



National Taking Action Plan 2017

*A Behaviour Change Action Plan to Help Prevent the Spread of
Invasive Species in Canada*

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Knotweed infestation | Photo: M. Polson



Community weed pull; Photo: ISCBC



Boat inspection for invasive mussels; Photo: ISCBC

National Taking Action Plan

Canadian Council on Invasive Species (CCIS) is committed to national education and outreach strategies to help guide invasive species councils and organizations to motivate people to get involved and to change their behaviour to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species in Canada. CCIS supports targeting pathways of introduction as a key foundation and operating principle for preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species in Canada.

The CCIS National Taking Action Plan is composed of:

1. A national education and outreach action plan based on Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) to get Canadians involved change their behaviour and take action to prevent invasive species introduction and spread.
2. A national resources website hub containing key CCIS invasive species programs and information currently available and in use in Canada, targeted at various pathways of invasive species introduction and spread.

Goals and Objectives of the CCIS National Taking Action Plan

The CCIS National Taking Action Plan outlines the main education and outreach strategies recommended for invasive species management plans across Canada.

- » Canadians adopt new behaviours that block targeted pathways for the introduction and spread of invasive species
- » Consistent messaging and branding across Canada for all programs
- » CBSM principles and practices become the cornerstone for development of pathway focused prevention programs
- » Collaboration with key pathway partners and stakeholders is critical to the development and success of these programs
- » Website-based national resource centre highlighting targeted pathways of introduction and spread:
 - Horticulture – Plant based activities including gardening, and ornamental horticulture,
 - Recreation – walking, hunting, fishing, camping, bicycling, OHV use, and pets,
 - Boaters and water activities,
 - Pet and Aquarium trade – Invasive species movement and release, (including pets),
 - Moving Firewood
 - Work and equipment movement.

Community Based Social Marketing – Principles and Theory

Traditional marketing often is focused at creating awareness. Many of the measures of traditional marketing success are awareness measurement analytics – examples include: number of promotion pieces distributed, number of people to an event, number of subscribers to a magazine a particular advertisement has been placed in, etc. Unfortunately, there is not a direct correlation between awareness and having people actually moving to the next step of the desired action.

A classic example of this lack of correlation between awareness and taking action can be found examining blood donation in Canada. The Canadian Blood Services survey data has determined that: 97% of people are aware of blood donation; additionally they also understand and agree that donating giving blood is critically important in today's society. However, on average, only 3% of people in Canada actually donate blood. This is the challenge between creating awareness verses motivating people into changing their behaviour so they start taking action.

Wikipedia says:

Social marketing is the systematic application of marketing, along with other concepts and techniques, to achieve specific behavioural goals for a social good. Social marketing can be applied to promote merit goods, or to make a society avoid demerit goods and thus to promote society's well-being as a whole. For example, this may include asking people not to smoke in public areas, asking them to use seat belts, or prompting to make them follow speed limits or to stop practices or behaviour that are spreading invasive species.

Initiatives delivered at the community level that focuses on removing barriers to an activity while simultaneously enhancing the activities' benefits.

Doug McKenzie-Mohr, Ph. D.

From "Quick Reference: Community-Based Social Marketing"

Education and Outreach Strategies

The CCIS National Taking Action Plan outlines the main education and outreach strategies CCIS proposes invasive species management plans could utilize across Canada.

CCIS believes that the adoption of invasive species prevention best practices that encourages the public to get involved, change their behaviour, and start taking action will result in reduction of introduction and spread of invasive species.

The CCIS thinks that consistency of understanding, implementation, measurement and messaging of CBSM education and outreach prevention best practices will be a critical component to the success of a National Taking Action Plan to reduce invasive species introduction and spread in Canada.

Seven key components to an effective community based social marketing plan:

1. Identify a mandate – mission statement. Why are you doing this?
2. Research – get some background on your project.
3. Survey – Next, survey your audience.
4. Pilot the Project – try it out – smaller scale means less expense before you go for full deployment.
5. Build – you know what you want to build – what tools do you need to do it?
 - a. Commitment
 - b. Prompts
 - c. Norms
 - d. Communication
 - e. Incentives
 - f. Remove Barriers/obstacles
6. Deploy Social media vehicles with traditional vehicles:
 - a. Wired and non-wired. E-banners, bulletins, newsletters, Facebook, Twitter, Yammer, Wiki's, Blogs...non wired – guerrilla tactics, door to door, in the malls focus testing
 - b. FOCUS GROUP TEST again – control group receives no prompts/ intervention while the other group receives the social prompts. Randomly assign households/individuals to either group.
7. Measure, measure, measure. Once your focus groups have effectively changed their behaviour, you are ready for full deployment.

Important KM: Failure to identify barriers and benefits will often result in a program that either has a diminished impact or no impact at all (Doug McKenzie-Mohr).

Existing Education and Outreach Prevention Programs in Canada

In Canada, many of the invasive species prevention programs that have been implemented in the past several years have been based on using the principles of CBSM and targeted at changing specific behaviours of individuals. These pathways-specific programs are outlined and highlighted in the **Invasive Species Pathway Resource Hub**.

Pathway: Ornamental Horticulture – Plant based activities including gardening, landscaping, reclamation

Program strategies and objectives:

Ornamental horticulture, including plants grown for gardens and landscapes, has been one of the largest intentional pathways for alien invasive plant introduction into Canada. Early settlement and importing of plants from around the world, as well as from region to region within Canada, has resulted in a great number of invasive plant issues in Canada. Successful programs targeted to nurseries, plant distribution centres, landscape architects, ornamental horticulture organizations, plus home gardeners have raised the awareness of invasive plant impacts and issues. CCIS developed a 5-year Ornamental Horticulture Action Plan in 2014, and each year develop new programs and initiatives based on the plan's recommendations to decrease or stop the introduction of invasive plants by the nursery landscape industry and home gardeners.



See CCIS Initiative: [National Framework for Ornamental Horticulture](#):

- » Provincial and territorial contacts
- » Links to Grow Me Instead and Je te remplace
- » Lists of invasive plants for each province and territory
- » National plants of concern

- » Best management practices and voluntary code of conduct for the nursery landscape industry
- » Tips for home gardeners

Programs: Grow Me Instead, Grow Me Instead Nursery Recognition Program, PlantWise, Garden Smart, Je te Remplace

Pathway: Recreation – walking, hunting, fishing, camping, bicycling, OHV use, horses and pets

Program Strategies and Objectives

Outdoor recreation (walking, hunting, fishing, camping, bicycling, OHV use, horses and pets) is becoming a very significant pathway for potentially spreading invasive species throughout large tracts of environmentally sensitive areas. Recreationists generally have low awareness of their individual role in spreading invasive species, and they do not understand how invasive species can negatively impact recreational areas.

CCIS is implementing PlayCleanGo.ca: Stop Invasive Species in Your Tracks as a national program to stop the spread of invasive species by outdoor recreationists. PlayCleanGo (PCG) started as a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) initiative to stop the spread of invasive species in parks and natural areas. The program has grown to include international and national partners, 33 states, and into Canada. CCIS and MNDNR signed a Memorandum of Understanding in late 2016 that will allow them to develop a Canadian outreach campaign that will make the PlayCleanGo brand common in both countries. CCIS will register PCG brand in Canada and form a steering committee to work closely with MNDNR to develop a parallel program of education and outreach for outdoor recreationalists with the objective to slow or stop the spread of invasive species through changes in public behaviour.

PlayCleanGo was developed using CBSM principles and practices and MNDNR continues to monitor the success of their program as recently as a 2016 phone survey of over 1,000 recreationists. Awareness has increased in the past six years with 14% of those surveyed reporting that they had seen the brand and its prevention messaging. Getting the PCG program actively going in Canada, the awareness of the both the brand and message should increase faster than before.



The PCG steering committee will develop partners and sponsors that will enable the launch of a website with resources and materials for use by invasive species and outdoor recreation organizations alike. Watch for PlayCleanGo.ca, coming to you soon, and find us on FB, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest!

Pathway: Boaters and Water activities

Program Strategies and Objectives

Water based activities have become important pathways for unintentional and intentional spread of invasive species, including plant, fish, invertebrate, and molluscs and crustaceans. International cargo ships have had a significant role in bring invasive species in bilge water into the Canadian ecosystem, including Zebra and Quagga mussels, and lamprey eels. Additionally, recreational boating has been responsible to spreading zebra and quagga mussels and Eurasian milfoil throughout North America water ways. Education and regulation is now an important mechanism for preventing the spread of invasive species in aquatic systems.

Program: Clean, Drain, Dry; Aquatic Hitchhikers; Look Before You Leave



Pathway: Pet and Aquarium trade – Invasive species movement and release (including pets)

Program Strategies and Objectives

The intentional release of pets (animals, fish, aquatic plants and species) into natural areas or waterways is potentially a very serious issue Canada. Often these species are from other regions in Canada, North America, or beyond, and when released, may not have any natural predators or environmental factors to limit the species from spreading exponentially. While people think they are doing the ecosystem or environment a favor, they are actually doing the opposite. Also, movement of firewood can result in the



spread of species such as mountain pine beetle, or elm bark beetle, which can cause great harm to trees in non-infested areas. Education and outreach programs such as 'Don't Let It Loose' and 'Buy It Where You Burn It' are designed to educate people about the dangers of invasive species movement and release as a pathway of introduction into vulnerable areas.

Program: Don't Let It Loose

Pathway: Moving Firewood

Program Strategies and Objectives

Moving firewood from one location to another can inadvertently move forest pests to new areas with disastrous results for both our forests and our urban trees.

These pests will move slowly on their own, but people transporting firewood can move them long distances quickly. Canada has 347 million ha of forest cover that represents nearly 9% of the world's forests ([Natural Resources Canada](#)). Our forests, and urban landscapes, are being negatively impacted now by introduced invasive insects and disease such as Asian longhorned beetle and emerald ash borer. By stopping the long distance spread by humans, foresters and entomologists will have the opportunity to manage and protect our trees. The CCIS has made the decision to implement a national program to reduce, or stop, the movement of firewood to slow down the spread of invasive alien insects and disease. CCIS has made the commitment to collaborate with the [Don't Move Firewood.org](#) and the [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#) on 'Buy It Where You Burn It' and 'Don't Move Firewood' programs. These education and outreach programs are designed to educate people about the dangers of invasive species movement and release as a pathway of introduction into vulnerable areas. The target audiences are campers, hikers, winter outdoor recreationalists, and people heating homes or businesses.



Program: Buy It Where You Burn It, Don't Move Firewood

Pathway: Work and Equipment

Program Strategies and Objectives

The spread of invasive species by workplace equipment can be very significant. Equipment from farm tractors to earth moving excavators, and even trucks can transport all different types of invasive species along work corridors, roads, and site to site. Forestry, mining, oil & gas, farming, reclamation, exploration, road and bridge building and maintenance, and other work activities move invasive species from infested areas to non-infested areas through their daily operations. Programs targeted at this pathway often include Best Practices for Industry, protocols for cleaning equipment, and education and awareness about invasive species spread for employees.



Program: Look Before You Leave, Clean Equipment Protocol, WorkCleanGo.ca

Recommendations

The CCIS National Taking Action Plan is an important national framework plan to ensure common messaging, consistency of messaging, and sharing of resources across all regions of Canada.

CCIS focus on preventing and blocking pathways of initial invasion and spread is fundamental to Canada's invasive alien species strategy, and whenever possible national and regional call to action programs should be developed with this objective.

Identify and engage key pathway partners and stakeholders

CCIS will ensure all programs and slogans in both official languages to ensure equivalency and consistency of messaging across the country.

CCIS will take a lead role to encourage, create, adopt and promote common slogan/ brands for each pathway focused program for use across Canada.

Some of the recommended tools are:

- » Development of key 'branding resources' that have been piloted and revised for each key pathway and programs
- » Development of a partnership or ambassador programs

- » Central website of resources and information for each of the key pathways and programs
- » Development of social media tools and outreach
- » Sharing of case studies and stories of success across Canada
- » Monitoring and effectiveness tools