



Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership
Steering Committee, 1st meeting
Montreal, 15 October 2013

REPORT OF THE MEETING

INTRODUCTION

1. To achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9, Parties need access to scientifically valid information on invasive alien species (IAS), including their occurrence with geographic references, their ecological features, and pathways and vectors of introduction and spread. “A Joint Work Programme to Strengthen Information Services on Invasive Alien Species as a Contribution towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 9” (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/INF/14) was developed to improve access to the necessary information during a workshop organized by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), held in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 5-6 September 2011.
2. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its fifteenth meeting (SBSTTA 15), welcomed the Joint Work Programme. To facilitate work prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11), the Executive Secretary convened the “Organizational Workshop for the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership”¹ at the Natural History Museum in London, United Kingdom, on 9-10 July 2012. The workshop prepared the “Operational Plan for the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership (GIASI Partnership)” (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/34).
3. On the margins of eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties in October 2012, the following organizations signed Memoranda of Cooperation with the CBD Secretariat, to join the Partnership: CABI; International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and its Invasive Species Specialist Group (IUCN-ISSG); FishBase Information and Research Group; Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF); Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle (France); Natural History Museum (United Kingdom); Horus Institute for Environmental Conservation and Development (Brazil); and Anatrack Ltd.
4. The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties welcomed the development of the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership (GIASI Partnership), and requested that the Executive Secretary facilitate its implementation (paragraph 22 of decision XI/28). Accordingly, the first meeting of the Steering Committee was held in Montreal on 15 October 2013.
5. The objective of the first meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) was to review the progress of the Partnership (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/INF/11) and provide guidance on the partners’ inter-sessional activities between SBSTTA 17 and the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, (COP 12) (October 2013 – October 2014) to facilitate the implementation of the work plans described in the Operational Plan for the Partnership (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/34) taking into account the progress made by the Partners from COP 11 to date.
6. The list of the meeting’s participants and the agenda as adopted can be found in annexes I and II below, respectively.

¹ A detailed workshop report is accessible at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cop/cop-11/information/cop-11-inf-34-en.pdf>.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

7. The meeting was opened by Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, 15 October 2013.

8. He welcomed all participants and introduced the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (decision X/2) and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He noted that the issue of invasive alien species was a cross-cutting issue in conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and if the management of this threat was successful it would contribute to achieving a wide range of targets, for example Target 5, 11, 12 and 17. In particular, Target 9 was set to address the issue of invasive alien species globally. Therefore this Partnership would be focused on the provision of scientifically valid information on invasive alien species by Parties and all implementers of the Convention. He also stressed that this Partnership might have strong potential to collaborate with other ongoing activities under the Convention, such as the national biodiversity strategies and action plans forum (NBSAPs Forum), the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership and a new online national reporting system developed by the CBD Secretariat. He encouraged the representatives of the partner organizations to collaborate not only within this Partnership but also beyond the Partnership with all relevant stakeholders in their ongoing activities in making progress towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

9. The Executive Secretary further explained that this meeting was the first meeting of the Steering Committee to oversee the activities of the GIASI Partnership and stressed that the activities were aimed at supporting Parties to achieve Target 9 and other relevant Targets.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

10. The Executive Secretary chaired the meeting and presented regrets from members Mr. Hesiquio Benites Dias and Mr. Saw Leng Guan, who were not able to be present due to the evening session for the Friends of the Chair meeting of SBSTTA 17, which was taking place in parallel with the present meeting.

11. He then invited the participants to select a co-chair for the Steering Committee from among the members of the SC, and a rapporteur for this meeting. The meeting selected Mr. Donald Hobern, the Executive Secretary of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) as co-chair of the SC, and Ms. Shyama Pagad, Programme Officer of the IUCN-Species Survival Commission-Invasive Species Specialist Group (IUCN ISSG) as a rapporteur for the meeting.

12. The meeting adopted the provisional agenda with amendments to the order of some sub-items (annex II). After self-introduction of members, including members participating remotely via Skype or telephone, the chair explained the role of the SC in accordance with the Operational Plan for the GIASI Partnership (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/34).

13. Briefly, the SC oversees the functioning of the Partnership and provides guidance on its coordination and activities of the Working Groups (WGs) to ensure implementation of the Operational Plan, especially the work plans of the WGs. The SC will also report to the Secretariat on the implementation of the work plans.

ITEM 3. ORGANIZATION OF THE GIASI PARTNERSHP

14. Mr. Chris Lyal, chair of the interim SC, explained the status of the WGs to date: (i) Information Gateway WG; (ii) Information Synthesis and Assessment WG; (iii) Database Interoperability and Quality Improvement WG; and (iv) Best Practices for Non-Web-Based Communications WG. He mentioned that the Taxonomic Information Services WG mentioned in the Operational Plan, while having several members, did not have a chair. He also informed the SC that the interim SC, which had been established on the margins of COP 11, had had an effective communication plan, with monthly conference calls of the interim SC, and calls also involving the wider Partnership and WG chairs.

15. The ex-officio members expressed their gratitude to the chair of the interim SC for his continued efforts to engage all information providers and other organizations in the activities of the WGs over the first year of operation among the partners and beyond.

16. Mr. Piero Genovesi, IUCN-ISSG Chair, explained to the SC that the foundation of the Partnership was conceived during a discussion at the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group meeting on addressing the risks associated with the introduction of alien species as pets, aquarium and terrarium species, and as live bait and live food,² held from 16 to 18 February 2011. At that meeting, GBIF had offered to organize a workshop of IAS information providers to facilitate sharing and provision of IAS information in a more collaborative manner. This workshop had produced a joint work programme for the major IAS information providers to work in collaboration to assist Parties in making progress to achieve Target 9. The strong willingness of the information providers to collaborate on developing an information service for Parties and the development of the Joint Work Programme was reported on to SBSTTA 15. The European Union (EU) had provided funds through the Secretariat of the CBD for further work to elaborate this Joint Work Programme and for the relevant organizations to develop an Operational Plan for the GIASI Partnership with a template of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between the SCBD and the information provider(s).

17. The ex-officio members of the SC (working groups chair/co-chairs) informed the SC of the “Technical Workshop for the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership” held in May 2013 with generous funding support from the EU. Plans of action were developed by each of the WGs, including a plan to implement an interoperable system in 2014 (UNEP/CBD/SBATT/17/INF/11).

18. In response to paragraphs 20 to 22 of decision XI/28,³ the Secretariat of the CBD informed the SC that coordination to facilitate implementation of the GIASI Partnership would be conducted by the GBIF Secretariat until the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

19. GBIF informed the SC that it had planned to organize a meeting just after SBSTTA 17 to review the plan of work, priorities and plan of action to deliver tools and data resources before SBSTTA 18 and to present to COP 12. The meeting would be a good opportunity for the Partnership to work under the supervision of the SC to agree on priorities and to implement the plans, subject to the availability of funding, in a harmonized manner.

20. After a discussion on the positive contributions of the relevant partner organizations since the Partnership launching, the SC seconded the arrangement by the Executive Secretary for the Partnership coordination to be conducted by the GBIF as a feasible and appropriate way to facilitate the implementation of the inter-sessional work until COP 12. It was stressed that the GBIF’s role in making biodiversity information freely accessible on the Internet was highly appreciated. It was also observed that the implementation of the operational plan of the Partnership further to the Joint Work Programme (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/INF/14) produced at the Copenhagen workshop in 2011 had been recognized by Parties and relevant organizations.

² <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/ais/ahteg-ias-02/official/ahteg-ias-02-sbstta-15-inf-01-en.doc>.

³ Decision XI/29 paragraph 20. *Recalling* paragraph 7 of decision X/38, *welcomes* the work of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility to improve the interoperability of online databases and networks and facilitate the use of information necessary to conduct risk and/or impact assessments, and *encourages* Parties, Governments and relevant institutions and organizations to participate in developing interoperable information systems that can be used in developing early-detection and rapid-response systems;

paragraph 21. *Recognizing* the vital importance of access to accurate information on invasive alien species in developing indicators to monitor the progress of achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 and the need to maximize synergies among existing information services, *welcomes* the development of the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership to further the joint work programme to strengthen information services on invasive alien species, as a contribution towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/34);

paragraph 22. *Recognizing* also the progress made in developing the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership and its importance in addressing invasive alien species at national, regional and global levels, *invites* relevant organizations and experts in biological invasion and information science to participate in the Partnership, *encourages* Parties, other Governments and donors to provide financial support to implement the plan of work, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to facilitate its implementation.

ITEM 4. ACTIVITIES OF THE GIASI PARTNERSHIP

21. The WG representatives (ex-officio members of the SC) noted that all partners were keen to implement their work plans; however, challenges remained in implementation of interoperability.

22. The SC further discussed priority activities for the next four months (through February 2014) to be able to report to SBSTTA 18 on progress of implementation. Consensus at this meeting on priority work included:

(a) Enhancement of the gateway, which could be developed in collaboration between the NHM and IUCN ISSG;

(b) Implementation of interoperability system with development of the central register in which the GBIF and NHM may take lead;

(c) The Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (GRIIS) and the Invasive Alien Species Pathway Management Resource (IASPMR), in which the IUCN ISSG may lead the activities with partners such as CABI, DAISIE, FishBase, and IABIN- I3N.

23. The Best Practices for Non-Web-Based Communications working group informed the SC that the relevant activities had not been fully implemented due to limited time of partners. However, it was stressed that development of mobile telephone applications to facilitate access to non-web information had a high potential for engaging civil society and implementers on the ground, particularly in regions where Internet connections were limited (e.g., East and Southern Africa). With the wider interests of CABI in capacity development, CABI was keen to work with the Partner organizations to facilitate use of the CABI Invasive Species Compendium by Parties.

24. The SC further discussed additional activities to be conducted in the next four months:

(a) Notification to Parties and organizations to call for engagement with the GIASI Partnership (action by SCBD);

(b) In the context of the Pyongchang roadmap for achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020 to be developed at COP 12, a call for the attention of Parties on Target 9 is important. SCBD needs to consider this point in its preparations for COP 12;

(c) The Interoperability WG is urged to create the planned central register, taking into account the fact that assessment on links to partners is needed, and that overlaps of data would also need to be addressed. Regarding use cases of the interoperable system, Parties' questions on invasive alien species need to be considered. The SC members, particularly those representing Parties, may provide suggestions on this matter;

(d) The GRIIS may contribute to developing an indicator for Target 9, for example, on the status of biological invasions at the national and regional levels. This may contribute to the online reporting system for national reports that has been developed by the SCBD. The relevant working groups are invited to explore collaboration with SCBD to build a component for the online reporting system for Target 9;

(e) Tools to support Parties to enable early detection and rapid responses would be urged. The SC recommended that the Partner organizations be invited to take into account the outputs of SBSTTA 17 on scientific and technical needs of Parties. Global tools customized to local conditions would be appreciated by Parties;

(f) Tools could also include materials to support Parties in developing appropriate national invasive species strategies and action plans as a part of NBSAPs or action plans under the programme of work on protected areas;

(g) Participation in the “Global Workshop on Reviewing Progress and Building Capacity for the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans Revision Process”,⁴ to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 11 to 15 November 2013, was suggested by the Executive Secretary for the Partnership to support Parties to achieve Target 9 with invasive alien species information. CABI and IUCN East Africa were encouraged to participate in the event as leading Partner organizations of the GIASI Partnership.

25. The Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network (APFISN) introduced their recent work on listing invasive alien species in the region in collaboration with FAO and other organizations. The SC welcomed APFISN to the GIASI Partnership and welcomed its immediate offer of collaboration to share the information.

ITEM 5. OTHER MATTERS

26. An ex-officio member raised a question regarding the difference between SC members and ex-officio members within the SC. The SC exchanged views on the different roles of the members. Some members of the SC interpreted “ex officio” to relate to nothing other than the basis on which the member is selected for membership in the SC, and others considered that the role of “ex officio” members was limited to ensuring good communication. It was recognized that further clarification was needed on this topic.

27. The SC felt that clear terms of reference for the SC were needed although documentation was not a primary purpose of this body. This would be followed up on in the next four months of work by the SC.

28. The next SC meeting would be convened via telephone/Skype; members of the SC would be informed of timing in due course.

ITEM 6. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

29. The co-chairs of the SC thanked all SC members for their participation, especially those who had joined remotely from different time zones. The meeting was closed at 10 p.m. on 15 October 2013.

⁴ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2013/ntf-2013-073-nbsap-en.pdf>, Participation, Side-events and Exhibition Space at the Global Workshop on Reviewing Progress and Building Capacity for the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans Revision Process, Nairobi, Kenya, 11-15 November 2013.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE FIRST MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE GLOBAL INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES INFORMATION PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias	Executive Secretary Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity 413 St. Jacques St. W., Suite 800 Montreal, QC H2Y 1N9, Canada braulio.dias@cbd.int
Mr. Donald Hobern	Executive Secretary The Global Biodiversity Information Facility Universitetsparken 15 DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø Denmark dhobern@gbif.org
Mr. Tshilidzi Edward Netshithothole, on behalf of Mr. Sabino Meri Francis Ogwal, Uganda	Deputy Director International Biodiversity and Heritage Department of Environmental Affairs Private Bag X447 Pretoria 0001 South Africa enetshithothole@environment.gov.za
Mr. Andrew Young, on behalf of Ms. Judith West, Australia	Director Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation CSIRO Plant Industry GPO Box 1600 Canberra ACT Australia
Mr. Sankaran Kavileveetil*	Director The Asia Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network Kerala Forest Research Institute Peechi, Thrissur- 680 653 Kerala, INDIA sankarankv@gmail.com
Mr. David Morveley*	Invasive alien species specialist Small Island and Developing States SPREP PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa davidm@sprep.org
Ms. Melodie McGoch*	Assoc. Professor Faculty of Science Clayton Campus Monash University Victoria 3800 Australia melodie.mcgeoch@monash.edu
Mr. Piero Genovesi	Chair of IUCN Invasive Species Specialists Group Senior Scientist, ISPRA Institute for Environmental Protection and Research Via V. Brancati 48 00144 Rome, Italy piero.genovesi@isprambiente.it

Mr. Christopher Lyal	<i>ex-officio</i> Chair, Interim Steering Committee for the GIASI Partnership Life Sciences department Terrestrial Invertebrates Division Natural History Museum Cromwell Road London SW7 5BD UK C.lyal@nhm.ac.uk
Mr. Samy Gaiji	<i>ex-officio</i> Database interoperability and quality improvement working group Senior Programme Officer for Science & Scientific Liaison The Global Biodiversity Information Facility Universitetsparken 15 DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø Denmark sgaiji@gbif.org
Ms. Shyama Pagad	<i>ex-officio</i> Information synthesis and assessment working group Program Manager Invasive Species Information Management University of Auckland Private Bag 92019 Auckland 1142 New Zealand s.pagad@auckland.ac.nz
Mr. Martin Parr	<i>ex-officio</i> interim Non-web-based communications working group; at this meeting he represented CABI Programme Manager CABI Head Office Nosworthy Way Wallingford Oxfordshire OX10 8DE UK m.parr@cabi.org
Ms. Junko Shimura	<i>ex-officio</i> Programme Officer for invasive alien species Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity 413 St. Jacques St. W., Suite 800 Montreal, QC H2Y 1N9, Canada junko.shimura@cbd.int

* Participants who joined the meeting via conference call.

Annex II

AGENDA AS ADOPTED

1. Opening of the meeting:
 - 1.1. Opening remarks by the Executive Secretary.
2. Organizational matters:
 - 2.1. Selection of co-chairs;
 - 2.2. Adoption of agenda.
3. Organization of the GIASI Partnership:
 - 3.1. Operational Plan and report from interim Steering Committee chair;
 - 3.2. Origin of the GIASI Partnership;
 - 3.3. Role of the Steering Committee;
 - 3.4. Coordination of the Partnership.
4. Activities of the GIASI Partnership:
 - 4.1. Progress during the period between COP 11 and SBSTTA 17:
 - Information Gateway;
 - Information synthesis and analysis;
 - Interoperability;
 - Non-web information;
 - 4.2. Plan of activities for the working groups 2013-2014.
5. Other matters:
 - 5.1. Next meeting (virtual meeting).
6. Closure of the meeting.

List of documents

- A Joint Work Programme to Strengthen Information Services on Invasive Alien Species as a Contribution towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 9” (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/INF/14);
- Operational Plan for the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership (GIASI Partnership) (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/34);
- Progress report on the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/INF/11).
