FORUM WORKSHOP SUMMARY

IDENTIFYING INVASIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPECIES KNOWLEDGE GAPS & WORKING TOWARDS SOLUTIONS

To help inform 'Key Knowledge Gaps' to report into the State of Knowledge of Ireland's Biodiversity 2025 exercise led by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, the challenge of the workshop was to identify:

- The top three invasive and non-native species knowledge gaps and what could be done close these.
- Key challenges to closing those gaps.

Workshop attendees divided into groups to work through the challenge, and the collective findings are summarised below.

GAP 1:

A live, integrated database of non-native and invasive species in Ireland, linking to species profiles with information on status and risk, impacts (environmental, social, human health, economic), distribution and abundance, pathways of introduction and spread, and links to best practice management strategies.

What is needed

IT solutions and web design for hosting and data flow.

Interoperability with other invasive species databases, including impact and cost metrics.

An Invasive Alien Species Research Network to help fill priority knowledge gaps such as on impacts and management.

Challenges

- Limited data and access to validated invasion metrics
- Sustained resources to keep the database current

GAP 2:

Distribution and abundance data for non-native species.

What is needed

Implementation of a surveillance and monitoring programme for priority species and areas, focusing also on facilitating early detection and providing data sufficient to inform trends in introductions and spread.

Enhanced data sharing across agencies into a central repository.

Challenges

- Resource constraints
- Improving open data access and sharing in a timely manner
- Complexity of data collection in the marine environment in an already data deficient area

GAP 3:

Public and Stakeholder Awareness and Engagement

What is needed

A Secretariat that is responsible for coordinating the approach to invasive alien species issues.

Increased awareness of legislation, governance, and public role in prevention and management.

Address knowledge gaps among communities, water users, land managers, businesses, and officials.

Provide training (including taxonomic skills), resources, sector-specific guidance, and strengthen biosecurity campaigns.

Challenges

- Securing department or cross-departmental support/funding for establishing the Secretariat
- Shortage of experts
- Funding and resources
- Competing interests and priorities
- Lack of consequence for poor practice
- Lack of natural capital metrics to demonstrate economic benefits of action