



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of the Environment,
Sustainability, Climate Change,
Heritage, Education and Culture

PRESS RELEASE

No: 470/2023

Date: 13th July 2023

Workshop on Enhancing monitoring and prevention of invasive non-native species held in Gibraltar

A UK-funded workshop on '*Enhancing monitoring and prevention of invasive non-native species*' took place at the University of Gibraltar recently as part of a wider Darwin Plus project being carried out in the UK's Overseas Territories until 2025. Invasive non-native species are considered one of the greatest threats to biodiversity given their potential impacts on protected species and habitats. The UK's Overseas Territories, most of which are islands, are particularly at risk.

Experts from the UK, led by Professor Helen Roy from the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, were in Gibraltar following a previous 'Horizon Scanning' exercise carried out in 2019. The aim of this workshop was to build on the initial exercise and help Gibraltar improve its data collection, awareness and prevention policies as well as consider practical management actions. Local scientists from the Department of the Environment, the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens, the Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society and the University of Gibraltar's School of Marine and Environmental Science and Research Office took part in the exercise who presented and discussed the latest work being carried out in Gibraltar. The Ministry of Defence also participated and this included representatives from the UK's Sovereign Base Areas Joint Services Health Unit in Gibraltar and Cyprus. Enalia Physis Environmental Research Centre, an NGO based in Cyprus researching invasive marine and terrestrial biodiversity also took part in the workshop.

Minister for the Environment, Professor John Cortes welcomed that another workshop was being held in Gibraltar and commented "Gibraltar prides itself on its record on nature protection, and I welcome collaborative research in this field. Invasive species often go unnoticed by the public but can have a devastating effect on natural communities. All research into ways in which these invasions can be prevented or controlled is hugely valuable".

Dr. Darren Fa, Director of the University's Academic Programmes and Research highlighted the importance of organising these workshops and stated "This has been a marvellous opportunity for us to not only engage with fellow researchers to establish current state -of -play and best practice, but also to explore opportunities for Gibraltar to play a leading role in future initiatives in this critically important area, which has the potential to significantly impact all of us."



Professor Helen Roy from the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology is the Project leader and Principal Scientist stated “It has been an immense privilege to collaborate with experts on Gibraltar to consider ways of enhancing the flow of information on invasive non-native species for this unique and amazing place. The ongoing activities on Gibraltar are inspiring and we have been incredibly fortunate to gain rich insights from all the participants and begin the process of co-developing resources. We look forward to building on our wonderful collaborations to collate information for the benefits of people and nature”.

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