ALIENS
The Italian Network of LIFE projects on IAS

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In Italy, since 1996 more than 50 projects have been funded to tackle issues related to invasive alien animals and plants.

In the last 10 years:
• more than 20 projects
• budget of about 60 million € (with EU co-financing > 50%)
From a preliminary analysis of available online database we retrieved information on 44 LIFE projects, with 38 projects being partially focused on IAS.

Local authorities (25%), protected areas (23%), and regional authorities (21%) were the most frequent coordinators.
Main activities

- Eradication: 20%
- Eradication and control: 73%
- Prevention and control: 2%
- Prevention/Alert: 5%
**Taxa and Habitats**

**Species involved in LIFE projects**
- **Animal/Plant** 23%
- **Animal** 36%
- **Plant** 41%

**Habitats involved in LIFE projects**
- **Terrestrial** 29%
- **Marine/Terrestrial** 2%
- **Island** 14%
- **Freshwater** 33%
- **Freshwater/Terrestrial** 22%
Top animal species

*Procambarus clarkii* (7/44)
*Rattus* spp. (5/44)
*Sciurus carolinensis* (3/44)
*Trachemys scripta* (3/44)
*Silurus glanis* (3/44)

Top plant species

*Carpobrotus* spp. (6/44)
*Robinia pseudoacacia* (4/44)
*Amorpha fruticosa* (3/44)
*Ailanthus altissima* (2/44)
*Pinus halepensis* (2/44)
Italian Network - LIFE and IAS

In May 2017, the Italian Network of LIFE projects dealing with IAS was established, with the following main aims:

• to facilitate the implementation of some pillars of the LIFE program (e.g. replication, networking)
• to improve circulation of information, experiences and solutions
• to exploit the technical skills acquired through the LIFE program.

The Network is coordinated by the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)
In a nutshell

- 31 projects officially in the network (2004-2018)
- 64 contact persons (2/project, range 1-7)

New entries (2017-2018):
GOProFOR LIFE, LIFE LETSGO
GIGLIO, LIFE STREAMS, LIFE CLAW
Budget (n=13)

SOSTUSCANWETLANDS
RESTOCONLIFE

ASAP (LIFE GIE)
USAVEREDS (control of grey squirrel)
RARITY (prevention campaign towards red swamp crayfish)
Further steps

- Enlarge the Network

- Collect evidences of the impact of IAS on biodiversity and human activities, management costs and effects of LIFE program in Italy

- Share knowledges and experiences in order to improve communication tools and actions and raise awareness on IAS

- Develop technical reports and organize information events for local authorities involved in IAS management
Main aim: to stop the loss of biodiversity of Lake Sibolla and Ramone marsh in northern Tuscany, controlling some invasive alien species (coypu, red swamp crayfish, false indigo bush, black locust) and restoring the habitats.
SOS TUSCAN WETLANDS (2012-2019)

Crayfish: a reduction of 74% and 55% of C.P.U.E. in the two project areas with a total of 171 trapping days using 182 traps (2014-2017: 123,534 trapped crayfish).

Coypu: 24 coypu trapped in Ramone Marsh in autumn 2018 (20 traps, 8 days), activities still ongoing.
False indigo bush: two repeated cuttings of the species on 20 ha in total

Black locust: cutting and painting with glyphosate on 2 ha
Main aims
Contributing to implementation of EU regulation 1143/14

Raising awareness of Italian citizens on IAS and favouring the adoption of responsible behaviours aiming at reducing the risk of further introductions
Communication, information and training campaigns specifically designed towards different target audiences or stakeholders

**Actions:**

- Facilitating an efficient applications of already into force legislative tools
- Supporting the voluntary adoption of good practices
Activities

• A4: training the multipliers (> 514 people)

• Regulatory measures:
  • B1: training public bodies and authorities involved in the implementation of Regulation
  • B7: drafting the list of IAS of national relevance

• Voluntary measures:
  • B2: guidelines for protected areas and IAS
  • B3: awareness of anglers and hunters
  • B4: awareness of botanical and zoological gardens, aquaria
  • B5: awareness of retailers; training professionals
  • B6: awareness of travellers at airports (>5000 people)

• General public:
  • B8: awareness of general public (photo contest, kid laboratories)
  • B9: citizen science campaigns (> 1000 participants)
Relevant products

• Italian version of all the codes of conducts on IAS
• Guidelines for protected areas
• Technical guide for multipliers
• Technical guide for professionals
• Technical guide for public bodies/authorities on new IAS laws
• Invasive alien flora path at botanical garden of Cagliari (Sardinia)
• Educational kit for schools
• ASAPp
• Laboratory for kids «Alien allarm!»
• Educational material for travellers
Network proposals

European level

- An *ad hoc* financial tool should be identified to ensure the after-LIFE sustainability of the results of LIFE projects on IAS

The recovery of native species is one of the main objectives of LIFE-IAS projects. We need long-term perspectives to obtain, maintain and appreciate significant results.

- WHAT ABOUT A EUROPEAN-WIDE NETWORK? A COST ACTION??
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