



Joint ESENIAS and DIAS Scientific Conference and 10th ESENIAS Workshop

Ten years of cooperation and networking on invasive alien species in East and South Europe

07–09 December 2021

Virtual Conference

Organised by:

General Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture,
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Turkey (GDFA)

East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species (ESENIAS)

Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS)

Mediterranean Fisheries Research, Production and Training Institute,
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Demre, Antalya, Turkey

Faculty of Agriculture, Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey

Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,
Bulgaria (IBER-BAS)

Faculty of Science, Hacettepe University, Turkey

SUEkos, Turkey

EWRS Invasive Plants Working Group

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Conference Overview

Invasive alien species (IAS) and climate change have been recognised as major and fast growing drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem services in Europe and worldwide and two of the most pressing issues of the Anthropocene. Despite the efforts of scientists, practitioners, policy makers and all other stakeholders, the most recent assessments (IPBES and IPCC) have shown that the rate of wildlife extinction is accelerating owing to the increased impact of IAS and climate change along with other drivers as habitat fragmentation, pollution and overexploitation of natural resources. COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that any biotic factor can change all the world, habits and lifestyle for very short time. The decreased movement of humans and goods, use of resources, and destroying the nature, has not decreased the role of IAS and climate change on biodiversity. In addition, new catastrophic and extreme weather events have been registered in Europe recently, such as forest fires, floods, and the mucilage problems in the Sea of Marmara, which are due to climate change and IAS. The changed climatic conditions may also lead to shifts in disease vectors and their release from natural controls, thus, increasing the potential for emergence of new diseases.

A number of global, European and regional instruments has addressed the major drivers of biodiversity loss. The EU Regulation 1143/2014 on IAS establishes a coordinated framework for action to prevent, minimise and mitigate the adverse impacts of IAS on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and limit their damage to the economy and human health. A core part of the European Green Deal, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, sets a comprehensive, ambitious, long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems. It aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 and build our societies' resilience to future threats, including climate change impacts, forest fires, and disease outbreaks. The Strategy calls for management of established IAS and decrease the number of Red List species they threaten by 50%. The new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change (2021) aims to make Europe more climate-resilient by shifting the focus from understanding the problem to developing solutions, and to move from planning to implementation.

In order to facilitate solving IAS issues at regional level and to support further actions for IAS prevention and management in East and South Europe, two regional IAS networks were established in the last 10 years: The East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species (ESENIAS) (2010–2011) and Danube Region Invasive Alien Species Network (DIAS) (2014). In 2020 ESENIAS celebrated its 10th anniversary. For this period, 16 countries became members of the network: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, R. North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine. ESENIAS initiated and conducted various IAS activities, as: exchange and sharing of IAS information, research, policy development and harmonisation, facilitation of collaboration between institutions and IAS experts from SE Europe, and integration to European and global IAS initiatives. Annual workshops and conferences (Zagreb 2010, Sofia 2011, Belgrade 2012, Çanakkale 2013, Antalya 2014, Sofia 2015, Sofia 2017, Bucharest 2018, and Ohrid 2019) were held to promote IAS capacity building and awareness raising initiatives within all countries in the region. Many projects were conducted, the largest of which, ESENIAS-TOOLS project: *East and South European Network for Invasive Alien Species – A tool to support the management of alien species in Bulgaria* (2015–2017), aimed at networking and development of IAS tools (harmonisation of definitions and standards, listing and prioritisation of alien species, data collection, database development, education) to support the management of alien species in the region. The ESENIAS projects' outcomes were communicated at numerous scientific and public forums and summarised in a number of publications. For this period ESENIAS gained many collaborators, followers and friends.

This anniversary conference entitled '*Ten years of cooperation and networking on invasive alien species in East and South Europe*' is also the fourth conference organised jointly by the ESENIAS and DIAS networks. The conference aims at:

- Update on current ESENIAS and DIAS project activities and outcomes
- Exchange of information on other IAS related initiatives carried out in the region, such as national and local monitoring programmes, risk assessments, pathway analyses and action plans, control and eradication projects, management plans and national strategies, citizen science activities and responsibilities, data planning and management
- Enhance cooperation and networking among scientists in the ESENIAS and DIAS regions and with other networks, organisations and projects.

Scientific Topics

- 1. Invasive alien species traits and trends** – invasive alien species introduction and spread, biological and ecological traits; characteristics of recipient environment; invasive alien species and climate change; viruses, bacteria and other small organisms as IAS
- 2. Vectors and pathways for invasive alien species introductions** – analysis, prioritisation, action plans
- 3. The Danube River as invasive alien species corridor** – priority species for the Danube Region, impact on threatened species, specificity of biological invasions in the Lower, Middle and Upper Danube River sections
- 4. Invasive alien species impact** – impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services, impact on human health, safety and the economy; pests and pathogens; adverse impact on protected areas, endangered species and habitats
- 5. Invasive alien species prevention and management** – early detection and rapid eradication, surveillance systems; risk assessment and horizon scanning; control measures; restoration of damaged ecosystems; education, citizen science, strategies, policy and legislation
- 6. Management and sharing of IAS data** – IAS networks and information systems, databases, data planning and management
- 7. Other topics** – general aspects related to the quality of the aquatic and terrestrial environments and associated biological communities, which may influence the introduction and spread of IAS, as well as the application of prevention and management measures; forest fires and IAS; mucilage and IAS.

Important Information

The official language of the conference will be English.

Authors are invited to submit their contributions related to one or more of the scientific topics given above. The scientific presentations will be oral or poster. Each presentation should indicate the most appropriate topic.

All contributions will be reviewed by the Scientific Committee members. The Scientific Committee reserves the right to change the scientific topic and form of presentation (oral/ poster) in case of thematic consideration or timing.

Publications

Abstracts accepted for presentation will be published in a **Book of Abstracts**.

The authors are invited to submit full papers for publication in the following journals, according to the requirements of the corresponding journal:

- Turkish Journal of Agricultural and Natural Sciences (<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/turkjans>)
- Transylvanian Review of Systematical and Ecological Research (<http://stiinte.ulbsibiu.ro/trser/>)

More details and other possibilities for publishing will be announced later.

Abstract Submission

The abstract form can be downloaded from the ESENIAS website www.esenias.org.

Abstracts prepared according to the instructions for publishing should be sent to: esenias.conference@gmail.com.

Registration

The registration form can be downloaded from the ESENIAS website www.esenias.org.

Please, send your filled form to: esenias.conference@gmail.com

Registration Fee is Not Required!

Key Due Dates

Abstract submission: 15 November 2021

Registration 15 November 2021

Further information will be available at the ESENIAS website www.esenias.org.

Contacts:

esenias.conference@gmail.com

For registration and submission of abstracts.

ad.banaduc@yahoo.com

For full paper submission in
'Transylvanian Review of Systematical and Ecological Research'.