



European Commission's evaluation of the Eel Regulation

**Webinar on European eel – the EU evaluation
and international developments**

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online meeting**

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Outline of the presentation

1. Legal framework for European eel in the EU
2. Additional EU actions for recovery of European eel
3. Evaluation of the Eel Regulation
4. Next steps

**The Eel Gatherers by
Camille Corot (1860)**

Legal framework for European Eel

European Union

- Council Regulation 1100/2007 (Measures for recovery)
- EU Wildlife Trade Regulations (No export & import 2010)
- TAC and quotas Regulations (3 month closure since 2018)

International

- CITES Appendix II (legality & sustainability of trade, 2009)
- CMS Appendix II (international cooperation, 2014)
- GFCM level (Rec. GFCM/42/2018/1 + research project)

Eel Regulation (I)

→ *For the recovery of the stock of European eel*

→ *Applies at sea, in transitional and fresh waters*

Requirements for the EU Member States

- Establishing Eel Management Plans (EMPs)
- Achieving 40% escapement of silver eel (compared to pristine)
- Reserving 60% of glass eel catches for restocking
- Reducing 50% effort or catches in EU marine waters compared to 2004-2006 average
- Regular reporting obligations

Additional EU actions for the recovery of European eel (I)

- *Annual ICES advice on the state of the stock and ad hoc requests from the Commission*
- *Recent actions to reinforce the protection of eels:*
 - **three-month closure of eel fisheries at EU level**
 - **political commitment from COM and MS to put more efforts for eel protection and improve the implementation of the Eel Regulation ('Declaration on eels', December 2017)**
 - **formal evaluation of the Eel Regulation**
 - **from 2019, eel fisheries in the scope of Specific Control and Inspection Programme (SCIP) under the EU Control Regulation, supporting involvement of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)**

Additional EU actions for the recovery of European eel (II)

➤ *Work with international partners:*

- **With third countries through Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, e.g. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)**
- **With the Russian Federation (Joint Baltic Sea Fisheries Committee)**

to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the recovery of the stock among all stakeholders.

- ✓ **EU and its MS to work with CMS and other countries on the development of the Action Plan on European eel under the CMS**

Evaluation of the Eel Regulation – results

https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/swd-2020-35_en.pdf

Fit for purpose but
implementation needs improvement

Management of eels in all life stages

Addresses fisheries and non-fisheries human impact

Progress in reducing fishing effort

Silver eel escapement well below 40% biomass

Status of eel stock still critical

Long-life cycle of eels → longer recovery

Evaluation of the Eel Regulation – EMPs key objective

EMPs developed by 19 MSs (81 EMUs + around 1,880 actions)

BE, CZ, DK, EE, FI, FR, DE, EL, IE, IT, LV, LT, LU, NL, PL, PT, ES, SE, UK

6 MS exempted + some individual river basins of other MS

CY, MT, AT, RO and SK exempt by COM Decision 2009/310/EC

COM Decision 2008/292/EC exempt Black Sea and the river basins flowing into

Achievement of 40% escapement target	Member State
YES	EE, IE (in all EMU but one)
Partial/variable	DE, ES, UK
NO	BE, DK, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, SE
Not clear	CZ, FI, FR, EL, PT

Principal issues (I)

- a. Not all MSs presented EMPs, notably SI, HR, BU (outside the Black Sea).
- b. The 40% escapement target was not met in BE, DK, IT, LT, LV, NL, PL, SE. Only 2 MS met target.
- b. Not all MSs achieved their 60% glass eel restocking targets.
- c. There are issues with control, enforcement and monitoring obligations in MSs (e.g. monitoring of small vessels, glass eels for restocking, traceability, freshwaters and recreational fisheries).

Principal issues (II)

- e. Some MSs appeared not to sufficiently reduced hydroelectric turbine and dams mortality.
- f. There is room for improvement between RBMPs under WFD and EMPs under the Eel Regulation.
- g. Reporting was incomplete (progress reports and evolution of glass eel prices).
- h. MSs do not quantify the direct costs of implementing Regulation.
- i. Uptake of EMFF and EFF in support of eel conservation measures was rather low.

Next steps

The stock remains in critical condition!

What more can be done to help in recovery?

- How to improve the EMPs implementation?
- What is the future of the Eel Regulation?
- Scope for increased international cooperation?
- ❖ We are now considering the way forward
- ❖ Further ambition is needed
- ❖ European Green Deal & EU Biodiversity Strategy

Next steps – better implementation

Focus on non-fisheries factors

Continue addressing fisheries impacts

Make use of good practices and projects

Reinforce control and enforcement

Strengthen transboundary cooperation

Improve connectivity RBMPs and EMPs

Increase EU funds uptake

Improve efficiency of reporting

Consider revising EMPs



Thank you for your attention



https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/marine_species/wild_species/eel/management_plans_en