

INVASIVE SPECIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ISAC)



Meet the Invasive Species Challenge.

Know the NISC Plan, Manage the Problem.

PREPARE, PREVENT, PROTECT.

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July 2, 2009

TO: Members of the National Invasive Species Council (NISC)

SUBJECT: Recommendations to NISC from the ISAC Meeting held May 5-7, 2009

During the May 5-7, 2009 meeting at the Radisson Suites Tucson in Tucson, Arizona, ISAC agreed upon the following recommendations:

Recommendation #1: Review existing authorities. Identify federal authorities relevant to biofuels. Determine their likely influence on biofuel invasiveness (i.e., prevention or facilitation). Identify gaps and inconsistencies in authorities with and among Federal departments.

Recommendation #2: Reduce escape risks. Use/promote species (including unique genotypes) for biofuels that are not currently invasive and are unlikely to become invasive in the target region. Choose plants with a low potential for escape, establishment and negative impact. When appropriate, implement mitigation strategies to minimize escape and other risks.

Recommendation #3: Determine the most appropriate areas for cultivation. Use research findings to identify the most appropriate sites (e.g., unlikely to impact sensitive habitat) for cultivation of biofuel crops within landscapes. Support for biofuel research and demonstration projects should be linked to appropriate site selection.

Recommendation #4: Identify plant traits that contribute to or avoid invasiveness. Incorporate desirable traits into biofuel varieties to minimize their potential for invasiveness. Use information from plant research, agronomic models, and risk analyses to guide breeding, genetic engineering, and variety selection programs.

Recommendation #5: Prevent dispersal. Develop and coordinate dispersal mitigation protocols prior to cultivation of biofuel plants in each region of consideration.

Recommendation #6: Develop Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) plans and rapid response funds. In order to eliminate abandoned or unwanted populations of biofuel crops or to prevent establishment and spread of escaped invasive populations. Implement EDRR plans that cover multiple years. A flexible funding source should be established to support EDRR efforts.

Recommendation #7: Establish effective cooperation and communication among stakeholders. Identify and employ networks (e.g., working groups and councils) and communication forums through which the Federal agencies can work with state agencies, tribes, the private sector, and other stakeholders to reduce the risk of biological invasion via the biofuels pathway.

Recommendation #8: Interagency coordination of research. Insofar as possible without compromising their individual research programs on invasive species, agencies should find ways to increase coordination of their efforts and support for research. Interagency coordination is essential because reacting appropriately to invasive species involves a range of understanding across disciplines in natural and social science. Coordination could also promote research on interactions between climate change, land use, and invasive species. Moreover, the NISC Management Plan recommends that its agencies should work together to form a collaborative research priorities plan, and a structured framework for research investments seems even more important given declining budgets and the breadth of the invasive species problem.

Recommendation #9: Research on biological control using microbes. Funding is needed for research on biological control using microbes. Microbial control is potentially a very powerful technique for the management of invasive species including plants and insects, but has been little used, partly because of concerns over possible rapid evolution of the control agents, and because of lack of quarantined facilities for research. Among other things, funding could help evaluate this risk and provide these facilities.

Recommendation #10: Research on the economics of invasive species management. The extramural research and internal capacity building program for economic analysis of invasive species issues at USDA (PREISM) has been funded from 2003 to 2008. This effort needs to be continued at USDA and other agencies at an appropriate level to maintain the capacity for analysis.

Recommendation #11: Establish the Sentinel Plant Network. Support and facilitate the establishment of the Sentinel Plant Network to facilitate the early detection reporting and prevention of pests and pathogens.

Recommendation #12: Revise and draft NEPA guidance. ISAC recommends that NISC and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) revise and draft guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and make it available for public comment by October 1, 2009.

Recommendation #13: Provide data on NISC member agencies' invasive species budgets. ISAC recommends that NISC member agencies annually provide in writing at the fall ISAC meeting their invasive species budgets for the preceding fiscal year in actual dollars and the budget for the current fiscal year (requested and enacted). The budget document should be divided into seven categories: Prevention, Early Detection/Rapid Response, Control and Management, Restoration, Research, Education and Public Awareness, and Leadership/International Coordination.

Recommendation #14: Create classification codes for invasive species management. National Standard (NAISC) and Standard Industrial (SIC) classification codes should be created for invasive species management in non-landscape, non-agricultural areas to include aquatic, wild land and range land for control of invasive weeds, arthropods, etc.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Zimmerman". The signature is cursive and includes a small superscript "20" above the "i" in Zimmerman.

Kenneth J. Zimmerman
Chairman, Invasive Species Advisory Committee
Lone Tree Cattle Company