

## Issue Statement for the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species: Blue Accounting

October 26, 2016

**Action:** Decision

**Decision Type:** “Will live with” consensus

**Decision Type Fallback:** Vote

**Timeframe:** 20 minutes

**Sideboards:** Presentations at November Great Lakes Panel (GLP) meeting and handouts

**Issue:** The Great Lakes Panel is being asked to “sponsor\*” a regionally-based initiative and associated products that would provide AIS information to GLP members and other Great Lakes and AIS managers and decision-makers: Great Lakes Blue Accounting (BA).

*\*The GLP is **not** being asked to provide any financial support to this effort.*

### **Background:**

*Additional information is provided through Great Lakes Blue Accounting handouts and presentations at the November 2-3 GLP meeting.*

Conceptually BA is intended to improve decision-making by facilitating information sharing and tracking progress towards agreed regional goals, based on regionally agreed upon metrics and supported by relevant data and information. AIS is identified as one of three issue areas for piloting BA concepts. The GLP has an opportunity to support and influence the development of the BA AIS pilot and needs to decide whether it would like to be the sponsor of this pilot. The financial and technical capacity resources associated with BA could be used to implement the recommendations and communicate findings of current GLP efforts including the GLP risk assessment ad hoc committee and the research committee AIS funding GAP analysis study committee (under the guidance and leadership of the GLP).

*Proposal for how the GLP could serve as sponsor for the BA AIS pilot initiative\*\*:*

#### Phase 1 (now - 2017):

- GLP completes the work of the RA ad hoc committee
- Relevant parties begin implementing the recommendations of the RA ad hoc committee to collect and provide RA information (*potentially through GLANSIS*)
- BA works with GLP members (*potentially through the continuation of the RA ad hoc committee*) to develop metrics for measuring progress toward meeting regional RA/harmonization goals
- BA initiative analyzes the information in the clearinghouse to report on the metrics
- The findings are reported on the BA web platform (*developed separately by TNC/GLC*)
  - GLP provides input on how the findings are communicated/messaged

#### Phase 2 (through 2020)

- Assessment of progress and interest
- BA works with GLP members to develop other metrics for regional AIS goals to inform the BA platform on AIS (potentially employing some methods and products similar to the “report card” example)
  - Some of these metrics already exist (e.g. rate of new introductions) but others would need to be developed by GLP members through regular panel operations. They can be as few or as many as GLP feels is necessary and/or GLP capacity and interest allow

- Another existing example metric is the current funding GAP analysis work being guided by the GLP Research Coordination Committee which will summarize and report on patterns of AIS investment across the region and research and management priorities
- BA provides technical capacity to collect and synthesize information to report on the GLP selected priorities and metrics and shares the results with GLP
- Findings are reported on the BA web platform
  - GLP provides input on how the findings are communicated/messaged (e.g., “report card” concept)
  - GLP provide input into broader information content needs on BA platform

### Phase 3 (through 2020)

- GLP updates its website to incorporate and/or provide a point of access to AIS information and reporting on AIS progress regionally, potentially taking ownership of the BA platform and/or regularly producing an AIS regional “report card”

\*\*Note on timing: The overall timeline for the BA pilots is through 2020. Phase 1 is intended to build on work the GLP already has underway and thus could be completed in the early stages of a BA AIS pilot. Phases 2 and 3 do not need to happen sequentially. They could begin in parallel to each other, or during Phase 1, or they could be phased in as appropriate.

### **Givens:**

- The GLP is operating under a new, 2-year work plan and operational model focusing on grass carp, risk assessment, and invasive macrophytes.
- The GLP has limited resources (funding and staff capacity) to implement its work.
- GLC and TNC are working on a joint, regional initiative supported by CGLSLGP known as “Blue Accounting” designed to track progress and support strategic decision-making throughout the Great Lakes water system that is being supported with resources from private foundations
  - One pilot of that initiative is focused on AIS
  - The initiative includes the development of a web platform to provide information to decision-makers
  - The initiative also has resources to support (an) existing regional collaboration(s) whose goals aligned with the goals of improved regional AIS management.
  - The timeline for piloting the BA program is within the next 4 years
- The Great Lakes region has established regional goals and priorities for AIS through the GLP priority documents, AIS state management plans, GLWQA Annex 6 commitments, and other strategy documents.

### **Assumptions:**

- No one is systematically collecting and reporting on data and information at a regional level to report on progress towards most AIS management goals.
- Existing AIS web platforms are either data portals (GLANSIS, USGS NAS) or provide static information. The BA web platform would synthesize data on key metrics from other websites/sources and therefore would link to but would not duplicate these existing websites.
- The “power” of the GLP (composition, position, expertise, etc.) make it the ideal forum to provide input on how progress on AIS prevention and control is measured and communicated
- The GLP does not currently have the resources or capacity to do this work on its own.

**Decision:** Should the GLP serve as “sponsor” of the Great Lakes BA initiative AIS pilot?

Option 1      No, the GLP should not engage with BA.

Option 2      Yes, the GLP should engage with BA as proposed.

Option 3      Yes, the GLP should engage with BA, but in a different way than proposed:  
*(provide detail)*

DRAFT