

Versions Issued

Version No.	Date	Description of Amendment	Approved by:
1.0	1 May 2025	Creation of Policy	SEG Board

This document is the property of the Sustainable Eel Group. It is effective from the date above.

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 The Sustainable Eel Group (SEG) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and respectful environment for all individuals it interacts with, including but not limited to staff, board members, volunteers, partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries. This commitment aligns with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice and the importance of safeguarding within sustainable systems. This Safeguarding Policy outlines SEG's commitment to protecting individuals from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all activities undertaken by SEG, including but not limited to:
 - SEG's work to aid in the recovery of the European eel, including projects related to fisheries, habitat restoration, and community engagement.
 - Meetings, events, and workshops, including those related to the SEG Standard and certification processes.
 - Research and data collection, which may involve interactions with individuals and communities.
 - Communications and public relations activities.
 - Management of the SEG Standard and certification.
- 1.3 This policy is designed to be compliant with the ISEAL Code of Good Practice, particularly requirements related to good governance.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Safeguarding:** Proactive measures taken to protect individuals from harm.
- 2.2 **Harm:** Includes but is not limited to abuse (physical, sexual, emotional), neglect, exploitation, harassment, bullying, and any form of ill-treatment.

3. Policy Principles

- 3.1 **The welfare of the individual is paramount.** SEG will prioritise the safety and well-being of all individuals in its activities.
- 3.2 **Prevention is key.** SEG will take proactive measures to prevent harm from occurring.
- 3.3 **Respect and dignity.** SEG will treat all individuals with respect and dignity.

- 3.4 **Responsibility and accountability.** All individuals associated with SEG have a responsibility to adhere to this policy and report any concerns.
- 3.5 **Transparency.** SEG will be open and transparent in its safeguarding practices.
- 3.6 **Collaboration.** SEG will work with partners and stakeholders to promote safeguarding.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 The **SEG Board** has overall responsibility for the implementation and review of this policy.
- 4.2 A designated **Safeguarding Officer** will be appointed to oversee the implementation of this policy and serve as a point of contact for any safeguarding concerns. That designated officer is currently: David Bunt: d.bunt@sustainableeelgroup.org.
- 4.3 All **staff, board members, contractors and volunteers** are responsible for:
- Adhering to this policy and related procedures.
 - Recognizing and reporting any safeguarding concerns.
 - Maintaining appropriate behaviour in their interactions with individuals.
- 4.4 **Partners and stakeholders** are expected to align with the principles of this policy. SEG will ensure that contracts and agreements include the requirements of this policy.

5. Procedures

5.1 Risk Assessment:

- SEG will conduct risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential safeguarding risks in its activities.
- Risk assessments will consider the specific context of SEG's work with eel populations and related communities, including potential risks related to fieldwork, data collection, and community engagement.

5.2 **Recruitment:** SEG will ensure safe recruitment practices, including appropriate background checks, for individuals working with vulnerable groups.

5.3 Training:

- SEG will provide safeguarding training to staff, board members, and volunteers.
- Training will be tailored to the specific safeguarding risks relevant to SEG's activities and will be delivered to those listed in 4.3.

5.4 Reporting Concerns:

- Any individual who has a concern about harm to an individual must report it to the Safeguarding Officer or, if the concern involves the Safeguarding Officer, to a designated Board member.
- SEG will have clear procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- All concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly and appropriately.

5.5 Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

- SEG will maintain confidentiality regarding safeguarding concerns, except where there is a need to disclose information to protect an individual or comply with legal requirements.
- Any sharing of data will be done in accordance with SEG's Data Management System, ensuring that personal and confidential data is protected.

5.6 **Responding to Incidents:** SEG will have procedures in place for responding to safeguarding incidents, including:

- Taking immediate action to ensure the safety of the individual.
- Investigating the incident.
- Implementing appropriate disciplinary or corrective action.
- Learning from incidents to improve safeguarding practices.

6. Linkage to SEG's Theory of Change

6.1 SEG's Theory of Change outlines the strategy for achieving its long-term goal of 'biologically safe wild eel populations.'

6.2 This Safeguarding Policy directly supports SEG's Theory of Change by contributing to the following key elements:

- **People:** By creating a safe and respectful environment, the policy ensures the well-being of individuals involved in eel recovery efforts. This fosters trust and collaboration, which are essential for the social dimensions of SEG's work.
- **Sustainability:** Safeguarding promotes ethical conduct and accountability, reducing the risk of harm and exploitation in eel-related activities. This contributes to the overall sustainability of SEG's interventions by ensuring they are socially responsible.

6.3. Specifically, the implementation of this policy helps mitigate potential negative impacts and ensures that SEG's work empowers stakeholders, aligning with the Theory of Change's emphasis on positive social, environmental, and economic outcomes.

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 SEG will regularly monitor and review the implementation and effectiveness of this policy, as part of its broader Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) processes, as required by the ISEAL Codes of Good Practice.

7.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or more frequently if required.

8. Related Policies and Documents

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant SEG policies and procedures, including but not limited to the following, which are published at: <https://www.sustainableeelgroup.org/the-seg-standard-system/>

- Risk Management Policy
- Data Management System
- Document Management System
- Whistleblower Policy
- Complaints Procedure