



## AEWA LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP



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### 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group

11-13 November 2019 – Bucharest, Romania

## UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF REVISION OF THE AEWA INTERNATIONAL SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR THE LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

### Introduction

The [AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose](#) was adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties in Madagascar in 2008. A review of the Action Plan was originally foreseen to be undertaken in 2013 and from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group in November 2012 onwards, several attempts have been made to revise the Plan. International Species Action and Management Plans developed and adopted under AEWA are consensus-based, and thus far no consensus on the content of a revised Plan could be reached amongst Range States.

At the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties in South Africa in December 2018, the AEWA Parties adopted [Resolution 7.5 on the Adoption, Revision, Retirement, Extension and Implementation of International Species Action and Management Plans](#), which included the decision to extend the validity of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* (Western Palearctic populations) for an additional three years, with the aim of preparing a new revised Action Plan for adoption by MOP8 in 2021 (LWfG IWG Inf. 4.6).

As is the established action- and management-planning procedure under AEWA, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is facilitating the revision process in close consultation with the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group, which is the body tasked with the revision of the Action Plan, and to which all key range states are members. More general information regarding the drafting and revision of Species Action Plans under the Agreement can be found in the [Overview on the Status of Preparation and Implementation of AEWA Action and Management Plans](#) submitted to MOP6 in 2015.

Based on the experience of previous attempts to revise the Action Plan under the Agreement, the Secretariat has in May 2019 proposed to commence the revision process by using a modular step-by-step approach to address remaining open issues. A positive outcome of each consecutive step will be the prerequisite for proceeding to the next step.

The initial steps of this modular process are to be carried out amongst a sub-set of seven range state governments (Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden) as well as the European Commission. During the previous consultation processes these Parties provided comments on various issues, some of them contradictory, which need to be addressed in order to be able to proceed with the actual revision.



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The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group is being hosted by the Romanian Ministry of the Environment and organized in cooperation with the Red-breasted Goose EU LIFE Project "LIFE for Safe Flight" coordinated by the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB), with additional funding provided by the Governments of Norway and Finland.

Once sufficient progress has been made in addressing the remaining contradictory issues, the Secretariat will prepare a draft revised Action Plan for consultation amongst all of the 22 Principle Range States for the Lesser White-fronted Goose which have been identified for the species within the Agreement area, following the established procedure under AEWA.

### **Modular Approach**

The following modular approach was proposed by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and approved by the sub-set of range states listed above for the revision of the International Single Species Action Plan, with the aim to reach consensus on a revised and updated plan amongst all Principle Range States in time for adoption by MOP8 in 2021. Consultations amongst the relevant range states on Step 1 are currently ongoing.

- Step 1: Unanimous agreement amongst a sub-set of range states (Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the European Commission) on underlying facts. The Secretariat will compile a short paper to be circulated amongst these range states outlining underlying facts on which there needs to be a common understanding and agreement before proceeding to the next step in the revision process;
- Step 2: Independent impact assessment to assess possible interactions and impacts between the Swedish population and the Fennoscandian population (Terms of Reference for the assessment consulted amongst the sub-set of range states, subsequently commissioned by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to an independent expert/organisation, subject to available funding). The sub-set of range states agree in advance to recognise the findings of the assessment;
- Step 3: Revision of the Action Plan and consultations with the AEWA LWfG International Working Group commence based on the findings of the independent assessment following standard AEWA action-planning and revision procedures;
- Step 4: Potential facilitated meeting amongst the sub-set of range states in 2020 to negotiate open points face-to-face, convened by the Secretariat, as necessary;
- Step 5: Unanimous agreement reached on final draft amongst all Principle Range State governments by December 2020;
- Step 6: Submission of revised Action Plan to the Meetings of the AEWA Technical and Standing Committees for decision on bringing it to MOP8 in January and April 2021, respectively;
- Step 7: Adoption of revised Action Plan at MOP8 in September 2021.

### **Action requested from the Working Group**

Working Group Members are requested to take note of the presented update and to be ready to participate actively in the wider revision of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose during 2020 should sufficient progress be made with respect to completing the steps of the modular approach.