



## **A Global Taxonomic Needs Assessment: Invasive Alien Species**

### *Introduction*

BioNET-INTERNATIONAL (BioNET) and the UK Natural History Museum (NHM), supported by the WSSD Implementation Fund (WIF) of the UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), are working together to carry out an assessment of global and regional taxonomic needs in relation to invasive alien species (IAS).

The Programme of Work of the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), which includes a recommended Planned Activity on IAS, calls for global taxonomic needs assessments (TNAs). Similarly the recently developed CBD/GISP/UNEP Joint Work Plans on invasives make a global TNA in the context of IAS timely.

### *Purpose and Project Outline*

The BioNET/NHM assessment is intended to enable governments, taxonomic institutions, relevant agencies and funding bodies to focus taxonomic resources effectively on IAS.

As an initial step in this assessment, the project partners are carrying out a paper-based survey of global taxonomic needs in relation to IAS, based on information gathered from:

- Published, unpublished and expert sources information on global needs expressed to date
- Interviews with personnel of key initiatives

This information will be used to produce an initial report on globally stated needs, including an analysis of priorities, as expressed by stakeholders, consistency of responses, and how the needs so identified are currently being addressed.

This report will be circulated to global stakeholders that have contributed information, to regional and national Coordinators of BioNET LOOPS, to GEF implementing agencies and the secretariat, and will be made publicly available via the Clearing House Mechanism of the CBD, as well as the BioNET website.

The report will inform the planned second stage in the assessment, for which the project partners will carry out ground-truthing of globally-stated needs at the national level, in collaboration with national, regional and global

stakeholders, using a generic toolkit that will subsequently be made available to others to use independently.

### *Information Gathering*

Information is being gathered for the project by Gia Aradottir. As well as compiling information from published and unpublished sources, she will be carrying out a series of interviews with stakeholders in order to identify and prioritise the following types of taxonomic needs relating to invasive alien species:

- Infrastructure and information - including expertise, facilities (collections, port of entry, laboratory), species names (scientific and common), specimen images, taxonomic literature and species distributions;
- Outputs - including lists of IAS, identification keys and services, catalogue of names, research (unknown groups, biocontrol agents), pathway maps and surveys; and
- Organisation - including strategies, networking of specialists and information users, directories of expertise, international training and promotion of IAS awareness.

### *The Project Partners*

Both BioNET and the Natural History Museum have a strong reputation in the scientific (taxonomic) and biodiversity conservation fields, not only at a practical level, across the globe but also in engaging in relevant intergovernmental processes such as the CBD. Both partners are represented on the Coordination Mechanism of the CBD's Global Taxonomy Initiative.

The Natural History Museum is the UK's National Focal Point for the Global Taxonomy Initiative. BioNET has been responsible for the development of subregional technical cooperation networks, a number of which prioritise IAS-related activities.

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