NOBANIS NEWS
European Network on Invasive Alien Species
Gateway to information on Invasive Alien Species in North and Central Europe

NOBANIS Newsletter

No 5, October 2011

News from the NOBANIS secretariat

The secretary at NOBANIS, Helene Nyegaard Hvid, went on maternity leave in mid September and Christina Fevejle Nielsen has been employed to substitute for Helene. Christina has recently finished her master degree in marine biology and communication studies at Roskilde University, Denmark and has some experience with IAS from working with monitoring and regulation in Australia.

Welcome to Belarus

Belarus is now a participating country in the NOBANIS network. We welcome you and look forward to cooperate with you in the future. Unfortunately it has not yet been possible to make an access at the web portal for Belarus to add their data. We continue to work on this technical problem and hope to solve it in the near future.
The national focal points for Belarus are Dr. Vladimir Razlutskij and Dr. Vitalij Semenchenko from the State Scientific and Production Amalgamation "Scientific-practical center of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus for biological resources".

Species alerts issued at the NOBANIS website

Since the publishing of the last NOBANIS newsletter six species alerts have been issued.
The alerts have concerned

- Twelve new marine species in the Dutch Wadden Sea
- *Leptoglossus occidentalis* in Norway
- *Harminia axyridis* in the Republic of Ireland
- *Procyon lotor* in Ireland
- *Anoplophora chinensis* in Denmark
- *Palaemon elegans* in Estonia.

If you want to read more about the species alerts please visit the NOBANIS website at www.nobanis.org

To send out a species alert please contact the NOBANIS secretariat at nobanis@nst.dk, then we will initiate the alert.

The latest species alert posted at the NOBANIS website

New scientific results puts Ash dieback (Chalara fraxinea) on the Ias list in Denmark

It has now been documented that the pathogenic fungus, Ash dieback, is not a native species which has mutated, as it was once thought but actually an American species and hence is the *Chalara fraxinea* now added to the Danish list of IAS. A preliminary study indicates that only 2 % of the effected Ash trees in Denmark will be able to survive a *Chalara fraxinea* attack. You can find more information on *Chalara fraxinea* here:
http://www.eppo.org/QUARANTINE/Alert_List/fungi/Chalara_fraxinea.htm

A new outbreak of ranavirus has been detected in Denmark

It has just been confirmed by the Veterinary Institute that a number of dead frogs found in a lake in Sealand, Denmark are infected with the feared ranavirus. Five dead frogs have been tested positive for the virus which has not been found in Denmark since the last outbreak in 2008.

Meetings and congresses

Scoping meeting on the involvement of citizens in IAS monitoring, EEA, February 21, 2011

Eye on Earth is a two-way communication platform on the environment which brings together environmental data and scientific information with feedback and observations of millions of ordinary people. At the moment you'll be able to view air and bathing water quality for the majority of Europe as well as provide your feedback.

The discussions on the meeting focused on the idea of using Citizen Science (Eye on Earth) as a tool to monitor the invasion of alien species in Europe.
The project goals were briefly described as: 1) exploring the potential of the EoE based monitoring scheme, and 2) achieving an improved knowledge of the IAS issue. Such an innovative policy-science interface would be useful to support the EU policy developments and at the same time facilitate the circulation of scientific information and interactive dialogue with volunteers on scientific issues of special concern, such as the IAS threat to biodiversity. However, it should be kept in mind that the EoE/ IAS initiative will start as a pilot project aiming to test the virtues and shortcomings of a citizen science approach to IAS monitoring.
Furthermore, this project is not aiming to replace any scientific work. It should be designed to complement ongoing activities where citizens can contribute to IAS monitoring through a project carefully managed by experts, including the project design, development of instruction material and data quality checking. At the meeting it was generally agreed that Citizen Science is a useful means to complement other IAS monitoring activities.

The meeting was well attended with 26 participants, including representatives from DG Environment, ETC/ Biological Diversity, NGO's, various IAS experts, database experts, and EEA staff.

The current Eye on Earth with water and air quality: http://www.eyeonearth.eu/

Informatics Expert Meeting on IAS, September 5-6, 2011.

The meeting was hosted by GBIF in Copenhagen and meeting participants were representatives from DAISIE, FISHBASE, GISIN, CABI, GISD, CBD, NOBANIS and GBIF.

The objective of the meeting was to create a joint work program to strengthen the information services on invasive alien species as a contribution towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 and to agree on a set of recommendations to bring to the SBSTTA-15 meeting.
The meeting agenda included five sessions:

- Session A: Presentations of key information systems and tools. The session aimed to provide to participants an overview of existing information systems, standards and tools.
- Session B: Identification of the most critical use causes to prevent the impact and minimize the risks associated with introduction of alien species.
- Session C: Inventory of requirements from the most relevant information resources and tools, including risk assessment/ risk analysis tools for alien species.
- Session D: Verification of the existing database standards, metadata standards, tools and information exchange protocols.
- Session E: Specification of the interoperable system addressing invasive alien species and designing the architecture for the open access information network composed with the relevant databases and information tools.

At the meeting it became clear that there is a common interest in collaboration between all the participants, and a report with the recommendations decided on at the meeting is now drafted and will be presented at the SBSTTA 15 meeting. The report lists the activities each partner plan to undertake with the funding available to them as well as with additional funding. It also lists the collaborative activities agreed on at the meeting most of which depends on additional funding in order to be carried out. One of the central activities on this list is an inventory of all species names. This idea originated because it was defined that the current use of different names for the same species has made it difficult to compile comprehensive information on invasive species.

Eionet/EEA workshop on Networking on IAS in West Balkan Countries and their Neighbours.

The workshop was held in Sofia, Bulgaria, October 17-18, 2011.
EEA had expressed their interest in using NOBANIS as a model for a future sister network in the West Balkan area. On their request NOBANIS sent two experts to attend the workshop, one with a techincal background in information technology and one with a scientific background. It was decided that Mora Aronsson from ArtDatabanken, Swedish Species Information Centre, represented NOBANIS as the IT expert and Christina Fevejle Nielsen from the secretariat attended as the NOBANIS scientific expert.
The meeting had a very positive outcome and a future collaboration between countries in the Balkan region is initiated. The name of the new network is ESENIAS (East and South European

Network on Invasive Alien Species). To begin with it will not include an IAS database but perhaps eventually this feature will be added. Instead a website will be created as a forum for sharing information and knowledge.

Projects by NOBANIS

Risk mapping for 100 non-native species in Europe

This is a project by NOBANIS, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The purpose of this project is to develop a method that can warn European countries on new, potentially invasive species is underway and map already established species in an easily understandable way by using available data. Recognising which species will become invasive is very difficult. The best predictor is the invasiveness in other countries with similar conditions, and therefore we will be working with bioclimatic zones.

We will create risk profiles of 100 species from terrestrial and freshwater environments by gathering information about establishment in Europe in the countries participating in NOBANIS - in the bio-geographic regions in Europe (after the definitions from the European Environment Agency).

Risk profiles can be used by individual countries to make emergency lists – i.e. focus on species that occur invasively within the same bioclimatic region and therefore possibly are on their way to the other countries in the same zone. It is very useful, since it is much more efficient and cheaper to do preventive work against invasive species, rather than try to fight them once they are established. Furthermore, we will explore the use of Metzger et al. Environmental stratifications for mapping the establishment of IAS.

The project will be finished in the fall 2011.

A comparative assessment of existing policies on invasive species in the EU Member States and in selected OECD countries

This is a project for the European Commission, DG-ENV, where NOBANIS is collaborating with the French company BIO Intelligence Service.

In 2008, the European Commission (EC) issued a communication ‘Towards an EU strategy on invasive species’. Following this, the Commission commissioned several studies about invasive species. The latest study, “Assessment to support continued development of the EU Strategy to combat invasive alien species”, presented an overview of possible components of the strategy and options. In parallel, a stakeholder consultation was performed in September 2010 and three working groups have been launched recently on Prevention, Early warning and rapid response, and Control, management, restoration. The EC is now preparing the impact assessment (IA) for the strategy. The current study is meant to fill the remaining data gaps for the IA.

The main objective of this project is therefore to systematically screen policies in the 27 EU Member States (MS), in particular to highlight gaps and inconsistencies, as well as existing and missing pieces of legislation in each MS. Additionally, four OECD countries were selected for

which the policies will be screened against the same list of criteria to identify best practices, lessons learnt and assess the costs where they are available. The project will present information on national initiatives and policies in a way so that specific information can be read and extracted easily.
The project was finished in August 2011.

Norway publishes regional action plan on invasive alien species

The County Governor of Oslo and Akershus published the first Norwegian regional Action Plan on Invasive Alien Species in 2010. The action plan is a follow up of the Norwegian Black List, and also the Norwegian National Action Plan on Alien Species, in which the County Governors are given the role to coordinate measures at the regional level and to provide regional action plans and measures to eradicate, contain and control alien species. Five more regional action plans are scheduled to be finalized in 2011.

Regional Action plan for Oslo and Akershus (Norwegian only)
http://www.fylkesmannen.no/Handlingsplan_mot_fremmede_skadelige_arter_i_Oslo_og_Akershus_m4RYu.pdf.file

National Action Plan (English)
http://www.regjeringen.no/Upload/MD/Vedlegg/Planer/T-1460_eng.pdf

Norwegian Black List (English and Norwegian)
http://www.artsdatabanken.no/Article.aspx?m=208&amid=3572

Finland launches attack on Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzium*)

Photo from www.NOBANIS.org, Helene Nyegaard Hvid

It was the Finns themselves who introduced the giant hogweed to Finland as an ornamental plant in the 1970s. Since then, it has spread to the country's villages, to roadsides, and in people's yards and is overtaken the living space of many domestic varieties. Now it has been decided to battle the invasive plant and a new strategy has been laid.
The core point of the strategy is that the giant hogweed is to be eradicated from the country completely. According to estimates, there are already 10,000 giant hogweed populations in Finland, the largest of which are more than a hectare in size. Can an enemy this overwhelming be subdued? In the working group's view, yes, but the effort calls for perseverance. The battle against the giant hogweed will be a long war of attrition, lasting up to 20 years.
Read the full article "War against giant hogweed invaders would last for 20 years" here:
http://www.hs.fi/english/article/War+against+giant+hogweed+invaders+would+last+for+20+years/1135265856246