

A Simple Guide to the SEG Standard

Purpose

This is a simple guide to the Sustainable Eel Group (SEG) Standard. It aims to give a simple introduction to anyone who wants to know more or doesn't understand the wide range of documentation surrounding the SEG System.

Background

The European eel population is much depleted after hundreds of years of habitat degradation, blocking of migration pathways, pollution, pumping, over-fishing and trafficking. The [2007 EU Eel Regulation](#) required all European countries to implement Eel Management Plans to help the eel population to recover.

What is the SEG Standard?

- Where countries permit fishing and trade of the eel, the [SEG Standard](#) stands as a best practice code of conduct for anyone fishing for or trading in the European eel.
- It is a *sustainability standard* for anyone wishing to show that they are treating the eel Responsibly.

What are its aims?

The aims of the SEG Standard are to:

- Define best practice for each player and part of the eel sector
- Provide the opportunity for operators to demonstrate high and responsible standards,
- Drive high and responsible standards throughout the supply chain, from fishery to consumer,
- Provide confidence to retailers and consumers who wish to buy responsibly,
- Reduce and discourage illegal eel fishing and trade,
- Support the implementation of the Eel Regulation, the CITES listing and other relevant laws,
- To give greater protection to the continuation of responsible eel fishing and trade – regularly under attack by uninformed NGOs and politicians who believe that stopping fishing is the best way to protect the eel.

Who owns it?

- It is developed and owned by the [Sustainable Eel Group](#) (SEG).
- SEG is a not-for-profit organisation registered in Brussels, Belgium.
- Our sole aim is for the recovery of the eel population for the conservation of this iconic and important species, whilst at the same time sustaining the traditions, cultures and livelihoods of fishing, eating and celebrating the eel.

What is its legal basis?

- The SEG Standard is not mandatory. It is a *Voluntary Sustainability System*.
- It goes beyond what is merely 'legal'.
- It supports and is guided by the legal frameworks for eel protection and recovery, notably the [Eel Regulation](#) and [CITES](#).

How is it assessed?

- Assessment and issue of certificates is by an independent Certification Body, not SEG.
- Assessment and certification is done according to defined procedures in our [202 Assurance System](#).

What does SEG Certification mean?

- Certification to the SEG Standard means that you have complied with the best practices for fishing or trading in eel.
- Certification means that you can claim:
 - *Certified responsibly sourced European eel*
 - *Complies with good practices for the protection of the European eel, from fishery to customer.*
 - *Making a contribution to the protection and recovery of the European eel.*
- And be licensed to use the label:



What are the benefits of certification?

- SEG Certification shows that you are acting responsibly – in a world where more consumers are seeking to purchase more sustainably.
- Certification may give you a competitive advantage over those who are not, and you may get a better price for your product.

What are the basic rules?

- The certification body will assess whether you meet the tests in the Standard to become certified.
- If you are certified, you can sell your product as *SEG Certified*.
- But to do so, you must have bought *SEG Certified* and only sold those as *SEG Certified*.
- You cannot sell eels from an uncertified supplier, uncertified batches or from a supplier whose certificate has expired as *SEG Certified*.
- Certification usually lasts for 4 years, but with a mid-term re-assessment after 2 years.

Where can I get more information?

For more information see, on our website:

[Sustainable Eel Group](#)

[The SEG Standard](#)

[The SEG System](#)

[How to apply for Certification](#)

Or contact: standard@sustainableeelgroup.org

With 16 years of experience, the SEG system continues to evolve in line with changes in regulations and feedback from stakeholders. As someone involved in the eel industry, we welcome your feedback to help make the standard even more relevant.



www.sustainableeelgroup.org