



Pacific Invasive Species Battler Series

CAMPAIGN TO BATTLE INVASIVE SPECIES IN THE PACIFIC



SPREP
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme



SPREP Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Campaign to battle invasive species in the Pacific.
Apia, Samoa : SPREP, 2016.

16 p. 29 cm.

ISBN: 978-982-04-0601-8 (print)
978-982-04-0602-5 (e-copy)

1. Non-indigenous pests - Control - Oceania.
2. Pest - Management - Oceania. 3. Biological
invasions - Oceania. I. Pacific Regional Environment
Programme (SPREP). II. Title.

363.78



Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

PO Box 240
Apia, Samoa
sprep@sprep.org

www.sprep.org

Our vision: A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures

Copyright © Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), 2016. Reproduction for educational or other non-commercial purposes is authorised without prior written permission from the copyright holder provided that the source is fully acknowledged. Reproduction of this publication for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without prior written consent of the copyright owner.

Cover Photo: Carlo Iacovino, SPREP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dear Invasive Species Battler	2
About This Guide	3
Create a Plan	3
Step 1: Define the issue of focus	5
Step 2: Examine why are you doing this	6
Step 3: Form an effective team	7
Step 4: Decide who are you targeting	8
Step 5: Develop a Clear Key Message	9
Step 6: Design an Integrated Strategy	10
Step 7: Create (and Maintain) a Budget and Funds	11
Step 8: Implementation: Just do it!	12
Step 9: Measure Your Success	12
Step 10: Follow-up and Re-create	13
Additional Resources	13

Dear Invasive Species Battler,

We are a diverse bunch of people in the Pacific region, which spans a third of the earth's surface and encompasses about half of the global sea surface. We have ~2,000 different languages and ~30,000 islands. Pacific ecosystems are one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, with a large number of species found only in the Pacific and nowhere else. In fact, there are 2,189 single-country endemic species recorded to date. Of these species, 5.8 per cent are already extinct or exist only in captivity. A further 45 per cent are at risk of extinction. We face some of the highest extinction rates in the world.

The largest cause of extinction of single-country endemic species in the Pacific is the impact of invasive species. Invasives also severely impact our economies, ability to trade, sustainable development, health, ecosystem services, and the resilience of our ecosystems to respond to natural disasters.

Fortunately, we can do something about it.

Even in our diverse region, we share many things in common. We are island people, we are self-reliant, and we rely heavily on our environment to support our livelihoods. We also share many common invasive species issues as we are ultimately connected. Sharing what we learn regionally benefits us and our families economically, culturally, and in our daily lives. The "Invasive Species Battler" series has been developed to share what we have learned about common invasive species issues in the region, with information and case studies that can assist you to make a decision about what to do next or where to go for further information.

The SPREP Invasive Species Programme aims to provide technical, institutional, and financial support to regional invasive species programmes in coordination with other regional bodies. We coordinate the Pacific Invasive Learning Network (PILN), a network of practitioners battling invasive species, and the Pacific Invasives Partnership (PIP), the umbrella regional coordinating body for agencies working on invasive species in more than one Pacific country.

For knowledge resources, outreach tools, and more information on SPREP, the Invasive Species Programme, PILN, and PIP, please visit the SPREP website: www.sprep.org

Thank you for your efforts,
SPREP Invasive Species Team





About this Guide

Dealing with invasive species is a huge job. Invasive species are everyone's responsibility, but people can only help if they are aware and know what they can change to make a difference. This guide is designed to support your creation of cost-effective communications campaigns to reduce the impact of invasive species in Pacific Island nations. Thanks to Steve Menzies and the Pasifika Collective for assisting with the design of the campaign, assisting and advising SPREP through the process, and preparing the draft text for this guide.



In January 2015, the Invasive Species team from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) began a targeted public campaign to stop the spread of the little fire ant across the Pacific. This guide uses examples from the "Stop the Little Fire Ant!" campaign to highlight the key steps needed to develop and implement an effective strategy. Please view the campaign materials at: www.sprep.org/stopthelittlefireant. You are welcome to draw from this campaign and any other produced by SPREP to assist in maximising the visibility of yours.

Create a Plan

Your Campaign Plan will almost always include the following key parts:

- 1 **Background:** What is the problem your campaign will address?
- 2 **SMART Objectives** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound), e.g. "We will increase the percentage of householders who believe that the little fire ant poses a serious threat from 10% to 20% by the end of our 6-week campaign".
- 3 **Target audiences.** What you say and how you say it depends on who is in your audience. How are your audiences connected to the problem and to each other? Where do they get their messages or news?
- 4 **Key barriers/opportunities.** Your list of key barriers is often the most useful resource you will develop for your campaign because it will allow you to develop an effective strategy that will help you to achieve your objectives and minimise potential risks.
- 5 **Key messages.** Your messages must be simple and repeatable and provide a clear call to action.
- 6 **Strategy.** You need to think about the most cost-effective way of:
 - a) reaching and influencing your target audience;
 - b) reaching and influencing key decision-makers; and
 - c) helping to identify and promote the key actions that will have the biggest impact on the problem you are trying to address.
- 7 **Implementation schedule and budget.** Make sure that you allocate clear roles, responsibilities and deadlines!
- 8 **Measures of success.** In addition to your SMART Objectives, make sure that you also allow for more immediate goals that will enable you to celebrate early successes with your campaign team.

Project work and the project campaign should support each other. For example, taking good pictures of project activities (and storing them with the right information, like copyright and caption) is important to feed into campaign and outreach materials later. In turn, campaign messages should strengthen support for other project activities.

Creating a plan early helps you achieve these links.



Battler Tip

A good campaign strategy can help you answer critical questions, such as:

- **Who am I trying to reach?**
- **What do I want them to know, think, or do?**
- **How will I know if I have succeeded?**

Answer these basic questions first, before starting to develop products such as posters. This way, you can decide if designing a poster is really the best use of your limited resources.



Photo: Carlo Iacovino, SPREP

Step 1: define the issue of focus

To create an effective campaign, you must first understand the issue, its cause, impact, and ways to address it. All these questions will come up as you develop your campaign, and a good understanding from the start is integral to its success.

Many Pacific Islanders are largely unaware of the key threats posed by invasive species to community livelihoods, economic opportunities and the critical biodiversity of their own countries.

Around the region, many environmental organisations and dedicated volunteers are working hard to prevent the significant damage caused by invasive species such as giant African snails, the crown-of-thorns starfish, and the little fire ant. However, unless communities, politicians, and decision-makers are aware of these problems, it is unlikely they will be motivated to support efforts to prevent the spread of these dangerous and unwanted visitors.



Case Study: Little Fire Ants










Identification: The little fire ant (LFA) is a slow-moving, brownish-orange species about 1.5 mm long.

Modes of Introduction: This species is commonly associated with and distributed by humans; discarded rubbish and green waste, nurseries, fruit tree orchards, and ornamental plants are all potential habitat for the LFA. Because these ants like to nest at tree bases and in potted plants, they are easily spread by plant nurseries. When LFA-contaminated plants are bought and planted, the ants may travel with the plants and establish at a new site.

Threats: The little fire ant poses a very serious threat to livelihoods, the economy, and native species in the Pacific islands. The little fire ant has already invaded islands in Hawaii, Guam, French Polynesia, Wallis et Futuna, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea.

The 'Stop the Little Fire Ant!' campaign is designed to try to stop the spread of this species to further sites, islands, and countries in the Pacific by changing people's behaviour in relation to these ants. This campaign was specifically designed to focus on the little fire ant because of the need to personalise the issues surrounding invasive species for the wider community.

-  There was very low community/government understanding of the seriousness of the invasive species problem.
-  People did not 'connect' with the invasive species problem on a personal level.
-  The term 'invasive species' was only relevant to experts.
-  Many people had a fatalistic attitude toward invasive species as 'normal' or an accepted part of everyday life.
-  Many people were simply unaware that they may be unwittingly contributing to the problem by transporting invasive species through activities like taking flowers to church or transporting organic material between islands.
-  Many people are used to dealing with 'normal' ants, and it is difficult for people to understand the severity of the problem until they have been directly affected.
-  Little fire ants are tiny ants extremely difficult to physically recognise (until people are stung!).

Step 2: Examine why are you doing this

It is important to address why you are creating the campaign.

There are many reasons why greater awareness and outreach are needed for environmental issues, but most importantly, outreach is to help people understand how an issue affects them and their livelihoods, environment, and communities. Your campaign addresses specific needs of your community: identifying those needs clearly helps you create the right campaign products.



Public campaigns about invasive species can help us to:

- raise awareness of the problems caused by invasive species
- highlight the key actions people can take to prevent the spread of invasive species
- advocate for the resources needed to prevent or eradicate invasive species
- encourage countries to take steps to reduce threats; and

For example, the main objectives of the 6 week 'Stop the Little Fire Ant!' campaign were to:

- 🐜 **create greater awareness** of the problems posed by the little fire ant
- 🐜 **encourage the individual actions** needed to stop the spread of the little fire ant
- 🐜 **generate the support** (political, funding and institutional) needed to adequately address this growing problem
- 🐜 generate a **shared sense of collective action** among the agencies and people working to address this problem; and
- 🐜 **create greater awareness** of the problems posed by invasive species in the Pacific region



Photos: Screen images from the TV commercial for the "Stop the Little Fire Ant!" campaign.

Step 3: Form an effective team

Forming a good team to support your campaign is helpful but not essential. It is highly recommended that you receive the relevant permissions and endorsements from managers or the CEO or head of unit or organisation to proceed. By doing this, you are able to secure support for your initiative. You will need access to experts or people who are well aware of the problem. You will also need to ensure that someone at the decision-making level is kept informed of your progress to assist you in moving forward and to obtain relevant approvals as needed: make sure that you have a system in place to report to a steering group or a key sponsor from your senior management team.



Having a team is heavily dependent on your budget, human resources, and time available. For a small budget, you would want to divert it to your materials or perhaps a consultant to assist in the formulation of the campaign.

If you have a large budget, you can hire specific people for these roles.

- A **Campaign Manager** can coordinate all the planning and implementation work while also working to engage all key stakeholders. It is very important that the Campaign Manager should focus on finding the best way to engage the support of stakeholders from both within and outside your organisation. In most cases, your key stakeholders and partners will be keen to support a campaign if they believe that it will also help them to achieve their own goals.
- A **Communications Adviser** can help to ensure that all paid and free media is developed in a coordinated and integrated manner, in a language and tone useful to your audience.
- A **Research Adviser** can help to ensure that the campaign is based on a good understanding of the target audience. They can help design baseline surveys and focus groups to generate ideas and pre-test concepts as well as design measurements of the campaign impacts.

If your budget cannot cover these roles, you can assign the roles to existing officers you think would have the best skills. As an example, if you are the initiator of the campaign, then you would naturally be the campaign focal point on top of your current role; if there is a communications officer for your organisation, that person can be the communications adviser for the campaign, and so forth. Clear roles and responsibilities can help you to deliver the campaign on time and on budget.

Step 4: Decide who are you targeting

Knowing your target audience will determine what methods you use to reach them; therefore, the best way to start is to identify who exactly you want to reach. You need to prioritise your audiences based on whether you think they will be the easiest to reach and influence, have the biggest impact on the problem, or have the greatest chance of influencing the attitudes and behaviours of others.

Depending on your invasive species of focus or the issue you are addressing, the target audience may vary. Who are you talking to? Kids, farmers, donors, community elders, politicians, ...? What you say and how you say it will be different for these different audiences.

The LFA Campaign Team ambitiously decided to develop different approaches for increasing general awareness of the problem among the wider public, targeting behaviours among a specific target group, and working to engage support from key stakeholders and decision-makers.

a) Awareness

Schoolchildren aged 8-15
The wider public

c) Strategies and policies

Leaders and partner agencies e.g.: Treasury, environment agencies, Agriculture, Customs

b) Behaviour change

People involved with the transport of flowers and organic material

d) Enhanced Regional Cooperation

Invasive Species Coordinators, Environment Agency Directors



Testing the little fire ant campaign

Small focus groups (of 4-8 people) can provide a very useful way to discuss the campaign issue and pre-test initial ideas directly with members of the target audience. The feedback can help to develop key messages and shape the entire campaign strategy. SPREP hosted several focus groups in Samoa with householders and school children, and these sessions produced key knowledge.



Many people were genuinely shocked to hear about the impacts little fire ants had on other Pacific island communities. They were particularly concerned to hear that the little fire ants had made it extremely difficult for people to work in their gardens or use their lands as they had done previously.



Several people felt there was a significant risk posed by people transporting exotic flowers to church and homes.



Because most people had never seen a tiny little fire ant before, many people initially found it easier to relate to the example of a rat as an unwanted invasive species that could provide significant problems for human beings.

As a direct result of these focus groups, the campaign TV commercial for the "Stop the Little Fire Ant!" campaign was designed to:



Use the funny and engaging character of a "sneaky" rat to immediately show the potential problems posed by invasive species;



Show how transporting exotic flowers between islands and communities could help to increase the spread of the little fire ant;



Highlight the high potential risk to community land use posed by the little fire ant; and



Highlight key steps that people could take to reduce the spread of the little fire ant.

Step 5: Develop a clear key message

Messages should be clear and should tell the audience what the problem is, what the solution is, and what they can do about it.

The best messages are easy to understand without needing more training or information.

When you are creating your campaign messages, make sure that you imagine the audience's perspective or even test the message using a few people who represent your audience.



Battler Tip

It is important to keep your messages as simple as possible. Your message should only attempt to answer the following questions:

What is the problem?

Why should I care?

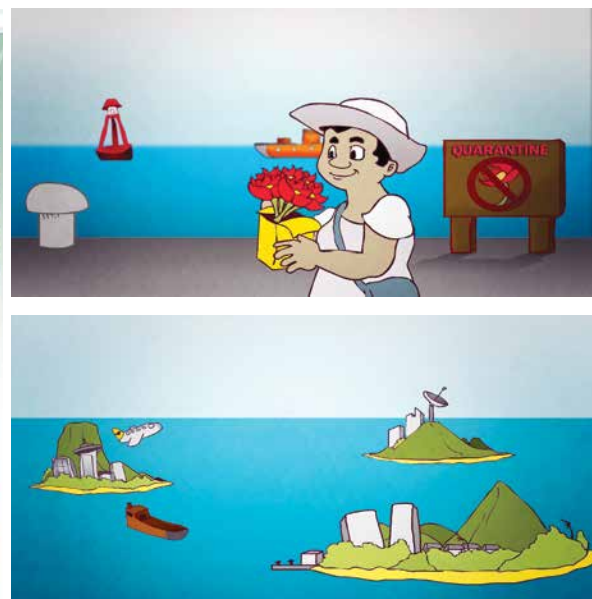
What can I do about it?

Why 'Stop the Little Fire Ant'?

The campaign focused on the need to promote a small number of priority messages.

- The bite from a Little Fire Ant makes it feel like your skin is on fire.**
- Once they invade, they can drive people from their lands.**
- You can help to prevent the spread of little fire ants.**
- Do not bring risky plant material into the country.**
- Check and wash any plant material before transporting it.**
- If you discover little fire ants, please contact your Environment Agency immediately.**
- Invasive Species are Everyone's Responsibility.**

For more information, visit www.sprep.org/stophelittlefireant.






Photos: Website (left) and screen images from the TV commercial (right) for the "Stop the Little Fire Ant!" campaign.

Step 6: Design an integrated strategy

Each piece of your campaign should support the rest. Creating space and connections so each component can add to, rather than take away from, the efforts in the rest of the campaign will make the best use of your resources. This integration requires planning, communication, and trust among all project partners involved.




The “Stop the Little Fire Ant!” campaign initially focused on the development and broadcast of an animated television commercial supported by a coordinated public relations campaign and a “School Challenge” with prizes for participating schools. It is intended that national partners will work to leverage additional support for local campaign activities.

Broadcast Advertising (English and French)

-  an animated TV commercial was developed by the Fijian animator Albert Rolls to help raise awareness of the problem and to provide a clear call to action in a fun and engaging way;
-  a radio commercial based on the TV version was also designed to be broadcast throughout the campaign, with the first two weeks of radio advertising focused on promoting participation in the School Challenge component of the campaign; and
-  currently, the broadcast strategy relies entirely on support from key broadcast partners.

The “Stop the Little Fire Ant” School Challenge supported by ANZ

The School Challenge was designed to provide a direct community engagement activity in support of the overall campaign. The Challenge provided participating schools with specific educational materials, group activities and prizes that are specifically designed to:

-  generate increased awareness of the “Stop the Little Fire Ant!” campaign and the problems associated with the spread of this invasive species;
-  increase knowledge about problems caused by invasive species; and
-  encourage children to think about the key actions that people need to take to stop the spread of the little fire ant.

Coordinated PR Campaign focused on leaders



The campaign activities were designed to provide opportunities for key community and national leaders to directly articulate their support for the campaign. These opportunities could include the launch of the Schools Challenge, the promotion of community survey results, and the participation and support of key sponsors.

Campaign activities should be designed to provide opportunities for community and national leaders to show their support for the campaign.

Step 7: Create (and maintain) a budget and funds

This is a key aspect of any campaign because without funds and a proper budget, it is hard to reach a wide audience effectively. After deciding on your method of campaigning, you can ensure that you get the biggest value for your campaign dollar by budgeting wisely.

If you already have the funds, then decide on how to best spend these funds to reach your target audience. For example, if you have a budget of USD 5,000.00 and you have decided to use it on posters, a workshop and a radio advertisement, you could plan its use using a table like the following:

 Method	 Cost
Poster (Graphic designer, printing, distribution)	USD 1500.00
Workshop for decision makers (10 participants for 1 day include catering and small venue hire)	USD 1500.00
Radio Spots (20 radio spots of ten seconds each – cost will include producer and airing fees)	USD 1500.00
Incidentals (transport, communications, stationary, etc.)	USD 500.00

If you do not have funds to carry out your campaign, there are numerous agencies and donors who have avenues to fund such initiatives. To get more information about these, please contact sprep@sprep.org



Battler Tip

Plan, plan, and then plan some more!

Initially you may only have a very limited budget, but you will have a much greater chance of securing greater support and achieving longer-term success if you invest time in developing a very clear campaign plan.

Step 8: Implementation: Just do it!

This is probably the most enjoyable part of your campaign, when you get to roll out the initiative and deliver your key messages.

Be sure to set a deadline for each action, follow through with everyone involved, and make sure that it is delivered in a timely manner. Make sure that you set clear roles, responsibilities, and deadlines.

When distributing merchandise, make sure it reaches the people intended, and when using media, ensure that you are using the most relevant media for your target audience.



Step 9: Measure your success

Start by clearly stating what you are measuring and how it indicates success (or not). Use your goals to guide this process. For example, if you want school children to know more about invasive species, then your measurement might be the number of students who heard the radio show, are exposed to the posters, or pass an 'Invasives' quiz.

The measurement or feedback process takes time, so build this into the campaign structure. What can be measured at the early stages, middle, and end of the campaign? Early measurements of progress allow you to measure your progress as well as adjust and improve during the campaign.

Battler Tip

Please remember that your campaign will only be successful if it is well planned and implemented in a way that maintains the enthusiasm and support of all your campaign partners.

Whenever possible, try to create opportunities for stakeholders and partners to actively participate and contribute to the success of the campaign. All of these people want to help you succeed!

Decide how you will collect your measurements and what you will do with the results.

Measurements can be counts, such as the number of children who took part in a poster competition or radio show or the number of participants in a workshop, or might be self-reported and ranked feedback, using something like the Likert-type scale given in surveys. Make sure to document the implementation for future use. If the campaign was a success, you can build upon its success for your next campaign; if it was weak, you can use lessons learned to ensure success in the next campaign.

Step 10: Follow-up and re-create

After every campaign, it is always good to follow up with those you targeted to see if a similar campaign would be needed. Have you identified another audience who needs to be involved? Is there new information about better actions?

Given the funds and the need, go ahead and re-create the campaign, scaling up to reach larger or new audiences with your new knowledge and skills for running an effective anti-invasives campaign.



Battler Tip

Help to guarantee a greater chance of success by narrowing the scope of your campaign. If you try to communicate too much, you will probably spread your limited resources far too thinly.

Do not be afraid to focus first on raising awareness of the specific problem you are trying to address before trying to influence attitudes and behaviours.

Additional Resources

The Battler Resource Base contains information materials and resources for battling invasive species: www.sprep.org/piln/resource-base. You can contact the Invasive Species Programme through the SPREP website: www.sprep.org/Invasive-Species/bem-invasive-species



All of the “Stop the Little Fire Ant!” campaign materials are available from SPREP: www.sprep.org/stopthelittlefireant



Join the Fight

Protect our islands from invasive species



Håfa Adåi

Aloha

Mogetin

Rahn Anim

Iokwe

Alii

Kaselehlie Len Wo

Ekawomir Omo

Mauri

Mālō te ma'uli

Halo

Tālofa nī

Halo

Tālofa

Halo

Tālofa

Bonjour

Ni sa Bula Fakaalofa lahi atu

Mālō e lelei

Kia Orana

Ia Orana
Bonjour

Hello

Kia Ora

