



Sustainable  
*Eel* Group

# The SEG Standard

## Claims and Labelling Guide

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For further information please see:

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## 1. Purpose

This document describes the rules and guidelines related to claims and labels, primarily for SEG certified eel, but with some reference to the Eel Stewardship Fund (ESF) labels. The aims of this guide are to:-

- protect the value and integrity of the certified eel logos and
- assist businesses and individuals in developing packaging and marketing materials that promote the sustainability aspects of their products, practices, or services.

Specifically, this document:

- Clarifies and explains what certification under the SEG standard means
- Defines how businesses may use the SEG logo off product
- Defines how businesses may use the SEG logo on product:
- Define how certified eel and eel products must be identified or labelled – using SEG or ESF labelling
- Describes the relationships between the responsible organisations

This guide defines what the SEG standard, certification and labelling means and what claims can be made under what circumstances.

## 2. Applicability and responsibility

This Guide is for use by SEG, the Eel Stewardship Association (ESA), Certification Bodies, Clients assessed under the SEG standard, the organisations running the labelling schemes, the commercial eel sector, retailers, consumers, NGOs and anyone with an interest in the eel sector in Europe.

It is published on the page [SEG Standard System](#) for transparency on our website: [www.sustainableeelgroup.org](http://www.sustainableeelgroup.org). Those using and applying it are responsible for ensuring they use the latest version.

## 3. Trademark and intellectual property

The Sustainable Eel Group logo is the property of the Sustainable Eel Group. Use of the logo or reference of an organisation's association with the Sustainable Eel Group shall not be used on any documentation, packaging, invoicing or marketing material (including websites) without SEG's written agreement.

## 4. What certification under the SEG standard means

### 4.1 Certification

To be awarded a SEG standard certificate, a business must achieve the criteria of the SEG standard, as assessed and awarded by the Certification Body.

## 4.2 The meaning of certification

The simplest meaning of a SEG standard certificate, is that the client (business) is trading in European eel in such a way that it is regarded as:

***‘Responsibly sourced and managed’***

It means that they have complied with the Code of Conduct for a Responsible Eel Sector. Further, it refers to:

***‘Eel that is traceable from a responsible fishery which has been caught, handled and traded using the most responsible practices by organisations that have all met the SEG standard, which are working towards sustainability, forming a joined up responsible supply chain.’***

It also means that the business that has achieved the standard is making a

***‘positive contribution to the recovery of the population of the European eel’.***

Definitions and further explanation of these terms are described in the [SEG standard](#), version 6.0 published 21 June 2018.

## 4.3 Claims

On holding a valid SEG standard certificate, a business may make one or more of the following claims on its website, promotional material or publicity:

- ‘certified under the SEG standard’
- ‘trading in SEG certified, responsibly sourced and managed European eel’
- ‘certified responsibly sourced’
- ‘certified as trading in Eel that is traceable from a responsible fishery which has been caught, handled and traded using the most responsible practices by organisations that have all met the SEG standard, which are working towards sustainability, forming a joined up responsible supply chain’.

## 4.4 Other claims and requirements

(Note that some of these are covered in the [SEG Assurance system](#) and the but are repeated here as these two documents may have different audiences).

- Achievement of the standard, and award of the certificate, shows that the client has passed the requirements for the components of the standard relevant to that business.
- It indicates that the client has demonstrated responsible practices to make a positive contribution to the recovery of the European eel population.
- The certificate indicates that the client is trading in responsibly sourced, SEG certified eel.
- The certificate alone does not show, and shall not be used to give the impression, that any individual batch of eel or eel product is SEG certified.
- The client may show their certificate to customers to show that they have passed the general requirements of the relevant section of the standard. Clients should also show them the terms and conditions of use.

- Certified products shall have relevant batch labelling to denote to enable assurance of traceability in the chain of custody.

#### 4.5 Other users

Media organisations and publishers may use the SEG logo for illustrative purposes, with written permission from SEG.

Organisations or individuals, such as grantors, foundations, certification partners or project collaborators that wish to promote their relationship with SEG, and that have a written agreement for logo use may also be permitted to use the logo.

## 5. How eel and eel products shall be identified or labelled

The use of the different certified eel logos (on product) has distinct parameters based on the type of use:

### 5.1 Business to business: from fishery to wholesaler / processor

#### Traceability and labelling

- Traceability of SEG certified product is fundamental to the SEG standard and the responsibly sourced supply chain. Now, from the application of Version 6 of the SEG standard (published 21 June 2018), only those clients who have passed the Traceability component and who are trading in certified eel shall achieve the SEG standard.
- When the SEG standard has been achieved, because that means that some or all of the client's eel is from a certified source, certified batches shall be labelled as-such and records shall be maintained (as required in the Traceability component of the certification assessment).
- Clients shall be provided with a unique number, related to their SEG standard certificate number. If the client doesn't already have a batch numbering system, a SEG standard batch labelling system can be adopted (see example below)
- The SEG logo can be used and the words 'Certified responsibly sourced' applied, along with the SEG website address ([www.sustainableeelgroup.org](http://www.sustainableeelgroup.org)) so that businesses and organisations can look up to see what the claim 'Certified responsibly sourced' means
- Examples of how labels shall look, are provided here:

(1) SEG logo and wording on or with product:



(2) SEG logo and wording when associated with a batch label:



- The label shall be associated with the consignment (e.g. on boxes, packaging, delivery note, invoice)
- There are no sizing or placement guidelines to the use of the label, except that the wording and logo shall be clearly visible.
- The label and claim shall **only be used on products that can be shown to be 100% traceable from certified source; there can be no mixing with uncertified product**. The client must be able to show, to an auditor, on inspection, the traceable source of any product that carries the label or claim.
- This batch labelling is a ‘business to business’ assurance scheme (fishery to wholesaler / processor. This is not designed for use on packaging for the consumer where the ESF label is to be used (see below).
- Written agreement from SEG shall be required to approve the use and appearance of the SEG label.
- SEG shall monitor usage to ensure that this guide is being adopted

## 5.2 Business to consumer: wholesaler / processor to retailer / shop / supermarket / restaurant

### Uncertified eel

Eel Stewardship Funds (ESFs) have developed in the Netherlands in 2010 and in Germany in 2016. In these schemes a small levy is placed on sales of eel, at a level set by the Eel Stewardship Association. This is then paid to the Eel Stewardship Fund for that country.

Those funds are used to finance scientific research and eel conservation projects such as restocking juvenile eels to areas of low abundance, building eel passes to help migration, or to even catch migrating silver eels and transfer them to the sea to by-pass the lethal effects of pumping stations.

In this way, consumers of eel have been able to fund and support eel conservation projects and measures.

Eel products in this scheme are identified by the label:



Rules for use of this label, including the claims it makes, are described on the eel Stewardship Association's [website](#).

In summary, this label claims that a proportion of the sale of this uncertified product is used in conservation measures and scientific research that directly benefit the European eel population.

No claims of SEG certified or use of the SEG logo can be used in conjunction with this label.

### Certified eel

As SEG standard certified eel becomes available through the supply chain and reaches the retailer and consumer, a different consumer-facing ESF label will be used:



This label shall be used to identify:

- Certified, responsibly sourced eel that meets the SEG standard. **Note that can only be used where 100% of the labelled product is from the certified supply chain** - there can be no mixing with uncertified product.
- Where a proportion of the financial proceeds has been allocated to an Eel Stewardship Fund for the direct benefit and recovery of the wild eel population.

Rules for use of this label, including the claims it makes, are described on the eel Stewardship Association's [website](#).

### 5.3 Choices for the retailer and consumer

With the application of the above options, retailers and consumers will have the ability to make a choice between purchasing:

- **Non-labelled eels**, with no associated ESF and no benefit back to the environment or the eel
- **ESF labelled eels**, where a proportion of sales go directly to eel conservation projects but are not SEG certified. The aim is for this label to decline and cease as certified supplies increase.
- **ESF labelled certified eels**, which are SEG Certified Responsibly Sourced and a proportion of sales go directly to eel conservation projects



## 6. The relationships between the organisations responsible

### 6.1 Sustainable Eel Group (SEG)

SEG is the system or scheme owner for the SEG standard. It shall be responsible for designing and setting the standard and supporting materials and systems for the effective, transparent and fair operation of the SEG standard system.

SEG shall work with the Eel Stewardship Association (see below) and the sector to identify and agree the mechanisms and amount at which clients shall make a contribution to Eel Stewardship Funds (ESFs) (see below). This to maintain a level playing field and to provide unlawful practices under EU competition laws. The funds shall be owned by the regional ESFs.

### 6.3 Eel Stewardship Fund (ESF)

ESFs are established to finance activities that contribute to a sustainable recovery of the eel stocks in European waters. Individual ESFs are administered by agreement of the members of the ESA.

ESFs set the terms of the logo licensing system for members to be able to use and to make their contributions.

ESFs currently exist in The Netherlands and Germany and it is expected that they will expand in size and into more countries.

ESFs can contribute to the costs of running SEG and its projects – particularly where it is providing a direct benefit the eel population or service to the eel sector.

### 6.4 Eel Stewardship Association (ESA)

The (ESA) is founder of the Eel Stewardship Funds and owner of the ESF trademark. ESA was established in 2015 by industry organisations of the Netherlands and Germany. ESA members make the decisions on how the ESF schemes operate, i.e. how funds are collected and how monies are allocated and spent.

### 6.5 Clients

Clients are the fishermen, traders, business and eel farms and processors (e.g. smokeries) who have been audited for their compliance with the SEG standard. Clients shall form a financial contractual agreement with the CB to undertake audits.

Clients shall be required to make a contribution to an ESF in order to meet the requirements of the SEG standard, as part of them making their positive contribution to the recovery of the eel.

Clients shall provide data and information to SEG and the CB to enable SEG to operate its Monitoring & Evaluation system.

## 7. How to apply for use of logos and claims

### 7.1 SEG logo

SEG-related claims and use of the SEG logo are subject to a licensing agreement between SEG and the entity wishing to use the logos or make claims. Licensing is conducted in line with the SEG Claims and Labelling Guide.

To apply to use the SEG logo or for details on how to use and apply any claims, contact: [standard@sustainableeelgroup.org](mailto:standard@sustainableeelgroup.org).

### 7.2 ESF logo

For more details on the ESF scheme and how to use it, see: <http://www.esf.international/how-to-use-esf/>.

To apply to use the ESF logo contact: [info@esf.international](mailto:info@esf.international).

## 8. Fraudulent Products

SEG is committed to upholding the credibility of its programme and will therefore carry out surveillance activities to ensure logo and claims use are in accordance with this guide and licence agreements.

SEG shall:

1. Every year, visit 10% of all fishmongers, markets and restaurant outlets that offer SEG or ESF labelled products and inspect how the products are labelled and advertised. Visited outlets shall rotate from year to year;
2. Every year, check SEG and ESF labelled products in a quantity that makes up 10% of all labelled products and request the chain of custody certificates of companies in the respective supply chain with the aim of identifying the origin of the product;
3. Investigate any reports SEG receives in relation to potentially fraudulent products.
4. Where labels, claims or origins are faulty or cannot be identified, SEG will take action to stop or correct the situation, for example requesting packaging to be corrected and reprinted or requesting an unscheduled audit. SEG may draw on the support of CBs in carrying out investigations.



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