

Preventing introductions of invasive alien plants in Belgium: a LIFE “Information & Communication” project dedicated to the ornamental sector



gembloux
agro bio tech



Mathieu Halford¹,

Leen Heemers², Catherine Mathys³, Grégory Mahy¹

1: Landscape and Biodiversity Unit. University of Liège, Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech (Ulg GxABT)

2: Research Center for ornamental plants (PCS)

3: Horticultural Technical Center of Gembloux (CTH)

AlterIAS, prevention starts in our gardens !

AlterIAS is a communication project which aims at reducing introductions of invasive plants in gardens, parks and green areas.



One project, three objectives

- ◆ Inform actors of the ornamental sector about the risks of invasive plants
- ◆ Identify **alternatives** and **best practices in prevention**
- ◆ Guide actors to implement these measures in a **self-regulation approach**



Invasive plants in horticultural catalogues

In Belgium, about 60 plant taxa are included in a black list and a watch list of invaders. Most of them are ornamentals still sold in nurseries.

Occurrence (%) of terrestrial invasive plants in horticultural catalogues (n = 146) in Belgium



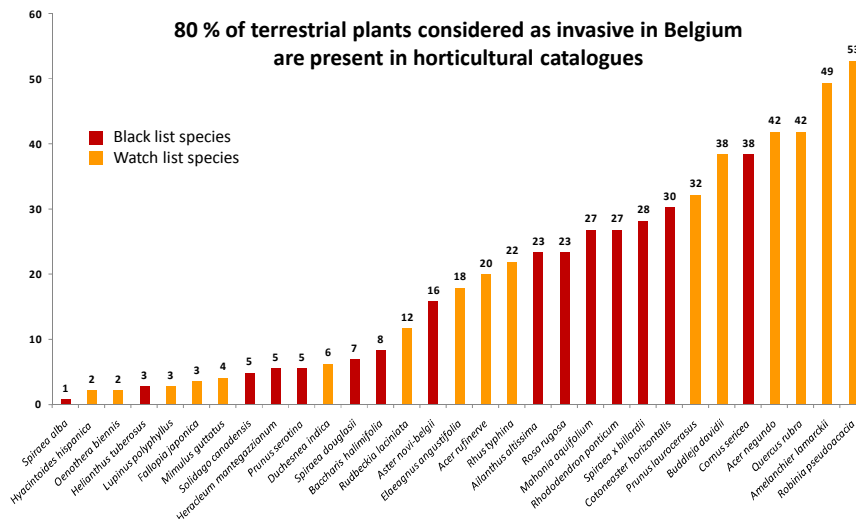
Duchesnea indica



Heracleum mantegazzianum



Spiraea alba



Rhododendron ponticum



Buddleja davidii



Rosa rugosa

Codes of conduct on invasive plants and horticulture

Preventive measures will be implemented through **Codes of conduct** negotiated with horticulture professionals (e.g. nursery men, public green managers, landscape architects, garden contractors).

Which measures ?

- ◆ Know the list of invasive plants
- ◆ Stop selling / planting invasive plants
- ◆ Promote the use of alternative plants (non invasive plants)
- ◆ ...

Take-home message

- It is necessary to communicate towards gardeners and horticulture professionals in order to prevent plant invasions
- Most invasive plants are still used and/or sold by the ornamental sector
- Code of conduct is a self-regulation tool based on voluntary adoption to preventive measures
- More information : www.alterias.be