

**NB:** If a permit holder sells the property on which an alien listed invasive species is under the permit holder's control, the new owner of such property must apply for a permit in terms of the Act.

The seller of any immovable property must, prior to the conclusion of the relevant sale agreement, notify the purchaser of that property in writing of the presence of listed invasive species on the property.

*The land owner, in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Affairs' Working on Water, lead the fight against invasive alien plants.*

The Working for Water (WfW) programme was launched in 1995 and was administered previously through the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and now the Department of Environmental Affairs. This programme works in partnership with local communities, to whom it provides jobs, and also with other national and provincial Government departments, research foundations and private companies. Over 2.8 million hectares of invasive alien plants have been treated.

In 2015 alone the Environmental Programmes facilitated more than 43 911 work opportunities (part-time jobs) for people from the most marginalized sectors of society. And the percentage of women participating in Environmental Programme projects: 55 – 56%.

Find out more about alien invasive plants at <http://www.sanbi.org/information-resources/infobases/invasive-alien-plant-alert>  
Report alien invasive plants to 0800 205 005



For more information please visit  
[www.environment.gov.za](http://www.environment.gov.za)  
Call centre: 086 111 2468



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# Facts about Invasive Alien Plants



forestry, fisheries  
& the environment  
Department:  
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**Much of this information supports teaching and learning associated with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) Further Education and Training Phase Social Sciences for Grades 7-9**

South Africa is the 30th driest country in the world and has less water per person than countries widely considered much drier, such as Namibia and Botswana (NWRS, 2013). As we have a limited quantity of available freshwater resources in South Africa we need to be especially careful with how we manage and utilise these resources, especially if one considers that “most of our major rivers have already been dammed; 50% of our wetlands have been lost; industrial and domestic pollution is increasing; and an estimated overall increase in demand of some 52% over next 30 years is predicted (due to increased population and increased demand from economic sectors)” (DEAT, 1999).

**Several factors (amongst others) negatively affect water availability in South Africa:**

- Invasive Alien Plants such as water hyacinth affect the capacity of dams and rivers in terms of water storage.
- IAPs also need much more water than indigenous trees for growth and may affect groundwater levels.
- Because of forestry, sugar-cane and alien invasive plants, only 9% of the rainfall reaches our rivers. (The world average is 31%.)

**What are invasive alien species?**

- The meaning of the words “invasive species” is that they are animals, plants or other small creatures which are introduced by man to a place that is NOT their natural home and so they make their home in this new place where they cause damage to other animals, plants or other small creatures;
- NB: It is important to recognise that not all alien species are invasive

**Why must we worry about invasive plants?**

The longer the farmer or land owner takes to deal with these species, the more impact on the value of land and productivity of the land. Invasive alien species threaten ecosystem and biodiversity in a number of ways:

**They have impact on water** - when alien plants invade catchment areas, they reduce the volume of water reaching rivers and dams, and may even stop streams from flowing. It also blocks sunlight to aquatic organisms, and may cause livestock losses through drowning.

**Use soil nutrients** – invasive alien plants grow fast and therefore use up large amounts of soil nutrients, reducing the nutrients available for indigenous plants.

**Decrease in agricultural production** – invasive alien plants that are crop weeds can reduce the success of crops, by depleting the soil of water and nutrients, and by contaminating harvests with their own seeds.

**Fuel for fires** - soft woods, like Pine, tend to grow in dense thickets. These catch fire easily and the fire is hotter than normal because there is more matter available to burn, which intensifies the damage caused by fires.

**What economic benefit can invasive alien plants provide?**

Once invasive alien plants have been cut down, they can be used for firewood, building material, walking sticks, and even furniture.

**What do we have to know?**

In South Africa, alien and invasive species are regulated through the *National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004)* (NEMBA) and its associated Alien and Invasive Species (AIS) Regulations, 2014.

**Landowners' obligations in relations to invasive plants:**

It is the duty of every landowner to familiarise himself or herself with the listed invasive species, and to comply with the corresponding duties related to that category of species.

Every landowner must:

- report listed invasive species occurring in his or her land to the Department of Environmental Affairs;
- take steps to control listed invasive species;
- prevent it from spreading;
- take all the required steps to prevent or minimise harm to biodiversity.

