

Assessing the freshwater distribution of yellow eel

In the global context of the decline in wild species, modeling the distribution of populations is a crucial aspect of ecological management. This can be a major challenge, especially for species, such as the European eel, that have complex life cycles, exhibit cryptic behavior, or migrate over long distances. A review of the literature suggests that eel size data could be used to assess and analyze freshwater distribution of eel. We argue that analyses based on small yellow eels (≤ 300 mm) along the longitudinal course of rivers could provide a valuable tool for population monitoring. We propose a standardized catchment recruitment index and a colonization index based on the probability of occurrence (presence/absence data) using logistic models for different size classes. The model developed here provides a convenient guide for assessing yellow eel stages in freshwater areas, and should have concrete applications for management of the species.

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