



Press Brief

Invasive Alien Species

Why is this important?

Invasive alien species are non-native (alien) species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species. Under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the contracting Parties should prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species, as far as possible and as appropriate (Article 8h). In some ecosystems, such as oceanic islands, ancient lakes or mountains, invasive alien species are a leading cause of biodiversity loss. The fourth edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook identified that more than half of known causes of species extinction globally was due to invasive alien species.

The cost for dealing with the problems caused by invasive alien species in the European Union (EU) alone has been estimated at €12 billion/year over the past 20 years. Other examples include: €11 billion/year in China; €90 billion/year in United States of America; and even a country such as New Zealand, where strong biosecurity measures are in place, has to spend €2 billion/year¹.

Governments are increasingly taking steps to prevent, control and eradicate invasive alien species. Efforts taken so far, however, have been overwhelmed by the rate of alien species introductions with increased international trade and transportation, which shows no sign of slowing.

Recently, an international collaboration of experts on invasive alien species conducted an analysis on major pathways of introductions. The result showed that escapes of plants and animals from confined conditions for introduction evoked significant numbers of further spread and establishment of alien species, globally².

¹ www.europarl.europa.eu/eplibrary/Tackling-invasive-alien-species-in-Europe-FINAL.pdf

² www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-18/official/sbstta-18-09-add1-en.pdf



Convention on
Biological Diversity



What news to expect in Pyeongchang?

The twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will consider a new global guidance to address the issue of invasive alien species introduced as pets, aquarium and terrarium species, and as live bait and live food, noting that their escapes are major cause of spread of invasive alien species, and to minimize their hazard risks to biodiversity. The COP will also consider the future work of Parties and the Secretariat and how to make progress on policy development and national and regional implementation to address invasive alien species in the future. The focus of the future work to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species needs to include: awareness raising on invasive alien species in wider sectors; making use of the guidance developed under the CBD as well as the existing international guidance for pests and diseases to address invasive alien species; further identification and prioritization of invasive alien species and their pathways to manage; addressing risks of alien species associated with developing aid and ecosystem restoration; making use of the full range of measures for control and/or eradication, including biocontrol; prioritizing actions to address invasive species in particularly vulnerable ecosystems; efforts to manage invasive alien species in protected areas and key biodiversity areas contributing to achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 11; regional collaboration; involvement of academics, citizen scientists and indigenous and local communities, particularly for early detection and rapid response; and reporting on Target 10 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800
Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1N9
Canada

Tel.: +1 514 288 2220
Fax: +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int

www.cbd.int/cop2014