



Goose Management Group Terms of Reference

Revised Draft May 2012 (2)

BACKGROUND

The proper management of geese is an issue of increasing relevance in the Wadden Sea Region due to increasing numbers of geese and improved cropping systems favored by geese. On the one hand geese are a natural part of the Wadden Sea and the Wadden Sea Region, and are a typical element of the biodiversity for which the Wadden Sea states have an international responsibility. They also constitute an important touristic attraction.

On the other hand, some goose species cause increasing damage to farmlands, while current management schemes for geese are highly variable between countries and liable to further improvement and harmonization.

A Goose Management Group set up under the Wadden Sea Forum (WSF) with the participation of representatives of national and regional authorities and relevant stakeholders elaborated a report on Goose Management for the Wadden Sea Region, delivered to the 11th Wadden Sea Conference (TGC). The report contains an extensive analysis of the development of relevant goose populations and the national management schemes in place. Further the report encompasses an extensive catalogue of management recommendations and guidance for a Wadden Sea Region wide management.

The Sylt Declaration welcomed specifically the WSF goose management guidance and the ministers declared their willingness to support the development of a Goose Management Plan in cooperation with relevant authorities, to achieve a balanced management to accommodate geese in the Wadden Sea region.

From the WSF report, delivered to the 2010 Wadden Sea Conference, it becomes clear however that the elaboration of a concrete Goose Management Plan is a huge challenge and may not be possible at a level of detail, required for a management plan. It is therefore more realistic to elaborate a plan which is a framework scheme on a strategic level, similar to the 2010 report, but with integration of more concrete management measures and defined responsibilities.

In the beginning of 2012, the WSF initiated an exploratory meeting to discuss the feasibility of elaborating a draft strategic framework goose management scheme. It was agreed, to re-establish a Goose Management Group with representatives of farmer organizations, regional authorities, scientists and NGO's. The new GMG will

resume work in April 2012 and intends to elaborate a strategic goose management framework scheme to be forwarded for decision to the 12th TGC.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Goose Management Group acts under the responsibility of the Wadden Sea Forum (WSF).

COMPOSITION

The Goose Management Group will consist of representatives of the responsible administrations, of the agricultural sector, nature and environment NGO's and goose experts. The group members contribute on a voluntary basis, respectively the national/regional governments ensure that the experts will contribute sufficiently. The secretarial work will be carried out by the Wadden Sea Forum Secretariat.

TASKS

1. To develop a goose management framework scheme to accommodate geese in the Wadden Sea Region, based upon the results of the 2010 GMG-report and in particular the following premises
 - a. the positive use of the existing national and international regulations, in particular the framework regulations of the EU;
 - b. the recognition of geese as a valued and natural asset of the Wadden Sea Region and the international obligation to accommodate the populations;
 - c. the elaboration of an inventory of the geese populations in the Wadden Sea Region, the damage caused by the geese and the existing compensation schemes;
 - d. the delivery of concrete proposals and advice for the designation of Go-areas and No-go areas in a trilateral framework, taking into account compensation and management schemes to be integrated in agricultural production;
 - e. the development of a concrete action plan, including responsibilities, to be adopted and implemented in cooperation with the national governments;
 - f. the aim of initiating a further management project with applied examples to be co-financed by EU-programs;
 - g. the relevance of a framework to be considered and applied in a wider integrated coastal management framework.
2. To provide a platform for knowledge and information exchange.
3. To report on request to the WSF plenary and WSB meetings or other relevant groups.

TIMETABLE

The work of the Goose Management Group will start as soon as possible after the adoption of the Terms of Reference. The draft final report, or an interim report, shall be submitted to the WSF in autumn 2013.

A goose management framework scheme shall be forwarded for decision to the 12th TGC in February 2014.