



Sustainable *Eel* Group



News Update June 2015

A huge amount of news has broken in the eel world in the last 6 months. The latest SEG newsletter is available now on the SEG website and includes full details on the following stories:

- The latest study from Sweden (see below) revealing the importance of restocking and the challenges presented by unscreened hydropower turbines
- Awards for Europe's 'eel heroes' to celebrate the first 5 years of SEG
- An update from Holland where the Regional Water Authority Hunze en Aa's initiative is clearing a route 'from sea to source' to open up 3,500km of waterways for migratory fish
- New education projects in UK, led by Bristol Water and Avon Wildlife Trust
- Updates from CITES on the criteria to measure eel recovery
- News from Bologna University, restocking in Denmark, silver eel trap and transport in Spain, and new data from France.

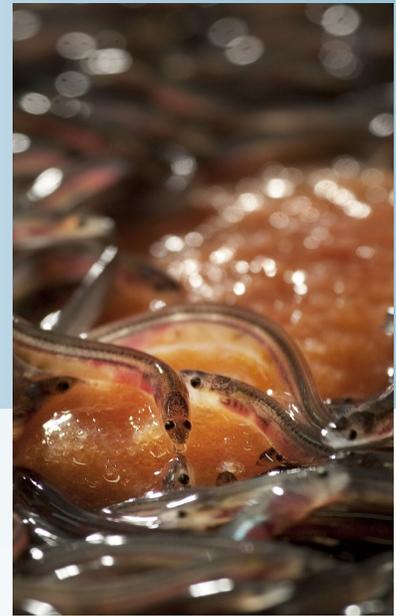
At the recent SEG conference in London, we heard many messages of hope for the recovery of the eel. SEG is all about taking effective action, and my message to you all is keep doing more of the same - that is concentrate on the migration pathways, control and limit exploitation and deliver the translocation and restocking programmes.

Andrew Kerr, SEG Chairman

Eel Recovery: dramatic new evidence published

Critical new evidence that re-evaluates the global priorities for eel recovery has been published in Sweden. The report from Sweden's leading eel scientists, Willem Dekker and Håkan Wickström of the Department of Aquatic Resources at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, reveals that:

- In inland waters hydro electric power turbines are now the largest cause of eel mortality in Sweden
- the vast majority of freshwater eels in Swedish waterways have been relocated from rivers in the UK and France



Staying in touch

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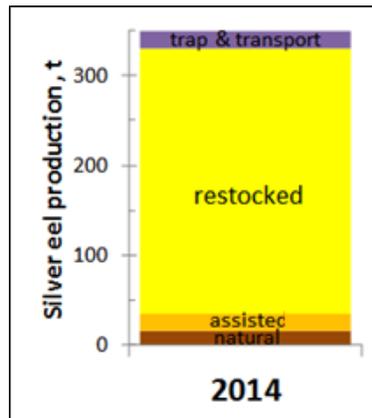
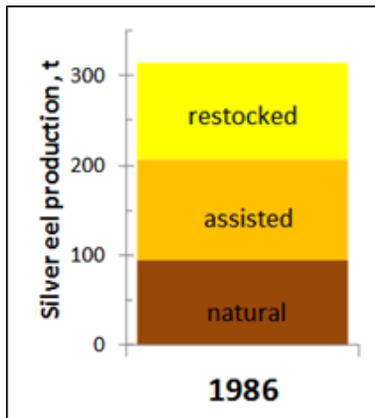
New education projects led by Bristol Water and Avon Wildlife Trust



Eels being released in Spain

Eel recovery: new evidence continued

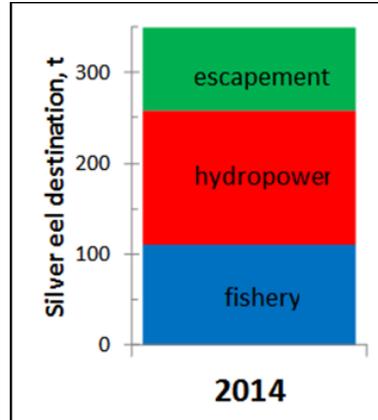
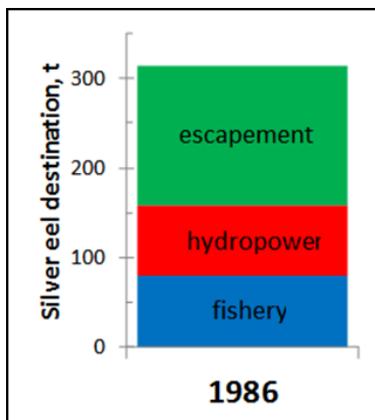
The groundbreaking new evidence is disclosed following analysis of 75 years of data from power companies, marine authorities and other research institutes in Sweden. This showed that while the source of silver eels in the past (eg 1986) was divided equally between restocking, assisted immigration and natural recruitment, by 2014 restocking is responsible for 90% of the Swedish silver eel production.



“Every time I see this plot I am surprised how important restocking has become in Sweden and how much the composition has changed”

*Willem Dekker
8 June 2015*

The report also shows the fate of silver eels in respective years. In 1986 the fresh water eel fishery and hydropower were each responsible for about 25% of silver eel mortality, and 50% were able to continue their migration. But in 2014, although overall numbers were up, only 26% were able to escape for migration, with 32% mortality due to fishery and 42% due to hydropower (some 147 tonnes of silver eels).



The full story is available in the SEG newsletter at www.sustainableeelgroup.com

Eels in the News

Ellie Harrison from BBC Countryfile telling the stories of the blocked migration pathways on the River Severn – here the steel door in front of Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust’s Coombe Hill Wetlands Nature Reserves.



Eel heroes recognised at SEG's 5th anniversary

Five leading figures behind the development and progress of the sustainable eel movement were recognised during the SEG 5th Anniversary conference at Fishmonger's Hall in April.

The awards were given by the Environment Minister of the last UK Government, Lord de Mauley.

The Awards are given in recognition of long term important contributions made to the sustainable eel agenda.



CONSERVATION
David Bunt (Environment Agency, England and IFM)



SCIENCE
Willem Dekker (Department of Aquatic Resources, SLU, Sweden)



INDUSTRY
Peter Wood (UK Glass Eels)



CONSERVATION
Andy Don (Environment Agency, England)



INDUSTRY
Alex Koelewijn (DUPAN Foundation, Holland)

*For the full story and citations for each winner, see the story on the SEG website
www.sustainableeelgroup.com/news*

CITES define the meaning of recovery

The Workshop on Eel and CITES met at the ICES Headquarters, Copenhagen from 10 to 12 March 2015, under the chairmanship of Alan Walker (UK).

The Workshop was attended by seven experts in eel assessment and management, two experts in CITES, plus observers from eel industry and CITES Scientific Authorities, and one independent reviewer. A second reviewer participated by correspondence.

ICES had been requested to provide scientific information and advice on the following issues:

- 1) What criteria (and if possible, what thresholds) could be used to make a Non-Detriment Finding in the future.
- 2) An assessment of the scale that could be used to make a Non-Detriment Finding.
- 3) An assessment of possible conditions that could be used in association with a Non-Detriment Finding (e.g. quota, or size of specimens, or any other condition).

The full story is in the latest SEG newsletter

From sea to Source in Holland

A major initiative is underway to clear the migratory pathways through all 3,500km of waterways in the Hunze en Aa's in Holland.

The Regional Water Authority (RWA) project is designed to literally allow fish to travel freely from sea to source.

Since 2005 the RWA has been working in close cooperation with the Regional Angling Federation and neighbouring RWA Noorderzijlvest. The vision focussed on reopening the most important migration routes for fish between the Wadden Sea and the small rivers.

These routes contain over 130 barriers, but by working with regional partner organisations over 100 locations have been fitted with fishways during the last 10 years.



Fish pass in River Drentsche Aa (loonerdiep)



Fish pass in Polder Breebaart tidal area

The Ledbury supports Eel Standard

Eels bearing the Sustainable Eel Standard are back on the menu at the Ledbury, voted Best Restaurant in the UK in 2014 by *Observer Food Monthly*.

"Smoked eel is wonderful to cook with and eat, and now that it comes through the SEG Sustainable supply chain we can enjoy it without fear that we are damaging its survival," chef Brett Graham told the Dutch Eel Company.



For full details on these stories and more, read our newsletter available on the SEG website