

Strasbourg, 15 June 2015
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T-PVS (2015) 10

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

35th meeting
Strasbourg, 1-4 December 2015

**11TH MEETING OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS
ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES**

4-5 June 2015
Triglav National Park (Slovenia)

- MEETING REPORT -

*Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by
the Directorate of Democratic Governance*

The Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) held its 11th meeting in the Triglav National Park (Slovenia) from 5 to 6 June 2015.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- Take note of the report of the meeting;
- Thank Slovenian conservation authorities for their warm welcome and excellent organisation of the meeting;
- Examine and, if appropriate, adopt the draft Recommendation No. ... (2015) on action to promote and complement the implementation of EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species (appendix 4);
- Examine and, if appropriate, adopt the draft Recommendation No. ... (2015) the European Code of Conduct on Plantation Forests and Invasive Alien Species (appendix 5);
- Examine and, if appropriate, adopt the draft Recommendation No. ... (2015) on the control of feral ungulates in islands of the Mediterranean and Macaronesian regions (appendix 6);
- Take note, while adopting its programme of activities for 2016 and 2017 of the proposals of the Group for further action of the Convention on Invasive Alien Species.

* * *

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1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIR AND WELCOME BY SLOVENIAN AUTHORITIES

Ms Branka Tavzes (Chair of the Group of Experts) welcomed participants in the name of Slovenian authorities.

Mr Øystein Størksen, Chair of the Convention, thanked Slovenia for their very warm welcome and the excellent organisation of the meeting. He noted that this Group of Experts was one of the several groups organised under the Convention and that the Standing Committee had given good financial support to the activities of the Group and that results were generally considered satisfactory.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Relevant documents :

*T-PVS (2013) 5 Report of the 10th meeting of the Group
T-PVS/Inf (2Z014) 3 – Report of the Select Group on IAS*

The agenda was adopted as it figures in appendix 1 to this report.

3. INTRODUCTION BY THE SECRETARIAT: PROGRESS ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES UNDER THE CONVENTION WITH OTHER BERN CONVENTION INITIATIVES.

Relevant documents :

*T-PVS/Inf 2013) 20 – Code of Conduct on Hunting and IAS
T-PVS/Inf (2013) 22 – Guidelines on Protected Areas and IAS
T-PVS/Inf (2014) 18 – European Code of Conduct on Recreational Fishing and IAS
T-PVS/Inf (2014) 26 – Report of the expert group on eradication of ruddy duck*

Relevant Recommendations adopted by the Standing Committee since 2013

- Recommendation No. 166 (2013) on the European Code of Conduct on Hunting and Invasive Alien Species
- Recommendation No. 167 (2013) on the European Guidelines on Protected Areas and Invasive Alien Species
- Recommendation No. 170 (2014) on the European Code of Conduct on Recreational Fishing and Invasive Alien Species

The Secretariat informed the Group on the adoption by the Standing Committee by three recommendations concerning the Codes of Conduct on Hunting and IAS and on Recreational Fishing and IAS, as well as the European Guidelines on Protected Areas and IAS. The Guidelines were now been adapted by ISSG to the world level as “Global Guidelines on Protected Areas and IAS”, which shows that the Convention was pioneer in that type of work.

The Secretariat informed the Group that a meeting on eradication of ruddy duck had been organised in November 2014.

The Secretariat informed the Group that more efforts had been put into awareness and publicising the different Codes of Conduct done by the Group, as well as the Guidelines on Protected Areas and IAS.

The Secretariat had also met the Head of the EC Biodiversity Unit to look for appropriate synergies in their respective work on IAS. It was agreed to work in co-operation in a number of subjects of common interest, in particular in supporting States in the implementation of the EU Regulation 1143/2014 on IAS.

4. IMPLEMENTATION BY STATES OF THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY ON IAS - NATIONAL REPORTS

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 17 – National Reports

14 written reports were presented. The Chair thanked Parties for their good response and invited a number of Parties (8 of them) to present their reports orally.

Participants unanimously valued highly hearing about the experiences and challenges in other states. From the reports received it was clear that governments were taking a very keen interest in

furthering their work on IAS, even if there was still much to be done (in prevention, in information, in eradication or management of widespread IAS).

5. REPORTS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER

5.1 Status of global work on IAS by the Chair of ISSG (IUCN)

ISSG is involved in a thorough work to finalise an analysis of pathways. Globally there are more and more efforts aimed at identifying both priority species and pathways but still action is insufficient. A similar picture for prevention and eradication: good, well oriented action but not enough to address what is a growing problem.

ISSG is also promoting more work on information on IAS and, in collaboration with other partners, is improving the Global Registry of Introduced Invasive Species.

The main tool is the Global Invasive Species Database. Substantial work is also been devoted to categorise pathways. The information is also prepared to see how key CBD decisions are being implemented by Parties. ISSG is also developing a system to rank invasive species by their impact. (Similar in approach to IUCN threat status for species) called now “IUCN Alien Species Impact Classification System” [it was decided not to call it blacklisting]. The system will be tested for a group of alien species in Europe.

ISSG and ISPRA have carried out an assessment of the impact of IAS in Europe (commissioned by EC). IAS are the 3rd most severe threat to endangered and vulnerable species in Europe.

5.2 European Commission work on Invasive Alien Species: progress in the implementation of the EU Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species

The representative of the European Commission made a short presentation of the EU Regulation on IAS. The first step will be the elaboration of a list of IAS of Union concern, based on agreed criteria. The EC has created a Scientific forum of IAS, a technical body to provide appropriate expertise. The new EU Regulation provides for measures for prevention, eradication and management of widespread species. On the prevention side there are provisions on identifying pathways of Union concern (they have to be identified in 18 months). There are also provisions concerning emergency measures and identification of IAS of regional concern.

The regulation contains obligations for surveillance and border controls to detect the spread of IAS of Union concern. It is recommended to use existing technical structures to do this work (such as those established for CITES species).

Another chapter concerns early detection and rapid eradication systems that have to be set up for all Member States”

There are also provisions aiming at the implementation of management measures for widespread IAS. Restoration of habitats damaged by IAS is also contemplated in the Regulation, as well as the establishment of an information support system (much based in existing databases).

5.3 Progress on the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO)

Since 2002 EPPO has been working on Invasive Alien Plants. It has a specific panel of experts. They carry risk assessments and provide recommendation aimed at Plant Protection Organisations.

EPPO has an “alert list” species on which more information is required. Last month 3 species were added at the last panel: *Galenia pubescens*, *Cenchrus longispinus*, *Impatiens edgeworthii*.

EPPO gathers information on species in the alert list.

EPPO has also a “Invasive Alien Plants” list (some have undergone Pest Risk Analysis). EPPO has a prioritisation system that helps prevent the ecological impact of listed species. They have been analysing lately *Alternanthera philoxeroides* which has become invasive only in the last years,

perhaps because of climate change. Another species under watch is *Microstegium vimineum*, which is highly invasive in water bodies in North America.

They recognise the need for shorter PRAs. On Ecosystem Services EPPO still finds difficult to assess the impact on IAS on Ecosystem services, as the process is very complex.

5.4 Progress on NOBANIS portal

NOBANIS is focused in sharing information on IAS (20 countries involved, Nordic Council, Baltic States, Poland). Main resource : a database with 7,593 species and datasheets on 92 most invasive species. It includes an alert system.

Since 2013, NOBANIS has been updating a revising database for some groups. It has integrated also Belarus (and will soon include Slovakia to the network). The information can be accessed through a web portal (with the database, a newsletter, etc.). The alert system/rapid response has been improved in the last two years. A report was prepared focused on target 5 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy limited to Nordic and Baltic States.

NOBANIS is working on Pathways Analysis of Alien Species in North Atlantic Islands, Baltic States and Nordic Council States.

NOBANIS has lately examined 434 “Doorknocker species” (alien species in neighbouring States of each region) to identify pathways and prioritise them. They calculated the number of “high risk doorknockers” in each pathway to see where to focus efforts. Unfortunately NOBANIS is soon losing its secretariat in Denmark and they are looking at possible solutions (i.e. rotational secretariat). The database will need to be kept updated. How, it is not yet clear.

6. HARMONISING BERN CONVENTION AND EU WORK ON IAS

6.1 Analysis of possible implications for the Convention of the new EU Regulation on IAS

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf(2015) 14

The consultant, Mr Arie Trouwborst, presented his report on « The Bern Convention and EU Regulation 1143/2014 on IAS ».

The Regulation opens up opportunities for the Convention. Control of IAS is within the mandate of the Convention. The extension of good practices (such as those promoted in the Regulations) to the whole territory of the Convention would make control of IAS more effective. (Much as was done by the Emerald Network in relation to Natura 2000). This can be done by way of a Bern Convention Recommendation or Resolution, not as hard as law as it would require substantial changes in the text of the Convention, which is not realistic.

What can be done under Bern? Concerning listing of IAS foreseen in the Regulation (national, regional or Union concern), the Bern Convention could perhaps prepare a “List of IAS of European concern” based on the Union list but including appropriate species from States non members of the Union. The Convention could also encourage non-EU member States to restrict introduction of IAS of Union concern and also suggest non-EU States to adopt, where appropriate, legal provisions similar to those in the Regulation. The Convention could also make proposals for detection of IAS, identify eradication priorities or propose management methods. It could invite all Parties to develop strong surveillance systems, promote early eradication of some target IAS and encourage ecosystem restoration. It could also team with other partners (such as IUCN and the European Commission) to develop guidance on risk assessment, priority pathways, early detection and rapid response, ecosystem restoration and other more technical issues.

In the discussion that followed the presentation by the consultant several delegations favoured a pro-active approach by the Convention, using in particular its flexible approach to technical issues, its greater geographical coverage (useful for identifying IAS of regional concern) and the willingness of its parties to share information and contribute to future information systems. The Chair of the Standing Committee noted that in the future the Convention would have an important role in this field, based also in its long experience on IAS and its innovative approach, adding also to the regulatory approach the voluntary one by codes of conduct (appendix 4).

The Secretariat presented the draft recommendation which the Group decided to forward to the Standing Committee for possible adoption with some small changes.

6.2 Guidance for IAS pathways action plans

The consultant, Mr Riccardo Scalera, explained that “Guidance for priority IAS pathways and their management” is also a part of the European Strategy on IAS adopted by the Standing Committee in 2003. This type of work has become more urgent for EU governments following the entry into force of the EU Regulation on IAS.

He presented what chapters, in his opinion, an Action Plan for Pathways should have (description of target pathway, aims and strategies, foreseen measures, roles and responsibilities, timing, financial planning, monitoring, evaluation and review, disseminate of information).

It was particularly important to identify stakeholders (general public, a certain industry, etc.). Consultation with stakeholders at an early stage was a key element for success. Measures should include training, awareness and surveillance.

The Group of Experts welcomed the information presented. The Group discussed whether it would be appropriate to focus the guidance for pathways of unintentional introductions (mentioned in Article 13 of the Regulation) of listed IAS. The Group agreed that it would be preferable to make a wider guidance for pathways (including intentional and unintentional introductions). The Secretariat informed the Group that a full report would be ready for July. That report will be circulated to governments and a final report will be finalised at the end of the year.

6.3 Risk analysis for some key species

The elaboration of the list of IAS Union concern requires the development of standards for risk assessment.

Mr Piero Genovesi, IUCN-ISSG, presented the work they are doing for the European Commission to define the minimum standards necessary for a sound list of IAS of Union concern.

ISSG has identified 50 species for which there are already sound risk assessment (those are not necessarily those of EU concern). Governments are producing new or additional risk assessment, which means that the EU list will probably be dynamic, not static.

The species identified are mostly widespread, so more efforts are being developed for species with limited distribution or “doorknockers” (species that are likely to enter Europe and are known to have caused environmental damage in other regions).

The Bern Convention is already involved in producing risk assessment on Finlayson’s squirrel (*Callosciurus finlaysonii*), the cotton-tail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) and small Indian mongoose (*Herpestes auropunctatus*).

The Group agreed that possible work of the Convention on this field could focus in identifying priority IAS for risk assessment and promote exchange of information needed for new risk assessments.

7. CODES OF CONDUCT

7.1 European Code of conduct on Plantation Forestry and IAS

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf(2015) 1

The consultant, Mr Giuseppe Brundu, presented the Code of Conduct on Plantation Forestry and IAS.

Forestry has a lot of benefits but some environmental impacts are also associated to some species planted for wood. The report is focused on planting of non-native trees (for many different uses: wood, fighting erosion, biofuels, etc.).

The Group discussed the Code of Conduct presented suggesting some changes in terminology (“Code of Conduct on Planted Forests”, following FAO terminology). Many comments had been

received by different forest services. The Group unanimously agreed that the document had an excellent content and it could serve as basis for a Convention's Code in the line of previous ones.

The Secretariat will circulate the draft Code to all Parties and a consolidated, revised version will be presented to the Standing Committee for possible endorsement, attached to a draft recommendation such as the one in appendix 5 to this report.

7.2 European Code of Conduct on Recreational Boating and IAS

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 19

The consultant, Ms Emma Barton, made a presentation of the first draft of the Code of Conduct.

She noted in particular the need to collaborate with the recreational boating community stressing that boating itself could be affected by some IAS (in particular aquatic plants that may clog waterways). Biosecurity measures have to be adapted to the type of boat. Awareness is already working well (at least in the United Kingdom) through well-targeted campaigns. She mentioned very different measures that boat managers can implement. Large boats present a real challenge as it is quite expensive to take them out of the water for anti-fouling measures.

The Group welcomed the report and made a number of suggestions to improve the Code, which is still much in an embryonic stage. The "stakeholders" for this Code should go beyond the recreational boating community to include water management authorities and other appropriate bodies involved in managing ports or waterways.

The document will be finalised, circulated for comment aiming to have a final version at the end of the year.

8. IAS ON AREAS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

8.1 Meeting on Feral ungulates in islands of the Mediterranean and Macaronesian regions

Relevant documents :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 2

T-PVS (2015) 7

Mr Juan Luis Rodriguez-Luengo presented the results of the Seminar on feral invasive ungulates in Macaronesian and Mediterranean islands (La Gomera, 23-24 March 2015). For the preparation of this workshop, a report was drafted by Mr Joan Mayol [document T-PVS/Inf (2015) 2].

He presented the draft recommendation.

The Group welcomed this work on what seems an important threat to island biodiversity and made comments on a number of points of the draft recommendation that will be forwarded to the Standing Committee for possible adoption (appendix 6 to this report).

9. PROPOSALS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE TO THE BERN CONVENTION: WORK AHEAD

There were a number of proposals for further work.

The Group agreed that it would be appropriate to continue Codes of Conduct.

The follows were possible issues:

- Aquaculture and IAS;
- Canals and IAS;
- Biofuels and IAS;
- Infrastructure construction and IAS;
- Commercial ports and IAS;
- Tourism and IAS;
- Composting and IAS;
- Internet trade/e-commerce of IAS (with a view to improve enforcement and fight this type of wildlife crime).

The Group thought it was important to start or continue work on other issues:

- ✓ Identification of species for risk assessment (focusing on “doorknock species”);
- ✓ Management of pathways;
- ✓ Technical guidance for management of IAS;
- ✓ Eradication of ruddy duck;
- ✓ Eradication of IAS on islands (A 1-day seminar could be organised back to back to the next meeting in 2017).

10. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR AND OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Wojciech Solarz (Poland) was elected Chair and Ms Melanie Josefsson (Sweden), Vice-Chair.

No other business was raised.

Appendix 1



11th meeting of the Bern Convention Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species

Triglav National Park (Slovenia)
4-5 June 2015
(excursion on 6 June 2015)

AGENDA

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIR AND WELCOME BY SLOVENIAN AUTHORITIES

2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

Relevant documents :

*T-PVS (2013) 5 Report of the 10th meeting of the Group
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3. INTRODUCTION BY THE SECRETARIAT: PROGRESS ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES UNDER THE CONVENTION WITH OTHER BERN CONVENTION INITIATIVES.

Relevant Recommendations adopted by the Standing Committee since 2013

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T-PVS/Inf (2014) 18 – European Code of Conduct on Recreational Fishing and IAS
T-PVS/Inf (2014) 26 – Report of the expert group on eradication of ruddy duck*

- Recommendation No. 166 (2013) on the European Code of Conduct on Hunting and Invasive Alien Species
- Recommendation No. 167 (2013) on the European Guidelines on Protected Areas and Invasive Alien Species
- Recommendation No. 170 (2014) on the European Code of Conduct on Recreational Fishing and Invasive Alien Species

4. IMPLEMENTATION BY STATES OF THE EUROPEAN STRATEGY ON IAS - National reports

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 17 – National Reports

5. REPORTS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER

5.1 Status of global work on IAS by the Chair of ISSG (IUCN)

5.2 European Commission work on Invasive Alien Species: progress in the implementation of the EU Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species

5.3 Progress on the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO)

5.4 Progress on NOBANIS portal

6. HARMONISING BERN CONVENTION AND EU WORK ON IAS

6.1 Analysis of possible implications for the Convention of the new EU Regulation on IAS

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 14

6.2 Guidance for IAS pathways action plans

6.3 Risk analysis for some key species

7. CODES OF CONDUCT

7.1 European Code of conduct on Plantation Forestry and IAS

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 1

7.2 European Code of conduct on Recreational Boating and IAS

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 19

8. IAS ON AREAS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

8.1 Meeting on Feral ungulates in islands of the Mediterranean and Macaronesian regions

Relevant document :

T-PVS/Inf (2015) 2

T-PVS (2015) 7

9. PROPOSALS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE TO THE BERN CONVENTION: WORK AHEAD

10. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR AND OTHER BUSINESS

Appendix 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS / LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

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Appendix 3

COMPILATION OF NATIONAL REPORTS
/
COMPILATION DES RAPPORTS NATIONAUX

See document T-PVS/Inf (2015) 17 at the following address:

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2324681&Site=&BackColorInternet=B9BDEE&BackColorIntranet=FFCD4F&BackColorLogged=FFC679>

Appendix 4



Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Standing Committee

1st Draft Recommendation No. ... (2015) of the Standing Committee, adopted on, on action to promote and complement the implementation of EU Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive alien species

The Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention;

Having regard to the aims of the Convention to conserve wild flora and 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 also Articles 2, 3, 4 and 11, paragraph 1 of the Convention;

Recalling its previous Recommendations addressing invasive alien species, including Recommendation No. 99 (2003) on the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species and Recommendation No. 125 (2007) on trade in invasive and potentially invasive alien species in Europe.

Welcoming the entry into force and application by the EU and its member states of Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species;

Determined to promote the effective application of Regulation 1143/2014 and to promote the taking of corresponding action by Contracting Parties that are not EU Member States, in order to achieve an approach that is as uniform and effective as possible across Europe;

Taking note of document T-PVS/Inf (2015) 14, which identifies various courses of action that may be taken under the Convention in this regard;

Noting that important contributions could be made through technical work, including the development of guidance, in coordination with the European Commission and other relevant bodies as appropriate, regarding several aspects of the implementation of Regulation 1143/2014, including:

- assistance with the performance of risk assessments in accordance with Article 5 of the Regulation,
- guidance on the identification of priority pathways and the design of priority pathway action plans, as required under Article 13 of the Regulation,
- guidance on the design and operation of the surveillance systems required under Article 14 of the Regulation,
- guidance concerning the restoration of ecosystems impaired by invasive alien species in accordance with Article 20 of the Regulation, and
- the enhancement of the information support system operating under Article 25 of the Regulation;

Welcoming document T-PVS/Inf (2015) [...] on risk assessment and document T-PVS/Inf (2015) [...] on priority pathways as useful first contributions in this regard, while recognising the desirability of further technical work and cooperation regarding the aforementioned issues;

Noting that, in addition, it is desirable to design and implement an equivalent regime on invasive alien species tailored to those Contracting Parties which are not EU Member States, and resembling the regime laid down in Regulation 1143/2014 as closely as appropriate and feasible;

Furthermore noting that such a regime should operate on the basis of a List of invasive alien species of European concern, based on the List of invasive alien species of Union concern drawn up under Regulation 1143/2014, and should set out preventive, detection, eradication, management and restoration measures emulating, in duly adapted form, those set out in Regulation 1143/2014,

Recommends that:

Contracting Parties which are EU Member States:

1. Cooperate with each other, and with non-EU Member States, where this would enhance the effective implementation of Regulation 1143/2014;

Contracting Parties which are not EU Member States:

2. Cooperate with EU Member States where this would enhance the effective implementation of Regulation 1143/2014, and consider adopting similar measures as those set out in the Regulation to the extent feasible and appropriate;

Invites the European Commission, where appropriate, to liaise with Contracting Parties and Observer States which are not EU Member States in the implementation of Regulation 1143/2014;

Invites Observer States to cooperate, as appropriate, with the EU and its Member States regarding the implementation of Regulation 1143/2014;

Instructs the Secretariat to cooperate, as appropriate, with the European Commission, Contracting Parties and other partners in technical issues such as risk assessment, identification of priority pathways for invasive alien species, design and implement of priority pathways action plans, identification of invasive alien species of European concern, guidance on management of IAS on the field, surveillance systems, restoration of ecosystems impaired by invasive alien species, information systems and other matters that may prevent the entry and spread of invasive alien species and limit their impact on native species and natural habitats protected under the Convention.

Appendix 5



Convention on the Conservation
of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Standing Committee

1st Draft Recommendation No. ... (2015) of the Standing Committee, adopted on, on the European Code of Conduct on Plantation Forestry and Invasive Alien Species

The Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the aim of the Convention which is notably to ensure the conservation of wild flora and fauna, by giving particular attention to species, including migratory species, which are threatened with extinction and vulnerable;

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 its Recommendation No. 99 (2003) on the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species;

Recalling Decision VI/23 of the 6th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, on Alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species, and the definitions used in that text;

Recalling that the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 with its 20 headline Aichi targets for 2020, in particular Target 9 devoted to invasive alien species (IAS): “By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritised, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment”;

Welcoming the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, endorsed by the Council of the European Union in June 2011, and in particular its Target 5, calling on Member States to combat IAS so that by 2020 IAS and their pathways are identified and prioritised, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and pathways are managed to prevent the introduction and establishment of new IAS;

Welcoming the European Union Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species;

Noting the need to co-operate with all the actors involved in forestry activities in the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of IAS into the territory of the Convention;

Referring to the European Code of Conduct on Plantation Forestry and Invasive Alien Species [document T-PVS/Inf (2015) 1],

Recommends that Contracting Parties:

1. Take the European Code of Conduct mentioned above into account while drawing up other relevant codes - or where appropriate - draw up national codes of conduct on plantation forestry and IAS,

2. Collaborate as appropriate with the actors involved in forestry activities in implementing and helping disseminate good practices and codes of conduct aimed at preventing and managing of introduction, release and spread of invasive alien species,

3. Keep the Standing Committee informed of measures taken to implement this recommendation;

Invites Observer States to take note of this recommendation and implement it as appropriate.

Appendix 6



Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

1st Draft Recommendation No. ... (2015) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 4 December 2015, on the control of feral ungulates in islands of the Mediterranean and Macaronesian Regions

The Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the aims of the Convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, especially endangered and vulnerable species, including endangered and vulnerable migratory species;

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 its Recommendation No. 99 (2003) on the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species;

Recalling its Recommendation No. 128 (2007) on the European Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity;

Recalling Decision VI/23 of the 6th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, on alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species, and the definitions used in that text;

Recalling that the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 with its 20 headline Aichi targets for 2020, in particular Target 9 devoted to invasive alien species (IAS): “By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritised, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment”;

Having in mind the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, endorsed by the Council of the European Union in June 2011, and in particular its Target 5, calling on Member States to combat IAS so that by 2020 IAS and their pathways are identified and prioritised, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and pathways are managed to prevent the introduction and establishment of new IAS;

Recalling its Recommendation No. 91 (2002) on Invasive Alien Species that threaten biological diversity in islands and geographically and evolutionarily isolated ecosystems;

Recalling its Recommendation No. 153 (2011) on the Charter on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity on European Islands;

Welcoming the EU Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive alien species and looking forward to its full implementation by Member States;

Noting that feral ungulates may have very serious negative effects on the rich biological diversity of islands of the Mediterranean and Macaronesian Regions;

Conscious that Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands have a very high rate of endemic species protected by Appendices I and II of the Convention;

Referring to the report “Feral ungulates in the Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands” by Mr Joan Mayol [document T-PVS/Inf (2015) 2],

Using the term “feral ungulates” for non-native ungulates in a wild state after escape from captivity or as a result of intentional introduction;

Recommends that concerned Contracting Parties:

1. Clarify, where needed, the legal status of feral ungulates, both those that are the result of ancient introduction on islands and those that result of recent abandonment from livestock owners or accidental escape;
2. Consider, as a general rule, feral ungulates as invasive alien species having possible negative effects on island native biodiversity;
3. For ancient introductions that may have conservation or historical interest, manage those populations of non-native ungulates in a way that minimises their impact on native biodiversity, avoiding as appropriate giving them a conservation status as protected species;
4. Reverse, as far as possible, recent introductions of feral or wild ungulates into islands in the Mediterranean and Macaronesian Regions, particularly in those where they are having a serious negative impact on native biodiversity;
5. Promote in Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands a stricter enforcement of legislation on registration, identification and health control of ungulates so as to avoid irregular or illegal herding in natural areas;
6. Avoid subsidies and incentives for free-ranging herds in Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands that may result in a substantial increase of feral ungulates;
7. When controlling feral ungulates in Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands, prioritise their elimination from small uninhabited islands, protected areas and their buffer zones;
8. Include, where relevant, control of feral ungulates in Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands in management plans of Natura 2000 and Emerald Network sites; wherever control or eradication of feral ungulates is not feasible consider fencing as a tool to protect native biodiversity from the negative effects of those animals;
9. Consult hunters and the herding community when preparing eradication or control plans for feral ungulates in Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands so that support and cooperation measures to be implemented are, as far as possible, agreed;
10. Favour, when eradicating or controlling feral ungulates, the engagement of professionals with the help of voluntary hunters, avoiding that hunters are left as only actors of controls, as many past experiences have shown they might have an incentive in making control activities take many years or become permanent;
11. Collect appropriate information on feral ungulates in Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands, particularly in small uninhabited islands, in protected areas and for ancient introductions;
12. Promote research on the effects of feral ungulates on native species and also on the interaction of different invasive alien species on native species, as the removal of one alien species only may affect the populations of other alien species;
13. Promote awareness with local communities on the negative effects on biodiversity, landscape and the economy of feral ungulates involving as far as possible different actors so as to get community support for removal of animals;
14. Promote the active participation of Macaronesian and Mediterranean islands in an efficient international network of island managers, in order to i) share lessons learned on past initiatives and ii) to be granted access to a series of internationally recognized standards, guidelines and recommendations addressing natural resources management and specifically for feral ungulate management . According to its future development and implementation, promote participation in the “Small Sustainable Islands” ecolabel initiative and corresponding network.

Further recommends appropriate authorities of Spain to:

Continue and reinforce controls of feral ungulates in the whole island of La Gomera, in particular in National Park of Garajonay, its buffer zone and other protected areas of the island, making sure that there is co-ordination among the different administrations involved (Agriculture, Environment, National Park, Regional, Island and local authorities) and a common strategy is implemented, hopefully resulting in permanently eradicating feral ungulates and illegal herding in the whole island.