



Live animal imports of native species/specimens

Guidelines for preparing a draft assessment report and application to amend the *List of Specimens taken to be Suitable for Live Import* (Live Import List)

These guidelines have been written to assist applicants (proponents) in completing an application to amend the *List of Specimens taken to be Suitable for Live Import* (Live Import List) under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) to include a new species/specimen.

This document outlines the application processes conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (the Department), and describes the requirements and minimum information needed to adequately assess the impact of importing the specimens.

Application

These guidelines are written in accordance with Sections 303EC, 303EE and 303EF of the EPBC Act. To apply for any native animal specimens to be included on the Live Import List it is necessary to submit to the Department the form, *Application to amend the List of Specimens Suitable for Live Import* along with a draft assessment report.

The draft report must include an assessment of the potential impacts on the Australian environment of the proposed list amendment. Applicants may complete this assessment themselves or may wish to employ a suitable consultant.

Terms of Reference

Terms of reference (ToR) is a list of questions to be addressed in the draft assessment report. The purpose of the ToR is to assess the potential impact that a species/specimen may have on the Australian environment. The draft assessment report enables the Minister to make a decision on the species/specimen proposed for import, based on a thorough assessment of the potential risks to the environment.

Inclusion of a species/specimen on the Live Import List means that anyone can then import it, not just the proponent. It is very important therefore for the Department to assess all potential environmental impacts regardless of the nature of the proponent's intended import.

Environment as defined in the EPBC Act includes:

- (a) ecosystems and their constituent parts, including people and communities; and
- (b) natural and physical resources; and
- (c) the qualities and characteristics of locations, places and areas; and
- (d) the social, economic and cultural aspects of a thing mentioned in paragraph (a), (b) or (c).

All ToR must be addressed in the draft report for it to be processed. Additional information not included in the ToR may be included if the applicant chooses.

Draft Assessment Report

As discussed, the Terms of Reference identify the issues that must be addressed in the draft assessment report. It is recommended that the Terms of Reference be used as subject headings in the report. This will ensure that all the information required by the Minister to make a decision is clearly incorporated within the report.

The draft report is published on the Department's website for 40 business days and stakeholders are invited to provide comments. At the same time, the Minister contacts the relevant Commonwealth, state and territory ministers advising them of the publication of the report and inviting their comments. The Minister may also consult with other organisations or individuals before making a decision to amend the list.

At the end of the consultation period the Department collates all comments received from stakeholders, and the Commonwealth, state and territory ministers, and forwards them to the applicant. The applicant must incorporate all relevant comments in the final report.

The Minister will make a decision about the proposed amendment based upon the final report and the outcomes of the consultation.

If the Minister does not approve an amendment to add the species to the Live Import List, the import of the proposed species will remain prohibited. Where this occurs, the applicant will be advised in writing of the decision.

The following are a few points to assist you with preparing and presenting the report:

- The report should be researched and presented in a clear and professional manner. It must comprehensively address each of the Terms of Reference.
- All stated information should be fully referenced in a clear and appropriate manner. It is important that claims in the report are based upon scientifically sound information. Where information is lacking, any reference to this in published literature should also be noted.
- Where it is not possible to obtain information from published literature, information published through more informal media, such as the internet, can be included in the report. Information obtained from these sources must be cited. For example, the web site address should be cited after the relevant information.
- While the applicant is responsible for preparing the report, they have the option of employing a suitably qualified consultant to undertake the actual research and writing.

Report Contents

1. Provide information on the taxonomy of the species

The following information is required about the taxonomy of the species.

- a) Family name: Identify which family the species belongs to.
- b) Genus name: Identify which genus the species belongs to.
- c) Species: Identify the species.
- d) Subspecies: Are there any recognised subspecies, and if so, what subspecies does the proposed specimen for import belong to?
- e) Taxonomic Reference: (eg. Axelrod, page no., illustration page no.)
- f) Common Names: Note what common names the species is known by (if any)
For example, the Plains Zebra (common name) is known scientifically as *Equus burchelli*, where 'Equus' is the genus and 'burchelli' is the species. Zebras belong to the family Equidae.
- g) Is the species endemic to Australia? If not, provide details of its natural range outside Australia.
- h) Is the specimen a genetically-modified organism (GMO)? Identify if the species has been genetically modified. If the species has been genetically modified or engineered, you will need to contact the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (www.ogtr.gov.au) before proceeding with this application.

2. Provide information on the status of the species under CITES and the EPBC Act

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international treaty involving over 150 countries with the purpose of protecting wildlife from unregulated trade. Australia, as a member country, controls the import and export of species that are threatened or could become threatened due to trade in them or their products.

A species may be affected in its natural environment by factors such as habitat destruction and fragmentation, and illegal collection for a variety of purposes e.g. for the pet industry. To help mitigate the threat of collection and trade, the species could be listed in the CITES Appendices. A species on CITES Appendix I or II requires appropriate CITES import permits to enter Australia.

If the proposed species for import is listed on CITES Appendix I or II discuss as appropriate:

- the implications of illegal trade
- popularity of the species in trade e.g. pet industry
- status of species in its natural range e.g. threatened, endangered, protected etc.
- why is this species threatened?

CITES listing is taken into account when considering restrictions in countries outside the species' natural range.

Please provide information on the species' status under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (i.e. whether it is listed as threatened).

3. Provide information on potential impacts

Summarise the potential impact on the environment of importing the specimen. Address both the potential impacts of the particular import that is proposed, and the

potential impacts of the species, should imported specimens ever be released from effective human control. As far as possible this should address impacts from all potential imported specimens – not just your proposed import.

It is important that a full explanation and comprehensive analysis, including the costs and benefits, of each aspect is undertaken.

3.1 Provide information on whether the specimens proposed for import are likely to have any impact on native populations of the same species. This may include an assessment of:

- Whether the specimens are phenotypically different (i.e. different in appearance) from the wild specimens occurring in Australia. For example, do they vary in colour, size, other features?
- Whether the specimens are behaviourally different from the wild specimens occurring in Australia. For example, have they adapted to living in different climatic conditions from where they occur in Australia? Have they modified their diet? Have they modified the use of their habitat for nesting, shelter etc? Have they modified their social or hunting behaviour?

3.2 Provide information on the overall potential impact of this species should it establish populations outside its natural range within Australia. This is particularly important if it varies from specimens occurring naturally in Australia or has been modified in any way. This may include an assessment of the following:

- Impact on similar niche species (i.e. competition with other species for food, shelter, etc)
- Probable prey/food sources (including native wildlife, agricultural crops and domestic or commercial animals)
- Environmental degradation
- Whether there are any possible parasites or pathogens that these specimens may carry as compared to those naturally occurring in Australian populations

4. Provide information on the origin of the live specimens that you propose to import

- Whether the specimens are a subspecies/race that is not available in Australia
- Whether the specimens are from feral populations overseas
- Whether the specimens have been captive bred and maintained in captivity

5. Purpose of importation

Specify the reason you want to import the species/specimens. This may be for eligible non-commercial purposes such as research, education, exhibition, conservation breeding, household pet or travelling exhibition, or for commercial purposes. Where appropriate discuss any potential uses for this species should it be imported into Australia. Where applicable, describe its human uses (e.g. zoos, research, pets etc).

Clearly state the number of animals you want to import.

6. Conditions/restrictions

Particularly if the information above indicates that the specimens proposed for import may vary from naturally occurring Australian populations, you should consider whether any conditions should apply on imports, and what they may be (e.g. limiting imports to desexed specimens only). Conditions may be suggested that would reduce the impacts on the Australian environment of importing the specimen. Recommended conditions should be relevant to the conservation status of the species and/or the risks posed by the import.

If the outcome of the assessment is that the specimen can be imported subjected to conditions, it will be placed on Part 2 of the Live Import List (i.e. the regulated part of the list).

7. State/Territory controls

Outline any Commonwealth, state or territory legislative controls on the species.

As each state and territory of Australia has different legislation regarding legally keeping different species, and some states/territories prohibit keeping certain animals, please check what restrictions each state/territory imposes.

Are you aware of quarantine requirements for bringing live animals into Australia? Is the species you are proposing to have added to the Live Import List allowed to be imported under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*? Does an import permit need to be obtained from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment?

If there are not yet quarantine conditions in place for this organism, contact the Department to discuss the undertaking of an Import Risk Analysis (IRA) by telephone on 1800 900 090 or visit the website for more information at <https://www.awe.gov.au/>