

Trends in Ecology and Evolution

Invasion Science: A Horizon Scan of Emerging Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract:	<p>We identified emerging scientific, technological, and sociopolitical issues likely to affect how biological invasions are studied and managed over the next two decades. Issues were ranked according to their probability of emergence, pervasiveness, potential impact, and novelty. Top-ranked issues include the application of genomic modification tools to control invasions, effects of Arctic globalization on invasion risk in the Northern Hemisphere, commercial use of microbes to facilitate crop production, the emergence of invasive microbial pathogens, and the fate of intercontinental trade agreements. These diverse issues suggest an expanding interdisciplinary role for invasion science in biosecurity and ecosystem management, burgeoning applications of biotechnology in alien species detection and control, and new frontiers in the microbial ecology of invasions.</p>

Trends

Expanding transportation networks, technological advances, global environmental change and geopolitical forces are transforming risks of invasion worldwide.

Genomic modification tools offer novel risks and potential solutions to managing invasions.

Rapid warming and intensified human activities in the Arctic will alter invasion patterns and risks across the Northern Hemisphere.

Anthropogenic stressors promote rapid evolutionary shifts that cause native and alien populations to become invasive.

Microbial ecology is becoming increasingly relevant to understanding and managing invasions.

Invasion Science: A Horizon Scan of Emerging Challenges and Opportunities

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1 **We identified emerging scientific, technological, and sociopolitical issues likely to affect how**
2 **biological invasions are studied and managed over the next two decades. Issues were ranked**
3 **according to their probability of emergence, pervasiveness, potential impact, and novelty.**
4 **Top-ranked issues include the application of genomic modification tools to control invasions,**
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6 **microbes to facilitate crop production, the emergence of invasive microbial pathogens, and**
7 **the fate of intercontinental trade agreements. These diverse issues suggest an expanding**
8 **interdisciplinary role for invasion science in biosecurity and ecosystem management,**
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10 **frontiers in the microbial ecology of invasions.**

11

12 Key words: invasive species; rapid evolution; gene drives; global change; Arctic globalization;
13 microbial ecology

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15

16 **Emerging challenges and opportunities in the science and management of invasions**

17 Invasions by alien species are a growing threat to biodiversity, ecosystem services, regional
18 economies, and public health. Risks of invasion are shifting rapidly on a global scale owing to
19 expanding transportation networks, technological advancements, landscape transformation,
20 climate change, and geopolitical events [1–4]. For example, enhanced shipping promoted by the
21 recent expansions of the Suez and Panama canals could escalate marine invasions at regional and
22 continental scales [3,4]. The rise of internet-based commerce in living organisms (e.g., pet trade)
23 is creating unique invasion pathways that are difficult to regulate [5]. Early warning of the risks

24 surrounding such events is essential for preventing, controlling, and mitigating invasion threats
25 and could reduce environmental and economic damage, just as disaster preparedness does for
26 natural hazards [6]. However, ecologists have invested little effort in forecasting global events
27 that could shape future invasions.

28 To identify future challenges and opportunities facing invasion science, an international
29 team of ecologists (the authors) convened a horizon-scanning workshop at Cambridge, U.K., in
30 September 2016. Horizon scanning is a systematic approach for exploring emerging trends,
31 issues, opportunities, threats, and events, which can facilitate proactive responses by scientists,
32 managers, and policy makers [7]. Through consensus (Box 1), we sought to identify emerging
33 scientific, technological, and socio-political issues likely to affect how invasion processes and
34 dynamics are studied and managed within the next 20 years. We present 14 issues that are
35 relevant to a broad range of taxa, environments, and geographic regions. Our goal in
36 highlighting these issues is to encourage scrutiny and debate that spurs development of new
37 research foci and policy objectives. These issues are not presented in rank order, but are instead
38 grouped into broad themes.

39

40 **Box 1: Identification and ranking of issues**

41 Issues were identified and evaluated using a modified iterative Delphi technique [8] and methods
42 of expert consultation such as voting and anonymity [9], similar to procedures used in recent
43 horizon scans of conservation issues (e.g., [10]). Each team member submitted at least two
44 topics, in some cases following consultation with colleagues within their organization or
45 professional network to ensure wide coverage. In summer 2016, short (200–300 word) synopses
46 of 40 submitted topics were circulated to all members, each of whom independently ranked all

47 40 topics by taking into consideration the probability of emergence, pervasiveness (scope of
48 influence), potential impact, and degree of novelty; for the latter criterion, priority was given to
49 issues whose mechanisms, implications, or impacts are not currently widely known or well
50 understood. The median scores of these ranks were calculated as a starting point for discussion.
51 In September 2016, the team convened at Cambridge, UK, and discussed all topics in random
52 order, with the constraint that the individual who proposed the topic was not among the first
53 three people to comment on it. Team members then confidentially scored each topic on a scale
54 from 1 (well known, or poorly known but unlikely to have substantial impacts on the study and
55 management of invasions globally within the next two decades) to 1000 (poorly known and
56 likely to have substantial impacts), which reduced the probability of ties. These scores were
57 subsequently converted to ranks, and the median rank of each topic was calculated (see online
58 Supplementary Material, Table S1 and Figure S1). Scoring summaries identified a clear
59 inflection in rankings between the top fifteen topics and the remainder, so we chose to retain this
60 distinct subset. A dozen additional topics emerged during discussions of the initial set, and these
61 were considered and voted upon. By such democratic decisions, the team decided that one of the
62 new topics would replace one of the original topics, and two original topics were merged,
63 resulting in a final set of 14 issues.

64

65 **Biotechnological issues**

66 *Managing invasions through genomic modification: gene drives and autocidal control*

67 Advances in molecular biology have provided potentially useful but risky options for invasive
68 species management. The advent of gene-editing tools (e.g. CRISPR/Cas9) and synthetic gene
69 drives enables the spread of beneficial or detrimental alterations through wild populations by

70 biasing the inheritance of particular altered genes [11]. One potential application is to modify
71 mosquitoes genetically so they cannot transmit diseases [12]. An example of obvious value to
72 conservation and restoration would be control of avian malaria introduced to Hawaii [13], where
73 most native birds are restricted to high elevations beyond the range of alien mosquitoes carrying
74 the parasite; the fate of these birds is precarious because their mountain refuges are threatened by
75 climate change [14]. Advances in recombinant genetics are also providing new autocidal (“self-
76 killing”) technologies to combat invasive species by modifying their genomes such that the
77 modification spreads through the population in a way that reduces the abundance or impact of
78 the species. Genetic modifications can be used to create conditional lethality or sterility, or to
79 create synthetic selfish genetic elements that drive genes into pest populations [15]. Proof of
80 concept has largely been restricted to modelling studies or experiments on short-lived organisms
81 [11], but important test cases include planned releases of recombinant autocidal mosquitoes
82 (*Aedes aegypti*) in Florida and Brazil. The ease of application of these techniques will increase
83 the scope of their utility – including, for example, in conservation [13]. However, they face
84 uncertain public and political acceptance and might require legislative changes designed to limit
85 the spread of recombinant species [16]. They also present environmental and biosecurity
86 concerns such as altered ecosystem functioning and potentially increased invasiveness of target
87 species [17].

88

89 ***Opportunities and challenges of employing eDNA for alien species surveillance and***
90 ***monitoring***

91 eDNA – genetic material gathered from bulk environmental sources [18] – provides researchers
92 with information on species presence without capture or direct observation (e.g., [19]). Although

93 eDNA has already begun to be used to study invasions, we expect that rapid growth, widespread
94 deployment, and automation of this technique in the next decade will transform the sensitivity,
95 speed, and scale with which we detect alien species. For example, we foresee citizen scientists
96 recruited to collect eDNA samples – a mobilisation that could enhance monitoring efforts across
97 large geographical ranges [20]. However, while eDNA offers considerable promise for
98 increasing the timeliness and ease of detecting alien species, it suffers from uncertainties in
99 species identification, runs a risk of false positives, has limited capacity for estimating
100 abundance, and could have weak statistical power leading to overconfidence when no detections
101 are recorded. Furthermore, it can capture signals that do not distinguish between dead and living
102 organisms (e.g. in ship ballast water), or contamination (e.g. faeces, pupal cases, or egested prey)
103 when, in fact, the species is absent. Finally, a greater standardisation of sampling and processing
104 methods is required. Application of such techniques to support quarantine in trade or large-scale
105 invasive species management remains in its infancy, but the power of these technologies and the
106 risks and challenges to their adoption will become a major focus of invasion science.

107

108 ***Changing agricultural practices and the emergence of new invaders***

109 Efforts to develop new commercially farmed species and the industrial use of mutualistic
110 organisms to increase crop yields will promote a new suite of invasive taxa. For example,
111 Eurasian field pennycress (*Thlaspi arvense*) is proposed for widespread commercial production
112 in North America [21]. Introductions of such new crops will enable plant pathogens to jump
113 from cultivated hosts to native species [22]. Two other emerging trends of food production pose
114 novel risks. Insects as protein source for humans offer an emerging market predicted to be worth
115 US\$723 million by 2024 [23]. Those species selected for farming, such as crickets, mealworms,

116 and lepidopteran larvae, grow quickly, often have a generalized diet, and thrive in high densities
117 – properties associated with invasiveness. Commercially produced house cricket, *Acheta*
118 *domesticus*, has already established in the wild outside its native range. Moreover, as
119 commercial house cricket farms in North America and Europe are devastated by *Acheta*
120 *domesticus* densovirus, farmers have imported other crickets that are similarly easy to rear and
121 potentially invasive [24]. Another emerging trend is investment by commercial agribusinesses in
122 seeking and rearing soil bacterial and fungi that facilitate crop production [25,26]; such products
123 are expected to be used on 50% of U.S. farmland by 2025 [26]. Widespread application of these
124 mutualists could trigger invasions by formerly non-invasive crops or co-occurring plants.

125

126 **Ecological issues**

127 *Adaptation to new environments: genetics versus epigenetics*

128 Colonizing species can respond rapidly to local environmental and biotic interactions with
129 epigenetic changes, thereby producing heritable, adaptive, and divergent phenotypes in differing
130 environments [27]. Epigenetic changes result in up- or down-regulation (transcription) of genes
131 responsible for phenotypes – including physiological, morphological, life-history, and behavioral
132 traits. Recent cases demonstrating that strong epigenetic variation contributed to invasion
133 success include both plants and animals [28,29]. Epigenetic changes provide tremendous scope
134 for rapid adaptation [29], despite low genetic diversity observed in some colonising populations.
135 The full impact of epigenetic mechanisms and the relative importance of epigenetic versus
136 genetic processes in invasion dynamics remain poorly understood and likely to vary by context
137 and taxon.

138

139 ***Greater recognition of the impact of soil biota on invasions***

140 Soil biota (invertebrates, fungi and bacteria) are increasingly recognized as a major driver of
141 plant and animal communities via various pathways and mechanisms. An emerging research
142 area examines how alien plants and animals interact with these biota and the consequences of
143 such interactions [30–32]. Some alien plants undergo more positive (or fewer negative)
144 feedbacks with soil biota in their invaded than in their native ranges [31,32], and alien animals
145 influence plant communities and soil biota as well as their interactions [33]. There is also strong
146 context-dependency in how alien species and soil biota interact [30,34], the basis of which
147 remains poorly understood owing to two issues. First, most studies have treated soil biota as a
148 ‘black box’, and we therefore know little about which organisms are involved in regulating the
149 success and impact of alien species. Second, we have a poor understanding of the mechanistic
150 basis by which soil biota interact with alien plants and animals. We expect these issues to
151 receive significant research attention in the future, driven in part by urgencies to enhance global
152 food production and to manage ecosystem services against growing anthropogenic stressors.

153

154 ***Global emergence of invasive microbial pathogens***

155 Invasions by pathogenic microorganisms increasingly threaten biodiversity resources, wildlife
156 conservation, forest sustainability, food security, fisheries, and human health [35–37]. Drivers of
157 this phenomenon are poorly understood but include tourism and global commerce in living
158 plants and animals [33,35]. Accidental transport of fungi, bacteria, viruses, oomycetes, and
159 protists in terrestrial, freshwater, and marine systems can catastrophically affect host populations
160 of animals and plants that lack prior evolutionary contact. Frequently, pathogens have formed
161 novel associations with insects or other organisms with consequent elevated pathogenicity (e.g.,

162 [37]). In other cases, infections by invading pathogens have been facilitated by climate change
163 or other shifting environmental conditions. Microbial taxa can undergo swift genetic changes,
164 either through natural selection or via hybridization with other species or strains, and such
165 changes can result in elevated virulence, the ability to infect new hosts, or emergence of entirely
166 new invasive pathogens [39]. A key problem in managing pathogen invasions is our currently
167 limited ability to detect or identify emerging pathogens, owing to the lack of comprehensive
168 global databases, existence of non-symptomatic reservoir hosts and cryptic pathogen spillovers,
169 and potentially enormous number of undescribed taxa (which can remain obscure until a host
170 die-off, e.g., [37]) New molecular methods will increasingly reveal impacts of invading
171 microbial pathogens, especially where host die-offs were otherwise thought to result from abiotic
172 causes.

173

174 ***Rapid evolution of invasiveness***

175 An existing but restricted alien population can undergo rapid evolution that promotes a greatly
176 expanded invasion. Such a shift is believed to have affected a newly introduced U.S. population
177 of the Asian harlequin ladybird (*Harmonia axyridis*), by the purging of deleterious alleles
178 through a genetic bottleneck effect. This invasive “bridgehead” population of a previously non-
179 invasive species facilitated subsequent invasions of North America, South Africa, South
180 America, and Europe [41,42]. Prolonged lag times preceding the sudden expansion of a non-
181 native population could be attributed to rapid evolution, although each case needs intensive
182 research on this possibility. Similarly, a human disturbance triggering an evolutionary change
183 can cause a formerly innocuous native or alien population to become highly invasive [43].
184 Invasions by the little fire ant (*Wasmannia auropunctata*) in many areas all appear to originate

185 from a clonal genotype that occurs only in human-disturbed habitats within the native range of
186 Brazil [44]. The sudden spread in North America and beyond of the Colorado potato beetle
187 (*Leptinotarsa decemlineata*, native to South America) originated not from native populations but
188 from an introduced population in North America that switched from burweed (*Solanum*
189 *rostratum*) to potato as its preferred host plant [43]. Genetic mechanisms underlying these cases
190 differ and require intensive study to decipher, but research on rapid change in contemporary time
191 is at the forefront of modern evolution [45]. We predict that ongoing massive changes to natural
192 ecosystems driven by land conversion, rapid climate change and invasions will increase the
193 opportunity for rapid evolution of increased invasiveness in particular local populations.

194

195 **Socio-political issues**

196 *Creation and destruction of intercontinental trade agreements alter long-distance* 197 *dispersal opportunities*

198 International trade agreements will increase the volume and distance traveled of merchandise and
199 the translocation of associated species as commodities, stowaways, and contaminants
200 (pathogens, parasites, commensals, and symbionts) [46,47] and have a vastly greater spatial
201 coverage than intracontinental agreements: the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership
202 and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement link the European Union with the U.S.
203 and Canada, respectively. The fate of these agreements can change with shifting political
204 landscapes; protectionism by some countries in the future will shift the balance of trade in new
205 directions with consequences for existing agreements (e.g., the Trans-Pacific Partnership).
206 Intensified translocations across distant regions are associated with significantly higher invasion
207 risks versus intracontinental translocations, because a higher proportion of incoming organisms

208 will be novel alien species, and species in recipient regions are less likely to have evolved traits
209 to cope with the invader [47,48]. In contrast, an opportunity exists for developing more effective
210 cooperative frameworks for animal and plant quarantine measures that would reduce invasion
211 risk. While the International Plant Protection Convention is designated by the World Trade
212 Organization as the standard-setting agency for plant protection activities, individual nations
213 could implement these standards differently depending upon desired risk levels. A consequence
214 of these heterogeneous standards is the establishment of new alien species populations that pose
215 a risk even to nations with strong quarantine programs, owing to the connectedness of
216 international transportation networks.

217

218 *Globalization of the Arctic*

219 Although few established populations of alien species are documented in coastal marine or
220 terrestrial habitats above 66°N (e.g., [49]), the Arctic is poised to emerge as a global hub of
221 biological interchange. Loss of Arctic sea ice is occurring more rapidly than predicted and is
222 facilitating a cascade of human activities including shipping, mineral and energy exploration,
223 shoreline and offshore development, fishery exploitation, and tourism – which will all generate
224 opportunities for invasion, locally and in distant regions (Figure 1). Prospective access to new
225 energy resources, raw materials, and a major shipping route has attracted keen interest from
226 many nations including China, India, and South Korea. Propagule supply to Arctic habitats will
227 increase dramatically [50,51], challenging efforts to protect northern fisheries and endemic
228 biodiversity under increasing disturbance from alien species. Transport on ships' hulls of fouling
229 organisms could ultimately pose a greater threat than ballast water discharge, if the latter vector

230 abates in importance owing to recent ratification of a global convention requiring treatment of
231 ballast water.

232 Climate warming will not only render the region more vulnerable to new invasions [52]
233 but also make it a conduit for them [53]. Indeed, some species have already begun traversing
234 this region [54]. Overland supply chains and a major new transoceanic trade route are emerging.
235 Ship transits have grown exponentially along Russia's northern coast in recent years [55], and
236 the first large luxury cruise ship traversed the Northwest Passage in 2016. The new sea routes
237 and infrastructure will create stronger linkages with existing global transportation networks,
238 while shortening voyages and likely reducing metabolic stress for organisms moved between
239 distant temperate regions (in contrast to the temperature stress of moving through tropical
240 systems). These changes will affect invasion risk in terrestrial, freshwater, and marine habitats
241 worldwide.

242

243 ***Increased invasion risk driven by geopolitical conflict***

244 The next few decades could see substantial increases in global conflicts and large-scale refugee
245 movements provoked, in part, by climate change [56]. Geopolitical conflict directly leads to the
246 erosion of infrastructure needed for conservation and biosecurity, redistribution of resources,
247 border policy changes, reconfigured transportation networks, greatly altered land-use patterns,
248 and large-scale refugee movements [57]. Collectively, these changes have major consequences
249 for the ingress, spread, and impact of alien biota through a variety of mechanisms such as
250 international military shipments. Indeed, post-World War II relocation of military equipment
251 allowed the brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*) to be introduced to Guam [58]. Similarly,
252 military transport is assumed responsible for the establishment of ten species of insects in Japan
253 [59]. Military activity has also been linked to the movement of alien plants since the 19th

254 century, amounting to the translocation of virtually entire weed floras – a phenomenon so
255 universal that such plants are known as polemochores [60]. Moreover, human colonization and
256 immigration history, including the displacement of people following geopolitical conflicts, have
257 profoundly influenced the composition of alien species found in any given region [61]. Thus,
258 impending geopolitical conflicts fuelled by climate change are likely to produce new waves of
259 biological invasions.

260

261 ***Capitalizing on citizen participation for early detection, surveillance, and management***
262 ***of invading populations***

263 Government agencies face constraints on resources available for conducting surveys and
264 surveillance of alien species, limiting the ability of traditional programs to detect and respond
265 quickly to invading populations when eradication and control are most feasible. The opportunity
266 exists to harness and mobilise extensive citizen observations for surveillance [62]. Increasingly
267 available tools and technology can support robust, efficient, and rapid data acquisition and
268 reporting. National programs for citizen science surveillance of invasions are lacking in most
269 countries. Organized frameworks and infrastructure are required, including systems for citizen
270 reporting, outreach campaigns (effective information and education delivery), quality control,
271 and data management. Additional opportunities exist for citizen effort in management and
272 eradication programs as well as in broadening public awareness of biological invasions [63]. To
273 realize this potential fully, social science research is needed to determine how best to engage the
274 public in alien species recording [64], as is technical work on how to integrate citizen
275 information into data systems.

276

277 *Socio-cultural resistance to management tools: an empty war chest?*

278 Five global trends will challenge our capacity to manage established alien species populations.
279 First, pest management often requires the use of traps, pesticides, and repellents, among other
280 methods. Increasingly, the humaneness of control techniques is given at least as much
281 consideration as their effectiveness, resulting in more humane but less effective tools available
282 for pest control [65]. Second, the public increasingly opposes using pesticides, forcing managers
283 to reduce application rates or to apply alternatives perceived to be more environmentally friendly
284 [66]. Third, many species are evolving resistance to commonly used chemical controls [67,68].
285 Research is needed to find alternative chemicals and non-chemical approaches. However, and
286 fourth, the rate at which new pesticides are being registered is slower than that at which active
287 ingredients are being removed from the market. A fifth emerging trend is public distrust of gene
288 drives and similar genetic interventions. These trends suggest that alien species management
289 will become increasingly difficult, thereby challenging science to develop new tools to replace
290 unacceptable current approaches.

291

292 *Invasive species denialism*

293 Coverage of alien species and their threats is increasingly mainstream. Previously, such
294 coverage reflected the scientific consensus that invasions often have negative biodiversity and
295 socioeconomic impacts. More recently, however, a surge of articles in the popular press has
296 attempted to re-frame, downplay, or deny the role of invasions in global change (e.g., [69–
297 72]). We distinguish between scientific scepticism – i.e., calling into question the assumptions
298 or quality of data supporting conclusions regarding impacts of invasions (e.g., [73]) – and
299 denialism, in which assertions are repeated in the face of substantial scientific evidence to the

300 contrary [74], similar to post-truth political discourse. Science denialism attempts to
301 manufacture uncertainty in the expert consensus on an otherwise undisputed topic – exploiting
302 the fact that all scientific knowledge contains an element of uncertainty, and policy makers have
303 invoked a perceived lack of expert consensus to prevent action on environmental problems
304 [75]. As has been the case with its impact on mobilising widespread societal response to climate
305 change, denialism in the context of invasions could significantly hamper efforts to mitigate or
306 control deleterious effects of alien species [76]. Invasion scientists will therefore need to find
307 more effective ways to communicate facts to the public, the media, policymakers, and other
308 researchers [77].

309

310 *New frameworks for resolving conflicts of interest in contested invasions*

311 Many species that provide commercial benefits for aquaculture, horticulture, or forestry, are
312 invasive. Consequently, management of alien species is increasingly contested in social arenas
313 where such species are valued by stakeholders differently [78]. For example, although invasion
314 researchers and conservationists perceive the spread of trout as a serious ecological problem,
315 some sport fishermen see attempts to manage and legislate against such invasions as
316 infringements of their rights. Such conflicts between stakeholders harm efforts directed at
317 building long-term conservation programs. A new approach to this problem lies in developing a
318 framework that more clearly presents issues pertaining to biological invasions and reflects
319 contemporary invasion science, which seeks to evaluate impacts using objective protocols that
320 incorporate ecological, economic, and human-value assessments. Woodford et al. [79] propose
321 applying concepts underpinning the notion of “wicked problems” to achieve clearer, more
322 transparent framing and communication of such complex problems. Such a framework would

323 need to show that effective management of invasions requires either recognizing unavoidable
324 complexity or circumventing it by seeking alternative management perspectives [77,80,81].

325

326 **Concluding remarks**

327 Although current issues of well recognized importance concerning alien species have
328 attracted much research attention (e.g. effects of climate change of the spread of biota; alien
329 plants as biofuel crops; international trade in live species), additional consideration should be
330 given to issues whose full significance is, at present, somewhat speculative or not yet fully
331 elaborated but that exhibit indications of their importance increasing in the future. Our horizon
332 scan identified 14 such issues, relevant to a broad range of taxa and environments (terrestrial,
333 freshwater, marine), that could cumulatively shape invasion science (Figure 2). We foresee a
334 rapid shift in the significance of these issues in coming decades. Advances in genetic
335 modification techniques, for example, will provide both challenges and solutions to invasive
336 species management. We considered biotechnologies that are in early stages of development and
337 likely to involve releasing novel biological entities (e.g., synthetic cells, products of de-
338 extinction), but these were not prioritized in our rankings because their importance was predicted
339 to be realized only in the more distant future. However, the release of genetically modified
340 organisms, already underway but recognized for decades as an issue for invasion science, is
341 likely to become increasingly significant to the field over time.

342 We identified the globalization of the Arctic region as a highly influential phenomenon
343 affecting future invasions (Figure 1). Although it is well known that diminishing Arctic sea ice
344 is facilitating greater ship traffic, much less attention has been given to the role of a warming
345 Arctic in generating new opportunities for invasion through diversified and intensified human

346 activities. It is not widely appreciated that the region will become a major trade corridor
347 between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, thereby forming a new hub within existing global
348 transportation networks [55]. While altering regional and global invasion dynamics, the
349 magnitude of these effects will depend on how effectively management and policy responses
350 reduce transfers of associated species. The Arctic Council – which seeks to address diverse
351 environmental issues in the Arctic by coordinating legal instruments (agreements and
352 regulations), infrastructure, and communication among countries [82] – is exploring strategies to
353 limit invasions [83].

354 Our horizon scan also recognizes emerging trends involving potential socio-political
355 conflicts that could render invasions ‘wicked problems’ for management [79]. These include
356 conflicts among stakeholders, public resistance to management tools (e.g., driven by perceived
357 risks of pesticides), and the rise of invasive species denialism in opinion articles and the popular
358 media. On the other hand, we anticipate that citizen science – that is, public participation in the
359 initial detection, surveillance, recording, and eradication of alien species – will play a prominent
360 role in management at local-to-regional scales and also lead to a greater public awareness that
361 could significantly impact policy. Socio-political issues in general are expected to have a
362 significant influence on all stages of the invasion process and on alien species’ impacts (Figure
363 2).

364 The composition of our team (with its biases in gender, race, and geographic
365 representation) likely influenced the selection and ranking of the issues presented here. In
366 particular, participants from developing countries might have proposed alternative issues (e.g.
367 effects of conversion of agricultural land for urban development) that have added significance
368 given that most developing countries have limited capacity to respond to invasions [2] and can

369 act as hubs to spread species into developed regions. Nevertheless, the diverse issues identified
370 here signal i) an expanding interdisciplinary role for invasion science in biosecurity and
371 ecosystem management, ii) burgeoning applications of biotechnology in invasive species
372 detection and control, and iii) greater recognition of the microbial ecology of invasions. They
373 also foretell a rapidly growing demand for more effective methods of assessing and predicting
374 ecosystem-level impacts of invasion, especially for microbial and ‘below-ground’ biota.
375 Evolving management and policy frameworks will affect the full impact of the issues presented
376 here; however, advanced warning of global shifts in invasion risks and opportunities is essential
377 for developing strategies that can more effectively mitigate invasion threats.

378

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388

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565 **Figure 1. Activities expected to drive increased invasions to and through the Arctic.**

566 Loss of Arctic sea ice will intensify oil and mineral extraction (A), movement of commodities
567 including live organisms (B), port development (C), tourism and cruise ships (D), commercial
568 fishing (E), aquaculture (F), and construction of overland pipelines (G). Shipping through the
569 region will facilitate species dispersal via hull fouling (see H; barnacles on the hull of a vessel
570 docked at Iqaluit, Canada) and ballast water discharge (I). See online Supplementary Material
571 for image attributions.

572

573 **Figure 2. Horizon scanning topics and their relevance to the invasion process and impact.**

574 Each of the biotechnological, ecological and socio-political issues identified here has a direct
575 influence on multiple stages of the invasion process: uptake of the species into a vector-pathway
576 system, survival during transport and introduction to a new region, establishment of a
577 reproducing population, and subsequent spread within the region. Several issues also directly
578 challenge our understanding of, and capacity to manage, the ecological impacts of invasions.
579 These links are not meant to be comprehensive, but rather to illustrate the breadth of relevance of
580 these issues.

581

Figure 1

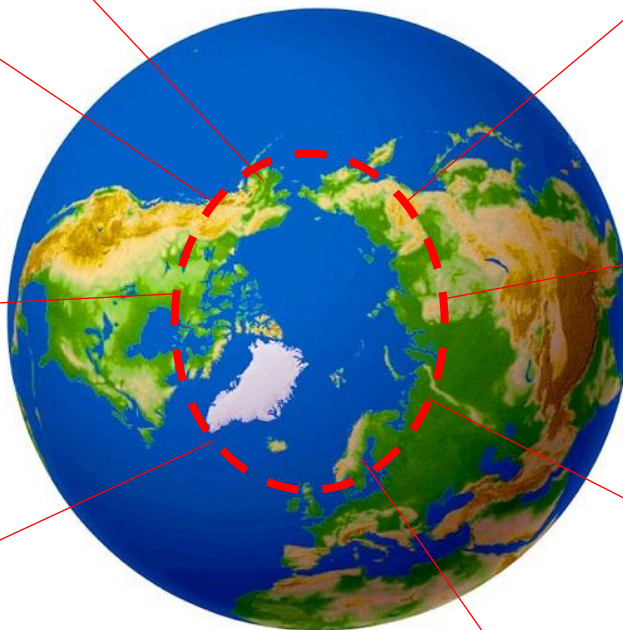


Figure 2

