



MARITIME FORUM

Study 2008-11 lot 2 Pilot projects to estimate potential and actual escapement of silver eel

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Reporting on the proportion of eel that manages to escape to the oceans for the spawning migration is an important part of the Eel management Plans that should be operational by mid 2009. In order to estimate the amount of escapees a consistent methodology should be developed that could be applied by the Member States.

Why this study?

The European eel stock has been in decline for several decades, both in terms of juvenile recruitment and adult escapement to the oceanic spawning migration. The ability to accurately determine the biomass of silver eel escaping downstream and into the sea is crucial to the implementation of Eel Management Plans which should be put in place by 1 July 2009. Member States will have to report every third year, starting in June 2012, the proportion of silver eel biomass that escapes to the sea to spawn. A 2005 Workshop on National Data Collection for the European Eel, developed general guidelines for monitoring eel stock and fisheries in river basins; implementation requires further testing of approaches and procedures.

Goals

The aim of this study is to improve methods currently used to monitor the escapement of silver eel from inland waters toward their marine spawning grounds for three regions, 1) the North and Baltic Seas, 2) the Atlantic arc and 3) the Mediterranean. It is expected that these pilot projects provide support information for introduction of monitoring elements in future eel managements plans. Goal is to develop and analyse efficient methods of estimating escapement rates of silver eel from various inland and/or coastal environments/habitats towards spawning grounds.

Approach

From the North and Baltic Seas, the Atlantic Arc and the Mediterranean Sea are selected six river basins from which silver eel can escape as part of their spawning migration.

Develop methods which can be applied to these rivers to determine, as accurately as possible, the potential silver eel escapement, if there would be no fishing. Also develop methods to estimate the actual silver eel escapement.

Develop appropriate stock assessment procedures suited to the various habitats. For the population models used in these assessments give information on how the model was adapted to suite the local circumstances, indicate how well the model works and provide guidelines of best practice for eel stock assessment.

Timing

24 months

Budget

€ 400.000

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