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INVALIDIS

Newsletter



European Union
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Development Fund

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INVALIDIS | Protecting European Biodiversity from Invasive Alien Species: 4th semester of the project implementation

INVALIDIS brings together 7 partners to improve their environmental policies, by supporting policy measures for the prevention, early detection and control of IAS. It will enable the participating territorial authorities to address common challenges associated with biological invasions such as a) knowledge gaps in ecosystems' vulnerability to biological invasions, b) lack of awareness about IAS environmental and socioeconomic risks, c) low level of cooperation between key stakeholders for the implementation of IAS management measures, and c) conflicts of interests.

During the fourth Semester of the project implementation partners advanced with the research activities of the project, organising also meetings and events for the dissemination of the results of the project.



Project news

3rd Stakeholders meeting in Extremadura

The 3rd stakeholders meeting was carried out in Extremadura (Spain) and the main discussion was about one of the problems currently present in the management of invasive alien species, the problem of conflicts of interest between different entities, administrations and social sectors. In this meeting all parties highlighted what the initial differences exist, reaching a series of commitments such as: a) Use the dialogue to resolve these conflicts where the parties involved are present, b) Seek transitory solutions that allow the development of activities by the parties in conflict, while defining longer-term solutions, c) Promote continuous communication between the parties to avoid misinterpretations and increased tensions.



Info Day and Alain Roques conference in Corsica

On 13th of December 2019, OEC held an info day on IAS issues and their management. This conference was held in the presence of several institutions from France and it was divided in two parts. The first part allowed to detail the actions of the Office of the Environment of Corsica in the management of IAS. The second part allowed Alain Roques, doctor of entomology and author of numerous scientific publications, to present his work on management and early detection of IAS.

Festa della scienza in Cagliari, Sardegna, Italy

From 7th to 9th of November 2019, OEC partner participated in the Festa della scienza in Cagliari, Sardegna, Italy. They held a stand where they presented the different activities linked to the IAS that the OEC conducts, of which INVALIS is an integral part. This event attracted over 10,000 visitors.



INVALIS “invades” the University of Extremadura

As part of the dissemination of Invalis project, partner Extremadura (Spain), visited several faculties of the University of Extremadura. The objective was to reach future professionals from different disciplines who will address different aspects related to IAS. Faculty of Education and School of Forest Engineering were visited. The focus of the different talks given was to involve students to the prevention and control of these species through the aspect of their profession. To achieve that, practical cases were given to students that can be found in their professional facet, as well as tools that they can use once they enter the labor market. The project will continue in the coming months by visiting the Veterinary Faculty, the Faculty of Sciences and the School of Agrarian Training to address problems with mascotism and the introduction of new species through a vector of great magnitude as is agriculture.

News from all partner's countries on IAS politics

Corsica – Legislation update

After a long process of raising awareness among the Corsican population through lobbying with schools, diving clubs, nurserymen and through various programs such as the ALIEN network or the ALIEM project, OEC through INVALIDIS project raised awareness on a political level. More specific, Corsica had to provide a tool to limit the introduction of exotic species. INVALIDIS project has been a driving force, a lever, for raising awareness to politicians about the problem of invasive species and supported the Environment office to complete a long-term work on the management of IAS. In July 2019, a law amended the French Environment Code, which enabled Corsica to acquire the power to create lists of animal or plant species whose introduction is formally prohibited on the territory. This law modifies articles L411-5 and L411-6 and entered into force in January 2020.



Combined efforts for a multiplied effect

The Romanian Ministry of the Environment, Water and Forests, in partnership with the University of Bucharest, is implementing the project “Adequate Management of Invasive Species in Romania, in accordance with EU Regulation 1143/2014 regarding the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species”. The general objective of the project is to create the scientific and administrative tools necessary for an efficient management of invasive species in Romania. Important progresses have already been achieved in the implementation, working group meetings being organized with a series of decision makers and actors involved in the management of invasive alien species from Romania. Several documents regarding the management of invasive alien species have been elaborated and are available: technical reports, a data base, a national preliminary list, an inventory protocol, a guide to inventory and distribution mapping, a report on the efficiency of the legislative framework for implementing actions and other interesting and useful materials.

More information can be accessed on the project's website <http://invazive.ccmesi.ro/> and social media page <https://www.facebook.com/InvaziveRO/>

2020 has been declared the International Year of Plant Health

The United Nations (UN) has declared 2020 the International Year of Plant Health, a unique opportunity to raise global awareness of how plant health can help reduce hunger, protect the environment and promote economic development. Plants are not only a source of fresh air, but also a source of food. Various food crops are lost every year due to pests and the health of plants is endangered. Ecosystems have also changed as a result of climate change and human activities, reducing biodiversity and allowing pests to proliferate. Invasive alien species have also entered Latvia, taking over territories and suppressing local biodiversity. Under this occasion ZPR partner released a press release inviting everyone to familiarize themselves with the list of invasive species, to observe changes in the nature, to act accordingly on their own or, if necessary, to report to the responsible authorities, claiming that everyone's involvement is important in maintaining plant health and biodiversity.

Public monitoring can be done by each of us - when noticing any of the invasive species in Latvia, report to data platforms, such as <https://dabasdati.lv/lv>, and on the website of Nature Conservation Agency (https://www.daba.gov.lv/public/lat/dati1/invazivas_sugas/).

Checklists of Italian Fauna

Recently, two articles regarding the composition of the Italian mammal fauna and freshwater fish have been published. The first article, published on the Italian Journal of Mammals, *Hystrix*, indicated that 12% of Italian mammals belong to alien species (Loy et al., 2019). According to the Authors, Italian mammal fauna is composed of 123 species, 9 marine and 114 terrestrial species, including 15 allochthonous species (or 16, depending on whether the crested porcupine is considered alien or native). Among this pool of species, four are reported in the list of species of union concern, according to EU regulation 1143/2014: the coypu *Myocastor coypu*, the Northern raccoon *Procyon lotor*, and three squirrels (the grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*, the Pallas's squirrel *Callosciurus erythraeus*, and the Siberian chipmunk *Eutamias sibiricus*). Against these species, all the Member States must perform management actions such as early detection, control or eradication, in order to contrast their expansion within the National borders.

The second checklist, compiled by Lorenzoni et al. (2019) on Italian freshwater fish, indicated an even more worrying situation: 86 out of 150 total species (60%) are alien. Fortunately, most of the identified alien fishes is not yet forming stable reproductive population.

Thus, excluding them, the number of taxa drop to 127, out of which 50% belongs to alien species. It was already well known that alien species constituted an important part of the Italian fauna, as well as their impact on the native biodiversity. However, the updated numbers of alien species, especially in freshwater environments, indicate how far we are from finding a solution to the problem and how important it is to promote projects that contribute to protect native biodiversity.

References:

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Lorenzoni M., Borghesan F., Carosi A., Ciuffardi L., De Curtis O., Delmastro G., Di Tizio L., Franzoi P., Maio G., Mojetta A., Nonnis Marzano F., Pizzul E., Rossi G., Scalici M., Tancioni L., Zanetti M., 2019. Check-list dell'ittiofauna delle acque dolci italiane. *Italian Journal of Freshwater Ichthyology* 1 (5), 239-254.
<<http://www.iiad.it/ijfi/index.php/ijfi/article/view/149>>.



Procyon Lotor



Sciurus Carolinensis

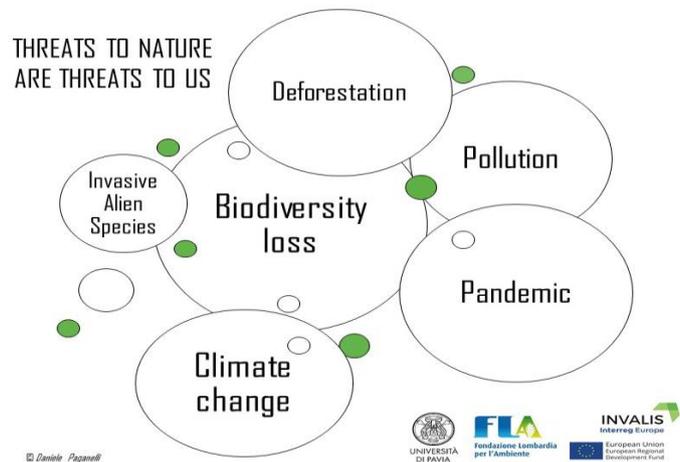
Threats to Nature – Threats to Us

The last WWF report (<https://wwf.panda.org/?361716>) illustrates the links between humanity's impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity and the spread of particular diseases. Although many of these links are not yet fully understood, it is clear that human and planetary health are closely connected (WWF report, 2020).

One of the major threats to biodiversity is invasive alien species that impact the economy and public health of recipient regions. The invasiveness of a species is equally related to its biological traits and the vulnerability of the environment, which, in turn, is influenced by the interactions of biotic and abiotic factors.

Thus, identifying the dimensions and factors that determine the vulnerability of natural ecosystems to the establishment of invasive alien species may improve our capability to manage the issue of biological invasions, to prevent new arrivals and to implement an effective early warning system.

The recent events underlined, once again, how biodiversity could act as a shield for human health. The paradox is that most of these threats to nature are caused by anthropogenic activities. Thus, a better management of natural resources could prevent many problems from happening in the future.



NEWS from Lombardy Region (only in Italian)

All the information has been collected from the website of the LIFE GESTIRE 2020 project -NATURA CHE VALE- <http://www.naturachevale.it/en/the-project/life-gestire-2020/>

- Guidelines for the management of the invasive crayfish species in Lombardy. More information at <http://www.naturachevale.it/news/pubblicare-le-linee-guida-per-il-contenimento-della-specie-alloctone-di-gambero-il-lombardia/#>
- Cariplo Foundation grant "Coltivare Valore" for good practices in agriculture. More information at <http://www.naturachevale.it/news/bando-cariplo-coltivare-valore-275-milioni-per-finanziare-pratiche-di-agricoltura-sostenibile/>
- Compensation tender "Misura 12 PSR" for the safeguard of agricultural areas close to Natura 2000 sites. More information at <http://www.naturachevale.it/news/bando-misura-12-psr-1-milione-di-euro-per-compensazioni-per-zone-agricole-natura-2000/>
- Proposal of the institution of a Site of Community Importance (SCI) for the reproduction of *Acipenser naccarii* in the River Ticino in the territory of the municipality of Pavia. More information at <http://www.naturachevale.it/news/regione-lombardia-approva-candidatura-a-sic-dei-siti-riproduttivi-di-storione-cobice-nel-pavese/>

INVALIS project on web



www.interregeurope.eu/invalidis



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Partnership



National Center for Environment and Sustainable Development



Lombardy Foundation for the Environment



Regional Ministry for environment and rural, agricultural policies and territory – Regional Government of Extremadura



Corsican Agency of Environment



Bucharest-Ilfov Regional Development Agency



Institute of Sciences, Technologies and Agroenvironment of the University of Porto



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