

Plenary information session with Alan Moore and Rose Muir:

Invasive species legislation in both jurisdictions.

As part of the Forum, a knowledge sharing and discussion was held on invasive species legislation with input from Alan Moore (NPWS) and Rose Muir (NIEA).

This was facilitated by Colette O'Flynn as Chair and Ann Haigh as Rapporteur, both from the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

Here is a summary of the **three key recurring themes** that arose from the discussion:

1. Outreach and a communication programme will be required to embed Ireland's new Statutory Instrument (S.I. No. 374 of 2024). Learnings were shared from Rose Muir as regards the series of communication events rolled out for publicity of the Northern Ireland regulations. Workshop attendees felt the guidance and communication should be targeted and sector based, e.g. for landowners, other state agencies and use novel ways for engaging and getting the important message of landowner responsibility across to the general public. It is **vital that the roles and responsibilities for the management of invasive species, and enforcement, are made clear.**
2. More funding for invasive species management for landowners would be appreciated. Existing funding streams such as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan fund are welcome, but it would be great to see this sustained and built upon. **Communication and support should be given to inform private landowners on how they can tap into funding.** Awareness and information about how other policy areas and levers might be used to access funding would be helpful. For example, funding for invasive species management projects cascading from the Nature Restoration Law, Water and Communities fund, Marine Strategy Framework Directive etc.
3. Thought should be given to the **capacity on our Shared Island for managing invasive species.** On the ground, it is noted that there is a significant paucity of skilled contractors to manage invasive species, and a shortage of ecologists to inform and advise on invasive species management work. Actions taken to control invasive species need to be grounded on evidence and science supported by overarching guidance on procedures. Quality assurance standards for industry contractors and audit of control management actions would be welcome.

Thank you to the funders of the Shared Island Biosecurity and Invasive Species Forum

