

ECOREGION **Widely distributed and migratory stocks**
STOCK **European eel**

Advice for 2013

ICES considered the updated time-series of relevant stock status indices and repeats the advice from last year:

“The status of eel remains critical and urgent action is needed. ICES reiterates its previous advice that all anthropogenic mortality (e.g. recreational and commercial fishing, hydropower, pollution) affecting production and escapement of eels should be reduced to as close to zero as possible until there is clear evidence that both recruitment and the adult stock are increasing.”

ICES has no new information regarding stocking and this issue has therefore not been revisited in 2012.

Stock status

Indications are that the eel stock remained in a critical state in 2012. The recruitment index (five-year average) is currently at its historical lowest, less than 1% for the North Sea for the years 1960–1979 (Figures 9.4.9.1–3). In 2012, recruitment for the series outside the North Sea (Figure 9.4.9.3, ‘Elsewhere Europe’) increased, but remained less than 6.5% of the 1960–1979 average.

Recruitment of young (recruiting yellow eel, usually 8–20 cm in length) yellow eel has shown a continuous declining trend since the 1950s (Figure 9.4.9.4).

Scientific basis

The assessment is currently based on stock surveys and commercial catch indices. Monitoring recruitment has been the main tool in the recent past for assessing the overall status of the eel stock, but the anticipated availability of new analysis and compilations of data on the landings and eel stock indicators (silver eel biomass and mortality) are expected to improve the assessment in 2013.

Assessment type	Index-based assessment.
Input data	Glass eel and young yellow eel indices.
Discards and bycatch	Discards not included.
Indicators	None.
Other information	Landing statistics unreliable.
Working group report	WGEEL

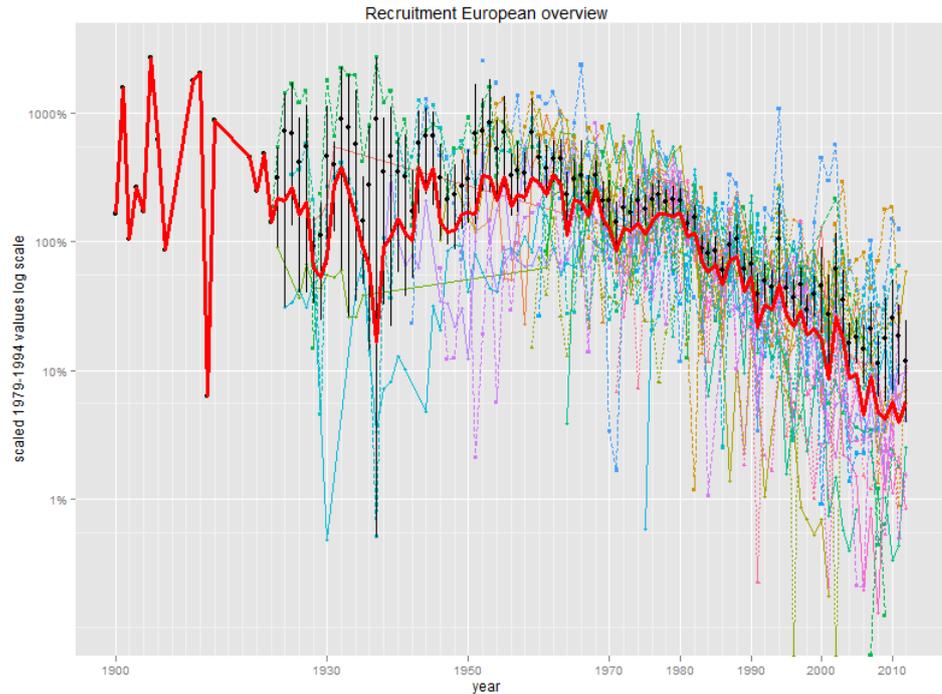


Figure 9.4.9.1 Time-series of glass eel and yellow eel recruitment in European rivers with data series >35 years (45 rivers). Each series has been scaled to its 1979–1994 average. Note the logarithmic scale on the y-axis. The mean values and their bootstrap confidence interval (95%) are represented as black dots and bars. Note: for practical reasons, not all series are presented in this graph. Geometric means are presented in red. Updated to 2012.

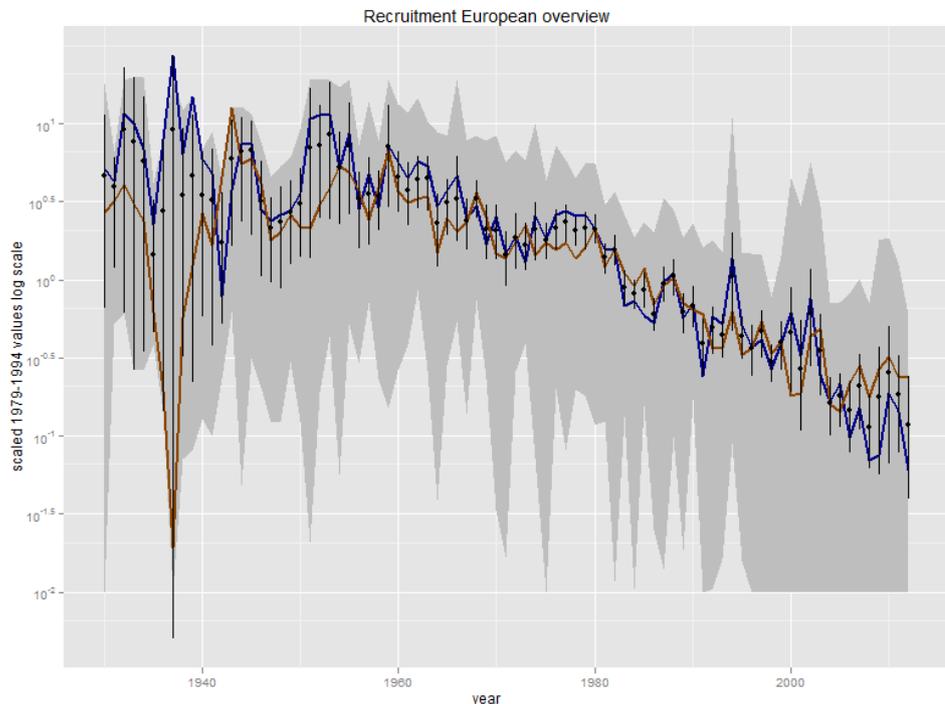


Figure 9.4.9.2 Time-series of glass eel and yellow eel recruitment in European rivers with data series >35 years (45 rivers). Each series has been scaled to its 1979–1994 average. Note the logarithmic scale on the y-axis. The mean values of combined yellow and glass eel series and their bootstrap confidence interval (95%) are represented as black dots and bars. The brown line represents the mean value for yellow eel, the blue line represents the mean value for glass eel series. The range of the series is indicated by a grey shade. Note that individual series from Figure. 9.4.9.1 were removed for clarity and this has been updated to 2012.

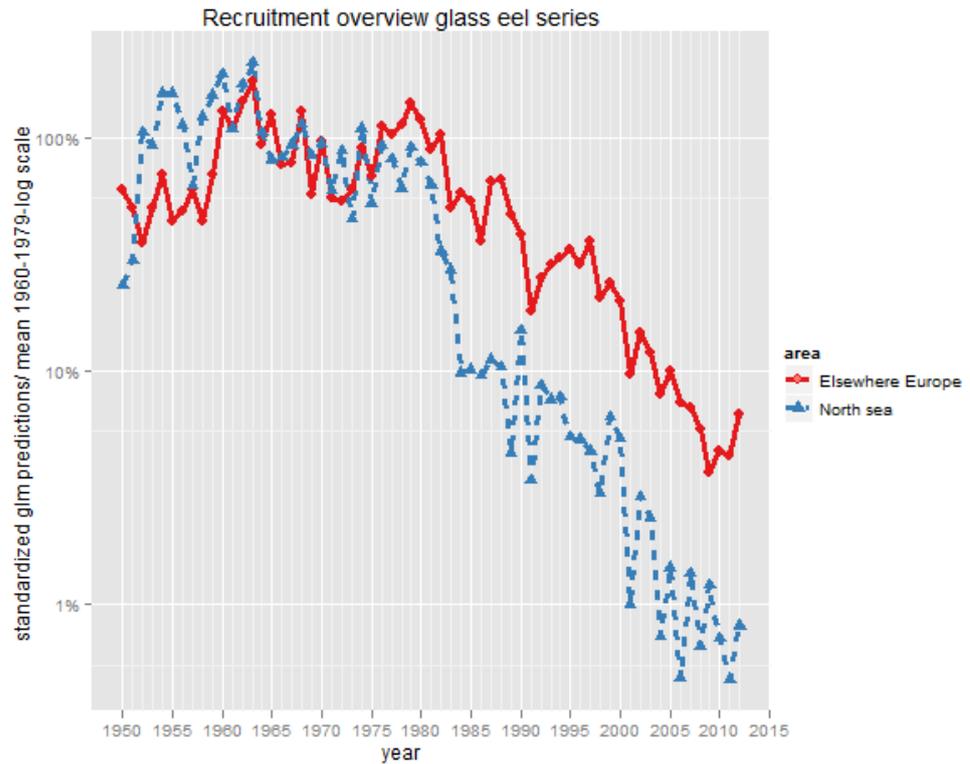


Figure 9.4.9.3 WGEEL recruitment index: mean of estimated (GLM) glass eel recruitment for the North Sea and elsewhere in Europe. The GLM (recruit=area:year+site) was fitted on 34 glass eel series comprising either pure glass eel or a mixture of glass eels and yellow eels and scaled to the 1960–1979 average. No series for glass eel are available in the Baltic area. Note logarithmic scale on the y-axis.

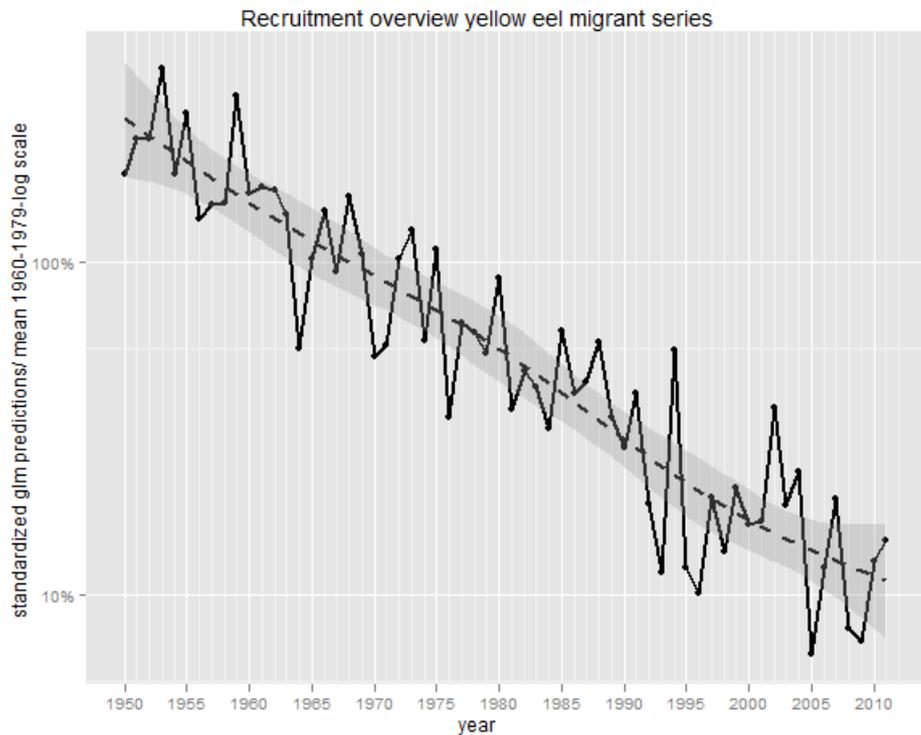


Figure 9.4.9.4 Mean of estimated (GLM) yellow eel recruitment and smoothed trends for Europe. The GLM (recruit=area:year) was fitted to ten yellow eel series and scaled to the 1960–1979 average. Note logarithmic scale on the y-axis. Bands show 95% point-wise confidence interval of the smoothed trend.