

International Webinar on Invasive Alien Species

Acting on the IPBES IAS assessment report toward the achievement of Target 6 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

October 5th, 2023 at 20:00–23:00 (Japan Standard Time: UTC+09:00)

Organizer: Ministry of the Environment (MOE), Japan

SUMMARY of the Report

Introduction

Invasive alien species (IAS) are one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss worldwide. Parties to the CBD developed a target on IAS in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)¹, while the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) produced an assessment report on IAS and their control². This webinar was arranged by the Ministry of the Environment (MOE), Japan, to exchange views on IAS. At the G7 Ministers' Meeting on Climate, Energy and Environment, held in Japan earlier this year, it was agreed to convene a G7 workshop on IAS to discuss necessary measures, including information sharing at national and subnational levels, technology development, and private sector engagement, and develop a set of recommendations. This webinar was a precursor to that workshop. Speakers in the webinar were from IPBES, the Secretariat of the CBD, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Task Force on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), Japan's National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES) and the Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA).

Key messages

Key messages from the webinar were summarized as follows by the moderator:

- **Promoting global, regional, and bilateral collaborations** and information exchange among countries is necessary to aid prevention of IAS introduction and management efforts. Regular meetings among countries and regions could help to enable this. Supporting the operation and further development of structures for multilateral cooperation may also help.
- **Outreach and mainstreaming require a whole of society approach.** IAS are directly linked to the economic benefits and risks of countries and companies, and it would be beneficial to develop standardized guidance to address the challenge they pose. In order to address this challenge, the discussion should be not only in the field of nature conservation, but also across various other sectors, and should welcome the active involvement and contribution of indigenous peoples and local communities and youth.
- **Scientific research, global databases, and information systems need to be strengthened.** Sustainable support is needed for the provision of data and information. Research, databases and information systems, including indigenous and local knowledge, are essential for monitoring and developing effective countermeasures to deal with IAS.

¹ Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf>

² Thematic Assessment Report on Invasive Alien Species and their Control, <https://www.ipbes.net/ias>

Summary of the presentations

Introduction & Opening Remarks

Mr. SHIRAIISHI Takao, Director General of the Nature Conservation Bureau of MOE Japan, opened the workshop by expressing his appreciation to the speakers, as well as G7 members for their cooperation in organizing the webinar. He acknowledged the importance of the approval of the IPBES IAS assessment report summary for policymakers and emphasized the importance of cooperation across countries and sectors in dealing with the challenge of IAS as a main driver of biodiversity loss, and he expressed Japan's commitment to lead this initiative as the G7 presidency.

Dr. David COOPER, Acting Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the CBD, said that the impacts of IAS are a threat to people and nature. He was hopeful that the IPBES report will support efforts toward Target 6 of the GBF. He overviewed some statistics from the report, adding that IAS can be managed through integrated governance, policy, and strategy. Dr. Cooper congratulated Japan and other G7 countries on their IAS actions and noted the need for all sectors to contribute.

Dr. Anne LARIGAUDERIE, Executive Secretary, IPBES, acknowledged those who contributed to the IPBES IAS assessment. She said that management of IAS is achievable, and that the assessment offers a wide range of management and response options. She noted that the control of IAS contributes to other targets in the GBF beyond target 6, and to the SDGs. She highlighted the exceptional global media success that the report launch had achieved in terms of geographical and linguistic reach, and underscored the fact that significant impacts on policy, processes and action are already starting to be tracked.

Key messages of the IPBES IAS assessment report

The co-chairs of the IAS assessment, **Prof. Helen ROY, Prof. Anibal PAUCHARD, and Prof. Peter STOETT**, thanked MOE Japan for supporting the assessment's technical support unit at IGES. They noted that the assessment had incorporated various knowledge systems including indigenous and local knowledge. The co-chairs defined some technical terms and provided an overview of some of the key figures from the report, noting that 37,000 alien species are established worldwide, and that 3,500 of those have been categorized as invasive, playing a role in 60% of recorded global species extinction and estimated to cost over \$400 billion annually. They said that new alien species are being introduced at a rate of about 200 species per year. They also noted insufficient national policy on IAS but acknowledged that targets to manage IAS have been included in most national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). They spoke about where to focus action, and about the importance of funding, cooperation, and long-term commitment. They pointed out that many GBF targets and SDGs are partly dependent on the control of IAS. They expect that the report will support capacity building as well as informing policy.

When asked why climate change will increase the risk of IAS, Dr. Pauchard explained that modified climatic conditions in the invaded range could make it more suitable for IAS.

When asked when the chapters of the IPBES IAS report would be available, Dr. Roy responded that they would be available online within the few weeks following the webinar³.

Invasive alien species and the Convention on Biological Diversity

Ms. Marianela ARAYA -QUESADA, Invasive Alien Species Program Officer at the Secretariat of the CBD, noted that IAS feature in the original text of the CBD as well as many further publications. She spoke of the need for a "whole of government" and "whole of society" approach to achieve Target 6 of the GBF; for science & innovation including indigenous and local knowledge; and for cooperation. Ms. Araya outlined the function of the Inter-Agency Liaison

³The report was posted online after the webinar: IPBES Thematic Assessment Report on Invasive Alien Species and their Control, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7430682>

Group on IAS, and emphasized the importance of integrated governance, funding, and outreach. She echoed other speakers' thoughts on the implications of the IPBES IAS assessment report.

When asked to explain what is meant by priority IAS, Ms. Araya referred to Target 6 language such as focusing on the most threatening IAS and most sensitive areas.

IUCN's work on IAS

Mr. Kevin SMITH, Invasive Species Programme Officer at The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), presented IUCN's work on IAS, including its Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG). He presented relevant outputs in which IUCN has been involved which can support the identification, prioritization and management of IAS and pathways of introduction such as the Global Invasive Species Database (GISD)⁴, a unified system to categories pathways of introduction, the Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (GRIIS), Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa⁵ – EICAT, the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species⁶, and various guidelines. He said that sustainable financing is critical to ensure that these datasets are maintained and expanded to support progress towards Target 6, for example to undertake EICAT assessments on the impacts of the 3,500 IAS reported by the IPBES assessment.

When asked whether there was a list of emerging or reemerging species, Mr. Smith said that attempts are being made to identify and list emerging species.

Introduction to the TNFD recommendations, guidance and metrics

Ms. Laura CLAVEY, Senior Technical Manager for the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), presented TNFD's recently released recommendations⁷ to enable business and finance to integrate nature into decision making. She outlined the four recommended disclosures (on governance, strategy, risk & impact assessment, and metrics & targets) and the LEAP (locate, evaluate, assess, and prepare) approach used in the recommendations. She explained that IAS fit into TNFD because they can affect businesses through dependencies and impacts, and she discussed relevant metrics used in the recommendations. These included a "placeholder core metric" for IAS, as well as the proportion of high-risk activities to prevent unintentional introductions; and the number/extent of unintentionally introduced species.

ASEAN Action Plan for Invasive Alien Species Management

Ms. Clarissa ARIDA, Director for Programme Development & Implementation at the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, presented the ASEAN Action Plan for Invasive Alien Species Management⁸. The action plan was compiled in response to the increasing threat of IAS in Southeast Asia. It highlights gaps in IAS management and has 8 goals: strengthen legal frameworks and coordination; enhance public awareness of impacts of IAS; increase capacity and resources; improve risk assessment and prioritization; maintain strong border control; improve prevention and security measures; improve monitoring evaluation and reporting; and develop finance mechanisms for IAS management.

⁴ Global Invasive Species Database, <http://www.iucngisd.org/gisd/>

⁵ Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa, <https://www.iucn.org/resources/conservation-tool/environmental-impact-classification-alien-taxa#:~:text=The%20Environmental%20Impact%20Classification%20for,living%20outside%20their%20natural%20orange.>

⁶ The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, <https://www.iucnredlist.org>

⁷ Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) Recommendations, <https://tnfd.global/publication/recommendations-of-the-taskforce-on-nature-related-financial-disclosures/>

⁸ ASEAN Action Plan for Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Management, https://www.aseanbiodiversity.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2023-9-5-Final-ASEAN-Action-Plan-for-IAS-Management_clean_1.pdf

Development of counter measures to invasive alien species in Japan

Dr. GOKA Kouichi, Head of the Biodiversity Division (Ecological Risk Assessment and Control Section) at the National Institute of Environmental Studies in Japan, presented examples of IAS and their control in Japan. These included mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*) and Argentine ant (*Linepithema humile*), which are both being eradicated quite successfully in some areas. He also spoke about current efforts to deal with the red imported fire ant (*Solenopsis invicta*). He warned of the need to take care to avoid exporting IAS accidentally, which can have economic consequences for exporters. Dr. Goka also noted that MOE's IAS control action plan is to be revised by 2024, considering the GBF and IPBES IAS report.

Challenges for Effective Management of IAS

Dr. Piero GENOVESI, Head of Wildlife Service at the Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) said that EU IAS regulation⁹ has influenced national legislation, and funding is now allocated to areas that need it most in Italy. He said national management plans are being developed for high-risk IAS and pathways action plans are also being looked at to prevent multiple species from being introduced. He said that red imported fire ants were recently detected in Italy as well. However, late reporting and limited ability to manage enabled the ant to spread. He noted the need for a more proactive approach. He further shared, that from the Italian experience, prevention and management measures are in place, with solid information that can support implementation. However, he said there is still limited commitment by authorities and decision makers, and that we still tend to approach reactively rather than proactively despite global understanding that prevention is more effective than response.

Panel discussion

When asked about the key to enhancing international / regional cooperation towards minimizing the negative impacts caused by IAS, Ms. Arida noted the importance of international and regional coordination and integrated governance and referred to the ASEAN action plan. Dr. Genovesi expressed the need for the exchange and accessibility of data, and greater awareness of IAS.

When asked how to collaborate with the business sector, Ms. Clavey pointed to the need for platforms for open dialogue, as well as regulation, better policy, and improved awareness. Dr. Goka said that countries dependent on global supply chains need to consider the economic impacts of importing or exporting IAS.

When asked how we can build on momentum to enhance international cooperation against IAS, Mr. Smith said that IAS need to be addressed by leaders outside our field. He emphasized the importance of mobilizing data and of sustainable financing. Prof. Stoett encouraged the uptake of the assessment report and leveraging its key messages, noting the importance of capacity building, information sharing, monitoring, and media campaigns. Ms. Araya said she expected the GBF to trigger national actions, and she highlighted the need to bridge IAS science and policy.

Prof. Roy noted the importance of communication to various audiences to communicate the threat of IAS. Prof. Pauchard noted that the report provides a holistic picture and illustrates the need for more international collaboration. Lastly, Dr. Larigauderie added that cross-sectoral collaboration at national level is needed across ministries and other sectors of society.

Ms. Nakao Fumiko, the moderator, ended by providing what she considered to be the key messages (see at the start of this report).

⁹ Invasive Alien Species Regulation (Regulation (EU) 1143/2014), [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/invasive-alien-species_en#:~:text=The%20Invasive%20Alien%20Species%20Regulation,Union%20concern%20\(Union%20List\)](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/invasive-alien-species_en#:~:text=The%20Invasive%20Alien%20Species%20Regulation,Union%20concern%20(Union%20List))