



# Building a European community of interest on Invasive Alien Species

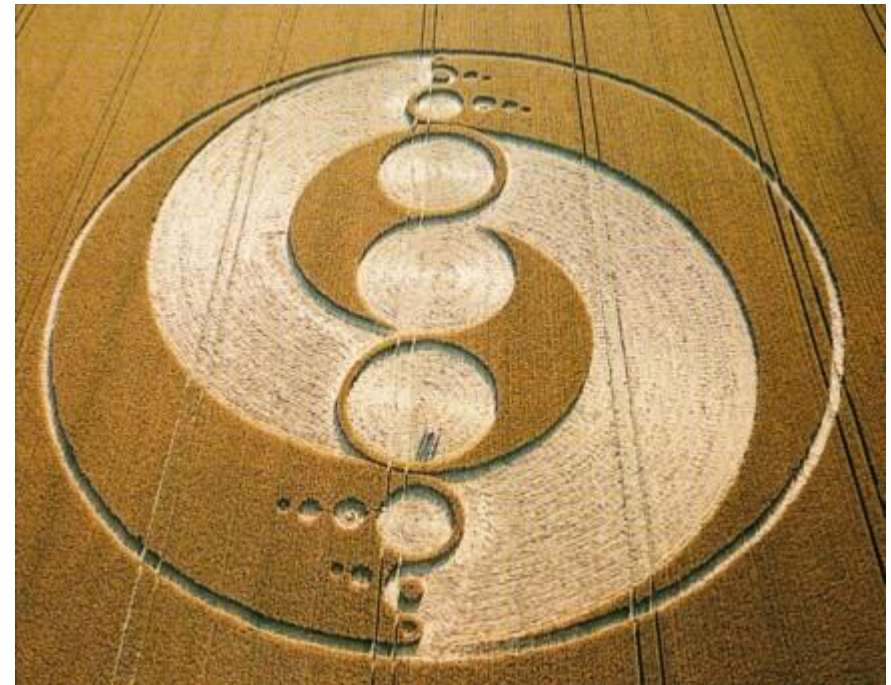
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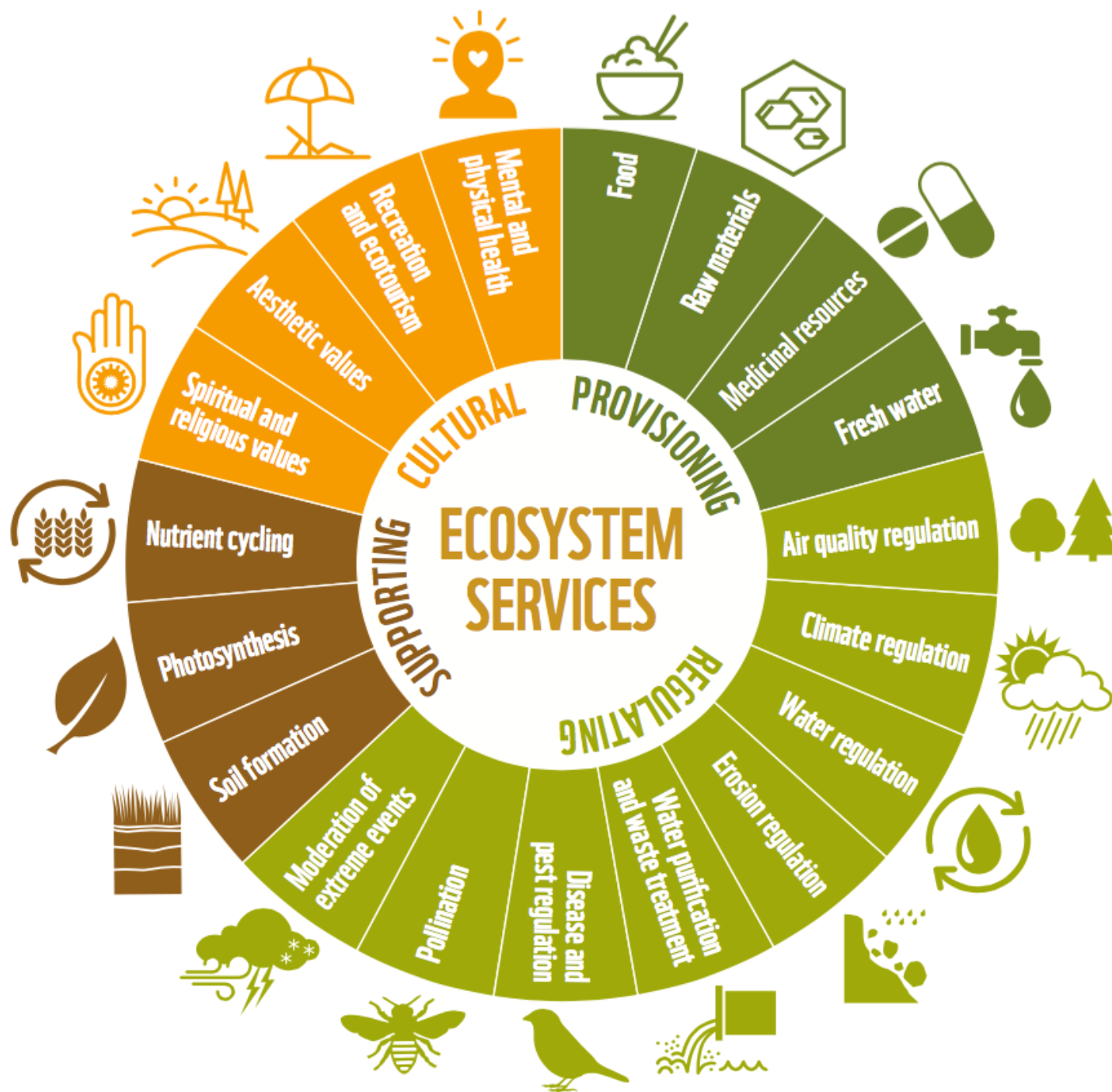
*EASIN – European Alien Species Information Network*

*Daylighting Rivers Final Conference 1-2 December 2020*

# “Aliens” - What are we talking about?



- Invasive alien species (IAS) are living organisms introduced by human activities in places outside their natural range
- IAS threaten native biodiversity and can cause severe ecological, health, economic and social damages, undermining the provision of “ecosystem services”
- Lack of public awareness and data on impacts associated with biological invasions are barriers to their effective management and mitigation.







# The need for people's engagement

- IAS are present in all environments, including urban areas, and severely affect freshwaters
- Awareness raising, education, communication and direct interaction are essential for people's long term engagement
- 28 of the 66 IAS in the Union list can be found in or near river and lakes, but many other can spread in these areas
- People can contribute to the detection, monitoring and management of IAS supporting the implementation of EU policy on biodiversity



# Addressing data needs: European Alien Species Information Network- EASIN

The screenshot displays the EASIN website with a blue header containing navigation links: Home, About, Services, NOTSYS, Documentation, Citizen Science, Contribute, and Contact us. The main content area features a large image of purple flowers with the text 'Alien Species in Europe' and a definition of alien species. Below this, there are three columns of information: 'Explore EASIN data' (Species Search and Mapping, API and Web services, EA BIN-Lit), 'Learn about Alien Species' (EU Regulation 1143/2014, Species of Union concern, Questions & Answers), and 'Join our Network' (Invasive Alien Species app, Become a Data Partner, Citizen Science projects). The right sidebar includes social media links, a 'Last updates' section with statistics on species catalogues and observations, and an 'Upcoming events' section listing online events like European Research & Innovation Days and a webinar on horizon scanning for invasive non-native species.

- Facilitates access to updated scientific information and spatial data on alien species occurring in Europe;
- Web tools and services to support policy makers, researchers, stakeholders;
- Official information system supporting EU MS in the implementation of the Regulation on Invasive Alien Species (EU Reg.1143/2014).

# EASIN: engaging with people

“Invasive Alien Species  
in Europe” app



Science communication,  
participation to events,  
collaboration with national  
projects and EU research



Social Media



Citizen Science projects  
– repository webpage

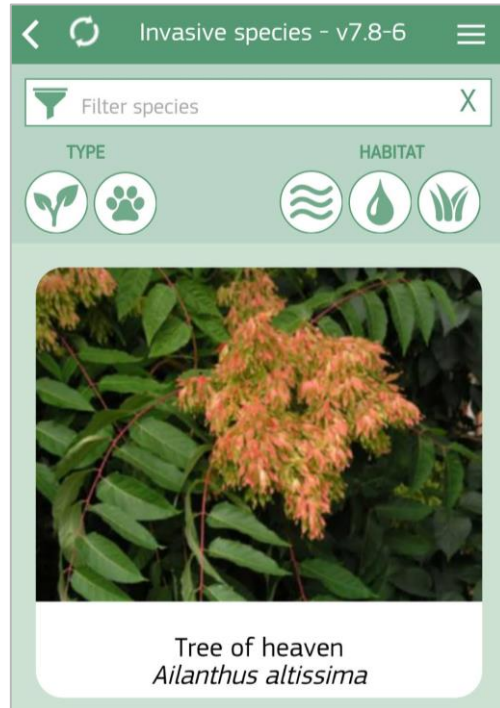


# 'Invasive Alien Species in Europe' App

- Stimulates people's awareness and involvement in environmental protection
- Increases knowledge, interaction with researchers, ownership and empowerment
- Helps prevention of biological invasions and can provide real-time massive data
- Citizen Science data integrate the official controls carried out by Member States competent authorities
- Available in 11 languages

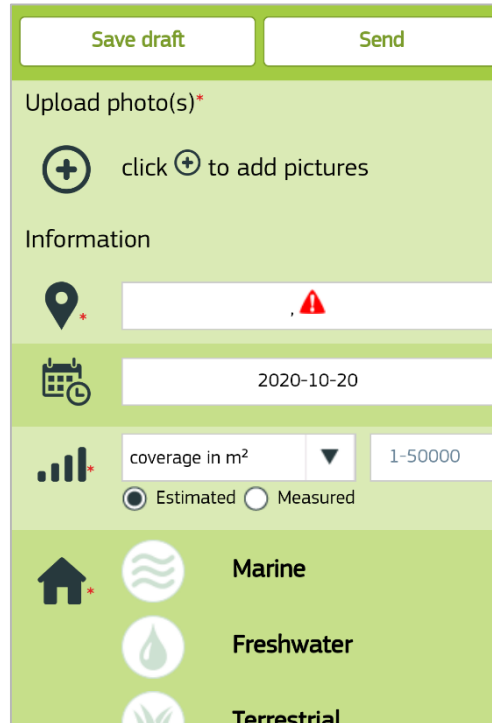


# Main functionalities of the App



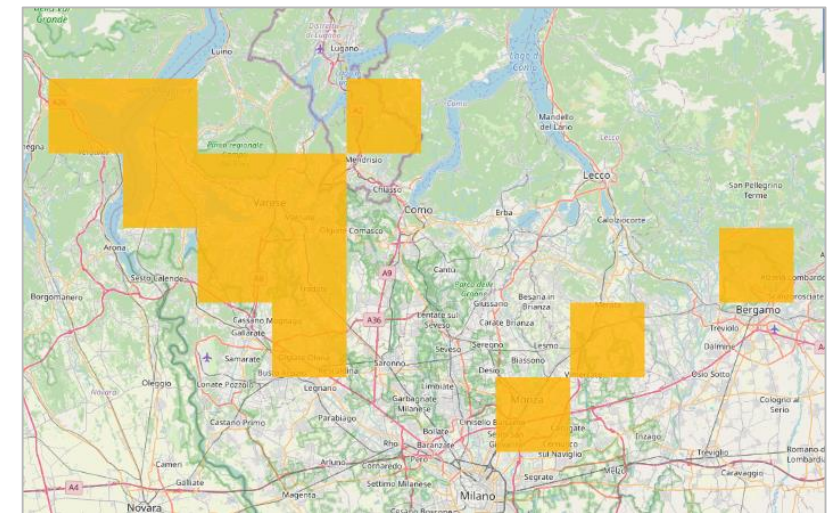
## Learn and identify IAS

Factsheets on 66 species of Union interest



## Report a species

Pictures & GPS



**Contribute to monitor IAS in Europe** – validated records accessible through EASIN Geodatabase





# Online Training Course – MOOC on IAS

- Teachers/ educators working on biodiversity, to become also trainers on the use of the “IAS in Europe” App
- Co-created with teachers, aimed at specific learning objectives,
- Modules easily accessible to make available online through the educational platform EU Academy,
- Videos, Quiz, targeted activities, links and documents
- Increases public outreach on EU research
- Online from early 2021

# Results

- Increased outreach: EWRC, World Water Day, EU Citizen Engagement Festival
- Growing community on Social Media
- Increased number of App downloads and reports submitted
- Volunteers translating the App
- Engagement with enquiries and contribution with scientific information

# Challenges for people's long-term engagement

- Perceptions on biodiversity and attitudes towards IAS linked to culture
- Citizens' awareness of their role as stakeholders and contributors to policy-making
- Language barriers and personal motivation
- Targeted knowledge, dedicated training programs
- Resources, including scientific support, and funds
- Validation of Citizen Science generated data, integration & data sharing



# Future directions

- Artificial Intelligence for image recognition to be embedded in the App and in the validation platform
- Translation of the App in further EU languages
- Integration with other CS projects (Natusfera, Natura2000, ....)
- Web application mirroring the App
- Online educational programs (MOOC), Virtual Reality, gamification

# Thank you very much for your attention!

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