

Invasive alien species

2015-04-21

Characteristics of invasive alien species

On 1 January 2015 a [Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council \(EU\) No. 1143/2014 of 22 October 2014 on preventive and remedial actions with respect to the introduction and spread of invasive alien species](#) entered into force, which should be used directly in EU Member States. The regulation comprehensively regulates issues such as preventing the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, their early detection and rapid elimination or long-term and effective population control in the event of widespread species.

A list of invasive alien species of Union concern will be drawn up and managed with Member States using risk assessments and scientific evidence.

Currently, according to national law, i.e. Art. 120 para. 1 of the Act of 16 April 2004 on Nature Conservation, it is prohibited to introduce alien species of animals, plants or fungi to the environment and to move them within this environment.

Storage, breeding/propagation, reproduction, offering for sale and sale of alien species that could be a threat to native species or natural habitats in case of their release into the natural environment (alien invasive species) is allowed only with a permit granted by a competent Regional Director of Environmental Protection (Article 120(2)(2) of the Act on environmental protection).

On the other hand, import of alien invasive species and at the same time storage, breeding/ propagation, reproduction, offering for sale and sale of such imported specimen requires a permit of the General Director of Environmental Protection (Article 120(2)(1) of the Act on environmental protection). The above provisions do not apply to fish species in the case of which introduction requires a permit granted by the minister competent for agricultural affairs and issued pursuant to Article 3(1) of the Act of 18 April 1985 inland fishing (Dz.U. of 2009, No. 189, item 1471, as amended) or Article 29(1) of the Act of 19 February 2004 on fisheries (Dz.U. of 2004, No. 62, item 574, as amended) pursuant to Article 120(3) of the Act on environmental protection.

The prohibition on the introduction of alien species of plants, animals or fungi to the natural environment and relocation thereof within such an environment, with the exception of the species that could pose a threat to native species or natural habitats in case of their release into the natural environment, does not apply to the introduction of the following plants into the natural environment and relocation within such an environment:

- the plants used when establishing and maintaining green zones and establishing and maintaining the woodlots outside forests and areas covered by forms of environmental protection,
- the plants used under a reasonable forest and agricultural economy (Article 120(4) of the Act on environmental protection).

The minister competent for environmental affairs in agreement with environmental protection specifies, by way of ordinance, a list of alien species of plants, animals and fungi that could be a threat to native species or natural habitats in case of their release into the natural environment, guided by the need to assure sustainability and protection of diversity of indigenous species of plants, animals and fungi (Article 120(2)(f) of the Act on environmental protection).

The Ordinance of the Minister of the Environment of 9 September 2011 on the list of plants and animals of alien species that could be a threat to native species or natural habitats in case of their release into the natural environment was promulgated on 4 October 2011 and entered into force on 5 April 2012 ([Dz.U. No. 210, item 1260](#)).

A request for a relevant permit issued by the General Director of Environmental Protection or a competent Regional Director of Environmental Protection should contain the following elements (Article 120(2)(b) of the Act on environmental protection):

- name and surname and address or name, the seat and address of the applicant,
- goal of the performance of the requested activities,
- description of the activity included in the request,
- the name of the species in Latin and Polish if the Polish name exists for the species affected by the activities,
- the number or quantity of specimen included in the request, if possible to be determined,
- specified conditions, place and time of the activities,
- certificate of origin.

The footnotes included in the Ordinance should be pointed out.

Footnote No. 1: It does not apply to further storage (with no changes in the location) of the specimen stored on the date of entry into force of the Ordinance; applicable to the following plant species:

1. Water Fern *Azolla filiculoides*;
2. giant hogweed (cartwheel-flower, wild parsnip, wild rhubarb, giant cow parsnip or giant cow parsley) *Heracleum mantegazzianum*;
3. Sosnowsky's Hogweed *Heracleum sosnowskyi*;
4. tree of heaven (ailanthus) *Ailanthus altissima*;
5. gorse (common gorse, furze or whin) *Ulex europaeus*;
6. wild cucumber *Echinocystis lobata*;
7. Bobby Tops (Copper Tops and Gnome's Hatstand) *Impatiens glandulifera*;
8. Orange Jewelweed (Common Jewelweed, Spotted Jewelweed or Orange Balsam) *Impatiens capensis*;
9. *Reynoutria x bohemica*;
10. Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*;
11. Giant Knotweed (Sakhalin Knotweed) *Reynoutria sachalinensis*;
12. Common Milkweed (Butterfly flower, Silkweed, Silky Swallow-wort, Virginia Silkweed) *Asclepias syriaca*.

Footnote No. 2: It does not apply to the species stored outside reservoirs for food purposes; applicable to the following animal species:

1. Chinese mitten crab (big sludge crab or Shanghai hairy crab) *Eriocheir sinensis*;
2. red swamp crayfish (red swamp crayfish, Louisiana crayfish, Louisiana crayfish or mudbug) *Procambarus clarkii*;
3. Spinycheek Crayfish *Orconectes limosus*;
4. signal crayfish *Pacifastacus leniusculus*;
5. Pacific oyster (Japanese oyster or Miyagi oyster) *Crassostrea gigas*;
6. round goby *Neogobius melanostomus*;
7. racer goby *Neogobius gymnotrachelus*;
8. monkey goby *Neogobius fluviatilis*.

Footnote No. 3: It does not apply to the specimen entered on the day of entry into force of the Ordinance in the Staroste's register pursuant to Article 64(1) of the Act on environmental protection; not applicable to the following animal species:

1. painted turtle *Chrysemys picta*,
2. red-eared slider (red-eared terrapin) *Trachemys scripta elegans*.

Useful links

- [European Commission website on invasive alien species](#)
- [The Convention on Biological Diversity and invasive alien species](#)
- [Bern Convention and invasive alien species](#) <http://ochronaprzyrody.gdos.gov.pl/inwazyjne-gatunki-obce>
- [IOP PAN database Alien Species in Poland](#)
- [IOP PAN Book of Invasive Alien Species in Polish fauna](#)
- [Database of invasive alien species in Europe \(DAISIE\)](#)
- [Database of invasive alien species in Northern and Central Europe \(NOBANIS\)](#)
- [The database and map the distribution of Sosnowsky's hogweed and giant hogweed - Higher School of Ecology and Management in Warsaw](#)
- [Additional information on alien species](#)
- [Educational materials for primary schools](#)

- [The results of the conference *Good practices in the use of alien species of plants in horticulture*](#)

Publications

- [European Code of Conduct on horticulture and invasive alien plants](#)
- [European Code of Conduct on domestic animals and invasive alien species](#)
- [Invasiveness of crops for biofuel production and the potential damage caused to natural habitats and native species. Report](#)
- [Do not dispose of invasive alien species information folder](#)
- [Tokarska-Guzik B., Dajdok Z., Zając M., Zając A., Urbisz A., Danielewicz W., Hołdyński, Cz., 2012, *Plants of foreign origin in Poland with particular emphasis on invasive species*, GDOŚ](#)
- [Guidelines for the control of Sosnowski's Hogweed \(*Heracleum sosnowskyi*\) and Mantegazzie's Hogweed \(*Heracleum mantegazzianum*\) in Poland](#)
- [Caucasian Hogweed locations - downloadable maps](#)

We encourage to use the publication entitled: *Alien plants in Poland, including in particular the invasive species* by B. Tokarska-Guzik, Z. Dajdok, M. Zając, A. Zając, A. Urbisz, W. Danielewicz, Cz. Hołdyński, We hope that the publication will encourage people to initiate measures aimed at counteracting of the spread of invasive species in the natural environment and to conduct research, education and other practical measures.

The publication entitled: *Alien plants in Poland, including in particular the invasive species* contains a catalogue of plant alien species that can be observed in the natural environment in Poland. Each species was evaluated in terms of the threat posed to the indigenous nature, including the natural habitats protected under the FFHD. Furthermore, the study contains the most essential information about alien species, i.e. about their geographical origin, the time of arrival, the type of colonised communities, description of the ecology and impact on the economy, health and the environment, as well as many other issues.

In 2014 the *Pałac Problem - Heracleum* Foundation carried out, at the request of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection, an expertise - *Guidelines for the control of Sosnowski's hogweed (*Heracleum sosnowskyi*) and Mantegazzie's hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) in Poland*.

The document is a compendium of knowledge about the biology of the above-mentioned species and their impact on the environment and living organisms, including human health. The study also includes overview of methods for combating the above-mentioned hogweeds and potential sources of funding for measures aimed to eliminate the population of these species from the environment.

It should be noted, however, that the above document does not constitute an official position of the General Directorate for Environmental Protection to combat these plants.