



Piero Genovesi

Chair

Piero Genovesi

Location/Affiliation

ISPRA Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, Via Vitaliano Brancati 48, 00144 Rome, Italy

Number of members

210

Social networks

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Invasive-Species-Specialist-Group-ISSG-208314625853141/>

Twitter:

@IUCN_ISSG



Mission statement

The Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG) aims to reduce threats to natural ecosystems and the native species they contain by increasing awareness of invasive alien species, and of ways to prevent, control or eradicate them.

Main activities by Key Priority Area (2016 & 2017)

Barometer of life

■ Research activities

i. ISSG has progressed with the implementation of a single hub to integrate all knowledge products on invasive species, through collaboration with the IUCN Global Species Programme (GSP) in Cambridge. An update on this activity was presented at the IUCN SSC Steering Committee meeting in Cartagena in 2017. The direction of the ISSG's future work is discussed in the article: Latombe G., et al. (2017) A vision for global monitoring of biological invasions. *Biological Conservation*, 213, 295–308.

ii. Discussions were initiated with the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to explore pathways to integrate invasive alien species data within the Protected Planet database. Although progress has temporarily stalled after the initial meetings, there are plans to reignite these discussions. (KSR #14)

iii. ISSG is actively working on enhancing the content of their key knowledge products with the data and information generated through project activities and solicited from experts, researchers and practitioners. The ISSG contributed to several analyses of pathways including: Pergl J., Pyšek P., Bacher S., Essl F.,

Genovesi P. et al. (2017) Troubling travellers: are ecologically harmful alien species associated with particular introduction pathways? *Neobiota*, 32, 1–20; and Saul W.-C., Roy H.E., Booy O., Carnevali L., Chen H.-J., Genovesi P. et al. (2017) Assessing patterns in introduction pathways of alien species by linking major invasion data bases. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 54, 657–669. (KSR #13)

iv. With funding support from the EC channelled through the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), ISSG was able to make good progress in the development of the Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (www.griis.org). Phase 1 completed draft lists for all Parties to the CBD. Outcomes of this activity have been published in *Scientific Data of Nature*, with a very broad global media coverage. Information extracted from GRIIS and GISD has been used in global meta-analyses published in articles including Seebens H., Blackburn T.M., Dyer E.E., Genovesi P., et al (2017) No saturation in the accumulation of alien species worldwide. *Nature Communications*, 8, 14435. Structure of GRIIS have been published in a dedicated article, Pagad S., Genovesi P., Carnevali L., Schigel D., & McGeoch M.A. (2018) Data Descriptor: Introducing the Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species. *Scientific Data*, 5. (KSR #13)

v. ISSG and the GSP have worked together on a consultation of the Environmental Impact Classification of Alien Taxa (EICAT) methodology, which was completed in July 2017. The conclusions of this consultation supported a continuation of work that is currently being implemented and results of the consultation were presented at the IUCN SSC Steering Committee in their annual meeting in Cartagena. Progress has also been presented at the

Liaison Group on Invasive Aliens Species, and at an Experts Meeting of the CBD, held in Montreal. Several technical meetings have been held to discuss next steps in the implementation of EICAT. A paper describing the SEICAT methodology has been published in Bacher S., Blackburn T.M., Essl F., Genovesi P., et al. (2018) Socio-economic impact classification of alien taxa (SEICAT). *Methods in Ecology and Evolution*, 2018, 158–168. (KSR #13)

vi. Progress has been made on the implementation of projects within the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA). Data and information has been collated for the countries of Africa, including the Indian Ocean Islands and countries in Oceania. (KSR #13)

vii. Discussions were initiated with the World Heritage Programme to complete an assessment of the impacts of invasive alien species on the natural value of World Heritage Sites. While there was a good amount of interest, we failed to secure the funding support we were seeking. (KSR #13)

viii. ISSG has undertaken the task of producing a guidance on the management of invasive alien species in protected areas and other areas of high biodiversity value. The ISSG Chair was invited to become member of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) to follow up on this activity. (KSR #13)

Bolster work at national scales

■ Policy advice

i. In parallel to developing annotated checklists of introduced and alien species, the ISSG has engaged with countries through workshops to enhance capacity for the use of invasive species data in setting targets for management action and in developing a strategy and action plan for the management of invasive species.

One such workshop was facilitated in the United Arab Emirates. The ISSG actively supports the Secretariat of the Pacific Region Environment Programme and has developed compendiums of alien and invasive species data for eight countries that have developed their National Invasive Species Strategies as part of a GEF supported programme. (KSR #13)

ii. ISSG has contributed to the development of national indicators on invasive alien species through participation in technical meetings in several areas of the world. ISSG continues supporting the European Environmental Agency on this issue. (KSR #13)

Communications

■ Communication

i. The ISSG operates a very active online list service known as Aliens-L, and we are very pleased to report that membership has steadily increased to over 1,450 members. A referral system is active with requests for information and linkages with requests from expert being received regularly. On average, 6-8 requests are received every week. ISSG also operates a Facebook page.

Policy

■ Policy advice

i. The ISSG has made good progress in our engagement with the CBD following the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation to support Parties to the CBD to make progress in the achievement of Aichi Target 9 in 2011. The ISSG is an active partner in the CBD convened Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership (GIASIP) and chaired an Experts Workshop organised by the CBD and held in Montreal in December 2017 (a report can be found here). The ISSG is also an active member of the Liaison

Group on Invasive Species (LGIAS), with FAO, CBD, CABI, IMO and other members; ISSG chaired the latest LGIAS meeting held in Brussels in November 2017 (a report of the meeting can be found here). The ISSG led the drafting of several information documents such as one related to biological control, prepared with inputs from several ISSG members. ISSG has also made some progress in engaging with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), The Ramsar Convention and FAO in IAS issues. (KSR #13)

ii. The ISSG has made good progress in our engagement with global institutions such as UN-EP-WCMC, the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), and regional bodies such as the European Commission, the European Council and, the Secretariat of the Pacific Environmental Programme both in providing strategic advice on policy related to the prevention of the introduction of alien and invasive species and its management, and support with data and information on species. The ISSG and the IUCN Secretariat collaborate in supporting the European Commission in the implementation of the EU Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive alien species. (KSR #13)

iii. The ISSG secured funding to update the Policy Response Indicator (including measuring resource allocation by national governments towards invasive species management action as outlined in the SDG 15.8.1 indicator), and develop a new indicator on measuring 'Trends in pathways of introduction of invasive species'. Factsheets have been submitted for both indicators to the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP). (KSR #13)

iv. The ISSG chair and members have participated actively in many fora and meetings- including main scientific conferences. Annual Center for Invasion Biology in South Africa; Island Eradication Congress, Dundee, Scotland; Meeting of the



Workshop to support the definition of a policy on invasive species in the Seychelles
Photo: ISSG archives

Council of Europe Group of Experts on Invasive Species, Madeira, Portugal; and seminar on invasive species, Seychelles. (KSR #13)

Acknowledgements

We thank the European Commission (EC), The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity for the funding support for achieving progress in the development of our knowledge products, especially the Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (GRIIS) and The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (Coordinators of the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership) for their guidance and expertise. Our thanks also to ISPRA Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, Rome, Italy and the University of Auckland, New Zealand for hosting our Chair and Programme Officer. The quality of work would not be what it is without the collaboration with our partners and networks of country level editors of data, experts and practitioners.

Targets for the quadrennium 2017-2020

Communications

Research activities: (1) complete 20% of proposed linkages between the ISSG knowledge products and other significant knowledge products of the IUCN and partners, such as the Red List, Protected Planet, ECOLEX, etc.; (2) aim to complete at least 200 EICAT for the most harmful alien invasive species, and post them on the GISD also as preliminary profiles; (3) develop an interlink between GISD and GRIIS, to display 30% of information available in GRIIS also through the GISD webpage; (4) prepare at least 100 species profiles for GISD.

Policy

Research activities: (1) update all four biodiversity indicators related to invasive species; (2) complete a global assessment of the impact of invasive alien species.

Projected impact for the quadrennium 2017-2020

By the end of 2020, the ISSG envisions indications of reductions in the global overall rates of biological invasions and targeted successful management options by national governments. Robust and current data and information are invaluable for planning management, action ranging from prevention of introductions to on-going management of invasions. By providing this support to our stakeholders, we hope to contribute to significant reductions in biological invasions both in preventing introductions of alien species and optimal management of on-going invasions. Biodiversity indicators allow decision makers to see the result of their decisions, the development of sound indicators is supported by sound and current data. The ISSG hopes to use the data it collates to develop practical and informative indicators leading to better decision making. The planned global assessment of the impacts of invasive alien species on the natural environment to be completed by the IPBES will use all the data and information generated during the development of IAS indicators and an expert group will compute the qualified impacts of IAS on the natural environment. The ISSG envisions that this informed assessment will be a key resource when the next Strategic Plan on Biodiversity will be developed in 2020.

Summary of activities (2016-2017)

Key Priority Area ratio: 4/7

Key Priority Areas addressed:

- Barometer of life (8 activities)
- Bolster work at national scales (2 activities)
- Communications (1 activity)
- Policy (4 activities)

Main KSRs addressed: 13, 14

Resolutions 2016 WCC: 018

KSR: Key Species Result