



NORTH EAST

Non-Native Species Strategy & Action Plan

2026-2030

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1. Scope of the NE INNS strategy

The threat of Invasive Non-Native species (INNS) is well recognised globally across all environments (see the 2023 assessment of Invasive Alien Species and their management IPBES). The environmental, economic and social threats posed by the arrival, establishment and spread of INNS in GB is outlined in the GB Invasive Non-Native Species Strategy, noting that without action the number of established species is likely to continue to rise. The significant economic burden of INNS and their control is well documented, and prioritisation of management efforts is necessary. The GB INNS strategy and the Scottish Action Plan for Invasive Non-Native Species 2026-2032 outline the national approaches to manage these threats and are aligned to address the global ambition set out in Target 6 in the CBD Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework where focus is on prevention and biosecurity, early warning and rapid response and long-term management.

In the North East of England, invasive species are found across freshwater, terrestrial and marine habitats, with many of the widespread species ubiquitous across the UK (such as giant hogweed, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, Japanese knotweed, *Reynoutria japonica*, Himalayan balsam, *Impatiens glandulifera* and grey squirrel, *Sciurus carolinensis*). However, some species causing significant impacts elsewhere in Britain have not yet widely established in the region e.g. floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*) and muntjac deer (*Muntiacus reevesi*). Freshwater catchments in the region have only occasional records of American skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*), which left unchecked could pose significant future threat. In contrast the sand dune system on Lindisfarne has been heavily invaded by the pirri-pirri burr (*Acaena novae-zelandiae*), which is not widespread elsewhere in GB and local efforts to reduce spread and suppress impacts particularly along the North East coastline are ongoing. The coasts and harbours have significantly less boating, tourism and commercial activity than those on the south coast of England and consequently have fewer established invasive species. Therefore, the species and management priorities at a national level don't always align with the threats and impacts at the regional or local scale. Similarly, species prioritisation processes such as Horizon Scanning, Risk Management and Early Warning Rapid Response carried out at a national level often don't inform regionally specific species threats or management priorities.

Local action on invasive species can involve a range of actors including citizen science or community volunteers, local councils, landowners, wildlife trusts and other charities. Their individual actions, while well intentioned and can be impactful, are often sporadic or in isolation. A coordinated landscape approach to INNS management, to share learning, resources and approaches as well as strategic oversight to priority species and sites will result in improved outcomes and more cost-effective management. The NE INNS strategy and action plan complements the approach of the GB INNS Strategy whilst taking a regional approach to biosecurity, and local catchment initiatives and projects.

This strategy and action plan includes an update to our approach and scope, to include all INNS encompassing similar efforts across terrestrial, marine and coastal systems in the region. As with national approaches we acknowledge that climate change is gradually adjusting

native species distributions, and this is considered natural change rather than something to be actively managed against. The strategy also doesn't consider pests and pathogens that are covered under plant health legislation at a national level.

Without a strategic, coordinated and sustainable approach to the prevention of introduction and control of the spread of INNS across the North East region, it is likely that the ecological, social and economic impacts and the costs for mitigation, control and eradication of these species will continue to increase.

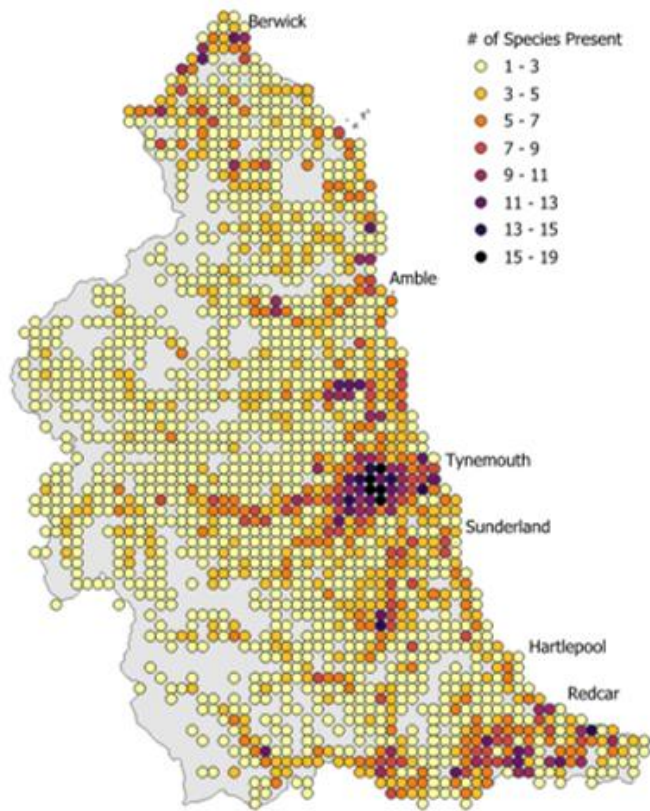
2. Regional Coordination

The NE INNS strategy 2020-2024 was created following the success of the Tweed Forum Invasives project and other catchment scale activity to initiate a more coordinated regional approach and establish a regional partnership working group. This local action group – The NE INNS partnership - comprises Tweed Forum, Environmental Records Information Centre North East, The Rivers Trusts of the Tees, Wear, Tyne and Northumberland catchments and Newcastle University (the full list of partners are listed in Annex ii). The focus of the first strategy was on riparian habitats and river catchments with the majority of species considered being freshwater aquatic. The engagement and awareness activities, facilitated through annual Environment Agency WEIF funding support, were open to all working on INNS across the region and interest in this collaborative working has increased.

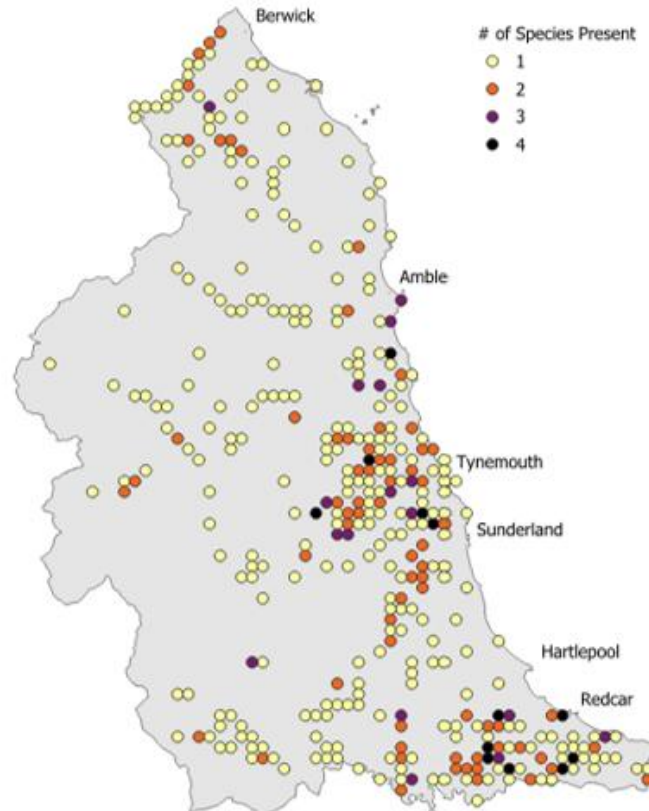
This updated five-year strategy presents a coordinated strategic approach for the prevention, early detection, rapid response to invasive species across North East England. The geographic coverage extends from the River Tees at Middlesbrough to the River Tweed at Berwick-upon-Tweed. The geography of the North East region encompasses a wide variety of landscapes and habitats many of which have protected designations including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Local Nature Reserves where the management of invasives species supports their conservation objectives. Many of these sites have biosecurity and management plans which include specific actions on invasive species, the regional strategy and actions plan does not replace these but aims to support their implementation and improve consistency between plans in the region. A new initiative since the last strategy is the development of Local Nature Recovery Networks across England as part of the Environment Act 2021, while still in the planning phase the NE INNS partnership will engage in the process to ensure invasive non-native species are appropriately prioritised in [Local Nature Recovery Strategies](#) across the region.

There are a diverse range of invasive species in the region and up to date species lists and maps are found on the [ERIC NE webpages](#). The focus of the first NE INNS strategy was on riparian species, primarily plants, however recognising that invasive species do not operate within discrete habitat types, and that interactions between habitats and land uses need to be accounted for the scope has been widened in this update. A [Marine INNS strategy for the Berwickshire and Northumberland and North Tyneside coast](#) was published by the Marine Nature Partnership in 2023 to mirror efforts in marine environment from the Tyne to the Tweed. There are also species specific funded projects and initiatives such as those that manage invasive grey squirrels and American Mink for the conservation gain of native red squirrels and

water voles (see [Red Squirrels Northern England](#) and [Northumberland Water Vole Recovery](#)). The strategy does not replace their goals or ambition but by encompassing all taxa in the strategy we seek to support coordination and scale management efforts and increase awareness and learning across projects. With the support of the [North East Environmental Records and Information Centre \(ERIC\)](#) we have increased our ability to record, report and respond to invasive species through the development of a bespoke early warning system, which we will continue to develop and improve on. Maps of the number of species recorded across the region in each of the terrestrial, freshwater and marine realms are shown in Figure 1. The partnership will align our approach of prioritisation of species by undertaking assessment exercises similar to national approaches (such as horizon scanning and risk management) taking into consideration the impacts, spread and management options for all invasive non-native species in the region. The partnership also actively promotes the use of digital tools, such as [INNS mapper](#), for mapping and sharing management activities.



Terrestrial INNS



Freshwater INNS



Marine INNS

Figure 1: Number of species recorded i) terrestrial ii) freshwater and iii) marine records across the region

The North East INNS strategy links Government policy, legislation and higher-level strategic action with catchment and local actions. A primary focus of the strategy is coordination and capacity building, managers and practitioners are encouraged to use the information, training and guidance provided by the GBNNSS. As well as working with partners across the region the partnership will increase coordination and cooperation with the GB Non-Native Species Inspectorate (NNSI) that was established in 2021 to encourage compliance with legislation and respond to new invasions as well as tackling eradications of localised species.

3. Aim, Objectives and Actions.

The aim of the North East INNS Strategy and action plan is to develop and maintain cost-effective strategic approaches to prevent, detect, control and eradicate specified INNS in North East landscapes through coordinated action.

The strategy follows the [Convention on Biological Diversity guiding principles](#) for Invasive Non-Native Species management with a focus on prevention and early warning and rapid response over long term management as this is the most cost-effective use of resources. The Objectives and Actions in this strategy mirror the structure and format suggested in the [Convention on Biological Diversity Invasive Alien Species toolkit and NISSAP guidance](#), applied at a regional scale but in alignment with the GB INNS strategy.

Particular focus will be placed on preventing the arrival of high-impact species that are not yet established in the NE of England and management of those with restricted distribution and/or low abundance within our geographic context. Coordinated action will contribute to work on containing species approaching the region's boundaries and to facilitating sustainable, strategic and cost-effective means of control or eradication.

The aim will be achieved through the realisation of four objectives and associated actions (Figure 2) which are described below and listed in Annex iii. The specific actions are described with some detail of the type of activities that will be undertaken highlighted in bold.

Figure 2: Outline of the Strategy Objectives and Areas of Action

Four Objectives and sixteen areas of action.	
Objective One – Regional Coordination	
Increase coordination of strategic and sustainable approaches to INNS management in North East England.	
Stakeholder engagement	Awareness raising
Building capacity	Funding regional INNS management
Objective Two - Prevention and Biosecurity	
Reduce the risk of the introduction and spread of INNS in North East England through increased awareness and biosecurity.	
Horizon scanning	Pathway analysis and management
Risk analysis and prioritisation	Biosecurity planning
Objective Three - Early Detection and Rapid Response	
Priority INNS are detected early, and action is taken to eradicate or contain to prevent establishment and spread.	
Risk management and prioritisation	Early detection
Contingency planning	Rapid response
Objective 4- Long-Term Management of Established Species	
Strategic and sustainable implementation of longer-term local control and eradication programmes.	
Risk management and prioritisation	Eradication
Landscape scale control	Monitoring and Adaptive management

4. Action Plan

Objective One: Regional Approach

Increase coordination of strategic and sustainable approaches to key aspects of INNS management in the North East.

There is a need for landscape scale action on invasive species as species distributions and impacts go beyond individual habitats, administrative borders and remit of individual organisations. Strategic coordination for development of plans, sharing of information and resources and carrying out management is critical but requires engagement and resourcing to maintain. This objective is important to facilitate the partnership's ability to continue to work together and increase capacity, awareness and resources to support invasives species management in the North East.

Action 1.1 Capacity Building

Increase the knowledge and skills of those involved in INNS management in NE England

The NE INNS partnership core group will **continue to hold regular meetings for coordination of the strategy**, where necessary working groups will be established. Previous working groups have been successful for developing the Early Warning Rapid Response alert system and data management and for improving stakeholder engagement.

The partnership will **hold regular training and sharing of best practice events**, to facilitate resource and knowledge sharing for the whole community. These have been well received and in both online and in person events. In particular in-person meetings that showcase innovations or novel management approaches, combined with site visits to discuss management challenges have received positive feedback as opportunities to share best practice.

Action 1.2 Funding Regional INNS management

Coordinate approaches to secure funding to support regional coordination and targeted delivery of actions.

A key benefit of a shared working practice across the region is being able to be strategic about managing sites and species at a larger geographic scale than can be achieved by anyone organisation alone. Key to this is having sufficient resources, or combining resources, to tackle species at the appropriate scale. Working in partnership we will **collaborate to maximise potential of available funding calls** (e.g. from DEFRA or the water industry) as well as applying for larger grants (e.g. Lottery Funding) and private sponsorship. We will emphasise the strategic approach and collaborative capacity building as strengths in our proposals.

Funding calls can often come with short deadlines. To increase our opportunity to bid into these we will **maintain a list of priority work areas** as 'ready to go' projects of differing scales across

the region for targeted funding. Priority projects will be identified from our assessment of species and sites (through horizon scanning and risk management) and will cover a range of stages of invasion to include prevention and biosecurity, rapid response and long-term management.

Action 1.3 Awareness raising

Increase awareness of the NE INNS partnership and its activities both within the region and nationally.

To increase general awareness of the NE INNS partnership we will **develop a partnership communication strategy**, an action that may involve a working group to define the scope, audience and messaging. Where appropriate communications will use national campaigns e.g. 'Check, clean dry' and 'Be Plant Wise' and link in with the national INNS week. Engagement with the NE INNS partnership has increased through proactively contacting environment officers in local councils, regional designated bodies (Natural England and Environment Agency), private sector and charity bodies with a remit or interest in INNS in the region. There can be a high turnover of personnel with INNS responsibility so we will **maintain regular communication and opportunities for engagement and training**. The wider partnership appreciates the availability of digital information and resources, however regional information is scattered across multiple webpage locations. We will **consolidate and increase the web presence/ portal for the partnership** (potentially as a Local Action Group page on the GBNNSS webpages).

Action 1.4 Stakeholder engagement

Increase stakeholder engagement with the NE INNS partnership both within the region and nationally.

As well as maintaining regular meetings and capacity building events for stakeholders the core partnership group will **explore opportunities to increase engagement to other stakeholder groups** such as school groups and 'friends of' groups who are active volunteers in their local parks and spaces.

We value the opportunities to share best practice and learn of new initiatives so will continue to **participate in GB NNSS stakeholder forum and LAG events at a national level** and where funding allows engage with relevant groups undertaking similar activity.

Objective Two: Prevention and Biosecurity

Reduce the risk of the introduction and spread of INNS in the North East through increased awareness and biosecurity.

Preventing the introduction of new species into the region is the most cost-effective management strategy and requires the coordinated action of all partners. Maintenance of baseline data on the species present in the region and identification of pathways and vectors of spread are essential to inform decision making about where management actions should be prioritised. Coordination through the North East Environmental Records Centre (ERIC) will allow

the partnership to share records and update information. Where possible training, awareness raising and planning resources will be shared and standardised, for example by utilising Risk Assessment resources from the GBNNSS and developing a common template for biosecurity plans. Lessons learned and best practice will also be shared with the partnership to improve biosecurity equipment and facilities. Increased engagement with land owners and managers of susceptible and sensitive sites to ensure effective planning is an important part of increasing awareness and engagement.

Action 2.1 Horizon scanning

Undertake review of species with the potential to arrive and establish in the north east region.

To support species prioritisation and management planning in the region the partnership plan to **undertake a horizon scanning exercise to identify new and emerging non-native species threats to the North East in 2027**. The group will draw on expertise of those in the region and taxon specialists nationally to systematically consider which species should be on an early warning alert list and be prioritised for preventative actions such as pathway management and contingency response planning.

Action 2.2 Pathway Analysis and Management

Identify the routes and vectors of species being introduced and spread and develop management plans.

Identification of the routes and vectors of species being introduced and spread across the region will help guide strategic and cost-effective management actions. The core group will **review national Pathway Action Plans (PAPs) and consider relevant pathways for the North East region**. The partnership **will update the regional list of sensitive and susceptible sites** and will aim to increase awareness and engagement of landowners and site managers in the partnership to review the biosecurity measures in place. Cross reference between the most important pathways and sites will guide action prioritisation. Where needed we will **create region pathway action plans for priority species/ areas and share with relevant stakeholders**.

Action 2.3 Risk Analysis and Prioritisation

Review the process for species prioritisation to consider the impacts and spread of species in the region

Based on Horizon Scanning and review of sensitive and susceptible sites the group **will reassess species prioritisation** (to update/replace the previous traffic light scheme of species categorisation) to incorporate the impact and spread potential components into the assessment. This will help focus action towards species and pathways that pose the greatest future risks.

Action 2.4 Biosecurity plans

Support development of biosecurity plans for organisations and sites.

There are various biosecurity measures that will assist in prevention of species arrival and establishment such as biosecurity stations, mobile biosecurity kits, biosecurity protocols, signage and training. Not all measures are applicable to, and affordable at, all sites or for all species. It is therefore important to assess which combination of measures will provide the most prevention for the least cost. The partnership will support the development of biosecurity plans for organisations and sites and aims to **improve consistency in biosecurity plan documents within the region** by providing a standardised template and sharing of resources.

Objective Three: Early detection and Rapid Response

Priority INNS are detected early, and action is taken to eradicate or contain to prevent establishment and spread.

A bespoke regional Early Warning and Rapid Response (EWRR) system was developed and piloted during the previous strategy to alert the partnership to new records of species identified as being high risk. The system captures species records made via iRecord and iNaturalist in a similar way to national early warning systems. ERIC NE coordinates the assessment of these records and reports (via email) to the core partnership to initiate site visits for verification and site assessment and to liaise with land owners for management action. New records need to be intercepted at the earliest point in the data workflow to allow a rapid response. Further improvements to the system include updating of priority species and more automation of the data workflow. The partnership is also exploring the capability of INNS Mapper App to report management action to record response and follow up on early detection records.

Action 3.1 Early Detection

Promote the recording of all INNS in the region and continue to improve the alert system for new records.

ERIC NE manage the alert system and will **continue to improve the regional EWRR system** with the support of a working group, primarily to incorporate updated INNS species lists and improve dataflows from the regional register and onwards to partners and landowners with response capabilities. We will continue to **promote the use of iRecord and iNaturalist for reporting INNS in the region** and increase awareness of the workflow and actions associated with the reporting system. Species records of national priority will be passed to GB NNSS and we will collaborate where a local response is required.

Action 3.2 Rapid Response

Improve coordinated action to prevent the establishment of high risk species.

To prevent the establishment of the highest risk species that are not yet present in the region rapid response protocols are essential. Notification of records will be passed to relevant bodies

to coordinate appropriate responses in line with contingency plans, record their decisions and evaluate effectiveness of responses. This process works reasonably well but we will continue to **monitor the system and maintain a tracker of all active responses** to allow areas for improvement to be identified. **Where appropriate we will coordinate with GB NNS Inspectorate to identify priorities and methods for coordinated action.**

Action 3.3 Contingency Planning

Develop regionally appropriate contingency plans to support rapid response

We will adopt [generic contingency plans](#) and continue to improve, test and evaluate their effectiveness for responding to incursions from priority species. **Where necessary we will develop regionally specific contingency plans for regional species priorities.** Species to focus on will be identified through a horizon scanning exercise.

Action 3.4 Risk management – Prioritisation

Use evidence based approaches to prioritise management actions

We will evaluate the feasibility of species eradication or long-term management by considering various components of management such as the effectiveness, practicality, acceptability, impacts and costs of different scenarios of management. This will be done by hosting **risk management workshops to assess the feasibility of eradicating or containing priority Invasive Non-Native Species** in 2028. This process will provide a prioritised list which we will use to **update species register with priority species for different management actions across all habitats.**

Objective Four: Long Term Management

Strategic and sustainable implementation of longer-term local control and eradication programmes.

Many local groups coordinate action on widespread established INNS species, in the North East species frequently controlled by volunteers include Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), grey squirrels (*Sciurus carolinensis*), American mink (*Acaena novae-zelandiae*) and pirri pirri burr (*Acaena novae-zelandiae*). Complete eradication is rarely the management objective for widespread species, alternative management objectives include **landscape scale control** to systematically remove reproductive populations, **containment** to prevent species spread or **suppression** to minimise localised impacts for shorter periods. To maximise the effectiveness of these efforts **coordination of management strategies** is needed. The NE partnership can support long term management strategies through actions which support coordination such as evaluating effectiveness of strategies and standardisation of monitoring. Prioritisation of species and sites at a regional level will allow improved effectiveness and efficiency of resources.

Action 4.1 Risk management

Use evidence based approaches to prioritise management actions

The NE partnership seeks to ensure limited resources are used effectively by prioritising species management at the appropriate landscape or catchment scale. **The partnership will run risk management workshops to assess the feasibility of long-term management measures**, this may result in different approaches being taken in different areas across the region. Risk management involves making a structured assessment on the availability and feasibility of management actions - costs, effectiveness, side effects, welfare/ethics etc. to eliminate, minimise or mitigate the impacts of invasive species. We will **apply a risk management framework to assess species management options**. To ensure resources support the most effective management options we will **document cost effectiveness of management measures**.

Action 4.2 Eradication

Undertake programmes to completely remove high priority species from the region.

It is unlikely that it will be feasible to eradicate species that are well-established and widespread from the entire region. **Risk management prioritisation will help to identify potential candidate species and methods for consideration**. Prioritisation will allow identification of smaller, relatively isolated populations of impactful species, if left uncontrolled these species could spread and leading to costly long-term control. **Candidate populations for eradication should be reviewed by conducting detailed feasibility planning**. In the North East American skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) is a potential example for local eradication. **Control initiatives should be designed in collaboration with inspectorate**.

Action 4.3 Landscape scale coordination

Promote engagement and best practise to support INNS management at scale

Many well-established invasive species are widespread across the region and require strategic control, such as plant management from upstream to downstream. There are many local volunteer squirrel management and conservation groups and coordinated trapping efforts across connected woodlands can improve management effectiveness. Similarly regional approaches to mink management have been successful in East Anglia and there is a [framework for the complete eradication of American mink from England](#). Ad hoc management of species at single sites is rarely effective and will be prone to reinvasions requiring on going action at a great cost. Across the region parcels of land that remain unmanaged can harbour invasive species as a source population making surrounding control efforts less successful. By working together we will promote the success of coordination to **engage landowners to take responsibility for INNS control on their land** and link up with [Local Nature Recovery Strategies](#). Through partnership working species and site management plans can be coordinated. Essential to this is the sharing of management activity. **The adoption of online tools such as INNS**

mapper for reporting management activity and follow-on survey and monitoring is encouraged to share records across the region.

Action 4.4 Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Use adaptive management processes to monitor and evaluate strategies.

Where site or species management plans are not yet in place we encourage review of previous work and management strategies and communication within the region to coordinate efforts.

Assessment of efficacy of strategies currently employed, including trials of biological control will promote sharing of best practice and increase uptake and connectivity of sites undertaking management.

Post management monitoring provides evidence for the identification of lessons that can then be used to inform future management. Coordinated monitoring of effectiveness of INNS treatments/actions, and methods provides opportunity for wider scale assessment. In some cases no single management strategy is sufficient. Taking an adaptive integrated approach, where more than one option is used either in parallel or sequence (e.g. mechanical removal followed by herbicide application), can achieve greater success than the application of either option on their own. An adaptive approach will be taken where **monitoring and evaluation of cost-effectiveness of trialed treatments will be promoted**. This approach can also include the use of ecosystem management approaches (e.g. restoring connectivity or flow regimes in a river) alongside actions that directly target the INNS.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The use of data and records of species and management actions are a core part of the North East strategy and will provide the evidence base for decision making. Monitoring species records and management actions will provide trend data to assess how INNS pressures change over time and can be used to assess the effectiveness of the actions within this strategy. Regular evaluation of the actions in the strategy will be undertaken by the partnership and monitoring of progress will be assessed to ensure the actions remain appropriate and achievable. Lessons learned will be consolidated and shared through best practice events and iterative improvements will be made using monitoring and evaluation outputs to update management prioritisation and contingency planning and inform future strategy development.

As a simple indicator of success the number of newly introduced species to the region and newly established INNS populations will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of pathways management, early detection and rapid response. The status of high-risk species within the region will be used to assess the effectiveness of landscape scale INNS management. Importantly the partnership will gauge the success of working together across the region by the level of engagement from those working to protect and conserve wildlife and nature in the North East through management of the threat of invasive species. We will actively seek

feedback from those that the partnership aims to support and welcome any suggestion for improvement to our strategy and approach.

Annexes

i. Glossary of terms and abbreviations

CABI	Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
ERIC NE	Environmental Records Information Centre North East
EU	European Union
GB	Great Britain
IAS	Invasive alien species
INNS	Invasive non-native species
IUCN	World Conservation Union
NE	North East
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NNSS	Non-Native Species Secretariat
NW	Northumbrian Water
RAMSAR	Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
RBAG	Regional Biodiversity Action Group
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RTC	River Tweed Commission
SAC	Special Area for Conservation
SC	American skunk cabbage
SPA	Special Protected Area
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
TF	Tweed Forum
TFo	Tweed Foundation
WFD	Water Framework Directive

ii. NE INNS partnership organisations

The engagement of key stakeholders is imperative for the success of this plan. Representatives from the regulatory agencies and bodies associated with delivery of this strategy include:

<p>Regulatory Bodies</p> <p>Environment Agency</p> <p>Defra</p> <p>Natural England</p> <p>River Tweed Commission</p> <p>Forestry Commission – Forest Services</p> <p>Local Councils</p>	<p>Catchment Management</p> <p>Environment Agency</p> <p>Tweed Foundation</p> <p>River Tweed Commission</p> <p>Tyne Rivers Trust</p> <p>Wear Rivers Trust</p> <p>Tees Rivers Trust</p>
<p>Recreation</p> <p>Angling Associations</p> <p>Walkers</p> <p>Canoeists</p> <p>British rowing</p> <p>Royal Yachting Association</p> <p>Recreational 4x4 vehicles</p> <p>Mountain biking</p> <p>Horse riding/British eventing</p>	<p>Conservation and Biodiversity</p> <p>Borders Forest Trust</p> <p>Lothian & Borders Wildlife Crime Unit</p> <p>Northumberland Local Biodiversity Action Group</p> <p>Northumberland National Park Authority</p> <p>Northumberland Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Durham Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Tees Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds</p> <p>Scottish Borders Local Biodiversity Action Group</p> <p>ERIC Environmental Records Information Centre NE</p> <p>North Pennines National Landscapes</p> <p>Northumberland Coast National Landscape</p> <p>Berwickshire and Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership</p>
<p>Transportation</p> <p>National Rail</p> <p>Port authority</p>	<p>Land Resources</p> <p>Countryside Landowners Association</p> <p>National Farmers Union</p> <p>National Trust</p>
<p>Water Resources</p>	

Northumbrian Water	
Hartlepool Water	

iii. Action Plan Table

The aim of the North East INNS Strategy and action plan is to **develop and maintain cost-effective strategic approaches to prevent, detect, and manage INNS in North East landscapes through coordinated action.**

Action	TIMEFRAME				
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Objective 1: Regional Approach: Increased coordination of strategic and sustainable approaches to key aspects of INNS management in the North East.					
Action 1.1 Capacity Building Increase the knowledge and skills of those involved in INNS management in the NE					
<i>Continue to hold regular meetings for coordination of the strategy</i>	--	---	---	---	--
<i>Hold regular training and sharing of best practice events</i>	--	---	---	---	--
Action 1.2 Funding Regional INNS management Coordinate approaches to secure funding to support regional coordination and targeted delivery of actions.					
<i>Collaborate to maximise potential of available funding calls</i>	--	---	---	---	--
<i>Maintain a list of priority work areas across the region for targeted funding.</i>	--	---	---	---	--
Action 1.3 Awareness raising Increase awareness of the NE INNS partnership and its activities both within the region and nationally					
<i>Develop a partnership communication strategy</i>	x				
<i>Maintain regular communication and opportunities for engagement</i>	-----				

<i>Consolidate and increase the web presence/portal for the partnership</i>	x	x			
Action 1.4 Stakeholder Engagement Increase stakeholder engagement with the NE INNS partnership both within the region and nationally.					
<i>Explore opportunities to increase engagement with other stakeholder groups</i>	-----				
<i>Participate in GBNNSS stakeholder forum and LAG events at a national level</i>	-----				
Objective 2: Prevention and Biosecurity Reduce the risk of the introduction and spread INNS in the North East through increased awareness and biosecurity.					
Action 2.1 Horizon scanning Undertake review of species with the potential to arrive and establish in the north east region.					
<i>Undertake a horizon scanning exercise to identify new and emerging non-native species threats to the North East in 2027</i>		x			
<i>Update INNS register with HS results</i>		x			
Action 2.2 Pathway Analysis and Management Develop or adopt plans to manage pathways of species arrival					
<i>Review national PAPs relevant to the NE region</i>	x				
<i>Create pathway plans for priority species/ areas</i>		x	x		
Action 2.3 Risk Analysis and Prioritisation Review the process for species prioritisation to consider the impacts and spread of species in the region					
<i>Reassess species prioritisation</i>		x			
Action 2.4 Biosecurity Plans Support development of biosecurity plans for organisations and sites					
<i>Improve consistency in biosecurity plan documents within the region (areas and catchment plans)</i>		x	x		
Objective 3: Early detection and Rapid Response Priority INNS are detected early and action is taken to eradicate to prevent establishment and spread.					
Action 3.1 Early Detection					

Promote the recording of all INNS in the region and continue to improve the alert system for new records.					
<i>Continue to improve the regional EWRR system</i>	--	---	---	---	--
<i>Promote the use of iRecord and iNaturalist for reporting INNS in the region</i>	--	---	---	---	--
Action 3.2 Rapid response					
Improve coordinated action to prevent the establishment of high risk species.					
<i>Monitor the rapid response system</i>	--	---	---	---	--
<i>Maintain a tracker of all active responses</i>	--	---	---	---	--
<i>Where appropriate coordinate with GBNS Inspectorate to identify priorities and methods for coordinated action</i>	--	---	---	---	--
Action 3.3 Contingency Planning					
Develop regionally appropriate contingency plans to support rapid response					
<i>Where necessary we will develop regionally specific contingency plans for regional species priorities</i>		X	X		
Action 3.4 Risk management - prioritisation					
Use evidence based approached to prioritise management actions					
<i>Host a risk management workshop to assess the feasibility of eradicating or containing priority Invasive Non-Native Species</i>		X			
<i>Update species register with priority species for different management actions across all habitats.</i>		X			
Objective 4: Long Term local management					
Strategic and sustainable implementation of longer-term local control and eradication programmes					
Action 4.1 Risk Management - Prioritisation					
Use evidence based approached to prioritise management actions					
<i>Run risk management workshops to assess the feasibility of long term management measures</i>		X			
<i>Document the cost effectiveness of management measures.</i>			X	X	X
Action 4.2 Eradication					

Undertake programmes to completely remove high priority species from the region.					
<i>Candidate populations for eradication should be reviewed by conducting in depth feasibility planning.</i>			x		
<i>Control initiatives should be designed in collaboration with inspectorate</i>	--	-----	-----	-----	-----
Action 4.3 Landscape scale coordination					
Promote engagement and best practise to support INNS management at scale					
Assessment of efficacy of strategies currently employed including trials of biological control	--	-----	-----	-----	-----
The adoption of online tools such as INNS mapper for reporting management activity	-----				
Action 4.4 Monitoring and Adaptive Management					
Use adaptive management processes to monitor and evaluate strategies.					
Engage landowners to take responsibility for INNS control on their land	--	-----	-----	-----	-----
Monitoring and evaluation of cost-effectiveness of trialled treatments	--	-----	-----	-----	-----

iv. Species strategies and project based INNS Management Initiatives

Coordinated management activity across the region occurs through ongoing (open-ended) partner organisations activities (such as the regular activities of the Rivers Trusts, Tweed Forum and National Landscapes teams) and fixed term funded projects which often have a species or area focus. Here we list strategies and funded projects where INNS management is a significant part of the project. We aim to maintain a database of all completed projects to allow learning and sharing from past experiences. We acknowledge that this list is not complete.

Species strategies and Project based INNS initiatives in the North East region.

Species	Project / strategy	Description
Marine	Marine INNS Strategy for Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside Coast	This Strategy describes the biosecurity issues of the coastal and estuarine waters of the Berwickshire, Northumberland and North Tyneside coast and presents actions for the prevention, early detection, control and mitigation of the introduction and spread of Marine Invasive Non-Native Species.

Species	Project / strategy	Description
Riparian plants	Tweed Invasives Project	The Tweed Invasives Programme was initiated in 2002 covering the whole of the Tweed catchment. Control is focussed on giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and American skunk cabbage.
American mink	Northumberland Water Vole Recovery Restoring Ratty (2016-2022) Naturally Native (2021-2023)	Northumberland Wildlife Trust coordinate landscape scale mink control to link to use national and local learnings to bring stakeholders together to create a fit-for-purpose water vole strategy that looks to remove mink from the landscape, allow water voles to recover on their own and, if necessary, reintroduce water voles
Riparian plants	Tees Invasives Species Project (TISP) TOPHOG - Operation Giant Hogweed (2019-2023) Alien Invaders (2018) TEES INNS-OUT (2015)	The Tees Rivers Trust has implemented several consecutive projects for the prevention, control and monitoring of the riparian INNS, giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam. Currently in the development phase of Tees Invasive Species Project.
Crayfish	Northumberland White-clawed Crayfish Strategy	The strategy aims to protect and enhance populations of white clawed crayfish, improve knowledge and understanding of current distributions and status of native crayfish, and inform and engage the public and stakeholders about crayfish conservation issues.
Himalayan balsam biocontrol Dune plants Marine species detection	WADER (EU Life 2021-2026)	WADER is targeting invasive species across the riparian (riverbank), coastal and marine areas of Northumberland and the Tweed Estuary. We are exploring new and innovative non-chemical ways of removing and controlling new and existing INNS and protecting native species and sensitive habitats from their encroachment. Early detection is key, and we are also developing systems for the surveillance and control of INNS in freshwater, terrestrial and marine environments
Grey squirrels	Red Squirrels Northern England (RSNE) Red Squirrel recovery network (RSRN 2025-2030)	The Northumberland Wildlife Trust project Red Squirrels Northern England (RSNE) is a red squirrel conservation partnership working across Northern England. RSNE is the lead organisation striving to conserve reds, working in seven counties, where wild living red squirrels

Species	Project / strategy	Description
		<p>still exist; Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, County Durham, North Yorkshire, Lancashire & Merseyside</p> <p>RSRN brings together conservation partners and 50+ volunteer groups to work across the Southern Scotland/ Northern England red squirrel range. Focus is on grey squirrel management.</p>
Water vole	North East Water Vole Recovery Strategy (2026 – 2035)	<p>Northumberland Wildlife Trust produced this strategy to coordinate efforts to facilitate the recovery of water voles across the North East. It provides a vision for what needs to be achieved as well as a list of goals and objectives. It is hoped that the strategy will contribute towards the creation of a partnership that will successfully work together to ensure that water voles are once again common across the North East.</p>