



20th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
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**List of AEWA Species which have been
Affected by Highly Pathogenic Avian
Influenza (HPAI) which Require
Enhanced Monitoring**

LIST OF AEWA SPECIES WHICH HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI) WHICH REQUIRE ENHANCED MONITORING

Note compiled by the AEWA Technical Committee, May 2024

Structure of document:

1. Information for AEWA Parties
2. Annex: Current limitations in animal health reporting databases and best alternatives for identifying populations affected by HPAI

Information for Parties:

A. Mandate for Parties:

[Resolution 8.2 Adoption of Amendments to the AEWA Annexes](#), Operative Para 4, provides the following mandate:

“Urges Parties and stakeholders to enhance monitoring and assessment of those species affected by recent HPAI H5N1 outbreaks and to report these data to allow population assessments for MOP 9 to be made on the basis of most recent information on status”.

B. The task for the Technical Committee (Task 2.7 of 2023-25 TC Workplan):

The task for Technical Committee was defined as “Identify those populations affected by HPAI in need of enhanced monitoring and assessment to allow updated assessments for MOP9.”

C. Response from Technical Committee:

It was not possible, given available data sources and limited Technical Committee resourcing, to precisely identify all those populations across the AEWA region which would benefit from enhanced monitoring to respond to the above mandate. However Section E of this document highlights populations known (from a variety of formal and informal sources) to have suffered high mortality – others may well exist. The inherent limitations of available animal health reporting systems for HPAI, which have contributed to the complexity of the task, are set out in the Annex.

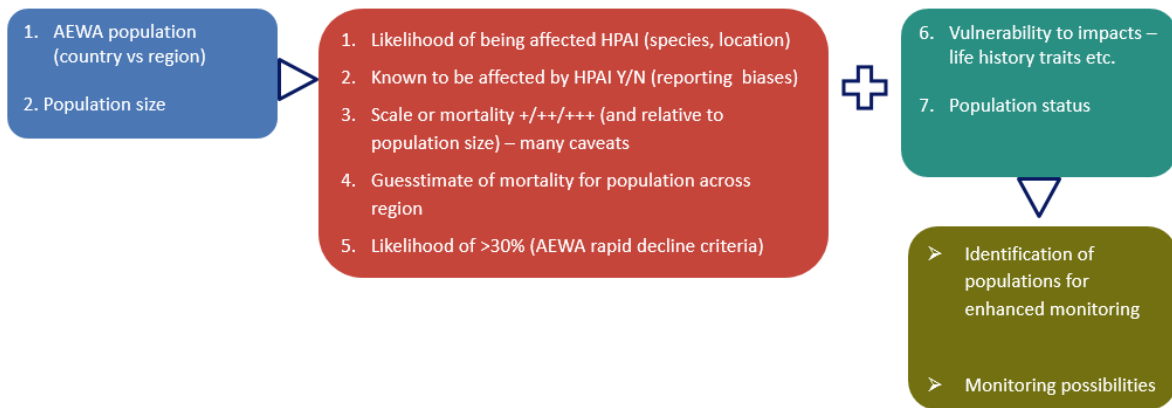
AEWA Parties which are Parties to CMS should note the recent Avian Influenza Resolution adopted at [CMS COP14 \(Wildlife Disease Res 12.8 \(RevCOP14\)\)](#) which highlights the need for better surveillance and reporting, in particular Operative para 4 a, b, c, f and g:

4. *Calls on Parties, non-Parties, and relevant international and national organizations to further enable effective prevention, preparedness, and response to avian influenza outbreaks, in particular by supporting and building capacity for:*
 - a) *research into HPAI in wild birds and mammals including determination of impacts of HPAI outbreaks,*
 - b) *long-term monitoring of migratory bird populations and movements, with focus on enhanced assessment for those species affected by HPAI,*
 - c) *robust surveillance programmes with conservation objectives for HPAI in populations of wild birds while additionally preventing delays in diagnosis and research caused by regulatory limits on transporting specimens across national boundaries,*

- d) *integrating and analysing existing data sets across different flyways to determine precise migratory routes, fluxes and species' population dynamics, and sharing data with other sectors to enhance multisectoral risk assessment,*
- e) *early warning systems,*
- f) *international cooperation in surveillance and risk assessments across flyways, and*
- g) *improving rapid wildlife reporting systems with collaboration and information-sharing with WOA national delegates and wildlife focal points, WOA WAHIS, the joint FAO–WOAH–WHO GLEWS and existing regional information system.*

There is a clear need for AEWA Parties and National Focal Points to support these actions to both improve wildlife health reporting systems and improve waterbird monitoring so that impacts of disease can be more easily determined.

That said, the following framework can be used to help to identify those populations requiring enhanced HPAI-related monitoring for national or regional approaches:



D. Prioritisation based on other waterbird monitoring priorities

Priority populations for HPAI monitoring could be cross-referenced with those identified for other broader conservation reasons: https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_mop8_27_waterbird_monitoring_priorities.pdf

E. Populations known to have suffered high HPAI mortality

The following table represents AEWA populations known from formal and informal reporting systems to have suffered ‘high’ mortality – although how this relates to population size is difficult to determine for some of them. As such these populations, particularly those which are not increasing (i.e. those stable or in decline) would likely benefit from enhanced monitoring.

Table 1. AEWA populations known from formal and informal reporting systems to have suffered ‘high’ mortality likely to benefit from enhanced monitoring – although how this relates to population size is difficult to determine for most of them.

Scientific name	Common name	IUCN Red List category	Population name	Trend	Particular hotspots
<i>Grus grus</i>	Common Crane	LC	<i>grus</i> , North-east & Central Europe/North Africa	INC	
<i>Grus grus</i>	Common Crane	LC	<i>grus</i> , Eastern Europe/Turkey, Middle East & NE Africa	INC	Israel
<i>Calidris canutus</i>	Red Knot	NT	<i>islandica</i> , NE Canada & Greenland/Western Europe	STA	Wadden Sea
<i>Catharacta skua</i>	Great Skua	LC	N Europe/N Atlantic	INC	Scotland
<i>Larus argentatus</i>	European Herring Gull	LC	<i>argentatus</i> , North & North-west Europe	DEC	Europe
<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	Black-headed Gull	LC	W Europe/W Europe, W Mediterranean, West Africa	DEC	Europe
<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Black-legged Kittiwake	VU	<i>tridactyla</i> , Arctic from NE Canada to Novaya Zemlya/N Atlantic	DEC	NW Europe
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian Tern	LC	West Africa (bre)	INC	West Africa/Senegal, Guinea Bissau/Gambia
<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>	Royal Tern	LC	<i>albidorsalis</i> , West Africa (bre)	DEC	West Africa/Senegal, Guinea Bissau/Gambia
<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	Sandwich Tern	LC	<i>sandvicensis</i> , Western Europe/West Africa	STA?	NW Europe/W Africa
<i>Sterna dougallii</i>	Roseate Tern	LC	<i>dougallii</i> , Europe (bre)	INC	NW Europe/UK
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common Tern	LC	<i>hirundo</i> , Southern & Western Europe (bre)	STA	W Europe
<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Arctic Tern	LC	Western Eurasia (bre)	INC/STA	W Europe
<i>Uria aalge</i>	Common Murre	LC	<i>albionis</i> , Ireland, S Britain, France, Iberia, Helgoland	INC	NW Europe
<i>Alca torda</i>	Razorbill	LC	<i>islandica</i> , Iceland, Faeroes, Britain, Ireland, Helgoland, NW France	INC?	NW Europe
<i>Morus bassanus</i>	Northern Gannet	LC	North Atlantic	INC	NW Europe
<i>Morus capensis</i>	Cape Gannet	EN	Southern Africa	DEC	
<i>Phalacrocorax capensis</i>	Cape Cormorant	EN	Coastal Southern Africa	DEC	S Africa and Namibia
<i>Anser anser</i>	Greylag Goose	LC	<i>anser</i> , NW Europe/South-west Europe	STA	Europe
<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>	Great White Pelican	LC	West Africa	INC?	Senegal/Mauritania

<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>	Dalmatian Pelican	NT	Black Sea & Mediterranean (win)	INC	SE Europe/Greece
<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Barnacle Goose	LC	East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland	STA	Scotland
<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Barnacle Goose	LC	Svalbard/South-west Scotland	STA	Scotland
<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	Barnacle Goose	LC	Russia/Germany & Netherlands	INC	NW/Europe
<i>Spheniscus demersus</i>	African Penguin	EN	Southern Africa	DEC	South Africa
<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	Tufted Duck	LC	North-west Europe (win)	DEC?	Europe
<i>Alca torda</i>	Razorbill	LC	<i>torda</i> , West Atlantic	INC	NW Europe
<i>Uria aalge</i>	Common Murre	LC	<i>aalge</i> , E Atlantic (bre)	INC?	NW Europe

List of abbreviations:

Column “IUCN Red List category”: LC – Least Concern, NT – Near Threatened, VU – Vulnerable, EN – Endangered

Column “Trend”: INC – Increasing, STA – Stable, DEC – Declining

Annex I

Current limitations in animal health reporting databases and best alternatives for identifying populations affected by HPAI

Formal animal health reporting databases (primarily WOAAH WAHIS and FAO EMPRES) were originally designed for reporting presence/absence in domestic livestock. The systems have over time been expanded to incorporate wildlife but are still a long way from being of value for understanding anything about the context of the disease other than it was positively identified in X species at Y location on Z date.

Some limitations of the global reporting system (WOAH WAHIS):

1. Reports may be from passive or active surveillance – living or dead birds – incidental or having caused mortality
2. No/little indication of numbers of dead birds (their goal is to indicate presence of disease only – nothing about scale) as only a sub-set of dead birds will be tested. As an example, of the ~13,000 barnacle geese dying on the Solway Firth Scotland in 2021/22 – 14 are reported (but recording of 0.1% of mortality is not necessarily standard and sometimes this is much higher).
3. No contextual information – ‘10 positive cases’ is difficult to contextualise (10 out of a roost of 10,000 or 10 out of 12 birds?)
4. Massive regional difference in surveillance – vast areas of the AEWA region are without any apparent reports. Does this represent absence of disease or absence of surveillance and reporting? (Likely the latter)
5. Sparsely populated areas will always be under-represented so there is a skew in reporting towards densely populated areas
6. Some species more likely to have been noticed, submitted, and tested – large white birds are more likely to be presented in surveillance datasets than small brown birds
7. Species identification still very mixed – databases still include species identities such as ‘duck’ or ‘unidentified anatidae’ etc.
8. Variety of HPAI virus subtypes involved (though H5N1 and H5N8 of main concern – but there may be species differences between them)

Overall, this (and other) systems cannot currently be used for anything other than saying that cases have been reported in some species. It is a frequent topic of discussion for many wildlife health professionals dealing with multiple disease issues.

Regional reporting:

Other regional reporting e.g. EU reports (from EFSA or European Reference Laboratory), provide similar information but sometimes with a little more detail.

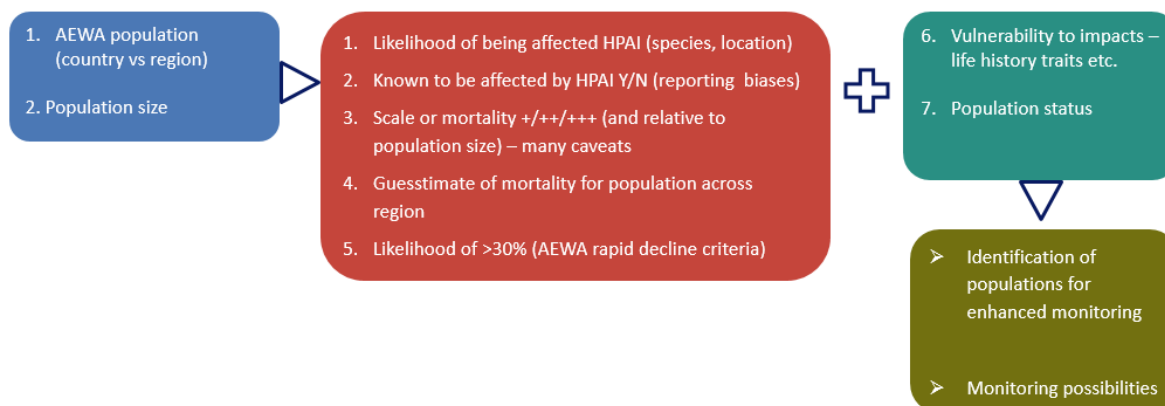
National reporting:

The best and most robust information on populations affected and to what extent comes from some national analyses undertaken by collaborative research groups using NGO and other datasets (including informal reporting). E.g. this [BTO publication](#) or the recent publication by [Caliendo et al. \(2024\)](#) provide good data on the effect of H5 HPAI on wild birds from 2020/21 and 2021/22. Similarly, the [Kleyheeg et al. \(2017\)](#) paper on numbers of wild birds dying during the H5N8 outbreak in the preceding winter would have pointed to the value of enhancing tufted duck monitoring. Note these analyses are typically undertaken some time after the event and in effect needed the enhanced monitoring in place sometime before – reinforcing the point that routine monitoring should be robust enough that it can be used to determine impacts of disease without needing to ramp up in event of emerging disease.

Better prioritisation coming from expert species group

Expert taxon-specific working groups are typically better placed to collectively evaluate which groups have been affected badly by HPAI e.g. seabird working groups.

This framework can guide that assessment:



Prioritisation based on other waterbird monitoring priorities

Cross referencing those priority populations for HPAI monitoring could be made with those identified for other broader conservation reasons: https://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_mop8_27_waterbird_monitoring_priorities.pdf

Sources of information

Examples of sources of HPAI data:

<https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/animal-health-and-welfare/disease-data-collection/world-animal-health-information-system/>

<https://wahis.woah.org/#/home>

<https://www.fao.org/animal-health/situation-updates/global-aiv-with-zoonotic-potential/bird-species-affected-by-h5nx-hpai/en>

<https://www.fao.org/animal-health/situation-updates/global-aiv-with-zoonotic-potential/en>

<https://empres-i.apps.fao.org/>

https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-diseases/diseases-and-control-measures/avian-influenza_en#outbreaks

<https://flutrackers.com/forum/forum/internet-communication/avian-flu-diary>

<https://promedmail.org/https://www.cms.int/en/publication/h5n1-high-pathogenicity-avian-influenza-wild-birds-unprecedented-conservation-impacts> - and references within

<https://datazone.birdlife.org/sowb/casestudy/an-unprecedented-global-epizootic-of-avian-influenza-is-causing-mass-mortality-of-wild-birds>

Informal wildlife health networks

Email list serves

Personal communications