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The role of species charisma in biological invasions

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Species charisma, understood as a set of species characteristics that affect people’s perceptions, attitudes and behaviour, is a highly relevant concept for invasion science, with implications across all stages of the invasion process. However, this issue has not yet been systematically investigated. Here, we clarify the concept of charismatic invasive alien species (IAS) and highlight management implications. We review how charisma affects the processes associated with biological invasions and IAS management, including: effects on species introductions and spread, media portrayals, public perceptions of species management, research attention, and active public involvement in research and management. Explicit consideration of IAS charisma is critical to improve understanding of the drivers of people’s attitudes towards particular IAS and planned management measures and strategies, and to implement a combination of education programs, awareness raising and public involvement campaigns.