

IRELAND'S INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

Angling Pathway Action Plan 2022 - 2027

Angler movements to and within Ireland, are an intrinsic element of the socio-economic value of recreational angling but there is also an associated threat of introducing harmful invasive species that impact on our wildlife, the functioning of the waterbody and on angling activities. Once established in waterbodies, it can be very difficult - if not impossible, to control or eradicate invasive species.

As invasive species can be unintentionally transported as stowaways with angling equipment, action is needed to reduce the risk of introducing invasive species into Ireland and between waterbodies in Ireland by this pathway.

The Angling Pathway Action Plan 2022-2027 outlines the general policy approach and actions government and those involved with angling in Ireland can undertake.

The **scope** of the Angling Pathway Action Plan is on activities related to angling in the freshwater and brackish environment. This includes trout, salmon, coarse, pike and shore fishing, and both wild and stocked fisheries but excludes aquaculture.

It is aimed at all those that engage in recreational fishing and fisheries whether anglers, angling governing bodies, clubs or affiliated angling groups, those that are commercially engaged with recreational fishing (such as fishing tour operators), and agencies that regulate recreational fishing.

The **aim** of this Angling Pathway Action Plan is to reduce the risk of invasive species being introduced to Ireland and spread from one waterbody to another within Ireland by angling activities.

The **objectives** of the Angling Pathway Action Plan are centred around increasing the level of awareness of invasive species issues amongst anglers, on how good biosecurity actions incorporated into angler activities can reduce the risk of introduction and spread of invasive species and, on facilitating the uptake of good biosecurity practice by the angling community.



Angling biosecurity guidance

Invasive plants and animals can carry diseases that kill fish, block waterways and banks interfering with fishing and impact on other wildlife. They can be small, hard to spot or microscopic so are easily spread on damp equipment and clothing.

Biosecurity actions are required to prevent or significantly reduce the risk of introduction and spread of invasive species.

General procedure of the Check Clean Dry aquatic biosecurity protocol

Check, Clean and **thoroughly Dry** angling gear, equipment and clothing that come into contact with the water before using them again. If everything cannot be dry for at least 48 hours, then **Disinfect**.

Anglers should always assume that the waterway contains invasive alien species and act accordingly with their subsequent movements to prevent spread



Protect the environment and fishing you enjoy by keeping your kit free of invasive plants and animals

CHECK

Check your gear, clothing, and footwear after leaving the water for mud, aquatic animals, or plant material. Remove anything you find and leave it at the site.

CLEAN

Clean everything as soon as you can. Pay particular attention to nets, waders and areas that are damp and hard to inspect. Use hot water (at least 45°C) or a high-pressure spray when possible.

DRY >DISINFECT

Dry all equipment and clothing until dry for at least 48 hours as some invasive species can live for weeks in damp conditions.

Disinfect all items if complete drying is not possible.



Key Actions

18 actions are set out in the pathway action plan under four categories. The complete wording of the key actions and outcomes including the responsible actors, are given in the full pathway action plan.

ACTIONS 1 - 5

Raising awareness

1. Survey of angler levels of awareness on invasive species issues and biosecurity.
2. Refinement of the biosecurity messaging and guidelines by the angling community.
3. Implementation of a border biosecurity awareness campaign.
4. All angling licence/permit holders will be made aware of biosecurity guidelines
5. Awareness of biosecurity guidelines to participants prior to angling events.

ACTIONS 6 - 10

On-site measures

6. Emergency biosecurity response procedures are implemented at sites when a newly introduced priority concern alert list invasive species has been detected.
7. The biosecurity regime of Check Clean Dry should be used as a regular practice.
8. Promote biosecurity awareness and provide biosecurity facilities where possible at well-known match stretches and slipways and other popular water entry/egress areas.
9. Sites that contain invasive species of priority concern and where angling occurs, will have signage and facilities where possible, to promote and facilitate very high levels of awareness and biosecurity.
10. Inspection checks on angling and water sport equipment/vehicles entering Ireland at prime concern border entry points to ensure they are clean, drained, and to the extent practical are dry.

ACTIONS 11- 14

Policy and coordination

11. Ongoing participation in the Aquatic Regional IAS Pathway Action Plan Cooperation Group.
12. Angling representative groups will help facilitate and encourage the uptake of good biosecurity practices by all angling clubs.
13. Coordination of policy response and actions with the Northern Ireland government and other administrations as necessary.
14. Coordination of actions in this plan with *Ireland's Invasive Alien Species Recreational Boating and Watercraft Pathway Action Plan 2022 - 2027* where relevant.







ACTIONS 15 - 18

Reporting

15. Log of actions taken to support implementation of the Pathway Action Plan.
16. Reporting of priority concern alert invasive species sightings to the National Biodiversity Data Centre to facilitate early warning and consideration of rapid response measures.
17. Compile and maintain a list or map of sites, waterways or catchments which contain priority concern list invasive to inform risk management and biosecurity response actions.
18. Interim and final review of the Pathway Action Plan.



As an angler, what biosecurity actions do I need to undertake?

Identify the fishing area (A, B or C)	Entering Ireland to fish	Fishing in Ireland only	Fishing in Ireland only
	A	B	C
	I have been fishing abroad and I'm going to use the same fishing gear in Ireland	I regularly or sometimes fish in different water bodies/stretches of water	I only fish in the same water body/stretch of water
Risk Level	Very High ⚠️ ⚠️ ⚠️	High ⚠️ ⚠️	Low ⚠️
Risk	You could introduce invasive alien species or pathogens to Irish waters. 	You could aid in spreading invasive alien species or pathogens to previously uninfected water bodies as you move from one catchment to another. 	By fishing in the same area all the time you are at minimum risk of introducing or spreading invasive species. There is a low risk of aiding persistence of existing invasive species or pathogens 
Principle	Your angling gear must be free of debris and organisms before you enter Ireland.	Your angling gear must be free of debris and organisms before you fish in a different water body.	Maintaining regular angling gear hygiene is good practice.
Action to undertake	Check, Clean and Dry all your angling gear. Thoroughly Dry all gear for at least 48 hours or Disinfect before using this equipment in Irish waters. 	Check, Clean and thoroughly Dry your angling gear for at least 48 hours or Disinfect before using this equipment in a different water body. 	Regularly Check, Clean and thoroughly Dry or Disinfect your angling equipment. 

Be aware

- ⚠️ Angling gear includes everything that comes into contact with the water including rods, nets, boots, waders, stink bags, etc.
- ⚠️ Desiccation is the most effective method to kill aquatic organisms.
- ⚠️ Where it is not possible to thoroughly dry equipment for 48 hours before using it in a different water body, the equipment must be disinfected.
- ⚠️ If disinfecting, use appropriate products such as Virkon Aquatic, Virasure or any other suitable proprietary disinfectant product.
- ⚠️ When disinfecting equipment, protective gloves should always be worn and the manufacturers' guidelines should be rigorously adhered to.
- ⚠️ If you are using a boat, then please also follow the biosecurity guidelines in Ireland's IAS Recreational Boating and Watercraft Pathway Action Plan. The principle is essentially the same; the boat must be free from debris or organisms before being launched in Irish waters or on different water bodies.

More information

Horizontal Measures

To support implementation of the Key Actions in this Angling Pathway Action Plan, underlying horizontal measures will need to be addressed.

- A.** Establish an Aquatic Invasive Alien Species and Biosecurity Technical Advisory Group.
- B.** Produce biosecurity measure guidance documents.
- C.** Scope boat movement restrictions.
- D.** Identify a funding mechanism for implementation of the plan.
- E.** Policy and legislation –
 - Introduce robust legislation to support implementation of biosecurity measures
 - Government departments/state agencies will adopt invasive species biosecurity plans.
- F.** Address knowledge gaps – specifically the need for systematic surveillance and monitoring.

To read the full version of *Ireland's Invasive Alien Species Angling Pathway Action Plan 2022 - 2027* and for more information on pathway action plans go to: <https://invasives.ie/biosecurity/pathway-action-plans/>



For more information on the Check Clean Dry biosecurity campaign and to download campaign materials (signage, posters, leaflets etc.) visit: <https://invasives.ie/biosecurity/check-clean-dry/>



Drafting of this Angling Pathway Action Plan was undertaken by the Angling Invasive Alien Species Pathway Action Plan Working Group:



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



The National Parks and Wildlife Service, assisted by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, will coordinate development of the Angling Pathway Action Plan and monitoring of its implementation.