

Mapping invasive alien species of Union concern

July 13 2017

The first ever [Baseline Distribution of Invasive Alien Species of Union concern](#) has been published by the JRC. The 37 invasive alien species covered by this report have been prioritised as species that need to be addressed at the level of the EU territory.

The report is based on the best available knowledge, resulting from data aggregated through the European Alien Species Information Network (EASIN) in collaboration with the competent authorities of the Member States. This constitutes an important tool supporting the implementation of the EU Regulation on Invasive Alien Species (IAS).

Why map invasive alien species?

Invasive alien species (IAS) pose an important threat to biodiversity, with potentially severe ecological and socio-economic impacts. The first list of IAS of Union concern includes 37 species, including both animals and plants. According to the EU Regulation on IAS, Member States must prevent the introduction and spread of those species, enforce effective early detection and rapid eradication mechanisms for new appearances, and adopt management measures for those that are already widely spread.

For proper implementation, the competent authorities need detailed and up-to-date spatial information on IAS distribution. A commonly acknowledged baseline will help Member States with implementing the

Regulation. It will also help Member States and the European Commission monitor invasion trends and the effectiveness of the EU policy on [invasive species](#).

The information included in the current baseline will also support other EU policies, such as the Birds, Habitats, Marine Strategy and Water Framework Directives.

For each IAS of Union concern, the report provides spatial information, at both country and a 10 x 10 km grid level covering information on the year and country of first introduction into the EU, the main pathway of introduction, the taxonomic group, the habitat, the origin, and the impact.

Where have they been reported?

The highest number of IAS of Union concern have been found in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Germany.

The red-eared terrapin turtle is the most common IAS of Union concern across the EU, found in 24 Member States. It is followed by the signal crayfish and the Chinese mitten crab, which are present in 23 and 22 Member States, respectively. Certain species are still in an early invasion stage in the EU (for example the small Indian mongoose, the Kudzu vine and the fox squirrel) or are not yet present at all (e.g. the mile-a-minute weed).

Most IAS of Union concern have been introduced into the EU by escaping or being released from captivity (e.g. from botanical gardens or aquaria). Most of the IAS of Union concern originate from America (mainly North America) and Asia (mainly East Asia).

Citizen scientists can help spot invasive alien species

Many IAS of Union concern are large and easily recognisable. They include many [species](#) found in and around urban areas (such as the Muntjac deer, House crow and Coypu). For this reason, the general public, and particularly citizen scientists, could be easily involved in the reporting and monitoring IAS of Union concern.

To this end, a dedicated smartphone application has recently been developed by the JRC. This Invasive Alien Species Europe app can act as a supplementary tool for monitoring IAS of Union concern, and increase cooperation with citizens.

Provided by European Commission Joint Research Centre

Citation: Mapping invasive alien species of Union concern (2017, July 13) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-07-invasive-alien-species-union.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.