

Thank you Madam Chair,

Island Conservation would like to make comments on Goal B, Target 9

We appreciate the work that has gone into the preparation of the background documents for this meeting. The section of UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/2/Add.2 focused on Target 9 (pages 25-31) provides a mixed and potentially misleading message on the utility and success of invasive alien species eradication. For example:

- Paragraph 107 states: “There are numerous examples where successful actions have been taken to control or eradicate invasive alien species. While some of the tools and methodologies identified above may have assisted with these actions it is not possible to come to any clear conclusions regarding their use.”
- However, paragraphs 108¹ and 125² present a series of statements as ‘conclusions’ about the utility of invasive alien species eradication. These statements do not reflect an adequate understanding of invasive alien species eradication, prevention, or control; all efforts to address IAS need to be strategically targeted to the specific context in order to be effective and require substantial investments in financial and other resources over time. Furthermore, minimizing the spread and impact of invasive alien species is not a matter of choosing between prevention and eradication. Even the best resourced prevention measures are not, and will never be, perfect. Early detection and rapid response programmes are thus needed to enable cost-effective eradication of invasive alien species. Finally, we must recognize that there are numerous invasive alien species already established and threatening native species with extinction. Where eradication is technically feasible, such efforts need to be a priority. Although there have been more than 800 successful eradications of invasive alien vertebrates from islands, urgent and critically important work remains to be done.

We thus offer the following points as ‘clear conclusions’ for invasive alien species eradication and hope they will be included in the report of this meeting alongside a call for additional resources to support eradication efforts, as this need is recognized in paragraph 114³.

- The eradication of invasive alien species can be a cost-effective action, particularly when introduced organisms are detected early in the invasion process, the area of introduction is geographically or otherwise contained (e.g., oceanic islands), and a site-specific strategic plan is developed that takes relevant biological and socio-economic parameters into consideration.
- There are already more than 800 examples of the successful eradication of invasive alien vertebrates recorded from islands, and numerous examples of successful eradications of various invasive alien species in the continental context. This body of work provides a strong scientific and technical basis for the design and implementation of cost-effective eradication programmes worldwide.
- Advances in eradication technology and the strategic application of lessons learned from past eradication efforts have increased the feasibility and the success of invasive alien species eradication.
- Eradication often enables ecosystem restoration and recovery of species at risk of imminent extinction. Finally, noting that Paragraph 116⁴ acknowledges the value of the Database of Island Invasive Species Eradications (DIISE), we encourage Parties to also recognize the Threatened Island Biodiversity (TIB)⁵, as a useful resource for information on invasive alien species eradications in the islands context.

¹ Paragraph 108: “Eradication efforts often need to be tailored to the species concerned and the ecosystem in which they are found. This can make it difficult to apply general guidelines related to invasive alien species as they need to be adapted to conform to national circumstances. In addition the costs of controlling or eradicating an alien species once it has become invasive or of setting up national phytosanitary measures are often high and require sustained efforts over several years. There is evidence that eradication is often difficult and sometimes not possible and that when possible, tends to be very costly.

² Paragraph 125. “Where actions have been taken to control or eradicate invasive alien species they can be effective. Eradication efforts have often required concerted efforts over several years and have been relatively costly. Actions to prevent the introduction of invasive alien species are more effective than trying to control or eradicate them once they have become established.”

³ Paragraph 114. “Other limitations include lack of import control, early warning systems, and resources for eradication.”

⁴ Paragraph 116: “Information is possibly the most advanced for islands, where the Database of Island Invasive Species Eradications (DIISE).”

⁵ www.tib.islandconservation.org