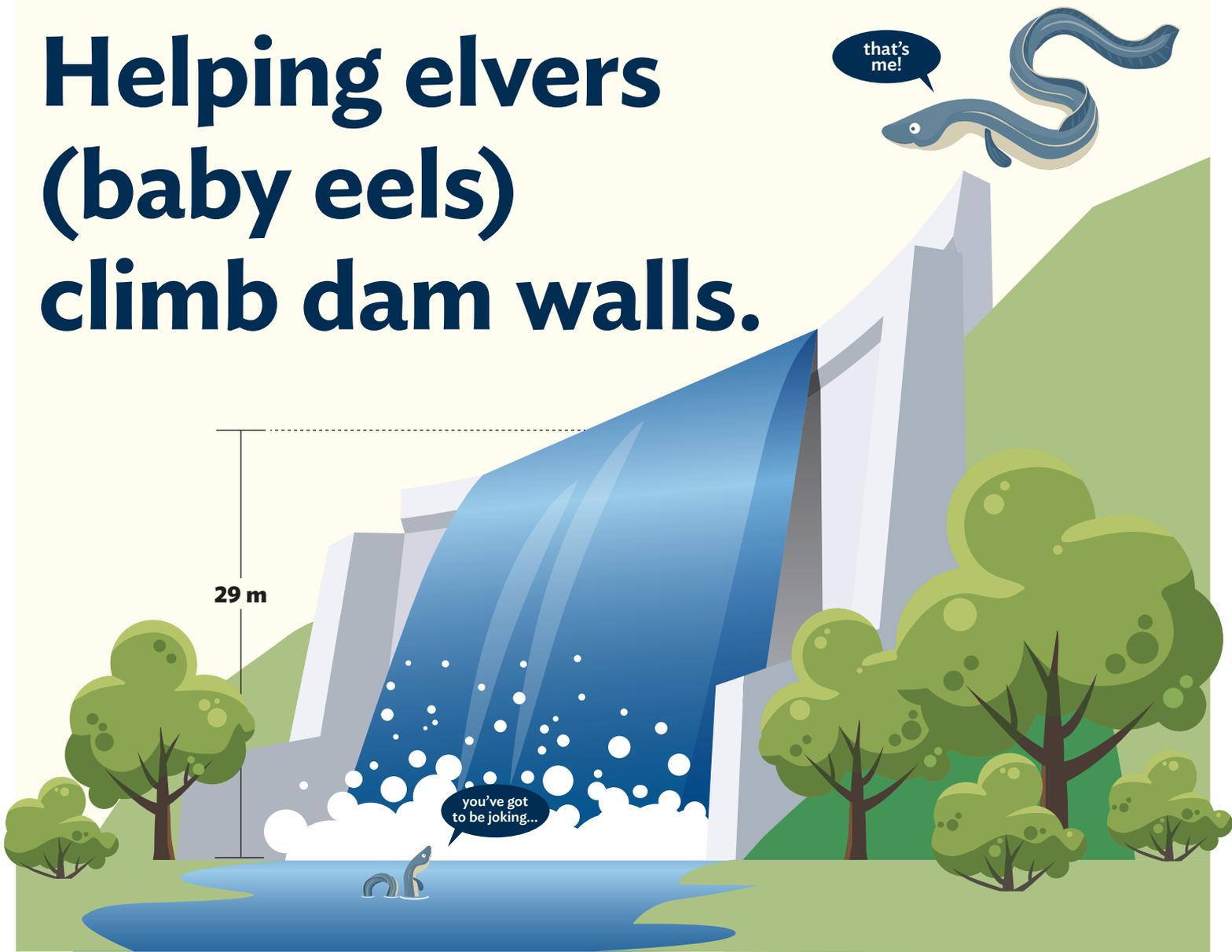


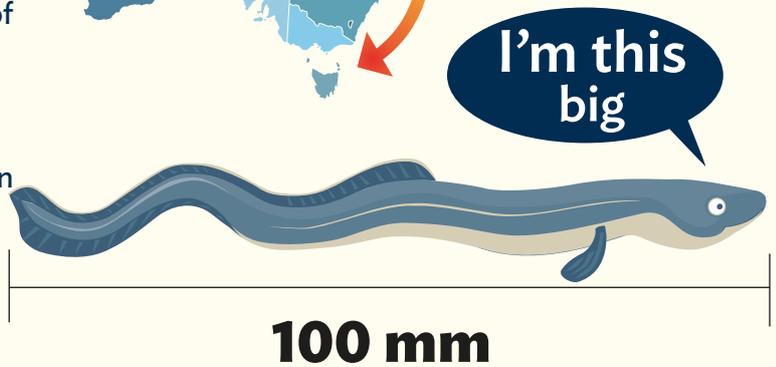
# Helping elvers (baby eels) climb dam walls.



## The problem!

Elvers are tiny, measuring about 100 mm long. You can fit around 800 elvers in a one litre milk carton. They are amazing creatures, swimming thousands of kilometres from the Coral Sea (North East Queensland) all the way to our rivers in Tasmania.

Elvers instinctively swim up rivers where they grow into adult eels. However, what is an elver to do when it swims up a river and meets a 29 metre dam wall (that is 290 times an elver's length)? In the past they were stuck but our Hydro Tasmania scientists came up with a solution.



# A solution.

We knew the elvers were really good climbers and liked to swim upstream. Our scientists decided to install a special ladder with flowing water to assist the elvers climb past the dam wall.

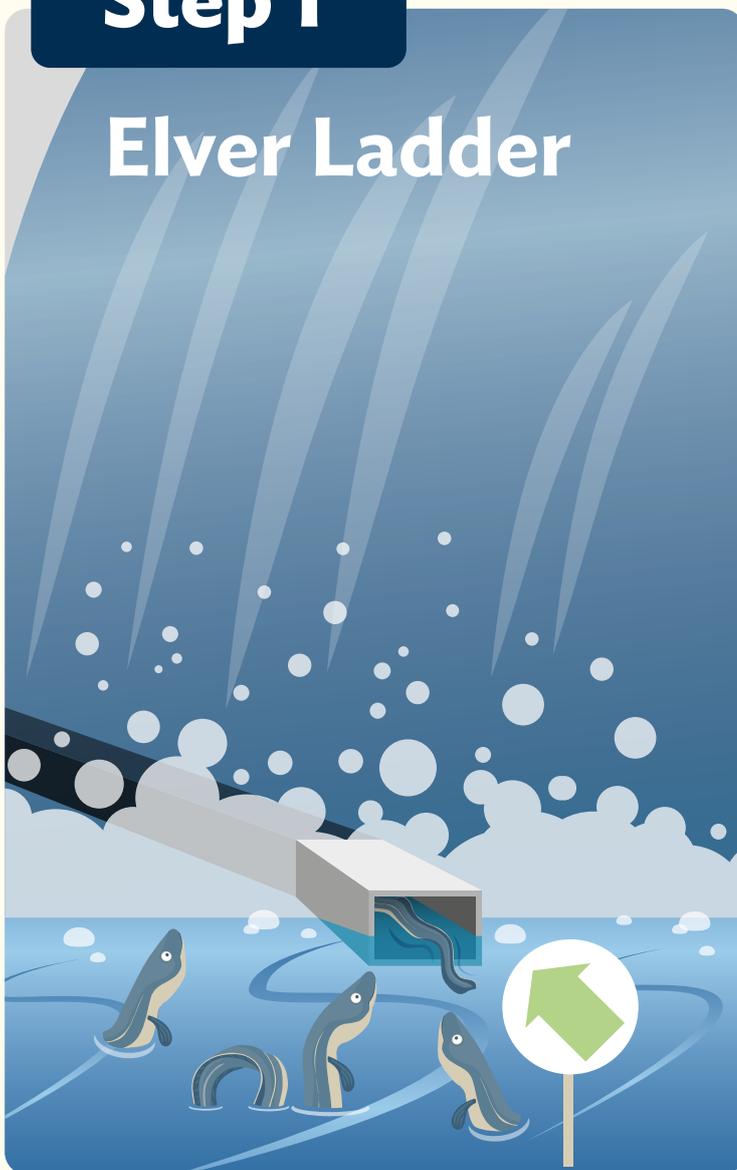
The ladder runs inside of the dam wall in an area called the gallery. It is installed alongside the stairs that are used by operators to access the internal dam wall.



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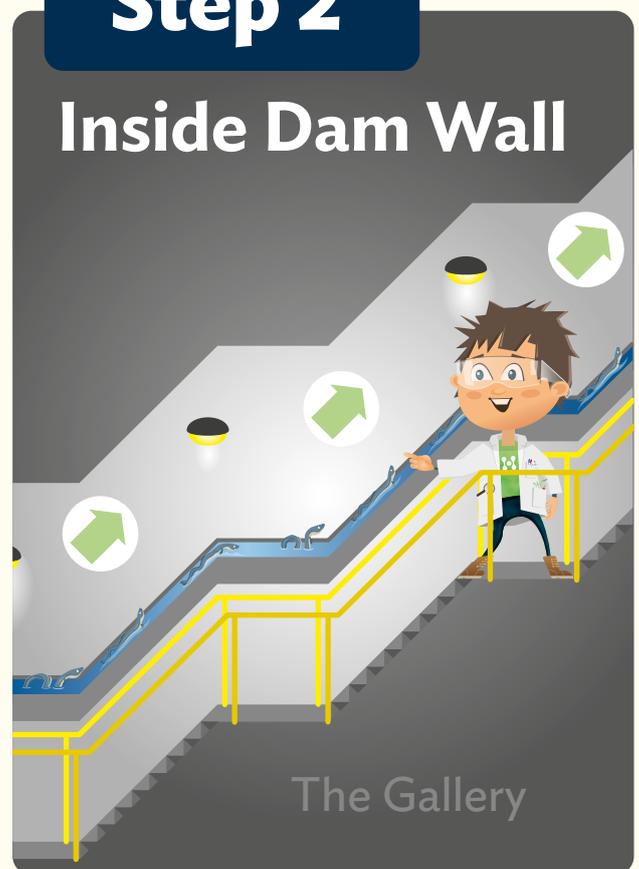
## Step 1

### Elver Ladder



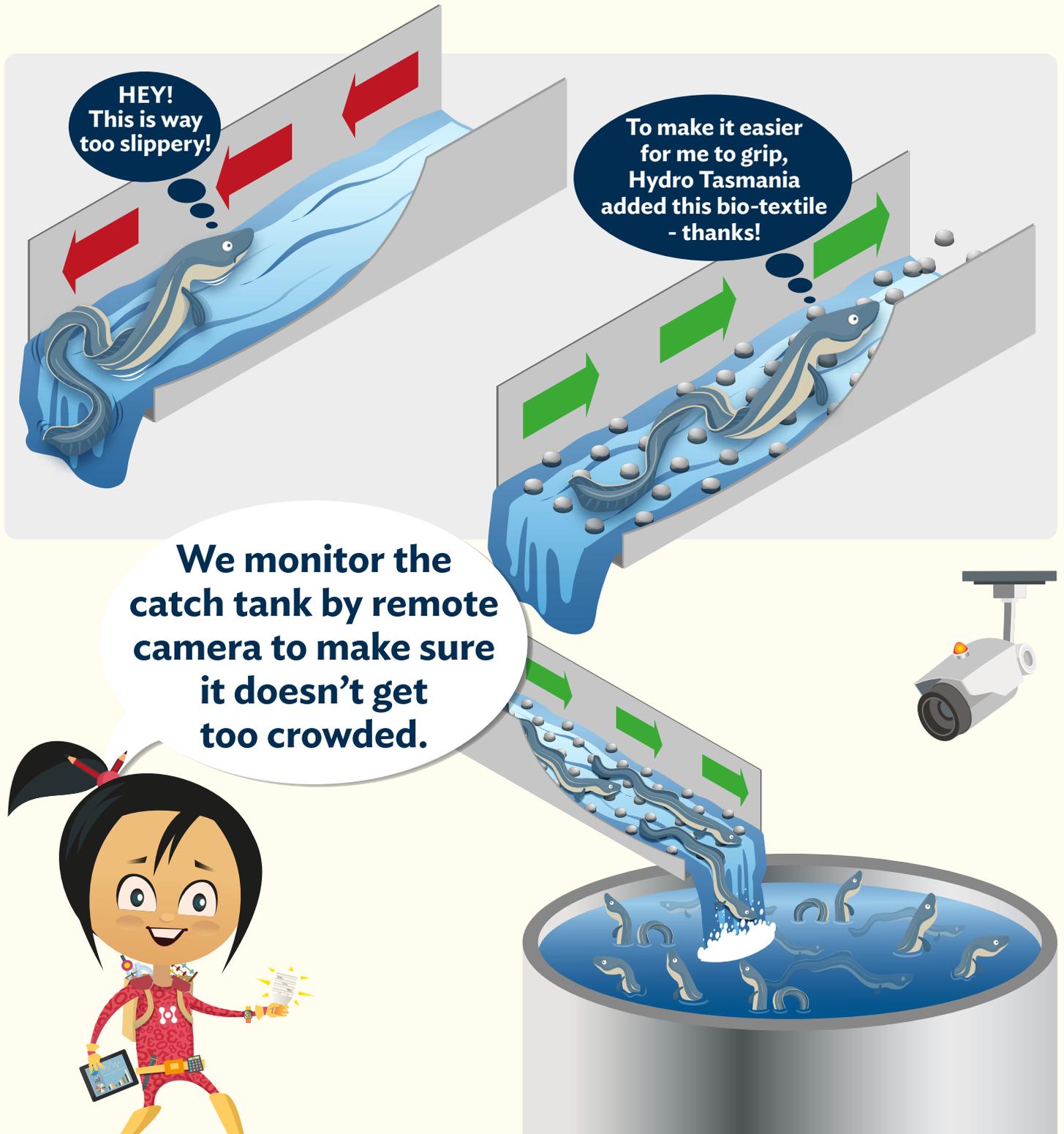
## Step 2

### Inside Dam Wall



# It's a bit slippery.

We always knew it was going to be a big ask for the elvers to climb such a long way over a slippery surface. So our scientists found a solution and fitted the ladder with studded matting called bio-textile which stopped the elvers slipping back down the ladder.



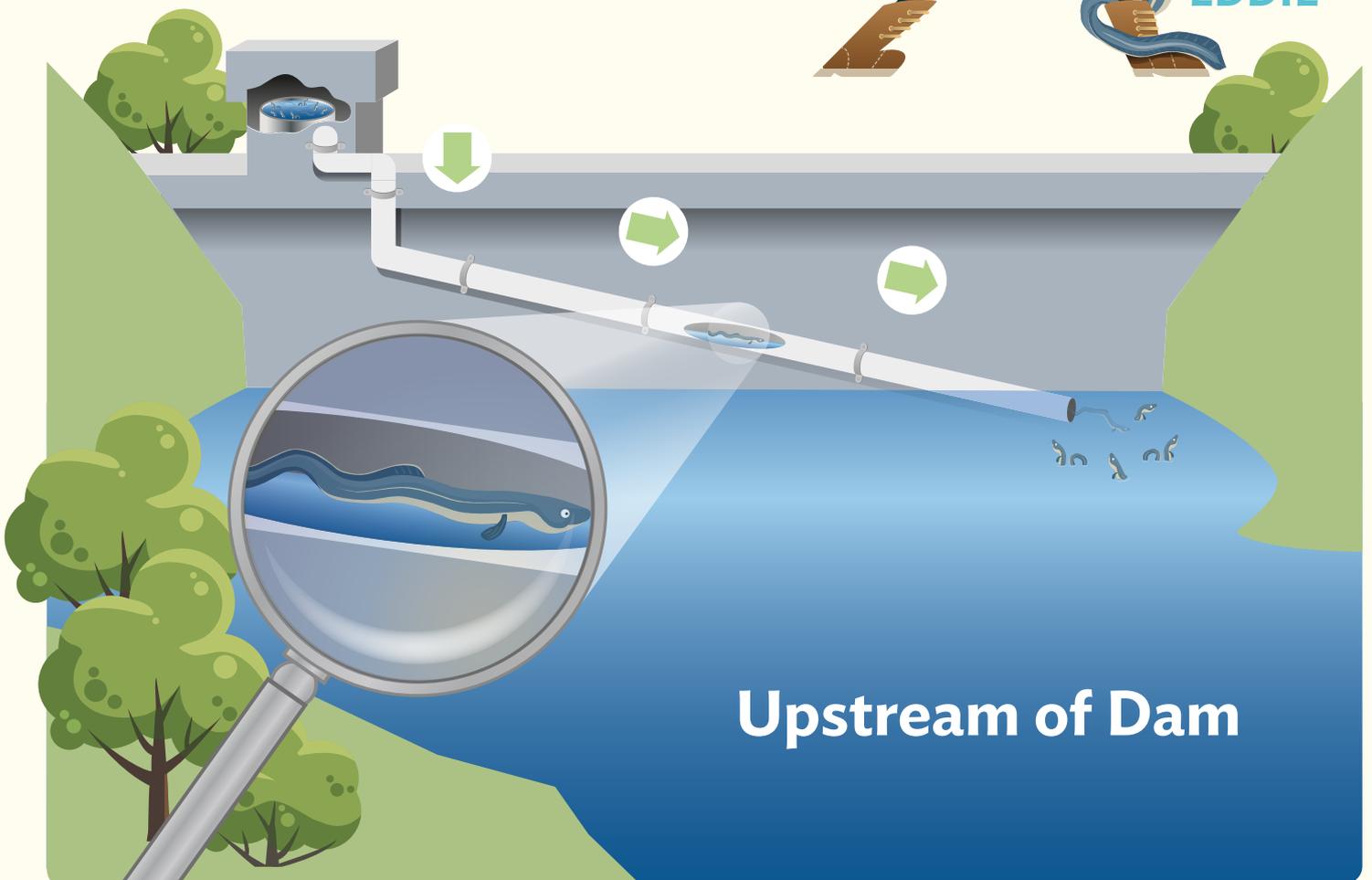
# And they're away!

Once the elvers reach the top of the dam, they gently fall into a special tank which every eight hours, automatically empties into a pipe leading to the lake behind the dam wall. Sometimes the ladder works so well, we have to monitor it by remote camera to make sure the tank doesn't get too crowded.

Once released into the lake the elvers will spend around eight to 20 years (sometimes even longer) growing up in the upstream river system.

**Science, technology, engineering and maths assisted us find a way for elvers to swim past the dam wall.**

Each year, our elver ladder ensures that hundreds of thousands of elvers are able to make their way upstream to grow up into eels. They are an important part of Tasmania's river ecosystem.



Upstream of Dam