



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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www.gov.uk/defra

3rd March 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Response to the stakeholder engagement on the regulation of conifer plants

Thank you for submitting views on the above stakeholder engagement of the proposed change on the regulation of conifer plants in the assimilated [Implementing Regulation 2019/2072](#) (“the Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation”). This letter is to notify you of the outcome.

Background

The phytosanitary import regime in Great Britain is not static and is kept under continuous review to ensure that it continues to address any biosecurity risk posed to the UK, and that it meets our WTO obligations by being risk-based.

Due to changes in taxonomy, all conifer species are now encompassed at the class level (Pinopsida) rather than the order level (Pinales). However, GB legislation currently regulates conifer species at the order level (Pinales).

Proposal

We proposed to update the references to all conifer species, given that the class level (Pinopsida) is now the internationally recognised name for conifers. Currently, certain conifer species are not categorised under Pinales and unintentionally fall out of scope for certain measures targeted towards conifer plants.

The full details of the proposed legislative changes can be found in Appendix A [here](#).



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Summary of responses

One response was received from the Wales Plant Health Evidence and Advisory Group. They welcomed the proposed change to the appropriate taxonomic reference of Pinopsida to include all conifers. They stated that this change will be useful for biosecurity, particularly with root and crown rots that cannot always be identified rapidly but whose symptoms can appear on all conifers.

The Wales Plant Health Evidence and Advisory Group did recommend that, for entry 12 of Annex 11 in the Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation, the sentence “Foliage, branches and other parts of conifer (Pinales) plants, without flowers or flower buds” should be changed to “Foliage, branches and other parts of conifer (Pinopsida) plants, without flowers or flower buds”.

We agree with the recommendation from the Wales Plant Health Evidence and Advisory Group and plan to make this additional change alongside the proposed revisions.

Next steps

The response received was supportive in making the proposed changes. Defra and the Scottish and Welsh Governments therefore intend to implement these changes from 30 May 2025. 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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