

DCF national correspondents

Els Torreele, Simona Vasileva Nicheva, Ivana Vukov, Jørgen Dalskov, Elo Rasmann, Heikki Lehtinen, Maximilien Simon, Christoph Stransky, Apostolos Karagianakos, Leonie O'Dowd, Evelina Carmen Sabatella; Didzis Ustups, Jolita Nečiūnienė, Inge Janssen, Zbigniew Karnicki, Emilia Batista, Jernej Švab, Maria del Pilar Vara del Rio, Anna Hasslow, Mathew Elliott, Marc Kreis, Vladimír Gall.

ICES ACOM members and observers

Els Torreele, Morten Vinther, Robert Aps, Matti Salminen, Alain Biseau, Christopher Zimmermann, Gudmundur Thordarson, Maurice Clark, Didzis Ustups, Tomas Zolubas, Nathalie Steins, Jan Horbowy, Fatima Borges, Francisco Velasco, Max Cardinale, Harald Gjørseter, Yuri Efimov, Nick Bailey, Petur Steingrund, Jesper Boje

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Subject: Joint ICES, EIFAAC and GFCM Data call: Data submission for advice for European eel under WGEEL – Part 1: 2017

Dear Reader,

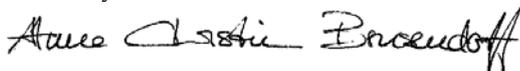
Please find enclosed a document describing the rationale, scope and technical details of the data call for the 2017 work of the Joint EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM Working Group on Eel (WGEEL). Also, enclosed are five annexes with additional information and feedback provision.

The data will be used by WGEEL to conduct an assessment of the eel stock and factors affecting the stock.

For countries which are also EU members this data call is under the Council Regulation (EC) No 2017/1004. The deadline for this data call is 18 September 2017.

For questions about the content of the data call, please contact: advice@ices.dk. For questions on data submission, please contact: accessions@ices.dk.

Sincerely,



Anne Christine Brusendorff
General Secretary

CC: Alan Walker (WGEEL co-chair), Cédric Briand (WGEEL Stock Assessor); Nathalie Florin (DG-Mare), Patrick Daniel (DG-Mare), Venetia Kostopoulou (DG-Mare, DCF); Bas Drukker (DG-Mare, DCF)



ICES
CIEM

International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea
Conseil International pour
l'Exploration de la Mer

H. C. Andersens Boulevard 44-46,
1553 Copenhagen V, Denmark

+45 33 38 67 00
info@ices.dk | www.ices.dk

Joint ICES, EIFAAC and GFCM Eel Data Call 2017

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Joint ICES, EIFAAC and GFCM Data call: Data submission for advice for European eel under WGEEL – Part 1: 2017

1. Rationale

This data call is intended to formalize data reporting across all countries with natural production of European eel. Therefore, this is a joint call from ICES, EIFAAC and GFCM, facilitated by ICES.

Much of the historic data are available to WGEEL already, but often in multiple versions, some with subtle differences and with limited information from which to identify the most up-to-date version. Furthermore, the descriptions of methods used to collect and process the data are often held separately in some Country Reports, and without the contact details of data stewards. These associated 'metadata' should be held alongside the 'eel data'.

Recognizing that the collection and provision of all eel and metadata is a huge task, the data call is split over two years (2017 and 2018), giving time to clarify the process for those providing the data and for the WGEEL and ICES to organize the data in the most efficient manner. This 2017 data call includes a request for information on how you believe the process could be improved (Annex 5).

In 2017, the call focusses on data directly required to achieve the annual stock assessment in support of the ICES Advice published in 2017. A follow-up data call will be released in 2018, including requesting the data on silver eel escapement and other mortality rates, etc., as specified by the Eel Regulation 1100/2007 and EMPs.

Output

The data and metadata provided for this data call (2017) will be used as the basis for the annual stock assessment in support of the advice for the eel stock.

Ultimately, the output from these data calls will be an electronic database for European Eel stock, held in a single repository and complying with data quality standards. This database will be used as a basis for timely and efficient drafting of stock status reports for ICES, the European Commission including fisheries and trade matters, and the provision of regional and whole stock advice across the natural range of the European eel.

Legal framework

The legal framework for the data call is as follows, though noting that these don't all apply to every eel-producing country:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 2017/1004 concerning the establishment of a Union framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the Common Fisheries Policy
- Council Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and E(EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC.
- REC.DIR-GFCM/40/2016/2 on the progressive implementation of data submission in line with the GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF)
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 of 18 September 2007 establishing measures for the recovery of the stock of European eel

2. Scope of the Data call

The data call is addressed to all countries within the geographic range of the European eel. These countries are distributed across different global and regional management organisations such as those represented in WGEEL (EIFAAC, ICES, GFCM).

Table 1: List of species

| Common name | Code | Scientific name |
|--------------|------------|--------------------------|
| European eel | <i>EEL</i> | <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> |

In this 2017 call we ask for submission of all available ‘eel data’ (including historical data and previously submitted data) for European eel on:

- *Recruitment*
- *Catches and Landings*
- *Restocking*
- *Aquaculture production*

Alongside each of these eel data, we request the following ‘metadata’:

- *Data Steward*: name and email address of a person who can be contacted about the dataset.
- *Method used*: short description of the method used to collect the data.

These metadata are further described in the data input sheets of Annexes 1 to 4.

The call also includes Annex 5 where we would like to record any suggestions you may have for how this data call process might be improved in the future.

3. Deadlines

ICES requests the data to be delivered to provide enough time for additional quality assurance prior to the Working Group meeting. The data should be submitted by email to the WGEEL stock assessor (Cedric Briand, email below) by **Monday 18th September, 2017**. This deadline is set according to the ICES standards.

Missing the reporting deadline will compromise the indispensable data quality checking (on a stock basis) before the use of that data to update assessments.

4. Data submission

The data should be submitted using the templates supplied in Annexes 1-4 to this data call. Suggestions for improvements to the process should be recorded in Annex 5.

A detailed list of data formats, instructions and codes (e.g. treatment of nil values) to be used in the database can be found in Annexes 1-4.

Note that once the database is developed, we would hope to make the data reporting process more efficient using an online system. This will come in future years.

5. Recruitment (Annex 1)

- Recruitment data are defined as the quantities of eel caught at specific (index) locations as they 'recruit' to the local vicinity. These captures can be either by fisheries or fishery-independent studies, which include handnets, fykenets or trapping ladders.
- The WGEEL uses these time series data to calculate the Recruitment Indices, relative to the reference period of 1960-1979, and the results form the basis of the annual Single Stock Advice reported to the EU Commission. These recruitment indices are also used by the EU CITES Scientific Review Group in their annual review of the Non-Detriment Finding position.
- Data should be provided as annual total values.
- The units of data are either numbers or weight (kg) of eel, or indices.
- Those recruitment data series used in the Recruitment Indices are described in detail in the ICES European eel Stock Annex: (http://ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Stock%20Annexes/2015/Anguilla_anguilla_SA.pdf). However, the data call also seeks new data series not listed in the Stock Annex.
- The recruitment series are categorized as glass eel, young eel, and larger yellow eel recruiting to continental habitats. The glass eel recruitment series are either comprised only of glass eel (i.e. zero age cohort) or a mixture of glass and young yellow eel. The young or larger yellow eel may consist of multiple year classes of eel but they are all 'recruiting' to the stock past the survey point in the same year.

6. Catches and Landings (Annex 2)

- Catches are defined as the quantity of eel that are caught by fishing gears (defined by the FAO as the 'gross catch').
- Landings are defined as the quantity of eel that are retained after capture (defined by the FAO as the Retained Catch), or to put it another way, removed from the water basin or management unit. So, Landings should not include any eels subject to assisted migration within the same river basin, or scientific studies where they are returned alive to the waters where they were caught.
- The WGEEL uses these data to report trends in catches and landings in the ICES Single Stock Advice. This information is requested by the Administrative Agreement between ICES and the EU Commission.
- Data should be provided as annual total values, according to life stage (glass, yellow, silver) and fishing activity type (commercial or recreational).
- The units of data are kg.
- As noted above, care should be taken to be clear whether the data reported are for catches or landings. The Stock Annex notes that there is a great heterogeneity among time-series of landings (also catches) because of inconsistencies in reporting by, and between, countries, as well as incomplete reporting of non-commercial and recreational fisheries.

7. Restocking (Annex 3)

- Restocking data are defined as the quantity of eel that are released alive into waters of a basin or management unit other than the basin/management unit where they were caught (i.e. NOT including assisted upstream migration).
- The WGEEL uses these data to check against eel production estimates and anthropogenic mortality rates reported by countries.
- Data should be provided in annual totals per eel management unit.
- The units of data are numbers and kg of eel when they are restocked.
- Note that a potential consequence of restocking could be that estimates of silver eel production for the restocked basin could be higher than those of historic production.

8. Aquaculture production (Annex 4)

- Aquaculture production data are defined as the quantity of eel produced on an annual basis from aquaculture facilities.
- The WGEEL uses these data in addressing its remit to report annually on the state of the stock, associated fisheries and other anthropogenic impacts.
- Data should be provided as annual total weights per country.
- The units of data are kg.
- Some aquaculture production data has previously been included in official landings statistics but this must be avoided.
- Some eel are grown in aquaculture for periods of time and then released alive to waters not necessarily those from where they were caught. This can be done for a variety of reasons. Such eels should be registered as restocked and not as aquaculture production.

9. Contacts

For support concerning issues about the data call please contact:

- Cédric Briand, WGEEL Stock Assessor. Email: Cedric.Briand@eptb-vilaine.fr

For support concerning other data issues, please contact:

- Alan Walker, chair of WGEEL. Email: Alan.walker@cefas.co.uk

For questions about the content of the data call, please contact: advice@ices.dk

For questions on data submission, please contact: accessions@ices.dk

10. Annex 1. Provision of Recruitment Data

See attached Excel sheet "Eel_Data_Call_Annex1_Recruitment.xlsx".

11. Annex 2. Provision of Catch and Landings Data

See attached Excel sheet "Eel_Data_Call_Annex2_Catch_and_Landings.xlsx".

12. Annex 3. Provision of Restocking Data

See attached Excel sheet "Eel_Data_Call_Annex3_Stocking.xlsx".

13. Annex 4. Provision of Aquaculture Production Data

See attached Excel sheet "Eel_Data_Call_Annex4_Aquaculture_Production.xlsx".

14. Annex 5. Provision of Feedback

See attached Excel sheet "Eel_Data_Call_Annex5_Feedback.xlsx".