

Pest Measures Q&A

Q1. What are the new measures?

Measures will be introduced or updated on the import of host plants and other relevant regulated goods, such as conifer wood, in Great Britain (GB) for certain pests (*Scolytus morawitzi*, *Polygraphus proximus*, *Liriomyza huidobrensis* and *Liriomyza tiliifolia*, *Cronartium* species, *Thaumetopoea processionea* “OPM” and Leek yellow stripe virus). Please see the affected hosts in the supplementary information.

The legislation will also modify the regulatory status of several pests. *Aonidiella orientalis* (a provisional quarantine pest), *Diaporthe caulivora* (a regulated non-quarantine pest “RNQP”) and *Heterodera fici* (a RNQP) will all be removed from these respective lists and therefore, deregulated. The GB provisional quarantine pests *Eotetranychus sexmaculatus* and *Platypus apicalis* will be listed instead as GB quarantine pests.

Pseudomonas avellanae, *Meloidogyne arenaria*, *Meloidogyne javanica*, and *Xiphinema index*, which are currently classified as GB RNQPs, will be added to the GB provisional quarantine pest list, pending full risk assessments. These pests are all absent from GB and therefore do not meet the criteria to be RNQPs. Based on an initial assessment, they have met the criteria to be GB quarantine pests.

Finally, on the basis of an initial assessment, the unregulated pests *Meloidogyne enterolobii*, *Agrilus horni*, Chilli veinal mottle virus, *Chrysobothris femorata* and *Lycorma delicatula* met the criteria to be listed as GB quarantine pests and will be added to the GB provisional quarantine pest list, pending a full risk assessment.

Q2. How do these measures impact trade?

Imports of high-risk goods (recognised hosts of *Scolytus morawitzi*, *Polygraphus proximus*, certain *Liriomyza* sp. and *Cronartium* species, *Thaumetopoea processionea*, Leek yellow stripe virus) will only be permitted into Great Britain under certain conditions. For example, a condition could be that the goods must be grown in a pest free area or appropriately treated. These additional import requirements will mainly impact GB importers of certain plants (*Abies*, *Pinus*, *Picea*, *Larix*, and *Tsuga*) and conifer wood but only if those imports originate in Russia.

Specific import requirements are already in place for *Eotetranychus sexmaculatus* and *Platypus apicalis*, so moving these pest from the GB provisional quarantine pest list to the GB quarantine pest list will not impact on trade, since there will be no changes to the restrictions imposed following this change to its classification.

The changes to existing import requirements for certain *Liriomyza* and *Cronartium* species will facilitate trade, as will the deregulatory measures, benefiting the horticultural and forestry sectors. There is only expected to be a negligible impact on trade as a result of reclassifying *Pseudomonas avellanae*, as GB RNQP requirements already apply to plants for planting of that pest’s only host, *Corylus avellana* (Hazel).

Action will be taken if any pest, assessed as meeting the requirements to be a GB quarantine pest, is found on imported goods. For this reason, action is already being taken on interceptions of *Meloidogyne enterolobii*, Chilli veinal mottle virus and *Lycorma delicatula* in Great Britain so this legislation will not change the current situation in terms of importing host plants for these pests.

Meloidogyne arenaria and *Meloidogyne javanica* are considered to pose a similar risk to *Meloidogyne enterolobii* but they have not been intercepted on traded material, so no impact is currently anticipated. The same would apply to *Agrilus horni* and *Chrysobothris femorata*.

Q3. Why are you introducing them?

Pest Risk Analyses have recommended *Scolytus morawitzi* and *Polygraphus proximus* for regulation and suggested the approach that GB are introducing. The presence of these pests in Great Britain would introduce an additional threat to a range of conifer trees. We are therefore proposing to introduce specific import requirements to enhance the level of protection against the risk of these pests entering GB.

The measures being introduced in respect of the remaining pests are being adjusted to ensure legislative action is proportionate to the threat of each pest.

The related legislation will be updated as needed in response to changing risk profiles and will be based on Pest Risk Analyses and decisions taken at the UK Plant Health Risk Group “PHRG”. This PHRG is a decision-making body that has representatives from Defra, Forestry Commission and all Devolved Administrations) with oversight from the UK National Plant Protection Organisation (consisting of the four Chief Plant Health Officers of the UK and senior Forestry Commission officials).

Q4. The OPM changes mean we will no longer have Pest Free Area status. Why are the changes being made and won't they weaken protection?

Thaumetopoea processionea is currently regulated as a ‘Pest Free Area (PFA) quarantine pest’, and the majority of GB, outside of South East England is designated as a PFA – measures are in place to restrict imports and movements of higher risk oak trees into the PFA, but imports are allowed into the area not under PFA designation.

Under the new measures, *Thaumetopoea processionea* will be listed as a quarantine pest present in GB, enabling import restrictions for high-risk oak trees to be extended to the whole of GB to further strengthen protections against *Thaumetopoea processionea*.

Q5. What evidence do you have to support these measures?

Risk assessments have been conducted for each of these pests.

A stakeholder consultation, based on a domestic summary of an EPPO (European Plant Protection Organisation) Pest Risk Analysis of *Polygraphus proximus*, was supportive. A consultation was also held for *Scolytus morawitzi*, based on a UK Pest Risk Analysis.

The decision to progress with this legislation was taken at the UK PHRG.

Q6. Is *Scolytus morawitzi* or *Polygraphus proximus* present in the UK?

These pests are not known to be present in GB, and we remain concerned about the possibility of them arriving in GB on imported host plants and plant products. The Pest Risk Analysis for each pest concluded that establishment of this pest in GB remains a risk.

Q7. Why are these measures being applied only to GB and not to the whole of the UK?

Under the terms of the Northern Ireland Protocol, Northern Ireland continues to apply Sanitary and Phytosanitary-related EU regulations. However, Great Britain and Northern Ireland administrations continue to work closely together on plant health issues and Northern Ireland continues to play a full and comprehensive role in technical and policy decisions that affect the UK as a whole.

Q8. The Pest Risk Analyses were published years ago, why are these measures being introduced now? Are they in line with the EU?

In light of the potential for these pests to enter and become established in Great Britain, enhanced protection is needed at the earliest opportunity, to mitigate the risk of introduction.

The UK was previously subject to EU-wide processes for new regulations and so it has only been possible to introduce a different approach to the EU on these pests now that the transition period has ended, taking into account the ongoing changes to the risks associated with these pests.

The measures being introduced will be GB wide, following agreement from the devolved administrations. These reflect the required measures as regards the desired level of protection for plants imported from countries and areas where these pests are present.

Q9. Why are you taking a different approach to the EU?

Great Britain is now focusing on pests which pose a risk to Great Britain, rather than to the EU.

As mentioned previously, an analysis has been carried out on the risk of *Scolytus morawitzi* to the UK. Certain measures have been proposed from this UK Pest Risk Analysis that may not be relevant to tackling this pest in the EU.

The Pest Risk Analysis for *Polygraphus proximus* was conducted by EPPO. The pest is already an EU Union quarantine pest but the EU has not introduced any specific import requirements for this pest. Based on the risk to GB biosecurity it was decided that specific import requirements should be introduced for GB inline with the recommendation of the PRA and existing import requirements for similar pests.

Q10. Why are the timings shortened for introducing some measures?

A failure to implement the legislation as soon as possible extends the period that GB is exposed to the serious biosecurity threat presented by certain pests. For these reasons, the measures for *Thaumetopoea processionea*, *Scolytus morawitzi* and *Polygraphus proximus*, in addition to the trade-facilitating measures (see Q2), will come into force 3 weeks after this legislation has been laid in February 2022. This will limit the period during which specific requirements are not in place, and therefore provide biosecurity assurances for the UK. The remaining pest measures that are less urgent will come into force 6 months after the legislation has been laid.