

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Thirtieth meeting of the Animals Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 16-21 July 2018

EELS

Membership (as decided by the Committee)

- Co-Chairs: the representative of Europe (Mr. Fleming) and the alternate representative of Asia (Mr. Ishii);
- Parties: Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, European Union, France, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, United States of America and Viet Nam; and
- IGOs and NGOs: Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), UNEP-WCMC, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), IUCN, SEAFDEC, Association of Northeast Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Global Guardian Trust, Humane Society International, Japan Wildlife Conservation Society, SSN, Sustainable Eel Group, TRAFFIC, Vulcan/Paul G. Allen Philanthropies, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund and Zoological Society of London.

Mandate

Taking into account the discussions in plenary, any additional information coming from range States and any updates provided by the intersessional working group of the Animals Committee on eels, the in-session working group shall:

- a) review the studies presented in Annexes 1 and 2 of document AC30 Doc. 18.1;
- b) consider the outcome of the regional workshops presented in Annex 3 of documents AC30 Doc. 18.1, AC30 Doc. 18.2 and AC30 Doc. 18.3, as well as information contained in relevant information documents;
- c) review the information in document AC30 Doc. 12.2, Annexes 1 and 2, concerning the Review of Significant Trade in *Anguilla anguilla* from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and provide advice on the recommendations that should be drafted under the Review of Significant Trade for these range States should they be categorised as “action is needed”;
- d) consider the available information on trade in *Anguilla anguilla* from Turkey to determine if it should be included in Stage 2 of the Review of Significant Trade as an exceptional case;
- e) draft recommendations on the implementation of the CITES listing of European eel (*A. anguilla*) for reporting to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- f) draft recommendations to ensure the sustainable trade in other *Anguilla* species for reporting to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and

- g) draft recommendations for reporting on the illegal trade in European eel to the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC70).

### Recommendations

Noting that a more complete working group report is available, and can be used to form the basis of the Animals Committee report to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18) under Decision 17.188, the working group makes the following recommendations.

#### Under item c) of the mandate

The group agreed that Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia should be placed in the 'action is needed' category. Provisional recommendations were drafted and sent to the working group on the Review of Significant Trade.

#### Under item d) of the mandate

The group did not support the inclusion of Turkey in the Review of Significant Trade at this stage; however, it noted that this could be reviewed by the Animals Committee at its 31st meeting (AC31).

#### Under item e) of the mandate

##### On reporting trade in European eels

The group **recommends** the descriptions for specimen codes in the *Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of CITES Annual Reports* (January 2017) and in the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports* be amended as follows:

1. The description for FIG and the definition for LIV should be amended as follows (new text in bold, deleted text in strikethrough).
  - i) Amend description for FIG (fingerlings) to read: '**live** juvenile fish ~~of one or two years of age~~ for the aquarium trade, **aquaculture**, hatcheries, **consumption** or for release ~~operations~~, **including live European eels (*Anguilla anguilla*) up to 12cm length**'.
  - ii) Amend definition for LIV (live specimens) to read: 'live animals and plants, **excluding live fingerling fish – see FIG**'.
  - iii) For eels, both specimen types should be reported in kilos (kg) rather than in numbers. The explanatory text should be amended accordingly as shown in (4) below.
2. The code for meat (MEA) should be used in preference for trade in eels for human consumption and that such trade should be reported in kilos (indeed reporting in kilos is more important than the code used).
3. The explanatory text should be amended to indicate that fillets of fish should be reported under the code for meat MEA and the code for bodies BOD should be amended to remove reference to processed fish, as follows (new text in bold, deleted text in strikethrough):

BOD – substantially whole dead animals, including ~~fresh or processed~~ **entire** fish, stuffed turtles, preserved butterflies, reptiles in alcohol, whole stuffed hunting trophies, etc.

4. Under section 3 of *Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of CITES Annual Reports* (January 2017) and in the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports*, 'Specific instructions', insert the following text:

**'For European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*)**, it is essential that live eels of <12cm length (and which may be referred to as glass eels or elvers) in trade are distinguished from other live specimens by reporting them as fingerlings (FIG); other live specimens should be reported as LIV. It is also desirable that the code for meat (MEA) should be used for trade in eels destined for human consumption. In all cases, Parties should report trade in live specimens (LIV), live fingerlings (FIG) and meat (MEA) of European eel by weight and not as number of specimens. The net weight of live specimens should be recorded and not the combined weight of eels and the water in which they are transported.'

### On source codes

It was considered desirable to be able to distinguish specimens raised in aquaculture from direct wild harvest of European eels potentially through the use of source code R (ranching). However, the making of non-detriment findings and consideration of ranching as a source code for European eel may require further consideration post-CoP18. In the meantime, this issue should be referred to the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on captive-bred and ranched specimens for their consideration and guidance. This issue may make a useful case study for the workshop referred to under Agenda item 10.1 (AC30 Doc. 10.1 / PC24 Doc. 10.1) on *Non detriment findings*.

### On customs codes

The group agreed that having better harmonisation of customs codes for trade in all *Anguilla* species would be desirable to enable patterns of trade to be understood and, for European eel, to enable comparison of customs and CITES trade data. However, the group noted that discussions on customs codes needed engagement with the World Customs Organisation and that the issue of customs codes is, perhaps, more appropriate for the Standing Committee. This issue should, therefore, be referred to the Standing Committee for their consideration.

### On trade in, and non-detriment findings for, European eel

#### **Decision 18.AA**

##### ***Directed to range States for European eel (Anguilla Anguilla)***

Parties are encouraged to:

- a) share and publish any non-detriment finding studies on European eel they have undertaken, explore the different approaches that would be needed for making non-detriment findings for European eels traded as fingerlings (FIG) and those traded as other live eels (LIV), seek peer review where appropriate, collaborate and share information with other Parties regarding such studies and their outcome, especially where they share catchments or water bodies;
- b) develop and/or implement adaptive eel management plans, or regularly review and revise these, at national or sub-national (or catchment) level, with defined and time-bound goals, and enhance collaboration within countries between authorities and other stakeholders with responsibilities for eel management, and between countries where water bodies or catchments are shared;
- c) share information on stock assessments, harvests, the results of monitoring and other relevant data with the Joint EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM Working Group on Eels ([WGEEL](#)) so that a full and complete picture of the state of the stock can be established;
- d) develop measures or implement more effectively existing measures to improve the traceability of eels in trade;
- e) provide the Secretariat with information on any measures they have in place to restrict the trade in live 'glass' or fingerling eels; and
- f) report on progress or provide information to the Secretariat in time for consideration at the 31st or 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee.

#### **Decision 18.BB**

##### ***Directed to the Animals Committee***

The Animals Committee shall consider, at its 31st and 32nd meetings, any reports by Parties with respect to the making of non-detriment findings for trade in European eel with respect to Decisions 18.AA and provide advice and guidance.

The Animals Committee requests the Secretariat to:

- a) clarify, through a Notification, information from Parties which are range states of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) on any restrictions they have in place to limit or prohibit the export of live 'glass' or fingerling eels; and
- b) inform all Parties, through a Notification, of any restrictions by range States of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) on the export of live 'glass' or fingerling eels.

**Under item f) of the mandate**

On trade in non-CITES *Anguilla* spp

**Decision 18.CC**

***Directed to range States of non-CITES *Anguilla* spp in international trade (particularly *A. rostrata*, *A. japonica*, *A. marmorata* and *A. bicolor*)***

Parties are encouraged to:

- a) implement conservation and management measures and related legislation to ensure the sustainability of harvests and international trade in *Anguilla* spp. and make these widely available;
- b) collaborate and cooperate with other range States on shared stocks of *Anguilla* spp. to develop shared objectives for these stocks and their management, improve the understanding of the biology of the species, conduct joint programmes of work and share knowledge and experience;
- c) establish monitoring programmes and develop abundance indices in range States where none exist. For ongoing programmes, identifying opportunities for expanding to new locations and/or live stages would be favourable;
- d) improve the reporting and traceability of *Anguilla* spp. in trade;
- e) develop and/or implement adaptive eel management plans at national or sub-national (or catchment) level and enhance collaboration within countries between authorities and other stakeholders with responsibilities for eel management; and
- f) report progress on these measures to the Animals Committee at its 31st and 32nd meetings.

**Decision 18.DD**

***Directed to Secretariat***

The Secretariat shall invite Parties, through a Notification, to report on their progress in implementing Decision 18.CC and prepare a summary report with draft recommendations in time for submission to the 31st and 32nd meetings of the Animals Committee.

The Secretariat shall invite Parties, through a Notification, to submit information regarding current levels of, or emerging trends in, their demand for specimens of *Anguilla* spp. in trade and, subject to the availability of resources, commission a study to consider levels of demand from consumer States, especially for live eels for aquaculture, and sources of supply, identify any disparities between these and make recommendations for the more effective future management of harvests and trade.

**Decision 18.EE**

***Directed to the Animals Committee***

The Animals Committee shall, at its 31st and 32nd meetings, consider the progress reports provided by Parties and the report by the Secretariat with respect to Decisions 18.CC and 18.DD and make any recommendations to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

**Decision 18.FF**

***Directed to donor Parties and other relevant organizations***

Donor Parties and other relevant organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and others, are invited and encouraged to provide support to, and build capacity for, Anguilla range states for the purpose of implementing Decisions 18.AA to 18.EE.