

Agenda Item: CEP 8a

Presented by: Australia, SCAR

Original: English

# **Alien Species Database**

IP 68

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#### Information Paper submitted by Australia and SCAR

## Summary

The CEP has encouraged the use of the Aliens Database maintained by the Australian Antarctic Data Centre (AADC) as the central database of non-native species occurrences in the Antarctic region. To facilitate use of the database, and to enhance its value as a tool to help identify non-native species, the AADC has added an online record entry form and a facility to upload images of observations / collections. Australia and SCAR encourage Members to promote the use of the Aliens Database, and would welcome feedback on these enhancements.

## Background

At CEP X (2007) the Committee adopted a five-year work plan that identified the need to 'establish a database of non-native species occurrences in Antarctica'. This reflected the Committee's agreement to the recommendation of the 2006 New Zealand workshop on Non-Native Species in the Antarctic that a common database for recording new species should be established (ATCM XXIX/WP13).

At CEP XI (2008) the Committee endorsed Australia's proposal (in ATCM XXXI/WP16) to use the Aliens Database maintained by the Australian Antarctic Data Centre (AADC) as the central database of non-native species (sometimes called alien species) occurrences in the Antarctic region (Final Report para. 267).

The Aliens Database represents a subset of species records held in the broader Biodiversity Database, which was developed by the AADC in support of the SCAR program Evolution and Biodiversity in the Antarctic (EBA) (<a href="http://www.eba.aq">http://www.eba.aq</a>). The database is accessible via the 'Bioregions and Aliens' tab on the Biodiversity page of the AADC website at <a href="http://data.aad.gov.au/aadc/biodiversity/index.cfm">http://data.aad.gov.au/aadc/biodiversity/index.cfm</a>.

At CEP XII (2009) Australia and SCAR submitted ATCM XXXII/IP55 *Improvements to the Alien Species Database*, which identified possible improvements to the database, including adding a facility to associate images with species records to assist with species identification, and developing an online data entry form. The Committee recognised the importance of a centralised data repository and again encouraged all Parties to input data to the database.

The draft Non-Native Species Manual prepared by the intersessional contact group on non-native species (ATCM XXXIV/34) reiterates the Committee's earlier agreements by recommending that non-native species should be recorded, and that records should be submitted to the Aliens Database.

#### Enhancements to the Aliens database

Australia and SCAR seek to ensure that the Aliens Database is a functional and useful tool for scientists, managers and the CEP. The AADC is in the process of implementing the enhancements discussed in ATCM XXXII/IP55, with a view to launching the new features by CEP XIV. Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrate how the ability to upload images of observations / collections and the online record entry form will be incorporated into the database.

The ability to associate images with a record will assist with identification of non-native species by relevant experts worldwide, and with monitoring and response. The online record entry form will streamline and provide structure to the process for submitting non-native species records, and could be set up to automatically direct new records to one or more experts who could assist with species identification.

Australia and SCAR encourage Members to promote the use of the Aliens Database, and welcome feedback on these enhancements.

Figure 1. Online form for submitting non-native species records to the Aliens Database

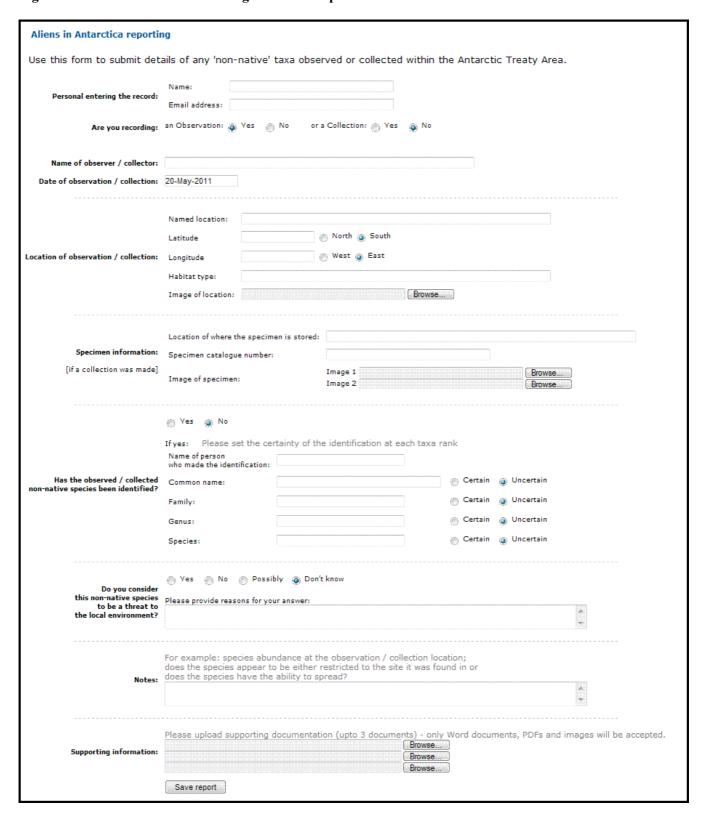


Figure 2. Example of a (mock) non-native species record with associated image

## Aliens in Antarctica reporting Your report has been saved with an Identification reference of 'ABUG-0242'. Detail are Example name Name: Personal entering the record: Email address: Example email address Are you recording: an Observation Name of observer / collector: Example name Date of observation / collection: 20-May-2011 Named location: Australian Antarctic Division, Kingston, Tasmania Latitude Longitude Habitat type: Car park gravel Location of observation / collection: Image of location: Location of where the specimen is stored: Australian Antarctic Data Centre Specimen catalogue number: Example01 Specimen information: [if a collection was made] Image of specimen: No Name of person who made the identification: Has the observed / collected Four-leaved allseed Uncertain Common name: non-native species been identified? Family: Caryophyllaceae Certain Polycarpon Genus: Uncertain Species: P. tetraphyllum Uncertain Do you consider No this non-native species to be a threat to Please provide reasons for your answer: the local environment? Interstitial weed Notes: One plant only. Restricted to site (carpark).