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TACKLING THE THREAT OF INVASIVE SPECIES

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Centre for Environment
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Ever expanding trade and travel, coupled with climate change, have increased the chances of species travelling from their natural range to locations where they may become invasive and consequently threaten biodiversity in freshwater and marine ecosystems, such as by out-competing or preying on native species, introducing disease, and/or damaging habitats or producing waste products that impact native species.

Invasive species can also threaten human health and well-being. Efforts are being made to control or eradicate invasive species in the UK, and legislative and regulatory measures to protect the UK from future invasive species are in place, but the risk is global and requires coordinated, international action.

In 2008, Cefas released the Fish Invasiveness Screening Kit (FISK), a freeware decision-support tool. FISK allowed scientists in over 25 countries across five continents to assess non-native (NN) freshwater fishes to

identify which species were likely to pose a high risk of becoming invasive in the selected risk assessment area and therefore warranted a full risk assessment.

FISK has since been replaced by the Aquatic Species Invasiveness Screening Kit (AS-ISK), which is fully compliant with European legislation and is applicable to any aquatic species, plant or animal, in marine, brackish and freshwater environments.

Identifying the invasiveness risk of aquatic species has never been easier, and these assessments are essential to understand potential pathways of introduction and dispersal and ultimately how they can be managed. AS-ISK has been used in a global study spanning six continents, and it is currently due to be published in 2018.

For more information please visit:
www.cefas.co.uk/nns/tools



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