

Exhortatory Resolution Urging Federal Action to Mitigate the Threat of Invasive Plant Species Introduced Through the Nursery and Pet/Aquarium Trades

WHEREAS, invasive plant species pose a substantial and multifaceted threat to the environment, economy, and public health of our nation, evidenced by their capacity to:

- Diminish native habitats through the displacement and suppression of indigenous plant species.
- Disrupt crucial food webs and wildlife ecosystems.
- Alter soil composition, chemistry, and organism distribution, affecting soil health.
- Decrease resource availability, including water and nutrients.
- Impair vital ecosystem functions like pollination.
- Reduce genetic diversity and global biodiversity.
- Elevate health risks such as poisonings, allergies, dermatitis, injuries, and diseases like Lyme disease and West Nile virus.
- Jeopardize food production and security.
- Limit recreational opportunities and utilization of urban green spaces.
- Transform Canada's natural heritage, including Indigenous cultural legacy and cherished landscapes.
- Negatively impact mental well-being through landscape transformation and management complexities.
- Diminish revenue in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, hunting, fishing, and recreation sectors.
- Damage infrastructure, causing increased maintenance expenses and heightened risks of fire, erosion, and property damage.

WHEREAS, the introduction and proliferation of non-native invasive plants have emerged as a primary driver of biodiversity loss and ecological disruption;

WHEREAS, Canada must reduce the rate of introduction and establishment of non-native invasive species by 50 per cent by 2030, to meet international obligations under the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Target 6 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework);

WHEREAS, the ornamental/horticultural industry is the primary pathway for the introduction and spread of non-native invasive plants within Canada;

WHEREAS, the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Biodiversity Working Group asserts that halting pathways of introduction is the key to dealing with invasive species;

WHEREAS, the unchecked proliferation of invasive plant species inflicts significant and enduring financial burdens upon local governments, landowners, and taxpayers, necessitating continuous investment in removal, control, mitigation, and restoration efforts;

WHEREAS, regional governments frequently lack the knowledge, information, and resources necessary to address the invasive species challenge adequately and equitably;

WHEREAS, the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Invasive Alien Species Task Force has called for improved federal leadership, coordination, information systems, and regulatory mechanisms;

WHEREAS, the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the Standards and Trade Development Facility have advised Canada and all parties to improve legal frameworks to better regulate invasive plants to safeguard environmental and biodiversity interests;

WHEREAS, to safeguard environmental and biodiversity interests, Australia and New Zealand improved their legal frameworks and require all new plant imports undergo risk assessments;

WHEREAS, to safeguard environmental and biodiversity interests, the European Union developed an *Invasive Alien Species Regulation* (Regulation (EU) 1143/2014) to prohibit the sale and movement of high-risk invasive plants across twenty-seven European countries;

WHEREAS, plants sold to consumers are products;

WHEREAS, product labelling is a fundamental component of consumer protection and education in Canada, alerting consumers to potential risks and providing proper handling guidelines;

WHEREAS, product labelling in Canada is used to engage market forces to reduce sales of products harmful to our environment or public health (Energuide program, tobacco labelling);

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: THAT the Town of Oakville council urgently calls upon the federal government of Canada to enhance its policies, tools, and regulations to reduce the threats posed by invasive plant species introduced through the ornamental/horticultural trades, by undertaking the following actions:

1. **A Comprehensive National Plant Risk Assessment Database:** The federal government should develop a national repository for information on invasive plants to support the activities of federal and regional governments, Indigenous communities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
2. **Mandatory Risk Assessments for New Plant Imports:** To prevent the introduction of invasive plants, the federal government should mandate rigorous risk assessments for all plant imports new to Canada, paid for by the importer.
3. **Ban on Sale and Movement of High-Risk Invasive Plants:** In order to prevent the further spread of invasive plant species, the federal government should institute a comprehensive ban encompassing the sale, trade, and transportation of identified high-risk invasive plants.

4. **Point of Sale Labeling and Education Mandate:** The federal government should mandate point of sale labeling for invasive plants to inform consumers about potential risks. Plant labels should clearly identify plants using botanical names, provide instructions on preventing the spread of invasive plants, and suggest non-invasive alternatives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this council call on all relevant federal agencies and departments to collaborate with provincial and territorial authorities, Indigenous communities, environmental organizations, academia, and other stakeholders to develop and implement these measures effectively.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this council commit to advocating for the importance of addressing invasive plant species threats at the national level and to support initiatives that promote the conservation of our environment, protection of our economy, and the well-being of our citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be communicated to the federal government of Canada, relevant ministries, members of parliament, and other appropriate stakeholders to encourage decisive action in combatting invasive plant species threats.

ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 20.

[City Seal]

Mayor, City of [City Name]