Anser anser -- (Linnaeus, 1758)

ANIMALIA -- CHORDATA -- AVES -- ANSERIFORMES -- ANATIDAE

Common names: Greylag Goose;

European Red List Assessment

European Red List Status
LC -- Least Concern, (IUCN version 3.1)

Assessment Information

Year published:	2015
Date assessed:	2015-03-31
Assessor(s):	BirdLife International
Reviewer(s):	Symes, A.
Compiler(s):	Ashpole, J., Burfield, I., Ieronymidou, C., Pople, R., Wheatley, H. & Wright, L.

Assessment Rationale

European regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)
EU27 regional assessment: Least Concern (LC)

In Europe this species has an extremely large range, and hence does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the range size criterion (Extent of Occurrence 10% in ten years or three generations, or with a specified population structure). The population trend appears to be increasing, and hence the species does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the population trend criterion (30% decline over ten years or three generations). For these reasons the species is evaluated as Least Concern in Europe.

Within the EU27 this species has a very large range, and hence does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the range size criterion (Extent of Occurrence 10% in ten years or three generations, or with a specified population structure). The population trend appears to be increasing, and hence the species does not approach the thresholds for Vulnerable under the population trend criterion (30% decline over ten years or three generations). For these reasons the species is evaluated as Least Concern in the EU27.

Occurrence

Countries/Territories of Occurrence

Native:

Albania; Armenia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Faroe Islands (to DK); Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Ireland, Rep. of; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of; Malta; Moldova; Montenegro; Netherlands; Norway; Svalbard and Jan Mayen (to NO); Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom

Vagrant:

Liechtenstein; Canary Is. (to ES); Gibraltar (to UK)

Population

The European population is estimated at 259,000-427,000 pairs, which equates to 519,000-853,000 mature individuals. The population in the EU27 is estimated at 197,000-343,000 pairs, which equates to 395,000-687,000 mature individuals. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Trend

In Europe and the EU27 the population size is estimated to be increasing. For details of national estimates, see Supplementary PDF.

Habitats and Ecology

During the breeding season the species inhabits wetlands surrounded by fringing vegetation in open grassland (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013), sedge or heather moorland (Johnsgard 1978), arctic tundra, steppe or semi-desert from sea-level up to 2,300 m (Snow and Perrins 1998). It nests near streams, saltmarshes (Kear 2005), river flood-plains, reedy marshes, grassy bogs, damp meadows, reed-lined freshwater lakes and estuaries

(Johnsgard 1978) close to potential feeding sites such as meadows, grasslands, stubble fields and newly sown cereal fields (Kear 2005). It requires isolated islands out of reach of land predators for nesting. In the autumn (before migration) the species also frequents agricultural land (Kear 2005). In the winter the species inhabits lowland farmland in open country, swamps, lakes, coastal lagoons (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013), reservoirs and estuaries (Madge and Burn 1988).
The species breeds from May or April in loose colonies (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013, Kear 2005). The nest is a shallow construction of plant matter placed among reedbeds, on the ground (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013), in or at the base of trees, under bushes or in sheltered hollows on isolated wooded islands on lakes or along coasts (Johnsgard 1978, Kear 2005), as well as on rafts of vegetation in rivers (Snow and Perrins 1998). Usually four to six eggs are laid (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013). The species is herbivorous, its diet consisting of grasses, the roots, shoots, leaves, stems, seedheads and fruits of other herbaceous marsh vegetation (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013), aquatic plants (Johnsgard 1978), and agricultural grain and potatoes. This species is fully migratory although some populations in temperate regions are only sedentary (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013) or locally dispersive (Scott and Rose 1996), occasionally making irregular movements in very icy winters (Carboneras and Kirwan 2013).

Habitats & Altitude

Habitat (level 1 - level 2)		Importance	Occurrence
Artificial/Aquatic - Water Storage Areas (over ha)		suitable	non-breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Arable Land		suitable	non-breeding
Artificial/Terrestrial - Pastureland		suitable	non-breeding
Grassland - Temperate		suitable	non-breeding
Marine Intertidal - Salt Marshes (Emergent Grasses)		suitable	breeding
Marine Neritic - Estuaries		suitable	breeding
Marine Neritic - Estuaries		suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands		suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Bogs, Marshes, Swamps, Fens, Peatlands		suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)		suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Freshwater Lakes (over ha)		suitable	non-breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Permanent Rivers/Streams/Creeks (includes waterfalls)		suitable	breeding
Wetlands (inland) - Tundra Wetlands (incl. pools and temporary waters from snowmelt)		suitable	breeding
Altitude	max. 2300 m	Occasional altitudinal limits	

Threats

This species is threatened by considerable hunting pressures across much of its range (Madge and Burn 1988, Carboneras and Kirwan 2013) and is susceptible to poisoning from lead shot ingestion (Mateo et al. 1998). It is also persecuted by farmers as it can cause considerable crop damage (Madge and Burn 1988, Carboneras and Kirwan 2013). The destruction and degradation of wetland habitats due to drainage (Madge and Burn 1988, Grishanov 2006, Carboneras and Kirwan 2013), conversion to agriculture (Madge and Burn 1988, Carboneras and Kirwan 2013), petroleum pollution, peat-extraction, changing wetland management practices (e.g. decreased grazing and mowing in meadows leading to scrub over-growth) and the burning and mowing of reeds is also a threat, especially in breeding areas (Grishanov 2006). The species is susceptible to avian influenza so may be threatened by future outbreaks of the virus (Melville and Shortridge 2006).

Threats & Impacts

Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (intentional use - species is the target)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Biological resource use	Hunting & trapping terrestrial animals (persecution/ control)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species disturbance			
Climate change & severe weather	Habitat shifting & alteration	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Future	Whole (>90%)	Unknown	Unknown
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation; Indirect ecosystem effects			

Threats & Impacts

Threat (level 1)	Threat (level 2)	Impact and Stresses			
Invasive and other problematic species, genes & diseases	Avian Influenza Virus (H subtype)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Future	Majority (50-90%)	Slow, Significant Declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Natural system modifications	Abstraction of surface water (unknown use)	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			
Natural system modifications	Other ecosystem modifications	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Ecosystem degradation; Indirect ecosystem effects			
Pollution	Oil spills	**Timing**	**Scope**	**Severity**	**Impact**
		Ongoing	Majority (50-90%)	Negligible declines	Low Impact
		Stresses			
		Species mortality			

Conservation

Conservation Actions Underway

EU Directives Annex II. CMS Appendix II. The species has been successfully reintroduced or introduced in some areas, for example Austria, Belgium, parts of Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands (Carboneras and Kirwan 2014).

Conservation Actions Proposed

Accurate monitoring of bag numbers in countries where the species is hunted should be implemented. The integration of farming and conservation measures along with protection of key wetland sites is needed to ensure the population remains stable.

Bibliography

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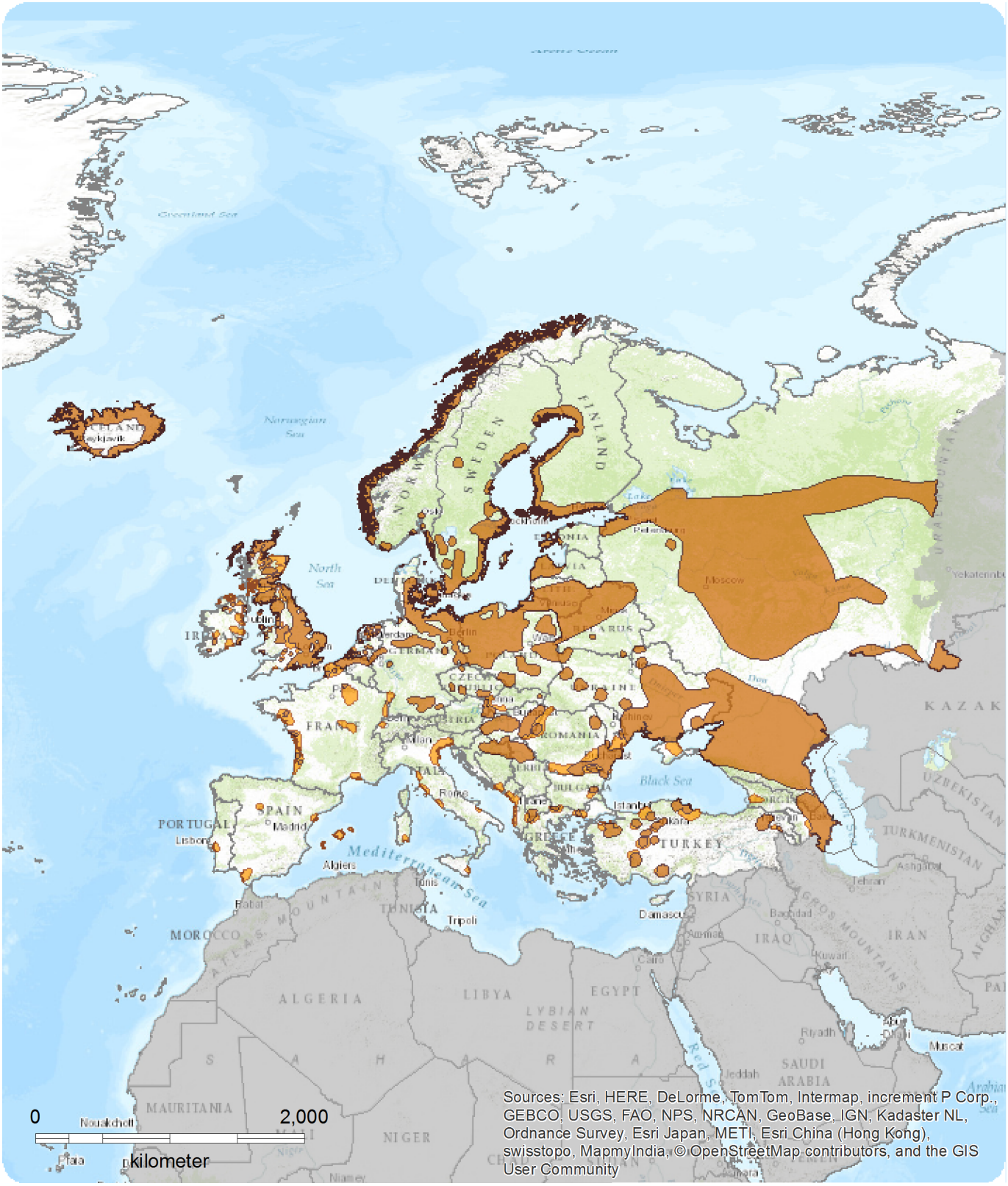
Map (see overleaf)

European Regional Assessment



Anser anser

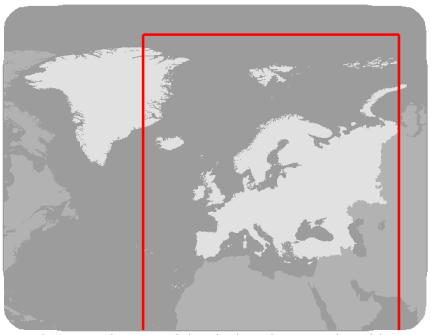
NE | DD | LC LEAST CONCERN | NT | VU | EN | CR | EW | EX

Range

- Extant (breeding)
- Extant (non breeding)

Citation:
BirdLife International (2015)
European Red List of Birds

Map created 05/13/2015



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