

INVASIVE LIONFISH WEBPORTAL

Factsheet

Program Goals

Based on international meetings in the past several years, there has been consensus for the need to create a lionfish webportal. Lionfish experts and managers from the Wider Caribbean agreed that a coordinated regional response to the lionfish invasion would benefit from a webportal. The webportal should provide current and reliable information on the lionfish invasion including status, reporting, management techniques, sample control plans, and legislation, all widely accessible to managers and decision makers. In addition, it should also allow web-based training on lionfish control strategies to coastal managers across the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR). Plans should include the development, launch, maintenance, and stewardship of the webportal.

All work should be conducted in consultation with the State Department's Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs and the Regional Lionfish Committee (RLC). The success of this project depends on consultations with key stakeholders. All draft documents, agendas, and other products should be shared with OES and the RLC for review and comment. The United States and the RLC both seek to be a catalysts and contributors to regional solutions dealing with invasive lionfish.

USG Funding

The U.S. Department of State has authorized the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries (NOAA) to provide funds for the development and implementation of a webportal. The terms and conditions on the use of these funds are specifically directed to developing specific elements of this webportal. Restrictions on the use of these funds give NOAA minimal ability to adjust spending priorities. To expedite completion of the web portal, a contract will be negotiated by NOAA with an approved vendor. The contracting process will include a public announcement soliciting bids for a specific period; bids will be evaluated; and the best vendor will be selected to perform specific work stated in the contract.

Project Actions

NOAA will lead the project and be responsible for managing the contractor in the development of a lionfish webportal. NOAA will coordinate the information to be featured on the webportal as well as the technical capability to display the information. It should be noted that this project funding is intended to support the foundation of a webportal that will later change over time with the evolving response to the lionfish invasion.

NOAA will chair a subcommittee of lionfish experts to synthesize the information (graphics, artwork, and text content) to be featured on the webportal. The web-developed documents must be compliant with the technical and usability requirements in Section 508 rules¹

The subcommittee will be comprised of five to eight lionfish experts, selected by NOAA in consultation with the RLC, keeping in mind that no funding is available for travel expenses, and are the responsibility of the experts. The subcommittee may have to consult by phone and electronically due to funding constraints and contract deadlines.

NOAA will enter into a contract with an entity that will design and layout the webportal on an existing server that currently provides natural resource information and coordination to coastal managers and researchers in the Wider Caribbean Region. All contracted work, including the webportal structure, will be developed in consultation with NOAA. Draft work will be shared with NOAA for review and comment before decision junctures. The contracted entity will also be responsible for submitting a performance, interim, and final report to NOAA. Measures will be taken to ensure that the webportal is suitable for an international audience.

¹ Section 508 requires that Federal agencies' electronic and information technology is accessible to people with disabilities. <http://www.osec.doc.gov/webresources/accessibility/RuleB.htm>. Also see <http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm>

RLC Consultation

In 2011, the RLC was tasked by ICRI to “Launch a web portal to serve as a site for ongoing regional communication, current and credible scientific information, and access to best management practices and manager-training tools.”

In recognition of the coordination role of the RLC, NOAA and its contractors will execute this work in consultation with the RLC and other regional experts. One member of the subcommittee will be a member of the RLC who will serve as a liaison between the subcommittee and RLC by maintaining regular communication with both entities. NOAA will conduct work in consultation with the RLC liaison on the subcommittee. The RLC liaison will share draft documents, agendas, and other products with the RLC for review and comment.

Engagement between the RLC and NOAA regarding webportal development is encouraged. By appointing a member of the RLC to serve on the subcommittee as a liaison, the RLC will be informed of the activities of the subcommittee and have an opportunity to give input. There will be numerous opportunities during this project for the RLC to engage in this process. The subcommittee will be constituted and have its first meeting prior to the start of work on the contract.

NOAA will assist the RLC in identifying a long-term host of the webportal that has a vested interest and demonstrated capacity to keep the webportal up-to-date for the foreseeable future.

Timeline

Project Milestones	Product	Estimated Delivery Date
Provisional design and layout	Webportal site map	June 1, 2012
Release of draft webportal for review	Beta version of webportal	August 1, 2012
Launch of live webportal	Fully functional webportal	October 1, 2012