

Invasive species – Controlling their economic, social, and environmental impacts (Target 6)

Recommended Investment:

\$250 million over five years to effectively manage and mitigate the catastrophic economic, social, and environmental impacts of invasive species in Canada. [ECCC, AAFC, DFO, CFIA, NRCan, PS, HC]

The impacts of invasive species on native ecosystems, habitats, and species is catastrophic and often irreversible. In Canada, invasive species are frequently and increasingly identified as a top threat to species at risk⁹⁵ and economic impacts result in billions of annual losses. In the early 1960s, invasive species cost North America USD \$2 billion per year, which has increased to over USD \$26 billion per year since 2010.⁹⁶ Significant impacts to the agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism sectors are experienced, with the Canadian agriculture sector alone estimating a \$2.2 billion annual economic impact from invasive plants.⁹⁷

Key Actions:

- **Prevent new invasive species** by identifying key pathways for the introduction and provide education, resources, and training. [ECCC, PS, CFIA, AAFC]
- Develop, implement, and monitor a **National Framework for Early Detection and Rapid Response** to ensure effective and early response to new and emerging invasive species. [CFIA, AAFC, ECCC, DFO, NRCan, HC]

- Enable and support **cross-sectoral partnerships** in planning, control, monitoring, and reporting to restore and improve habitats. [ECCC, DFO, AAFC, CFIA, NRCan, PS]
- Ensure access to, and encourage the use of, **strong science to inform management** and provide **transparent reporting** to evaluate effectiveness of programs and policies. [ECCC, DFO]

Rationale:

- **Environmental impact**
 - Invasive species are one of the direct drivers of biodiversity loss causing irreversible damage to native ecosystems and habitats.
 - Effective management of invasive species will restore and improve habitats, ensuring healthier ecosystems.
- **Economic benefit**
 - Significant economic impacts are seen in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism. Addressing invasive species can mitigate losses to Canada's GDP.
- **Social and community impact**
 - Supports community wellbeing, fostering stronger local involvement and stewardship.
 - Increases public awareness and participation in preventing and managing invasive species through education and training initiatives.
 - Enhances cultural and ecological resilience of peoples and communities.

Contact

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⁹⁵ Woo-Durand et al. "Increasing importance of climate change and other threats to at-risk species in Canada." 2020. <https://cdnsiencepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1139/er-2020-0032?download=true>

⁹⁶ Crystal-Ornela, R. et al. "Economic costs of biological invasions within North America." 2021. <https://neobiota.pensoft.net/article/58038/>

⁹⁷ Canadian Food Inspection Agency, "Invasive plants in Canada." <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/plant-health/invasive-species/invasive-plants>