

American eel range states virtual workshop discussion document

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

A workshop in the Dominican Republic in 2018 brought together American eel range states with a specific focus on enhancing coordination and information sharing in regard to fisheries, and capacity building with respect to data collection on harvests and exports. One of the key recommendations outlined in the vision statement of the Dominican Republic workshop called for collaboration among American eel range States. Further, at the CITES CoP18 a new series of Decisions were adopted, a number of which encouraged collaboration and establishment of joint programmes of work to benefit eel species. However, to date there is no co-ordinating forum to define such a programme of collaborative work for the species.

This follow-up virtual workshop intends to bring together American eel range States with active eel fisheries with the aim of developing a 'road-map' to facilitate improved international cooperation among the range States with active Eel fisheries. The aim is to develop, through the workshop, a draft road-map with objectives and associated actions that will benefit all participants and work towards a greater understanding of the species and how improved international cooperation could progress management across the range.

Below are a range of questions for consideration relating to fisheries and trade of the American eel that are aimed to facilitate discussion at the workshop and identify where first steps can be taken in developing the roadmap for international cooperation.

It is not expected that countries will submit a response to these, though they are welcome to include relevant information in their update at the beginning of the workshop. Workshop participants can consider where co-operation might be necessary and easily achieved in the short-term.

This is not a comprehensive list, and any omissions would be welcomed for discussion at the workshop.

Examples are given in some questions, please do not be limited by these, answers should reflect the situation in your country.

National oversight

- Which government departments/agencies engage on matters relating to fisheries, and national and/or international trade, of the American eel in your country?
Please include sub-national agencies, where appropriate.
 - Is there co-operation/communications among these organisations?
 - Is there co-operation with similar partner organisations in other range states on these matters?
- Do you have any formal/informal agreements with other American eel range states? e.g. with regard to shared stock in transboundary water bodies.
- Who are the key stakeholders on matters relating to fisheries, and national and international trade, of the American eel in your country? e.g. fishers, traders, customs agents, academic researchers, NGOs, others.
 - Are there fora at relevant levels to ensure engagement?
 - Where relevant, is there a mechanism to share this information with other range states?

Data collection and management

- What methods for monitoring and/or data collection presently exist with regard to fisheries and/or national and/or international trade of American eel in your country?
Please consider any sub-national variations in these.

- Is this data consolidated, quality assessed and/or analysed in order to inform management/policy in your country?
Please consider any sub-national variations in these.
- Are fisheries dependent datasets validated using fisheries independent methods?

Fisheries

- What life-stages of the American eel are harvested in your country? e.g. glass eel/elver; yellow eel; silver eel.
- Do you have mechanisms for management of American eel fisheries in your country? e.g. permits, quotas, gear restrictions, closed seasons etc. Please consider any sub-national variations in these.
 - Are any of these fisheries on trans-national waterbodies?
 - Is there engagement with partner organisations in other countries in relation to these mechanisms?
- What are the major uses of American eel harvested in your country and how does this vary between life-stages? e.g. consumption, export, farming, restocking etc.
- What are the major issues relating to fisheries and/or trade of American eel in your country at the national level? e.g. traceability, illegal activity, lack of capacity, resources and/or expertise, lack of stakeholder co-ordination.
 - Could any of these be addressed through improved international co-operation?

Trade

- Do you have mechanisms for management of national and/or international trade in American eel in your country? e.g. permit systems, traceability frameworks, legislation etc.
Please consider any sub-national variations in these.
 - Do you engage with other range states in relation to these mechanisms?
- What are the major importing nations for American eel harvested in your country?
 - What proportion of the national catch is exported?
- Does your country import live or processed anguillid eel products?
- Does your country re-export live or processed anguillid eel products?
- What are the major issues relating to with regard to trade of American eel in your country at the international level? e.g. traceability, illegal activity, lack of capacity, resources and/or expertise, lack of range state and/or import/re-export nation co-ordination.
 - Could any of these be addressed through international co-operation?

Roadmap

- What would be key to include in a road-map to improve the international cooperation management surrounding American eel? e.g. capacity building, knowledge/intelligence sharing, consolidated datasets, improved international co-ordination.
- How would the road-map fit in the context of the range of threats to American eels?
 - Do you have national/sub-national eel management mechanisms with this aim?
- Do you have examples of existing international road-maps/mechanisms for other species/issues that could inform the development of one for American eel?
- How could such a road-map be co-ordinated? e.g. rolling chairing by relevant countries only, third-party, through existing RFMO(s), etc.
- Do you have any other comments or suggestions? e.g. time period of road map, key aims and objectives to be included, monitoring and evaluation, resourcing etc.