

CONVERSION OF WORKING PARTIES TO PROJECTS

Working Group on Eel – WGEEL

(see Annex 1 for ACRONYMS)

Owner: **Joint EIFAAC & ICES**

(Special issues relating to joint EIFAAC/ICES Working Groups/projects are listed in Annex 2)

The Working Group on Eel is a joint Expert Scientific Working Group between EIFAAC and ICES. There is liaison with the First EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM Workshop on Eel and the ICES/HELCOM Baltic Workshops on Eel.

Role of ICES: The International Council for Exploration of the Seas (ICES) is the primary source of scientific advice on the marine ecosystem to governments and international regulatory bodies that manage the North Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas. The Advisory Committee, or ACOM, is the sole competent body in ICES for scientific advice in support of the management of coastal and ocean resources and ecosystems. ACOM works on the basis of scientific analysis prepared in the expert groups and the advisory process include peer review of the analysis before it can be used as basis for the advice. In the case of eel, the relevant expert group is the Joint EIFAAC/ICES Working Group on Eel. ICES covers fish stocks in the north Atlantic, which for eel includes *Anguilla anguilla* and *A. rostrata*.

Role of EIFAAC: Covers inland waters, fisheries and aquaculture of member countries of EIFAAC, including Mediterranean countries, not covered by ICES. EIFAAC brings expertise and specific issues to the Working Group relating to the inland water phases of eel. EIFAAC and FAO have the structure and experience to disseminate advice and information to a wide audience of scientists, managers and stakeholders. This it will achieve through the EIFAAC Technical and Scientific Committee.

There is a new co-ordination role required between EIFAAC, ICES and GFCM to cover the Mediterranean and North African area.

Initial EIFAAC Approval: 1996/98

Last EIFAAC Review: 2012

Next Scheduled EIFAAC Review: 2014

Recommendation for project to continue: Yes/No \ yes

1. OBJECTIVE AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

Note: see Annex 1 for acronyms

a) **Purpose/objective¹**

To report on the status of the European and American eel stocks and to provide technical and scientific advice in support of the development and implementation of the EU Regulation for the recovery of the eel stock. To provide regular updates on the latest advances in eel stock assessment and science and to develop a means of post-evaluating the outcome of implemented management actions on the whole stock.

¹ Statement of purpose for the project including goals and objectives.

b) **Rationale**²

The eel stock is in decline, recruitment is at an all time low and exploitation of the stock is currently unsustainable. ICES have advised that anthropogenic mortality should be reduced to as close to zero as possible and the EU have implemented a Regulation for the recovery of the stock. The EU Regulation requires Member States to put in place approved eel management plans and to monitor their implementation and outcomes. Eel has been listed as critically endangered by IUCN and as an Annex II species in CITES. The WGEEL brings together national and key agency scientists to provide the latest advice on the status of the stock, a framework for post-evaluation of the outcome of management actions and implementation of the Regulation, technical support to MSs for local assessments and eel management and updates on the latest developments in eel science pertinent to the objectives. The WGEEL is now listed in the EU DCF as an international expert group providing the basis for scientific advice and supported by DCF funding (DCF provides funds for nominated national participants to attend Expert Stock Assessment Groups).

c) **Benefits**

- Annual stock assessment and observation on the status of the stock, including recruitment trends
- Local stock assessment methodologies
- Up to date (annual) best available scientific advice under ICES /EU Memorandum of Understanding
- Scientific support to the EU Regulation for the Recovery of the Eel Stock
- Scientific support for the EU determination of non-detriment findings for the trade of eel with respect to CITES listings
- Network of key eel scientists covering the north Atlantic, Baltic, Mediterranean areas and close links with Asian and Australasian scientists

d) **Clients**

EU – DGMARE
EU – DGENV
FAO
EU – MSs Government Organisations
North America GOs

2. **TERMS OF REFERENCE: PROGRAMME/PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

Currently, the annual ToR is drawn-up by ACOM, in consultation with the Chairs of WGEEL and the Technical Secretariat of EIFAAC. This consultation should now include the EIFAAC TSC. Each ToR is addressed annually by the WGEEL.

a) **Terms of reference for 2013**

The **Joint EIFAAC/ICES Working Group on Eels** (WGEEL), chaired by Martin de Graaf, The Netherlands and Russell Poole, Ireland, will meet in Sukarietta, Spain, 18–22 March and in ICES Copenhagen, Denmark, 5–11 September 2013, to:

In preparation for undertaking the international stock assessment, the joint EIFAAC/ICES Working Group on Eel (WGEEL) requires access to the most up to date stock indicators for each Eel Management Unit. To achieve this, ICES will issue a data call to the EU for these data and for supporting information to facilitate quality assurance of the stock indicators.

² Reason for the project; why the project is important and key outcomes and stakeholders.

Preparatory work

- a) Develop data call in conjunction with ICES for stock indicators and supporting information on local/national methods used to derive indicators;
- b) Support ICES to issue data call to MS via EU in first week of December 2012 for return deadline 1 February 2013;
- c) Collate the returns from the data call and from the Member States 2012 Reports to the EU.

Spring Meeting

- d) Complete the broad-brush quality assurance checking of the reported Eel Management Unit biomass and mortality estimates, and prepare the data for the international stock assessment;
- e) Provide a summary report on the reported data and stock indicators and the quality assurance of the indicators;
- f) Provide a first compilation of the best available biomass and mortality data, along with additional data from the Baltic and GFCM areas;
- g) Further develop the S/R relationship and reference points, following the ICES peer-review, and using the latest available data.

Autumn Meeting

- h) Evaluate the EU Regulation (EC No. 1100/2007) and its consistency with the precautionary approach, following the plan developed by WGEEL in 2012;
- i) Apply the reported biomass and mortality data to the precautionary diagram using PA limits and the EU Regulation derived target/limits if different and provide appropriate advice on the state of the international stock and its mortality levels;
- j) assess the latest trends in recruitment, stock (yellow and silver eel) and fisheries, including effort, indicative of the status of the European stock, and of the impact of exploitation and other anthropogenic factors; analyse the impact of the implementation of the eel recovery plan on time series data (i.e. data discontinuities). Update international databases for data on eel stock and fisheries, as well as habitat and eel quality (EQD) related data;
- k) In conjunction with WGBEC and MCWG, review and develop approaches to quantifying the effects of eel quality on stock dynamics and integrating these into stock assessments. Develop reference points for evaluating impacts on eel;
- l) Respond to specific requests in support of the eel stock recovery regulation, as necessary.

Material and data for the meeting must be available to the group no later than 14 days prior to the starting date of each meeting.

WGEEL will report by 27 September 2013 for the attention of ACOM, WGRECORDS, SGEF and FAO, EIFAAC and GFCM.

b) Project Manager or Chair

2013-2015	Chair	Martin de Graaf (The Netherlands)
2013	Co-chair	Russell Poole (Ireland)
Oct 2013-2016	Co-chair	Alan Walker (United Kingdom)

i. Management responsibilities

Chair the WGEEL

Report to EIFAAC TSC, ICES ACOM, WGRECORDS, RG/ADG, SCICOM Groups. Set the meeting Agenda and workplan, co-ordinate the Country Reports and the running of the meeting, edit report, edit draft advice. Provide support to the Review Groups and Advice Drafting Groups where appropriate.

c) Participants³

³ Identify participants, include details of relevance of the participant to the project and the capacity in which participation is carried out.

i. Identify participants

Scientific Experts ICES National Nominations
DCF Government Nominations
EIFAAC Participants
GFCM Participants
Invited Experts

ii. Include details of relevance of the participant to the project (e.g. data provider, stakeholder, scientists, wildlife managers, policy makers, organization)

Scientists, data providers
The Expert Group WGEEL needs a communication framework with managers and stakeholders.

iii. State the capacity in which participation is carried out

Nominated and invited Scientists

d) Time frame

Annual meetings

Meeting on: 18–22 March 2013 & 5–11 September 2013

e) Benchmarks/deliverables⁴

One meeting per year (two in 2013 to support revision of the EU Regulation for recovery of eel stock)

One technical report per year, including individual Country Reports to the WGEEL

Draft scientific advice to ICES ADGroup (ACOM)

Each ToR is addressed annually.

Report is organised into themes.

f) Methodology⁵

Meetings and correspondence, including an Annual Working Group involving those identified in C(i) and close liaison with Study Groups and Workshops.

Country Reports on Eel stock and data updates.

Collation and examination of national data collected under the DCF

Collation and examination of national data reported to the EU

3. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

a) EIFAAC TSC

Review of annual report and technical advice and dissemination in non-ICES areas. Make information available for managers and stakeholders. Formulating ToR in conjunction with ACOM.

ICES ACOM

⁴ Start date, finish date, deadlines for specific deliverables.

⁵ e.g. meetings, workshops, literature review, research.

Peer-review of the annual report, drafting and issuing of technical advice. Formulating ToR.

EIFAAC Secretariat

Final approval of draft report for publication

Others?

ICES Secretariat

Sharepoint website management

Co-ordination of nominations for participation

Provision of report templates, technical support, data support group, training (e.g. Chair duties)

Formatting and editing of report and Country Reports.

Drafting and issuing data calls.

b) Project management⁶

Chair/vice chair: Communication with parent bodies/committees
Setting agenda and work plan
Finalising participants
Running meeting
Co-ordinating Country Reports

Host Country: Local arrangements

ICES HQ: if no host country – host meeting
Review Report
Produce advice
Archive Sharepoints

c) Partnerships/linkages⁷

FAO EIFAAC – TSC

ICES – ACOM

FAO GFCM

Other linkages to SCICOM, WGRECORDS

EU – DGMARE and DGENV (CITES)

FAO

Links with eel research

4. BUDGET/SUPPORT

None required

Participation is at National Expense

WGEEL is listed in the DCF for international co-ordination and eligible for DCF funding to cover expense

b) Budget required

⁶ e.g. management of data (e.g. classification, setting up a share point website), arrangement of meetings.

⁷ Include any relevant legal partnership agreements, agreements on relevant aspects such as data.

Host Countries need to have some resources to support meeting, such as coffee, administrative, printing, WIFI, etc.

- i. Approval**
- ii. Confirmed source(s) of income**
- iii. Authorized expenditure**

c) Resource requirements⁸

Sharepoint
WIFI in meeting

Host Databases – this is a new complex issue requiring discussion and support

d) In-kind contributions

Time: Country Reports
Preparation and participation in WG

Chair and others: RG/ADG
ASC/ACOM
EIFAAC Session – and/or TSC

5. REPORTING

a) Requirements for reporting

i. Recipient of Report(s)

EIFAAC – TSC
ICES – ACOM
GFCM
EU Member States
Other Countries
NGOs

ii. Intervals

Annual
Fast Track advice – ad hoc (e.g. IUCN, FAO, CITES, EU)

iii. Benchmarks/deliverables

Report

(<http://www.ices.dk/workinggroups/ViewWorkingGroup.aspx?ID=75>)

Draft advice for ACOM and EIFAAC TSC

ACOM advice (<http://www.ices.dk/advice/icesadvice.asp>)

⁸ e.g. access to databases

- iv. **Dates**
Annual meeting in: Sept/October (additional meeting in 2013 in March)
- v. **Other**
Report to WGRECORDS (ICES)
DGENV WG on EEL CITES
GFCM

Provide ad hoc fast-track advice when requested
e.g.: IUCN
CITES
EU: Black Sea
EU: Stocking
EU: Seasonality of fishing
- vi. **Quality Assessment**
ICES undertake a technical review of the WG report prior to the issuing of advice.

Annex 1: Abbreviations

Conversion of Working Party on Eels

ACOM	Advisory Committee
ADG	Advice Drafting Group
ASC	Annual Science Conference
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
DG ENV	Directorate-General for the Environment
DG MARE	Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
DG MARE POSE	DGMARE Studies and pilot projects in support of the CFP Lot 2: pilot projects to estimate potential and actual escapement of silver eel: POSE
EELIAD	European Eels in the Atlantic: Assessment of Their Decline
EU MSs	EU Member States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GOs	Government organisations
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
ICES HQ	ICES Headquarters, Copenhagen
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
RG	Review Group

SCICOM	Science Committee
SGAESAW	Study Group on Anguillid Eels in Saline Waters
SGIPEE	Study Group on International Post-Evaluation on Eels
TSC	Technical and Scientific Committee
WGEEL	Working Group on Eel
WGRECORDS	Working Group on the Science Requirements to Support Conservation, Restoration and Management of Diadromous Species
WKAREA	Workshop on Age Reading of European and American Eel

Annex 2: Special issues relating to joint EIFAAC/ICES Working Groups/projects

Management

- Selection and appointment of officers (eg Chair)
- Drafting and approval of annual ToR (driven by ICES MoU with EU Commission)
- Joint publication of report

Participation:

- scientific expert group (closed)
- ICES nominations
- EIFAAC participants invited by Chair and/or TSC

Advice: Required of ICES EIFAAC TSC?

How to handle two sets of scientific advice coming from one expert group – not an ideal situation

Should EIFAAC nominate a representative on the ICES Advice Drafting Group?

Technical & Secretariat Support: let ICES do it ? Have link b/w EIFAAC TSC and ICES? or b/w Secretariats?