



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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18 April 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Response to stakeholder engagement on a summary of the EPPO PRA on *Chrysobothris femorata* and *Chrysobothris mali*

Thank you for submitting views on the above stakeholder engagement. This letter is to notify you of the outcome.

Background

Chrysobothris femorata, known as the flat-headed apple tree borer, and *C. mali*, known as the Pacific flat-headed borer, are highly polyphagous North American beetles that attack a wide range of deciduous non-conifer trees and are pests in commercial nurseries, orchards, and in the wider environment.

The EPPO PRA for these beetles was conducted in September 2021 and concluded that these pests pose a **moderate risk** (with moderate uncertainty) to the EPPO region, which includes the UK. Imports of host round wood with bark were considered the most likely pathway for entry. It also estimated that establishment of this pest is **highly likely** outdoors (with low uncertainty for *C. femorata* and moderate uncertainty for *C. mali*).

Proposal

The summaries of EPPO's findings and their relevance to GB were enclosed in the engagement documents. New GB regulations were proposed, using the EPPO PRA recommendations with the aim of further mitigating the risk of introducing these pests.

Summary of responses

One response was received on this engagement from the Woodland Trust.



The Woodland Trust agreed with the conclusions of the engagement documents, that *Chrysobothris femorata* and *C. mali* pose a risk to certain tree species in the UK and that their introduction could cause significant social or environmental damage. It supports the introduction of regulations to prevent the arrival of these beetle pests. The Woodland Trust does note, however, that the host plants for planting are currently prohibited from import, pending risk assessment, and emphasises that these species must remain prohibited to prevent pests like the *Chrysobothris* species arriving.

Defra thanks the Woodland Trust for its support of regulating host material to prevent the entry of Chrysobothris femorata and C. mali in Great Britain. Defra continues to use a risk-based approach to combat plant health threats, including the prohibition on imports of the highest risk trees (which spans many native species).

In addition, the Woodland Trust encourages Defra to prohibit plants for planting of *Carpinus* and *Aesculus* as two hosts of the *Chrysobothris* species, in addition to other pests. It believes that pest free areas and pest free places of production are not reliable measures for preventing pest spread.

We can reassure the Woodland Trust that pest free areas and pest free places of production are internationally recognised classifications. Defra requires these areas to be established in line with international standards for phytosanitary measures (“ISPM”), specifically ISPM 4¹ and ISPM 10², as issued by the International Plant Protection Convention. These measures were recommended by EPPO as being proportionate to the risk of Chrysobothris femorata and C. mali, including several fortifying conditions. For example, the pest free area must not be within 100 km of a known outbreak of the pest, and the pest free place of production must have regular inspections and have complete physical protection against the pest.

Any imports of plants for planting of the species referred to would also be subject to 100% inspection on arrival. If there was any evidence to suggest the pest free area or pest free place of production may not have been implemented effectively, for example, the pest was intercepted on importing plants, this information would be conveyed to the exporting country and statutory measures taken to ensure any further imports were restricted until the source of any infestation was established.

Next steps

The response received was supportive of adopting regulations to prevent the arrival of these *Chrysobothris* beetles. The UK Plant Health Risk Group intends to implement this proposal from 31 May 2024.

¹ [ISPM 4. Requirements for the establishment of pest free areas \(fao.org\)](https://www.fao.org/ISPM/4/en/)

² [ISPM 10. Requirements for the establishment of pest free places of production and pest free production sites \(fao.org\)](https://www.fao.org/ISPM/10/en/)

I would like to thank those responding for taking the time to submit views on the stakeholder engagement. Your comments have been very valuable in working to develop a policy position.

If you have any views about how this review was handled, or its outcome, please let me know.

Yours faithfully,

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