

## Position on Trade of European Eel from non EU Countries

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### Background and purpose

The EU has a strong, well known and increasingly well regulated policy and regulations for the trade of European eels within the EU, and to restrict trade outside.

For non-EU countries, whilst there are international CITES regulations in place, the application of those regulations by the different CITES authorities of each country has the risk of being inconsistent.

This statement sets out the Sustainable Eel Group's (SEG's) position.

### The reason for a SEG position

- SEG has campaigned strongly and successfully since 2012 for the robust application of all regulations that protect the European eel and facilitate the eel's recovery. This has included the Eel Regulation EC 2007/1100 and also the CITES Regulations that has restricted trade to Asia. SEG continues these campaigns for the ongoing protection of the eel stock.
- Most eel trade is within the EU and, as a single CITES authority for that bloc, there is no restriction of trade between EU member states. Some trade is between the EU and range states (those with eel, but not in the EU) and some are between non-EU range states. Countries such as Morocco, the United Kingdom, Tunisia and Belarus are at liberty to make trade arrangements outside of the EU agreements. Each has its own CITES authority to interpret the regulations and process permit applications.
- Some operators are SEG certified and we apply additional assurance processes to ensure the credibility of the trade, and the associated credibility and reputation of SEG and its certified participants.
- Some operators are not SEG certified. Whilst we therefore have less connection or control over such trade, we have a strong opinion, designed to provide the adequate protection to the eel.

### SEG's position

- SEG supports any trade between non EU states that applies the same level of robustness as the EU, to be consistent with the EU Eel Regulation, i.e.:-
- The donor country meets the 60% glass eel restocking target,
- The donor and recipient countries have Eel Management Plans that are of the same standard as those specified in the EU,
- The donor and recipient countries are implementing those Eel Management Plans,
- In high risk countries - i.e. those where intelligence indicates a high risk of illegal re-export, e.g. to Asia - additional assurance processes are put in place to ensure that the trade is made for the intended purpose. For example a consignment could include an inspector to accompany and verify that a consignment of glass eels for restocking was fully used for that purpose.