

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
TO THE NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL
BY THE INVASIVE SPECIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

November 5-6, 2001

The Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC) met for the sixth time in Washington DC on November fifth and sixth, 2001 to discuss the activities of the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) and make recommendations to NISC about the Council's invasive species activities and programs, as provided for in Executive Order 13112 on Invasive Species. Deputy Secretary Moseley of the Department of Agriculture and Deputy Secretary Griles of the Department of the Interior, opened the meeting and spoke about the Council's plans to enhance current efforts to deal with the accelerating problem of invasive species. After a series of updates and discussions on issues including funding, biosecurity, and Council progress to date on action items under the National Invasive Species Management Plan (Plan), ISAC specifically addressed – both in plenary and break out groups -- a number of high priority issues relevant to the Plan and the Council's mandate under the Executive Order. ISAC also discussed how the Committee could contribute to efforts in these critical areas. These include: prevention, early detection and rapid response, control and management, research, the North American invasive species strategy, and education and public awareness. This document briefly summarizes ISAC recommendations to the Council and planned ISAC actions under each of these topics.

In the area of prevention, ISAC first addressed the issues of pathways and urges the Council to:

- develop an inventory of existing pathways by March 15, 2002;
- establish a process to “quantify” pathways for resource allocation;
- provide information how federal agencies rank pathways in terms of importance;
- rank pathways from high to low priority risk (on a scale) rather than ranking pathways against each other; and
- establish procedures for checking whether these rankings were accurate and up to date.

ISAC recommends, regarding the development and testing of a process to screen intentional introductions, that the Council:

- ensure a transparent process with stakeholders involvement;
- develop a generic screening process with guidelines and principles to serve as guidance for more specific screening processes;
- develop a summary of existing screening processes; and
- consolidate the screening and permit processes (recognizing importance to biosecurity).

ISAC will write a letter to the Council requesting that it inform the new Homeland Security Office about ISAC's expertise and knowledge in the area of potential U.S. vulnerabilities to help prevent biosecurity threats.

ISAC recommends the following regarding early detection and rapid response:

- the Council develop (as called for in the GAO report and the Plan) a rapid response system;
- the Council put in place an early warning system with a central point(s) for quickly reporting new discoveries (noting CDC is model for human pathogens and APHIS Veterinary Services for animal diseases)
- ISAC provide comments to Council staff to help clarify the definition of rapid response (as called for in the GAO report);
- ISAC members provide the Council staff with a list of scientific societies that should be contacted to identify potential invaders before they are introduced;
- establish the \$50 million rapid response fund called for in the Plan;
- ◆ ISAC work with the Council to prepare an information document on five successful cases of rapid response and five examples where lack of rapid response caused serious negative consequences;
- ◆ The Council make a broad statement to Council agencies to work beyond their traditional program areas to address natural areas and inform decision makers, Congressional committees, etc. through innovative reports, field trips, field hearings, and other mechanisms, the importance of the issue.

Regarding control and management of invasive species, ISAC recommends that: the Council clarify the budget authority for listing and mitigating the negative impacts of connecting waterways and provide sufficient resources for this task;

- the Council should support additional monies for control efforts at the state and local level while ensuring that state efforts are not pre-empted;
- the Army Corps of Engineers should provide a report back to ISAC on the invasive species impacts of the disposal and movement of dredge materials;
- USDA should provide a report to ISAC on the issue of accelerating the development and testing of environmentally safe biological control agents; and
- relevant Council members should provide a report to ISAC regarding action items #29, 31 and 32 -- regarding coordinating control activities, providing additional federal resources for control, and ranking of invasive species control projects.

ISAC's research recommendations include:

- provide research funding through State extension programs; and
- address other research action items and ensure coordination through the Research Implementation Subcommittee.

In the area of international cooperation, the Plan calls for the development of a North American strategy to address invasive species, working through existing agreements and international mechanisms. ISAC recommends that:

- ensure that there is a central, coordinating hub to coordinate the activities of different parties involved; and
- agency representatives that lead the North American various agreements and mechanisms report back to ISAC and the Council on their activities.

Regarding education and public awareness, ISAC recommends that the Council:

- make specific changes in the wording of the draft terms of reference of the Education and Public Awareness Implementation Subcommittee to more closely reflect the intent and wording of the Plan;
- select a neutral, outside marketing firm to design the national education campaign;
- include as part of the National Campaign measurable marketing goals (i.e. changes in behavior);
- reinforce support of current quality education and public awareness efforts and make them more readily accessible;
- provide full time staff support to the Council (preferably detailee from another agency) to work on education and public awareness; and
- ensure that the Council's Education Subcommittee has met at least twice and prepares a work plan to be presented at the next ISAC meeting.