



IAPPS NEWSLETTER

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REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES: FORGING COOPERATION THROUGHOUT WEST AFRICA ACCRA GHANA, 9-11 MAY 2004

As a means of fostering regional collaboration in addressing Invasive Alien Species (IAS) issues, the U.S. State Department had previously funded a series of six workshops in different parts of the world, arranged and co-hosted by the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP). This was the 7th and final workshop, co-hosted and organized by CAB International and the Ministry of Environment and Science, Ghana.

Summary Report and Recommendations

The delegates of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo participating in the Regional Workshop on *Prevention and Management of Invasive Alien Species: Forging Cooperation throughout West Africa*, held in Accra Ghana, 9-11 May 2004, co-hosted by the Ministry of Environment and Science (Ghana), the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and CAB International (CABI), and funded by U.S. Department of State and the Global Invasive Species Program (GISP);

Recognizing that invasive alien species (IAS) are a major threat to biodiversity in the region and a serious constraint to regional economic development;

Considering that expanding trade, transport and tourism are increasing the frequency of invasions;

Reaffirming that an effective response to the problem of invasive alien species requires action at community, national, regional and international levels;

Acknowledging that the countries of West Africa are Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international instruments that seek to minimize the threats posed by IAS;

Recognizing that IAS cause impacts in many sectors and must therefore be tackled using a multisectoral approach;

Having discussed and considered how the problem of IAS can be addressed more effectively in West Africa through regional cooperation and collaboration;

Recommend;

1. **Establishment of national steering committees and focal points**

The committees should be formed immediately ensuring representation from relevant existing committees and all relevant ministries and stakeholder groups. The national focal point should coordinate the steering committee, and could serve as liaison to a regional body formed to address IAS in West Africa.

2. **Establishment of a regional coordinating mechanism**

A regional coordinating mechanism should be established under existing regional bodies. CAB International is requested to facilitate the process and provide interim regional co-ordination.

3. **Development of a regional strategy and action plan**

A draft regional document should be prepared by a technical team taking into account national strategies and action plans, for subsequent validation and adoption. The strategy should include links, where appropriate, with relevant international and regional instruments, bodies and organizations.

4. **Promotion of awareness at national and regional levels**

Policy makers and other stakeholders should be made aware of the threat posed by IAS, and of the associated economic and environmental impacts. Media and languages appropriate to the different stakeholder groups

should be utilized.

5. Building/strengthening of national and regional capacity

Particular needs include: training and technology transfer; exchange of IAS experts in the sub region; strengthening research capacity; and setting up centers of excellence based on existing capacity.

6. Development of a regional legal framework

The framework should promote regional harmonization of policy, legislation and regulations on IAS, taking into account existing legal frameworks.. The framework should create an enabling environment for the application and enforcement of regulations, and for building consensus on IAS management issues.

7. Improvement of the knowledge base

Biological, ecological and socio-economic research should be undertaken on prevention and management of IAS. Emphasis should be given to baseline studies and IAS inventories, risk assessment, use of indigenous technical knowledge, and assessment of the impact of IAS and management strategies.

8. Enhancement of regional communication and information dissemination

The regional co-ordination mechanism should serve as a clearing house for information and expertise on IAS, to promote regional communication and collaboration. Emphasis should be given to early warning systems and promotion of community participation

9. Mobilization of increased financial resources

In response to the growing threat posed by IAS, increased funding for prevention and management is requested from governments, the private sector and development partners.

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It seeks to provide a global umbrella for the plant protection sciences to facilitate and promote the application of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to a the world's crop and forest ecosystems.

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