Baltic Sea eel recovery from an ecosystem perspective





The European eel has been in decline for decades and is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN, EU and HELCOM Red Lists, with no sign of recovery. ICES advises zero catches for all life stages in all habitats, including for restocking and aquaculture, as well as zero anthropogenic mortality.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

This collaborative project started in 2021 with the long-term goal of more coordinated management of European eel in the Baltic region. We analysed the national Eel Management Plans (EMPs) and restocking practices in four Baltic countries, and held roundtables with national stakeholders, resulting in a policy brief and a report on restocking practices.

• Transparency needs to improve.

- Management adaptive but plans not revised.
- Unclear calculations and assumptions behind management targets.
- Lack of ecosystem-perspective.
- Fishing reduced in Sweden and Lithuania.
- Restocking is heavily relied on to reach objective.
- Fewer efforts to restore natural habitats.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

- Focus on fisheries and restocking rather than long-term measures to improve natural recruitment, habitats and migration routes.
- Research and data collection may be too focused on the 40% escapement target.
- Poor coordination with the Water Framework

BALTEEL-RECO is a partnership between FishSec in Sweden, Eestimaa Looduse Fond in Estonia, Pasaules Dabas Fonds in Latvia and Lietuvos gamtos fondas in Lithuania. In 2023, phase two (BALTEEL-RECO II) with additional partners in Sweden, Finland and Germany began.

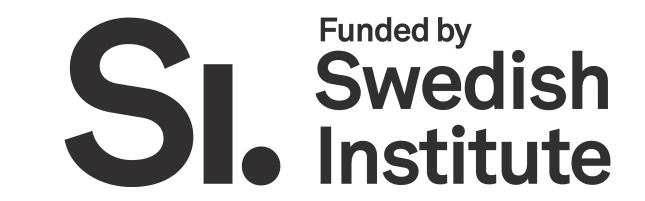
- Directive despite requirement.
- Production perspective rather than protection.
- Management not in line with current scientific advice.

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The Fisheries Secretariat (FishSec) is a non-profit organisation working towards sustainable fisheries in Europe



This project is funded by the Swedish Institute. Additional funding was provided by the Swedish Agency for Marine

with a focus on the Baltic Sea.

www.fishsec.org

and Water Management and The Waterloo Foundation.