POLICY FOR REDUCING THE IMPACT OF ALIEN AND INVASIVE SPECIES ON CAMPUS

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1. Preamble

P P Savani University recognises that the conservation of native plants, animals, and habitats is an important part of maintaining a healthy and sustainable campus. Alien species are plants, animals, or other organisms introduced outside their natural range. Some of these species can become invasive and negatively affect native biodiversity, soil quality, water resources, and ecological balance.

The University is committed to identifying, monitoring, and reducing the harmful effects of invasive alien species on its campus. Through responsible landscaping, suitable weed and pest management, expert guidance, student participation, and environmental awareness, PPSU aims to protect local biodiversity and maintain a healthy campus ecosystem.

2. Purpose

The policy aims to:

- Identify and monitor alien species that may pose a threat to native biodiversity on campus.
- Prevent the introduction and spread of potentially invasive plants, animals, pests, and pathogens.
- Promote native and locally appropriate plant species in campus landscaping and plantation activities.
- Use environmentally responsible methods to manage invasive weeds and pests.
- Protect existing vegetation, habitats, soil, and water resources from ecological damage.
- Encourage students, faculty, maintenance staff, and external experts to participate in biodiversity conservation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all areas under the University's management, including academic buildings, gardens, landscaped areas, sports grounds, roadsides, parking areas, hostels, plantation sites, water bodies, and other green spaces. It applies to university departments, campus maintenance teams, gardening and landscaping contractors, construction agencies,

students, faculty, staff, and other persons undertaking activities that may affect campus biodiversity.

4. Identification and Monitoring

The University will establish a process to identify alien species that may adversely affect the campus ecosystem.

- Periodic inspections will be conducted in landscaped areas, gardens, plantation sites, disturbed land, and other suitable locations.
- Suspected invasive species will be recorded with their location, approximate spread, observed impact, and photographs where possible.
- Environmental experts, botanists, horticulturists, or other qualified specialists may be consulted to confirm identification and recommend appropriate management measures.
- Monitoring records will be maintained to track changes in the occurrence and spread of identified invasive species.
- Priority will be given to species that spread rapidly, threaten native plants or habitats, or create significant ecological or public-health concerns.

The University will distinguish potentially harmful invasive species from non-native species that do not present a demonstrated ecological risk. Management decisions will be based on identification, evidence, and expert advice.

5. Prevention and Responsible Landscaping

Prevention will be the preferred approach wherever practical.

- Native and locally suitable plant species will be prioritised for new landscaping and plantation activities.
- Plant species will be selected after considering their ecological suitability, maintenance needs, water requirements, and potential to spread beyond cultivated areas.
- Plants known to be invasive or prohibited under applicable regulations will not be introduced or planted.
- Nursery plants, seeds, soil, compost, and other landscaping materials will be checked where appropriate to reduce the accidental introduction of invasive plants, pests, and pathogens.
- Garden waste and removed invasive plant material will be handled and disposed of responsibly to prevent further spread.
- Existing native vegetation will be protected wherever feasible during landscaping, maintenance, and construction work.

6. Control and Management Measures

When an invasive species is identified, the University will assess the extent of the problem and select an appropriate control method.

6.1 Manual and mechanical control

Hand removal, cutting, pruning, or other suitable physical methods may be used where effective and safe. Removed material will be handled carefully to prevent seeds, roots, or plant fragments from spreading.

6.2 Habitat and landscape management

Appropriate ground cover, healthy native vegetation, suitable soil management, and regular maintenance may be used to reduce opportunities for invasive species to establish and spread.

6.3 Integrated pest management

The University will encourage an integrated approach to pest management, combining monitoring, preventive practices, physical methods, and other suitable controls. Chemical pesticides and herbicides will be used only when justified, in accordance with applicable regulations and product instructions, and by authorised personnel.

6.4 Biological control

Biological control may be considered only after a scientific assessment and consultation with qualified experts and relevant authorities. No organism will be introduced for control purposes without appropriate assessment and authorisation.

6.5 Protection of native biodiversity

Control activities will be planned to minimise harm to native plants, pollinators, birds, beneficial insects, soil organisms, and other non-target species. Sensitive habitats will receive particular attention.

7. Responsibilities

The University will oversee the implementation of this policy, provide the necessary resources for monitoring and management, and ensure that biodiversity considerations are integrated into campus development and maintenance activities.

Environment Committee

- Coordinate species identification and monitoring activities.
- Maintain records of identified invasive species and management actions.
- Review progress and recommend improvements.

Estate, Gardening, and Maintenance Teams

- Inspect campus green spaces regularly.
- Report suspected invasive species.
- Follow approved procedures for landscaping, removal, and disposal of affected plant material.

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Faculty and Students

- Participate in awareness programmes, campus biodiversity surveys, and approved conservation activities.
- Report suspected invasive species to the designated university authority.
- Avoid planting, releasing, or distributing potentially invasive organisms on campus without approval.

8. Awareness, Education, and Research

PPSU will encourage awareness activities on invasive alien species and their potential effects on local ecosystems. Activities may include workshops, student projects, biodiversity walks, plantation programmes, poster campaigns, and collaboration with environmental organisations or local experts.

Academic departments may undertake research on campus biodiversity, invasive-species distribution, ecological impacts, and effective management practices. Students may be encouraged to contribute through supervised projects and field observations.

9. Monitoring and Documentation

The University will maintain records of:

- Species identified and locations affected.
- Inspection dates and monitoring observations.
- Management and control measures undertaken.
- Planting and landscaping decisions relevant to invasive-species prevention.
- Awareness programmes, expert consultations, and student participation.
- Follow-up observations to assess whether management measures have been effective.

10. Governance and Review

The policy will be implemented through coordination among the University Administration, School of Agriculture, farm staff, concerned departments. The policy will be reviewed at least once every three years or earlier when required.

11. Commitment

P P Savani University is committed to reducing the harmful impact of invasive alien species through prevention, early identification, responsible management, education, and continuous monitoring. By protecting native biodiversity and involving the campus community, the University aims to create a healthier, more resilient, and environmentally responsible campus.

Dr Sateesh Biradar
The Registrar
P P Savani University, Surat.

Registrar
P P Savani University

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