

AEWA - Championing Sustainable Harvest of Waterbirds within the African-Eurasian Region

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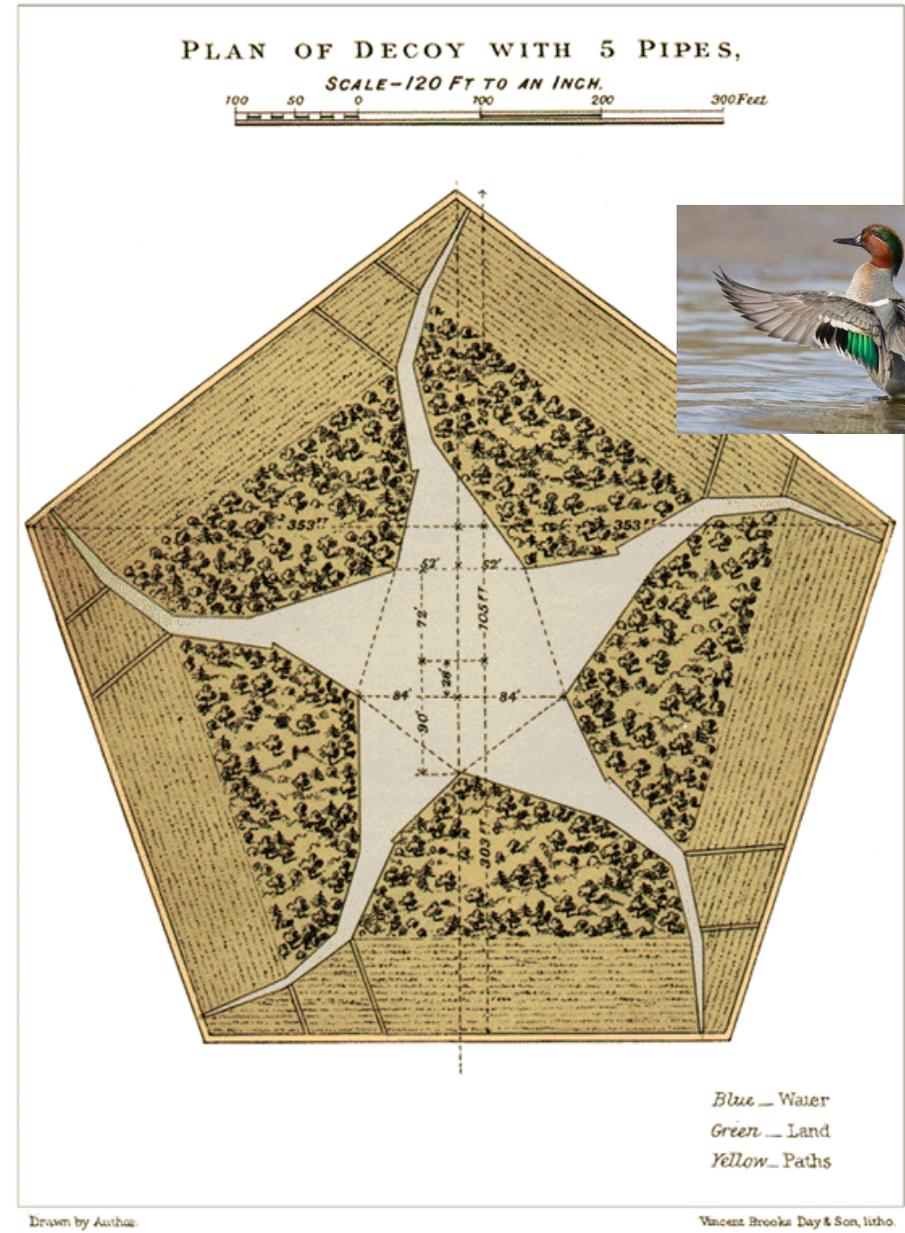
Chairman of the Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group of
Wetlands International



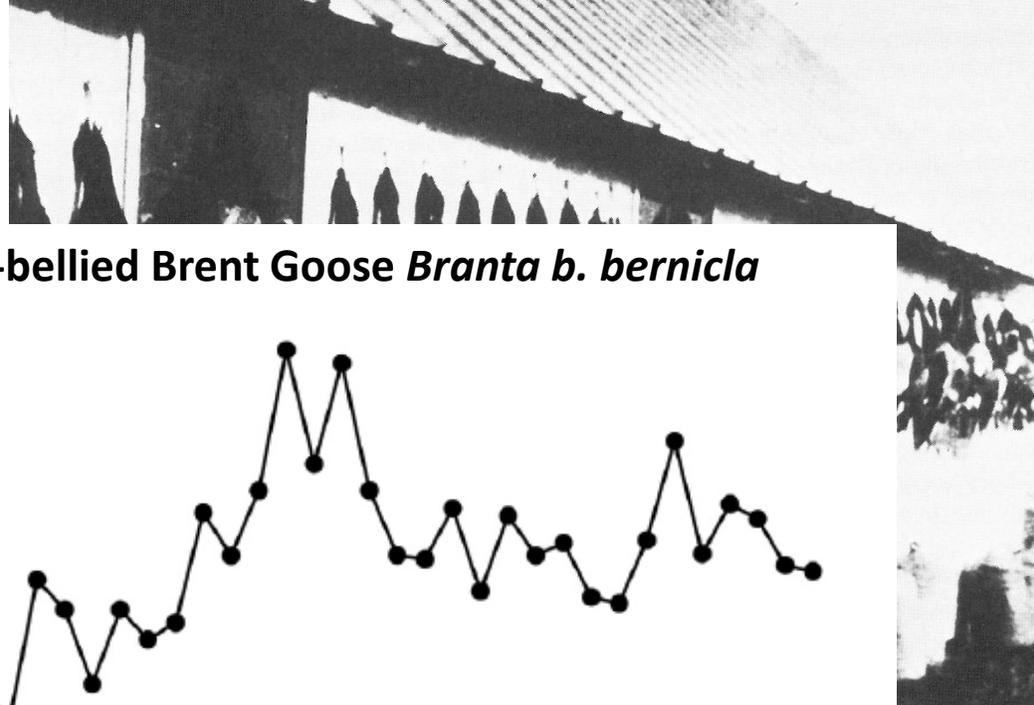


Storå, N. Mass capture of waterfowl in Northern Eurasia.
Åbo Akademi, Åbo (1968)

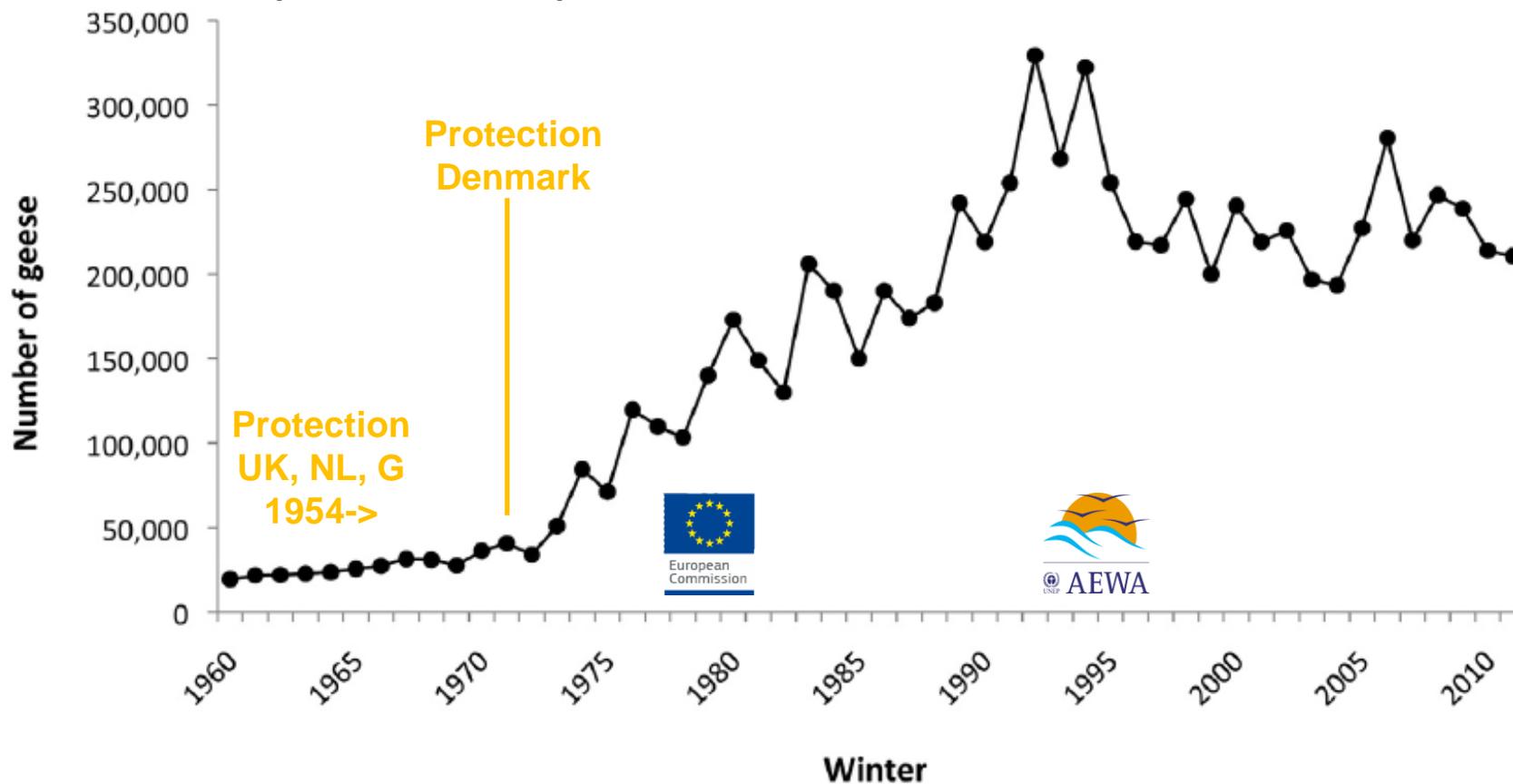
Waterbird harvesting has a long history



Ralph Payne-Gallwey's Book of Duck Decoys (1886)

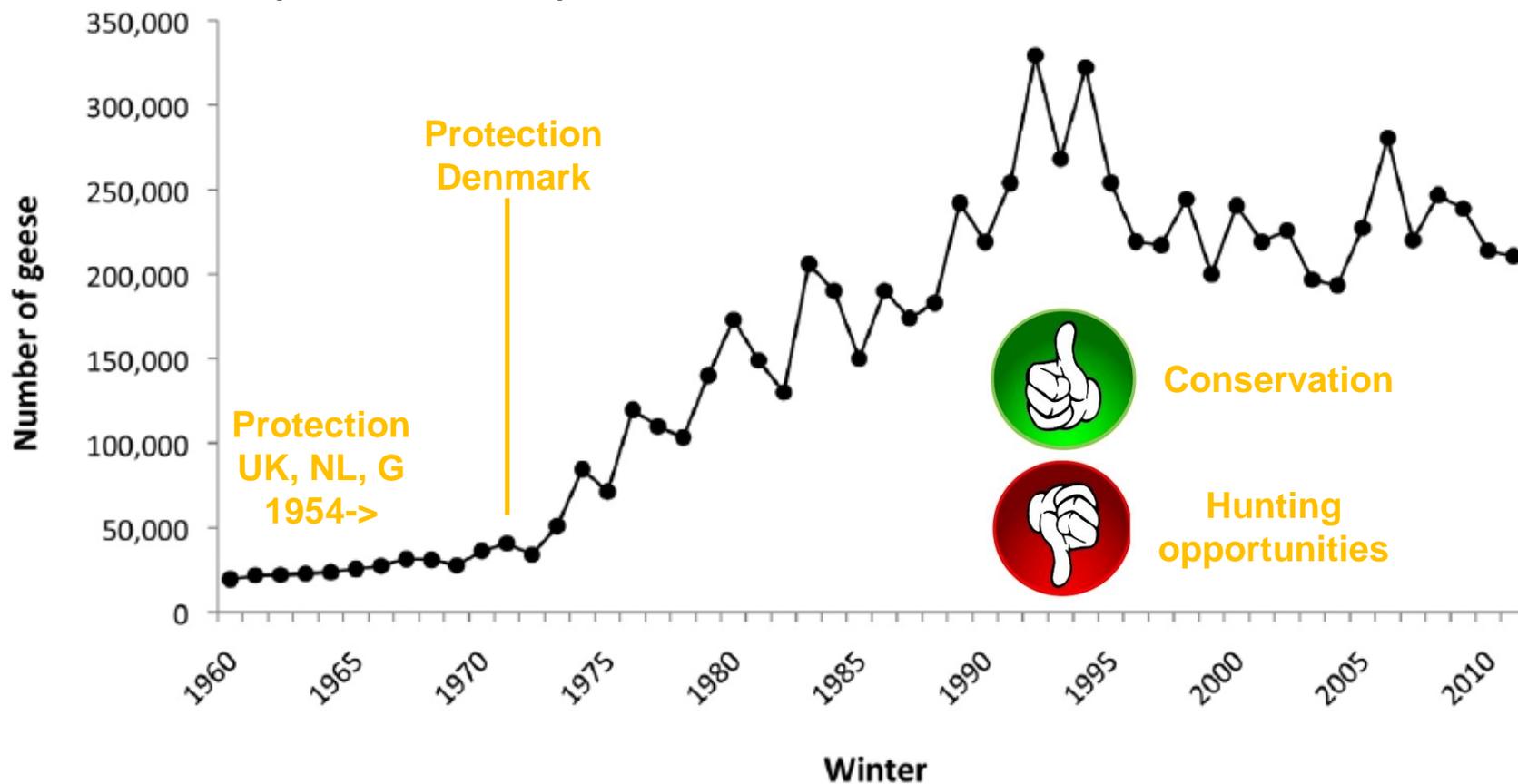


Population development Dark-bellied Brent Goose *Branta b. bernicla*





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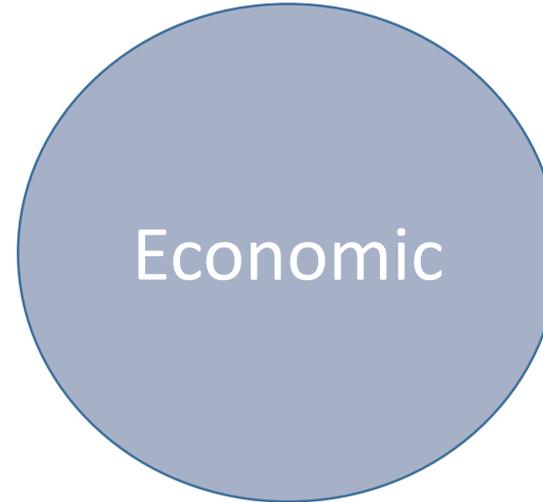
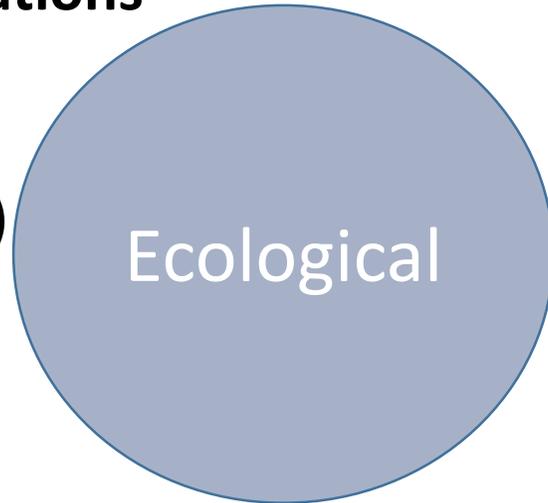
AEWA – THE framework to make migratory waterbird harvest management succeed

- THE flyway instrument
- Goes all the way from policy to implementation on the ground
- Is flexible
- Provides guidance and training
- Recognises the importance of monitoring and research
- Recognises the importance of working with partners
- Takes a holistic approach to sustainability
- Recognises the importance of a participatory approach
- BUT: still a long way to go!

Sustainability of harvest

Impacts on populations

- Direct impact
- Disturbance
- Poisoning (lead)

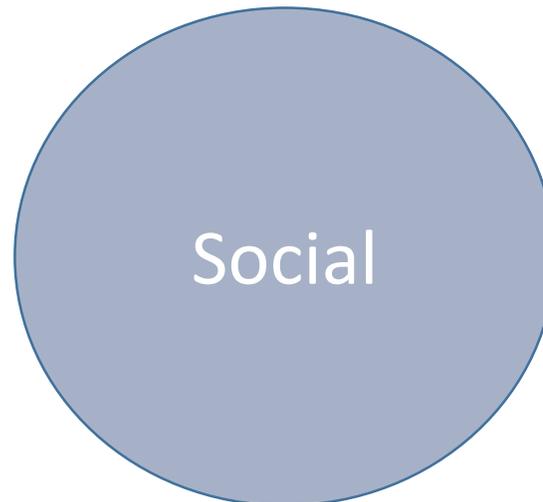


Role of harvesting

- Support of livelihood
- Market sale
- Recreation
- Habitat management
- Management tool
- Economic benefits

Ethical concerns

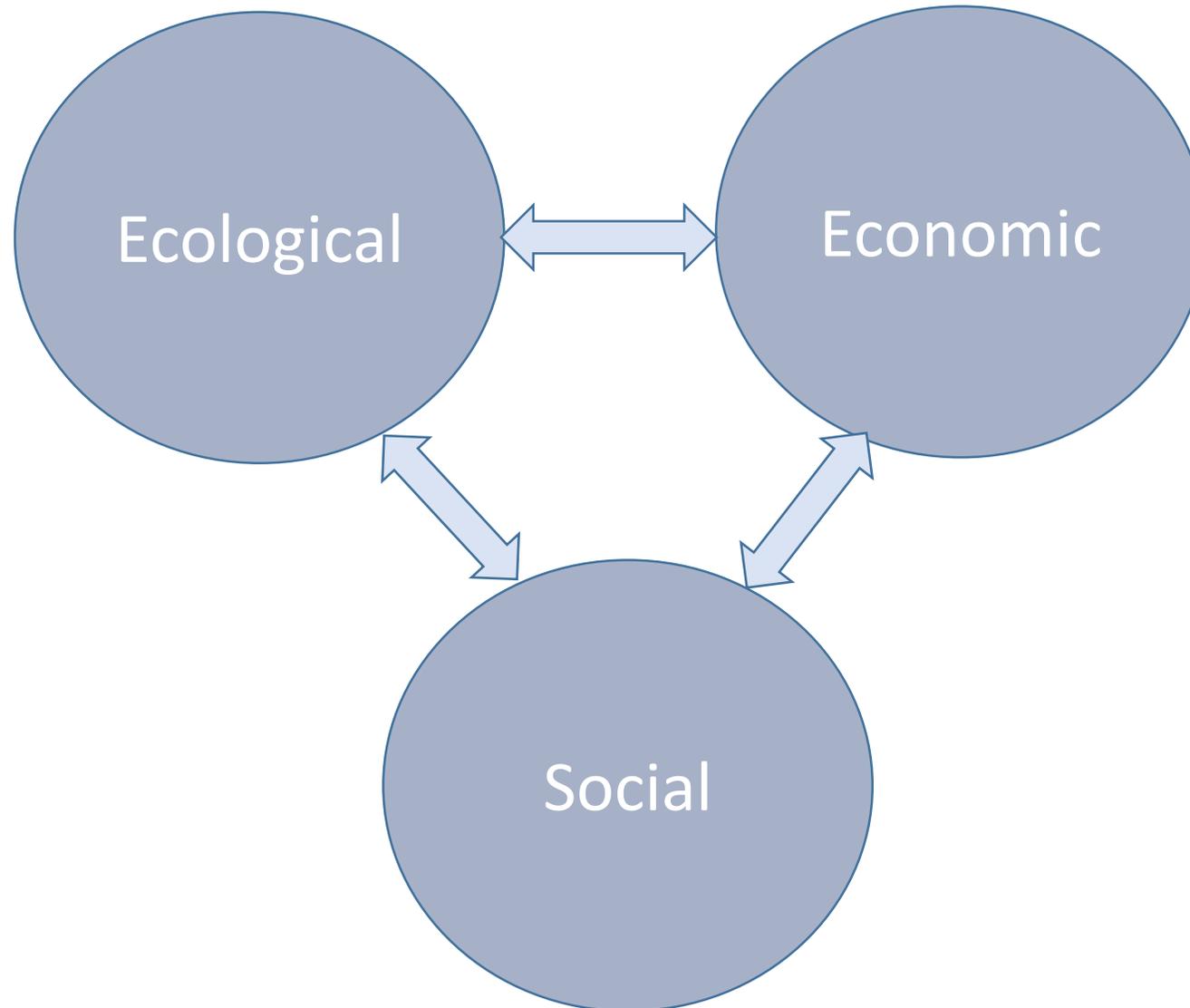
- Avoid suffering by game
- Illegal shooting
- Noise / safety



Cultural values

- Identity
- Transfer of knowledge
- Training

Sustainability of harvest



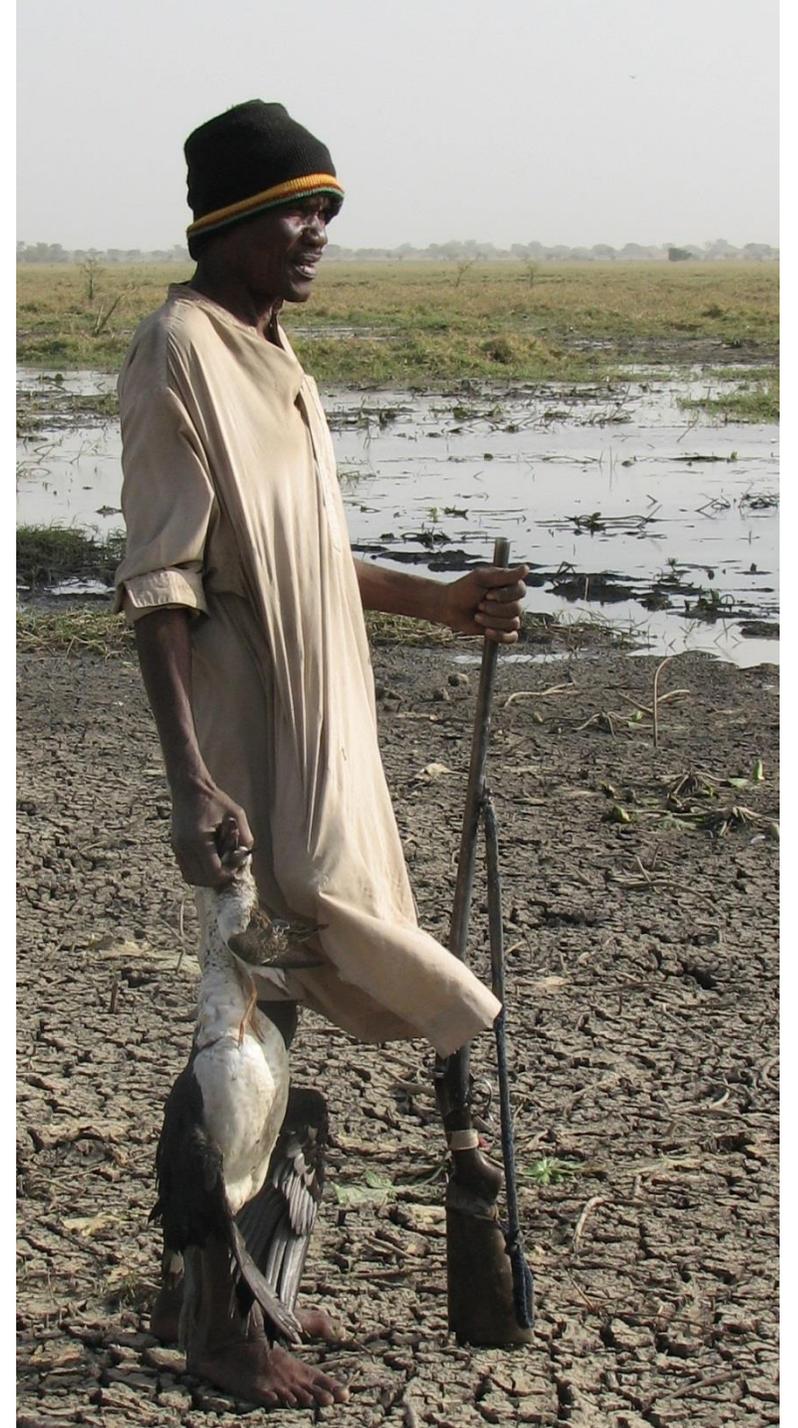
Understanding modes and motivations for harvesting is essential for achieving sustainability

Varies greatly across the AEWA-region and includes several non-exclusive purposes:

- Subsistence
- Support of livelihood
- Shooting for market sale
- Recreation / sport
- Contribution to management







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Principles of sustainable harvesting (in ecological terms)

Depends on:

- Management objectives that are congruent with the renewal capacity of the resource
- Ability to effectively regulate harvest
- Understanding of the biological system
- Understanding of responses to intrinsic (density dependent) and extrinsic (environment, harvest) factors



Information needs to ensure ecological sustainability of harvest

$$N_{t+1} = N_t + N_t r_{\max} \left[1 - \left(\frac{N_t}{K} \right)^\theta \right] - h_t N_t \quad h_{MSY} = r \frac{\theta}{(\theta + 1)}, \quad H_{MSY} = rK \frac{\theta}{(\theta + 1)^{(\theta + 1)/\theta}}$$

Under circumstances with poor demographic information (counts for the vast majority of populations), minimum data requirement is:

- Delineation of populations (and emigration/immigration rates)
- Population size
- Population growth rate
- Form of density dependence (is harvest additive or compensated?)
- Harvest at flyway level

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Provided by IWC
and research
projects

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■ Harvest at flyway level

Country level
No international data collation

Conclusion: with few exceptions it is not possible to assess the ecological sustainability of harvest in the AEWA region

Risky business:

In the EU, 42% of huntable populations of waterbirds (n=83) are in decline

As long as the sustainability of harvest cannot be evaluated, a prudent approach (precautionary principle) may be to ban hunting

We can do better!

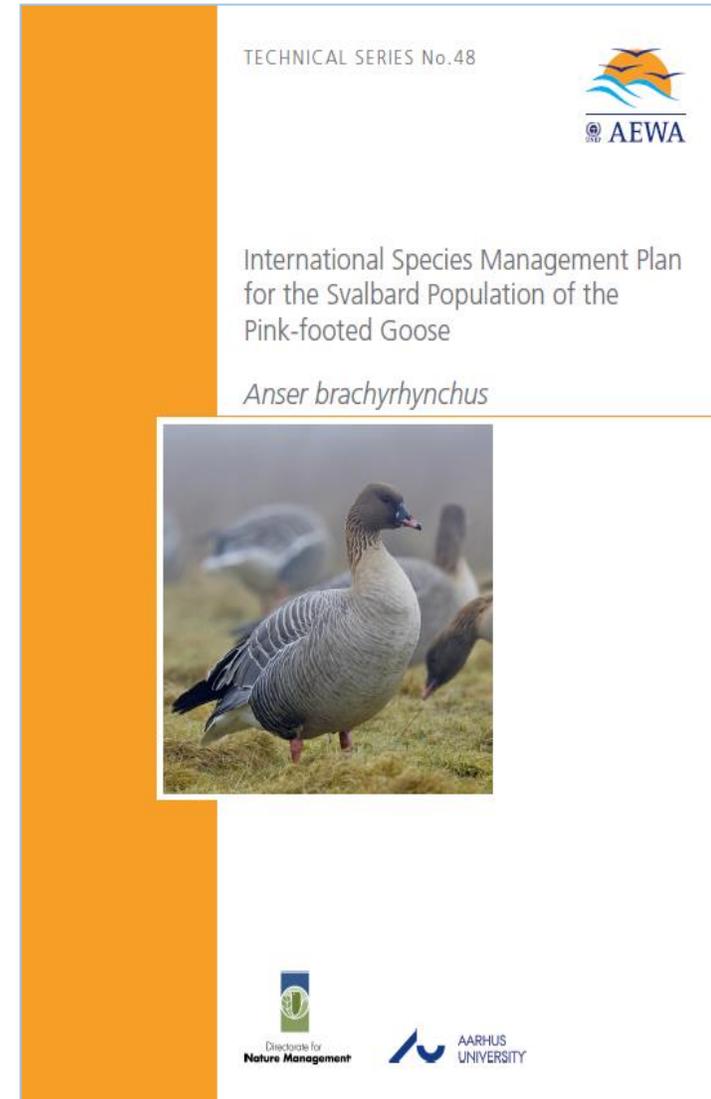
- It's in the interest of conservation
- It's in the interest of the communities harvesting waterbirds



Adaptive management: a structured and proactive way forward for flyway-based harvest management

First AEWA initiative in place (and more in the pipeline)

- Engage stakeholders at all governance levels
- Agreement on clear management objectives
- Internationally agreed actions
- Predicting consequences of actions
- Monitoring, evaluation, adjustment of actions
- Learning while taking action (institutional & social learning)
- Reducing uncertainties and risks
- Building trust
- Securing buy-in



20th Anniversary of AEWA

Making Flyway Conservation Happen

9 November 2015

Bonn, Germany

Congratulations with the first 20 years - Keep up the good work!

Thanks to the following photographers for providing pictures:

Bakary Kone

Carsten Egevang

Magnus Elander

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B. Trolliet

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