Early detection of IAS in Flanders

From centralised reporting to effective early warning

Tackling the problem once damages become evident is an expensive option with respect to biological invasions making rapid detection of harmful IAS essential. Until recently, Flanders - and by extension Belgium - had no dedicated portal for reporting observations of such species, despite the high political priority. In 2011, the Agency for Nature and Forest (ANB) and the Institute for Nature and Forest Research (INBO) initiated a pilot project. For some notorious IAS, the ngo Natuurpunt, in cooperation with the other Belgian regions, launched an EWS through the widely used online recording platform www.waarnemingen.be targeted towards naturalist observers.

Aims

- ultimate goal is to have an EWS for IAS in Flanders that anticipates developments of a trans-European system
- global evaluation using some assessment criteria (which species are picked up, potential reporting bias, data quality, validation)
- mobilising volunteers for monitoring IAS
- provide information and raise awareness amongst field workers and the public
- streamline the process from reporting to management

Set-up

- Online questionnaire to screen available datasets on NNS data
- module in observations.be for online recording of 70 alert, emerging and established species (sensu ISEIA) in Belgium
- ID sheets with information on impact and identification
- User-driven e-mail alert system with feedback to the user

Results

- validation
- observations

Keep an eye out

Getting hands-on controlling IAS using a variety of methods

Current use of the system

The current system is already being used for various (rapid) response projects in Flanders, including control of invasive aquatic plants (floating pennywort, water primrose), eradication of ruddy duck, Chinese muntjac, Pallas squirrel and quarantine insects, control of American bullfrog and giant hogweed control.

Acknowledgements


More information

www.inbo.be • info@inbo.be