



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.25.6.2

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15th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Campo Grande, Brazil, 23 – 29 March 2026
Agenda Item 25.6.2

EUROPEAN EEL

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

This document reports on progress to implement Decisions 14.106–14.109 *European Eel* and proposes new draft Decisions for adoption. It also proposes a draft Resolution and draft Single Species Action Plan for the European Eel.

The attached draft Resolution, Action Plan and Decisions would support the achievement of Targets 1.1, 2.3, 3.1, 4.1 and 5.4 of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024–2032.

EUROPEAN EEL

Background

1. COP12 (2017) adopted the Concerted Action for the European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), following its listing on CMS Appendix II at COP11. The Concerted Action was proposed by the Principality of Monaco in collaboration with the Sargasso Sea Commission and the CMS Secretariat.
2. COP14 adopted the following Decisions on the issue:

14.106 Directed to Parties

Parties that are Range States to the European Eel are urged to provide support for the development of the Action Plan, including the convening of a Range State Meeting to finalize it.

14.107 Directed to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to provide expertise and funding for the development of the Plan, including the convening of a Range State meeting to finalize the plan.

14.108 Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall consider the Action Plan for adoption at one of its meetings before COP15.

14.109 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of resources:

- a) *support the finalisation of the draft Action Plan for the European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*);*
- b) *hold consultations among the Range States and relevant IGOs and NGOs on the draft Action Plan by correspondence and, if funding permits, by convening or supporting another meeting of Range States;*
- c) *collaborate with the CITES Secretariat on their respective intersessional activities relating to European eel; and*
- d) *submit the draft plan to the Standing Committee at a meeting before COP15 for adoption.*

Activities

3. The timeline for finalizing the Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) for the European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) has been revised. Initially intended for submission to the Standing Committee prior to COP15, the process was delayed due to the shortened intersessional period and the absence of financial resources. As a result, it was not feasible to complete the draft in time for earlier consideration by the Standing Committee.
4. The 4th meeting of Range States, scheduled for May 2025, was supported by the Sargasso Sea Commission, the Government of Sweden, which hosted the meeting in Malmö, and the Government of the Principality of Monaco.

5. The meeting was rescheduled to 14 and 15 October 2025 to allow sufficient time for written consultations on the draft of the Action Plan. A revised draft was circulated in May 2025 for comments by the end of June 2025. The 4th meeting was presented with a second draft, which was finalized during the meeting. The meeting served as the primary forum for final review and consensus-building among Range States ahead of submission to COP15 for formal adoption.

Discussion and analysis

6. The European eel remains a species of grave concern, listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, and requiring coordinated international conservation action. The rescheduling of the Range State meeting to October 2025 provided the opportunity to finalize the draft SSAP with Range State input. This version can be found in Annex 2 of this document. A Resolution for the adoption of the SSAP can be found in Annex 1.

Recommended actions

7. The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:
 - a) adopt the draft Resolution contained in Annex 1 of this document;
 - b) adopt the draft Single Species Action Plan contained in Annex 2 of this document;
 - c) adopt the draft Decisions contained in Annex 3 of this document; and
 - d) delete Decisions 14.106–14.109.

DRAFT RESOLUTION

SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN FOR THE EUROPEAN EEL (*Anguilla anguilla*)

Noting that the European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) was listed on CMS Appendix II at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11),

Alarmed by the continuing population decline of the European eel across its range and by the complex combination of threats including barriers to migration, over-exploitation, bycatch, habitat loss and degradation, pollution, parasitic infection, and changes in oceanic conditions,

Concerned that the species is assessed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List and that recruitment levels remain at historical lows despite management measures in place in several Range States,

Recognizing that the European eel is a unique catadromous migratory species connecting inland and coastal waters of Europe and North Africa with the Sargasso Sea, playing a vital ecological, economic and cultural role,

Noting the complementary work undertaken within other relevant frameworks including the European Union, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), CITES and the Sargasso Sea Commission,

*The Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

1. *Adopts* the Single Species Action Plan for the European Eel annexed to this Resolution;
2. *Urges* Parties and *invites* non-Party Range States to implement the relevant provisions of the Action Plan and integrate its objectives into national and regional management frameworks;
3. *Calls on* Range States to strive for active collaboration among governmental, scientific and non-governmental stakeholders to maximize effective use of resources and ensure that results of research and monitoring inform adaptive management and policy;
4. *Further calls on* Range States and partners to facilitate regional collaboration, particularly between European, North African, Eastern Mediterranean and Sargasso Sea stakeholders, to coordinate measures across the full migratory range of the species;
5. *Requests* the Range States to consider appropriate coordination mechanisms;
6. *Requests* Range States to report on progress and implementation of this Action Plan to future Conferences of the Parties;
7. *Encourages* synergies with relevant multilateral environmental agreements and regional initiatives to strengthen conservation and management measures for the European eel;

8. *Further encourages* Parties to share experience and knowledge and best practices with each other; and
9. *Calls upon* Parties, donors and other stakeholders to provide financial and technical support for the implementation of the Single Species Action Plan.

DRAFT ACTION PLAN

**CMS SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN
FOR THE EUROPEAN EEL (*Anguilla anguilla*)**

NB: The annex is presented in a separate file [here](#).

ANNEX 3

DRAFT DECISIONS

**SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLAN
FOR THE EUROPEAN EEL (*ANGUILLA ANGUILLA*)**

Directed to Parties

15.AA Parties that are Range States to the species are requested to:

- a) complete the national threat matrix, outlined in the Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) for the European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) contained in Annex 2 to document UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.25.6.2;
- b) provide information to the Secretariat regarding national legislation specific to the European eel, to be included in Annex 2 of the SSAP;
- c) undertake those actions of the SSAP specified for immediate and short-term implementation and for delivery within three years as a matter of priority;
- d) continue ongoing and medium-term activities, and start implementation of long-term activities within five years;
- e) establish a governance structure, including a Working Group of Range States, to support and monitor implementation and to facilitate cooperation and communication among Range States;
- f) provide a brief report on the implementation of the SSAP in time for the last meeting of the Sessional Committee before the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties using a template provided by the Secretariat; and
- g) encourage non-Party Range States to engage with Party Range States in the implementation of activities outlined in the SSAP.

Directed to non-Party Range States

15.BB Non-Party Range States are encouraged to engage with Party Range States in the implementation of activities outlined in the SSAP.

Directed to intergovernmental organizations

15.CC Intergovernmental organizations, in particular the European Commission, the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC), the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and its Advisory Committee, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), are encouraged to engage with the implementation of activities outlined in the SSAP.

Directed to non-governmental organizations

- 15.DD Non-governmental organizations, in particular the Sargasso Sea Commission, are encouraged to support the implementation of the SSAP, including through research and awareness-raising.

Directed to the Scientific Council

- 15.EE The Scientific Council is requested to, subject to the availability of resources, review the summary of information provided by Range States on the implementation of the SSAP and make recommendations on the further implementation of the SSAP to the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to the Secretariat

- 15.FF The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of resources:
- a) encourage non-Party Range States to contribute to the implementation of the SSAP;
 - b) develop and disseminate to Range States a simple reporting form to enable assessment of progress in the implementation of the SSAP and facilitate reporting in advance of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and prepare a summary for review by the Scientific Council and for consideration by the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
 - c) assist Range States in establishing a governance structure and monitoring system and provide a platform for communication upon request; and
 - d) collaborate with the CITES Secretariat on relevant activities relating to the European eel to be included in the next CITES–CMS Joint Work Programme.