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Press release | 18.06.2013

Eel stock

Call for urgent action to save eels teetering on the brink

With the European eel stock in a precarious state across Europe, the European Parliament's fisheries committee today voted on legislative proposals on management of eel fisheries. The EU urgently needs to adopt a new recovery plan to give eel stocks a chance and there is also a need for a more sustainable approach to re-stocking. Green rapporteur/draftsperson **Isabella Lövin** is calling for a new EU regulation to reflect this and after the vote she said:

"The status of the European eel stock remains critical and with the European eel now a critically endangered species, urgent action is needed to increase their numbers. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has confirmed that existing eel fisheries are not sustainable and that urgent action is needed to remedy this. Eels all over Europe – from the Mediterranean to the Baltic – belong to the same stock, which is why we need a coordinated European effort to save eels. In the last three decades, the number of eels returning to the Sargasso Sea to spawn has dropped by 99% for the North Sea and 95% elsewhere in Europe. In addition to this, scientific advice from ICES for 2013 states that the stock is at an historical minimum and that there are no signs of recovery. ICES recommends that for eel stocks to recover, fisheries and other human activities affecting the stock should be reduced to as close to zero as possible.

This report calls on the Commission to come forward with legislative proposals to move towards a more sustainable approach to current practices on eel re-stocking and the Greens welcome the committee's decision to support this. The Commission has made re-stocking a central element of its Eel Management Plans but currently there are no corresponding conditions or guidelines to ensure success. Instead, re-stocking is essentially a highly labour-intensive tool that enables fishing to continue rather than something that ensures independent survival of eel stocks."

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Opinion

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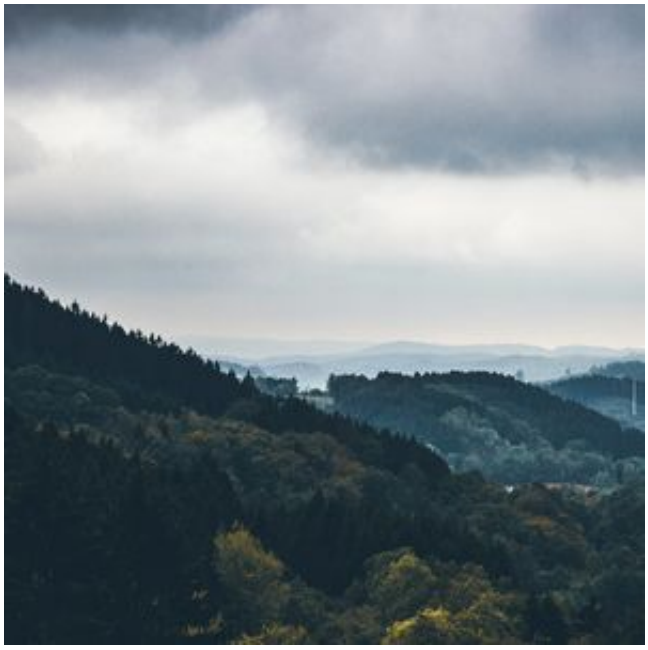


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