

**COST**

## **ALIEN Challenge**

**TD1209**

**Start date: 02/05/2013**

**End date: 01/05/2017**

**Year: 1**

**Helen Roy**

Chair

Centre for Ecology & Hydrology / UK



# Scientific context and objectives (1/2)

- **Background / Problem statement:**

Invasive Alien Species (IAS) threaten biodiversity, society, human-health, well-being and the economy. ALIEN Challenge will facilitate enhanced knowledge gathering and sharing through a network of experts, providing support to a European IAS information system which will enable effective and informed decision-making in relation to IAS

- **Brief reminder of MoU objectives:**

1. Identify needs and formats for an Early Warning and Rapid Response System.
2. Review of pathways and priority species
3. Review IAS impacts in Europe and impact assessment methods
4. Explore existing data gaps in harmonisation and validation of information



## Scientific context and objectives (2/2)

- **Research directions:**

Establish a network of experts to contribute to Early Warning and Rapid Response Systems, harmonise the information in existing AS databases within Europe, explore undiscovered sources of information, and identify the needs and formats for alien species information by different user groups.

Disseminate results through collaborative publications linking to social media and the Action website

- **Innovation:**

Range of international projects and research initiatives collating information on AS but many of these focus only on IAS. Broad approach including all AS is essential for providing context and enhancing understanding of invasions to allow for early warning and mitigation because AS have the potential to become IAS



# Working groups

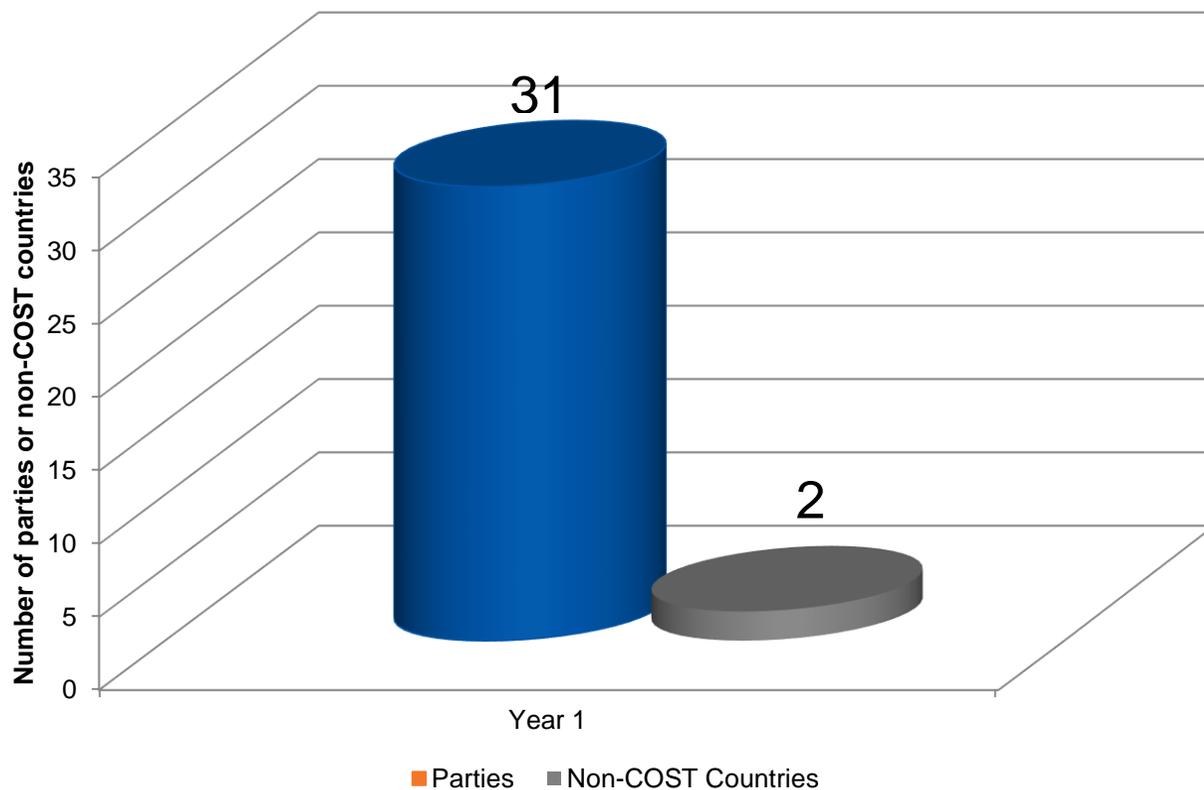
WG1: Early warning and rapid response: Ana Cristina Cardoso  
(deputy: Cristina Maguas)

WG2: Analysis of pathways: Franz Essl (deputy: Alain Roques)

WG3: Analysis of impacts: Marc Kenis (deputy: Montse Vila)

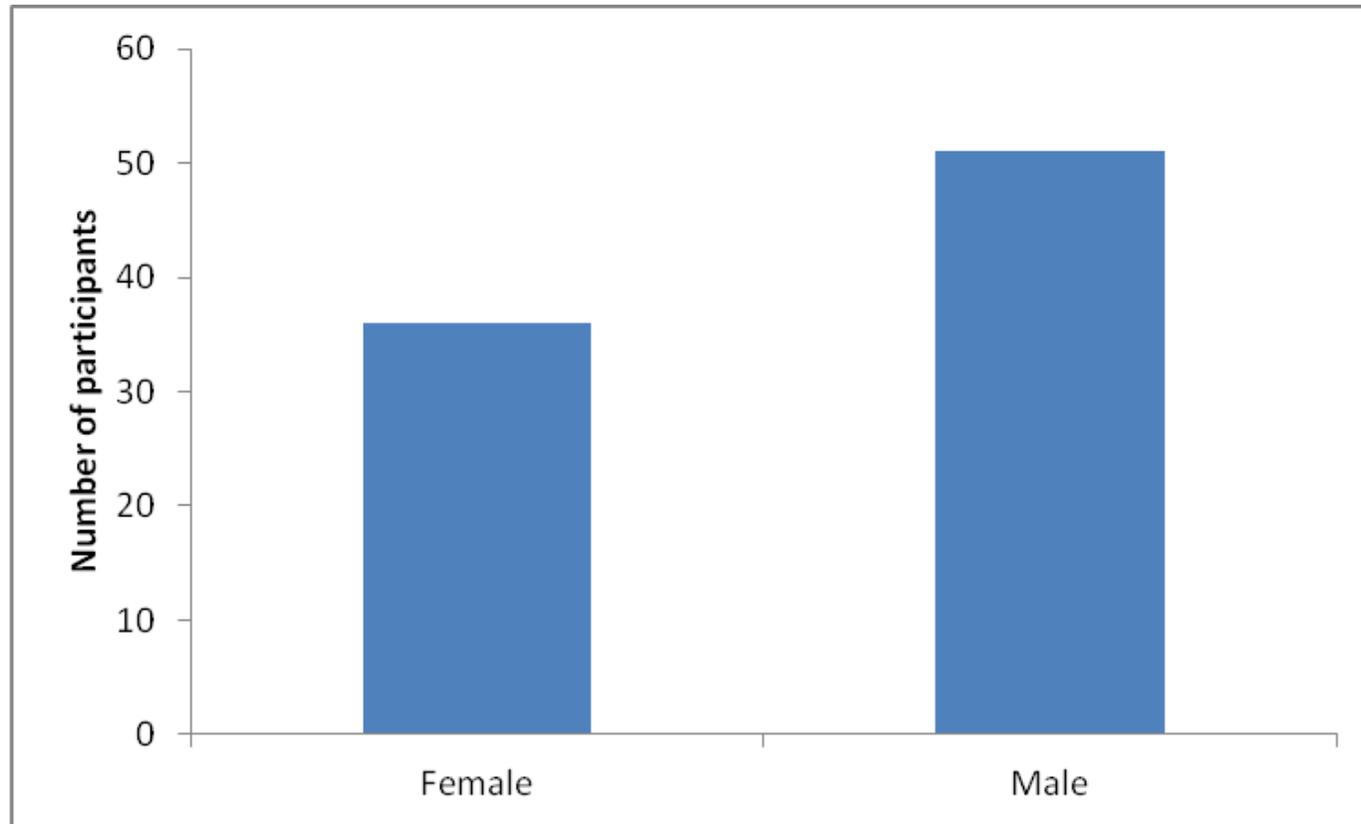
WG4: Harmonisation and integration: Jan Pergl (deputy: Colin Harrower and Jana Medvecka)

# Action Parties



**Grant Holder:**  
NERC  
Katharine Turvey  
UK

# Action participants



# Use of COST Instruments

Activity (No.)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
MC/WG Meetings	2			
STSMs	12			
Training Schools	1			
Workshops or Conferences	0			
Joint Publications	~20			



# Results vs. Objectives

Extremely productive first year and the networking of the 31 parties participating alongside the additional near neighbour, international partner countries and other organisations has been active leading to new research collaborations

Networking has enabled:

- Collaborative research submissions in terms of tenders and publications
- 12 STSMs
- 22 participants to the training school



## Significant Highlights in Science or Networking (1/2)

- Collaboration on EC Tender: IAS – Framework for the identification of IAS of EU concern
- Ongoing activity but the consortium is developing the minimum standards for risk assessment that will underpin proposed EU regulation on IAS



## Significant Highlights in Science or Networking (2/2)

- Working group meeting in Italy, December 2013
- ~74 participants
- Dynamic and interactive workshops (termed “Market Places”) convened to explore how to best develop flow of data and information for ALIEN Challenge were extremely successful. In total 26 data systems were presented to COST participants



# Challenges

- STSM requests received either for the end of the year or crossing two years of the Action are constrained by the way in which the work plan and budget is approved on an annual basis
- Limited involvement of freelance researchers who are not affiliated to a specific organisation although they work regularly with many of the key organisations, also at the international level

- Critical next steps:

Consolidation of reviews on pathways and impacts

Mobilisation of IAS data