

## 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 fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment in its operations. From its inception, SEG has recognised the importance of bringing together diverse perspectives and stakeholders to achieve its mission of restoring healthy eel populations. This commitment to inclusivity is embedded in SEG's Theory of Change and is essential for achieving sustainable outcomes.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all staff, board members, volunteers, contractors, partners, and any individuals working with or on behalf of SEG.
- 1.3 This policy covers all aspects of SEG's operations, including but not limited to:
  - Recruitment, hiring, and promotion
  - Compensation and benefits
  - Training and development
  - Workplace conduct
  - Partnerships and collaborations
  - Program design and implementation
  - Stakeholder engagement
- 1.4 This policy is designed to align with the principles of the ISEAL Code of Good Practice, emphasizing stakeholder engagement, non-discrimination, and creating positive social impacts.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Diversity:** The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organisation, or community. This includes, but is not limited to, differences in:
  - Age
  - Gender identity and expression
  - Race and ethnicity

- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic background
- Religion
- Disability
- Nationality
- Culture
- Education
- Skills and experiences

2.2 **Equity:** The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Equity may require differential treatment to achieve equal outcomes.

2.3 **Inclusion:** The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.

### 3. Principles

3.1 **Respect:** SEG values and respects the diversity of all individuals and is committed to creating a culture of dignity and mutual respect.

3.2 **Fairness:** SEG is committed to ensuring fairness in all its practices and procedures, providing equal opportunities and eliminating discriminatory barriers.

3.3 **Belonging:** SEG strives to create a sense of belonging for all individuals, where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their best.

3.4 **Accountability:** SEG holds itself accountable for implementing and upholding this policy, monitoring progress and taking action to address any shortcomings.

### 4. Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

4.1 **Diversity:** SEG recognises that its strength lies in its commitment to bridge divides and foster collaboration across diverse groups. Its organisational structure is unique, relying on the expertise of stakeholders from diverse professional and cultural backgrounds to achieve its goals in a range of geographical contexts. SEG is committed to:

- **Geographic Diversity:** Fostering collaboration across the diverse range of European countries and regions where the European eel is present, acknowledging the distinct cultural contexts, relationships with eels, and challenges and opportunities in each area.
- **Sectoral Diversity:** Uniting stakeholders from various sectors, including eel fishing, eel production, government, scientific researchers, arts and culture, and environmental conservation, recognising that a holistic and integrated approach is crucial for effective and sustainable eel management.
- **Professional Diversity:** Recognising the value of different types of expertise and experience represented on its Board and staff and among its collaborators in a range of industries and organisational backgrounds, including scientific, cultural, traditional ecological knowledge, policymaking, and on-the-ground conservation practices.

- **Demographic Diversity:** Valuing the contributions of individuals of all ages, genders, and backgrounds, understanding that a broad range of perspectives enriches decision-making, problem-solving, and project implementation, and that the aim to restore healthy eel populations cannot be achieved in one generation or country alone.
- Building a team and Board that so far as possible reflects this multi-faceted diversity, ensuring representation from the communities and stakeholders across its operational range.
- Designing and implementing programmes and activities that are inclusive and accessible to our wide range of stakeholders, proactively addressing potential barriers related to culture, language, location, and other factors that may hinder participation.

#### 4.2 **Equity:** SEG is committed to:

- Identifying and addressing systemic barriers that may disproportionately affect certain groups within the eel sector or conservation community, with particular attention to ensuring equitable participation in decision-making processes.
- Providing equitable opportunities for Board service, collaboration, and leadership roles, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.
- Providing reasonable accommodation for staff, Board members, and participants with disabilities to ensure their engagement in SEG's activities.

#### 4.3 **Inclusion:** SEG is committed to:

- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where all staff, Board members, partners, and stakeholders feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique skills and perspectives, regardless of their location, sector, or background.
- Promoting inclusive communication and decision-making processes that facilitate active participation and shared ownership among SEG's diverse network.
- Fostering a culture of allyship and support, where individuals actively work to challenge bias and discrimination and advocate for equity within the organization and the broader eel conservation community.

## 5. Implementation and Responsibilities

- 5.1 SEG will endeavour to integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles into its strategic planning, policies, and procedures.
- 5.2 The Board will champion DEI providing leadership and resources, and ensuring that DEI considerations are embedded in organisational decision-making, recruitment, and partnership development.
- 5.3 All staff members, Board members, and partners are responsible for upholding this policy, actively promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion and their work, and challenging any behaviors that undermine these principles, recognizing that this responsibility extends across all interactions within SEG.
- 5.4 SEG will establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating its DEI efforts, using data to inform continuous improvement and ensure accountability.

## 6. Reporting and Expressing Concerns

- 6.1 Any individual who believes they have experienced or witnessed a violation of this policy should report it to the SEG Chair person in the first instance.
- 6.2 SEG will investigate all concerns promptly and impartially.
- 6.3 SEG will take appropriate action to address any concerns.
- 6.4 SEG prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report concerns in good faith.

## 7. Linkage to SEG's Theory of Change

- 7.1 SEG's Theory of Change recognises that achieving “biologically safe wild eel populations” requires a holistic and integrated approach that considers social, environmental, and economic factors.
- 7.2 This DEI Policy is inherent in SEG's Theory of Change because:
  - **Social Cohesion:** SEG's work inherently involves bringing together diverse groups of people. This policy ensures that this convening power is used equitably and inclusively, fostering collaboration and shared ownership of eel recovery efforts.
  - **Environmental Justice:** By promoting equity, this policy helps ensure that the benefits and burdens of eel conservation are distributed fairly across different communities and stakeholders.
  - **Economic Sustainability:** An inclusive approach strengthens the long-term sustainability of the eel sector by promoting fair practices, reducing conflict, fostering innovation, and preserving eel populations and habitats for many generations to come.
- 7.3 By embedding DEI principles into its operations, SEG not only fulfills its ethical obligations but also enhances its effectiveness in achieving its core mission and contributing to a more sustainable future for eels, eel habitats, and communities connected to them.

## 8. Monitoring and Review

- 8.1 This policy will be reviewed as part of the annual management system review and updated to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with best practices and ISEAL Code requirements.

## 8. Related Policies and Documents

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

- 009 Theory of Change
- 012 Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- 018 Risk Management Policy
- 015 Complaints Procedure
- 020 Whistleblower Policy