



**5th Meeting of the Committee for Captive Breeding, Reintroduction and
Supplementation of Lesser White-fronted Geese in Fennoscandia (RECAP 5)**

12th February 2013, UN Campus Bonn, Germany

Revision of the AEWA Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose

Draft Proposal on Guiding Principles

INTRODUCTION

The AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Western Palearctic populations of the Lesser White-fronted Goose was adopted at the 4th Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties in 2008 in Madagascar. The Action Plan foresees that a revision should be carried out five years after its adoption.

The responsibility for updating the International Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) lies with the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group and the revision process was initiated at the 2nd Working Group Meeting in November 2012. Issues being dealt with under the Committee for Captive Breeding, Reintroduction and Supplementation of Lesser White-fronted Geese in Fennoscandia (RECAP) were not discussed by the International Working Group.

During the past four years since the adoption of the SSAP, much progress has been made under the framework of the RECAP Committee on issues previously of contentious nature. The Committee has had four meetings and has commissioned two independent scientific reviews. Following a proposal by Sweden for amendments to the SSAP submitted to the 11th Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee in 2011, a AEWA Technical Committee Recommendation (LWfG RECAP Inf. 5.5) as well as expert guidance from the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group (LWfG RECAP 5.3) are now also available to further guide the work of the Committee.

On the basis of decisions taken at past RECAP meetings as well as the independent expert advice received to date, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has prepared draft principles on the basis of which the revision of the Action Plan in points concerning the Lesser White-fronted Goose populations breeding in the Nordic range states are to be undertaken. The RECAP Committee is invited to review the issues presented below with the aim to reach an agreement. Issues identified by the Secretariat as being in need of final agreement include:

- Lesser White-fronted Goose flyways in Europe;
- Definition of the Lesser White-fronted Goose population breeding in Sweden;
- Definition of Lesser White-fronted Goose populations;
- Focus of the revised Single Species Action Plan.

Based on the outcomes of the RECAP meeting, the Secretariat will provide Committee members with a first draft of the revised Action Plan in early 2013 for comments. In general the Secretariat will aim to streamline and simplify the Action Plan within the framework of this revision process, for example by omitting substantial parts of the currently very lengthy background information provided. The focus of the revised Plan will hence be on the operational part (i.e. Framework for Action, Activities by Result and Implementation).

Once finalized, the revised Action Plan will be presented to the AEWA Technical Committee and will then be submitted to the AEWA Standing Committee at its 9th meeting - set to take place in September 2013 - for preliminary approval. The final adoption of the revised Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose is foreseen to take place at the 6th Session of the Meeting of the AEWA Parties in 2015.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE REVISION OF THE SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. European Lesser White-fronted Goose flyways

The Secretariat proposes that the recommendations of the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) as presented in their Review of Lesser White-fronted Goose Flyways in Europe, which was submitted to the RECAP Committee in 2011, are endorsed by the RECAP Committee and inserted into the revised Action Plan as appropriate.

2. Definition of the Lesser White-fronted Goose population breeding in Sweden

In the revised Action Plan, the Secretariat proposes to follow the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist group recommendation as endorsed by the AEWA Technical Committee and refer to the Swedish sub-population as **reinforced** instead of the current wording “supplemented/reintroduced”.

3. Definition of Lesser White-fronted Goose populations

The Secretariat proposes to follow the AEWA Technical Committee recommendation not to classify the Lesser White-fronted Geese in Sweden as part of the Fennoscandian population, as the birds breeding in Sweden migrate along a completely different migration route and thus represent a different biogeographic population to the birds breeding in Norway.

Instead, the Secretariat proposes that the Lesser White-fronted Geese breeding in Sweden and migrating to wintering grounds in the Netherlands be recognized as the **Swedish population**.

The Action Plan would therefore in future continue to refer to **four populations of Lesser White-fronted Geese**, to be defined as follows: Fennoscandian population, Western main population, Eastern main population and Swedish population.

4. Focus of the revised Single Species Action Plan

Also following the AEWA Technical Committee recommendation, the Swedish population will no longer be referred to as not being wild.

However, the Secretariat proposes to keep the main focus of the international conservation efforts for the species in the Action Plan on the Fennoscandian and Western main populations - with the possibility of including the Eastern main population as an additional priority depending on the outcome of on-going negotiations with China to extend the scope of the Action Plan to cover all Lesser White-fronted Goose populations.