



Photographs:

- 1 Shiny cowbird. Source:
www.birdinginlucia.org/Gallery/tendiwu.ht
- 2 Southern opossum. Credit M Morton
- 3 Sargassum seaweed. Source:
www.antiguaobserver.com
- 4 Moses in the cradle. Credit: Roger Graveson
- 5 Water hyacinth. Credit: Roger Graveson
- 6 Asian mongoose. Credit G. Guida, Durrell
- 7 Wandering Jew (Background). Credit: Roger Graveson

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SAINT LUCIA NATIONAL INVASIVE SPECIES STRATEGY






**2012 -
2021**









**Ministry of Agriculture,
Lands, Forestry and Fisheries**

What is an invasive alien species (IAS)?

Invasive alien species (IAS) are plants, animals or micro-organisms that are not native to a specific ecosystem and whose introduction threatens biodiversity, food security, health or economic development.

How do IAS impact on Saint Lucia?

Saint Lucia is at risk from invasive alien species through increased trade, transport, travel and tourism, which have inevitably increased the intentional or accidental introduction of organisms into Saint Lucia. Examples include the coconut mite, the Amblyomma tick and potentially avian influenza.

It is also widely predicted that climate change will further increase the threat posed by invasive species.

The global cost of IAS is estimated at EC\$3.8 trillion per annum (nearly 5% GDP) – and rising in times of globalization and climate change. Extrapolated to Saint Lucia, the annual cost of IAS is EC\$244 million, or nearly EC\$1,500 per capita per year. It cost the Government approximately EC\$1,500,000 to eradicate the tick over a five year period, beginning in 1984. In the Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL) Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan, it is estimated that up to 35% of the population—70,000 people of all ages—will become clinically ill, and more than 35,000 will die, if an avian influenza pandemic should reach the island. In the case of dengue, recorded cases increased from 18 in 2009, 97 in 2010 to over 500 in 2011, leading to loss of productivity and even human lives.



Recently, several Caribbean islands saw an invasion of sargassum seaweed on their beaches. In Antigua, the seaweed swamped the enclosed Mamora Bay, and left an awful sulphur stench from the rotting weed. This stench resulted in early departures by guests from a hotel in the Bay. This hotel was operating at 70% capacity and, with the invasion, it had to be temporarily closed.



What is the NISS?

The National Invasive Species Strategy (NISS) provides high level policy direction for:

- the preparation of IAS management action plans, e.g. for specific pathways, areas, ecosystems or taxa;
- legislative drafting and enactment on IAS issues; and
- enforcement of laws and regulation relevant to IAS

Implementing the NISS will help to minimize the harmful effects of invasive species on the environment, economy and society of Saint Lucia. It will also help to facilitate cooperation with neighbouring countries and the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) to prevent the movement of invasive species into and within the WCR.

The NISS covers a span of ten years: 2012 to 2021. The NISS will be complimented by a fully costed Action Plan. In addition, all national agencies involved in the management of invasive species will develop annual work plans and budgets that will be incorporated into the overall work plan and budget of the agencies.

The NISS comprises two major components: the strategic interventions and the programmatic interventions. The strategic interventions will help to create the necessary enabling environment for the programmatic interventions to take place. The programmatic interventions are assembled along a cascading management hierarchy and are supported by the enabling environment.

Who will implement the NISS?

The NISS will be implemented by the agencies that make up the Invasive Alien Species Working Group.

One of the first actions that will be undertaken as soon as the NISS is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers is to conduct an audit and gap analysis of all the agencies that are involved in the management of IAS in Saint Lucia. This review should be completed within six months, and the enhanced institutional arrangement should be in place within 18 months of the commencement of the implementation of the NISS.



It is envisaged that the institutional arrangements would include the establishment of an invasive species entity, which will have a mandate to deal with IAS in Saint Lucia. It is proposed that the entity’s special purpose is to foster coordinated approaches that

support local initiatives for the prevention and control of invasive species, by providing policy level direction and planning that includes legislation, funding, and program direction for all agencies responsible for invasive species issues management.

