### Know your enemy.

The influence of contact with nature in the knowledge and attitude towards alien invasive species.

Milene Matos
University of Aveiro, Portugal



#### Rationale



- Alien invasive species are a worldwide leading cause of biodiversity decline, ranking second only to habitat loss.
- Producing effective invasive species management plans is a central issue in conservation.
- When it comes to charismatic species, ethical questions also arise.
- On controlling invasive species: how to tackle conservation, ethics and communication to the general public?

### Questions



- What do people know?
- Who knows what?
- How do people feel?
- What influences knowledge and attitudes?
- Why do we need to know this?



### Questions



- What do people know?
- Who knows what?
- How do people feel?
- What influences knowledge and attitudes?
- Why do we need to know this?
- EU Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive alien species
  - Prevention
  - Early detection and rapid eradication
  - Management

### **Study** area





### Methods



Percepciór sobre las e	species invasoras	* Y
SP Escolares		
<b>1. Edad</b> ( <i>Señala con una x en el recu</i> 10 − 11 años (Tercer ciclo de l  12 − 15 años (E.S.O.)		Tu pei
<b>2. Zona de residencia</b> Pueblo/región	País	
¿Con qué frecuencia visitas parque	s naturales?	aturales y su conservacion
¿Con qué frecuencia visitas parque ¿Cómo calificarías tu preocupaciór	s naturales?	aturales y su conservaci
¿Con qué frecuencia visitas parque ¿Cómo calificarías tu preocupación	s naturales?	aturales y su conservacio
¿Con qué frecuencia visitas parque ¿Cómo calificarías tu preocupación 4. ¿Puedes nombrar algunas 5. ¿Puedes nombrar algunos 6. ¿Hay algún animal o plan	s naturales?  I por la conservación de la naturaleza?  Valores n  PLANTAS que son típicas en la zona donde vives?	
4. ¿Puedes nombrar algunas 5. ¿Puedes nombrar algunos 6. ¿Hay algún animal o plan ¿Por qué es importante?	s naturales?  I por la conservación de la naturaleza?  Valores n  PLANTAS que son típicas en la zona donde vives?  ANIMALES que son típicos en la zona donde vives?	rives? Sf \( \text{No} \( \text{No} \( \text{C} \)

10. ¿Has oído hablar de especies invasoras? Sí	
¿Dónde has oído hablar de ellas? (Señola con x)	☐ TV / Radio ☐ Periódico / Revistas ☐ Redes sociales (Facebook, Twitter) ☐ Internet (sítios web, blogs) ☐ Entre amigos o familiares ☐ Paneles informativos o folletos ☐ Colegio / Instituto
11. ¿Sabes alguna forma de introducir especies	□ Otros
12. ¿Puedes identificar alguna especie invasora	en la siguiente lista?
FLORA   Jara   Mimosa   Gaña común   Gaña común   Hierba de la Pampa	FAUNA Gineta Garza real Mapache Martin-pescador Galápago de Florida
☐ Ailanto o árbol del cielo  13. ¿Cómo calificarías los siguientes efectos de (Puntúa de -5 a 5: -5 efectos muy negativos; O neutro;	
	ativos Neutros Positivos
Sobre la naturaleza (animales y plantas)	-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4 5
Sobre el medio ambiente (agua, suelo, clima)	
Sobre la agricultura	
Sobre la vida cotidiana de las personas	
	Control de especies invasoras
14. ¿Crees que la naturaleza necesita la ayuda h Pontúa de 1 (no) a 5 (sí, mucho) 1 2 3 4 5	numana con respecto a las especies invasoras?
15. ¿Conoces algún programa de control de espo 5í □ No □ ¿Puedes nombrarlo o describirlo?	ecies invasoras que tenga lugar en la zona donde vives?
16. ¿Te gustaría participar en un programa de p	orotección de la naturaleza?
Pontúa de 1 (no) a 5 (sí, mucho) 1 2 3 4 5	

#### Methods



💢 Crie um site no V

Nature Conservation & Communication









¿Qué sabes sobre...

**ESPECIES INVASORAS?**  O que sabe sobre...

**ESPÉCIES INVASORAS?** 

Participe no

inquérito!

Ajude-nos a entender como

podemos melhorar a nossa

comunicação sobre conservação

da natureza e espécies invasoras.

What do you know about...

> INVASIVE SPECIES?

#### Participa

#### en la encuesta!

Ayúdanos a entender cómo podemos mejorar nuestra comunicación sobre conservación de la naturaleza y las especies invasoras.



#### Take the survey.

Help us understand how we can improve our communications on nature conservation and invasive species.











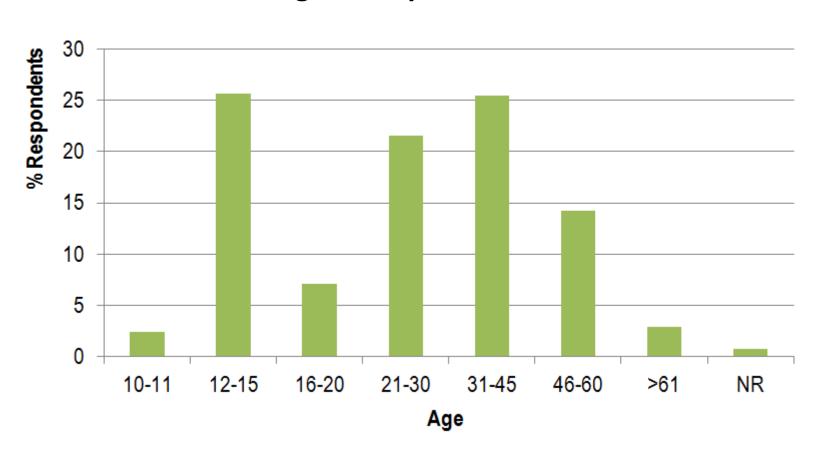
#### Nr. of respondents.

Country	Category	Nr. Surveys
SP	Adults	198
<u> </u>	Children	112
PT	Adults	95
Γ I	Children	4
	Total	409

### **Results - Profile**

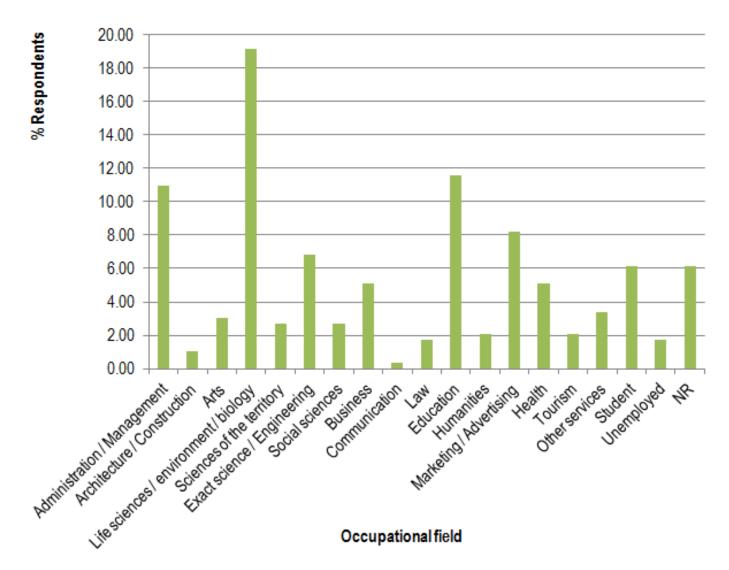


#### Age of respondents.



#### **Results - Profile**

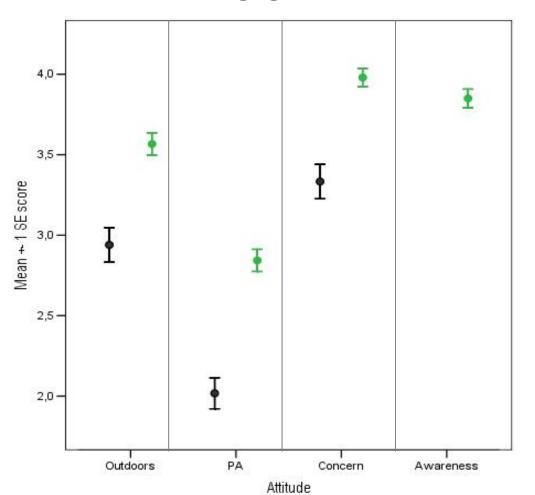




#### Results – Attitudes towards nature



#### Attitudes/Engagement towards nature.



Age category

I Children

I Adults

- •Adults 个
- •Portuguese 个
- Life Sciences ↑
- Land Sciences ↑
- •Architects / constructors ↓
- Marketeers / advertisers ↓

### **Results - Perception of natural values**



Percentage of respondents who mentioned exotic or invasive species as being typical in their region.

		% Respondents	
		Adults	Children
	Acacia sp.	4.44	6.03
Typical plants	Eucalyptus sp.	3.75	0.86
	"Invasive"	0.34	0.00
Typical animals	Monk parakeet	3.07	1.72
i ypicai aililliais	Raccoon	0.68	0.00





# Percentage of respondents answering "is there a species you do not like?".

Al	ADULTS		CHILDREN	
Word	%Respondents	Word	%Respondents	
Invasive	12.29	Pigeon	6.03	
Acacia	9.90	Bites	6.03	
<b>&gt;</b> Pigeon	8.53	Allergies	5.17	
Parakeet	7.85	Insects	5.17	
Eucalyptus	4.78	Wasps	4.31	
Dirtiness	3.75	Parakeet	2.59	
Raccoon	3.41	Cardoon	2.59	
Ailanthus	2.73	Noise	2.59	
Hottentot-fig	2.39	Dirtiness	2.59	
Mosquitoes	1.71	Mosquitoes	2.59	

### **Results - Awareness on environm. threats**

#### Most frequently mentioned environmental threats.

	ADULTS		
	Threats	% Respondents	
1	Pollution	26.96	
2	Invasive species (total)	25.26	
	"Invasive species" - general concept	10.58	
	Specific invasive species	14.68	
3	Urbanisation / Construction	16.04	
4	Garbage / Waste	8.87	
5	Man	7.17	
6	Traffic / Roads	6.14	
7	Noise	5.80	
8	Industry / Factories	5.80	
9	Deforestation	4.10	
10	Eucalyptus	3.75	
11	Agriculture	3.75	
12	Poaching	2.73	
13	Forest fires	2.05	
14	Tourism	1.71	
15	Landfills	1.37	

CHILDREN		
Threats	% Respondents	
Pollution	31.03	
Garbage / Waste	24.14	
Man	7.76	
Invasive species (total)	3.45	
"Invasive species" - general concept	2.59	
Specific invasive species	0.86	
Traffic / Roads	3.45	
Urbanisation / Construction	2.59	
Pollen	2.59	
Drought	2.59	
Noise	1.72	
Forest fires	0.86	

### Results – Knowledge of inv. species



#### FLORA



Coscoja (Quercus coccifera)



Jara (Cistus spp.)



Acacia, mimosa (Acaciaspp.)



Caña (Arunda danax)



Álamo blanco (Populus alba)



Hierba de la Pampa (Cortaderia sellagna)



Ail anto (Ailanthus altissima)



Pina silvestre (Pinus syl vestris)

#### FAUNA



Perca sal (Lepamis gibbosus)



Gineta (Genetto genetto)



Garza real (Ardeo cine rea)



Mapache (Procyon lotor)



Martin-pescador (Alcedo atthis)



Culebra de collar (Natrix natrix)



Galápago de Florida (Trochemys scripto)



Cotorra argentina (Mylopsittamanachus)

### Results – Knowledge of inv. species



#### **AGE**

- Plants: adult ↑, children ↓
- Animals: adult ↑, children ↓
- Final marks: adult ↑, children ↓

#### **COUNTRY**

- Plants: PT ↑, SP ↓
- Animals: no significant differences
- Final marks: PT ↑, SP ↓

### Results – Knowledge of inv. species



#### **OCCUPATIONAL FIELD**

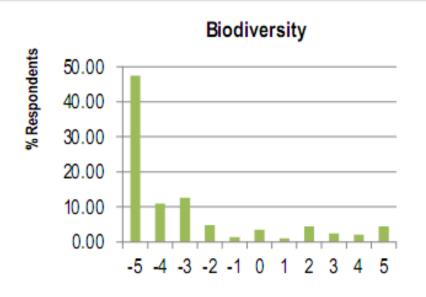
- Plants: life/land ↑, law/manag. ↓
- Animals: life/land ↑, market./students ↓
- Final marks: life/land ↑, construc/market. ↓

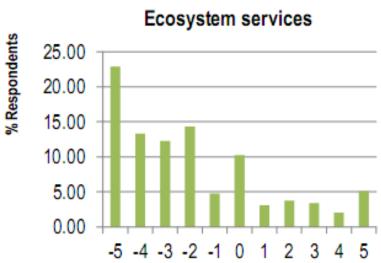
#### **CORRELATIONS** (all significant)

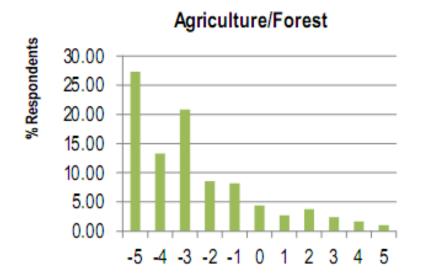
- Outdoors 个, Knowledge 个
- Protected areas 个, Knowledge 个
- Concern 个, Knowledge 个
- Commitment 个, Knowledge 个

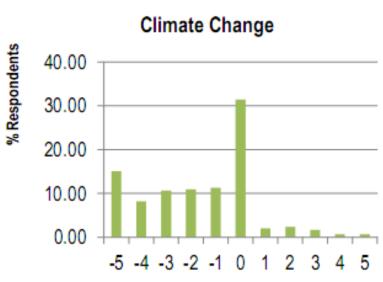
### Results – Impact of inv. species





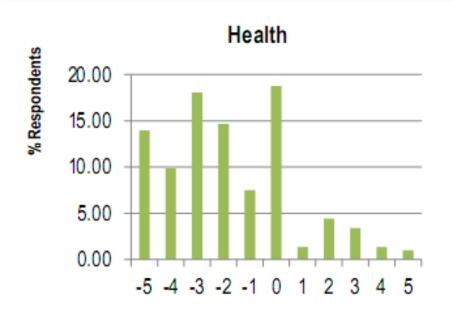


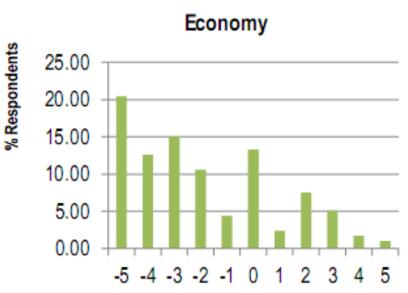


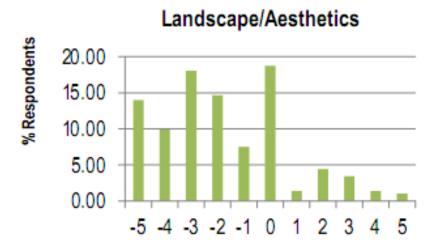


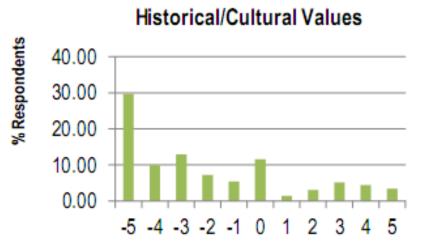
### Results – Impact of inv. species











### Results – Impact of inv. species



- Adults rated more negative impacts of invasive species than children.
- Biodiversity and agriculture/forests were acknowledged by adults as suffering the greatest negative impacts from invasive species.
- Consistently in all criteria, Portuguese respondents rated the impacts of invasive species more negatively than Spanish.
- The training/occupational field also has influence on their perception of the impacts of invasive species.

# Results – Attitude towards inv. sp. control

#### Should we control invasive species?

AGE: adult ↑, children ↓

COUNTRY: PT ↑, SP ↓

OCCUPATIONAL FIELD: no differences

## Results – Attitude towards inv. sp. control

Do you know any control program for invasive species?

#### **CORRELATIONS** (all significant)

- Outdoors 个, Knowledge 个
- Protected areas 个, Knowledge 个
- Concern 个, Knowledge 个
- Commitment 个, Knowledge 个

#### Results – Ethical concerns



- Plants ↓, Animals ↑
- $\uparrow$  Agreement with control,  $\downarrow$  Ethical concerns

#### **NATIONALITY:**

- Plants: no differences
- Animals: ↑ PT, ↓ SP
- OCCUPATIONAL FIELD: no differences

### **Results – Ethical concerns**



#### Alternative methods to elimination

Suggested alternative method	n	% Respondents
Preventions / Vigilance	11	13.25
Castration / Prevent reproduction	8	9.64
Exportation to native areas	8	9.64
Create special reserves / Zoos	8	9.64
Control trade or sales	6	7.23
Hunting / Elimination	6	7.23
Biological control	5	6.02
Capture	5	6.02
Information	5	6.02
Gastronomy	1	1.20

### Discussion/Conclusions



- Valuable information on the public perception.
- Greater efforts towards children/youth.
- Communicate/engage less concerned professionals.
- Nationality:
  - Hypothesis: ↑Outdoors, ↑PA ↔ ↑Knowledge?
- PA and conservation programs have an important impact on the public's knowledge on conservation issues.
- ↑Knowledge, ↓Ethical concerns ↔ "Desensitization"?
- Alternative solutions: prevention and information!

# Effective communication and public engagement needed!

### Acknowledgements











dbio universidade de aveiro departamento de biologia



















Thank you!