

Northern Ireland Non-Native Species Pathway Action Plan: Angling

Background to action planning

Reducing the risk posed by pathways of introduction and spread is a key way of tackling invasive non-native species (INNS). The Invasive Alien Species Strategy for Northern Ireland calls for the development of Pathway Action Plans (PAPs) and they are a requirement under the EU IAS Regulation. They can also form an element of the programme of measures under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

This Pathway Action Plan is one of a series of plans intended to address pathways of introduction or spread of non-native species in Northern Ireland. The plan outlines the general policy and approaches as well as deliverables by government and other actors in relation to this issue

Scope

This Plan is aimed at the angling pathway, covering marine and freshwater environments, coarse and game fishing, including both wild and stocked fisheries but excludes aquaculture. The geographical scope of the PAP is Northern Ireland but will also make reference where relevant to the Republic of Ireland from a biogeographical perspective and further afield (particularly Continental Europe).

This plan was developed by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency an agency of the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), DAERA Inland Fisheries, Loughs Agency and other related stakeholders.

Rationale

There are currently around 200 non-native aquatic species established in GB, N.I and Ireland. These species, especially those in freshwater, tend to be particularly invasive. In recent decades the rate of arrival has accelerated – e.g. one new Ponto-Caspian species invades Britain every 2-3 years compared to one every 100 years before 1992. Unlike GB, Ireland and Northern Ireland have not yet been invaded by species such as the killer and demon shrimps and the quagga mussel. This PAP allows us the opportunity to try and prevent their arrival into the island of Ireland. There are also further species in the Netherlands poised to invade GB which we wish to prevent from doing so into the Northern Ireland/Ireland biogeographical region.

There is also a range of fish diseases that pose a threat to fish in the UK and Ireland along with several invasive fish like topmouth gudgeon which pose a threat to angling.

Good biosecurity is key and Government has, since 2011, been developing the *Check Clean Dry* (CCD) public awareness campaign aimed at improving biosecurity amongst water users. This has included a border campaign which started in 2016

and which has grown annually since, including CCD being expanded to Ireland, the Isle of Man and Channel Islands in 2018.

There is a European Code of Practice for Angling that has been developed under the Bern Convention and this area is also covered by a number of relevant acts in domestic legislation most importantly, the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 as amended which prohibits the release of any animal or the planting of any plant, listed on Schedule 9, into the wild and provides a general prohibition on the release of any non – native species of animal or plant in Northern Ireland.

Other relevant acts;

The Fisheries Act (Northern Ireland) 1996 as amended

The Aquatic Animal Health Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009

Molluscan Shellfish (Control of Deposit) Order (Northern Ireland) 1972 Order

Lobsters (Prohibition of Introduction) Order (Northern Ireland) 1982

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1251/2008 implementing Council Directive 2006/88/EC - conditions and certification requirements for the placing on the market and the import into the Community of aquaculture animals and products thereof and laying down a list of vector species.

The EU fish health regime under Directive 2006/88/EC

All movements of fish or shellfish into Northern Ireland must be notified on [TRACES](#)

However, legislation alone is not sufficient to manage and lower the risk associated with introducing or spreading of INNS. It requires cooperation and collaboration from all concerned, each sector is part of the solution and plays an important role in INNS management and implementing best biosecurity practice. This plan sets out additional actions to help to minimise the risk of introduction and movement of non-native species caused by anglers.

Northern Ireland has adapted the GB Angling PAP and has detailed measures to raise awareness among key actors in the sector and strengthen existing biosecurity mechanisms. These actions are outlined below and they form the main body of the action plan.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the PAP is to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of invasive non-native species by anglers based on international good practice.

- Facilitate the uptake of good biosecurity practice by the angling community.

- Raise awareness of the non-native species issue amongst anglers.
- Raise awareness of non-native species amongst fisheries managers and riparian owners.
- Raise awareness non-native species amongst traders and the media.
- Encourage all stakeholders to reporting novel INNS to CEDaR online, NIEA Wildlife Team, Loughs Agency and DAERA Inland Fisheries Officers.
- Promote partnership working

Key Actors

- Northern Ireland Government
- Northern Ireland Local Government (All councils)
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency
- DAERA Inland Fisheries
- Loughs Agency
- Ulster Angling Federation
- All Angling governing bodies (Coarse, Game and Sea)
- Waterways Ireland
- Agri - Foods and Biosciences Institute
- DAERA Marine & Fisheries Division
- DAERA Fish Health Inspectorate
- Department of Infrastructure Rivers Agency
- Fishing festival/competition organisers Other aquatic asset owners that permit angling
National Trust NI, Local Authorities, Ulster Wildlife (?), RSPB?, DAERA Forest Service
- Queens University Belfast/Ulster University
- The Rivers Trusts
- Angling Clubs
- Recreational fishery owners and managers
- Wild fish conservation organisations
- Local Community/Action Groups
- Riparian owners and managers

Actions

Key general actions are outlined below while a more detailed set of actions are to be found in Annex 2.

Action 1

DAERA will oversee the running of a border biosecurity campaign concentrating on the high risk routes of entry to NI and Ireland – mainly ferries from GB to and from Ireland and NI

Action 2

DAERA to include the Check Clean Dry message on the online angling license process.

Action 3

DAERA will liaise with NNSS who will work with member states to agree a programme of action related to aquatic biosecurity (see Annex 5 for those priority species whose arrival we aim to prevent entering NI). This will be targeted to;

- Continental anglers visiting Northern Ireland and Ireland in same visit
- Local NI and Ireland anglers recently returned from the European continent

Action 4

All angling locations will put a reference to carrying out good biosecurity into all lease and management agreements, relating to angling at their sites, when they next come up for agreement/renewal.

Action 5

The Ulster Angling Federation and other angling governing bodies will be encouraged to add good biosecurity protocols to their constitutions.

Action 6

The DAERA Invasive Non Native Species Team will compile and maintain a list of sites/waterways which contain critical INNS (at UK National or Regional levels) that are a priority to contain or slow the spread of (see Annex 7 for NI critical species list) and where angling occurs.

Action 7

Owners and managers of these sites and where angling occurs will install facilities and signage to promote very high biosecurity. This may include;

- Suitable hard standing
- Cold water wash down facilities
- Large prominent signage
- Hot water wash down facilities where possible and practicable
- Enact local biosecurity by-laws where possible.

Action 8

Organisers of angling events will be asked to implement heightened awareness – raising activities and ensure strict biosecurity, especially at the high priority sites where invasive species are already present.

Action 9

DAERA Fish Health Inspectorate will circulate fisheries biosecurity guidance (see Annex 6) to all fisheries

Action 10

NIEA Invasive Non Native Species Team will act as a conduit for verifying and following up all reports of novel INNS.

Monitoring and updating

The working group will be re-convened annually to assess progress with achieving the actions. The group will consider all relevant information including the following:

- Number of organisations/clubs/sites signed up to promote CCD.
- Baseline uptake of biosecurity among anglers – then future measurement of improvements to uptake. Particularly important for anglers travelling abroad and for foreign anglers visiting NI from infested waters in GB or abroad.
- Number of angling events organised by each relevant key actor which have provided cleaning facilities each year to demonstrate increasing trend.
- Number of water assets/access points that provide cleaning facilities for anglers permanently or temporarily e.g. during peak season (and within that how many promote/police use of them).

Annex 1: NI Working/Advisory Group members (TBC):

The following group will be represented on further discussions regarding updating, improving and monitoring of this PAP:

Loughs Agency (Chair)
NIEA Invasive Non – Native Species Team (INNST) (Secretary)
Lagan Rivers Trust
Ballinderry River Trust
Ulster Angling Federation
DAERA Inland Fisheries
DAERA Fisheries Inspectorate
Agri – Food & Biosciences Institute – Fisheries & Aquatic Ecosystems
Northern Ireland Government
NI Water
Department of Communities River Managers
Department of Infrastructure Rivers
Local Council representatives

Annex 2:

NI Code of Practice for Angling when agreed by group in Annex 1

Annex 3:

Biosecurity guidance/plan for fisheries owners in NI also to be added when agreed by group in Annex 1.

Annex 4:

List of priority species that we want to keep out of Northern Ireland (none present currently as far as records show, but several present in GB and on mainland Europe)
Use All Ireland Horizon Scanning exercise list when available

Annex 5:

List of priority species that we want to keep out of Northern Ireland (none present currently as far as records show, but several present in GB and on mainland Europe)

Priority	Latin name	Common name	Impact	Year of introduction to NI	Widespread?
V high	<i>Neogobius melanostomus</i>	Round goby	5	N/A	
	<i>Proterorhinus semiluaris</i>	Freshwater tubenose goby	5	N/A	
	<i>Proterorhinus marmoratus</i>	Tubenose goby	5	N/A	
High	<i>Dreissena r. bugensis</i>	Quagga mussel	5	N/A	
	<i>Dikerogammarus villosus</i>	Killer shrimp	5	N/A	
	<i>Myriophyllum heterophyllum</i>	VL Water Milfoil	5	N/A	
	<i>Ludwigia peploides</i>	Water primrose	5	N/A	
	<i>Neogobius gymnotrachelus</i>	Racer goby	4	N/A	
	<i>Hypania invaria</i>	Hypania goby	4	N/A	
Med	<i>Echinogammarus ischnus</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Echinogammarus trichiatus</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Dikerogammarus bispinosus</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Limnomysis benedeni</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Obesogammarus crassus</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Pontogammarus robustoides</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Hypania invaria</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Chelicorophium robustum</i>		3	N/A	
	<i>Alternaterna philoxeroides</i>		3	N/A	

Annex 6:

The Ulster Angling Federation biosecurity clause for inclusion in members angling club future constitutions:

To provide Check Clean dry materials to their members. This should include signage and materials being displayed at the club water, guidance on the organisations website/social media streams, features in newsletters and sending materials to new members when they sign up.

BIOSECURITY

Members of the Club are asked to undertake good biosecurity practice whilst they are using the club's fishing waters.

This includes:

- 1.1.1 Making sure that their equipment is dry and free of mud prior to arriving at the site.
- 1.1.2 After every fishing trip, cleaning their equipment and boots in accordance with the Check, Clean Dry guidance. Particular care should be given to the seams of boots and waders and the rims of nets.

Day ticket users visiting the club are asked to follow the same Check, Clean Dry guidance.

Annex 7:

List of critical NI restricted species that we want, as a priority, to contain or slow down their spread and for which there is a risk of spread via angling:

Plants

Myriophyllum heterophyllum
Lagarosiphon major
Lysichiton americanus
Hydrocotyle ranunculoides

Animals

Trachemys scripta (Red-eared, yellow-bellied and Cumberland sliders)

Marine angling risk species

Species	Present in NI	Risk
<i>Undaria pinnatifida</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Styela clava</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Sargassum muticum</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Hemigrapsus takanoi</i>	Not Present	possible bait species
<i>Hemigrapsus sanguineus</i>	Not Present	possible bait species
<i>Grateloupia turuturu</i>	Present (one record only)	line and equipment tangles
<i>Gracilaria vermiculophylla</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Eriocheir sinensis</i>	Not Present	possible bait species
<i>Didemnum vexillum</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Caulacanthus okamurae</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Caprella mutica</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Bonnemaisonia hamifera</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Asterocarpa humilis</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles
<i>Asparagopsis armata</i>	Present	line and equipment tangles