



## Priorities of the Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species

Established in 2005, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species (MAPAIS) is composed of individuals from state and federal agencies, private and commercial interests, regional entities and academic institutions. Eight states (Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia) and the District of Columbia are represented on the Panel.

The mission of the MAPAIS is to assist state and federal agencies and other stakeholders in developing and implementing strategic, coordinated, action-oriented approaches to prevention and control of aquatic invasive species (AIS) in the Mid-Atlantic region. Our driving force is to strengthen cooperation, coordination, and communication on AIS issues within the region and beyond.

The Panel identifies the following as high priorities:

- ***Develop or use existing national databases to map distributions of AIS in the region***  
Mapping of AIS to document species occurrence and distribution in the Mid-Atlantic region is an important and necessary tool for effective monitoring, state and regional coordination, and early detection and rapid response. The MAPAIS is interested in how existing databases can be used to facilitate this process. The goal is to provide easy to use geospatial maps and technologies to track the occurrence of priority species in the region. Ideally, AIS databases throughout the region would eventually provide coarse to fine scale maps of AIS distribution and temporal occurrence.
- ***Encourage states to develop an AIS management plan***  
The MAPAIS recognizes state plans can provide a catalyst for state and federal funding and resources, and seeks to support activities contributing to the development of state management plans. In the Mid-Atlantic region, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, and Virginia have completed state management plans. Some of these plans address both aquatic and terrestrial species.
- ***Implement AIS management plans***  
Implementation of actions called for in state invasive species management plans and Chesapeake Bay Program Regional Management plans for Phragmites, purple loosestrife, water chestnut, nutria, mute swan, and zebra mussels is critical to minimizing the introduction and spread of harmful AIS. The Panel strongly encourages on-the-ground effort that accomplishes management plan objectives.

- ***Build on current regional efforts in early detection and rapid response***

In early 2009, Maryland Sea Grant and the MAPAIS completed a regional rapid response plan with funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The plan emphasizes an Incident Command System approach to help initiate a synchronized response in the event of a new invasion in a state or watershed in the region. Proposals are encouraged that further expand activities to strengthen early detection and rapid response effort.

- ***Examine regional coordination efforts for preventing the spread of AIS***

The Environmental Law Institute's (ELI) 2007 report "Halting the Invasion in the Chesapeake Bay: Preventing Aquatic Invasive Species Introduction through Regional Cooperation" provides a series of specific recommendations the MAPAIS has adopted to address:

- *Enhance Regional Body Interactions*
- *Encourage Interstate Collaboration*
- *Address Weaknesses in existing AIS Prevention Authorities*
- *Facilitate compliance with and enforcement of AIS prevention authorities*
- *Plan for AIS Prevention on a regional level*

For more information about the Panel visit our website: <http://www.midatlanticpanel.org>