



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Department of
Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs
www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

11 February 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Rapid Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) on *Ennomos subsignaria*

I am writing to seek your views on a UK Pest Risk Analysis for *Ennomos subsignaria* (elm spanworm). A link to the rapid PRA can be found at the website given below:

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/pest-risk-analyses/>

We would welcome your views and comments on the PRA and the proposals for future action.

In submitting any comments you may wish to focus on the summary, key uncertainties and conclusion sections of the risk assessments and to consider the following:

- Are any factual corrections required?
- Your view on the appropriateness of the suggested proposals for future actions?
- Can you provide any additional information (or links to other sources of information) that may help address uncertainty identified in the assessment/management measures?
- Are there any risks that have not been adequately considered?
- Have you reviewed the risk assessment and consider that you have nothing further to add?

This review applies to the UK and is being conducted by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, with the agreement of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Government. The objective of this stakeholder engagement is to gather views from all interested sectors on the UK position. We will take all comments made into account in developing the UK position.



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Background

Ennomos subsignaria (the elm spanworm) is a North American (Canada and USA) moth which intermittently reaches outbreak densities, causing serious defoliation of hardwood forests in parts of its native distribution.

This moth was identified as a serious pest during the compilation of a Defra list of pests of *Fraxinus* created during 2016. There is one interception reported in the literature from 1984 (on asparagus fern at Convent Garden market, London), but no further interceptions are known. *Ennomos subsignaria* is currently listed as a provisional quarantine pest (PQP).

Untreated wood in the rough¹ and fuel wood² were identified as the most likely pathways of entry – rated as moderately likely with medium confidence. It was considered that this pest would be likely to establish in the UK if it entered. The impact this pest could have in the UK was rated as large but with low confidence as it is very unclear whether *E. subsignaria* would ‘outbreak’ as it does in its native distribution.

Recommendations for action

This pest is currently listed as a provisional quarantine pest. It is proposed that it becomes a quarantine pest (QP).

New measures for the higher risk host species not already on the list of high-risk plants (plants for planting) could be considered, as well as new measures on wood^{1&2} for certain host species. However, given there have been no recorded interceptions of this pest in the last 30 years and that this pest can feed on many different plants, regulating certain hosts for the purpose of excluding this pest may be difficult to justify.

All responses should be sent to plantpestsrisks@defra.gov.uk

Responses should be received by **6th May 2025**.

Information provided in response to this stakeholder engagement, including personal information, may be made available to the public on request, in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs)

If you do not wish your response, including your name, contact details and any other personal information, to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the stakeholder engagement. Please note that if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, this will not count as a confidentiality

¹ Commodity codes beginning 4403 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/classifying-wood#rough-wood>
<https://www.trade-tariff.service.gov.uk/headings/4403?day=29&month=1&year=2025>

² Commodity code 44011200 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/classifying-wood#fuel-wood-and-logs>
<https://www.trade-tariff.service.gov.uk/headings/4401?day=29&month=1&year=2025>

request. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for the information under freedom of information legislation. However, we cannot guarantee that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

Yours faithfully,

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