# Guidance for governments concerning

# IAS pathways action plans

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

4-5 June 2015, Triglav National Park (Slovenia)

# European strategy for IAS

The *European Strategy on IAS* has explicitly identified the need to "Develop action plans to address specific problems identified e.g. for priority IAS, pathways and vectors, vulnerable sites, ecosystems, etc." (see action 3.3.2.).

The aim is for Parties to "have specific strategies and action plans in place to address all aspects of IAS prevention and mitigation".

In fact the *European Strategy on IAS* also highlights the need for "Subregional co-operation" at the European level according to which Parties should "Promote dialogue between countries, sectors and key institutions in the same subregion, where not already established, to harmonise strategic direction and develop common approaches to shared IAS pathways and problems".

SSC
Species Survival Commission
ISSG
Invasive Species
Specialist Group

# Rationale

EU Regulation no.1143/2014

*Article 13*

**Action plans on the pathways of invasive alien species**

…specifically requires Member States to develop action plans for the management of pathways (including the analysis of pathways, and the identification of priority pathways) within fixed deadlines.

This provision is also aimed at the achievement of task 5 of the Biodiversity Strategy

# Rationale

The Council of Europe and the European Union are well known for being characterised by "different roles, shared values".

The EC fully recognised the "added value" in cooperating with Council of Europe on the issue, as the work being carried out by the Bern Convention and its group of expert on IAS can be both complementary and innovative on same aspects

In December 2014 the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention welcomed the EU intervention on IAS and invited the Secretariat to explore, in coordination with the European Commission, possible initiatives of work in the field.

Possible initiatives for consideration include:
- the development of guidelines on the identification of priority pathways and on the ways to address priority pathways;

This guidance tool is addressed to all Member States of the Council of Europe, possibly including also neighbouring countries, thus are not limited to the EU Member States

While the implementation of such plans is mandatory for EU countries, it is expected that all non-EU states, particularly those at the EU borders will benefit from considering a harmonised approach to deal with IAS, thus increasing the opportunities for collaborations between countries on the issue.

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# European strategy for IAS

## What is a pathway?

The introduction of species beyond their natural range is rising sharply, due to increased transport, trade, travel and tourism and the unprecedented accessibility of goods resulting from globalisation. These activities provide vectors and pathways for live plants, animals and biological material to cross biogeographical barriers that would usually block their way.

In this context "pathway" means, as applicable:

- the geographic route by which a species moves outside its natural range (past or present);

- the corridor of introduction (e.g. road, canal, tunnel); and/or

-the human activity that gives rise to an intentional or unintentional introduction.

A "vector" means the physical means or agent (i.e. aeroplane, ship) in or on which a species moves outside its natural range (past or present).

# Rationale

## CBD provisions

The need to identify and manage IAS pathways is explicitly addressed, particularly in relation to the Guiding principle 11, on Unintentional introductions:

*"Common pathways leading to unintentional introductions need to be identified and appropriate provisions to minimize such introductions should be in place. Sectoral activities, such as fisheries, agriculture, forestry, horticulture, shipping (including the discharge of ballast waters), ground and air transportation, construction projects, landscaping, aquaculture including ornamental aquaculture, tourism, the pet industry and game-farming, are often pathways for unintentional introductions. Environmental impact assessment of such activities should address the risk of unintentional introduction of invasive alien species. Wherever appropriate, a risk analysis of the unintentional introduction of invasive alien species should be conducted for these pathways"*.

"Pathways of introduction of invasive species, their prioritization and management" UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/18/9/Add.1

# Rationale

## CBD provisions

At the 10th COP meeting a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity with 20 headline targets for 2020 was set out.

Aichi target 9 "By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment"

# Rationale

## What is a pathway?

♦ Pathways management
♦ Prioritization of pathways

Essl et al. 2015. Crossing frontiers in tackling pathways of biological invasions. BioScience, submitted

Saul et al. 2015. Linking major databases to assess patterns in introduction pathways of alien species, submitted

# Structure of the plan

**Best practices**

CoE, 1997. Guidelines for action plans for animal species: planning recovery.

Bern Convention action plans, codes of conduct, etc.

FACE and BirdLife International 2011. Methodology for Bird Species Recovery Planning in the European Union. Final Report to the European Commission. European Commission, Cambridge, UK.

LIFE programme, Application brochures, European Commission

Guidelines on ballast water management

Biosecurity Act 1993 New Zealand legislation

# Structure of the plan

**Pre-planning phase**

- Composition of planning team (professional profile and functions to be covered)
- Working language(s)
- Time-table and milestones of the planning process
- A checklist of subjects to be considered
- Data gathering, availability and access
- Analysis of the information and its quality
- Editing and technical improvement of the documents
- Consultation methods (including timing)
- Initial identification of relevant stakeholders
- Identification of consultation and coordination requirements (e.g. including with stakeholders)

# Structure of the plan

The plan should contain the following sections:

- ♦ Policy and legal background
- ♦ Description of target pathway
- ♦ Aims and Strategies
- ♦ Foreseen measures
- ♦ Time schedule
- ♦ Financial planning
- ♦ Monitoring, evaluation and review
- ♦ Dissemination of information

# Structure of the plan

**Policy and legal background**

It is fundamental to provide a detailed description of the following information:

♦ Policy and legal background (at the global, regional, national and local level, as appropriate)

♦ Process and procedures for development, approval, review and revision of the pathway action plan (including a discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the current provisions, as well as suggestions for improvements)

♦ Pathway management responsibilities (a clear review of all competent authorities acting at the appropriate level)

# Structure of the plan

## Description of the target pathway

All available key information on the target pathway in the country (as well as within the broader region) should be described and discussed here. In particular, the following points should be considered:

♦ Analysis and discussion of relevant threats (e.g. impact of associated IAS)

♦ Identification of the problems to be addressed by the plan.

♦ Evaluation of the data needed for the identification of the best management options.

♦ Available data sources (discussion of limits and potentialities of each)

♦ Knowledge of the key gaps and inconsistencies in the information available.

♦ Identification of stakeholders, and target audience to be considered in the action plan

♦ Discussion of socio-economic data on the pathways and on the human activities related to them (the action plan should be sensitive to local traditions).

# Structure of the plan

## Description of the target pathway

"**Stakeholders**" refers to entities (organisations, authorities, persons, groups of persons etc.) that have an interest in the issue targeted by the pathway action plan.

The "**target audience**" represents the audience (general public, citizens, researchers, NGO's and other organisations, etc) addressed by specific measures, e.g. usually awareness and communication activities.

# Structure of the plan

## Aims and Strategies

The overall objective(s) of the pathway action plan, along with the specific objectives of each single action, should be clearly stated and explicitly discussed.

Aims/objectives should be:

♦ Quantified, clear and consistent, without ambiguity.

♦ Achievable within a given timeframe (inclusive of both long-term and short-term goals)

♦ Realistic in the context of available resources and finance

♦ Understandable by policy makers, decision takers, stakeholders, target audience, etc.

♦ Possibly (at least partly) negotiable with the key stakeholders and target audience (a formal system of appeal against elements in a plan may be needed)

# Structure of the plan

**Foreseen measures**

The following main categories of actions should be distinguished in the plan:

♦ Overall management of the plan

♦ Consultation with key stakeholders

♦ Preparatory actions, elaboration of technical blueprints, authorisations

♦ Core actions, and management options (including discussion of difficulties and technical constraints, and relevant contingency plans)

♦ Training activities

♦ Education, communication and awareness raising activities

♦ Surveillance activities

# Structure of the plan

## Roles and responsibilities

For any individual proposed measure it is advisable to identify and designate only one single responsible body for its implementation.

Other elements to be considered in the action plan are:

♦ Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders.

♦ Detailed consultation process with key stakeholders (commencing as early as possible).

♦ Co-operation and co-ordination with other competent authorities in the country and beyond.

♦ Implementation outside the country boundaries to ensuring the success of the foreseen measures (if necessary)

# Structure of the plan

## Time schedule

♦A detailed time schedule for the plan as a whole and for each action should be provided, including a clear definition of both the duration and the validity of the plan.

♦Regarding the plan periods, time limits of 5-10 years are generally recommended e.g. in species action plans or site management plans (pathways action plans have to be reviewed every 6 years according to the EU regulation)

♦Safety margins and time buffers should be duly considered, e.g. to pre-empt the risk of underestimate the time needed for eventual authorisations and permits.

# Structure of the plan

## Financial planning

♦ Precise costs estimates should be included in the plan. The cost for the plan as a whole and for each action should be clearly indicated. A detailed budget breakdown should also be included where appropriate, e.g. in the case of complex and very expensive actions.

♦ In the case of actions that do not need any specific budget, an explanation of the reasons for this choice should be provided, in order to assess whether there is any risk that the action will not be implemented as required

♦ Source of funding might need to be identified

# Structure of the plan

## Monitoring, evaluation and review

The pathway action plan should be implemented, otherwise is meaningless.

♦ **Monitoring the progress of the proposed actions** according to the plan (scope of the actions, objectives, timetable etc.) e.g. by means of specific progress indicators to be measured by the plan Coordinator on a regular basis. This may include regular meetings with the competent authorities, the bodies responsible for each action, the key stakeholders, etc.

♦ **Monitoring the impact** (success) of the plan, by measuring whether the proposed actions have any effect towards contributing to the objective of preventing further introductions of alien species in the country.

♦ Monitoring and evaluating may trigger the reorientation of the measure foreseen in the pathway action plan (thus dedicated contingency plans could be envisaged, as well as a form of adaptive management).

# Structure of the plan

## Dissemination of information

This includes dissemination actions to spread information about the plan itself, thus should be distinguished from awareness raising campaigns addressing the problem linked to the spread of alien species through the target pathway and the relevant impacts (e.g. aimed at facilitating the implementation of the proposed actions, by creating strong social norms and change people behaviour).

More technical dissemination actions aimed at transferring the results and lessons learnt from pilot/demonstration actions to those stakeholders that could usefully benefit from the plan's experience and implement themselves the actions demonstrated in the project.

# Thank you!

*Any examples and suggestion on:*

- structure and contents of the plan
- examples of pathways action plans and relevant best practices
- any other aspects and requirements

*…is very welcome!*

*Please let me know!*

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