

Non-indigenous species and policy

Dumortier Myriam

European Commission

E-mail: myriam.dumortier@ec.europa.eu

Invasive alien species (IAS) are one of the most important causes of biodiversity loss and can also have serious consequences for the economy and human health. It has been estimated that IAS are costing at least €12 billion per year in Europe. IAS respect no borders. Action in one Member State is often undermined by lack of action in another Member State. Therefore it is important to act jointly at the EU level.

Following its announcement in the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the European Commission has recently proposed a dedicated legislative instrument on IAS. Key elements in this proposal are the need to prioritise, to coordinate and build upon existing systems and to shift attention from reaction to prevention. Prioritisation would be pursued through a list of IAS of Union concern, based on risk assessment and developed in cooperation with the Member States. IAS of Union concern would be banned from the EU, there would be an early warning rapid response system pursuing the swift eradication of any newly establishing population, while established populations would have to be eradicated, contained or controlled. There would be specific attention for priority pathways of unintentional introduction, i.a. ships ballast water and sediments and ships biofouling.

References

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/index_en.htm