



Second Meeting of Range States for the European Eel

Malmö, Sweden, 15-16 May 2018

UNEP/CMS/Eels2/Outcome

OUTCOMES OF THE MEETING

Elements for Strengthening International Conservation of the European Eel

The meeting considered information on activities taking place related to the assessment, conservation and management of the European Eel, within and beyond the EU. Discussions following presentations from experts, country representatives, IGOs and NGOs involved in eel conservation identified certain gaps and opportunities as well as advantages to having stronger international cooperation for the conservation of European Eels. The meeting highlighted the necessity of taking into account all threats affecting eels throughout their life cycle and throughout their range including the High Seas.

The group identified the following areas, which add value and complement current efforts, and recognized the need to include all Range States and destination countries.

Imperatives for International Cooperation

Explore options for a coordination, monitoring and feedback mechanism for all actors to assess the efficiency of implementation of measures for the conservation and recovery of European Eels.

- Discuss what is being done and what needs to be done better.
- Help to raise awareness among all stakeholders.
- Consider and evaluate advice on the conservation status of the species
- Address gaps in knowledge
- Address gaps in international cooperation to conserve and manage the species

The proposed cooperation mechanism could undertake the following actions:

- Move towards common goals and standards (shared objectives)
- Establish measures to protect the Sargasso Sea, by building on the EBSA status, and by including data collection and sharing mechanisms, connectivity issues, and engagement in the ABNJ process
- Promote a common understanding of the pressures on the species including demand in Range and non-Range States
- Involve non-Range States in the implementation of measures to reduce the pressure on the species.
- Knowledge sharing among the Range States of all *Anguilla* species

Opportunities to complement existing regimens and fill Gaps

- Coordination of technical and scientific advice and a feedback mechanism
- Capacity-building and knowledge transfer, including guidelines and methodologies, (noting that information exists but dissemination mechanisms are needed).
- Awareness raising
- Partnerships

Other Considerations

- Take into account ongoing reviews and developments:
 - EU Regulation evaluation and other initiatives
 - Ongoing discussion towards a GFCM Eel Management Plan
 - CITES Decisions and the Review of Significant Trade process
 - IUCN Red List Assessment
 - ICES advice
- Need to quickly address the conservation status of the species
- Need for funding and resource mobilization

Way Forward

- The meeting decided that there is a potential for international cooperation to address gaps and challenges in European Eel conservation.
- In this context, the CMS as a global mechanism could address many of these issues. Based on the above modalities, there is a potential for CMS to begin consultations on setting up such a mechanism for more coordinated and comprehensive European Eel conservation.
- A negotiation process for strengthening international cooperation should take into consideration ongoing reviews of European Eel policies, including those taking place in the EU, the GFCM, CITES, IUCN and ICES.
- Consideration should also be taken of the need to reinforce action as soon as possible given the species' Critically Endangered conservation status.