

THE KIRSTENBOSCH DECLARATION

We the delegates to the Symposium on Best Management Practices for Preventing and Controlling Invasive Alien Species:

- Recognise
- that many alien species provide a basis for our economies and quality of life;
 - that invasive alien species can cause substantial environmental and economic change in both developed and developing countries, and consequently impede their ability to develop sustainably;
 - that invasions by certain alien species threaten the sustainable use of and equitable access to natural resources, biodiversity, and human health; and that current projections suggest that species, including plants, animals, and microbes, will be moved around the world at an accelerating rate;
 - that habitat degradation and global climate change might both facilitate and compound the negative impacts of invasive alien species;
 - that the global community has failed to anticipate and counter the spread and impacts of invasive organisms in a timely manner, and that such failures with respect to potential invasive alien species could have disastrous results;
 - that countries have varying levels of awareness of the crisis posed by invasive alien species; priorities for addressing this crisis; practical experience in managing invasive alien species; and resources (especially fiscal and technical) to resolve the crisis – and that these countries differ in the threats posed by invasive alien species and pathways of origin, as well as geography, climate, culture, creed, and political structure;
 - that the crisis of invasive alien species is beginning to be addressed by several international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on the Law of the Sea, the International Plant Protection Convention, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade;
 - that the invasive alien species crisis involves both existing problems and the possibility of further invasions;
 - that invasive alien species represent a serious threat to natural resources, human health and ecosystems in many regions of the world, including the SADC region;
- Commend
- the wide range of innovative and progressive programs being undertaken to address the crisis, including:
 - the Global Invasive Species Program (GISP) for its efforts to promote awareness of the invasive alien species crisis, and to synthesize and exchange current knowledge;
 - the Working for Water Programme as one model for inter-sectoral partnerships focused on invasive alien species, and its commitment to optimizing developmental opportunities;
- Note with approval GISP's plans to host a meeting in Cape Town, South Africa in September 2000, and to produce a global strategy document and guidelines for policy makers;
- Encourage:
- All Stakeholders** to co-operate in the identification and understanding of invasive alien species and invasion pathways; to develop and transfer sustainable, cost-effective and practical measures to prevent new invasions of alien species, to manage and monitor existing invasive alien species; and to raise awareness of the crisis of invasive alien species and the urgency for its resolution;

to enhance, at all levels, the knowledge and understanding required to adaptively manage the crisis of invasive alien species;

to develop and employ sustainable and innovative funding mechanisms, including public-private partnerships and economic instruments, to deal with the crisis of invasive alien species, including its ecological and socio-economic components, at local, national, regional and international levels;

to actively support and participate in the GISP, including the meeting in Cape Town in September 2000, and the development, publication, dissemination and implementation of resulting strategies;

Governments

to develop and implement means of co-ordinating multi-sectoral work on invasive alien species at the national and local levels, taking the necessary precautions to minimize any negative impacts and maximize the benefits of national actions on other countries;

to develop and implement global, regional and inter-governmental alliances and sustainable strategies for preventing the transfer, and encouraging the management, of invasive alien species, building on existing international conventions and agreements;

to monitor and report on the management of invasive alien species, especially case studies reflecting innovations, successes and failures, through such means as the Convention on Biological Diversity's clearing-house mechanism;

Commit to

the exchange of technical information and personnel in order to build capacity in the management of invasive alien species;

the development and implementation of regional partnerships;

a reciprocal, international meeting on best practices for the management of invasive alien species in Arizona, 2001;

Recommend

that SADC members states hold an urgent conference on invasive alien species and initiate regional co-operation programs to manage the crisis;

And conclude

that resolving the crisis of invasive alien species is a pre-requisite for a satisfactory quality of life for all, and is in the enlightened self-interest of all countries and individuals.

