

**Meeting Report on the 2004 Transition meeting of ISAC in Washington, D.C.
June 4, 2004
Lori Williams**

INTRODUCTION: Continuing members of the Invasive Species Advisory Committee Steering Committee (ISAC) and ISAC/NISC subcommittee co-chairs met in Washington D.C. on June 4, 2004. The ISAC Steering Committee assists in providing agenda items and planning for ISAC meetings. The purpose of this meeting was to plan for the transition to the new ISAC and enhance communication among NISC staff and ISAC members; set a preliminary agenda for the October 2004 meeting; and discuss the current subcommittee structure. A summary of the meeting will be sent to all current ISAC members and an August conference call date will be set to complete a draft agenda for the October 2004 ISAC meeting in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

The ISAC members participated with NISC staff and co-chair policy liaisons:

Ship Bright (Acting ISAC Chair)
Marilyn Leland
Bill Dickerson
Gary Beil
Lu Eldredge

Diane Cooper (acting ISAC Secretary)
Jerry Jackson
Chuck O'Neill
George Beck

BACKGROUND

In order to ensure continuity, ISAC member terms are staggered. About one-half (17 including vacancies) of the members terms expired March 30, 2004 and final decisions on the appointment of new members are expected in the next month. Roughly one-half (14 members) terms continue one additional year -- until March 30, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to ensure that new members have adequate preparatory materials and that the ISAC Operating Guidelines and other procedures are in place to ensure that ISAC is productive and can continue to make progress during a time of transition. At the first meeting of the Third ISAC in October of 2004, ISAC will select a new Steering Committee and recommend a slate of officers for NISC approval. These and many other issues were discussed at this transition and planning meeting. Please note that the Steering Committee and ISAC subcommittee chairs can make recommendations and assist with planning for future meetings, but are not empowered to make any final decisions for ISAC. All recommendations will have to be considered by the full ISAC at their next meeting.

MEETING SUMMARY

Key recommendations are summarized below.

Process and Transition Issues

- NISC staff discussed and got input at the meeting about what materials should be included in an ISAC Orientation Package guide with basic materials and updates that will be sent out to all ISAC members in mid-August, 2004. This information will be designed to provide background for new members as well as provide an

update and refresher on key topics for current and reappointed members. In addition Steering committee members and co-chairs offered to serve as informal mentors or “buddies” for new members to help them understand the operation of ISAC during (and before) the first meeting. (Kelsey Brantley lead)

- Several important procedural issues were raised regarding the Charter and the ISAC Operating Guidelines. First, now that ISAC member terms have been staggered, the Charter calls for all member terms to be two years in length. That would mean that about one-half of the terms will expire each year --requiring a new selection and transition process each year. One proposed solution was to allow ISAC members to serve two consecutive three-year terms – rather than three consecutive two-year terms as currently provided in the ISAC Charter. This would reduce the time spent selecting new members and improve continuity while preserving a six year restriction on continuous ISAC service. The Charter would have to be amended to make this change. ISAC itself can change its own Operating Guidelines, but only NISC can change the Charter through a formal FACA process. NISC staff are currently exploring the feasibility of amending the Charter (which has just been renewed). (Kelsey and Lori Williams lead)

- The second issue is that the ISAC Operating Guidelines and the Charter call for all officers to serve for terms of 2 years; however half of the ISAC terms area scheduled to end in one year. That would seem to disqualify half of the ISAC members from serving as officers as technically their terms would expire in less than two years -- even if they were later reappointed for another term. Several changes to the Operating Guidelines were suggested to resolve this issue. These changes are being drafted and will be circulated in early July. In summary, the amended Guidelines would allow any experienced, former ISAC member to be selected as Chairman and as Secretary; but require that only a member of the ISAC’s third (new) class to be chosen as Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair would automatically become Chair at the end of March 2005. Former officers would not be eligible. This would ensure some new and some experienced members are providing leadership for ISAC. NISC staff are checking whether this solution would also require an amendment to the Charter to adjust the officer term length. (Ship Bright and Lori lead)

Agenda for October meeting

A number of items for the October meeting were suggested and agreed to. Further adjustments in the schedule will have to be made once new ISAC members have been named and logistics considered.

Each day will close with Secretary summarizing key points and listing action items for that day and with opportunity for public comment.

Highlights include:

- October 13-- First day would primarily cover Orientation and Procedural issues,
 - Round-robin introductions (distribute short biographies of all members)
 - Overview of Executive Order & NISC by NISC staff and ISAC by Ship

- Review of ISAC Charter and Operating Guidelines (including rules governing recommendation of officers)
- FACA training (FACA expert from co-chair department)
- ISAC/NISC committee reports for all active committees
 - Leadership and Coordination – definitions issue (volunteers to work on definitions issue in short term include: George Beck, Richard Orr, Diane Cooper, Chuck O’Neill, and Marilyn Leland)
 - Outreach and Communications – update and activities
 - Prevention
 - Control and Management – redraft of Prioritization Guidelines
- Reception – Opportunity for Recognition (letters or certificates of appreciation)

October 14, Day 2

- Reports on how departments have responded to ISAC recommendations
 - Presentations may occur throughout meeting
- International Panel (2-3 speakers)
 - GISP, APEC or ASEAN, IMO other major international efforts
- Invasive Species Management Plan (with time for discussion)
- FY 06 invasive species performance-based crosscut budget
- Forest Service invasive species strategic plan (FS request)
- DHS presentation (ISAC request) on invasive species activities (highlighting anti-bioterrorism efforts)
- OMB presentation (ISAC request) on CCC process
- Approval of any changes to Operating Guidelines

October 15 – last day

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers update/ new invasive species activities
- USDA/APHIS PPQ update by Ric Dunkle (PPQ request)
- Heinz Center presentation on ecological indicators for nonnative species (Heinz Center request)
- Legislative Update and issues
- Selection of ISAC III. Steering Committee and recommendation of slate of officers.
- Conclusion, summary of meeting and list of action items

ISAC/NISC subcommittee issues

Current ISAC co-chairs of the ISAC/NISC subcommittees charged with providing guidance for implementation of the Management Plan were also in attendance to discuss ways to improve and enhance ISAC participation on subcommittees (and working groups) as well as the overall operation of the subcommittees. The following recommendations were discussed.

- Make it clear that ISAC members are expected to participate on one or more subcommittees. (NISC staff and ISAC members can make this point).
- Describe subcommittee process in background documents so time commitments are clearer.
- Provide a summary document to ISAC including a list of all the subcommittees and information on: membership, leadership, missions, past and potential future activities. Models include documents describing the Prevention and

Communications, Education and Outreach Subcommittees. (NISC staff will prepare with assistance from Chuck O'Neill.)

- Charge Leadership and Coordination Committee with short term task of describing and clarifying issues regarding definition of terms related to invasive species (without re-doing previous ISAC work). (See list of volunteers on agenda above).
- Charge leadership of Research Committee with providing list of NISC research capacity, programs current activities and current and future priorities before next meeting. (George Beck, Chris Dionigi & Research committee federal members).
- Communications Committee will meet this summer and work with Anna Cherry, NAL and other agency communications specialists to advance plans to enhance outreach efforts dealing with written materials, web site issues and other matters for further discussion at ISAC meeting.
- NISC staff will track and provide more information to ISAC members on progress of subcommittee assignments and set clear deadlines for work assignments

Next steps:

- Exploration of amending ISAC Charter and preparation of ISAC selection letters once list of new members named. (Both could be surnamed simultaneously (Lori and Kelsey)
- Draft recommended changes to Operating Guidelines (Ship and Lori)
- Preparation of Orientation Package and Materials (NISC staff)
- Subcommittee actions as outlined above
- Scheduling of ISAC Steering conference call to complete draft agenda for October meeting in August (Ship Bright)
- Explore a central computer file where all ISAC materials and notices can be posted for ISAC member's convenience and better communication. (Kelsey)