



Proceedings of the Sixteenth Stakeholder Forum on Non-native Species

The Scotsman Hotel, Edinburgh

18 June 2019



Introduction

The GB Non-native Species Stakeholder Forum was established in 2004 to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to help shape policy and also to hear about key developments in policy and delivery. It is also used as an opportunity to facilitate networking with colleagues working on non-native species issues across GB. The Forum has been held annually since 2004 and is seen as a key element of the GB approach to non-native species. Since 2008 it has been used to facilitate the active involvement of stakeholders in taking forward the GB Strategy.

The morning sessions consisted of talks to update on developments in the past year. The afternoon workshop sessions provided the opportunity for stakeholders to have a wide-ranging discussions.

Overall, 69 attendees from a broad spectrum of organisations attended the Forum.

NOTE: The views summarised in the workshop reports represent the views as they were expressed by our Stakeholders.

PROGRAMME

09:30 Registration and coffee

10:00 Welcome address (Richard Pullen, Defra)

10:15 Update on progress since 2018 Forum (Niall Moore, GBNNSS)

Updates and presentations

10:30 INNS and Islands in Scotland (Paul Walton, RSPB)

10:55 Managing INNS at the Canal & River Trust (Tom King, Canal & River Trust)

11:15 *Refreshment break*

11:35 Plant Alert: a new tool to report potentially invasive garden plants (Katharina Dehnen-Schmutz, Coventry University)

11:55 Awareness of INNS and uptake of biosecurity measures by GB recreational anglers (Emily Smith, Angling Trust)

12:15 Introduction to workshop sessions

12:30 *Lunch*

Workshop session:

- **Workshop 1:** Gathering views on management objectives for widely spread species
- **Workshop 2:** Brainstorming key actions for priority pathways
- **Workshop 3:** Research strategic plan (discussion of draft plan)

15:00 *Refreshment break*

15:20 Open session

15:50 Closing remarks/next steps

16:00 Close

Workshop Reports

Workshop 1: Management of widely spread species

Chair: Stan Whitaker (SNH) and Jenny Park (SNH)

Background

Although the main emphasis of the EU Regulation is on prevention and rapid eradication, it recognises the need to manage the impact of invasive alien species of Union concern that are already established. Article 19 requires Member States to put in place 'management measures' for widely spread species that are cost-effective and proportionate to their impact on biodiversity. 'Management measures' are defined as any lethal or non-lethal physical, chemical or biological actions aimed at the eradication, control or containment of a population; a 'widely spread' species is one which has gone beyond the naturalisation stage and whose population is self-sustaining.

The updated GB Strategy (2015) set a series of ambitious aims and objectives in relation to long-term control of species. Key Action 5.1 calls for us to "develop a decision support system to help prioritise strategic responses for well-established species at a GB, national and/or regional level" and 5.2 to "develop and facilitate key GB level long-term management programmes that are cost-effective, evidence-based and proportionate to the threat level." Government resources are limited, are unlikely to increase substantially and are likely to be increasingly directed at prevention and rapid response. However, issues related to species that require long-term control continue to grow.

To control INNS most effectively requires strategic, coordinated and sustained action. For long-term INNS control the key is working in partnership, where multiple stakeholders pool expertise, local knowledge, resources and funding over a continuous period of time to deliver against jointly agreed objectives. The objectives for managing INNS in different parts of the country will depend on the stage its invasion is at. When resources are limited it is important that priorities are agreed and understood by all the stakeholders.

The workshop aimed to explore ways to prioritise strategic responses for well-established species at a GB, national and regional level, using widely spread species of Union concern as examples.

How to prioritise management of widespread invasive species?

Consider whether the species is:

- Commercially valuable e.g. carp
- At an early stage of naturalisation, e.g. carp

Consider prioritising the following:

- Biological assets
- Manageable pathways
- Management programmes which are financially feasible
- Areas where regional coordination is possible
- Options which have political will
- Sustainable control actions

Other recommendations:

- Consider the scale of priorities – national and regional
- Define assets for protection, e.g. floating pennywort and navigational waterways

- Consider the degree of impacts, e.g. climate change links
- Make use of local professional expertise, e.g. weed control companies, ecologists etc to level funding from their clients
- Make use of existing networks, e.g. volunteers
- Take account of biocontrol options
- Give up on some species, e.g. Japanese knotweed
- Develop BAP type INNS plans
- Carry out cost benefit analysis

Workshop 2: Brainstorming key actions for priority pathways

Chair: Olaf Booy (GB NNSS) and Jo Long (SEPA)

Background

Prioritising invasive non-native species pathways is a requirement of both the EU IAS regulation and the GB Invasive Non-native Species Strategy:

- Article 13 of the EU IAS regulation requires Member States to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the pathways of unintentional introduction and spread of invasive alien species of Union concern (at least) in their territory; while,
- Key Action 3.1 of the GB Invasive Non-native Species Strategy states that we will develop a robust approach to prioritising pathways based on potential impact of the species introduced and the effectiveness of pathway management.

The UK has recently completed a comprehensive analysis of pathways to identify those that pose the most risk of introducing harmful invasive non-native species (<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/downloadDocument.cfm?id=1980>).

This identified six priority pathways for initial consideration:

1. Hull fouling
2. Horticulture escapes
3. Contaminants of ornamental plants
4. Ballast water
5. Stowaways on fishing equipment
6. Zoo and botanic garden escapes

The EU IAS regulation requires that Pathway Action Plans are developed for all of these pathways. While good progress has been made on some fronts (for example the [zoo escapes PAP](#)) there are a number of pathways that have not yet been fully addressed (see Table 1 for an NNSS take on progress towards the development of PAPs).

The aim of this workshop was to gather ideas for how to reduce the risk from these pathways.

Questions to consider included:

1. Are there any comments / views on the pathways identified as initial priorities? Are there any specific aspects of these pathways (e.g. specific routes, types of vehicle / import, points of entry) that should be considered particularly high risk or for which there is a particularly good opportunity to reduce risk?

2. How should we take forward PAPs for these pathways where they are not already in progress (refer to Table 1)? What stakeholders / delivery mechanisms should be involved?
3. What key actions can we take to manage these pathways?

Workshop 3: Research strategic plan (discussion of draft plan)

Chairs: Niall Moore (GB NNSS) and Sarah Webster (Defra)

Background

The review of the GB Strategy in 2014-15 found that research on invasive non-native species was not well coordinated and lacked strategic focus. The re-launched Strategy called for the establishment of a research working group and this first met in 2018. The overall aim of the working group is to develop a strategic plan for INNS evidence across GB and as components of this plan we need to:

- Identify gaps in current knowledge and priorities for evidence provision.
- Identify research, and other evidence, priorities for underpinning delivery of the GB Strategy (and EU IAS Regulation, WFD, MSFD).
- Improve communication with the research community to identify knowledge gaps and opportunities for the future.

The workshop aimed to get stakeholder input into the draft strategic plan (see Annex 1) and the general conclusions outlined in points 1 - 3 below.

The research working group has already agreed the following general points:

1. The plan should highlight not only areas where there are currently gaps but also priority areas that need to be maintained – e.g. horizon scanning.
2. There is a general lack of evidence on the economic and wider social science side of INNS including citizen science for biosecurity, monitoring, reporting and control.
3. There is a need to prioritise species e.g. for assessing impacts, rapid response methods and for long-term control.

Key prompts/questions:

- Do participants agree with the general points agreed by the research working group – in points 1 – 3 above?
- Are the priority evidence needs outlined in Annex 1 correct? Are there others?
- How can we optimise communication with the research community?

Feedback from attendees

69 delegates attended the Forum and 21 feedback forms were returned.
All 21 agreed that holding an annual Forum was very worthwhile activity.

Comments about the Forum which worked well:

'Good range of topics'.
'Workshop very interesting'.
'The supporting paperwork was good and location and presentations were excellent'.
'A good representation of key stakeholders'.
'This was my first Forum and I found it very informative.'
Excellent Forum, as always.
'Great opportunities to network'.
'Mixture of talks from different organisations was good.'
'Excellent presentations and contributions in the workshop which expanded my knowledge'.

Comments about the Forum which didn't work well:

'Sometimes the workshop lost track of the objective of the session'.
'Workshops are good but they need better facilitation and focus'.
'Enjoyed the talks, not so much the workshop'.
'I liked the workshop discussing real issues but they could have benefited from being facilitated by someone other than directly involved staff'.
'Forum should be chaired more tightly – all sessions overran significantly'.

Other comments:

'Arrange a meeting the night before for networking'.
'2 days would be more useful considering travel'.
'I'd like to be able to participate in more than one workshop session'.
'Circulate who is attending in advance'.

Most suggested locations for the 2018 Forum were:

York
Wales

Secretariat Website

The table below shows the frequency of delegate visits to the website reported on the feedback forms.

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Never									
Rarely	4	2	4	2	4		2		3
Once per month	10	7	14	10	10	5	6	2	11
Once per week	1	2	6	5	6		4	8	8
Several times per week	1	3	5	3	7	2	2	8	2

The most useful parts of the website included:

Species information (Information Portal, ID Sheets, Image Gallery, Risk Assessments)

Publications and useful links

Biosecurity and Prevention (inc Check Clean Dry, Be Plant Wise)

Legislation and Regulation

The least used parts of the website included:

News / Events

Training

Projects

Suggested improvements to the website included:

'There is so much useful information on there that it can be hard to navigate, consider a revamp'.

'The Apps are all out of date and no longer work'.

'Regular checking to keep the information up to date.'

Suggested information to be added to the website included:

'More marine'.

'Local authority case studies'.

'Pathway Action Plans for consultation'.

'Regional / local contacts'.

NNSS e-learning modules completed are:

Module 1:	Introduction to invasive non-native species	5
Module 2a:	Introduction to identification and recording	3
Module 2b:	Identification of freshwater plants	2
Module 2c:	Identification of freshwater invertebrates	2
Module 2d:	Identification of riparian plants	2
Module 3:	Biosecurity	4

Suggested improvements to the online training included:

'Find a better way to promote this'.

'Maybe refer to EU Regulation in NNSS'.



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