



AEWA LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE
INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP



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rev. 1
Date: 18.6.2013

2nd Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group

9. - 11. November 2012, Lake Kerkini, Greece

MEETING REPORT

1. Opening and Welcome Address

The meeting was opened by the President of the Board of the Lake Kerkini Management Authority. The Acting Chair, Mr. Sergey Dereliev from the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, also welcomed participants and requested that the meeting commence with a minute of silence for Ms. Minna Ruokonen, who contributed greatly to the conservation of the species through her work on genetics. Dereliev also thanked the Hellenic Ornithological Society and the Greek Ministry of the Environment, as well as the Lake Kerkini Management Authority for hosting the meeting and assisting with its organization.

2. Admission of Observers

Decision: Observers from the LIFE+ project and from local conservation organizations were admitted to the meeting.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Decision: The annotated agenda (Doc. LWfG IWG 2.1, dated 19.7.2012) was adopted.

4. Election of a Chair Country

Norway proposed Estonia as a Chair country for the Working Group. The proposal was seconded by Finland and Kazakhstan.

Decision: Estonia was elected Chair, and was represented by Mr. Üllar Rammul from the Estonian Ministry of the Environment.

5. Progress in the Implementation of the Single Species Action Plan (SSAP)

5.1. Implementation Analysis of Submitted National Reports

Ms. Nina Mikander from the AEWA Secretariat reported back to the range states on progress made in the implementation of the Single Species Action Plan based on the information provided in the submitted national reports (Doc. LWfG IWG 2.2). By the extended deadline of the 1st October 2012, 16 of 22 due reports had been submitted. Mikander stressed that the Secretariat had only undertaken a swift analysis of the reports, and that further analysis of the information provided would be necessary within the framework of the revision of the SSAP.

Main conclusions of the analysis included that the rapid decline of both sub-populations seems to have slowed down. However, many range states still reported a fluctuating population trend and much about the overall trend is still unknown. Range states reported that a large number of sites have been identified as key sites for the species, but that only a fraction of them are protected. In order to focus the limited resources, there is a need to assess which sites are currently critical for the survival of the species.



The 2nd Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group is being convened within the framework of the EU LIFE+ project "Safeguarding the Lesser White-fronted Goose along its European Flyway" [LIFE10NAT/GR/638].

Hunting was still reported as the main threat to the species, with human disturbance as well as habitat loss and degradation both reported as increasing threats. Predation remains a threat in the breeding areas of the Fennoscandian population.

With regard to implementation, progress has been made in the establishment of National Working Groups and many new National Action Plans are underway, however no new National Action Plans were adopted during the inter-sessional period. Despite the general lack of national level monitoring schemes for the species, monitoring efforts are being undertaken within the limits of available resources. Over half of the range states reported implementing awareness-raising activities for the Lesser White-fronted Goose. However, gaps still remain - in particular with regard to awareness-raising activities for hunters. Range states reported a lack of national funding for conservation activities in general and for the Lesser White-fronted Goose in particular.

Major knowledge gaps such as the exact wintering areas of the Western main population still exist, although range states are making efforts to increase monitoring efforts. A more coordinated monitoring effort is needed during the next inter-sessional period in an effort to close the most serious gaps in knowledge.

Decision: A more in-depth analysis of the National Reports will be undertaken for the revision of the Single Species Action Plan.

5.2. Revision of the Reporting Format

Mikander also informed range states that the reporting format will need to be revised in connection with the overall revision of the Single Species Action Plan. The revised format will follow the redefined priority activities and follow the SSAP indicators more closely. This will most likely mean a more detailed reporting format. Range states were also asked for feedback on if they had experienced difficulties in filling in the current reporting format.

Discussion:

Ukraine commented that the format itself is not a problem, the problem is rather that there is not enough information available to answer all the questions properly. Dereliev replied that if there is no information, it will be reported as a knowledge gap.

Decision: The Secretariat will submit a revised reporting format to the Working Group after the finalization of the updated Single Species Action Plan for comments and approval.

6. Online Reporting System (ORS)

Mikander reported on comments received concerning the use of the CMS Family Online Reporting System as the web-based format for the National Reports. In general, the feedback received from the Working Group members was positive; however, some countries reported having experienced problems. Feedback reported to the Secretariat included that the system was not easy to use and that there were problems logging in. Users also experienced problems with uploading attachments and with the designation of other experts to fill in the report. Several users also noted that they received no direct feedback from the system on whether the submission of the report was successful or not.

Discussion:

Ukraine added that the opening of individual pages on the AEWA National Report should be accelerated. Dereliev replied that the reporting format for the AEWA National Reports will be revised that and the architecture simplified. Estonia noted that the feedback received from the system landed in the junk mail folder. The Secretariat will use all the comments received to further improve the system.

7. Projects Implemented in 2011-2012

Mikander gave a brief report of the Lesser White-fronted Goose conservation projects facilitated by the AEWA Secretariat during the inter-sessional period (*Doc. LWfG IWG 2.3*). A total of 254.267,00€ was fundraised for fourteen projects, which were implemented in Syria, Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Bulgaria. In addition 14.449,00€ were raised for the following awareness-raising activities: LWfG

identification and monitoring field guide, LWfG general information poster, BTO review on LWfG flyways in Europe.

Upcoming projects include a monitoring and capacity building project in Azerbaijan and a project to limit the threat of hunting to the Lesser White-fronted Goose in the Volgograd region in Russia. Mikander noted that there is an urgent need of funding for capacity building (equipment, training of national monitoring teams). Mikander also requested that countries be active in approaching the Secretariat with project proposals for fundraising.

Discussion:

Greece inquired whether a format for submitting project proposals to the Secretariat could be developed. Dereliev noted that in general the implementation of the Single Species Action Plan and the National Action Plans should be supported nationally – not only through the Secretariat. National representatives should be more proactive in championing for national funding for the implementation of the Single Species Action Plan. Finland suggested that countries could also earmark funding for international LWfG activities when preparing their National Action Plans.

Decision: The Secretariat will continue its fundraising efforts for LWfG activities in close cooperation with the range states. The Secretariat will provide range states with a general format for providing project proposals for fundraising. Range states will actively provide the Secretariat with proposals for projects in line with the identified priority activities. In addition, range states will try to access national funding for Lesser White-fronted Goose conservation measures.

8. Establishing a Network of Critical Sites

Nina Mikander presented a proposal to establish a network of critical sites for the Western Palearctic populations of the Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Doc. LWfG IWG 2.4*). The Secretariat suggested the following general criteria to be applied for the selection of the critical sites:

- Sites should be critical for the conservation and recovery of the Lesser White-fronted Goose;
- Sites should have a regular (yearly) occurrence of high numbers of Lesser White-fronted Geese – whereby high numbers should be defined in a national context.

In addition, it was suggested to have no limit to the amount of sites chosen per country. The Secretariat also suggested making a list of sites prioritized for surveys.

Discussion:

Greece inquired what the status of former important sites would be which are currently not in use. Norway was positive towards the adoption of a list of critical sites, adding that it would serve to highlight their importance in general. Norway also inquired how and when the list can be updated once adopted. Dereliev replied that the critical sites should be identified by the government and that it should be flexible. Azerbaijan agreed with the proposal to pinpoint sites that are currently really critical for the species but also stressed the need for a second list of sites to be prioritized for surveys. Dereliev replied that none of the previously identified sites will disappear from the overall list, but that countries must provide monitoring, protection and management for the sites selected as critical.

Kazakhstan agreed in general to develop a list of sites, but highlighted that in Kazakhstan the whole Kostanay region is important. For example, 2012 was extremely dry and many of the lakes lost water. It is very difficult to organize the restoration of habitats for geese on such a large scale as conditions fluctuate on a yearly basis. It would be more effective for Kazakhstan to talk about the measures on a regional level. Dereliev replied that the entire region will be a priority area but that concrete sites should still be designated for protection. It is understood that there is a dynamic element to sites – this is also the case in the Middle East – and this will be addressed, but the selection of sites has to be at local level.

Romania commented that the Danube Delta area and the geese concentrations therein have changed during the past 20 years. In Romania some 25 sites are used by geese and need to be monitored in order to assess which ones are currently used by LWfG. It is problematic to establish critical sites for LWfG as sites used by geese seem to change every year. The Chair commented that the list is meant to be flexible. Dereliev confirmed that there are challenges - nature is dynamic. No recipe will work for all sites in all countries.

Norway agreed that there should be flexibility to the list and supported the idea of a list that is approved by the Working Group. The idea of networks is becoming more and more important and the Working Group can be one of the first groups to implement such a network. The LWfG is a specialist bird so it needs special sites.

Ukraine commented that in the Ukraine the roosting places are mainly within the protected areas which consist of quite big areas in the steppe zone with a lot of geese on ponds during the night. The protection of critical sites will not be enough as this will not protect the geese when they move outside of the protected areas. Dereliev added that goose conservation often neglects feeding areas and that this needs to be changed. Work with farmers on the ground is needed in order to get some voluntary protection. There is a need to get the stakeholders involved. Dereliev added that the list of critical sites will be finalized based on the suggestions received from each range state. Countries will have to verify the list before it is made public.

Decision: The Working Group decided to proceed with the establishment of a list of critical sites for the species (Annex II) as well as a list of sites to be surveyed (Annex III) as a priority. The Secretariat will circulate the list of critical sites suggested by each range state to the Working Group for verification as soon as possible.

9. Tackling the Pressure from Illegal Hunting

Mikander briefly introduced the agenda item. Hunting remains the number one threat to the species as confirmed by the national reports submitted to the Secretariat. As such, the Secretariat suggested having a short brainstorming session on innovative ways to tackle the threat from hunting, which could possibly be implemented in addition to the activities already highlighted in the Single Species Action Plan. The Secretariat is, for example, planning to organize a meeting in Central Asia on the sustainable hunting of waterbirds where the conservation of threatened species like the LWfG would also be discussed.

Discussion:

Azerbaijan agreed with the need for innovative measures to tackle the threat from illegal hunting. Greece reported receiving complaints from hunters who intercept poachers, who are then not tried or punished. This is partly because environmental crimes are not taken seriously and are seen as “soft” crime. Lobbying and awareness-raising should be done in this field. Mr. Cy Griffin from FACE agreed that when it comes to the illegal killing of birds there is, for example, a need for training of judges to better handle wildlife cases. Dereliev suggested sending a message from the LWfG IWG to AEWA noting that the violation of conservation and hunting legislation is having a severe impact on threatened species and requesting countries to step up the implementation of the national judicial systems.

Kazakhstan also agreed with the need for innovative approaches and suggested making use of an international expert group to change the mentality concerning poaching. Such a group could visit key regions in countries where poaching is an issue and organize activities with the local hunters’ communities.

The group discussed the use and feasibility of installing flexible hunting times thereby organizing goose hunting around the times when LWfG are not present. Finland noted that such a system has already been established in the eastern part of Hungary. Finland added that the cooperation with hunters in Finland has been very positive. The early warning system to alert hunters of migrating LWfG is working very well. Bulgaria also expressed having good experience with hunters. However, in Bulgaria an early warning system would not work as the LWfG occur amongst such large flocks of Greater White-fronted Geese. Griffin (FACE) suggested collecting positive messages on how collaboration with hunters has been successful.

Uzbekistan reported that the gap between the hunting legislation and the actual hunting activities on the ground is big. There has been some cooperation with hunters on the Common Crane. The biggest challenge in Uzbekistan is to teach hunters to identify goose species. Finland added that hunting in the dark should not be allowed, it should be illegal. Greece noted that cooperating with hunters through the use of such an early warning system could be useful for Greece and Hungary in the search for the so-called mystery site. Greece added that one of the main problems is that hunters do not believe that they are a problem and use their own data to argue against proposed conservation measures.

Russia reported working together with local as well as national hunting organizations. The hunting licence in Russia will now be changed to include goose species – not just geese in general. Some initiatives to change the hunting times are being implemented in different areas. Negotiations are also on going with hunters on a regional level concerning the ban of spring hunting within areas that are important for waterbirds. Conflicts

with hunters are more numerous during spring due to spring hunting. One measure to alleviate the negative effect of spring hunting is to create no hunting zones in and around the wetlands. There should also be a stricter limit on the hunting bag, for example only allowing hunters to shoot one goose per day. In southern Russia there are limits on how many birds can be shot, but in the north there are no limitations, which basically means that local people can shoot as many geese as they want. In the Manych area in southern Russia activities to create feeding places for LWfG within the protected areas have been successful. This allows the birds to avoid at least some of the hunting pressure. In principle – especially on the local level – the Russian hunters understand the situation and are positive. They have requested field guides for the identification of the species. Such a guide was distributed to hunters and the feedback was positive. Some regional hunting organizations are requesting several hundred leaflets and they are even ready to pay for these kinds of publications and guides.

Romania also suggested limiting the amount of geese shot at each site as well as limiting the number of birds per day which one person can shoot. Griffin (FACE) replied that bag limits can be problematic and depend on the legislation. The possibility to implement voluntary restrictions should be explored. The impact of hunting can also be regulated by changing the hunting times and the days.

Griffin (FACE) suggested that some more national and regional hunting organizations be invited to the next Working Group meeting, as the issue of hunting is given such importance. Griffin also suggested sending the national reports to national hunting organizations – not only for their information, but also requesting further information. Griffin added that work on a local level is needed to convince hunters that LWfG are actually there. Many don't believe that their hunting activities pose a threat to the LWfG.

Ukraine and Griffin (FACE) suggested the production of training materials specifically for hunters which could be used in all range states, for example including series of pictures of flying birds or videos. Ukraine added that hunters sometimes provide useful information and that it would perhaps be possible to organize a closer collaboration with hunters in regard to collecting information.

10. Update/Revision of the LWfG Single Species Action Plan

Nina Mikander opened the discussion with a presentation on the foreseen timetable for the revision process (*Doc. LWfG IWG 2.5*). On the basis of the action planning workshop and a more detailed analysis of the submitted national reports and national data on the species, the Secretariat will provide range states with a draft of the revised version as soon as possible. After receiving comments from the range states, the draft will be sent to the AEWA Technical Committee for comments and then on to the AEWA Standing Committee for preliminary approval. The revised plan will be adopted in 2015 at the 6th Meeting of the AEWA Parties.

Dereliev led the group in a workshop on the revision of the Single Species Action Plan focusing on the goals/actions part of the plan. The outcomes of the brainstorming session will provide the basis for the goals and activities in the revised SSAP.

During the discussion, the Working Group members decided to extend the range of the Group to include the Eastern main population, which in practice means inviting China to join the group. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat will discuss extending the SSAP to be a joint AEWA/CMS Action Plan to cover the global population – however, this might not yet be included in this revision process.

Decision: The revised actions and results were adopted by the Working Group and will be incorporated in the revised Action Plan. In addition, the Secretariat will look into the possibility to expand the framework of the Single Species Action Plan to include the Eastern main population of the Lesser White-fronted Goose and report back to the Working Group.

11. Establishment of a Common Monitoring Scheme

The Secretariat presented the proposal to set up a common monitoring scheme for the Western Palearctic populations of the Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Doc. LWfG IWG 2.7*). The set-up of the scheme is meant to be as simple as possible, consisting of the following three parts: 1) identification and monitoring of the species following clear and coordinated guidelines, 2) a network of national ornithologists/field experts between all range states as well as 3) a common database for the insertion of and access to observations.

Peter Sjolte Ranke presented the updated database developed by the Norwegian Ornithological Society for the insertion of Lesser White-fronted Goose sightings on the www.piskulka.net website. In addition, the updated website features an overview of Lesser White-fronted Goose peer-reviewed and grey literature.

Ranke clarified that the database is not yet ready and that sites as well as literature are still being added. Range states were requested to provide any missing information to Tomas Aarvak (tomas@birdlife.no). In addition, Petteri Tolvanen from WWF Finland gave a short presentation on the identification of Lesser White-fronted Geese. Tolvanen also reported that a second identification and monitoring workshop will be organized within the framework of the LIFE+ project in autumn 2013.

Discussion:

Mikander added that information from the Eastern main population will be included in the database. Bulgaria noted that information from the database should also be linked up with the CSN-tool. Greece highlighted the need to agree on and control the insertion of sites. Azerbaijan noted that the rest of the sites need to be inserted. Bulgaria also added that there is a need for control of the observations inserted as anyone who registers can enter data. Ukraine and Romania suggested developing a training kit to assist with the identification and monitoring training. Kazakhstan added that it would be good to receive a cd/dvd with LWfG calls (single bird, flock, breeding bird).

Decision: The proposal to establish a common monitoring scheme (Doc. LWfG IWG 2.7) was adopted. Range states will submit their proposals for national field experts to the Secretariat by the 31. January 2013. The Secretariat will work together with WWF Finland and others to develop a training kit on LWfG identification.

12. Priority Activities

The Working Group split into regional break-up groups to discuss priority activities for the next inter-sessional period (Doc. LWfG IWG 2.6). Mr. Peter Cranswick (WWT) reported back on the priority activities discussed in the regional break-up group for the European flyway and Mr. Maxim Mitropolsky (Uzbekistan) reported back on the priority activities discussed in the regional break-up group for the Western main flyway. The Secretariat requested both group Chairs to submit the prioritized activities to the Secretariat. A clean document will be produced and submitted to the range states for verification (Note: see Annex IV).

Decision: The range states decided on national conservation activities for the Lesser White-fronted Goose to be implemented during the next inter-sessional period as a matter of priority. This priority ranking will be reflected in the revised SSAP.

13. Working Group Website and Workspace

Nina Mikander briefly presented the Working Group website and internal workspace. The internal workspace is set to be the main communication forum for the Working Group in the future. Mikander encouraged all Working Group members to use the workspace actively.

14. Next Meeting

The Secretariat proposed that the next meeting of the Working Group be organized in three years (autumn 2015/winter 2016), instead of two years as defined in the Working Group Terms of Reference. This would allow for the revised SSAP to be adopted at the 6th Meeting of the AEWPA Parties set to take place in June 2015. In addition, it would give range states three years to implement prioritized conservation activities as well as set up the common monitoring scheme. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan expressed an initial interest in hosting the meeting, subject to approval by the respective authorities and available funding. In addition, the Working Group agreed that representatives from China should be invited to the next Working Group meeting.

Decision: The next Working Group meeting will be held in three years' time. The Secretariat will stay in touch with range states interested in hosting the meeting. Experts from China will be invited to attend the next meeting.

15. Any Other Business

Finland suggested that future Meetings of the Working Group focus less on bureaucratic issues and more on concrete conservation planning and activities. Estonia supported the proposal.

16. Summary and Conclusion

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked all the participants for their hard work. He encouraged everyone to remain active and keep in touch via the workspace during the inter-sessional period. He also thanked the Hellenic Ministry of the Environment, the Hellenic Ornithological Society and the Lake Kerkini Management Authority for acting as hosts and helping to organize the meeting. In addition he thanked the AEWA Secretariat for their efforts in preparing and facilitating the meeting.

Annex I. – LWfG IWG2 Decisions Requiring Action

Nr.	Agenda item	Decision	Action
5.1.	Implementation analysis of submitted national reports	An in-depth analysis of the National Reports will be undertaken within the framework of the revision of the SSAP.	- The AEWA Secretariat will liaise with experts from the range states as well as the observer organizations and facilitate a further-reaching analysis of the implementation of the SSAP.
5.2.	Revision of the National Reporting Format	The reporting format will be revised in connection with the revision of the SSAP.	- The AEWA Secretariat will submit a revised reporting format to the Working Group after the finalization of the updated Single Species Action Plan for comments and approval.
7.	Projects Implemented 2011-2012	The AEWA Secretariat will continue to fundraise for LWfG conservation activities in cooperation with the range states.	<p>- The AEWA Secretariat will provide range states with a general format for providing project proposals for fundraising.</p> <p>- Range states will actively provide the Secretariat with proposals for projects in line with the identified priority activities. In addition, range states will try to access national funding for Lesser White-fronted Goose conservation measures.</p>
8.	Critical Site Network	The Working Group decided to establish a list of critical sites for the species as well as a list of sites to be surveyed as a priority.	- The AEWA Secretariat will circulate the list of critical sites suggested by each range state to the Working Group for verification as soon as possible.
10.	Revision of the LWfG SSAP	<p>The revised actions and results were adopted by the Working Group.</p> <p>The Eastern main sub-population of the Lesser White-fronted Goose will be included in the revised SSAP (pending confirmation from the Chinese government).</p>	<p>- The revised actions and results adopted by the Working Group will be incorporated in the revised Action Plan.</p> <p>- The AEWA Secretariat will look into the possibility of expanding the framework of the Single Species Action Plan to include the Eastern main sub-population of the Lesser White-fronted Goose and report back to the Working Group.</p>
11.	Common Monitoring Scheme	The proposal to establish a common monitoring scheme was adopted.	<p>- Range states to submit proposals for national field teams to the Secretariat by the 31. January 2013.</p> <p>- The Secretariat will coordinate work on the development of a training kit on LWfG identification.</p>
12.	Priority Activities	The range states decided on national conservation activities for the Lesser White-fronted Goose to be implemented during the next inter-sessional period as a matter of priority.	<p>- The Secretariat will send a complete list to the IWG for confirmation of the selected activities.</p> <p>- This priority ranking will be reflected in the revised SSAP.</p>
14.	Next Working Group Meeting	The next Working Group meeting will be held in three years' time.	- The Secretariat will stay in touch with range states interested in hosting the meeting (Azerbaijan/

			<p>Kazakhstan).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experts from China will also be invited to attend the next meeting.
15.	Any other business	Future meetings shall focus less on bureaucratic issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More "bureaucratic" issues will be dealt as much as possible via the workspace. - Meeting agendas will include the presentation of concrete conservation activities etc.

Annex II. – List of Designated Critical Sites

COUNTRY	SITE	SEASON	CURRENT ESTIMATE
Azerbaijan	Gizil Agach State Reserve (Golden Tree)	winter	410-715
	Aggol National Park	winter	33-230
	Arraz Water Reserve (Nachevan)	winter	100
<i>Belarus*</i>			
Bulgaria	Shabla Lake Complex	winter	5-20
	Durankulak Lake	winter	5-20
Estonia	Matsalu Bay region	spring staging	30-50
	Silma Nature Reserve	spring staging	30-50
Finland	Oulu region wetlands (especially Säärenperä)	spring staging	50
<i>Germany</i>			
Greece	Evros delta	winter & passage	54-75
	Lake Kerkini	winter & passage	35-69
Hungary	Hortobágy	winter & passage	
Iran			
	Miankaleh Peninsula and Gorgan Bay	winter	5--20
	Bujagh National Park	winter	<5
<i>Iraq</i>			
Kazakhstan	Kulykol-Taldykol Lake System	passage	>1000
	Koybagar-Tyuntyugur Lake System	passage	>1000
	Bolshoy Kak Lake	passage	>1000
	Kazakh Zharkol, Kostanay province	passage	>1000
	Russian Zharkol, Kostanay province	passage	>1000
	Shagly-Teniz Lake, North Kazakhstan province	passage	>1000
	Alva Lake, North Kazakhstan province	passage	>1000
	Kamyshlovo Lake, North Kazakhstan province	passage	>1000
	Zhaltyr Lake, North Kazakhstan province	passage	>1000

	Balykty Lake, North Kazakhstan province	passage	>1000
	Aksuat Lake, North Kazakhstan province	passage	>1000
	Shalkar-Karashatau LAke, Aktobe province	passage	>1000
	Shalkar Lake, Aktobe province	passage	>1000
	Zharsor, Kostanay (51.36440; 62.81942)	passage	>1000
	Aikya, Aktubinskaya (50.92418; 61.58656)	passage	>1000
<i>Lithuania</i>			
<i>Netherlands</i>			
Norway	Inner part of Porsanger fjord (includes Valdak Marshes)	non-breeding	unknown
	Sirbma, Tana municipality, Finnmark county	spring migration	1--10
	Kvaenangsbotn, Troms county	spring staging	1--10
	Iesjav'ri, Finnmark county	breeding	10--20 pairs
<i>Poland</i>			
Romania	Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve and Razim Complex	winter & passage	5-20
	Balta Ialomitei (island in Danube - sort of equal some other sites), Bugeac Lake, Bistreț, Blahnița, Dunăreni Lake, Oltina Lake, Techirghiol Lake, Brăila Small Islands, Eleșteele Jijiei and Miletinului, Strachina Lake, Tașaul-Corbu Lakes, Fundata-Amara Lakes, Iezer Călărași (near Srebărna)	wintering	5-20
	Suhaia	wintering	5-20
Russia	Dvuob'ye	passage	20.000
	Lake Manych-Gudilo	passage	2.000-10.000
	Niya-Yu River valley, the Polar Urals	breeding	30-50 pairs
	Dyupkun Lake, Putorana Plateau	breeding	unknown
<i>Serbia*</i>			
<i>Sweden</i>			
<i>Syria</i>			
Turkey	Evros delta	winter	unknown
Turkmenistan	Kelif-Seyit	winter	250-400
	Durnali	winter	150-300
Ukraine	Syvash Bay	passage	100-500
Uzbekistan	Amudarya river flood land	winter	100-500
	Talimarjan water reservoir and adjoining territories	winter	500-1000

*Currently not members of the Working Group.

Annex III. – Additional sites to be surveyed as a matter of priority

COUNTRY	SITE	SEASON	CURRENT ESTIMATE
Azerbaijan	Shirvan National Park	winter & passage?	
	Samukh Area	winter & passage?	
	Agrichai Water Reservoir	winter & passage?	
<i>Belarus</i>			
<i>Bulgaria</i>			
<i>Estonia</i>			
<i>Finland</i>			
<i>Germany</i>			
<i>Greece</i>			
<i>Hungary</i>			
Iran	Gomishan marshes and Turkoman steppes	winter	5--20
	Hilleh[HELLEH] Protected Area	winter	<5
	Dez river marshes and plains	winter	<5
	Lake Alagol, Lake Ulmagol and Lake Ajigol	winter	5--20
	Dasht-emoghan	winter	<5
	South uromyieh lake	winter	5--20
	Qareh Qeshlagh	winter	5--20
	Fereydoun Kenar & Sorkh rud	winter	<5
	Miandasht Plain	winter	<5
	Arjan & Parishan	winter	unknown
	Horel-azim Wetland (border with Iraq)	winter	unknown
Shadegan Marsh	winter	<5	
<i>Iraq</i>			
<i>Kazakhstan</i>			
<i>Lithuania</i>			
<i>Netherlands</i>			
<i>Norway</i>			
<i>Poland</i>			
<i>Romania</i>			
<i>Russia</i>			
<i>Serbia</i>			
<i>Sweden</i>			
<i>Syria</i>			
<i>Turkey</i>			
<i>Turkmenistan</i>			
<i>Ukraine</i>			
<i>Uzbekistan</i>			

Annex IV. – Prioritized Conservation Activities

RANGE STATE	PRIORITIZED ACTIVITIES	MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION	RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
AZERBAIJAN	Plant lure crops to direct LWfG away from areas where hunting pressure is known to be high and towards refuge zones	Identify places and plant crops in Gyzylagach SNR and Aggol NP	
	Upgrade level of protection from illegal hunting within existing protected areas through training and improved enforcement (European Commission, ALL)	Conducting training for rangers, inspectors and scientific workers of Gyzylagach SNR, Aggol and Shirvan NP, Samukh State Hunting Reserve, Ajinohur Sanctuary and Ara Sanctuaries	
	Develop and adopt Management Plans for Critical Sites with no plans, where appropriate	Develop or adopt MPs for Gyzylagach SNR, Aggol and Shirvan NP, Ajinohur and Araz Sanctuaries, Samukh SH Reserve	
	Mortality caused by hunting is minimized	Winter surveys in Gyzylagach SNR, Aggol and Shirvan NP, Samukh Game Reserve, Ajinohur and Araz Sanctuary, Agrichay w.r.	
	Joint targeted surveys with hunting organizations in critical staging and wintering sites	Identify legal and illegal hunting pressure on LWfG in and around Gyzylagach NR, Aggol and Shirvan NP, Ajinohur and Araz Sanctuaries, Samukh SGR and Agrichay w.r.	
BULGARIA	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for enforcement of hunting legislation and that these resources are deployed to control hunting effectively.	Letter from the LWfG IWG to each country and/or relevant regional authorities; dialogue to specify the time window when hunting can occur (in cooperation with AEWA and national experts, referring to EU directives + propose meetings with national hunting organizations). Letter to national BirdLife association about the need to follow the hunting situation at the key LWfG sites, reporting violations of EU directives. Training for hunters (identification skills etc.)	Ongoing. Discussions being held between BSPB, MoEW and national and local huntings associations about regulation in key SPAs. Patrols by hunting and forestry associations being made in Dobrudzha (for RbGs) under Life project will be applicable to LWfG. Other areas? Training of hunters already happens. Measures about LWfG (eg identification/education materials) to be introduced.
	Ensure that all key sites have a management plan that: a) addresses the		Existing MPs have expired – unclear what procedure/timetable will be for revisions.

	conservation requirements of the LWfG and b) is resourced, monitored and periodically updated.		
	Establish an effective network of coordinated counts in the wintering grounds (or main staging areas) to monitor overall population trends as accurately as possible	Nomination of contact persons from state authorities, protected area management authorities and BirdLife partners, establishment of emailing list and telephone alert network. Nomination of coordinator. (Note: Activity included in LIFE+ project proposal for Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey)	Regular counts made at many wetlands for IWC and geese (as part of Life project, and elsewhere) – though LWfG are only likely to be detected in the fields. Key LWfG sites are covered, but coordination needed between different areas.
ESTONIA	Use combination of satellite tracking and field surveys to locate the key breeding, staging and wintering sites for the Fennoscandian population.	- Ensure continuation of annual spring monitoring, including [if possible] individual recognition.	International task (tagging should be done in NO). Implementation of much of coordinated monitoring scheme should be possible under the state monitoring scheme, except the recognition of individuals – this would need additional effort (eg from NGOs, volunteers)
	Ensure the updating of National Action Plan for protection of LWFG.		Estonian Environmental Board is responsible for updating and compilation of the plan and will submit the updated plan to the Ministry of Environment for approval.
FINLAND	Ensure that all key sites are afforded appropriate protected area status at national and international levels.	- Ensure protection in the entire spring staging area.	Protection of remaining part of key sites still needed (after 15 years) – progress stalled. Letter from IWG could be useful.
	Ensure that all key sites have a management plan that: a) addresses the conservation requirements of the LWfG and b) is resourced, monitored and periodically updated	- Minimize human disturbance at spring staging and breeding sites by updating and enforcing site management plans (Note: Actions aiming to minimize human disturbance are included in the current LIFE+ application. If the application is not successful, alternative funding needs to be found.)	Ongoing for most sites, but see above for Siikajoki, Saarenpera, Savilahti – protection needed first.
	Take measures to minimize predation.	- Being done already, but would be carried out with higher intensity if breeding pairs are found.	Red Fox control ongoing in large areas in Lapland (and would be focused in any new-found breeding areas)
	Use combination of satellite tracking and	- Ensure continuation of annual spring monitoring, including individual recognition.	International task (tagging should be done for NO). FI teams active in surveys

	field surveys to locate the key breeding, staging and wintering sites for the Fennoscandian population.		(both for FSP and WMP).
<i>Germany</i>	-	-	-
GREECE	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for enforcement of hunting legislation and that these resources are deployed to control hunting effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter from the LWfG IWG to each country and/or relevant regional authorities; dialogue to specify the time window when hunting can occur (in cooperation with AEWA and national experts, referring to EU directives + propose meetings with national hunting organizations). - Training for hunters (identification skills etc.) 	<p>LETTER STILL NEEDED – TO IMPROVE COOPERATION BETWEEN NGO, AUTHORITIES AND HUNTERS</p> <p>GR – money from hunting licences 300 game guards employed to enforce hunting GR – booklet on identification skills being produced (details from Cy)</p> <p>Previous Life project proposed that [which?] wardens involved, but wardens didn't have time for LWfG and hunting (Yannis)</p> <p>Wardening effort needs focus in Evros in particular (Marie)</p> <p>Training for hunters underway</p>
	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for identifying the traditional flyway and stop-over sites, and making that flyway safe for the geese	- Co-ordinated counts and networking particularly in Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey.	Underway under Life project
	By 2012/13, ban goose hunting at all key sites for LWfG during the period when LWfG are usually present, given the difficulty of reliably distinguishing goose species in flight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-operation with hunters (local, national, international) - voluntary red-light alert system 	Underway – law amended Need to delineate boundaries of sites – funds needed for signs
	Ensure that all key sites have a management plan that: a) addresses the conservation requirements of the LWfG and b) is resourced, monitored and	- Letter to inform protected area management authorities to specifically include LWfG issues which apply to their jurisdiction in their management plans.	Plans underway under Life project, many completed – but not endorsed Official letter from IWG to ensure LWfG measures are incorporated – to speed up process – would be useful

	periodically updated.		
	Upgrade level of protection from illegal hunting within existing protected areas through training and enforcement.	- Co-operation with hunters, protected area management authorities and local forestry service (activity included in LIFE project proposal)	Action underway through Life project
	Establish an effective network of coordinated counts in the wintering grounds (or main staging areas) to monitor overall population trends as accurately as possible.	Nomination of contact persons from state authorities, protected area management authorities and BirdLife partners, establishment of emailing list and telephone alert network. Nomination of coordinator. (Note: Activity included in LIFE+ project proposal for Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey)	Progressing on schedule in Life project
HUNGARY	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for enforcement of hunting legislation and that these resources are deployed to control hunting effectively.	- Letter from the LWfG IWG to each country and/or relevant regional authorities; dialogue to specify the time window when hunting can occur (in cooperation with AEWA and national experts, referring to EU directives + propose meetings with national hunting organizations). - Letter to national BirdLife association about the need to follow the hunting situation at the key LWfG sites, reporting violations of EU directives. - Training for hunters (identification skills etc.)	Hunting not sorted in western part – letter still useful Letter to BirdLife not needed – situation re hunting understood reasonably Training for hunters – still needed, but struggling for funds. Possible misunderstanding – belief that LWfG are ‘easy to identify’. Currently, no hunting main site.
	Establish an effective network of coordinated counts in the wintering grounds (or main staging areas) to monitor overall population trends as accurately as possible.	- Nomination of contact persons from state authorities, protected area management authorities and BirdLife partners, establishment of emailing list and telephone alert network. Nomination of coordinator.	Counts are underway – at key sites works well, and by volunteers at other sites. Small amount of funding needed to repair observation towers. [ALSO – national action plan is underway, will be published in 2014]
IR IRAN	Plant lure crops to direct LWfG away from areas where hunting pressure is known to be high and towards refuge zones	- Specially at key sites up damaged mean kale protected area	
	Upgrade level of protection from illegal hunting within existing protected areas through training and improved enforcement (European Commission, ALL)	- Training for Damga and Meankale Protected Areas workers	
	Provide compensation for farmers for	- Compensate damage to farmers on lands around Damga, mean kale and other relevant sites	

	goose grazing		
	Undertake satellite tracking and field surveys	- Field survey to suspected areas for LWFG (Southern Part of Iran: Meangeran wetland and adjacent areas) To find out LWFG movement In order to protecting during along the migration routes (to survey areas in Khuzestan and Ilam provinces).	
<i>Iraq</i>	-	-	-
KAZAKHSTAN	Population size and trend estimates of the WMP are established and regularly monitored	Intensive and regular monitoring in Kazakhstan	
	Significance of sites identified through satellite tracking is verified	Field survey for limited period of time	
	Modify timing of hunting to avoid the time of LWfG presence	Hunter period on the key site will be remove according to main part of LWFG main part of population in migration period	
	Plant lure crops to direct LWfG away from areas where hunting pressure is known to be high and towards refuge zones		
	Existence or absence of new staging areas is confirmed	Participation on satellite tracking and field survey	
	Magnitude of hunting impact, incl. at critical sites (WMP) is identified	Joint targets survey in critical staging and wintering site	
<i>Lithuania</i>	-	-	
<i>Netherlands</i>	-	-	
NORWAY	Ensure that all key sites are afforded appropriate protected area status at national and international levels.	- Ensure that this is the case for the breeding area.	Ongoing – LWfG are priority species under the NO Biodiversity Act – allows most important sites for the species to be protected. But two most important sites were not included. Letter from AEWA to express concern about lack of progress to designate key

			sites. Other ideas for strong external pressure would help.
	Ensure that all key sites have a management plan that: a) addresses the conservation requirements of the LWfG and b) is resourced, monitored and periodically updated.	- Develop and implement an appropriate management plan for the breeding and staging areas.	Needed – stalled under protected status in place Staging areas that are protected don't have a plan. Include in letter to Government? Secondary priority to ensuring protection Area is owned by government (complication of needing to respect wishes of local communities, esp Samii). Lack of continuity of staff in local authorities is not helping progress! (has been continuing for 30 years...). Responsibility could be given to central (not regional) government. [liaise with Secretariat over precise contents of letter to target effectively]
	Avoid infrastructure development and other sources of human disturbance liable to have an adverse impact on known and potential core breeding areas.	- Take measures to avoid power line construction, fishing, and reindeer herding etc. in the breeding area. [add also staging areas and movement corridors between staging and breeding areas. Proposal for large energy power lines in this area]	External pressure needed. Consider raising IRP is best way forward to provide pressure. (Option to be buried and take a different route – deemed acceptable for LWfG – was not chosen).
	Take measures to minimize predation.	- Already being carried out – is considered essential!	Continuing, working well.
	Take measures to eliminate waterbird hunting on the breeding grounds.	- Ban spring hunting of waterfowl (ducks) in the breeding area in the one municipality where it is currently still allowed. - Letter from AEWA to Norway concerning this.	Letter from AEWA (following text of AEWA action plan). Letter urgently to fit with national planning process to set permanent position. [key point in AEWA letter is that despite large efforts elsewhere in flyway, the key breeding grounds lacks protection. Flag also that is priority species for NO. Is a campaign locally useful? Something by NOF? Sammi rights in Finnmark are a key issue. Pressure to politicians

<i>Poland</i>	-	-	
ROMANIA	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for enforcement of hunting legislation and that these resources are deployed to control hunting effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter from the LWfG IWG to each country and/or relevant regional authorities; dialogue to specify the time window when hunting can occur (in cooperation with AEWA and national experts, referring to EU directives + propose meetings with national hunting organizations). - Letter to national BirdLife association about the need to follow the hunting situation at the key LWfG sites, reporting violations of EU directives. - Training for hunters (identification skills etc.) 	<p>Discussions between the Local Protection Environment Agencies (LEPAs) and the hunting associations about the regulation in the key SPAs are needed.</p> <p>Training of hunters for species identification and education materials to be discussed with the administrators of SPAs, and the Romanian Ornithological Society experts.</p>
	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for identifying the traditional flyway and stop-over sites, and making that flyway safe for the geese.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surveys needed to identify changing wintering sites. - Use of new monitoring techniques (digiscoping)? 	<p>Improve the collaboration between the NGOs, LEPAs, NEPA and the administrators of the natural protected areas</p> <p>Increase the budget for species conservation</p>
	Ensure that all key sites have a management plan that: a) addresses the conservation requirements of the LWfG and b) is resourced, monitored and periodically updated.		<p>Approve the management plans for the SPAs where the LWfG were identified.</p> <p>Coordination of key LWfG sites is necessary</p>
	Establish an effective network of coordinated counts in the wintering grounds (or main staging areas) to monitor overall population trends as accurately as possible.	Nomination of contact persons from state authorities, protected area management authorities and BirdLife partners, establishment of emailing list and telephone alert network. Nomination of coordinator.	The coordinated counts is established by the Romanian Ornithological Society experts.
RUSSIA	Survey areas of former LWfG breeding in Russia	- Carry out survey and satellite tracking in European part of Russia and Gydan Peninsula.	
	Magnitude of hunting impact including at critical sites (WMP) is identified	Collect information on hunting pressure in Ob River Valley and Manych-Gudilo area.	
	Modify timing of hunting to avoid the time of LWfG presence	Agree with local authorities and local hunters association on changing hunting period in CSA at Manych-Gudilo Lake and Dvuobye	
	To reduce mortality rates	- Create and support plant lure crops into hunting free zone of Manych-Gudilo Nature Reserve	

	The species is not hunted in the breeding areas.	To negotiate with responsible local authorities on stop spring hunting in the vicinity of LWfG breeding areas situated in the east of Bolshezemelskaya tundra and Southern Yamal	
<i>Sweden</i>	-	-	-
<i>Syria</i>	-	-	-
TURKEY	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for enforcement of hunting legislation and that these resources are deployed to control hunting effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter from the LWfG IWG to each country and/or relevant regional authorities; dialogue to specify the time window when hunting can occur (in cooperation with AEWA and national experts, referring to EU directives + propose meetings with national hunting organizations). - Letter to national BirdLife association about the need to follow the hunting situation at the key LWfG sites, reporting violations of EU directives. - Training for hunters (identification skills etc.) 	<p>Letter from AEWA to ministry still useful</p> <p>Letter about hunting still useful (still undertaken illegally)</p> <p>Training for hunters done by ministry – need to include LWfG aspects</p>
	Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for identifying the traditional flyway and stop-over sites, and making that flyway safe for the geese.	Co-ordinated counts and networking particularly in Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey.	Evros delta needs coverage – contacts and funds needed
	Upgrade level of protection from illegal hunting within existing protected areas through training and improved enforcement.		Gendarmes are contacted when happens. But more enforcement needed – needed in Evros
	Ensure that all key sites for Lesser White-fronted Goose have a management plan that: (a) addresses the conservation requirements of Lesser White-fronted Goose and (b) is resourced, implemented, monitored and periodically updated.		MP needed for Evros – Ministry should prepare. (Need to clarify how to achieve this.)
	Assess the hunting pressure at key sites.		Unclear – activity still needed
	Establish an effective network of	Nomination of contact persons from state authorities, protected area management authorities and BirdLife	Not done – volunteer approach is the most likely to succeed

	coordinated counts in the wintering grounds (or main staging areas) to monitor overall population trends as accurately as possible	partners, establishment of emailing list and telephone alert network. Nomination of coordinator. (Note: Activity included in LIFE+ project proposal for Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey)	
TURKMENISTAN	By 2018, ban goose hunting, in the absence of other feasible protection alternatives, at all critical sites for LWfG during the period when LWfG is usually present, given the difficulty of reliably distinguishing goose species in flight	To submit activities on banning of goose hunting with Ministry of Nature protection of Turkmenistan and hunters unions approval	
	Plant lure crops to direct LWfG away from areas where hunting pressure is known to be high and towards refuge zones	Indicate potential sites and prove importance and redirect to ministry of agriculture	
	Intensive and regular monitoring	Designate under domestic legislation	
	To identify new wintering areas and verify significance of sites	Undertake fields surveys during wintering period	
	Confirm existence or absence of new staging areas	Undertake fields surveys	
UKRAINE	Inventory of important\critical sites (satellite tracking, staging areas field surveys)	- field surveys in autumn and winter time (at least 3 times) per year - validation of staging areas recognized by satellite tracking	
	Training hunters and monitoring participants in field identification of LWfG	- analysis legal regulations and current status of hunters training in the country - translation of Hunting Charter and make it accessible to hunting associations - workshop on implementation of HC in practice - prepare training materials into Ukrainian and conduct series of trainings	
	Assess hunting influence (hunting bag, areas free from hunting)	- collecting of data on hunting bag (pilot project) - analysis of game reserves borders and existence of free of hunting places	
	Improvement control for pesticides using for rodents control	- analysis of current influence of pest control on migratory and wintering birds, incl. list of pesticides, rate of birds mortality, hot areas where pesticides is most frequently used	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information materials - develop of network of observers who can monitor situation at local level 	
	Informational complain and other public awareness activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - publication in mass-media - update information on web-site on LWfG 	
UZBEKISTAN	To reduce mortality caused by hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are allocated for control and manage hunting effectively and sustainably - By 2018, ban goose hunting, in the absence of other feasible protection alternatives, at all critical sites for LWfG during the period when LWfG is usually present, given the difficulty of reliably distinguishing goose species in flight - Implement obligatory training as outlined by the Hunting Charter of the Bern Convention (Nov 2007) for hunters particularly in Eastern European countries (signatories to the Bern Convention, European Commission) 	
	To afford appropriate protection status for all critical sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delineate all critical sites - Designate under domestic legislation - Designate under international frameworks (N2K, Ramsar) 	
	To prepare management plan for critical sites with the aim of LWfG conservation	Develop and adopt MPs for CRSs with no plans, where appropriate	
	To identify new staging and wintering areas and verify significance of sites	Undertake fields surveys during migration and wintering period	
	To identify magnitude of hunting impact	Joint targeted surveys with hunting organizations in critical staging and wintering sites	