



Notes

Action

1. Welcome, introductions & apologies

- Andrew Kerr welcomed the group
- Apologies received and attendance are listed in the attendance list, Appendix 1.
- Alistair Maltby stated that RSPB had indicated an interest to join the Group. Alistair will provide the name
- Roger Castle stated that he is assisting the Environment Agency and Southampton University with research into eels on the Dorset Stour

AM

2. Minutes of last meeting

- IUCN – are considering a two day workshop to review the eel's red-listing. Peter & Brian to progress and seek support from SEG as necessary
- SEG Europe? – SEG UK is well developed, and we are fortunate in having good European links. Plan to have SEG Europe meeting in Denmark in January. It would be good to develop one Sustainable Eel Standard there is a risk of being several at present. Consensus was that we should move towards SEG Europe, and this would help to bring unity across the continent.

PW, BK

3. Sustainable Eel Standard

- David, Matt & Brian provided an overview of the latest (6th) draft. Some issues / queries:
 - Standard to ensure it covers capture of yellow and silver eels
 - Traceability to be considered. Robustness of assessment will be crucial to success. Batch separation and record keeping in the supply chain will have to be good
 - Where does the buck stop – eg. does a farmer “fail” if the glass eels provided by a supplier were of poor quality? The reverse could also be true? This will encourage a sustainable supply chain.
 - Should we accredit each part of the chain of the whole supply chain?
 - Which river systems pass the 40% escapement limit?
 - Standard should be high to maintain credibility to the markets, but should also be achievable. The Standard was developed by people with no commercial interest – though must also be credible (workable) to the industry. Eg. how do we know if a farmer does daily checks
 - Sub-group to consider how to manage a “transition period” whereby people in the chain may currently have some batches of uncertified eels that will be moving through the system over the next 2 – 3 years; will need to have a date at which the transition period stops (use equivalent to pre- and post- “convention”)
 - Need to start pilot soon to help start working in Europe as soon as possible
 - Pilot needed in UK by 15 February,
- Any further detailed comments (eg. from Chris Leftwich) to be forwarded to the sub-group (David Bunt). It was proposed and agreed that Chris Leftwich should join the sub-group (having 25 years of standard setting experience). Supermarkets will also become independent assessors for their own standards and credibility
- SEG unanimously agreed to adopt the standard in pilot form at the earliest possible opportunity. The Sub-Group will continue meeting, at an accelerated rate, to

CL, All
DB

DB

complete the working version.

- Next steps – users to contact the SES sub-group to sign-up for assessment PW, PN, others?
- Andrew to contact Russell Poole at the Working Group on Eel to liaise on the final version AK
- Agreed that when ready to go, SEG to organise significant press launch (in February, at Fishmongers?) AK

4. SEG logo

- The logo has been agreed. The graphics and guidelines have been provided. They will be forwarded to relevant officers for use in correspondence, position statements and the website. DB

5. Annual Review

- See previous report circulated. A very successful first year so well done to everyone for their commitment to The Sustainable Eel DB
- Put a user-friendly version of the annual report on the SEG website

6. Sub-Group Quarterly Reports

- Resources. Peter Wood circulated the Financial Reports. Approx £10k raised in 2010. A funding meeting to be organised to focus on income – target £30k. We have achieved a great deal with very limited income, due in large part in people giving their time and not claiming expenses. This benefit in kind should be recorded as it will count towards any match-funding we seek PW
- Policy. Ongoing advice from the policy group has informed much of our work; including correcting erroneous press and scientific reports. A set of Frequently Asked Questions to be developed to help refer authors of such reports to, and published on the website BK
- Recovery Plans. EA & ART – Habitat Mapping Project; EA: National Eel Group reviews progress of Eel Management Plans in each River Basin; 100 eel passes installed this year; restocking in some places (eg. Humber, Anglian); Eel Statutory Instrument gives EA new powers to enable eel passage – eg. passes and screens at high priority sites – now looking at prioritised programme to implement at structures across the country to be in place by 2015. Approx 30,000 sites to consider. Ayesha will provide a brief report for SEG's website, and will circulate a link to the EA's website which has a series of reports. AT
- Communication & Publicity. Lot of press activity in last quarter related to potential ban on exports from EU. This group has not been as proactive as desired. AM suggested we put more effort on developing a partnership for implementing, or just doing, rather than planning too much. Any links from members' websites to SEG's website would be helpful.
- Governance Review. Andrew presented the drafted legal memorandum and articles. The Governance sub-group will meet by teleconference to review this first draft. SEG members will be invited to join that meeting. Agreed that at the next meeting SEG would seek to (a) agree the legal documents and (b) hold the AGM. This will require nominations for Board membership in advance of the next meeting DB
DB
DB

7. Habitat Project update

- Alistair Maltby gave an update. A wide range of conservation groups and other water users / owners are involved in this project. The project is looking at habitats that need enhancing for eels and those that would benefit from restocking.
- Any news on conservation projects from Europe would be good to put on the website – especially from Sweden, Denmark & Holland. Also eg. any reports that European members

show the effectiveness of restocking

8. Europe Update

- Scientific Review Group met on 3 December. Recommended that ALL imports and exports of European Eel be banned from the EU. This was unanimous – including from French scientists
- Management Group met following Monday. France did not support it, but is under extreme pressure to do so. Timing poor as it is 2 weeks into the French glass eel fishing season
- The ban includes live fish and fish products.
- So, currently the ban is in place – we are all waiting to see if it will stick
- The Standard is required urgently to help influence the markets and managers positively

9. Offer of funding from Co-op

- Co-op have offered £5 - £10k for conservation projects such as eel passes . We would like to recommend they use that to help fund the Standard.
- EA has plenty of eel conservation projects to fund if other ideas are required.
- A Priority plan is urgently needed so that we can choose locations and use funds at short notice.

AM

10. Objectives for 2011

The following came from the Group, to include initiatives listed above. Most imminent in bold:

- **Developing, implementing & launching the standard, to include the pilot**
- **Habitat project work**
- **Funding Group meeting**, to include identifying funding streams
- **Influencing NGOs and WWF in Europe** via WWF UK with the Standard, and influencing other NGOs eg. IUCN. Could be more effective by spreading the load on who we influence – 1 person per NGO: AK, JJ, MG, VF & AM best placed to jointly influence the conservation organisations
- **Influencing EU Review**
- **Complete Governance Review and hold AGM**
- Influencing fishermen & regulators: Andrew Kerr and Peter Neusinger are meeting fishermen on the river Parrett to influence them to fish sustainably there to enable the fishery to meet the Standard. Involves co-operation & negotiation with the Environment Agency
- Definitive data on stock levels – eg. from ICES,
- Engage with “Sustain” – an organisation influencing all Olympic suppliers in 2012
- Build on Habitat Priority report – find ways of delivering the funding and priorities

AK, PN

11. Any other business

- Handling draft documents. David Bunt mentioned how we are now using a standard statement on draft documents to ensure recipients are clear that they are not complete

12. Next meeting

Andrew thanked everyone for attending, particularly those who made the effort to travel long distances

Next meeting, proposed to be Weds 9 March probably at Fishmongers. David Bunt and Andrew Morgan to arrange

DB, AM

Appendix 1. Attendance List and apologies for absence

| | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------|--|-------------|
| Present: | Andrew Kerr | (AK) | Independent (Management Consultant) | (Chair) |
| | David Bunt | (DB) | Institute of Fisheries Management | (Secretary) |
| | Brian Knights | (BK) | Independent (Fisheries Scientist) | |
| | Matthew Gollock | (MG) | Eel Conservation Group / Zoological Society London | |
| | Peter Wood | (PW) | UK Glass Eels | |
| | Alistair Maltby | (AM) | Association of Rivers Trusts | |
| | Peter Neusinger | (PN) | Eeline Aquatrading | |
| | John van Dooren | (JvD) | Nutrigo / Trouw Nutrition | |
| | Andrew Morgan | (AM) | Fishmongers Company | |
| | Chris Leftwich | (CL) | Fishmongers Company | |
| | Mogens Mathiasen | (MM) | Royal Danish Sea Food | |
| | Roger Castle | (RC) | Eel Fisherman | |
| | Richard Fordham | (RF) | Scandinavian Silver Eel (Sweden) | |
| | Ayesha Taylor | (AT) | Environment Agency | |
| | Heather Webb | (HW) | APEM Ltd. | |
| | Lars Lange | (LL) | Royal Danish Sea Food | |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|------|---|--|
| Apologies: | Vin Fleming | (VF) | Joint Nature Conservation Committee | |
| | Alan Walker | (AW) | Cefas | |
| | Julian Jones | (JJ) | Radnor Wildlife Trust | |
| | Christopher Moriarty | (CM) | Retired Fisheries Scientist former Chair ICES EIFAC | |
| | Tom Fort | (TF) | Author | |
| | Janina Gray | (JG) | Salmon and Trout Association | |
| | Laky Zervudachi | (LZ) | Direct Seafoods | |
| | Paul Knight | (PK) | Salmon & Trout Association | |
| | Heidi Stone | (HS) | Environment Agency | |
| | Miran Aprahamian | (MA) | Environment Agency | |
| | Robert Rosell | (RR) | Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute, Northern Ireland | |
| | Jon Harman | (JH) | Seafish | |
| | Garry Hillier | (GH) | Eel Fishermens Association (not elvers) UK | |
| | Robin Barker | (RB) | Eel Fishermens Association (not elvers) UK | |
| | Jo Gascoigne | (JG) | Fisheries Scientist & MSC Assessor | |
| | Joost Blom | (JB) | Biomar | |