

[helpline@defra.gov.uk](mailto:helpline@defra.gov.uk)  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

26th May 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

## Rapid Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) on *Dendroctonus valens*

I am writing to seek your views on a UK Pest Risk Analysis for *Dendroctonus valens*. 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 consultation is to gather views from all interested sectors on the UK position to progress. We will take all comments made into account in developing the UK position.

## Background

*Dendroctonus valens* is a bark beetle from the subfamily Scolytinae, which is native to North America. Its recorded hosts include a wide variety of *Pinus* species (pine trees), with occasional reports on other conifers. Adults and larvae construct galleries in the lower bole (below about 2.5 m) and into the roots. In its native range it is a secondary pest on dead or already declining trees. However, it is an invasive pest in parts of China where it has been causing very high impacts, potentially linked to severe drought in the worst affected region.

This PRA was initiated to look at the differences between the impacts in these two areas of establishment, and to consider the potential risks to the UK should the pest arrive. However, despite detailed assessment there remain uncertainties over the potential impacts for the UK, as other factors may have contributed to the effects the beetle had in China.

## Recommendations for action

Due to the uncertainties over potential impacts in the UK, continued exclusion is considered to be the best option. While most pathways have existing mitigations in place in the legislation, consideration could be given to increasing measures on the pathway of ornamental wood products with bark.

Due to its cryptic lifestyle and superficial similarity to bark beetles already present in the UK, it might be some time before an outbreak of *D. valens* were detected. This would mean that it could potentially have spread undetected, and eradication would be more difficult. Controlling the movement of host timber out of the affected area, felling of affected trees and, given the potential dispersal capacity, the use trap trees to attract adults to stay within the local area could all be considered.

The UK Plant Health Risk Group (PHRG) review is presenting the following option regarding future action against this pest:

- **Statutory action.** The UK PRA concludes that there is still uncertainty over the impact of this pest, however there is a high possibility that should it arrive it could establish. Statutory action against *D. valens* is considered proportionate based on current information, due to the high level of impacts in China, albeit during a severe drought. Due to the listing of “non-European Scolytidae spp.” in the plant health legislation, statutory action is already required against all findings of *D. valens* as it is a non-European species.
- Given the many uncertainties remaining, a more detailed PRA at the regional (EPPO) rather than national level would appear to be proportionate.

All responses should be sent to [plantpestsrisks@defra.gov.uk](mailto:plantpestsrisks@defra.gov.uk)

Responses should be received by **4<sup>th</sup> August 2021.**

Information provided in response to this consultation, 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 publically available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note that if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, this will not count as a confidentiality 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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