**Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species**

**Risk Assessment Committee**

**Draft Recommendations for Development of an**

**Aquatic Invasive Species Risk Assessment Clearinghouse**

Draft: November 2, 2016

The Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species Risk Assessment Ad hoc committee is charged with improving regional species and pathway risk assessment coordination and developing a scope of work for the development of an aquatic invasive species (AIS) risk assessment clearinghouse. This document outlines the committee’s recommendations on development of the clearinghouse. The committee envisions that the proposed clearinghouse will evolve in its uses and functionality, addressing tier one parameters first and tier two parameters over time.

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| **Drivers:****Why** is the clearinghouse being initiated? | To support the objectives of regional AIS forums:* *GLP Policy Coordination Committee*: Consistent AIS risk assessments across the Great Lakes region.
* *GLP Research Coordination Committee*: Develop a suite of risk assessment tools for fishes, plants, mollusks, amphibians, reptiles and crustaceans to identify a list of high and low risk species.
* *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement Annex 6*: The Parties shall develop and implement programs and other measures to eliminate new introductions of AIS through a binational prevention-based approach, informed by risk assessments.
* *Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers*: Risk analysis uses the best available science to identify key AIS threats, and to guide policy and legislation development to address these threats.

And to:* Support efforts to harmonize species regulation
* Support jurisdictional decision-making (i.e. regulation, rapid response activities)
* Provide a mechanism for leveraging resources for risk assessment
* Facilitate communication between managers, researchers and stakeholders
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| **Audience:****Who** are the end users? | Tier I: (Primary)* Great Lakes basin state, provincial, and federal regulators
* Authors of risk assessments

Tier II: (Secondary)* North American state, provincial, and federal regulators
* Educators
* Outreach personnel
* Retailers and industry representatives
* General public
* International parties
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| **Uses:****What** specific services and uses should the clearinghouse provide for end users? | Tier I: (Foundational)* Serve as an efficient (e.g., time-saving) mechanism for regulators to share and get feedback on risk assessments and risk information
* Provide a mechanism to compile risk assessment information to track progress in meeting partner objectives (see Drivers)
* Serve as a point of reference for managers to inform their decisions on potential response and control/management activities for specific species
* Provide users with points of contacts and experts from other agencies and organizations working on risk assessment
* Help users to identify gaps in information and/or assessments for species of interest and identify next steps
* Allow users to identify any concordance or discrepancies between risk assessment results.

Tier II: (Value-added)* Provide risk assessment methodology and other specific species information (e.g. reproduction methods, dispersal mechanisms, etc.) to regulators
* Serve as a point of reference for educational and outreach materials
* Provide guidance for retailers regarding species to avoid selling
* Serve as a source of information for international entities regarding species’ ecology, impacts, and control/management options
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| **Information:****What** is the type of information that should be shared and sensitivity level of the information?Are there species that should be prioritized for inclusion first?Should the clearinghouse include pathway risk assessment information? | Tier I: (Finalized information, lower sensitivity)* Completed and finalized risk assessments (for all species) that have been conducted by agencies within the Great Lakes region
* Completed and finalized risk assessments that have been completed by jurisdictions outside of the Great Lakes region for species of interest (e.g. species on the RCC priority list) to Great Lakes regional managers and regulators
* Summary descriptions of applicable risk assessment methods and protocols with links to complete information
* Notations for risk assessments that are currently being worked on by Great Lakes agencies and a point of contact for more information
* A high-level summary of risk assessment results across different methodologies for individual species

Tier II: (Draft information, higher sensitivity)* Comparative analyses of assessments for each species
* Access to detailed information used to support risk assessments
* Draft risk assessments for sharing between jurisdictions (when allowed and needed)
* Record of risk assessments (and related documents) supporting decisions to regulate species
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| **Platform / Functionality:****How** will this information be shared?What are the important mechanisms/functions? | Other desired functions:Tier I:* Tiered user system to allow differential access to information

Tier II:* Sophisticated search functions, including using “tags” for individual assessments to indicate the type of information used in order to search for specific types of information
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| **Implementation:****Who** are organizations able to support and conduct this work? | The initial reaction of Great Lakes jurisdictions in attendance at the ad hoc committee meeting was supportive of this initiative. The work group recommends: 1. The NOAA GLANSIS website will serve as the initial/basic data portal with query functions to achieve as many as the above objectives as possible. Additional work to incorporate pathway risk assessments should occur in collaboration with the ad hoc committee and the interstate early detection and response workgroup (GLRI funded through USFWS).
	1. For the purposes of this clearinghouse, NOAA GLANSIS, the Takeaim program, and others as needed, will work together to prevent duplicity of information to ensure appropriate housing of information.
2. The committee is supportive of evaluative components listed above, and we recognize that Blue Accounting is an option to undertake this work, pending further discussion. If Blue Accounting is not chosen as the value-added component, the committee will regroup to determine the appropriate platform for conducting the evaluative work.
3. The risk assessment ad hoc committee will continue to:
	1. Provide oversight of implementation of the clearinghouse.
	2. Interact with the interstate early detection and response workgroup regarding pathway risk analysis.
	3. Ensure longevity of the clearinghouse and its use.
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