



## NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2021/018

Geneva, 8 February 2021

CONCERNING:

Seeking information on the status, management  
and trade in eels (*Anguilla* spp.)

1. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.197 to 18.202 on *Eels* (*Anguilla* spp.), which are presented in Annex 1 to this Notification.
2. Pursuant to the implementation of paragraph a) of Decision 18.199, Parties are invited to provide any relevant information on the implementation of Decisions 18.197 and 18.198 to the Secretariat in order to allow it to report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate. Decision 18.197 is directed to range States of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), while Decision 18.198 is directed to range States of non-CITES listed *Anguilla* spp. in international trade.
3. **Annex 2** to this Notification contains a questionnaire that is to be completed by the range States of anguillid eels – *Anguilla* spp.<sup>1</sup> (*Anguilla anguilla*, *A. australis*, *A. bengalensis*, *A. bicolor*, *A. borneensis*, *A. celebesensis*, *A. dieffenbachii*, *A. interioris*, *A. japonica*, *A. luzonensis*, *A. marmorata*, *A. megastoma*, *A. mossambica*, *A. obscura*, *A. reinhardtii* and *A. rostrata*). This will facilitate the collation of the information sought under Decisions 18.197 and 18.198 from Parties; and allow the Secretariat to report to the Animals and Standing Committees as instructed in paragraph e) of Decision 18.199.
4. **Annex 3** to this Notification contains a questionnaire to collect information from Parties regarding current levels of, or emerging trends in, trade in specimens of *Anguilla* spp., in accordance with paragraph c) of Decision 18.199. This questionnaire should be completed by those Parties that are source, transit or destination countries for the anguillid eels referred to in paragraph 3 above. The information collected will be used to inform the study referred to in paragraph d) of the same Decision.
5. When completing the questionnaires in Annexes 2 and 3, Management Authorities are encouraged to consult all relevant national authorities, especially fisheries departments, to obtain the required information. Parties are further encouraged to engage with industry representatives, researchers, fishery experts, national and international organizations with relevant expertise, and other pertinent stakeholders, to ensure that as much information as possible is provided. It would also be greatly appreciated if respondents could provide contact details of experts in any of these sectors who would be able to answer any specific follow-up questions that may arise.
6. Parties are invited to complete and submit the relevant questionnaires by **5 March 2021** to the Secretariat at [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org), with a copy to [karen.gaynor@cites.org](mailto:karen.gaynor@cites.org), who will make relevant information available to the consultants who will undertake the study cited in Decision 18.199 paragraph d).

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<sup>1</sup> Three other species names are occasionally used in relation to freshwater eels – *Anguilla labiata*, *Anguilla malgumora* and *Anguilla nebulosa*. *A. labiata* is a sub-population of *A. bengalensis*, primarily found in Africa and should be referred to as the latter. *A. malgumora* is a synonym for *A. borneensis* and should be referred to as the latter. *A. nebulosa* is a synonym for *A. bengalensis* and should be referred to as the latter.

**Decisions on Eels (*Anguilla* spp.)****18.197 Directed to range States of European eels (*Anguilla anguilla*)**

*Range States of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) are encouraged to:*

- a) *submit any non-detriment finding studies on European eel they have undertaken to the Secretariat for inclusion on the CITES website; explore the different approaches that might be taken for making non-detriment findings for European eels traded as fingerlings (FIG) compared with those traded as other live eels (LIV); collaborate and share information with other Parties regarding such studies and their outcome, especially where the Parties share catchments or water bodies; seek review and advice from the Animals Committee or other suitable body on any non-detriment findings for European eels where appropriate;*
- b) *develop and/or implement adaptive European eel management plans 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 Working Group on Eels (WGEEL) of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission, the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas and the Central Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM), so that a full and complete picture of the state of the European eel stock can be established;*
- d) *develop measures or implement more effectively existing measures to improve the traceability of eels in trade (both live and dead);*
- e) *provide the Secretariat with information regarding any changes to measures they have in place to restrict the trade in live 'glass' or fingerling European eels; and*
- f) *provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of this Decision to allow it to report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate.*

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

*Range States of non-CITES *Anguilla* spp. in international trade are encouraged to:*

- a) *where appropriate, implement conservation and management measures, such as adaptive eel management plans, enhanced collaboration within countries, between authorities and other stakeholders with responsibilities for eel management, 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 traceability of Anguilla spp. in trade (both live and dead); and*
- e) *provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of this Decision to allow it report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate.*

**18.199 Directed to the Secretariat**

*The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *prepare and submit a summary report on the implementation of Decisions 18.197 and 18.198 with draft recommendations to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate, for their consideration;*
- b) *collate available information on the biology of Anguilla anguilla in collaboration with experts, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Anguillid Specialist Group, with a view to determining whether the glass eel (fingerling) life stage can be considered to have a "low probability of surviving to adulthood", and report its findings to the Animals Committee;*
- c) *invite Parties, through a Notification, to submit information regarding current levels of, or emerging trends in, trade in specimens of Anguilla spp.;*
- d) *subject to the availability of resources, commission a study to consider levels of trade and trade patterns, especially in 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; and*
- e) *prepare and submit a summary of the responses to the Notification and the study referred to in paragraph c) of this Decision, if available, with draft recommendations to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee as appropriate for their consideration.*

**18.200 Directed to the Animals Committee**

*The Animals Committee shall:*

- a) *if requested, consider any reports submitted by Parties with respect to the making of non-detriment findings for trade in European eel and provide advice and guidance as needed;*
- b) *review the report from the Secretariat on the biology of European eel (Anguilla anguilla) prepared under Decision 18.199 paragraph b) and consider the potential use of source code R (ranching) for specimens of A. anguilla from aquaculture production systems, and provide advice and make recommendations to the Parties and the Standing Committee as appropriate;*
- c) *review available information relating to the potential risks and benefits of reintroducing seized, live European eels (Anguilla anguilla) to the wild and, if appropriate, provide advice on suitable protocols taking into account existing guidance and practices, for consideration at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and*
- d) *consider the progress reports provided by Parties and the report by the Secretariat with respect to Decisions 18.197, 18.198 and 18.199 and make any recommendations to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

**18.201 Directed to the Standing Committee**

*The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *consider the report prepared by the Secretariat and any other available information relating to illegal trade in European eel, including the case study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on European eel trafficking as part of the 2nd World Wildlife Crime Report, and make recommendations as appropriate;*
- b) *review any advice and recommendations coming from the Animals Committee concerning Decision 18.200 paragraph d) and make recommendations as appropriate; and*
- c) *with the assistance of the Secretariat, engage with the World Customs Organization to examine the feasibility of harmonizing customs codes relevant to trade in all Anguilla species and report to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*