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Biosecurity Advice 2018/13

DRAFT RISK ANALYSIS REPORT FOR THE RELEASE OF *CECIDOCHARES CONNEXA* FOR THE BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF *CHROMOLAENA ODORATA*

This Biosecurity Advice notifies stakeholders of the release of the draft report for the proposed release of the gall fly *Cecidochares connexa* for the biological control of the weed *Chromolaena odorata* (commonly known as chromolaena).

The draft report proposes that the biological control agent should be released, subject to standard import and release conditions associated with exotic biological control agents.

The draft report is being issued for a 30 calendar day public consultation period. Stakeholders are invited to submit written comments by 17 August 2018.

This Biosecurity Advice notifies stakeholders that the department has completed a draft report for the proposed release of *Cecidochares connexa* for the biological control of *Chromolaena odorata*. Written comments on the draft report are invited from stakeholders. The closing date for comments is 17 August 2018.

In support of the release application from Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the applicant has provided a submission detailing results of host specificity testing, together with other relevant information. This submission is included as an attachment to the draft report.

A preliminary draft of this report was distributed to state and territory departments of primary industry and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) through the Plant Health Committee (PHC). There was no opposition to the release of *Cecidochares connexa*.

The Department of the Environment and Energy also has an approval process under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Under Section 303EE (4) of the EPBC Act, risk analysis reports prepared by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources may be used by the Minister for the Environment and Energy in making a determination to include the item on the List of specimens suitable for live import (the live import list). The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has consulted with the Department of the Environment and Energy prior to the release of the draft report.

The draft report proposes that the biological control agent should be released. The draft report has identified low off-target effects with negligible potential consequences that would be associated with the release of the gall fly *Cecidochares connexa*. The risk is estimated to be Negligible, which meets Australia's appropriate level of protection (ALOP).

The [draft report](#) and information about the risk analysis process is available on the department's website. Printed copies of the report are available on request.

The public consultation period of 30 days for biological control risk analyses differs from the standard period of 60 calendar days for other risk analyses. This is because the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources has consulted extensively with all state and territory governments, the Department of the Environment and Energy and CSIRO, all of whom support the recommendations in the draft report. This approach is consistent with the [Revised guidelines for the introduction of exotic biological control agents for the control of weeds and plant pests](#).

Stakeholders interested in receiving information and updates on biosecurity risk analyses are invited to subscribe via the department's new online [subscription](#) service. By subscribing to [Biosecurity Risk Analysis Plant](#), you will receive Biosecurity Advices and other notifications relating to plant biosecurity policy, including this risk analysis.

Dr Marion Healy
First Assistant Secretary
Biosecurity Plant Division

Telephone: 1800 900 090 (option 1, option 1)
Email: imports@agriculture.gov.au