

LIFE-IP LatViaNature

Sub-Action C.5.3 "Development of early detection and rapid eradication system for invasive alien species"

Minutes of the first meeting of the competent authorities of the Baltic countries on information exchange for the implementation of the early detection system

Coordinating partner: Nature Conservation Agency

Sigulda 2021



SUMMARY

Sub-Action C.5.3: Development of early detection and rapid eradication system for invasive alien species

Deliverable: Minutes of the first meeting of the competent authorities of the Baltic countries on information exchange for the implementation of the early detection system

Within the framework of LIFE-IP LatViaNature project, it is planned to develop early detection and rapid eradication system for invasive alien species (IAS). Collaboration with and data exchange between neighbouring countries is crucial step to ensure timely preparation for the introduction of a new IAS into the country, as well as to develop and improve the national early detection and rapid eradication systems in each country.

To enhance the collaboration and to discuss achievements and issues related to the management of IAS, meeting of the competent authorities of Baltic States was held on 4th of June, 2021. Due to the restrictions related to COVID19 pandemics meeting was organized online. Estonia was represented by representatives from the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Estonia, Estonian Environmental Board and Estonian Environment Agency; Lithuania - by representative from Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania; Latvia – by representatives from Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia, State Plant Protection Service and Nature Conservation Agency. During the meeting each country gave presentation on national management systems of IAS focusing on legislative frameworks, distribution of competencies, implementation of EU regulation on IAS. Presentation was given also to present the LIFE-IP LatViaNature project and actions related to management of IAS planned in the framework of it.

During the meeting participants came to conclusion that the issues countries are facing are rather similar and agreed that cooperation is needed not only for early detection but also in other areas, such as the exchange of experience and good practices on the monitoring and eradication methods of IAS. It was concluded that the best solution for the exchange of information on IAS included in the early warning system is the use of institutional e-mails. On the Estonian side, the first authority for communication is Ministry of the Environment of Estonia, from Lithuania - Ministry of Environment from Lithuania, from Latvia – Nature Conservation Agency. The participants of the meeting agreed on the following steps to promote future cooperation:

1. LIFE-IP LatViaNature project before the next meeting will create a shared file to collect information on species identified as IAS in each country and for which the country would like to receive additional information and early warning messages.
2. LIFE-IP LatViaNature project before the next meeting will prepare and send out for commenting a draft letter to certify cooperation for the development of an early warning system.
3. The next meeting should be organized in the autumn/early winter 2021, possibly with additional attention to the issue of monitoring of IAS.

**Meeting of competent authorities on management of invasive alien species of Baltic countries
 Early Warning System and Management of invasive alien species in Baltic countries
 Meeting minutes**

**LIFE Integrated Project “Optimising the Governance and Management of the Natura 2000
 Protected Areas Network in Latvia” No LIFE19 IPE/LV/000010 (Project LatViaNature)**

Time and venue: online MS Teams, 04.06.2021., 13:00-15:30 EET

List of participants:

No	Organization, role	Name, Surname
1.	Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Estonia Nature Conservation Department Senior Officer	Merike Linnamägi
2.	Estonian Environmental Board Nature Conservation Work Office Head of Department	Eike Tammekand
3.	Estonian Environment Agency Nature department Leading specialist	Rauno Kalda
4.	Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania Nature Conservation Policy group	Laura Janulaitienė
5.	State Plant Protection Service Plant quarantine department Head of Group on the control of harmful organisms	Astra Garkāje
6.	Nature Conservation Agency Project LatViaNature Expert on invasive species	Santa Rutkovska
7.	Nature Conservation Agency Nature Protection department Senior expert	Evija Andruškeviča- Jonāne
8.	Nature Conservation Agency Project LatViaNature Head of Species and habitats protection division	Agnese Priede
9.	Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia Nature Protection Department Senior expert	Māra Melnbārde
10.	Nature Conservation Agency Project LatViaNature Expert on invasive species	Jākabs Dzenis

Chair of the meeting: M.Melnbārde

I Agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting (J.Dzenis).
 - *the meeting participants are introduced with the aim and agenda of the meeting.*
2. Management system of IAS in Latvia - challenges and experience
 - 2.1. Current legislative framework of invasive alien species in Latvia (M.Melnbārde)
 - *Participants of the meeting are introduced with the legal framework in force in Latvia in the field of invasive species management (e.g. Plant Protection Law and relevant Regulations), including solutions integrated in sectoral legislation that promote the management of invasive species (e.g. the Law on Hunting, Regulation on fishing, etc.). Planned amendments of the Law on protection of species and habitats needed to contribute to limiting and managing the spread of invasive species are presented. Major challenges and part of the results achieved in the management of invasive species are outlined.*
 - 2.2. Project LatViaNature and its role in improving management system of IAS (J.Dzenis)
 - *The participants are presented with the activities planned by the Project LatViaNature in the field of invasive species management, as well as the website "Invasive Species Manager" developed within the project.*
 - 2.3. The brilliance and misery of the hogweed eradication (A.Garkāje)
 - *A system for the management of Sosnovsky hogweed is presented, outlining the role and responsibilities of the competent national authorities, municipalities and landowners. The current prevalence of the species in Latvia is presented, the good practice models obtained for the performance of species containment measures, the education, monitoring of the public and the promotion of cooperation.*
3. Regulation 1143/2014 in Estonia (M. Linnamägi)
 - *The system for implementing Regulation 1134/2014 in Estonia is presented, including species, institutional competences and responsibility, enforcement, monitoring of invasive species, etc. The State-funded system for restricting the spread of hogweed is highlighted, as well as its results and its impact on the public's attitude towards the distribution of responsibilities for the management of invasive species. The meeting participants are presented with a list of national invasive species, as well as past experience and future plans to limit the distribution of these species. The main challenges for the management of invasive species are outlined: lack of funding, low activity of landowners, etc.*
4. Current legislative framework of invasive alien species (IAS) in Lithuania (L.Janulaitienė)
 - *The meeting participants are presented with the gradual steps taken since 1999 to develop a legal framework for the management of invasive species, including the establishment of a commission on the national list of invasive species (the list currently contains 35 species). As a result following the entry into force of Regulation 1134/2014, it was only necessary to make certain amendments to ensure more effective implementation of the Regulation. Launched and planned projects in the field of invasive species management – inventory of invasive species, development of a natural spatial database, creation of a specialised centre for seizing animals are presented.*

5. Discussion on development of early warning system in Baltic countries (M.Melnbārde):
 - 5.1. *Estonia presented the experience in reporting the case of early detection in the EASIN NOTSYS system developed by the European Commission, as well as the correspondence with the European Commission on the possibility of not taking rapid eradication measures if rapid eradication measures can no longer be taken at the time of detection of the species (for example, the species has already spread widely in the open water body).*
 - 5.2. *Estonia presented the functionality of the developed spatial data processing system, in which the responsible employee receives notifications regarding the observations of certain invasive species identified in a specified buffer zone around the territory of Latvia. Due to system security settings, it is not possible to provide access to or automatic sending of messages to e-mail addresses outside of organization.*
 - 5.3. *The participants of the meeting agree that the best solution for the exchange of information on species included in the early warning system is the use of institutional e-mails. On the Estonian side, the first authority for communication is Ministry of the Environment of Estonia, from Lithuania - Ministry of Environment from Lithuania, from Latvia – Nature Conservation Agency. At the same time, the first step is to understand on which species each country would like to receive information.*
 - 5.4. *The representatives of the institutions agree that cooperation is also needed in other areas, such as the exchange of experience and good practices on the monitoring and eradication methods of invasive species.*

II Conclusions and further actions

6. The participants of the meeting agree on the following steps to promote future cooperation:
 - 6.1. *Project LatViaNature creates a shared file to collect information on species identified as invasive in each country and for which the country would like to receive additional information and early warning messages.*
 - 6.2. *Project LatViaNature before the next meeting prepares and sends out for commenting a draft letter to certify cooperation for the development of an early warning system.*
 - 6.3. *The next meeting should be organized in the autumn/early winter 2021, possibly with additional attention to the issue of monitoring of invasive species.*
7. Closing of the meeting (M.Melnbārde)

Minutes prepared by J.Dzenis



The Project "Optimising the Governance and Management of the Natura 2000 Protected Areas Network in Latvia" (LIFE19 IPE/LV/000010 LIFE-IP LatViaNature) is implemented with the financial support of the LIFE Programme of the European Union and Latvian State Regional Development Agency.

The information reflects only the LIFE-IP LatViaNature project beneficiaries' view and the European Commission's Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.