

***P.ramorum* (Pr) – Statutory Plant Health Notices and the harvesting and movement of material from site – Decision matrix**

Background

To date, harvesting and moving timber from sites under SPHN controls have been considered to pose a phyto-sanitary (plant health) risk, albeit a relatively low one. A minimum buffer zone of 100m around symptomatic larch trees has been used to delineate the area to be felled under notice, and any timber contained within this zone has been subject to movement controls. The risk from timber is principally related to the presence of the organism within infected inner bark, and contamination from infected larch needles is secondary to, and much less important than, contamination from infected inner bark.

Movement of all material arising from sites under notice to processors is controlled through licensing. The source of timber is defined as “any tree species originating on sites known to be infected with *P. ramorum* and from which the movement has been restricted by the Forestry Commission or Natural Resources Wales”.

An increase in the area of infected larch has been observed, principally in south Wales and Galloway. We have therefore reviewed this approach to determine whether the current restrictions on movement are still proportionate or whether they can be relaxed in some situations. As a result we have relaxed the requirements by allowing material from other conifer species within 100m of infected larch (**or any other distance set by Plant Health authorities**) to be treated as uninfected.

The decision matrix below describes the situations where SPHNs are required or not required, and describes the associated mitigation measures required to reduce the risk of disease spread. The proposed mitigation under (1) would be **voluntary** where infection is not confirmed and SPHNs are not in place. In addition, in the colour-coded columns it provides guidance on how the bark from trees in the different situations should be treated, depending on its end use.

Situation and relevant material	Treatment	SPHN	Mitigation to reduce risk	Bark – end use			
				Biomass	Compost	Mulch	Export
1. Non-larch timber, regardless of proximity to symptomatic larch stands, but not contained within SPHN areas.	Treat as uninfected	No SPHN required	Normal felling licence restrictions apply. Biosecurity for low-risk activity to be applied as per FC Biosecurity Guidance	√	√	√	√
2. Non-larch timber contained within SPHN areas	Treat as uninfected	SPHN conditions apply	Biosecurity for high-risk activity to be applied as per FC Biosecurity Guidance. Produce must be forwarder extracted, stacked and despatched separately from larch. Apply the following biosecurity measures in woodland to minimise presence of contaminated material on lorries and to minimise contamination with felling debris during extraction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where possible, avoid extraction through infected sites; • stack logs on bearers; and • ensure that lorries are free of debris before loading. 	√	√	√	√
3. Larch, sweet chestnut, common ash, Holm oak and Turkey oak timber not in proximity to symptomatic larch stands and not contained within SPHN areas	Treat as uninfected	No SPHN required	As (1) above, normal felling licence restrictions apply. In regions described as high risk zones no approvals for felling during the winter period when needles are not present on trees. And to note that owner-occupier has a legal obligation to report potential infection.	√	√	√	√
4. Larch, sweet chestnut, common ash, Holm oak and Turkey oak timber from SPHN areas	Treat as infected	SPHN conditions apply	Biosecurity for high-risk activity to be applied as per FC Biosecurity Guidance. Apply the following biosecurity measures in woodland to minimise presence of contaminated material on lorries and to minimise contamination with felling debris: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extract by forwarder; • stack logs on bearers; and • ensure that lorries are free of debris before loading.. A Processing Licence is required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handling round wood derived from <i>P. ramorum</i>- affected wood; • handling co-product, residue and plant debris arising from the initial processing of wood from infected sites; and • operating mobile processing plants in-forest. 	√	√	√	X

√ = No processor controls applied; √ = Processor must heat treat bark to an agreed standard; X = Export of round timber and bark products is prohibited.

NB Co-product created by sawing (i.e. sawdust) can be treated as uninfected material if it comes from a log that was fully debarked before sawing. Otherwise it must be treated as infected material.

