

International AEWA Single Species Action-Planning Workshop for the management of Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser f. fabalis*)

Population size, trend , distribution, threats, hunting, management,
conservation status and possible actions in
ESTONIA



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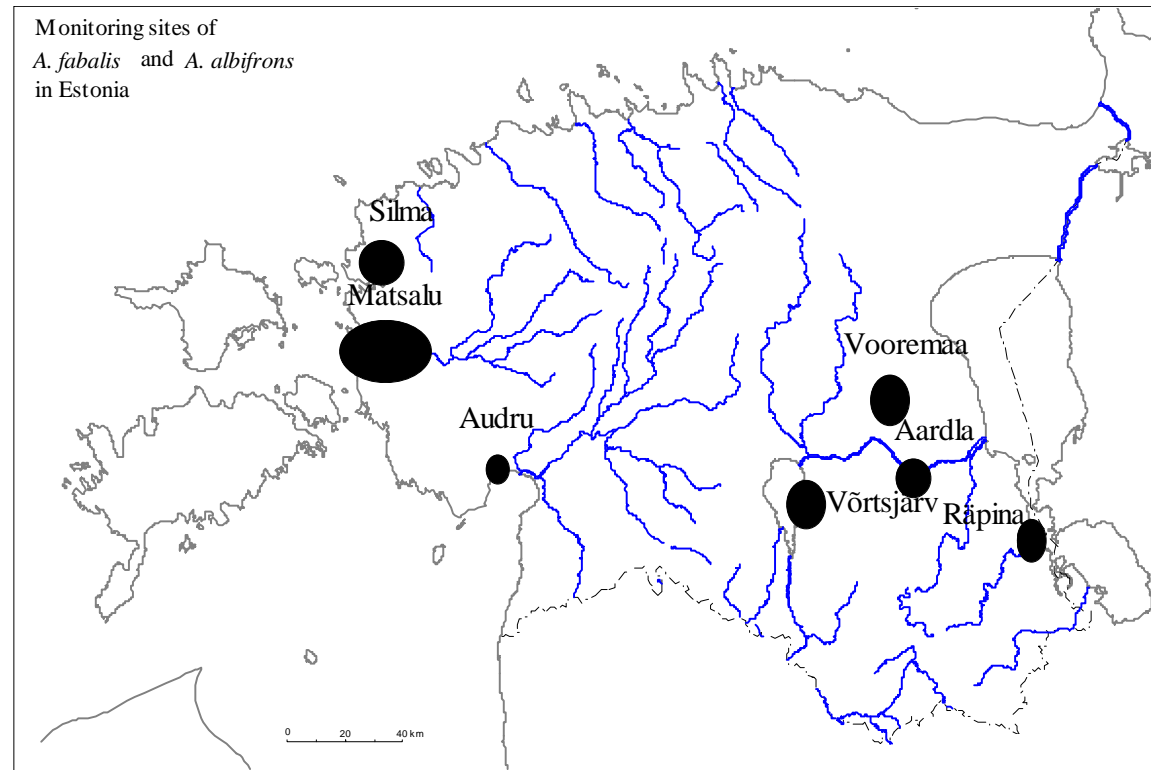


Population

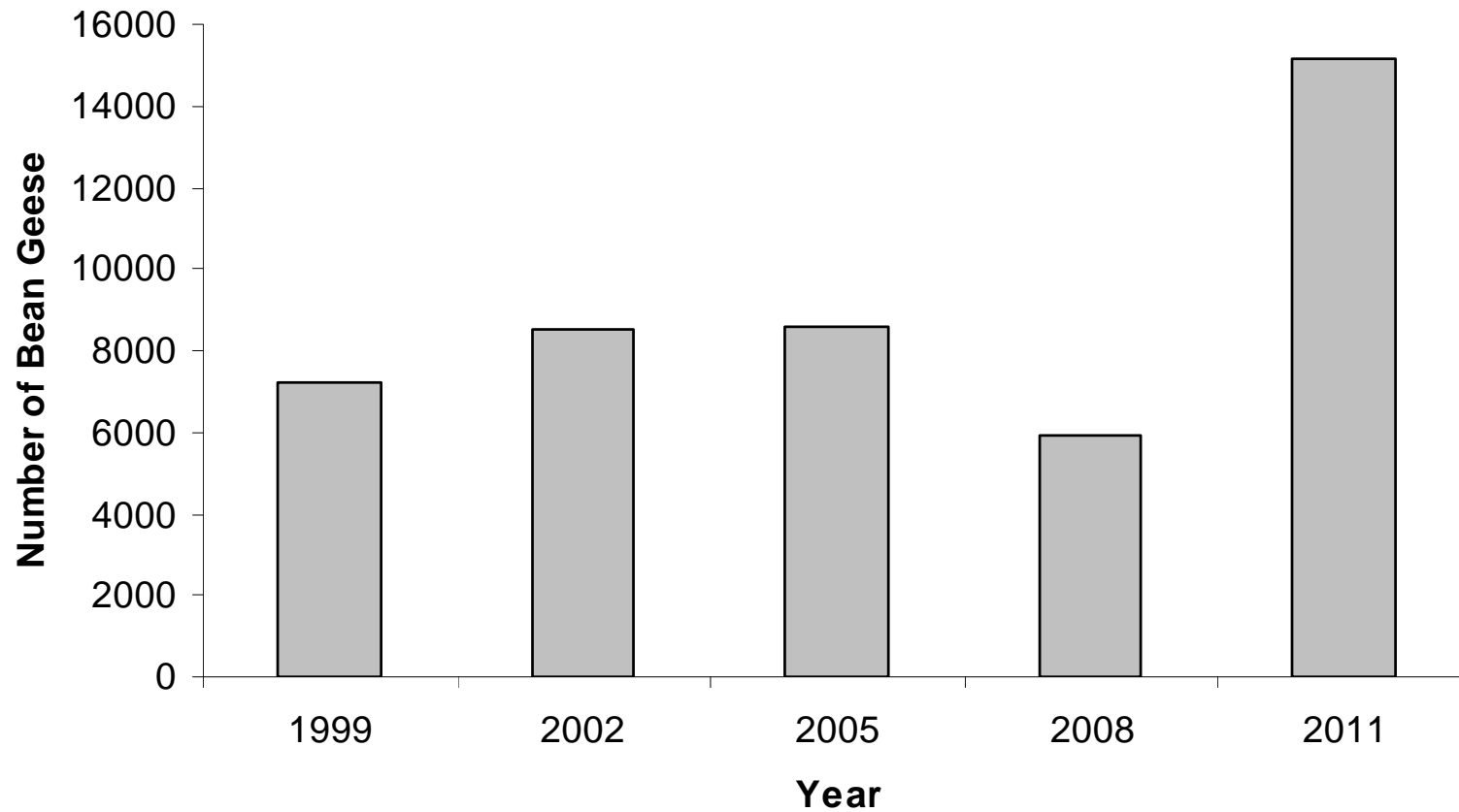
- Both subspecies of Bean Goose, *Anser fabalis fabalis* and *Anser f. rossicus* staging in Estonia during spring and autumn migration (Leibak *et al.* 1994).
- According the ringing data 1/3 of Bean Geese staging in Estonia belongs to nominate race *A.f. fabalis* and 2/3 are *A.f. rossicus* (Burgers *et al.* 1991).
- The number of staging Bean Geese counted in permanent monitoring sites have been 9000-18000 individuals in spring during the period 2002-2011 (Leito 2011). The number of staging Bean Geese depends much more on weather conditions during autumn migration.

Trend of Bean Goose in Estonia

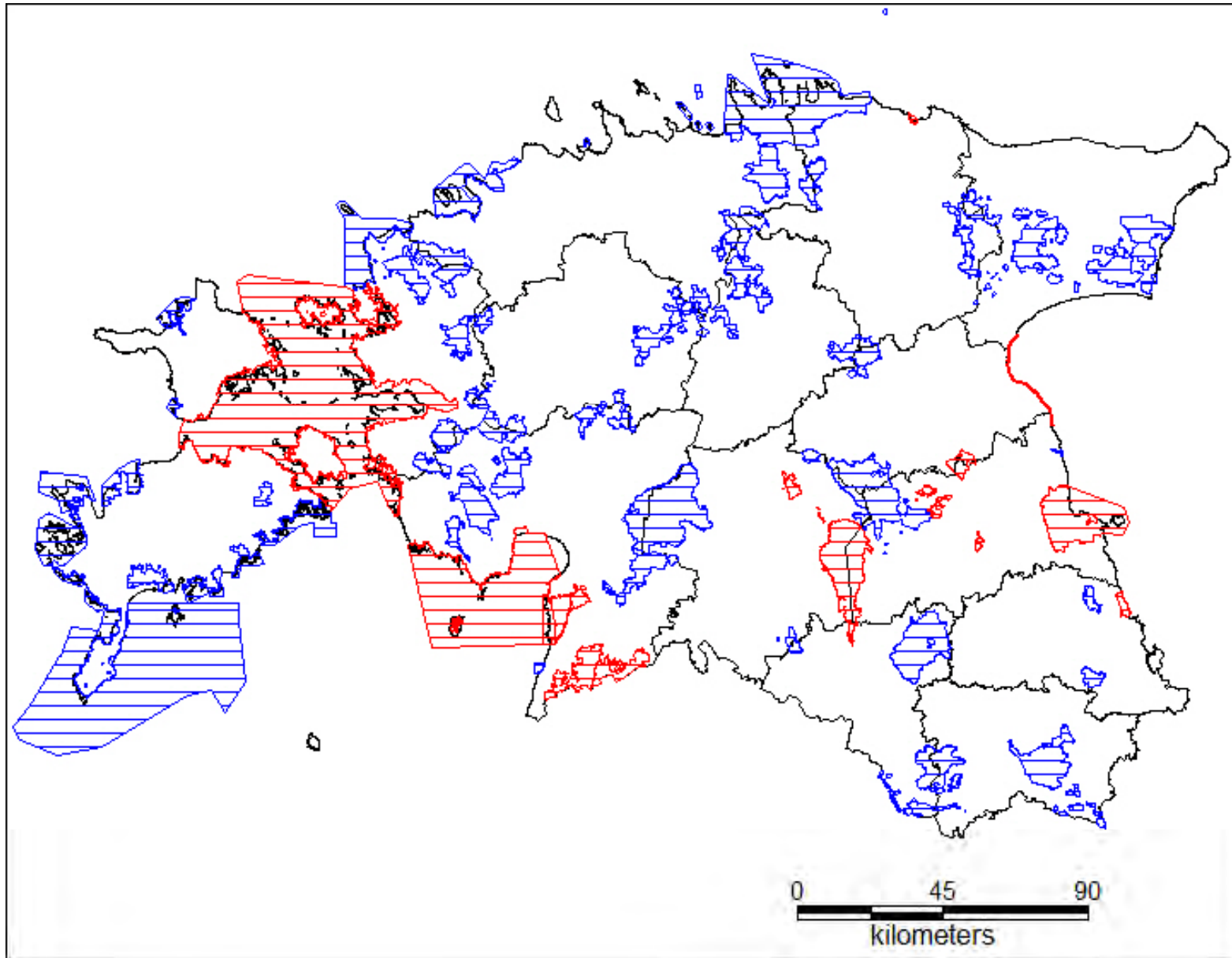
(both subspecies considered)



- Monitoring sites of Bean Goose and White-fronted Goose in Estonia (Leito 2011).



- Number of staging Bean Geese in monitoring sites in eastern Estonia 1999-2011 (Leito 2011).



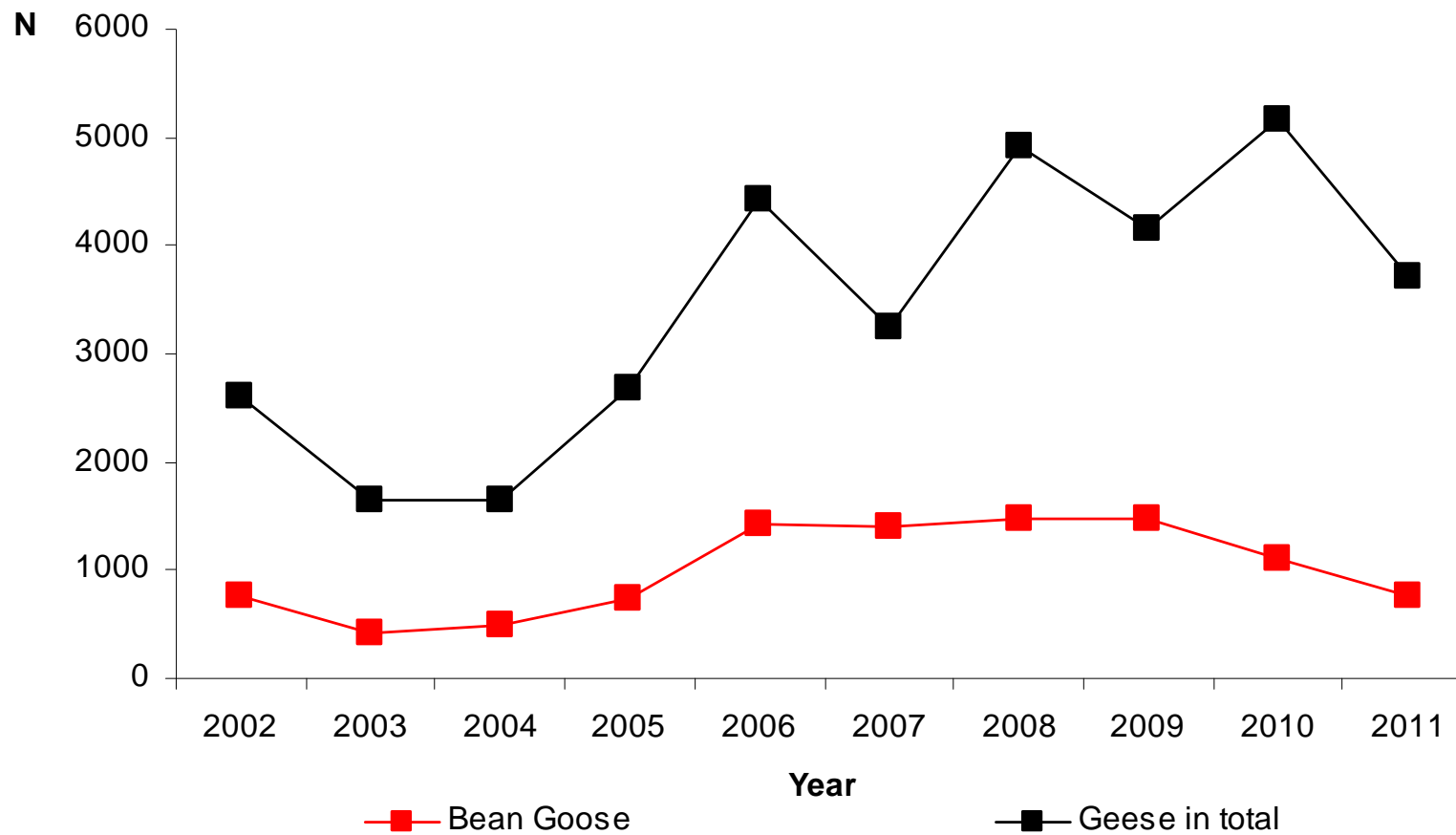
- IBAs in Estonia and most important roosting sites of Bean Geese (in red).

Threats to the Taiga Bean Goose in Estonia

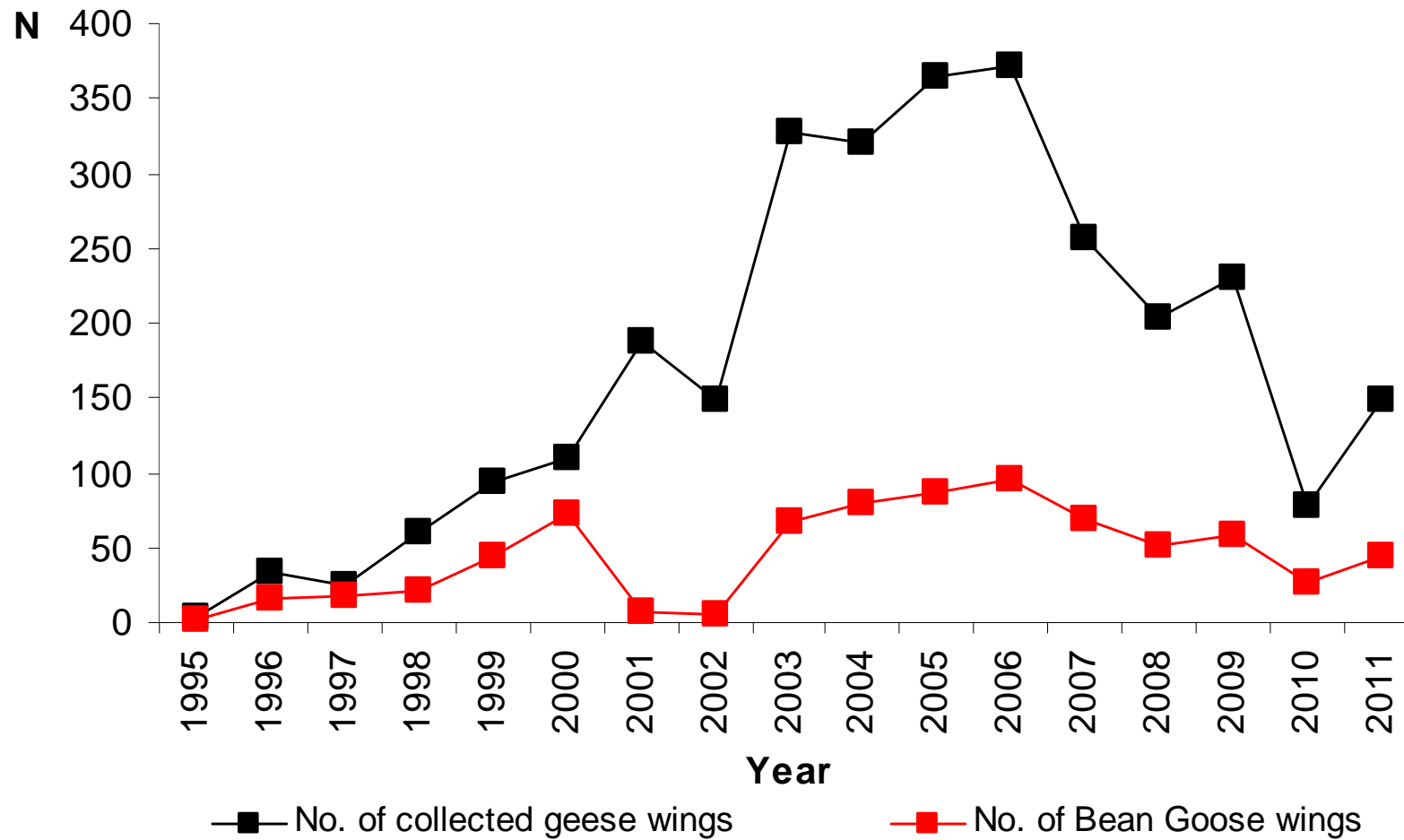
- Not known:
 - negative is that subspecies are mostly not separated;
 - positive is that most important roosting sites of Bean Goose are protected.
- Only threats which can have impact is biased geese hunting bag: from amongst 926 collected geese wings (i.e. 4,1% of totally hunted geese) belonged 36% to juveniles and 64% to adults during periods 2007-2008 and 2010-2012. But geese are long-living species and low survival rate of adults have strong impact to the population trend.

Hunting and management

- Bean Goose is a game species in Estonia.
- The hunting season for geese lasts from September 10th - November 30th, i.e. 82 days, therefrom:
 - in mainland from September 10th - October 31th, i.e. 52 days;
 - on sea and on Narva reservoir, Võrtsjärv lake, Peipsi and Pihkva lake from September 10th - November 30th, i.e. 82 days.
- Average annual geese hunting bag have been 4276 individuals (data 2006-2011).
- On average 1275 Bean Goose are shot annually in Estonia (data 2006-2011).



- Annual hunting bag of geese and number of Bean Geese (red line) in Estonia.



- Number of Bean Geese wings among collected geese wings during hunting seasons.

The Taiga Bean Goose - the local community and the economy benefits - damages

- The Bean Goose does not have special value as game species and any local hunting traditions are associated with this species, but
- geese hunting itself have very long historical background in Estonia.
- During the birding trips looking for the staging geese is quite important part of this activity during spring and autumn.

- The damages to the agriculture (cereal and rape fields and pastures) are not separated among geese and cranes because both species feeding usually together on the fields. Proportionally 10-15% damages belongs to cranes (cereal fields) and 85-90% to geese (cereal and rape fields & pastures).
- The damages to the agriculture are estimated by the specialists of Environmental Board and compensated from the budget of Environmental Investment Centre.
- Annually over 60 000 euro are paid to farmers for compensation.

National Information - Monitoring

- In Estonia we have special monitoring program for geese, swans and cranes together.
- There is 3-year interval between those species groups.
- This program providing overall trend of staging Bean Goose on the permanent monitoring areas during spring, but again,
- Bean Goose subspecies in this monitoring scheme are not separated.
- In principle there is possibility to separate Bean Goose subspecies, but this needs additional monitoring protocol and financial recourses.

National Information – Status of the species

- National legal status of the species:
 - Bean Goose is a game species, i.e. not protected;
 - in Estonian Red List the Bean Goose have status “*Least concern*”, subspecies are not separated.

Actions and Planning

- Is there any Actions taken on Taiga Bean Goose - YES
- National Species Action Plan or other relevant plan - No
- National (Taiga) Bean Goose Working Group or other relevant group - Yes, we have national Goose Working Group, head is Dr. Aivar Leito.

Other Information

- It seems, that hunting regulation on the breeding and wintering areas where geese are constantly present during some months have bigger positive effect to the population than hunting regulation on the staging areas along the flyway where geese are present 2-3 weeks only.
- It is worth to use satellite telemetry more widely also on staging areas in different countries to separate Taiga Bean Goose flyways and breeding areas.
- It is worth to use more widely DNA analysis to separate the subspecies composition (but not only!) in the hunting bag.

Thank you!

