

# European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission (EIFAC)

Its role in Reconciling Fisheries with  
Conservation in Times of Change in Europe



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1. Who – or what – is EIFAC?
2. The structure of EIFAC, membership
3. How EIFAC works
4. The role of EIFAC in reconciling fisheries with conservation: some examples

# 1. Who is EIFAC?

The European Inland Fisheries Advisory Commission  
EIFAC is a **statutory body** of the



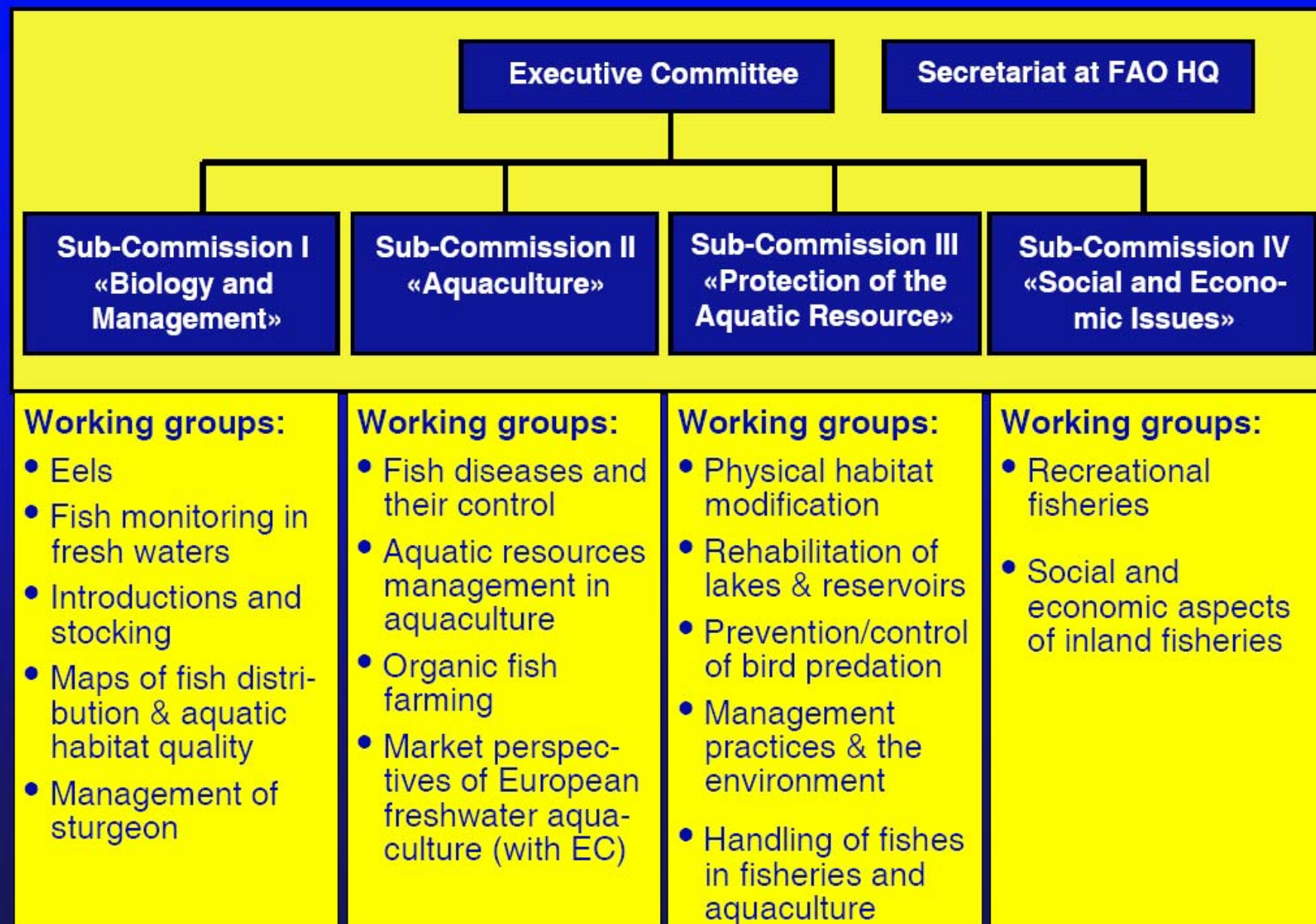
It is a **regional fisheries commission** of FAO according to Article VI of the FAO Constitution, serving as the centre of a network, linking policy-makers, managers, scientists and others working on inland fisheries and aquaculture issues.

# 1. Who is EIFAC?

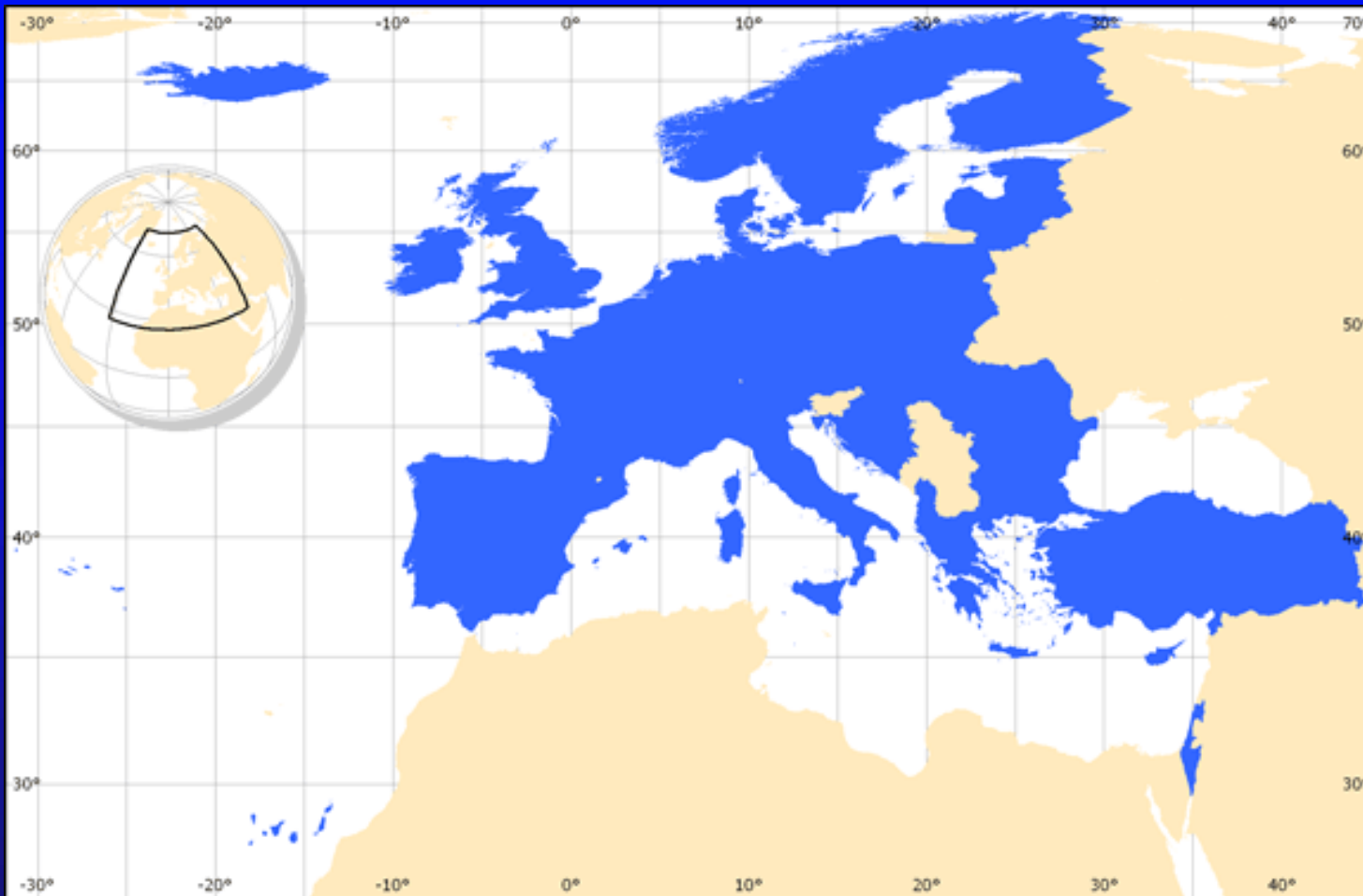
EIFAC = European **Inland Fisheries Advisory** Commission

- focus on inland waters (freshwater)
- purely advisory function towards member states
- no regulatory power!
- no budget for activities → on charge of members
- based largely on voluntary work

## 2. The structure of EIFAC



# EIFAC membership



34 members (states with national correspondent), including the European Commission.  
Regular cooperation with scientists from North America, Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia.

## 3. How EIFAC works

### 3 main areas of activity:

1. A **Plenary Session** of the Commission is held every two years (→ **session report** available online).

In conjunction with session:

**Scientific symposium.** Symposium proceedings published as books or special issues of scientific journals.

2. Between sessions, most work of the Commission is carried out by the **working groups** (in meetings, by correspondence).

Main **products**: Reports, Technical and Occasional Papers (available online), and scientific publications, all made available to EIFAC members and others by FAO.

3. **Networking**: contacts and exchange of information among scientists, managers, administrators.

## 4. The role of EIFAC in reconciling fisheries with conservation

### **Primary field of activity of EIFAC:**

**European inland fisheries and aquaculture: resource use**

In recent years, **conservation aspects** have become more and more important when providing advice to member states.

Specifically, with the political and economic changes in (Eastern) Europe, the **need to reconcile fisheries with conservation** is becoming urgent:

- Often poor state of aquatic habitats due to rapid and/or uncontrolled industrial development
- Certain fish populations also threatened by overexploitation
- Freshwater aquaculture is rapidly developing → need for environmentally sound and sustainable development



## 4. The role of EIFAC in reconciling fisheries with conservation: some examples

### Example 1: Eel



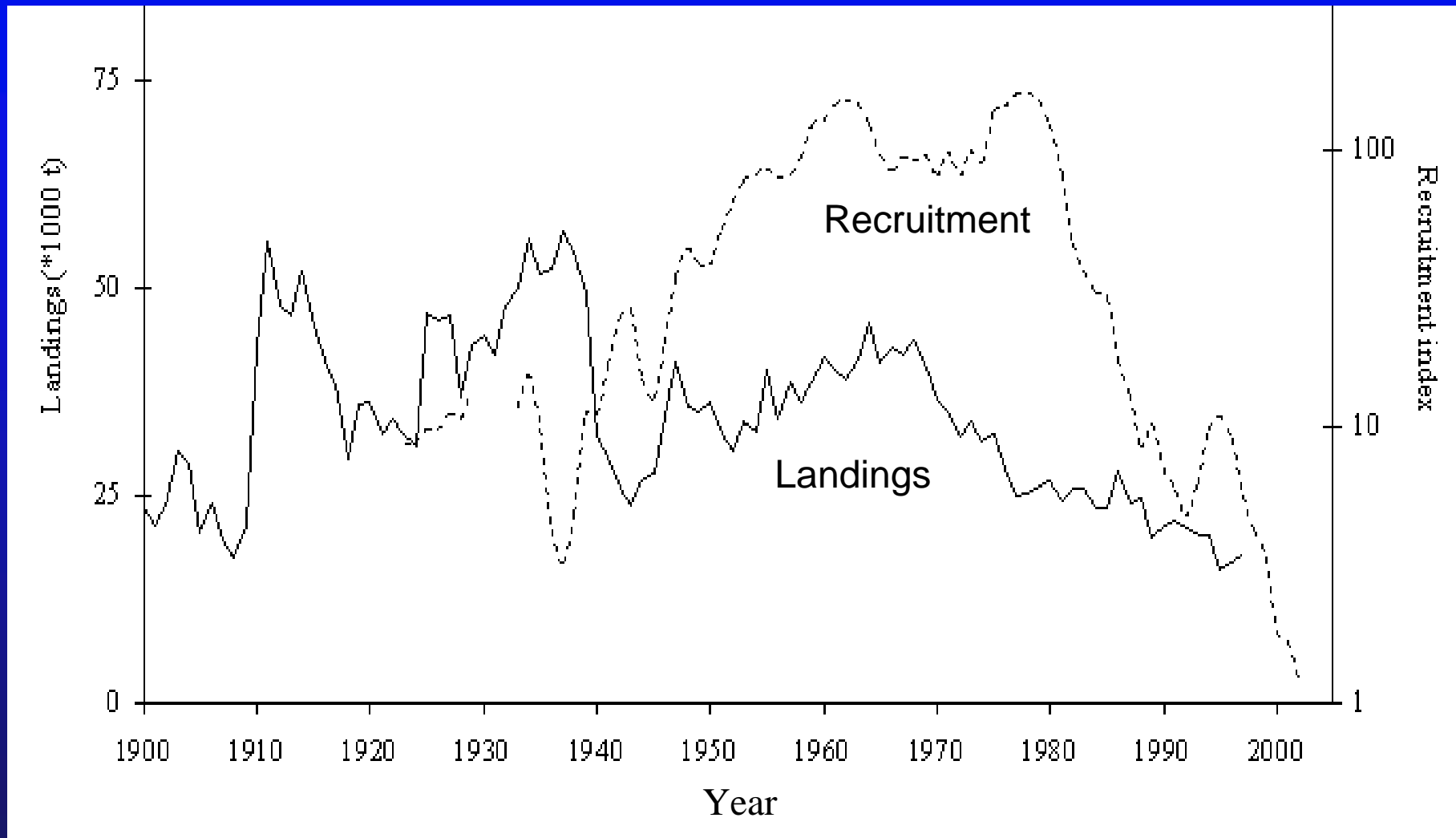
Catches (stocks) of the European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) have dropped to an alarmingly low state in recent years.

—> Appropriate measures are pressing.

The joint **EIFAC/ICES working party on Eel** tries to find ways for improving the state of the stocks, and to help formulating and implementing a management plan to:

- safeguard the species in the long term (conservation),
- promote the sustainable fisheries of this highly valued resource.

## Example 1: Eel



Estimated trends in recruitment and landings of the European eel showing the downward trend in recruitment.

## Example 2: Sturgeon



The **working party on Management of sturgeon** works jointly with the General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

- to assess the state of the sturgeon stocks in the Danube, Black Sea, Caspian Sea and Adriatic Sea regions,
- to help protecting sturgeons from illegal capture and exportation,
- to review existing conservation and management measures, and
- to advise on appropriate interventions for the sustainable exploitation of the stocks (CITES requirement!), including stock enhancement through aquaculture production and stocking.

### Example 3: Bird predation



Cormorant



Common merganser

#### **EIFAC working party on Prevention and control of bird predation:**

Cooperation with European ornithological and fisheries organisations.

Focus on effects of cormorants (mergansers) on inland fisheries and aquaculture, and on (endangered) fish stocks on a pan-European scale

- > conflict between birds and fish of different conservation status;
- > European cormorant management plan - EIFAC workshop November 07
- > strong need for reconciling fisheries interests with conservation.

## Example 4: Rehabilitation of rivers for fish



River Thur,  
Switzerland

Photograph by  
Armin Peter

### **EIFAC working party on Effects of Physical Modification of the Aquatic Habitat on Fish Populations:**

Produced a manual on river rehabilitation for fish (practical advice)

- > example for the commitment and involvement of EIFAC to restore and enhance the ecological basis of fish production;
- > example for reconciling fisheries with conservation.



**25<sup>th</sup> Session  
and Symposium  
Turkey, May 2008**



**EIFAC/CECPI**

THE EUROPEAN INLAND FISHERIES  
ADVISORY COMMISSION

COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE  
CONSULTATIVE  
POUR LES PÊCHES DANS LES  
EAUX INTÉRIEURES