



**Global Invasive Species
Programme (GISP)**

Global Strategy

2008 - 2010



The challenge...

Invasive Species are plants, animals or microorganisms whose introduction to a new ecosystem threatens biodiversity, food security, human health, trade, transport and economic development.

The cost of damage caused by invasive species is estimated as **\$US 1.4 trillion per annum** - close to 5% GDP and they are recognized as being one of the greatest threats to the environmental and economic well-being of our planet.

The history...

Invasive species are not a new issue - farmers have been fighting weeds since the beginnings of agriculture and throughout history, epidemics of exotic human diseases such as malaria, yellow fever and bubonic plague, have been recorded. CABI, one of GISP's partner organisations, has been managing invasive pests and diseases effectively for the past 100 years! Yet it was only 50 years ago (1958), that the term 'invasive species' was first coined and the cross-sectoral nature of the threat was finally brought to the world's attention with the publication of Elton's book, *"The Ecology of Invasions by Animals and Plants"* which is widely recognized as the starting point for focussing global attention on biological invasions.

The beginning...

Established in response to recommendations from the 1st international conference on invasive species held in Trondheim in 1996, GISP was launched as a partnership between 3 international, not-for-profit organisations: **CABI (www.cabi.org)**, **IUCN (www.iucn.org)** and **SCOPE (www.icsu-scope.org)**. Its aims were to raise awareness of the threats caused by invasive species and to provide support to the implementation of Article 8(h) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which calls on Parties to "prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats and species". It is also a crosscutting network of DIVERSITAS.

Building a knowledge base...

Co-ordinated initially from Stanford University, GISP's 'knowledge-building' phase (1997-2001) culminated in a number of groundbreaking publications, notably the *Global Strategy on Invasive Alien Species*, and contributed extensively to the knowledge and awareness of invasive species through a range of products including *100 of the world's worst invasive alien species*.



"Invasive species are, immense, insidious and usually irreversible"

(IUCN, 2000)



Implementing the **global strategy...**

Attention turned increasingly towards training and capacity building with a series of regional workshops and, in a move reflecting a shift towards addressing the needs of developing countries, a dedicated secretariat (GISP Sec) was established in Cape Town to facilitate and co-ordinate implementation of GISP's global strategy. The development and delivery of widely acclaimed training courses on the prevention and management of Terrestrial, Marine and Coastal Invasive Species followed, underpinned by the production of toolkits and best practice manuals. Publication of books and brochures on various aspects of invasive species including Poverty, Economic Impacts and the Aid Trade etc. continued, together with a large number of posters and fliers, raising awareness of the growing threat of invasive species. GISP was also constituted as a legal entity with 4 founding partners i.e. **CABI (www.cabi.org)**, **IUCN (www.iucn.org)**, **SANBI (www.SANBI.org)** & **TNC (www.tnc.org)**.

GISP's scientific reputation has thus been built on taking scientific, economic and legal developments in invasive species to the international arena by translating them into policy recommendations for broader uptake. An integral part of this approach is facilitating capacity building, training and publicising the results of scientific research through GISP's global network.

The next **decade...**

10 years later, GISP entered a new and exciting phase following the relocation of GISP Sec to CABI in Nairobi, the appointment of a new Executive Director and the development of a new, more focussed Global Strategy to ensure greater impact and sustainability in the next decade, and beyond!



The latest...

2008 was dominated by preparations for CBD COP9 (May 2008), providing technical inputs to the in-depth review of ongoing work on invasive species and the subsequent decision (IX/4). Ahead of COP9, GISP also jointly organised an expert workshop on, 'Pre-import risk screening for species of live animals in international trade' (April 2008) at the University of Notre Dame, USA, culminating in a CBD information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/INF/32/Add.1) and, at a press conference held during COP9, launched its report on biofuels and the use of non-native species to intense media interest.

The World Bank-funded, development of two new toolkits and subsequent delivery of the related training courses on invasive species i.e. 'Economic analysis of invasive species' and 'Drafting legal and institutional frameworks for the management of invasive species', in three languages delivered nationally or regionally in five countries, was another major achievement for GISP in 2008. Additional scientific outputs include the production and publication of guidelines on marine Biofouling, in collaboration with UNEP Regional Seas; and publication of a report on the taxonomic support needed for invasive species management.

Of particular note during 2008 was the compilation and publication of a 'Proof of Concept Report' by GISP, a key indicator partner in the GEF-funded 2010 Biological Indicators Partnership Project on the, 'Status of alien species invasion and trends in invasive species policy' – a key step towards the development of a 2010 biodiversity indicator for invasive species!

The new GISP strategy 2008 - 2010

What is GISP? GISP is an international partnership dedicated to tackling the global threats of invasive species through policy development, awareness raising and information exchange.

Goal

GISP's goal is that by 2020, a majority of countries will have the necessary policies in place to implement their biosecurity strategies and action plans.

Purpose

GISP's purpose is to promote and facilitate the development of policy frameworks at international, regional and national levels to prevent, control and manage invasive species.

Mission

GISP's mission is to conserve biodiversity and sustain human livelihoods by minimising the spread and impact of invasive species.

What does GISP do?

GISP provides an international platform for promoting and facilitating the development, adoption and implementation of national, regional and international policies to prevent and manage invasive species. GISP's activities include building partnerships, providing policy guidance, raising awareness, promoting the exchange of information on invasive species problems and supporting national and regional capacity building efforts.

As such, GISP is recognised as an authoritative voice on invasive species policy by the CBD and by an increasing number of other international bodies and instruments including the IPPC, WTO and WHO

Objectives

GISP has three overarching objectives in tackling the threat of biological invasions:

1. Facilitate the development, adoption and implementation of science-based policies and systems of governance.
2. Raise awareness of threats posed by, and solutions for, addressing the issue.
3. Promote the exchange of information for broader uptake by decision-makers.

How will GISP achieve these objectives?

Overall supervision of GISP is provided by an experienced, multicultural and multidisciplinary Executive Board, which catalyses the international effort to combat the threats of invasive species. GISP Sec is responsible for co-ordinating activities globally and facilitates implementation of GISP's Global Strategy.

It is headed by an Executive Director, supported in day-to-day operations by a Management Team (GMT) comprising Directors from GISP's partner organisations, and draws its expertise from a global team of Directors located in GISP partner and affiliate organisations around the world, ensuring GISP has a global outreach yet is responsive to the needs of different sectors and geographic locations.

Delivery of GISP's objectives is primarily through GISP's Partner organisations. These include:

- Promoting international co-operation for prevention and management of biological invasions.
- Catalysing and facilitating capacity building efforts through the development, production and dissemination of information and materials.
- Building partnerships and communications with international, regional and national bodies with expertise on invasive species.
- Supporting governments to meet their obligations under the CBD and other international agreements including IPPC, WTO and IMO.
- Developing and implementing the Joint Global Programme of Work with the Secretariat of the CBD with priorities on:
 - Developing guidance & identifying best practices for priority pathways of invasion (e.g. civil aviation, hull fouling, animal imports);
 - Developing guidance & identifying best practices as tools for national implementation (e.g. model national and regional strategies, risk assessments, and guidance for protected area managers)
- Collating and disseminating information and knowledge, primarily by regular updating & maintaining of the GISP Website and producing GISP Publications, as necessary.
- Raising the profile of GISP and the threat posed by invasive species at key international fora.
- Securing funds and resources to support the core functions of GISP on a sustainable basis.

**Join the fight against
invasive species - contact
GISP for advice and help on
managing invasive species
in your country.**

Please visit our website
www.gisp.org or contact us at:

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