

Risk assessment for the import of alien species to Iceland

According to Article 63(1) of the Icelandic law of nature conservation No 60/2013, a permit from the Environment Agency of Iceland (UST) is needed for the import and distribution of living exotic species. All applications must be supported with a risk assessment where it is predicted if the species is likely to be invasive or have any negative affect on natural biodiversity. The Environment Agency sends all documents and data to a committee of experts on the import of alien species (appointed by the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources). Considering the committee's verdict, and based on data presented, The Environment Agency decides if importation license will be granted.

The Environment Agency is working on a new regulation with further instructions about the import and distribution of exotic species, incl. more detailed information's about the risk assessment that needs to be presented. Until the regulation has been legislated, requirements about the risk assessment are presented in the table below.

It is worth being mentioned, that the role of the committee is only to give statement to The Environment Agency, but not to embody an independent investigation for different species. Risk assessments and applications that are deficient, or do not meet scientific standards, will be rejected.

The risk assessment shall be written by an independent expert/scientist in the field of life science and accompanied with his/her CV. Scientific citations and references are needed.

Introduction	Background or other information 's, e.g., information's about the business or production.
Biological information's	Species name in Icelandic, English and Latin. Life cycle, natural habitat, growth conditions, distribution etc.
Can the species get invasive?	Is the species considered to be invasive somewhere inside or outside it's natural habitat? Can the species live or breed in Icelandic conditions? Is there a possibility that the species will interbreed with local species? Is it likely that the species will get invasive if released into Icelandic nature?
Risk assessment	Is it possible that the species will transmit disease?
	Is it possible that the species will transmit disease to livestock, wild flora or have any negative affect on animal welfare?
	Is it possible that the species will transmit disease to humans?
	Is it possible that the species will escape captivity and what are the possible consequences? Could it have negative affect on natural biodiversity?
Hazard plans and safety measures	Emergency plan or other measures in case the organism escapes captivity. In case of accidents, shutting down of business or other incidents, where will the biomass/organism be disposed?
Final words	Summary and main findings