The Sustainable Eel Group

Notes of the meeting 11 January 2010, 11.00 – 13.00 by teleconference

Present:	Andrew Kerr David Bunt Brian Knights Heidi Stone Miran Aprahamian Paul Knight Roger Castle Derek Evans Alan Walker Matthew Gollock Mark Owen Peter Wood Ricarda Pasing	(AK) (DB) (BK) (HS) (MA) (PK) (RC) (DE) (AW) (MG) (MO) (PW) (RP)	Independent (Management Consultant) Institute of Fisheries Management Independent (Fisheries Scientist) Environment Agency Environment Agency Salmon & Trout Association Eel Fisherman Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute, Northern Cefas Eel Conservation Group / Zoological Society Angling Trust UK Glass Eels	
	Tom Fort Janina Gray Mark Salt Jonathon Wilson	(TF) (JG) (MS) (JW)	Author Salmon & Trout Association National Anguilla Club National Anguilla Club	
Apologies:	Vin Fleming Chris Leftwich Chetal Moghraby Andy Don Robert Rosell Malcolm Drummond	(VF) (CL) (CM) (AD) (RR)	Joint Nature Conservation Committee Fishmongers Company Defra Environment Agency Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute, Northern Fishmongers Company	Ireland

Minutes

Action

1. Welcome, introductions & apologies	
 Andrew Kerr welcomed the group, including several new members. Apologies received are listed above. 	
• The full list of invitees / current group membership is enclosed with these minutes.	DB
2. Progress & decision making (refer to the slides enclosed with these minutes)	All
 2.1 <u>Name of organisation & establishment of a not-for-profit company</u> Agreed: Sustainable Eel Group (SEG) Agreed: To create a not-for profit limit liability company (provides a vehicle to appropriate fund and provide limited liability) 	
 2.2 <u>Purpose, aims and objectives</u> People were broadly in agreement with the statements provided in the sliide, though there was a perception that the list of objectives was in priority order (and therefore that sustaining the commercial fishery is most important, which several people were uncomfortable with). To be reviewed at a sub-group meeting that reviews the Sustainability Statements (see below). 	
 Our influence to extend to Europe & N. Africa & the Eel's total range? Objectives to include the education & promotion of messages. 	DB

2.3 <u>Sustainability statement</u>	
• There had been considerable debate by e-mail on this. There are many fundamental	
questions to address before the Group can progress in full. As above for the Aims &	
Objectives, key parties to come together to work up and agree the Sustainability	
statement & detail on 5 February.	
Meet at Fishmongers (or ZSL) Fri 5 February. David to organise.	DB
2.4 <u>Relationship between major stakeholders</u>	
There were no major conflicts or issues listed between different interests. It was	
recognised that we have a common interest to seek sustainable eel populations at	
whole ecosystem level (ie. to benefit wildlife, communities and commercial interests)	
• Some, esp. Govt agencies (EA, Cefas & AFBNI) are used to playing a balancing act	
between what can be perceived as conflicting interests and priorities	
• Commercial fishermen obviously have a vested interest, but are also dependent on a	
sustainable eel population. Derek Evans to seek to persuade LNFC to attend in future.	DE
 Angling interests were content with working within the broad objectives. 	
Conservation interests: must protect the species and enable sustainable fishing	
• The chairman stated that: any conflicts should be openly raised and people should not	All
be embarrassed to do so.	
2.5 Concept and formation of 5 functional teams	
All agreed.	
2.6 Leadership and membership of those teams	
Leading: membership & plan as per slides agreed	
• Creating the resources (funding initially). Contributions from some organisations had	
been offered already. Andrew reported that the European Fisheries Fund would see	
the Group as viable, particularly on presentation of a plan. Water Cos. May be a	
source of income. We feel the £10k target is achievable. AK to work with Andy Don to	AK, AD
apply to Fisheries Challenge Fund	
• Developing messages & positions: agreed. Include DB, MA, Pat Close of Lough Neagh	
Fishermens Co-operative (via DE). HS will circulate response to byelaw consultation	DE, DB
• Supporting Eel Management Plans (these will provide a blue-print for management of	
the Eel as a whole): Agreed: Heidi to lead – plus need Rivers Trusts (Alistair Maltby?	HS
Via MO), someone from NI. MA to invite others as appropriate, add Janina Gray, Mark	MO
Owen, Derek Evans	MA
• Communicating messages & positions: Agreed, but Chetal leaving Defra, add Tom Fort,	AK
Matt Gollock, an EA person (HS to advise). Website: Peter Wood's office to assist. All	HS
to send a $1-2$ sentence resume for each member for the website. Website will be low	All
 – cost, but may wish to enhance over time. Chains of these meeting to ensage these meetings to heat with research enshing. 	-
Chairs of those meeting to organise those meetings to best suit membership	Team
 Resourcing: agreed - members to be supported by employers where possible, those not supported able to claim expenses from SEG, subject to budget 	Leads All
2.7 <u>Decision making process</u>	
 Agreed. This is to enable progress between quarterly meetings. 	
2.8 <u>Meeting plan for the year</u>	
Agreed – quarterly	
Telecons can be used if necessary	
3. Update on Eel matters - political, scientific, commercial and fishing	
Heidi – the Statutory Instrument proposed by the EA is due to come into place this	

	Friday (if no objections)	
•	French season so far – difficult to assess – there has been little fishing due to the cold weather	
•	Greenpeace & WWF has been successful at dismantling the commercial fishery in Germany and Holland – many business are likely to fold this year. Dutch supermarket will stop selling eel. If this continues, the whole commercial fishery in Europe may collapse (WWF says eating an eel is like eating a Panda sandwich!). MO declared that his salary is funded by WWF – but he has no remit for Europe ICES latest – Brian Knights will send a website link to David Bunt to circulate	ВК
4.	Notes of last meeting	
•	Agreed that these were an accurate record.	
•	Any outstanding actions to be progressed where relevant	All
5.	Next meeting	
•	Meeting of group to agree purpose, aims, objectives & sustainability statements will	All
	be on Friday 5 February. Those involved to note date. To be held at Fishmongers (PK	PK, MG
	to advise) or Zoological Society London (ZSL) as back-up (MG)	
٠	Next full meeting will be on Friday 16 April – at either Fishmongers or ZSL. All to note	All
	in diaries. David to arrange in liaison with Paul and Matt. Alternating between	DB
	Fishmongers and ZSL was identified to be a good share of resources. At Derek's	
	invitation, it was agreed that a meeting at Lough Neagh in the future would be	
	educational as well as a change	
•	Everyone agreed that the telecon worked well given the circumstances, and could be	
	used again if and when necessary (eg. urgent or short meetings where travel is	
	restrictive or unnecessary)	
•	Andrew thanked everyone for their positive input	