

Memorandum 2/11/2018

AS8: Arctic Invasive Alien Species Action Plan (ARIAS): National implementation and empowering decision making by mobilizing, sharing, and analysing Arctic invasive alien species data

This memo provides a summary of reports submitted on the session AS8 organized at the Arctic Biodiversity Session in Rovaniemi, Finland, October 9-12 organized by the US National Invasive Species Council.

Attendance: 40

Arctic Biodiversity Assessment recommendation themes most prominently addressed in the session:

- Ecosystem-based Management
- Addressing stressors
- Improving knowledge and public awareness

Key points raised in the session that were important to note:

- It is very important to define what “invasive species” is before discussing anything else.
- the CAFF definition requires three components (1) it must be new to an ecosystem (2) it must have been put there directly or indirectly by humans, and (3) it has to have caused harm already or have a potential to cause harm.
- ARIAS been a top priority for Finland and incorporated into their official policies for government action.
- Baseline information about invasive species is not complete
- There is an urgent need and timely opportunity to address invasive alien species in the Arctic
- There is a need to consider impacts beyond those directly affecting biodiversity e.g. human health and cultural identity and resources.
- Arctic States are already considering how to implement the ARIAS Strategy and Action Plan at the national level and there are opportunities for upscaling existing national work to the circumpolar level.
- The mobilization of Arctic non-native species data and its analysis for baseline assessments of species invasiveness, pathways of invasion, and impacts is the fundamental priority for ARIAS Strategy and Action Plan implementation

Recommendations/actions identified for how to deal with the issues raised in the session:

- Raising awareness about invasive species is an urgent need in Finland, and across the Arctic
- When it comes to invasive species, we need to be proactive.
- There is to develop tools that narrow the space between detection and reporting, and then the response.
- The ARIAS Strategy and Action Plan Implementation Coordinating Group (ICG) will take next steps by:

- Hosting a technical-experts, consultation on non-native species data mobilization/analytics in Washington, DC on Jan 28-30, 2019. Among other things, the group will discuss the possibility of forming a joint CBMP-ARIAS Working Group to focus on the data-related components of the ARIAS Strategy and Action Plan.
- Hold the first in-person ICG meeting in Washington, DC on Jan 31-Feb 1, 2019 to discuss project proposals.
- With CAFFs Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI), explore the possibility of an on-the-ground project to eradicate *Spartina alterniflora* on Arctic bird wintering groups in Asia.
- For more information, contact: Jamie_reaser@ios.doi.gov

Take home message from the session:

- Prevention and early detection and rapid response are the most important parts of ARIAS.
- Success in addressing invasive species in the Arctic is going to depend on strong partnerships.
- Community engagement is essential.
- We have an urgent need and timely opportunity to address invasive alien species in the Arctic.