Ref. No. Date.....

Tantia University

Policy title	Policy on Reducing the Impact of Alien Species
Effective date	20-11-2024
Next scheduled review	Three years after the effective date, or earlier if applicable rules change

Tantia University is located in an irrigated, agriculture-dominated region where the introduction and spread of alien species, particularly invasive species, may threaten native biodiversity. These species can displace indigenous vegetation, increase pressure on limited groundwater resources, pose risks to livestock and human health, and degrade habitats for birds and other wildlife. In recognition of these challenges, the University is committed to preventing the introduction of new alien species and minimising the ecological impact of those already present on its campus.

Scope

This policy applies to all University campuses, the Research Farm, hostels, hospital and college premises, the University Gaushala, laboratories, and field-based programmes. It is applicable to all staff, students, contractors, vendors, and visitors who work, study, provide services, or undertake activities on University-controlled land.

Definitions

Alien Species: Any plant, animal, or microorganism introduced beyond its natural geographical range through human activities.

Invasive Alien Species: An alien species that establishes, spreads, and causes adverse effects on native biodiversity, agriculture, water resources, or human and animal health.

Native Species: Species that naturally occur in the arid and semi-arid regions of north-western Rajasthan, including Khejri, Neem, Peepal, Rohida, and Sheesham.

Policy Statements

The University shall:

- Prioritise Native Species: Give preference to native plant species in all landscaping activities, plantation drives, avenue and boundary plantations, and ecological restoration initiatives.

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- Restrict Invasive Species: Prohibit the planting, sale, distribution, or exchange of any species identified as invasive in the University's Alien Species List.

- Regulate the Introduction of Non-Native Animals: Prohibit the introduction of non-native animals, including pets, aquarium or pond species, fish for stocking, and ornamental birds, onto campus without prior written approval from the authorised University authority.

- Monitor and Manage Existing Invasive Species: Identify, monitor, and, wherever practicable, control or remove invasive alien species present on University-controlled land through a planned and systematic management programme.

- Promote Awareness and Community Participation: Conduct awareness and educational activities for students, staff, farmers, and the wider community to encourage the prevention and management of invasive alien species and the protection of native biodiversity

Prevention

Approved Plant List

The Faculty of Agriculture shall maintain an Approved Plant List for landscaping, hedges, gardens, and field-based programmes, along with an Alien Species List identifying plants that must be excluded or removed. The list shall include invasive species such as Prosopis juliflora (vilayati babool), Parthenium hysterophorus (Congress grass), Lantana camara, and Eichhornia crassipes (water hyacinth). Both lists shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

Procurement

Nurseries and contractors supplying saplings, seeds, turf, or other planting materials to the University shall provide only species included in the Approved Plant List. The University Maintenance Team shall inspect all deliveries to verify compliance with the approved list and ensure that prohibited species are not introduced onto University premises.

Research and Teaching

The Research Farm and Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory may use non-native crop varieties and planting materials for agricultural research, teaching, and related purposes, provided that the intended use is documented, appropriate containment measures are implemented, and all applicable plant quarantine and biodiversity laws are followed. Any other research or teaching activity involving non-native species shall require prior approval from the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture.

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Animals

Pets shall not be permitted in University hostels. The Veterinary College and University Gaushala shall not accept non-native animals except for approved clinical, research, or teaching purposes. The release of any animal, fish, or aquarium species into campus ponds, drainage systems, or green spaces shall be prohibited. Unwanted animals shall be transferred to authorised agencies or the Forest Department, as appropriate.

Biosecurity

Imported soil, compost, planting materials, fodder, and agricultural machinery shall be inspected before use to identify and prevent the introduction of invasive weed seeds, pests, and plant diseases. Compost and garden waste containing invasive plant material shall not be distributed or applied on University land, thereby preventing the accidental spread of invasive species.

Early Detection and Monitoring

The Biodiversity Monitoring Group, with the support of National Service Scheme (NSS) and National Cadet Corps (NCC) volunteers, shall identify and document alien and invasive species during the University's biannual campus bird and wildlife surveys and the baseline survey conducted for the Species Register. Each record shall include the species name, location, extent of occurrence, and any corrective or management measures undertaken. All members of the University community may report suspected invasive species to the Maintenance Committee, which shall coordinate with the Faculty of Agriculture for species identification, verification, and appropriate follow-up action.

Control and Removal

Planned Removal: Invasive plants shall be removed systematically, preferably before flowering and seed formation, using manual or mechanical methods wherever feasible. Chemical control shall be considered only as a last resort, with appropriate precautions to protect water bodies, nesting sites, and surrounding biodiversity.

Safe Disposal: Removed invasive plant material shall be collected and disposed of safely through suitable methods, such as secure bagging, drying, or controlled burning where legally permitted. Such material shall not be composted or dumped in locations where it could regenerate or spread.

Restoration of Cleared Areas: Areas cleared of invasive plants shall be replanted with suitable native species to minimise the risk of reinvasion and support ecological restoration. The survival and growth of newly planted trees shall be documented in the University's Tree Register.

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Protection of Wildlife and Worker Safety: Removal activities shall, wherever practicable, be scheduled to avoid bird breeding seasons and minimise disturbance to wildlife. All control and removal work shall be undertaken by trained personnel or by volunteers working under appropriate supervision.

Awareness and Education

Each year the University will run at least one awareness activity, such as a student-led weed removal drive, a native plant display, or a workshop on invasive species with the Forest Department, covering farmers and schools as well as students. Agriculture and veterinary courses include invasive species in plant protection, weed science and ecology teaching, and farmer seminars and the Soil and Water Testing Laboratory advisory service share guidance on invasive weeds.

Review

The policy shall be reviewed every three years from its effective date, or earlier if required due to changes in applicable laws, regulations, or guidelines.

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