Assess possibilities and options to collaborate on this with relevant organizations during planned session on bycatch of seabirds at upcoming 1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the AEWA European Seabird IWG.
3.1.4. Assess the severity and sources of poisoning from lead and other pollutants (e.g. mercury) on Common Eiders in the Baltic, North & Celtic Seas population	DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, SE, UK					
3.1.5. Monitor and document climate change impacts on the Common Eider (including the potential loss and deterioration of habitat to climate	Applicable to: All range states	2021-	National experts	Utilise existing data and ongoing monitoring of food items (such as Blue Mussels) in different parts of the flyways to assess changes in food availability due to climate change.		Monitor the availability of Blue Mussels in Finland (because range limit is in Finnish waters) – funding needed,

<b>Objective 3: Close knowledge gaps</b>						
<b>Project/activity</b>	<b>Range states</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Budget needed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
change) to increase knowledge of the current and potential future effects and to determine what possible mitigation measures could be.						currently run by volunteers.  Use Mussel data from Wadden Sea.  Piggy-back on data gathered for HELCOM and OSPAR.
3.1.6. Analyse and publish existing Common Eider aerial survey datasets to increase understanding of the baseline population size.	Applicable to range states of the Baltic and North Seas Management Unit: DE, DK, EE, FI, NL, NO, SE, RU	2020-2021	?  Aarhus University	Fundraise for and commission analysis of 2016 aerial seaduck survey to Aarhus University.	20,000 euro	Possible to run analysis in 2020 if funding is available, but more likely in 2021. Note: not just benefit for Common Eiders but all other seaducks as well.
		2021		Fundraise for analysis of data from aerial survey which is currently ongoing during 2020/2021 winter season.	20,000 euro?	Note: not just benefit for Common Eiders but all other seaducks as well.
		2021	AEWA ES IWG  Aarhus University?	Need to develop software/script for analysis of the data in future to minimize the costs of the analyses and to speed them up. Liaise with Common Wadden Sea Secretariat to see what they have already developed.	Yes	Could be taken as a discussion item at the next meeting of the AEWA European Seaduck IWG.
3.1.7. Develop and implement a coordinated monitoring scheme for	Applicable to: All range states	2020-2021	AHMP Technical Working Group	Prepare overview of monitoring needs, prioritisation and recommendation for coordinated monitoring for each of the	Yes, covered by the Finnish Common Eider project	

<b>Objective 3: Close knowledge gaps</b>						
<b>Project/activity</b>	<b>Range states</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Budget needed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
the Common Eider (including population size, trend and harvest bag where applicable etc.), preferably linked to existing reporting obligations and generic monitoring schemes, reflecting the monitoring needs of the different populations and management units			EGMP Data Center	populations/management units. Determine what monitoring can be covered through existing national schemes/ongoing activities in consultation with national experts.		
3.1.8. Carry out ring recovery and telemetry studies (including the analyses of existing data) of Common Eiders to increase understanding of movements of different populations between the breeding and wintering areas.	All range states	2020-	Aarhus University	Ring recovery and telemetry project planned for Baltic, North Sea Management Unit	Additional 100,000 euro	Project application pending with Nordic Council. Additional funding required to carry out analysis of existing data.
		2021	AEWA ES IWG	Develop a more strategic approach for using tracking to plan management actions for all three populations.	YES	Explore opportunities for collaboration with NO SEATRACK project.
		2021-	All	Make an effort to ring more male Eiders and ducklings as a way to increase recoveries as part of existing ringing schemes	n/a if applied as part of existing schemes	
3.1.9 Identify changes in food resources and assess whether common eiders are adapting.	All range states					



AEWA Single Species Action Planning Workshop for the  
Common Eider (*Somateria mollissima*)  
15-17 September 2020 - *online via GoToMeeting*

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