

>> SYNTHESIZE MOUNTAINS OF KNOWLEDGE <<

Submitted Abstract

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Abstract

Invasive species are a major driver of change in global biodiversity and ecosystems. However, knowledge on the impact of invasive species' on biodiversity, nature's contributions to people, and human well-being in mountains is currently lacking. Are there differences in perceived impacts on ecosystem functions and nature's contributions to people between IPBES regions and stakeholder groups? And how is this different between plants, animals, and microorganisms? - We conducted a global survey across IPBES regions and a broad range of stakeholders, including managers, land-owners, farmers, policy makers, conservation, and scientists. Over 600 respondents from all IPBES regions answered the MIREN survey on alien invasive species impacts in mountain regions. Our work provides perspectives on the impacts of invasive species on water, soil, biodiversity, pollination and disturbance processes along with their role in resource provisioning, human safety, human health, recreation and culture across regions and stakeholder groups. Across all stakeholder groups and regions, biodiversity was generally seen to be overwhelmingly negatively affected by invasive alien species, whereas ecosystem services such as resource provisioning were also positively impacted. Regional differences in perception of impacts are larger than those between stakeholder groups. Respondents from the Americas, and government officials rated impacts as most negative, while respondents from Asia and the Pacific tended to be more positive, particularly for ecosystem services. Overall, there is concordance between invasive alien species' impacts on ecosystem functions and services, suggesting that management to safeguard biodiversity will benefit people, and vice versa. Additionally, we assessed what sources of information guide invasive species management, who is involved, and how such activities are funded. Local management plans are the main source of guidance for management across regions. We hope the insights from our survey will serve to inform policy and foster collaborative action towards sustainable management practices for invasive species in mountain regions.