

**Notes****Action****1. Welcome, introductions, apologies & opening address**

- A video was shown presented by Isobel Lovin, MEP who is pressing to ban all fishing for the European eel. Andrew is meeting her in Brussels tomorrow
- Andrew welcomed the Group and introduced new people
- Andrew invited people to declare any conflicts of interest at relevant points
- Andrew stated the intention to continue expanding the reach to our European colleagues and that this was a focus of today's meeting
- Andrew described how he felt we are at another cross roads, and described some latest news regarding the review of the Eel Regulation going on by the EU; the new 'Rapporteur', Isobel Lovin is believed to wish to use the Technical Evaluation to attempt to 'fundamental change including the end all eel fishing. Andrew and Alex are to meet a number of MEP's in the next few days before a meeting of the PECH Committee next Tuesday. If this technical review was successful it could by-pass and replace the full review of the Regulation
- Andrew also described how Christos Theophilou (DG Mare in the EU Fisheries team) is handing over to Evangelia Georgitsi

**2. Notes of last meeting**

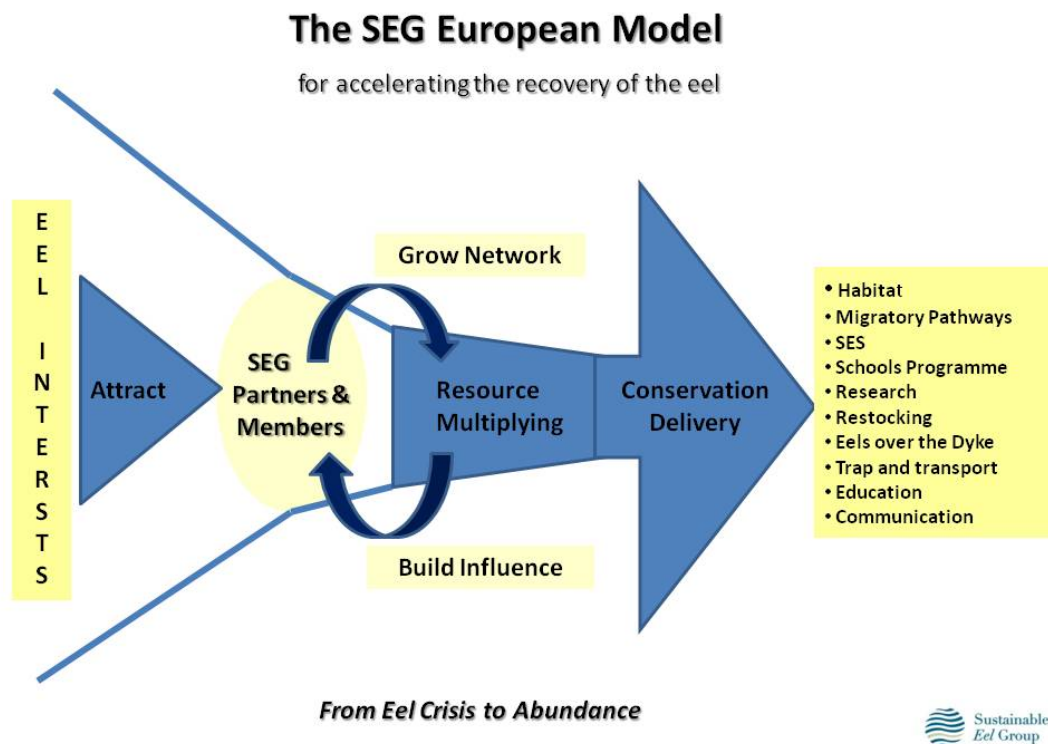
- Brian and Alex proposed and seconded the approval of the last minutes as an accurate record

**3. Progress reports**

- IUCN Specialist Eel Sub-Group. Matt Gollock is leading the development of this work. We have a good breadth of expertise and geographical representation from around the world. They have applied for funding to support the project. MCS as a charity may be able to help with expertise. SEG may be able to assist with financial support for air travel and accommodation however this should be on an arm's length basis.
- Netherlands & Dupan.
  - Alex Koelewijn gave a presentation on the eel conservation & recovery programme in Holland. Dupan is a Sustainable Eel Foundation in Holland.
  - Dupan's objectives are very similar to SEG's – to help the eel recover, progress EMPs, pursue sustainable use of the stock (the objective of the EU regulation), progress research, progress conservation projects
  - The work includes paying fishermen to catch silver eels to transport them past pumps to aid their migration to sea (4600 adult eels: 4000kg transferred last autumn). This legal fishery detected and removed a significant illegal fishery (60 fyke nets).
  - The success of the programme is helping to influence others (including the Dutch Government) to invest more to support the sustainable eel programme further.
- Finances
  - Peter Wood gave an update. SEG is now in a stronger and more stable financial

position than previously, thanks mostly to the contributions made from DUPAN, the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) grant and contributions from members and Fishmongers.

- Trademarking & Contracts
  - Chris Leftwich reported on how SEG trademarks have been registered
  - Agreements are developing to award SEG logo contracts to a number of members
  - Financial agreement with Dupan has yet to be formalised – it is largely a verbal agreement at the moment
  - Andrew thanked Fishmongers Hall who financed the Trademarking work
- Strategy & Big Picture
  - Andrew described the strategy & process, outlined in the following diagram to show how all the work we are doing it connected to help the Eel.



- Fishing Season
  - Catches in France so far have been the highest in about 12 years. The catch quotas in France have been met already (17 tonnes for consumption & 17 tonnes for restocking by the first week in January. Environmental factors may have had an influence on this – eg. North Atlantic oscillation, westerly winds and high rainfall
  - This huge volume of recruitment had led to an economic collapse of the fishery – prices are now too low to make any profit (£150 / kg on the river bank). Prices are so low that glass eel is being eaten locally again. There is believed to be a large stock of dead glass eel now frozen.
  - Alex described how he felt the quota system in France is not providing the best outcome for the eel. Currently the quota is bigger than the market – there is not the market for consumption or for restocking.
  - Although not fully controlled yet, the Asian market is much less than before and this has had a major impact. This has caused some in the French market to try to influence the French Govt. that exports to Asia should restart.
  - Other tools are being considered – eg. individual fisherman quotas. Any ideas to

- Andrew who is going to France next week.
- There appears to be no fisheries independent monitoring of recruitment in France
- Sustainable Eel Standard
  - David Bunt gave an update on how the Eel Standard is assessed, and the status of applications. Currently 25 certificates have been awarded and 26 are in the process of applying. The register will be circulated and regularly published on the website
  - Max Goulden described how the Standard is being improved, to raise standards further and to make the rules clearer, eg. there are 2 Standards – one for the Practice and one for the Chain of Custody. Chain of Custody must be demonstrated by anyone in the supply chain before the SEG logo can be used. This emulates the similar MSC standard
  - The changes to the Standard will soon go through a Stakeholder consultation (8 week consultation period). Review Group will be the Eel Standard Panel.
  - The aim is to launch the new Standard at the June Eel Festival

#### 4. Influencing European Eel Policy

This is a very important year for SEG. There are a number of activities this year which collectively will influence the review of the EU Eel Regulation

- Eel Regulation
  - As described above, there is the overall review, and a technical review. If fishing is banned, it may prevent catching fish for restocking, for moving over barriers, and to police illegal fisheries. Technical Review timeline is 22 January to June 2013. We are taking advice from a PR Co. on how to best influence the relevant people and committees.
  - We will also be putting in a huge bid to the EFF for a Europe-wide project. This immediate work will lay down groundwork for that.
- London Eel Festival.
  - Paul Coulson described how IFM is organising a Conference on 26-27 June at Fishmongers. Capacity of up to 250 people. It will hopefully include a Dutch Eel Barge coming up the Thames. It will have a Europe-wide reach and influence, to include MEPs. Any ideas of key people to invite from each country or offers of sponsorship, please contact Paul.coulson@ifm.org.uk or Andrew.
- IUCN Review
  - A review of the IUCN listing will happen this July. The review of the evidence surrounding the Eel will help to inform the Regulation.
- Creating one European Eel Fund.
  - Alex described how the Dutch Sustainable Eel Fund works. There will be less money available from central funding, but there is a range of sources of funding. Alex made a case for there being a single European Eel Fund to pool member countries stakeholder contributions. Such projects can be used to engage with the public and the consumer to connect consumption with environmental stewardship. Funding can be match-funded to increase them further. Could be used for projects such as re-stocking Mediterranean lagoons with their faster growing capabilities

#### 5. EFF Fund projects

- Alistair Maltby to advise SEG on what/if we need to do to complete the EFF projects (believed to need to be spent and complete by May) AM
- The Environment Agency has commissioned APEM to undertake some innovative eel monitoring techniques on the Severn. To update us at the next meeting MA

## 6. Any other business

- Glass Eel catches in Spain are reported to be the highest since the 1960s
- We will await feedback from Andrew on his visit to Brussels and then decide when our next meeting will be.

### Attendance

Andrew Kerr	Chairman
Alex Koelewijn	DUPAN
Jac Tijssen	Nevepaling
Max Goulden	McAlister Elliott & Partners
David Bunt	Institute of Fisheries Management & SEG
Chris Leftwich	Fishmongers Company
Matt Gollock	Zoological Society of London
Brian Knights	Independent Fisheries Scientist
Peter Wood	UK Glass Eel
Andy Don	Environment Agency
Paul Coulson	Institute of Fisheries Management
Corine Rozendaal	Dutch Eel Co
Armando Piccini	SEG Italy
Gert Goeting	SEG Germany
Richard Fordham	SEG Sweden & Scandinavian Silver Eel
Sam Stone	Marine Conservation Society
Morten Lauritzen	SEG Denmark & Jupiter Eel
Andrew Morgan	Fishmongers Company

### Apologies

Alan Walker  
Scott West  
Barry Bendall  
Alistair Maltby  
| Miran Aprahamian  
Marc-Adrien Marcellier (SEG France)  
Rodolfo Barrera (SEG Spain)