



*AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS*

**AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group
- NATIONAL REPORT -**

Please send the completed form to Nina Mikander, Coordinator for the Lesser White-fronted Goose at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat by **Friday the 29th of October at the latest.**

Email: nmikander@unep.de / Tel: +49 (0)228 815 2452 / Fax: +49 (0)228 815 2450

LWfG Single Species Action Plan online in *ENGLISH*:

http://www.unep-awa.org/activities/working_groups/lwfg/lwfg_ssap_130109.pdf

LWfG Single Species Action Plan online in *RUSSIAN*:

http://www.unep-awa.org/activities/working_groups/lwfg/lwfg_ssap_russ.pdf

NOTE: THIS DRAFT REPORTING FORMAT WILL BE REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE LWfG RANGE STATES AT THE 1ST WORKING GROUP MEETING IN HELSINKI ON THE 30TH NOVEMBER - 1ST DECEMBER 2010.

- Please use the grey fields for answers and comments. -

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

COUNTRY Estonia

Contracting Party to AEWA:

Yes No

NATIONAL FOCAL POINT

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NATIONAL EXPERT

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DATE of submission 25.11.2010

DATE (submission of previous report)

GENERAL INFORMATION – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional):

2. STATUS UPDATE

2.1. SPECIES STATUS -BREEDING (pairs)

Latest population estimate: Year
 Minimum
 Maximum

Population trend: select from list

Source(s) of information:

Not applicable No information

2.2. SPECIES STATUS - PASSING (individuals)

Latest population estimate: Year 2010
 Minimum 30
 Maximum 35

Population trend: stable

Source(s) of information:

WWF Finland LWfG working team report "LWfG monitoring in Estonia 20.April-8.May 2010"

Not applicable No information

2.3. SPECIES STATUS – WINTERING (individuals)

Latest population estimate: Year
 Minimum
 Maximum

Population trend: select from list

Source(s) of information:

Not applicable No information

2.4. SPECIES STATUS – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)**3. UPDATE ON CRITICAL SITES**

NOTE: the list of critical sites can be found in Annexes 3a and 3b of the SSAP (see links above).

Which sites that have been identified in the LWfG SSAP as important for the species in your country have been designated as protected areas under the national legislation and have management plans that are being implemented?

Total number of sites

2

Out of the above total, number of protected sites

2

Number of protected sites with management plans that are being implemented

2

Please point at major gaps in the protection and management of critical sites which will need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

Sites have been protected and managed satisfactorily.

Have any new sites currently not mentioned in the SSAP, either through monitoring or satellite tracking, been identified as possible critical sites for the species?

Yes No

If yes, please list these sites:

Are any of these sites protected and/or managed?

CRITICAL SITES - FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)**4. UPDATE ON PRESSURES/THREATS AND RESPONSES****4.1. HUNTING**

Please rate the magnitude of hunting as a threat to the LWfG in your country:

Severe High Medium Low No threat

Trend: stable

Description of the situation:

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

Source(s) of information:

Field observations, monitoring, hunting bag reporting from hunters.

No information

Has hunting been banned at all key sites used by the Lesser White-fronted Geese during the period when Lesser White-fronted Geese are present?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide more information:

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

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

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

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide more information:

Training seminars for hunters have been implemented at key sites in Läänemaa and Pärnumaa counties. Presentations introducing LWfG occurrence in Estonia, identification and threats have been presented and information materials disseminated.

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Has obligatory training of hunters as outlined by the Hunting Charter of the Bern Convention for hunters been implemented?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide more information:

Trainings for hunters are regularly conducted by Estonian Hunters Society.

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Has the level of protection from illegal hunting been increased within existing protected areas through training and improved enforcement?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide more information:

There has been no registered cases of poaching at the protected areas important for LWfG during last years.

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Has an effort been made to redirect hunting from adults to juveniles in areas where Lesser White-fronted Geese occur outside of the key sites?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide more information:

If no, please explain why:

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

If not applicable, please explain why:

Have lure crops been planted (or similar steps been taken) to direct Lesser White-fronted Geese away from areas where hunting pressure is known to be high?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide more information:

If no, please explain why:

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

If not applicable, please explain why:

4.2. POISONING

Please rate the magnitude of poisoning as a threat to the LWfG in your country:

Severe High Medium Low No threat

Trend: select from list

Description of the situation:

Source(s) of information:

No information

4.3. HUMAN DISTURBANCE

Please rate the magnitude of human disturbance as a threat to the LWfG in your country:

Severe High Medium Low No threat

Trend: increasing

Description of the situation:

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

Source(s) of information:

Field observations, monitoring reports 1999-2010.

No information

Are you taking measures to avoid infrastructure development and other sources of human disturbance, including recreation/tourism liable to have an adverse impact on the known core breeding areas?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Not breeding in Estonia

Are you taking measures to avoid infrastructure development and other sources of human disturbance, including recreation/tourism liable to have an impact on the known key sites?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

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

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Are you taking measures to avoid overgrazing and nest trampling if/where this is known to be a problem?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Not breeding in Estonia

4.4. PREDATION

Please rate the magnitude of predation as a threat to the LWfG in your country:

Severe High Medium Low No threat

Trend: stable

Description of the situation:

There are no registered occasions of predation of LWfG.

Source(s) of information:

Field observations, monitoring reports 1999-2010.

No information

Are you taking measures to minimize predation, where this has been shown to be a significant limiting factor (particularly in the breeding grounds)?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Not a significant limiting factor

4.5. HABITAT LOSS/DEGRADATION (Agricultural intensification, construction of dams etc., wetland drainage, climate change, land abandonment, overgrazing, pollution of wetlands/water bodies)

Please rate the magnitude of habitat loss/degradation as a threat to the LWfG in your country:

Severe High Medium Low No threat

Trend: declining

Description of the situation:

Land abandonment and overgrazing were a significant threat in the end of the last century. Major part of coastal areas were overgrown by reed and bushes and not in suitable condition for staging geese. During the last 10-20 years the situation has been improved significantly. The key staging areas for LWfG are in favorable condition and managed satisfactorily in major parts.

Source(s) of information:

Environmental board coastal meadow inventories and monitoring reports, Life-project reports, semi-natural landscape management reports.

No information

Are you monitoring the habitat quality at key sites in order to identify any anthropogenic pressures as early as possible?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

Monitoring and inventories of coastal meadows are conducted according to the monitoring scheme at all key sites and on the potential sites for LWfG.

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Are you taking measures to restore and/or rehabilitate Lesser White-fronted Goose roosting and feeding habitat in the staging or wintering areas?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide more information:

A former roosting and feeding site for LWfG was restored on the small islands in Matsalu Bay during the Life project in 2006, and managed with beef cattle grazing afterwards. LWfG have used the site in several occasions after restoration, at least in spring 2007 and 2010.

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

THREATS & RESPONSES - FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

5. UPDATE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND ACTIVITIES

5.1. NATIONAL LEGAL PROTECTION

Is the Lesser White-fronted Goose legally protected in your country?

Yes No

If yes, please list the year and title of the legislation concerned as well as the enforcing institution:

Protected with Nature Conservation Act (2004) enforced by the Parliament of Estonia .

If no, please explain why:

Does the national hunting legislation, in principle, provide adequate protection of the Lesser White-fronted Goose?

Yes No

If yes, please provide further information:

LWfG is protected by Hunting Act and Hunting Regulation, which are providing adequate protection in principle.

If no, please explain why:

Are sufficient human and financial resources being allocated to the enforcement of hunting legislation in order to control hunting effectively?

Yes No

If yes, please provide further information:

If no, please explain why:

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

NATIONAL LEGAL PROTECTION – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

5.2. NATIONAL SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN

Has your country drafted a National Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose?

- NSSAP in place and being implemented
- NSSAP in place, but not being implemented
- NSSAP in development
- No NSSAP

If you already have a NSSAP, please add a reference/link to the plan below:

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

If a NSSAP has been developed but is not being implemented, please explain why:

If your NSSAP is still being developed, please describe when the process was started and when the Action Plan is estimated to be completed:

If your country does not have a NSSAP, please explain the reasons why not:

If your country does not have or is still in the process of developing its LWfG NSSAP, would you be interested in assistance from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in this work?

Yes No

If yes, please specify what kind of assistance you would require:

NSSAP – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

5.3. NATIONAL WORKING GROUP

Does your country have a National Working Group for the Lesser White-fronted Goose?

Yes No

If yes, please provide more information about Working Group members, function etc.:

Responsible body for protection and monitoring of LWfG in Estonia is the Environmental Board. Members of the working group are Maire Toming (conservation biologist) in Läänemaa county and Ivar Ojaste (conservation biologist) in Tallinn.

If no, please explain the reasons:

NATIONAL WORKING GROUP – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)**5.4. MONITORING****Does your country have a monitoring scheme in place for the LWfG?**

Breeding season:

Yes Partial No Not applicable

Please provide more information on the monitoring activities during breeding season:

Passage/migration period:

Yes Partial No Not applicable

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

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

Since 2009 the responsible institution for monitoring of LWfG in Estonia is the Environmental Board.

Wintering season:

Yes Partial No Not applicable

Please provide more information on the monitoring activities during the non-breeding/wintering season:

If there is no monitoring scheme on a national level, is LWfG monitoring conducted on a regular basis by other means?

Breeding season:

Yes Partial No Not applicable

If yes OR partial, please provide further information on how the monitoring is being done and by whom:

Passage/migration period:

Yes Partial No Not applicable

If yes OR partial, please provide further information on how the monitoring is being done and by whom:

Wintering season:

Yes Partial No

If yes OR partial, please provide further information on how the monitoring is being done and by whom:

MONITORING – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)**5.5. LWfG CONSERVATION/RESEARCH PROJECTS**

List (or provide links to) any national and/or international LWfG conservation or research projects being conducted in your country - including the project title, goals and objectives, period of implementation, implementing organization, contact details and a short description:

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

Project web site: www.wwf.fi/lwfg

List (or provide links to) any other national and/or international conservation or research projects being conducted in your country that could be useful for LWfG conservation - including the project title, goals and objectives, period of implementation, implementing organization, contact details and a short description:

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

Project web site: www.envir.ee/lk/aewa and www.wingsoverwetlands.org

Life-Nature project "Boreal Baltic Coastal Meadow Preservation in Estonia", LIFE00NAT/EE/7083, 2001-2004. Project partner Matsalu National Park Administration. Project web site: www.arhipelaag.ee/vainameri/

ERDF project "Rising of crazing pressure on Haeska coastal meadows in Matsalu National Park", 2010-2015.

Beneficiary NGO Upkeepers of Väinameri Seminatural Habitats. The main focus is to obtain the beef cattle in order to craze the coastal meadows more efficiently.

LWfG CONSERVATION/RESEARCH PROJECTS – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)**5.6. AWARENESSRAISING**

Has your country developed and implemented methods for raising awareness and understanding on LWfG and LWfG conservation, in particular with relation to hunters?

Yes, being implemented

Please provide further information on methods and how they are being implemented:

Awareness rising meetings/seminars for hunters have been conducted in Matsalu and Pärnu regions in western and south-western Estonia where LWfG regularly occur during the migration period.

Yes, but not being implemented

If methods are available but not yet implemented, please provide further information on the methods and explain why they are not being implemented at present:

Being developed

If being developed, please describe when these methods will be ready for implementation:

No

If no, please explain why:

If yes or being developed, has your country developed/produced LWfG information materials to this end (i.e. posters, leaflets etc.)?

Yes Being developed No

If yes OR being developed, please provide further information:

A booklet (1000 copies) and a sticker (1000 copies) introducing LWfG and Life-project in Estonian language.

An article in the national hunters`magazine "Eesti Jahimees".

An article in newspaper "Lääne Elu".

An article in magazine "Loodus".

Information signs describing the LWfG, its European flyway, and Life-project have been erected in Matsalu (Haeska coastal meadow) and Nigula-Häädemeeste area.

AWARENESSRAISING – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

6. FUNDING

Are there any national funding possibilities for LWfG conservation measures in your country?

Yes No

If yes, please list the funding programs and relevant authorities:

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

If your country does not yet have a National Single Species Action Plan, would national funding be available for the drafting and implementation of the NSSAP?

Yes No

FUNDING – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

7. UPDATE ON KEY KNOWLEDGE

Are satellite tracking and/or field surveys being used in your country to locate the key breeding grounds for the Western Main population?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Not breeding in Estonia

Are satellite tracking and/or field surveys being used in your country to locate the key staging and wintering sites for the Western Main population?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:
Not staging in Estonia

Are satellite tracking and/or field surveys being used in your country to locate the key breeding, staging and wintering sites for the Fennoscandian population?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

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

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Are further field studies of suitable breeding habitat and staging areas being undertaken in order to update the estimate for the Fennoscandian population (Kola peninsula etc.)?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, please provide further information:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

Are there any further knowledge gaps not covered by this report critical for LWfG conservation in your country which would require further research?

Yes No

If yes, please provide further information:

KEY KNOWLEDGE – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (optional)

THANK YOU!