



Monitoring and Evaluation System Public Statement



Our purpose

The European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) population has declined significantly and is now classified by the IUCN as 'critically endangered'. It was once very common and widely spread across its range from North Africa, through Europe and up to Scandinavia, and supported fishing, associated trade and livelihoods.

Our primary purpose is for the recovery of the European eel, with multiple concurrent benefits to habitats, communities and economies that rely on it.

Scope and Boundaries of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System

The M&E system supports the following principal objectives:

- To monitor the health (quantity) of the European eel (*Anguilla anguilla* L.) across its natural range in Europe, North Africa and Scandinavia
- To monitor the status of socio-economic aspects of those business and countries that fish for and trade in European eel
- To monitor the health of aquatic ecosystems.

The intended effects of SEG's work are:

- The recovery of the eel population to 'healthy and biological safe' levels across its range
- such that it can play its part in aquatic ecosystems
- and support sustainable use for the benefit of communities, local economies and traditions

The SEG standard aims to:

- Promote best practice in the commercial eel sector
- Enable the commercial eel sector to demonstrate how, by adopting best practice, they can make a 'positive contribution' to the eel population
- Provide an assured traceable supply of 'responsibly sourced' eel, from fishery to consumer
- Provide the consumer with the choice to purchase responsibly sourced eel
- Reduce the illegal trade of eels
- Stimulate wetland restoration and the unblocking of migration pathways

Roles and Responsibilities

The M&E team is managed by David Bunt (Director of Conservation Operations). He is responsible for:

- Designing the M&E system
- Collating data and information and reporting on the measures in the M&E Framework
- Reviewing and improving the M&E system

Defining the intended change

Long-term outcomes

SEG's vision is:

Healthy wild eel populations distributed throughout their natural range fulfilling their role in the aquatic environment and supporting sustainable use for the benefit of communities, local economies and traditions.

To help achieve this, as described in our Mission our long term organisational goals are:

To provide the respected leadership alliance that enables and promotes the joined-up conservation and management of the eel in the Member States of Europe and across the eel's range, linking all interests in an open and effective process to achieve SEG's Vision.

Short and Medium Term Outcomes

Our shorter term outcomes are to:

- Define, promote and encourage best practice fishing (via the SEG standard)
- Reduce the illegal trade of European eel to Asia
- Enable adequate levels of restocking to support eel management plans
- Gain independent accreditation and credibility for our strategies and the SEG standard
- To improve the traceability of eels sold back to their source
- Increase investment in eel conservation programmes and scientific studies

Our strategies are described in more detail in our [Theory of Change](#).

Organisational Strategies, and their Contribution to Intended Outcomes and Impacts

SEG employs multiple strategies to achieve its aims and objectives:

The SEG Standard

- Implementation of the SEG standard aims to adopt best practice across the sector
- The SEG and ESF labelling schemes aim to provide assurance and choice to retailers consumers who wish to buy responsibly
- The labelling schemes and associated marketing aim to develop a market demand for certified, responsibly sourced eel and so encourage further adoption of the standard
- Assessments against the standard are performed by accredited third party auditors under the oversight of a Conformity Assessment Body – CAB.
- These CABs are accredited according to our [Accreditation System](#), and samples of assessment reports are assessed by SEG as part of our monitoring and oversight role.
- This ensures that assessments are of a high quality, carried out consistently and without bias.

Advocacy and influencing

- SEG aims to be highly influential in European Commission and national government policies that affect the aquatic environment and the eel.
- SEG develops and builds its credibility based on using a balanced collaboration of scientists, conservationists and the commercial sector to develop and present its views in the most compelling way.

Collaborative and partnership working for science and conservation programmes

- SEG is a small NGO and must work in partnership with others to be most effective at garnering knowledge and
- We work with scientists, conservation organisations (usually NGOs) to influence, gain funding and manage projects that will directly help eel populations or scientific knowledge

Performance Monitoring

Performance monitoring includes:

Measuring **long term impacts**, such as:

- the status of eel populations
- the status of aquatic ecosystems
- the effect on traditional forms of eel fishing and eating eel

Measuring **short and medium term impacts**, such as:

- the level of best practice fishing and trading – by the take-up of the SEG standard
- the level of illegal trade (exports to Asia)
- the level of restocking of juvenile eels from areas of high abundance to under-populated areas
- the level of funding for eel science studies and conservation programmes

The programme also measures the effectiveness of the SEG standard, with key performance indicators for each of its components.

Performance monitoring involves the collection of data and information from fisheries, traders and other businesses in the sector, through assessment reports, market surveys and direct contact. Published information will also be sourced, e.g. from the ICES Working Group on Eel annual reports.

The measures and targets for these are presented in our [M&E System Performance Indicators](#).

Outcome and impact evaluation

SEG is developing its repository of eel science publications. We are collating studies from around the World and publish them at:

<http://www.sustainableeelgroup.org/scientific-publications/>

SEG has produced a number of its own papers to understand the eel sector better. Examples are:

- [Evaluation of eel stocking across Europe and recommendations for improvement](#)
- [Quantifying the illegal trade in European glass eels \(*Anguilla anguilla*\): Evidences and Indicators](#)

As SEG has developed its first set of M&E performance indicators, an evaluation against those will be made in 2018 and subsequently reported. That will form a baseline for our M&E system, from which to assess performance of the effectiveness of our strategies.

Those reports will be published on the SEG website at: [Evaluation Reports](#)

Improving the Effectiveness of the M&E system

This is our first M&E system. We don't expect it to be right first time and we welcome feedback on how to improve it.

As described above, our first evaluation will be a baseline report to establish the status of our key performance indicators as at 2018. That will be published in 2019. In publishing it we will seek feedback from partners, stakeholders, contributors and our own experiences to gain and implement the learning of:

- The most efficient and effective processes and mechanisms to collect the data
- The most useful and informative data to collect and report
- The most informative and accessible ways to present the reports

Opportunities for engagement

Procedures and opportunities for stakeholder engagement

The M&E framework was developed with stakeholders during consultation of the SEG standard in its review from February 2017 to June 2018. A first draft was provided in June 2017 and a second in December 2017 with opportunities to provide written comments. There was a workshop in June 2017. Feedback was received from a range of stakeholders, scientists and NGOs and the feedback was used to develop this first set of performance indicators.

The review and consultation process is published on the SEG website [here](#).

SEG provided specific responses to participants on comments received and a full log is published [here](#).

SEG will produce its first evaluation report in 2018 and will seek feedback from contributors and readers on (1) the most efficient and effective processes and mechanisms to collect the data; (2) the most useful and informative data to collect and report and (3) The most informative and accessible ways to present the reports.

Reports will be published from a SEG web-page called [Evaluation Reports](#).

Contact point for submission of comments or complaints about M&E

Stakeholders can send comments directly to M&E staff via email, or answer surveys designed to obtain feedback on specific reports.

For comments about the SEG M&E system, contact: standard@sustainableeelgroup.org

If you have any complaints about the SEG standard system or how it has been applied, to include this M&E system contact: info@sustainableeelgroup.org

