

11 Research

11.1 Invasion biology is currently an area of growing interest in the scientific community. Consequently, there is a large amount of research on non-native species occurring in GB: in universities, research institutes, government agencies and others. Funding comes from a wide range of sources and the research topics covered range from highly applied through to fundamental research on invasion biology. Some of this body of research is focussed on the UK while there are several initiatives which involve research at the EU or a more global level; for example, the DAISIE^{xiv} and ALARM^{xv} projects.

11.2 Research is a key area in relation to invasive non-native species. It is vital that we underpin policy with a strong evidence base and research outcomes will often be a key component helping to inform risk assessment, surveillance, detection, monitoring, control and eradication strategies. Applied research is particularly important to help inform and refine control methods as well as for assessing the feasibility of proposed action (for example, eradication attempts). Feasibility studies, often involving modelling, are a key tool for assessing the likely costs and probability of success for larger-scale control or eradication efforts.



*Research, such as the genetic research on the threat to native bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) from the Spanish bluebell (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*), is vital for informing both policy and practice on non-native species.*

11.3 Research could also provide technological or biological control solutions to help address problems that have hitherto seemed intractable.

11.4 The non-native species policy review group considered research priorities and the Monitoring and Risk Assessment Sub-Group produced a list of research needs (Defra, 2003ⁱⁱⁱ). More recently, the UK Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (UK BRAG) non-native sub-group has given strategic consideration to a series of research priorities for non-native species for the UK^{xvi}. There is a need for better strategic co-ordination of this research effort involving all the key research funders, including government departments, statutory nature conservation bodies as well as the relevant Research Councils.

Research

Objective

To encourage a more strategic and coherent research stream to underpin GB invasive non-native species policy and action.

Key actions

We will:

Key Action 11.1

underpin all risk assessment, prevention, detection, surveillance, monitoring and management with the highest quality science available;

Key Action 11.2

seek to secure funding for the research priorities identified in the Defra review and by UK BRAG;

Key Action 11.3

encourage collaborative research projects and wide access to results; and,

Key Action 11.4

monitor developments in research nationally and internationally to detect technological or biological advances and to ensure that GB research on invasive non-native species is cutting edge and avoids duplication of research elsewhere.