



Strasbourg, 8 July 2003  
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**T-PVS (2003) 6**

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species**

5<sup>th</sup> meeting

Strasbourg, 19-20 June 2003

**MEETING REPORT**

*Secretariat memorandum  
prepared by  
the Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage*

The Standing Committee is invited to:

1. take note of the report of the meeting of the Group of experts;
2. examine the 3<sup>rd</sup> draft of the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species as it is presented in document T-PVS (2003) 7 and propose possible modifications if required;
3. examine and, if appropriate, adopt the draft recommendation presented in Appendix 3 to this report.

## **1. Opening of the meeting by the Chair**

The Chair, Mr. Patrick De Wolf, welcomed participants (list in Appendix 1) and noted the great interest of the Standing Committee on this activity. He thanked the consultants, Ms Clare Shine and Mr Piero Genovesi, for the excellent revision of the first draft of the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) and also the many governments that had examined thoroughly the text and sent valuable comments.

## **2. Adoption of the Draft Agenda**

The agenda was adopted as it appears in Appendix 2 to this report.

## **3. Introduction by the Secretariat**

*[document T-PVS/Int (2003) 4]*

The Secretariat recalled the framework for discussion on IAS by the Group of Experts. Since 2000, work at the convention on IAS is turned with similar work under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

In February 2001, a small group of consultants presented some ideas as “Contribution to a European Strategy on the IAS issue”, a joint initiative with IUCN-Specialist Group on IAS. That first approach was discussed at a side-event within the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of SBSTTA in March 2001 and was welcomed by many states.

On November 2001, the Standing Committee requested the preparation of a European Strategy on IAS. Meanwhile, on May 2002, the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the CBD adopted *Guiding Principles on Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species*. Consultants prepared a first draft of the Strategy taking account the CBD Guiding Principles [document T-PVS (2002) 8]. That text was discussed at the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts (Horta, Azores) on October 2002, and presented at the December 2002 meeting of the Standing Committee and circulated to governments for written comment. The consultants met with Mrs Ana Isabel Queiroz and the Secretariat in Paris on March 2003, analysed all the comments received and prepared a second draft [document T-PVS (2002) 8 revised]. This second draft had been circulated to Parties and was the main document for discussion at the meeting.

## **4. Presentation of “Contribution to an European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species” by Mr Piero Genovesi and Mrs Clare Shine**

*[document T-PVS (2002) 8 revised]*

The experts, Mrs Shine and Mr Genovesi, explained that they had taken into account all comments received and that the new draft had been prepared trying as much as possible to follow the wish of Parties to simplify the layout of the draft Strategy and to ensure consistency with the CBD Guiding Principles. Thus the number of actions had been reduced and the new draft had a greater emphasis on the non-binding character of the actions proposed. Boxes had been introduced to include examples of best practice, or possible steps to make progress on some issues. In the new text it becomes clearer that the Strategy aims mainly to provide support and suggestions for priority setting by Parties to tackle IAS-related issues. More cross-references had been inserted and the whole document was now more readable and to the point.

The consultants explained the main changes in the introduction, objectives, scope and the different chapters of the Strategy.

## 5. Discussion of different parts of the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species

*[documents T-PVS/Inf (2003) 2 and T-PVS/Inf (2003) 2 addendum and addendum 2]*

The Chair, participants and Secretariat were unanimous in praising the work of the consultants. They had done a remarkable and very thorough job, simplifying and improving substantially the draft Strategy.

Parties and observers made a high number of comments of detail on the different chapters. The group agreed that those comments were to be taken into account in the revision of the text. Thus the consultants were invited to prepare, with the Secretariat, a revised third draft integrating as much as possible all the comments made, which delegates were invited to send in writing in the following two weeks.

It was not possible, however, to obtain a consensus on two points:

- a. on the objectives** (first paragraph): The consultants had originally suggested that the Strategy was important “to prevent or minimise adverse impacts of IAS on Europe’s biodiversity as well as its economy and human health and wellbeing”.

Some States proposed to have the underlined words omitted, mainly to be more in line with the CBD Guiding Principles, which focus on threats of IAS to biodiversity, not to health or economy. In the views of those states the underlined words are superfluous, as biodiversity is generally recognised as a valuable asset having economic interest.

Other states proposed to keep the wording proposed by the consultants, as they reinforce the interest of the draft Strategy in the light of the principles of sustainable development re-stated at the Johannesburg Summit. Also, the CBD Guiding Principles urges Parties to research and assess the socio-economic implications of IAS (point 24 of CBD decision) and the introduction of the CBD Guiding Principles also states that “*their purpose is to assist governments to combat invasive alien species as an integral component of conservation and economic development*”.

- b. on “aims” of rapid response and contingency planning** (point 6.2 of the draft Strategy). The Consultants had proposed “*the development plans for eradicating newly detected alien species*”, a formulation that was supported by some states mentioning the precautionary approach. Thus newly detected alien species should be considered potentially invasive and eradicated at an early stage. Those states also pointed out that the full title of the CBD Guiding Principles was “*Guiding Principles for the Prevention, Introduction and Mitigation of Impacts of Alien Species that Threaten Ecosystems, Habitats or Species*” so that it was clear that the CBD Guiding Principles and the strategy dealt also with prevention regarding all alien species.

For other states such plans should be contemplated only for “newly detected invasive alien species” or for “newly detected potentially or known invasive alien species”. The states supporting that formulation noted that the draft Strategy was aimed at invasive alien species or those that could potentially become invasive, not to all alien species.

As there was no consensus on those two points, the Chair decided the Standing Committee should leave them in bracket for decision.

## 6. Proposals to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention

Many delegates expressed satisfaction with the discussion held and the results. The Group of Experts agreed that if the observations made were included in an appropriate form in a new third draft the Standing Committee could be asked to examine such text and was possibly in a position to adopt a recommendation on the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species.

The Chair instructed the Secretariat to prepare a draft recommendation. Such text was prepared after the meeting by the Secretariat and it appears as Appendix 3 to this document.

No other business was raised.

## Appendix 1

### Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species / Groupe d'experts sur les espèces exotiques envahissantes

Strasbourg, 19-20.06.2003

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## Appendix 2



### **Bern Convention Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species**

Strasbourg, 19 – 20 June 2003

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#### **DRAFT AGENDA**

1. Opening of the meeting by the Chair
2. Adoption of the Draft Agenda
3. Introduction by the Secretariat  
*[document T-PVS/Inf (2003) 4 ]*
4. Presentation of “Contribution to an European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species” by  
Mr Piero Genovesi and Mrs Clare Shine  
*[document T-PVS (2002) 8 revised]*
5. Discussion of different parts of the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species  
*[documents T-PVS/Inf (2003) 2 and T-PVS/Inf (2003) 2 addendum]*
6. Proposals to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention

### Appendix 3



#### Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

#### Standing Committee

#### **Draft Recommendation No. .. (2003) of the Standing Committee, examined on 4 December 2003, on the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species**

The Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, in accordance with Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the aim of the Convention to conserve wild fauna and its natural habitats;

Recalling that under Article 11, paragraph 2.b of the Convention, each Contracting Party undertakes to strictly control the introduction of non-native species;

Recalling that under Article 8.h of the Convention on Biological Diversity, each Party undertakes to prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or indigenous species;

Recalling Decision VI/23 (2002) of the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity on “*Guiding Principles on alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species*” that invites, the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, in collaboration with relevant organizations, to promote further the implementation of Article 8.h within its mandate, through, *inter alia*, the development of guidance, best practices and pilot projects that address the threats of invasive alien species to particular sites or habitats, including means to enhance the capacity of ecosystems to resist or recover from alien species invasions;

Noting that in the decision mentioned above the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity welcomes the initiative of the Council of Europe, in the framework of the Bern Convention, to help the implementation of Article 8.h, including the development of a European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species;

Bearing in mind Recommendation No. R 14 (1984) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to Member states concerning the introduction of non-native species;

Recalling Recommendation No. 57 (adopted on 5 December 1997) of the Standing Committee, on the introduction of organisms belonging to non-native species into the environment;

Wishing to contribute, in the territory covered by the Convention, to the prevention, introduction and mitigation of the impacts of alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species protected under the convention;

Referring to the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species prepared under the aegis of the Standing Committee in collaboration with IUCN Species Survival Commission by the experts Mr Piero Genovesi and Ms Clare Shine [document T-PVS (2003) 7], and considering such text as useful guidance for action on invasive alien species issues;

Wishing to contribute to the regional implementation of the Guiding Principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity mentioned above, by facilitating guidance on priority setting to governments and other stakeholders,

Recommends that Contracting Parties:

- 1 draw-up and implement, or reinforce, as appropriate, national strategies on invasive alien species taking into account the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species mentioned above.
- 2 co-operate with other parties where wild flora and fauna and natural habitats may be threatened by invasive alien species and the conservation of those species and ecosystems require the co-operation of several states.
- 3 Inform the Standing Committee of measures taken to implement this recommendation.