



Minutes of the Board Meeting 16 Sept 2015 at ZSL

Start at 1100 and to Finish 1500

Attendees So far Andrew Kerr (Chairman), David Bunt (Standards Panel Chair), Richard Fordham (Sweden), Alex Koelewijn (DUPAN Netherlands), Jac Tijssen (Netherlands), Simon Toms, , Kerry Sims (EA), Marc-Adrien Marcellier (France), Morten Lauritzen (Denmark), Arne Koops (Germany), Peter Wood (UK), Paul Coulson (IFM), Peter Neusinger (UK), Alexander Wever (Germany), Peter Philipson (Nature at Work, Holland)

Guests: Vicki Crook (Traffic)

Apologies : Alison Debney, Matt Gollock (ZSL), Andy Don (EA), Miran Aprahamian (Scientist), Vin Fleming (JNCC), Simon Soffe, Roger Castle, Alistair Maltby, Barry Bendall (Rivers Trust). Armando Piccini (Italy), Rodolfo Barrera (Spain). Frank Hoffman (Wetlands International), Chris Leftwich (Fishmongers Company, Adrian Pinder (BU), Corine Rozendaal (UK). Brian Knights, (independent scientist), Stephen Mowat ZSL, Andy Sadler EA, Jess Patterson (Brown and Forest)

FOCUS for the Meeting

The meeting will be structured into two parts. The morning until lunch time will be a series of brief updates and then an internal focus on SEG its Governance, Strategies, Budgets and Finances. The afternoon will be the external focus looking at illegal trade (Vicki from Traffic) and the development of wider conservation programmes. David Bunt's arrival is now delayed so the ISEAL and SEG standards section will be taken later)

1. Apologies as above and Welcome

Alexander Wever from Germany, Simon Toms and Kerry Sims from EA, Vicki Crook from Traffic

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting January 2015 (April was 5th Anniversary)

Alex Koelewijn proposed their acceptance and the agenda was confirmed.

3. General Matters

3.1. Brussels Andrew reported that the Commission was now working on the reports from Member States which reviewed the effectiveness of current measures. Several countries reports were still awaited. SEG members expressed their frustration on progress to date and called for better coordination and more effective action.

3.2. Standards and Assessments Not reported upon

3.3. Science Brian reported by email that key papers were continuing to be circulated. The Willem Dekker slides showing the importance of translocation to the Swedish recovery programme were reviewed along with the emerging significance of Hydropower damage.

3.4. Conservation

River Test Project – Kerry Sims spoke of the emerging project on the Test where the EA, SEG, Rivers Trusts and Wildlife Trust and other partners were coming together to develop a sustainable approach. Next meeting 1st October.

Other Projects on the Parrett, Severn and Thames were mentioned and progress would rapidly develop following 'alternative measures and EMFF.

Simon Toms spoke briefly on the progress with the EA's Alternative Measures programme and Andrew said that he hoped there would be something definite and positive to work from at the next meeting.

Several countries reported the frustrating delay in the EMFF programme and it was hoped that the application forms will shortly be published. **It was proposed that the Rivers Trust and ZSL with SEG will develop this approach** here. Andrew also spoke of the developing relationships with Bristol Water and the Tidal Lagoon Company and how these might be included in any future bids and plans.

Simon Toms will report back in January with the tally of obstruction solutions implemented to date.

3.5. Commercial Report and the coming season

Alex Koelewijn briefly summarised the commercial situation with sales running at similar levels to 2014 and that prices were hardening. Vicki Crook gathered information on the state of the industry comparing it with 10 years ago. Total demand for farming, growing on for consumption purposes, was considered by the meeting as a whole and **consensus suggested a bracket of 10-15 tons and for restocking / translocation a further 10 tons.**

Alexander Wever spoke from a series of slides on the progress with the German Eel Initiative and how hopeful he was that it would start from 1st October. This development was greatly appreciated and is seen as a very important to the success of the sustainable programme.

Marc-Adrien's update from France spoke of the discussions to set the quota for 2015/ 2016 season. It was thought that the likely outcome will be way less than the previous years. One side is calling for about 15 tons and the other two to three times as much.

4. Business Planning, Governance, Budgets and Finance

The outcome of the financial discussion were two fold. **Firstly the annual subscriptions of 2000 Euros per company were to be initiated immediately** and secondly

The repayment of the loan to PW would be enabled through a concept of other parties loaning the money to SEG. This would spread the load and demonstrate wider commitment.

So the outstanding sum of 40k if divided by 8 parties would be 5k each. SEG would then repay the loaning parties in an agreed way over time. **Peter Neusinger the originator of the idea has agreed to help make this happen speedily. 'A loan to SEG to enable payment to PW of the original set up and starter costs of SEG'.**

Meanwhile there is to be a search for a Treasurer (not from UK) and further financial plans can be made and brought to Jan 2016 meeting.

4.1. The Outline Plan (see planning document)

It essentially says SEG must continue with its evolution into a European Body whilst maintaining the governance balance between Science, Conservation and the Industry

Decision to expand the nominations to 5 votes for each grouping Science, Conservation and Commercial was agreed in principle and Andrew will progress this

The search and Voting of a leader for each of the three groups to help on the development of a more detailed SEG European Business Plan will take place **Andrew**

Andrew presented the case for implementing the ISEAL Proposal from One World Standards. This is the phase one step as outlined in the proposal shared at the meeting. DUPAN has since offered to underwrite or loan the first phase cost of £7500.

5. SEG greatly appreciated the presentation by Jo Barker of ZSL on their Citizen Science Eel projects in the Thames

The link to the latest ZSL video clip on UTube the amazing eel life cycle is

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBRnNk_uo9Y

6. Illegal Trade an update from Traffic

Vicki Crook

The latest report from Traffic was presented by one of its author Vicki Crook. See attachment. The changing pattern of world trade in eels and the scale of the different Asian markets were assessed. The European Eel continues to find its way to Asia farms in spite of its CITES listing and in spite of the illegality. **Some 20 tons in both 2013/14 season and similar again for 2014/15.**

SEG is determined to stop this trade and proposes to help the Commission and the relevant authorities in Member States. We will build a campaign.

SEG and its members will support Traffic and participate with Enforcement including joining the Enforcement meeting in Brussels 4/5th November. A policy statement and campaign will now be developed and led by the Commercial members of SEG who believe that this continuing trade is threatening the future of their livelihoods and the sustainable programme for eel recovery.

7. **World Fish Migration Day 21 May 2016** Paul Coulson will be the UK lead for action to support this event. A plan will be brought to the January meeting.
8. **IFM EA SEG Eel Conference Peterborough** All SEG members are welcome and it will be another milestone on the road to recovery. Willem Dekker will be making a key scientific address and strong visiting teams from Netherlands and Germany are already planned.
9. **SEG next meeting 13 Jan 2016 in Holland**

Some Key Dates Going Forward

- 21st Sept DEFRA Briefing on Freshwater Fish Policy
- 29th Sept Severn Estuary Partnership Forum Bristol
- 30th Sept Tidal Power Conference Dover
- 1st Oct First meeting of the River Test Group
- 1st week October Loire Fishermen's visit to their customers
- 5th Oct Thames Estuary Group
- 13 -15th Oct IFM Annual Conference
- 10-12th Nov IFM EA SEG Eel Conference Peterborough
- 26th Nov address at Vissennetwork Conference in the Netherlands
- 21st May 2016 World Fish Migration day