



*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-aewa.org/activities/working_groups/lwfg/lwfg_ssap_130109.pdf

LWfG Single Species Action Plan online in RUSSIAN:

http://www.unep-aewa.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 Germany

Contracting Party to AEWA:

Yes No

NATIONAL FOCAL POINT

Name: Oliver Schall

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Phone & Fax:

NATIONAL EXPERT

Name: Thomas Heinicke

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DATE of submission 08.11.2010

DATE (submission of previous report)

GENERAL INFORMATION – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional):

Information about hunting issues from the German Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection - in charge of hunting in Germany at Federal level - was included.

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 2000-2005
 Minimum 15
 Maximum 30

Population trend: declining

Source(s) of information:

WAHL, J. et al. (in prep.): Rastbestandsschätzungen von Wasservögeln in Deutschland 2000-2005. Vogelwelt.
 MOOIJ, J.H. & T. HEINICKE (2008). Status, distribution and numbers of the Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* in Germany. Vogelwelt 129: 281-292
 MOOIJ, J.H. & T. HEINICKE (2007). Neue Erkenntnisse zum Auftreten und Schutz der Zwerggans *Anser erythropus* in Deutschland. Charadrius 43: 171-184.
 Heinicke & Köppen (2007). Vogelzug in Ostdeutschland I - Wasservogel Teil 1. Ber. Vogelwarte Hiddensee 18 (SH), Greifswald.

Not applicable No information

2.3. SPECIES STATUS – WINTERING (individuals)

Latest population estimate: Year 2000-2005
 Minimum 10

Maximum 20

Population trend: declining

Source(s) of information:

WAHL, J. et al. (in prep.): Rastbestandsschätzungen von Wasservögeln in Deutschland 2000-2005. Vogelwelt.
MOOIJ, J.H. & T. HEINICKE (2008). Status, distribution and numbers of the Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* in Germany. Vogelwelt 129: 281-292.

MOOIJ, J.H. & T. HEINICKE (2007). Neue Erkenntnisse zum Auftreten und Schutz der Zwerggans *Anser erythropus* in Deutschland. Charadrius 43: 171-184.

Heinicke & Köppen (2007). Vogelzug in Ostdeutschland I - Wasservögel Teil 1. Ber. Vogelwarte Hiddensee 18 (SH), Greifswald.

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

18

Out of the above total, number of protected sites

18

Number of protected sites with management plans that are being implemented

UNKNOWN : at least 2 (German Waddensea area)

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

The situation at the federal state's level requires an involvement of the German federal states, which was in the relatively short time given not possible: However, it appears that at least in some federal states for a considerable number of the sites, still no management plans have been elaborated or implemented. And even where protection regulations ("Verordnungen") exist, they might not be sufficiently focussed on the SPA character of the site or do not include special protection measurements for geese. Therefore "disturbance/scaring" and at least in some areas "hunting" is insufficiently regulated. Not all relevant roosts are protected as nature reserves and several roosts have insufficient hunting regulations to prevent goose hunting.

Not all relevant roosts are protected as nature reserves.

The issue, how far protected areas are sufficiently protected against disturbance/scaring and goose hunting (of similar species) would merit a state by state analysis and a respective involvement of the German federal states, which was in the time given not possible.

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:

7 new sites in Eastern Germany (see annex)

Are any of these sites protected and/or managed?

All sites are partly or completely within SPA, but so far no management plans have been implemented.

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: declining

Description of the situation:

The LfWG is protected in all parts of Germany by the Hunting Legislation.

However, from the Nature Conservation point of view incidental shooting can not be excluded, as LFWG mostly stay in mixed flocks with Bean Geese and Greater White-fronted Geese.

The situation is different in the German federal states and would merit a more in depth study, which was in the short time given not possible.

Source(s) of information:

e.g. annual hunting bag reports for Germany

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:

If no, please explain why:

The relevant roosts of the LfWG in Germany are in principle situated in nationally or internationally protected areas.

Goose hunting in such areas is regulated by the respective nature protection laws of the federal states and might require a consent of the respective nature protection authorities .

How far the restrictions are already sufficient or insufficient needs a more detailed analyze involving the German federal states: North Rhine-Westphalia and its "Lower rhine area" appears to be a good example for protection. However, in some other relevant federal states it appears possible to optimise the situation.

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:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

"Not applicable" was chosen in comparison to states, where still hunting of LWfG occurs:

In Germany the LWfG is a rare but regular migrant. The roosting sites are in principle in protected areas. Hunting in protected areas is regulated by the respective federal states' nature protection legislation and requires usually the consent of the nature protection authority. Hunting of LWfG is everywhere forbidden.

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:

Yes: at least in comparison to a large part of other states in the LWfG range:

In order to get a hunting permit in Germany applicants have to give proof of sufficient knowledge of species, game or fowl biology and of nature protection.

The owners of hunting rights are under preservation obligations too and they have to care for sufficient knowledge about game or wildfowl in their hunting districts.

The situation in the Länder is different: apparently a good example was given 2007 by the hunting association of Sachsen, prescribing special requirements for hunters of waterfowl.

From the Nature protection point of view there is still scope for improvements: no systematic training of hunters to prevent incidental shooting of protected goose species is foreseen after the hunters have received their hunting licenses. - At least in a few regions, some private activities from ornithologists together with local hunting organisations exist (mainly talks about goose identification). In principle, an awareness campaign, relevant information material and practical training (ID of different goose species, selective shooting of juveniles, hunting on larger geese etc.) for every goose hunter in those Länder with key areas for LWfG in Germany appears needed or at least useful, where hunting with the similar white fronted goose is possible.

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:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

LWfG falls in Germany under the hunting law. However, there is no hunting season for the species, which means, the LWfG is the whole year protected.

Illegal hunting in the sense of poaching is usually not a problem in Germany. However, in single caeses incidental shootings appear in some of the Germanfederal states possible because not all federal states have prohibited the hunting of the similar White fronted Geese.

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:

No activities on this issue exist.

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:

If not applicable, please explain why:

In some goose areas, lure crops are planted. These activities are mainly directed to prevent damage by geese, swans and/or cranes, but not to direct LWfG away from areas with high hunting pressure.

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:

Only incidental accidents of poisoning of geese through mis-use of rodenticids (e.g. zincphosphid) has been reported.

Source(s) of information:

e.g. Schmidt, E. (2009). Vergiftung von Gänsen und Kranichen an einem Stausee in Thüringen. Ber. Vogelschutz 46: 163-165.

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:

Regulations to protect geese on feeding areas against human disturbance are missing in most key areas. Especially in Eastern Germany no compensation measures for goose damage exist anymore, which forces farmers/hunters to increase scaring the geese away from the fields. Excessive scaring in connection with hunting has led to significant shifts in goose distribution both at a regional and national level.

In recent years more and more problems are found with the increase of windfarming and the construction of wind mills/farms within important goose feeding areas. As geese strongly avoid windfarms, the development of windfarms with goose areas minimizes feeding areas of geese.

Source(s) of information:

unpublished data from goose monitoring

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:

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:

If no, please explain why:

As in most key sites management plans for the Special Protection areas still not exist, measures to avoid human disturbance are mostly insufficient or do not exist. For all infrastructure development projects within SPA's environmental impact studies are mandatory. But in practise, only rarely larger projects are rejected and several examples exist, that e.g. federal roads and autobahnen have been build or are planned through important goose areas.

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:

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: select from list

Description of the situation:

Source(s) of information:

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:

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: select from list

Description of the situation:

LWfG usually stay in mixed flocks with other goose species and use a great variety of agricultural and natural habitats.

Source(s) of information:

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:

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:

If no, please explain why:

If not applicable, please explain why:

In principle, there is no deficit of roosting and feeding habitats for geese in Germany, but not all roosts and feeding areas can be optimally used by geese because of disturbance.

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:
Bird Directive 79/409/EEC; especially protected after Federal Nature Conservation Law (BNatSchG § 7)

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:

The LFWG is in Germany listed in the hunting legislation as a species with hunting protection all over the year. Illegal hunting will be punished pursuant to ³ 22 Abs. 2 Sentence 1 Federal Hunting Law ("BJagd G") by prison up to 5 years or by fines.

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:

The implementation of the Federal hunting Law and the respective Länder legislation is an obligation of the German federal states. However, NGOs complain that in almost all key sites, no efficient goose hunting control systems have been established.

If no, please explain why:

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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:

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:

Until now, the relevance and importance of Germany for wild LWfG from Norway or Russia has been widely neglected by officials in Germany and even international organisations (e.g. BirdLife International). So far, no NSSAP for any bird species exist, but there are discussions to prepare national action plans for Corncrake and Ferruginous Duck. Due to the federal system in Germany it is unclear at the moment, who is responsible for such national action plans (federal states or the federal government).

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.:

If no, please explain the reasons:

There is no special working group for LWfG in Germany, but two organisations dealing with matters of LWfG: Federation of German Avifaunists, waterbird working group (goose monitoring) and German Ornithologist's Society, goose working group (conservation and scientific aspects). Beside these groups, a NGO "Aktion Zwerggans e.V." exist.

NATIONAL WORKING GROUP – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

contacts:

Federation of German Avifaunists: Johannes Wahl (national waterbird monitoring coordinator; johannes.wahl@dda-web.de), Thomas Heinicke (national coordinator for the goose and swan monitoring; thomas.heinicke@dda-web.de)
 German Ornithologist's Society: Helmut Kruckenberg (chairman of the goose working group; helmut.kruckenberg@blessgans.de)
 Aktion Zwerggans: Johan Mooij (chairman; mooij@zweggans.de)

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:

The goose monitoring program in Germany (led by the Federation of German Avifaunists/DDA) focuses on the monitoring of common goose species (e.g. *Anser albifrons*, *Anser fabalis*, *Anser anser*, *Branta leucopsis*, *Branta bernicla* etc.). Due to the large numbers of geese and the used methods (mainly roost counts in Eastern Germany, day-time counts in Western Germany and parts of Eastern Germany), LWfG are insufficiently covered within the goose monitoring scheme. Although the DDA is collecting all observations of LWfG in Germany, these data not reflect the real occurrence in Germany (due to different observer activities and ID problems).

Therefore, a special monitoring program in all important key sites and a special training for ornithologists/participants of the goose monitoring program is urgently needed to assess the current status of LWfG in these areas (vagrants versus regular visitors etc.).

Wintering season:

Yes Partial No Not applicable

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

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:

Regular data collection of all LWFG observations/records in Germany (database on rare goose species in Germany by the waterbird working group/Federation of German Avifaunists; see also above).

In 2011 the germany-wide website ornitho.de will be online, enabling observers to enter occasional sightings. This will enhance the monitoring and status assessment of LWfG.

Wintering season:

Yes Partial No

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

Regular data collection of all LWFG observations/records in Germany (database on rare goose species in Germany by the waterbird working group/Federation of German Avifaunists; see also above).

In 2011 the germany-wide website ornitho.de will be online, enabling observers to enter occasional sightings. This will enhance the monitoring and status assessment of LWfG.

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:

Operation Lesser Whitefront (Aktion Zwerggans): project founded in 2001. Aims to help to protect LWfG in Fennoscandia in cooperation with Fennoscandian project partners. In the scope of a several years project it is planned to lead a total of 400 young Lesser Whitefronts (100 birds a year) on save migratory routes to protected wintering grounds by help of microlight aircrafts. The main project has not been implemented until now due to missing permissions and general discussions about genetics of re-introduced birds.

contact: Aktion Zwerggans e.V., Kirchalde 13, D-71083 Herrenberg, Germany; e-mail: mooij@zwerggans.de

So far hunting associations or owners of hunting rights are not part of reintroduction or monitoring projects.

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:

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:

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:

Only some local/regional initiatives exist to raise awareness and understanding on LWfG and their conservation. These activities are mainly focused on local/regional ornithological groups to raise awareness, inform about field identification of LWfG and promote selective search for rare goose species amongst the large flocks of common goose species.

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:

So far, no special information material on LWfG exist. The goose working group of the German Ornithologist's Society produced a special booklet on geese in general, how to identify, watch and count them
Titel: Bergmann, H.-H., Heinicke, T., Koffijberg, K., Kowallik, C. & H. Kruckenberg (2006). Wilde Gänse - Erkennen, Beobachten, Zählen.

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:

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:

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:

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:

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:

Due to deficits in the monitoring of LWfG in Germany, special monitoring action is needed to reveal the true status of LWfG in the known key sites. This would require special training of ornithologists and special field surveys, where extra funding is needed to start such activities.

As reading color-marked geese becomes more and more popular in Germany, intensified marking of LWfG in Scandinavia and Russia could help to locate unknown key sites and to bring more light into the question, how important Germany actually is for LWfG. As the reading of color-leg-rings (as actually used by Swedish and Norwegian projects) is not suitable for most goose areas in Germany, the use of neckbands is highly recommended.

KEY KNOWLEDGE – FIELD FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (optional)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (optional)

THANK YOU!