

Notes

Action

1. Welcome, introductions & apologies

- See appended list for attendance and apologies
- Andrew set the scene for the meeting. SEG has had a very successful “start-up” phase over the past 2 years and now need to develop into a maturing phase. A Core Group or Board structure is an important requirement for this phase of SEG

2. News, Context & Updates

TV & Education

- Autumnwatch last Friday was seen as a great triumph. Andrew read out an e-mail from Richard Taylor-Jones, the Autumnwatch producer, with feedback on how well it had been received. Ask: (a) if we can put edited version onto SEG website and (b) if they might be able to provide any other filming for our archives / info
- Andrew also reported on the making of another TV programme by ARTE, a European channel, with Gary Hillier, due to be shown next June

AK

Progress in Europe

- Andrew and others have been particularly busy influencing in Europe over the past 4 months, in particular Spain, Italy, France and with Christos Theophilou, the “Director General” for certain fish, including eels, in the European Commission. He came to the Valencia meeting, as did many other key players in Europe.
- Meeting in Paris last week between Govt, scientists and fishermen endorsed the sustainable approach in France, but this needs follow-up discussions this week to see it through. We even hope the most unsustainable operators will be adopting the sustainable fishing practices soon. No decisions on quotas in France were made in time for the season start of 1 November.
- Andrew to meet Dupan later in November. Recent court case suggests that SEG’s definition of Sustainability is well regarded
- CITES – review in 2013
- ICES – Alan summarised ICES discussions over whether re-stocking is a viable management policy. The science currently differs and shows that we still don’t know definitively, even though the indications so far suggest restocking is viable
- At Valencia Christos Theophilou recognised a disconnect between the science and the policy decisions. He asked SEG to draft terms to commission a project to undertake further research which could be funded by Brussels and influence EC policy. Again, this indicates the regard for SEG and its maturity.

2. Governance

- Good governance is key to the right running & decision making for any organisation
- Agreed: Board to consist of 12; a quorum of 7, to comprise 2 scientists, 2 conservation interests, 2 commercial interests, 1 independent. Govt. employees to not be listed as non voting and non-Board members – ideally “Advisors”. Full details to be set out in an updated paper and circulated for clarity and agreement
- Alan, Miran & Vin to discuss the terms Observer v Advisor. SEG Board would prefer Advisor as this is active rather than passive

DB
AW, MA,
VF

3. Funding

- Andrew discussed the concept of raising an income stream from members of SEG on a more formal basis, rather than just seeking donations every so often.
- Hope also to raise income from the Standard, and licensing of the logo as an eco-label
- Peter proposed categories: Private (eg. £35?), Industry (£1000 – suggested minimum?) per co. rather than per country - could be on a sliding scale, NGOs, Govt, Unclassified (eg. Dupan [a Trade Association]), Fisheries Associations.
- Chris Leftwich asked – what are the benefits? Current stakeholders have seen the benefits and have been very willing to contribute.
- Agreed: Individuals; Commercial Organisations; Charitable Organisations; Govt Organisations
- Peter Neusinger raised the possibility of the Parrett (& maybe Severn) Fishery Association – paying £10 each and get a badge to demonstrate their commitment (this would be complimentary to the fishery achieving & maintaining the Standard).
- Consider what benefits might be to help market and promote membership. List of achievements – could list what different products would cost
- Strapline: something like “Supporting the European Eel’s Return to Abundance”
- Other income: Sponsorship, Donations, (eg Power cos.) / Grant funding (EA?). Ask EA if/how to access licensed eel & elver fishermen
- Andrew, Peter and David to discuss and progress. Include IFM thinking on membership categories
- Donations had been a reasonably successful income stream so far and it is possible that this can continue and even become more formalised

DB
PW, DB,
AK

4. Eel Standard

Improving the Standard

- David, Chairman of the Eel Standard sub-group described the process for the future review and improvement of the Standard, including bringing new people in, ie. MCS, Traffic, WWF France. Identify stakeholders in each Country to consult with. Improving the Standard is included in the EFF Bid
- ISO accreditation preferred – depending on cost and timing
- Use of word Sustainable to be reviewed too. Don’t wish to dilute the strength of the standard, but recognise also the Dutch court case implications. Must ensure can be clear to the public. Not to have an interim / lower Standard

DB

DB

Licensing the Eco-Label

- Members to e-mail info to each other (Chris, David, Richard, Peter) to help make a decision. May be based on £ per piece rather than %. Agreed to mimic MSC model. Others in chain could either pay for licence of as a member
- Agreed OK to levy some form of charge for certification – even if by membership

CL, DB,
RF, PW

5. Progress Reports

5.1 EFF Bid

- Looking positive. Alistair was asked for further information this week by the administrators. Apparently they had also seen the Autumnwatch programme which helped their understanding. Send copies of the Bid to: Matt, Brian

AM / AK

5.2 Standard Take-Up

- A series of assessments recently, eg for eel feed and processors. Will distribute to the Panel for comment.

DB

5.3 Valencia Meeting

- Ensure a comment on the website that says that these were the presentations – do not necessarily reflect the views of SEG AK

5.4 IUCN

- Contribution is under review ready for submission

5.5 ICES

- The current main topic of discussion is the science around the viability of restocking
- Richard & Brian to assist with identifying research work for ICES in liaison with Alan. Short timescale to influence due to the revision RF, BK, AW

6. **Priorities & Work Plan for the Year Ahead**

- Need a Strategic Plan for SEG that sets our priorities, supported by a set of work plans. Andrew to draft the Strategy and suggest others to contribute AK

7. **Meeting Plan**

- Suggested: 2 Board meetings per year, 1 AGM, 1 wider membership DB

8. **Any other business**

- Website: check that personal profiles are still available (eg. for Alan) AK

Attendance

Attending

Andrew Kerr
David Bunt
Chris Leftwich
Matt Gollock
Brian Knights
Alan Walker
Peter Wood
Richard Fordham
Peter Neusinger

Apologies

Paul Knight
Janina Gray
Andrew Morgan
Roger Castle
Miran Aprahamian
Julian Jones
Vin Fleming
Andy Don
Gary Hillier