

SUMMARY

Description of IAS early detection and rapid eradication system

Sub-Action C.5.3: Development of early detection and rapid eradication systems for invasive alien species (IAS)

Deliverable: Description of IAS early detection and rapid eradication system.

The increase in climate change, population mobility, transport and cross-border trade in recent decades has led to the rapid spread of invasive species and the introduction of more and more new IAS, so countries need to be prepared for new invasions. One of the most important solutions to prevent such new invasions is effective and rapid early detection and eradication, thus detecting and stopping the invasion of the species as soon as it enters the country.

Taking into account the fact that the system of early detection and early eradication or early warning system of invasive species (EWS) has not been developed and implemented in Latvia, a proposal for the development of EWS was developed within action C.5.3. This would allow a quick and efficient response to the emergence of new IAS in the country, thus preventing significant damage to the environment and saving resources in the long run.

An inter-institutional working group (working group) was set up to develop the proposal. The working group consisted of seven institutions, within the functions of which it is possible to perform early detection and/or rapid eradication: Nature Conservation Agency, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, State Plant Protection Service, State Forest Service, the Food and Veterinary Service, Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre.

The proposal prepared by the working group describes the provisions of the European Union legislation, regarding the development and implementation of EWS, the binding regulatory framework of the Republic of Latvia and the current situation, as well as providing a description of the developed EWS. This description includes five successive steps: early detection data sources for EWS, exchange of information, rapid eradication of EWS species, and monitoring and surveillance of the eradication of EWS species. The document also describes the institutions involved in EWS, their competencies and identifies the necessary amendments to the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia. Depending on the EWS species group (e.g, wild game animals, terrestrial plants, etc.) and the location of the species (e.g, border inspection post or wild), the document describes specific approaches, competencies and responsibilities of the involved authorities and owners of invaded areas or EWS species for specific species, as well as EWS steps and their execution time. In order not to create unnecessary administrative expenses, the steps of the EWS are, as far as possible, linked to the respective functions and tasks of the institutions. As part of Action C.5.3, the first meeting of the competent authorities of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in the field of invasive species management was organized in 2021, therefore the proposal prepared by the working group outlines the next steps of cooperation.

