



Live animal imports of exotic species/specimens into secure facilities for research purposes only (Part 2 of the Live Import List)

Terms of Reference for Research

Application to amend the List of Specimens taken to be Suitable for Live Import (Live Import List)

These Terms of Reference should be used by researchers wanting to import species/specimens that are not currently on the Live Import List for the purposes of research. The Terms of Reference outline the information that is required as part of an application to amend the Live Import List to include a new species for research purposes only. These Terms of Reference do not apply to applications relating to biocontrol agents. There are separate Terms of Reference for applications of this nature at [Live Import List - DCCEEW](#).

Please note that whilst the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) can issue a permit to import animals into an approved arrangements facility, this does not override the requirement that all species/specimens being imported into the country must be on the Live Import List.

Guidelines

These guidelines have been written to assist applicants 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.

To apply for any vertebrate or invertebrate animal species/specimens (excluding biocontrol agents) 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 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.

The draft report must include an assessment of the potential impacts of the species/specimen on the Australian environment, based on the Terms of Reference. Applicants may complete this assessment themselves or may wish to employ a suitable consultant.

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) Heritage values of places; and
- e) the social, economic and cultural aspects of a thing mentioned in paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d).

Draft Assessment Report

All Terms of Reference must be addressed in the draft report for it to be processed. Additional information not requested in the Terms of Reference may be included if the applicant chooses. It is strongly recommended that the Terms of Reference be used as subject headings in the report. This will ensure that all of the information required by the Minister to make a decision is clearly incorporated within the report.

The document titled [Risk assessment models for establishment of exotic vertebrates in Australia and New Zealand \(PDF 2MB\)](#) provides further context on the types of risk assessment processes employed by the department to inform decisions in relation to import of live mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates under the EPBC Act.

The draft assessment report is published on the department's website for at least 20 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. This final report and a risk assessment prepared by the department will then be sent to Commonwealth, state, and territory departments for comments during a second consultation round.

The Minister will make a decision about the proposed amendment based upon the applicant's final report, a report of the risk assessment prepared by the department, and the outcomes of the consultations. The applicant will be advised in writing of the Minister's decision. If the Minister does not approve an amendment to add the species/specimen to the Live Import List, the import of the proposed species/specimen will remain prohibited.

Here are a few considerations when preparing the report:

- Ensure you use copyright-free images in your report, or have permission for them to be used.
- Research and present all information in a clear and professional manner.
- Peer-reviewed, scientific information should be drawn upon with references cited.
- Where it is not possible to obtain information from published literature, information from other sources, 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.

Terms of Reference

1. Provide information on the taxonomy of the species/specimen.

The following information is required about the taxonomy of the species/specimen and its role in its natural environment:

- *Family name: Identify which family the species/specimen belongs to.*
 - *Genus name: Identify which genus the species/specimen belongs to.*
 - *Species: Identify the species/specimen.*
 - *Subspecies: Are there any recognised subspecies, and if so, what subspecies does the proposed species/specimen for import belong to?*
 - *Taxonomic Reference: e.g. Axelrod, page no., illustration page no.*
 - *Common Names: Note what common names the species/specimen is known as (if any) e.g. 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.*
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- *Is the species/specimen a genetically-modified organism (GMO)? Identify if the species/specimen has been genetically modified. If the species/specimen has been genetically modified or engineered, you will need to contact the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR website) before proceeding with this application.*

2. Provide details on the way in which the species/specimen should be kept, transported and disposed of in accordance with the types of activity that the species/specimen will be used for if imported into Australia.

You must include:

- *the containment (e.g. cage, enclosure) and management standards for this species/specimen to prevent escape or release. Include information on the security standards for this species/specimen including a discussion of why the proposed containment facilities are considered appropriate to mitigate the level of environmental risk posed by the species/specimen;*
- *procedures for the recovery or extermination of any escaped species/specimens; and*
- *the disposal options for surplus species/specimens and at the conclusion of the research.*

3. Provide information on, and the results of, any other environmental risk assessments undertaken on the species/specimen both in Australia and overseas, including any Import Risk Analyses.

4. Provide an analysis of the overall potential impacts on the Australian environment should the species/specimen escape containment, including a statement on the likelihood that the species/specimen could become an environmental pest.

Summarise the potential impact on the environment of importing the species/specimen. Address both the potential impacts of the particular import that is proposed, and the potential impacts of the species/specimen should the species/specimen(s) ever be released from effective human control.

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

An application will not be continued if information provided in this section is inadequate.

4.1. Does the species/specimen have similar niche/living requirements to native species?

- *Could wild populations of the species/specimen use the same resources as native Australian species, for example that it would compete with for food, shelter etc.*
- *If 'yes', what types of resources could be used: food; water; space; rest or shelter sites; nest sites; other. What Australian native species would be affected by this resource use?*
- *If the species/specimen you are proposing to import is a mammal, identify if it can climb trees.*

4.2. Is the species/specimen susceptible to, or capable of transmitting any pests or diseases?

4.3. Probable prey/food sources

- *Does the species/specimen attack or prey on wildlife? Identify if the species/specimen has the capacity to attack or prey on wildlife. If 'yes', specify whether the prey are: waders or waterfowl; other birds; mammals < 1 kg; mammals 1–5 kg mammals > 5 kg; amphibians; vertebrate eggs; fish; aquatic invertebrates; reptiles; insects; land invertebrates; other; (specify).*
- *Does the species/specimen attack or prey on domestic or commercial animals or plants?*

4.4. Impacts on habitat and local environments.

- *Could the species/specimen reduce the ground vegetation cover to an extent where it could cause or increase soil erosion? This question looks at identifying if the species/specimen, through feeding, digging or other activities could have a detrimental impact on vegetation such that the underlying soil is exposed to increased erosion.*
- *Does the species/specimen construct burrows or dig near or around waterways? Identify if the species/specimen does/can burrow or otherwise disturb the substrate (soil or sand) around waterways.*
- *Has the species/specimen ever been recorded causing damage to: native animals' habitats; natural communities; native plants; forestry; agriculture?*
- *Could the species/specimen inhibit tree seedling regeneration in forests and woodland? This question aims to identify if the species/specimen could have a negative impact on regeneration in native forests and woodlands.*
- *Could the species/specimen spread weeds? Identify whether the species/specimen could spread weeds through carrying seeds on their fur/feathers, defecating the seeds at a distance from the parent plant or moving viable vegetative matter to new areas.*

4.5. *Discuss any control/ eradication programs that could be applied in Australia if the species/specimen escaped or were released. Are any such eradication programs already available in Australia?*

4.6. *Behaviours that cause environmental degradation*

- *Behavioural characteristics. Describe any behaviours of the species/specimen which cause physical disturbance to the environment e.g. hooves, digging etc.*
- *Does the species/specimen eat or disturb wetlands/wetland vegetation? This question seeks to identify negative impacts the species/specimen may have on wetlands.*
- *Could the species/specimen cause pollution of water bodies? This question seeks to identify if the species/specimen could impact native aquatic flora or fauna, or water for human consumption, by polluting waterways.*
- *If possible, outline the current health of the possible habitat matches in Australia and analyse their sensitivity to possible introductions from the species/specimen being assessed.*

4.7. *Impacts on primary industries*

- *Has the species/specimen ever been recorded causing damage to: livestock, poultry, agriculture?*
- *Could a wild population of the species/specimen eat or damage any of the following: plant parts or products; flowers or buds; nuts; root vegetables; leaf vegetables; sugarcane; fodder crops; cotton; nursery/garden plants; timber forests or plantation trees; fruit orchards; stored grain or seeds; legumes; cereal grain in field; oilseeds or coarse grains in field; other (specify).*
- *Could wild populations of the species/specimen use any resources that might cause it to compete with livestock? This question seeks to identify if this species/specimen could compete with livestock.*
- *Has the species/specimen ever inflicted damage to trees, shrubs or their seedlings that has caused tree death or affected their value as timber? This question aims to identify if the species/specimen may have a negative impact on tree plantations/silvicultural activities.*

4.8. *Damage to property*

- *Could the species/specimen deface or physically damage buildings? Identify if the species/specimen could damage buildings either through physical damage, or through depositing excrement on the exterior of the building.*
- *Could the species/specimen damage fences? Identify if the species/specimen has the capacity to damage fences.*
- *Could the species/specimen damage equipment? Identify if the species/specimen could cause damage to domestic or commercial equipment.*

4.9. *Is the species/specimen a social nuisance or danger? For example, because of the following behaviours: invading buildings; forming large noisy colonies or flocks; polluting equipment,*

buildings, parks or other public facilities with urine, droppings or nesting material; posing a risk to aircraft when present in flight ways or at airports; other (please specify).

4.10. Describe any potentially harmful characteristics of the species/specimen.

- Any potential threat to humans, any available mitigation measures (such as anti-venom), and methods for appropriate handling.
- Has the species/specimen ever injured people? Identify whether there are any recorded instances of this species/specimen causing harm to people.
- Is the species/specimen susceptible to, or could it transmit any pests or diseases? Identify if the species/specimen could potentially transmit harmful diseases or parasites to humans or any other species/specimen.

5. What conditions or restrictions, if any, could be applied to the import of the species/specimen to reduce any potential for negative environmental impacts?

If the outcome of the assessment is that the species/specimen can be imported subjected to conditions, limiting imports to eligible non-commercial purposes only, excluding household pets, it will be placed on Part 2 of the Live Import List (i.e., the species/specimen of animals and plants suitable for live import with an import permit issued under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.). Recommended conditions should be relevant to the conservation status of the species/specimen and/or the risks posed by the import, for example, single sex imports, size restrictions etc. Conditions should mitigate the likely establishment and impact that a species/specimen may have.

6. Provide a summary of the proposed purpose of import, including why this species/specimen has been chosen for import and details of the research facilities.

Please include:

- *If the applicant is not the primary researcher, please provide the name of the person primarily responsible for this research and the name of the institution in which the research will be conducted*
- *Research affiliation/s e.g. University, CSIRO, Government department etc;*
- *The type and certification level of the containment facilities where the species/specimen will be held.*
- *Security procedures, including a discussion of why the proposed security procedures (including disposal of waste/wastewater) are considered appropriate to mitigate the level of environmental risk posed by the species/specimen.*
- *Why the species/specimen selected is the best species/specimen suitable for the research to be undertaken (if there another suitable species/specimen available from within Australia why is this species/specimen not being used?).*
- *Will individual species/specimens be able to be identified and tracked through the import process? (e.g. microchipped tattooed animals).*

7. Provide information on the status of the species/specimen under the following international conventions:

- *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).*

Is the species/specimen listed on CITES Appendix I, II or III?

- *International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List conservation status*
- *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).*

8. Provide information about the ecology of the species/specimen.

Include, but do not restrict your response to:

- *lifespan of the species/specimen;*
- *size and weight range;*
- *the natural geographic range and how this range matches Australia's climate.(you can do this using 'Climatch' at the following address; <https://climatch.cp1.agriculture.gov.au/climatch.jsp>)*
- *habitat;*
- *diet, including potential to feed on agricultural plants;*
- *social behaviour and groupings;*
- *territorial and aggressive behaviours;*
- *natural predators; and*
- *characteristics that may cause harm to humans and other species/specimen.*

9. Provide information on the reproductive biology of the species/specimen.

Include:

- *the age at maturity (first breeding);*
- *how frequently breeding occurs;*
- *if the female can store sperm;*
- *how many eggs or live-born young are produced at each breeding event;*
- *if the species/specimen has hybridised with other species/specimen (both in the wild and in captivity) or has the potential to hybridise with any other species/specimen; and*
- *if the species/specimen can hybridise, are the progeny fertile?*
- *is the species/specimen capable of Parthenogenesis or sequential hermaphroditism?*

10. Provide information on all other Commonwealth, state and territory legislative controls on the species/specimen and proposed research, including any state/ territory risk assessments of the species/specimen available.

Outline any Commonwealth, state, or territory legislative controls on the species/specimen and provide information on any other relevant assessments that have been made of the species/specimen.

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

Are you aware of quarantine requirements for bringing live animals into Australia? Is the species/specimen 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, Fisheries and Forestry?

If there are not yet quarantine conditions in place for this organism, contact the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to discuss the undertaking of an Import Risk Analysis (IRA) by telephone on 1800 900 090 or visit the website for more information at [Home - DAFF \(agriculture.gov.au\)](https://www.home.gov.au/daff).