

# The Cost of Invasive Non Native Species (INNS)



Non-native animals or plants that have been introduced to areas outside their normal geographic range have the ability to spread causing damage to the environment, the economy, our health and the way we live<sup>[1]</sup>. Worldwide they are the **second biggest threat to biodiversity**.



## Biosecurity – prevention better than cure

Preventing INNS from spreading is estimated to **cost less than 1% of the costs of keeping an outbreak under control**<sup>[3]</sup>.

- **Biosecurity** involves employing simple hygienic practices, such as those promoted in the **Check Clean Dry** campaign, to ensure environment users do not transfer INNS between sites on equipment, vehicles, clothing and footwear.
- Good biosecurity will guard against further INNS introduction and spread, reducing the costs of damage and control and potential litigation and reputational damage.



## The costs of INNS

Once established INNS can rarely be eradicated often requiring costly year on year treatment.

It costs an annual **£100m to British economy to treat and control aquatic and riverbank INNS**<sup>[2]</sup>

**£26.5m on control - £43.5m if all infested areas treated.**



## Reputational Damage

The presence of INNS on local authority owned land can cause –reputational damage and result in litigation if allowed to spread.

- Allowing Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Himalayan balsam to spread is an offence under **the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981**.
- Giant Hogweed sap can cause severe blistering and long term skin damage where people come in to contact with it.

## Impacts on humans

- Clog waterways
- Delay construction
- Exacerbate flooding
- Physical harm to humans

## Recommendations for Local Authorities

- Adopt a biosecurity policy that includes simple risk assessments and biosecurity practices to reduce the risk of accidental spread of INNS.
- Engage decision makers to embed biosecurity and explore ways to fund this.
- Roll out this biosecurity policy for use by employees, contractors and partner organisations.
- Support and reinforce this biosecurity policy using evidence-based biosecurity guides and materials.
- Embed this biosecurity policy into the planning and development processes.
- Include biosecurity measures in tenders and framework agreements to allow biosecurity to be included in all quotes and fully costed upfront.
- Develop an audit process for contractors and work with them to upskill and ensure future compliance.

## How do INNS spread?

Human activity is the main driver of spread. Key pathways involve activity in or around the water environment:

- Construction
- Agriculture
- Recreation
- Management



**Key INNS within Yorkshire:** A) Signal Crayfish B) Zebra Mussels C) Floating Pennywort D) Chinese mitten crab E) Giant Hogweed F) Japanese knotweed