



managing invasive species

Biodiversity on planet Earth is under threat from Invasive Alien Species. Not creatures from outer space, but plants, animals and micro-organisms that are non-native species introduced to other environments.

This is not a new problem, but it is a growing one. Globalization of trade and travel is increasing the number of species moving around the world, and changes in land use and climate are making some habitats more susceptible to invasions.

so what's the problem?

Agriculture, trade, and the environment – key areas for developing nations – are all being affected by invasive alien species. In Africa many invasive species were purposely introduced, but are now damaging natural and man-made ecosystems.

A variety of tropical American water plants have invaded unique wetlands, lakes and rivers, leading to a loss of biodiversity and interfering with fishing and tourism. Terrestrial ecosystems are also under siege, threatening agricultural production and food security.

There are many barriers to the effective management of invasive species – from weak policies and a lack of information and awareness, to inadequate prevention and control programmes. Without a coordinated approach at all levels, things will only get worse.

what is CABI doing?

Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda and Zambia have recognized the urgent need to address the problem of invasive species and have teamed up with CABI and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) to tackle it.

The objective is to protect ecosystem, species and genetic diversity in Africa from the threat of invasive species, as agreed in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The four components of the project are:

- Strengthening policies and institutions to prevent and manage the threat of invasive alien species
- Raising public and political awareness, and giving decision makers the information they need on risks, impacts and management of invasives
- Putting in place strategies for prevention and control – from strengthening plant quarantine services to pilot control programmes in areas of important biodiversity
- Building capacity for tackling invasive species





Goat eating the invasive *Prosopis*

results so far

National coordinating units have been established in the four countries. A draft National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan has been prepared in each country, and publicity and information materials produced. Management plans for the pilot sites have been developed; paper mulberry, water hyacinth, lantana, mimosa, prosopis and other species will be tackled.

Guidelines on communication, economic impact assessment, risk analysis, and surveillance and rapid response have been prepared.

what next?

As the work continues, we will communicate the lessons learned to other countries in Africa. The project countries are in different economic communities, and have a range of different habitats and invasive species, so they are well placed to take the lead at a continental level.

project team

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