

Declaration of Mèze

Preamble

From 25 to 27 May 2005, 110 plant scientists, conservationists and other experts from 24 countries met in Mèze (France) to discuss the threats to biodiversity, the environment and the economy posed by *invasive alien species* (IAS) (definitions according to the COP meeting of 26 March 2002: UNEP/**CBD**/COP/6/18/Add.1/Rev.1) of plants in the world's five Mediterranean-type climate regions – southern Australia, California, Chile, the Cape region of South Africa and the Mediterranean basin – and to search for possible ways to address these threats.

Although the Mediterranean climate regions cover less than 5% of the Earth's land surface, they are home to about 20% of the world's vascular plants, including a high number of endemic species and many taxa of considerable economic importance, and the Workshop Participants noted with concern that this plant diversity is increasingly threatened by invasive alien species, often exacerbated by global change and in particular its climatic components.

Recognizing the importance and relevance of existing organizations, programmes and initiatives that address the issue of IAS in the framework of several international fora, such as the Conservation of Biological Diversity (*Guiding Principles for the Prevention, introduction and mitigation of impacts on alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species*, The Hague April 2002), the Council of Europe (*Bern Convention European Strategy on IAS* Strasbourg December 2003) the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the European Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO), the Paris Declaration (Conference Biodiversity Science and Governance, January 2005), The Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) and the Baltimore Declaration (Technical Workshop on the Implementation of a Global Invasive Species Information Network (GISIN) Baltimore, April 2004), and recognised the great importance attached to regional cooperation;

Recognizing the environmental, economic, health, and other social risks posed by plant IAS;

Aware of the international commitments of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002 and the Ministerial Conference 'Environment for Europe', held in Kiev in 2003, which both recommend the management of IAS and the prevention of their introduction so as to help the global Millennium goal of halting the loss of biological diversity by 2010;

Realizing the importance of information and experience sharing among the countries in the Mediterranean-climate regions for the effective management of plant IAS;

Noting the lack of inventory of plant IAS in some Mediterranean-type climate -regions and basic information about the threats they pose;

Confronting the lack of education, awareness and communication about the impacts of plant IAS on the environment and the livelihoods of people;

Recognizing the substantially different impacts of plant IAS in the different Mediterranean-type climate regions;

Recognizing the different social and economic realities in the different countries of the Mediterranean-type climate regions and the different priorities given to plant IAS ;

Recognizing that methods of tackling plant IAS and their impacts often exist, including environmentally sound approaches which are overlooked,

The participants of the Workshop:

1. Urge governments, scientific institutions, NGOs and all other stakeholders, as part of their continuing efforts to conserve biological diversity, to apply the best known practices for the prevention, eradication, and control of plant IAS, building on existing knowledge and control and prevention systems where these exist.
2. Call upon governments to ensure that national legislation and regulations effectively address the management and control of plant IAS and limit the spread and further introductions of such plants and of those that are potentially invasive because of their known impacts elsewhere.
3. Encourage plant IAS practitioners and experts in the countries concerned to share experiences, skills, technologies and data on the inventory, monitoring, management, control and eradication of such plants.
4. Recommend the preparation of 'Codes of Conduct' for stakeholder groups, including both the public and the private sector, that take into account, adapt, and build on existing guidelines where these exist.
5. Urge governments and donor agencies to increase funding to facilitate the development of prevention, management and monitoring programmes, essential research, and economic analysis on invasive alien plants.
6. Encourage the development of national inventories of invasive alien plants in the Mediterranean-type climate countries, using appropriate information technology; suggest the Global Invasive Alien Database as a clearing house mechanism; further the development of spatial tools to assist in the management of plant IAS; and encourage governments to support the exchange of information, methodologies and staff in biological control programmes.
7. Call upon the countries to cooperate in the development and distribution of materials for public awareness and education.