

Invasive alien species (Agenda Item 3.3)

Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP9), Bonn, Germany, 19-30 May 2008

Recommendations

IUCN recommends that COP 9:

- √ **Adopts** the draft recommendation of SBSTTA XIII-5 included in UNEP/CBD/COP/9/3;
- √ **Invites** the International Plant Protection Convention to include, in its current work on invasive alien species, those which have an impact on biodiversity, marine and aquatic environments;
- √ **Invites** the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to compile recent experiences and develop comprehensive guidance on risk management of the use of exotic species in mariculture and to update the existing guidance on freshwater aquaculture;
- √ **Encourages** Parties and other States to develop scientifically based risk assessment procedures for the import of live animals at national level;
- √ **Urges** Parties and other countries to develop national invasive species strategies and action plans; to design and undertake capacity building to implement these plans and strategies; and to ensure, in doing this, that there is close cooperation and coherence at regional, national and sub-national level;
- √ **Urges** Parties and other States to integrate in their national plans and strategies the ecological, health, and economic impacts of invasive alien species, and to address all introduction vectors, including intentional introductions, in terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments;
- √ **Urges** Parties and other States that have not done so, to ratify the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments;
- √ **Encourages** Parties to take relevant actions to develop national and regional regulatory mechanisms to manage hull fouling;
- √ **Calls upon the Parties** to further support efforts of organizations, such as BIONET, to promote training on traditional taxonomy and innovative methods for species identification;
- √ **Urges** donor agencies to increase their funding for prevention and management of invasive alien species;
- √ **Invites** donor agencies to develop and apply criteria to evaluate IAS risks posed by development aid projects and include invasive species issues and impacts in their protocols for project/programme development and funding.

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Report on consultations regarding international standards on invasive alien species

IUCN welcomes the consultations undertaken by the Secretariat of the Biological Diversity Convention (CBD) with the secretariats of World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Organization of Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to address the lack of international standards covering invasive alien species (IAS), in particular animals that are not pests of plants under the IPPC. IUCN also welcomes the discussions on this topic during SBSTTA 13 and the resulting draft recommendations as well as the findings of the recent workshop on “Best Practices in Pre-Import Risk Screening for Species of Live Animals in International Trade” held in 9-11 April, South Bend, Indiana, USA.

IUCN supports the proposed work on conveyances as pathways for invasive alien animals and the need for attention to all forms of aquaculture. In this respect, IUCN has developed guidelines for undertaking risk assessment, evaluation and management of alien species imports for aquaculture purposes. The guidelines also provide a brief review of existing structures at international, regional and national levels that are useful for evaluations. The guidelines are available at <http://www.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2006-036.pdf>.

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- √ **Invites** the International Plant Protection Convention to include, in its current work on Invasive alien species, those which have an impact on biodiversity, marine and aquatic environments;
- √ **Invites** the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to compile recent experiences and develop comprehensive guidance on risk management of the use of exotic species in mariculture and to update the existing guidance on freshwater aquaculture.

IUCN would like to underscore that, as noted by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG), the gaps in the international regulatory framework do not necessarily limit the ability of

governments to address such gaps at national level.

IUCN further recommends that COP9:

- √ **Encourages** Parties and other States to develop scientifically based risk assessment procedures for the import of live animals at national level.

In-depth review of ongoing work on alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species

For millennia, natural barriers such as oceans, mountains, rivers and deserts provided the necessary isolation for species and ecosystems to evolve. In just a few hundred years, these barriers have been degraded by major global forces that resulted in species travelling vast distances to new habitats and becoming invasive alien species in their new environment. Few countries have developed the legal and institutional systems that are capable of responding effectively to the impact of invasive species. A global response is, therefore, imperative. For this reason, IUCN considers action to prevent and control invasive species as a priority.

IUCN notes that Parties' input to the in-depth review on invasive alien species¹ called for by the CBD Secretariat has been less than comprehensive. In some cases, this is due to the lack of capacity in some countries to address invasive species at local, national and regional levels and the relative paucity of information available about the state of invasive species within those and other countries.

There is a need to strengthen countries' commitment to address invasive species issues and to support the development of national invasive species strategies and action plans (as part of national biosecurity arrangements, where appropriate). These efforts need to be combined with activities designed to build the necessary capacity to manage these strategies and action plans for invasive species. Parties to the Convention should closely cooperate in the development of national strategies and capacity building to manage invasive species in a coherent and coordinated manner.

IUCN is committed to assist countries in these endeavors and stands ready to provide

¹ “In-Depth Review of Ongoing Work on Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species,” UNEP/CBD/COP/9/11

technical advice from its extensive experience of capacity building in this area.

IUCN further recommends that COP9:

- √ **Urges** Parties and other countries to develop national invasive species strategies and action plans; to design and undertake capacity building to implement these plans and strategies; and to ensure, in doing this, that there is close cooperation and coherence at regional, national and sub-national level.

National Integrated strategies to manage invasive species

IUCN understands that one of the main priorities in relation to management of invasive species is to adopt a comprehensive approach in order to ensure integrated management.

In addition to the technical aspects of invasive species management, there is an urgent need to consider the social and cultural dimensions of the problem and strongly involve local communities. Prevention remains a priority and efforts should be increased to reduce and prevent the introduction of new species into natural environments. National programmes for management of invasive species should address all introduction vectors, including intentional introductions, and should consider all environments, terrestrial aquatic and marine. These programmes should, therefore, include early-warning for invasion and rapid-response systems. They should also foresee expanded bioinvasion research as well as education and public awareness components. Incentive measures or economic instruments should, where possible, be introduced to deter unwanted introductions or promote eradication and control of new invasion.

IUCN is concerned that the national efforts that have been made for prevention, including quarantine do, in most cases, ignore the marine environment. Existing national strategies often do not consider marine pathways – an issue that should be addressed by the COP.

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introductions, in terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments.

Addressing particular pathways

Ballast water

Concerned by the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens through the control and management of ships' ballast water and sediments, the international community adopted the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments in February 2004. The Convention will enter into force 12 months after ratification by 30 States, representing 35 percent of world merchant shipping tonnage. So far, only 13 States representing 3.62 percent of the world's merchant shipping tonnage have ratified the Convention.

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **Urges** Parties and other States that have not done so, to ratify the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments.

Hull fouling

Currently, no regulation exists for managing hull fouling. The International Maritime Organization (IMO), through its Marine Environmental Protection Committee, has only recently started to consider the issue. But even then, one significant gap will remain: the management of hull fouling associated with the large global fleet of recreational vessels, as it falls outside the IMO's mandate.

Given the un-flagged, and in many instances un-registered, nature of this class of vessel,

IUCN recommends that COP 9:

- √ **Encourages** Parties to take relevant actions to develop national and regional regulatory mechanisms to manage hull fouling

Taxonomy

Poor taxonomy has been highlighted as one obstacle to address invasive alien species, in particular, in the marine environment. Accurate species identification is a key challenge in detection and monitoring invasives.

Strengthening capacity in traditional taxonomy and species identification is a much needed action. Advances in molecular biology and biotechnology could provide innovative methods that are easy to apply for detecting and identifying invasive species. Research towards developing such identification techniques would be a worthwhile investment.

IUCN recommends that COP9

- √ **Calls upon** the Parties to further support efforts of organizations, such as BIONET, to promote training on traditional taxonomy and innovative methods for species identification.

Address interactions with climate and other global change processes

Several global factors, including climate change, economic globalization, overfishing and alteration of nutrient cycles, are contributing to escalating the rates of species invasion. Climate change alters the physical environment in ways that may benefit non native species and that may alter resilience to invasion. Economic globalization is not only changing the pathways and rates of species transfers between oceans, but also the economic forces affecting local and regional decisions, and thereby indirectly influencing invasion opportunities.

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **Calls on** Parties and other organisations to compile information and undertake studies to determine impacts of climate change and free trade policies on pathways and behaviour of invasive species, including in the marine environment.

Donor community

Currently, invasive species are not a priority for many decision makers and donors. Funding for work on invasive species is very limited. In fact, the lack of funding has been identified as one of the major impediments for developing and implementing national programmes addressing invasive species, including marine invasive species. In addition, in many cases, donors are not aware of the impact invasive species may have on development projects and their sustainability. Furthermore, some of these projects actually contribute to new introductions of marine IAS.

IUCN recommends that COP9:

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