

## ***Rapid Pest Risk Analysis*** ***Xyleborinus attenuatus***

This rapid pest risk analysis (PRA) provides a quick assessment of the risks posed by the pest to Sweden, which is the PRA area being assessed. The format is an adapted version of the EPPO Express PRA scheme ([EPPO 2012](#)). Definition of terms used as well as the rating scheme and assessments are done in line with the guidance given in the EPPO CAPRA system ([EPPO 2011](#)). The likelihood of entry and establishment are assessed considering the current phytosanitary regulation in place with respect to the EU legislation ([Council Directive 2000/29/EC](#)). The definition of a quarantine pest follows the regulation ([EU 2016/2031](#)).

### **Summary**

#### **Presence**

*Xyleborinus attenuatus* is established in Sweden. The ambrosia beetle originates from Japan and eastern Russia and has until now spread to 13 European countries as well as to USA and Canada.

#### **Entry, establishment and spread**

The likelihood of entry of *Xyleborinus attenuatus* into Sweden is assessed to be very likely. The main pathways of entry are “Wood and wood products” and “Natural spread”. *X. attenuatus* is already established and further spread is assessed to be very likely since suitable host are widely distributed in Sweden, the climate is suitable and the species have a track record of being able to establish in different environments. The rate of spread is assessed to be high based on the species presumed high flight capacity and the high likelihood of spread through transportation of colonized wood material.

## Impact

Both the economic, environmental and social impact was assessed to be small since there currently is little support in the easily accessible literature that the pest cause significant damage. Nevertheless, there is a risk for a similar shift towards increased impact as have been recorded for closely related ambrosia beetle species.

## Management options

It is assessed to be difficult to prevent further introductions of *X. attenuatus* to Sweden. Current phytosanitary measures such as barking and heat treatment does not completely prevent entry of ambrosia beetles with wood and there is also a risk of natural spread from Denmark.

## Assessment in relation to the definition of quarantine pests

The results presented in this rapid PRA shows that *Xyleborinus attenuatus* does not fulfil all of the criteria for a union quarantine pest, e.g. it is widely distributed within the EU territory. In addition, it indicates that *X. attenuatus* does not fulfil all criteria for a protected zone quarantine pest for any part of Sweden, e.g. due to limited possibilities to prevent natural spread from areas where the pest is established and that the impact was assessed to be small.

## Key uncertainties and further investigation needed

There is a large uncertainty in the assessment of the future impact of *Xyleborinus attenuatus* due to the potential risk that it may shift from colonizing dead trees to colonizing live trees as has been observed for other closely related beetle-fungus symbioses ([Hulcr and Dunn 2011](#)). It would therefore be desirable if the development of *X. attenuatus*, both nationally and internationally, is followed to detect any shift towards increased impact.

## Pest risk assessment

### 1 Name of the pest

**Latin name:** *Xyleborinus attenuatus*

**Synonyms:** *Xyleborus attenuatus*, *Xyleborus attenuatus*, *Xyleborinus alni*

**Common names:** Ambrosia beetle

**Taxonomic position:** *Xyleborinus attenuatus* (Blandford 1894) (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Scolytinae: Xyleborini)

## 2 Reason for performing the rapid PRA:

In 2016, *Xyleborinus attenuatus* was trapped in a monitoring program administrated by the Swedish Board of Agriculture.

## 3 Does a relevant earlier PRA exist?

- No  
 Yes

## 4 Regulatory status of the pest

*Xyleborinus attenuatus* is not listed in the EC Plant Health Directive ([Council Directive 2000/29/EC](#)) nor in the [lists of EPPO](#).

## 5 Current area of distribution

*Xyleborinus attenuatus* is considered to be native in Japan and eastern Russia (e.g. [Rabaglia et al. 2006](#)). In eastern Russia it may be considered to be rather common since it in one study accounted for 1.3% of all Scolytinae species trapped ([Sweeney et al. 2016](#)). See the homepage "[HISL - PEET Xyleborini](#)" for a comprehensive list of references related to the native distribution of *X. attenuatus*.

*X. attenuatus* was found in the United States in 1995 ([USDA 2011](#)) and it has now been reported from Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Washington ([Gandhi et al. 2010](#); [Hoebeke and Rabaglia 2007](#); [Mudge et al. 2001](#); [Rabaglia et al. 2006](#)). According to the homepage "[Bark and Ambrosia Beetles](#)" it has also been found in Connecticut, Idaho, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Vermont. At that homepage there is also a map of 226 distinct collection events in the United States.

At about the same time, i.e. 1995-1996, *X. attenuatus* was also found in Canada for the first time. It has now been reported from British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Quebec ([Popa et al. 2014](#); [Rabaglia et al. 2006](#); [Robideau et al. 2015](#)).

In Europe, the first record of *X. attenuatus* is from 1987 (Knížek 1988.) and it has now been found in:

- Austria (Holzschuh, 1994; [Geiser and Geiser 2000](#))
- Czech Republic ([Knizek and Zahradnik 1999](#); [Procházka et al. 2014](#))
- Denmark ([Hansen and Jørum 2014](#); [Pedersen et al. 2010](#))
- France ([Freeman and Grancher 2014](#))

- Germany ([Bussler and Immler 2007](#); [Flechtner 2004](#); [Gebhardt 2002](#); [Möller and Neumann 2000](#) and according to [Entomofauna Germanica \(2017\)](#) it has been observed in 17 out of 20 regions in Germany (80 sites in total))
- Netherlands ([Vorst et al. 2008](#))
- Poland where it is considered common ([Borowski et al. 2012](#); [Borowski et al. 2013](#); [Borowski and Mokrzycki 2016](#); [Mokrzycki 2016](#); [Papis and Mokrzycki 2015](#))
- Russia ([Martynov and Nikulina 2016](#))
- Slovakia ([Galko et al. 2014](#))
- Spain ([Kirkendall and Faccoli \(2010\)](#) citing another source)
- Sweden ([Lindelöw 2012](#); [Lindelöw et al. 2006](#))
- Switzerland ([Wittenberg 2006](#) citing C. Besuchet, pers. comm.)
- Ukraine ([Nikulina et al. 2015](#) where they also state that it has been recorded from all climatic zones in Ukraine (citing other sources))

However, according to [Mokrzycki et al. \(2011\)](#) the full extent of the current distribution in Europe is not clear, because of a confusion with the closely related *Xyleborinus saxesenii*.

In conclusion it is assessed that *X. attenuatus* is widely distributed within EU according to the criteria defined in regulation (EU) 2016/2031; Annex I; [p.73](#) (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Map showing European countries where *Xyleborinus attenuatus* has been reported in blue colour.

## 6 Is the pest present and is it widely distributed in Sweden?

*X. attenuatus* is already present in Sweden. In total 100 individuals have been observed from in total eight locations within the country (Lindelöw et al. 2006; ARTPORTALEN (<https://www.artportalen.se/> accessed 7 June. 2017); Lindelöw, unpublished report to SJV; Fig. 2). Considering that many of these observations were not done close to any harbours it appears unlikely that all of the trapped individuals had hitchhiked with imported infested host material. In conclusion there is strong support for that *X. attenuatus* should be considered established in Sweden (using the ISPM 5 definition of establishment, i.e. “Perpetuation, for the foreseeable future, of a pest within an area after entry”).

*X. attenuatus* is only *known* to be present in a limited part of its potential distribution area in Sweden (Fig. 2) it is therefore assessed to be not widely distributed (according to the criteria defined in regulation (EU) 2016/2031; Annex I; p.73). It is however likely that the distribution of *X. attenuatus* in Sweden is larger than the current observations indicate due to e.g. i) the species concealed mode of life, ii) that identification requires specialist knowledge and iii) restricted sampling efforts.

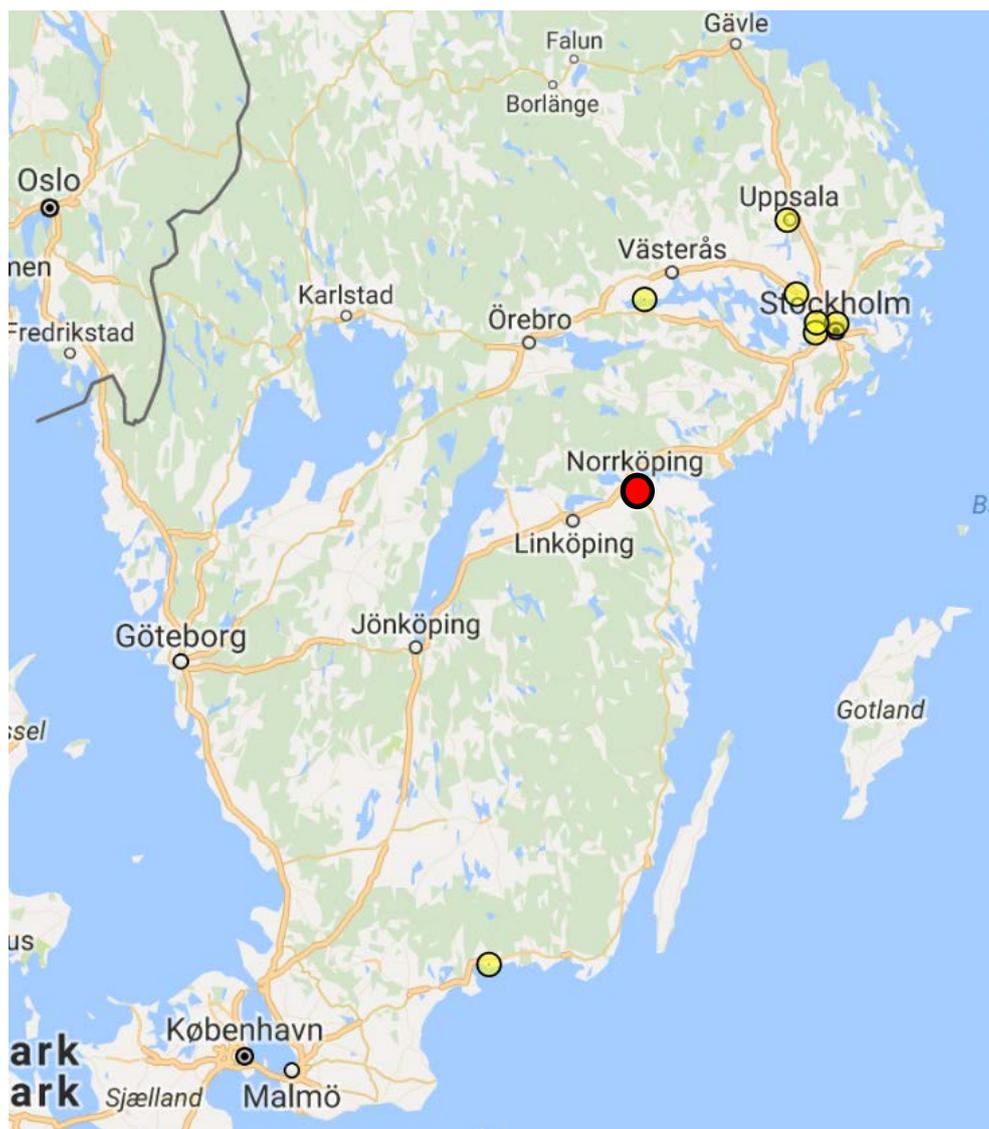


Figure 2. Yellow circles denotes locations where *Xyleborinus attenuatus* has been found in Sweden (ARTPORTALEN (<https://www.artportalen.se/> accessed 6 June 2017). The red circle denotes the location where *X. attenuatus* was trapped in 2016 in a monitoring program administrated by the Swedish Board of Agriculture (Lindelöw, unpublished report).

## 7 Host plants and their occurrence in Sweden

*Xyleborinus attenuatus* is a polyphagous species that has been found in many deciduous tree species, e.g. willow (*Salix* spp.), alder (*Alnus* spp.), birch (*Betula* spp.) oak (*Quercus* spp.), aspen (*Populus* spp.), ash (*Fraxinus* sp.), lime tree (*Tilia* sp.), hazel (*Corylus*) and *Prunus* sp. (Dodds et al. 2017; Nikulina et al. 2015; Roques et al. 2010; Wood and Bright 1992). In addition, the pest has recently been found on red pine (*Pinus resinosa*), but this was regarded to represent an unlikely new host associations (Dodds et al. 2017). Host species, i.e. deciduous trees, can be

found in the whole of Sweden up to the subalpine belt although deciduous forests, which constitutes 1% of the land area of Sweden, is confined to the southern part of the country ([Diekmann 1999](#)).

It is important to keep in mind that *X. attenuatus* is an ambrosia beetle and thus does not feed on their host but on the fungi that they grow in their tunnels within the wood. The wide host range may indicate that this species is more limited by finding hosts in a suitable condition (e.g. stressed or recently dead) with a suitable moisture content and density rather than on finding specific deciduous tree species. Such dependence on host condition, rather than specific host species, has been suggested for several closely related species, i.e. *Xylosandrus crassiusculus*, *Xyleborus volvulus*, *Xyleborus perforans*, *Xyleborus perforans*, *Xyleborus similis*, *Xylosandrus germanus* and *Xyleborinus saxesenii* ([CABI 2015](#)).

## 8 Is the pest a vector?

*Xyleborinus attenuatus* live symbiotically with *Ambrosiella* spp. ([Nakasima et al. 1992](#)). The *Ambrosiella* fungi may cause staining of the wood around the galleries but is not regarded as pathogenic ([CABI 2015](#)). There seems to be no information about that *X. attenuatus* should be a vector of any pathogenic fungi ([Humble and Allen 2006](#)).

## 9 Is a vector needed?

- No  
 Yes

## 10 Pathways and likelihood of entry into Sweden

**Wood and wood products:** Wood and wood products are considered to be the most likely pathway for *Xyleborinus attenuatus*. The beetle reside within the wood and are thereby both protected from adverse climatic conditions during transportation and become difficult to detect at points of entry ([Rassati et al. 2016](#)). *X. attenuatus* is present in large parts of Europe as well as in several countries in North America and Asia. Wood and wood products of deciduous trees, potentially infested with *X. attenuates*, are imported to Sweden on a regular basis particularly from North America. There is also trade with Russia, parts of Asia and other European countries. For some species/genera of deciduous trees, there are import regulations with special requirements in Directive 2000/29. Although those requirements primarily target other pests they should reduce the risk for introduction of species such as *X. attenuates*.

It is assessed to be much more likely that *X. attenuatus* entered to Sweden through a pathway with imported material rather than by natural spread since the current observations in Sweden are much closer to harbours which import wood than the

closest neighbouring country from where *X. attenuatus* has been reported, i.e. Denmark (Fig. 2). The pattern of observations of *X. attenuatus* suggest that it has entered into Sweden at least at three different occasions (Fig. 2).

The efficiency of the different treatments currently used to prevent the entry of pest species in wood varies when it comes to ambrosia beetles. Debarking will not remove the beetles from already colonized material as they are situated in the sapwood nor will it prevent the colonization of wood (Haack and Petrice, 2009). A heat treatment of 56°C for 30 min (e.g. ISPM 15) is sufficient to kill a range of insect (IPPC 2017; USDA 2016). In an experiment where wood was experimentally infested with adults of the closely related species *X. germanus* 100% were killed at 52°C by hot water treatments and at 58°C by microwave irradiation (according to the abstract in Suh (2014)). However, such treatments do not prevent the wood from being recolonized with ambrosia beetles should the conducive environmental conditions be fulfilled (Haack and Petrice, 2009). Some fumigant, like methylbromide appear to successfully kill ambrosia beetles in wood (based on the abstract of Oogita et al. (1998)).

**Plants for planting:** Woody plant stems of deciduous trees may be colonized by *X. attenuatus* and plants for planting is therefore considered a potential pathway. Plant for planting is judged to be a less important pathway than “Wood and wood products” due to the much smaller volumes of suitable hosts material that is transported within this pathway and because attacked living plants frequently shows symptoms that makes it easier to detect and destruct colonized material. This pathway is assessed to be unlikely but with a high uncertainty due to the lack of observations in the literature.

**Natural spread:** Most scolytids, including species closely related to *X. attenuatus*, are strong flyers allowing wind-aided dispersal of several kilometres (Byers 2000; Grégoire et al. 2001; Henin et al. 2003). Thus, since *X. attenuatus* is present in Denmark the likelihood of entry into Sweden through natural spread is assessed to be likely but with a high uncertainty due to the very limited species specific information in the literature of historical natural spread.

#### Rating of the likelihood of entry

| Pathway                | Very unlikely            | Unlikely                            | Moderately likely        | Likely                              | Very likely                         | Uncertainty rating <sup>a</sup> |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Wood and wood products | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Low                             |
| Plants for planting    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | High                            |
| Natural spread         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | High                            |

<sup>a</sup>)Low/medium/high

## 11 Likelihood of establishment outdoors and under protected cultivation in Sweden

**Establishment outdoors:** The likelihood of establishment outdoors is assessed to be very likely since:

- *Xyleborinus attenuatus* is already established in Sweden (see answer to question 6).
- The climate is suitable in a large part of Sweden. The Köppen-Geiger climate type where *X. attenuatus* has been found in Sweden, i.e. Dfb, covers a large part of Sweden since it stretches up to Örnsköldsvik on the east coast and to Torsby on the west side of Sweden ([Peel et al 2007](#)). *X. attenuatus* has also been found in this climate type elsewhere, e.g. in Sherbrooke in Canada (45.402406° N; -71.8822763° W; [Popa et al. 2014](#)).
- Suitable hosts are widely distributed in Sweden.
- A single individual is enough to initiate a population since ambrosia beetle females are usually already fertilized when they as adults disperse by flight from their natal host tree (due to sibling mating within the natal chamber; [Peer and Taborsky 2007](#)). This trait has been shown to promote colonization of new areas ([Jordal et al. 2001](#)).

**Establishment under protected cultivation:** The likelihood that *X. attenuatus* will establish on plants grown under protected cultivation is assessed to be very unlikely, but with a high uncertainty, since there does not seem to be any reports of that.

### Rating of the likelihood of establishment

|                              | Very unlikely                       | Unlikely                 | Moderately likely        | Likely                   | Very likely                         | Uncertainty rating <sup>a</sup> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Outdoors</b>              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Low                             |
| <b>Protected cultivation</b> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | High                            |

<sup>a)</sup>Low/medium/high

## 12 Potential spread after introduction

Most scolytids, including species closely related to *X. attenuatus*, are strong flyers allowing wind-aided dispersal of several kilometers per year ([Byers 2000](#); [Grégoire et al. 2001](#); [Henin et al. 2003](#)) and host plants are broadly distributed in Sweden. Human assisted spread through transportation of infested material could become important if the beetle become common in an area. The spread rate is therefore assessed to be moderate, i.e. 1 km to 10 km per year. There is however a high uncertainty due to the restricted empirical data of spread rates from areas where the species have established.

### Rating of the magnitude of spread within Sweden

|             | Very low                 | Low                      | Moderate rate                       | High                     | Very high                | Uncertainty rating <sup>a</sup> |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Spread rate | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | High                            |

<sup>a</sup>)Low/medium/high

## 13 Economic, environmental and social impact

The endangered area in Sweden is large since available hosts and a suitable climate is found in a major part of the country. There is however little support in the easily accessible literature that the pest cause significant damage. This is in agreement with a previous literature search that showed that there had not been a single report of damage by *X. attenuatus* on living trees in USA ([Aukema et al. 2010](#); [USDA 2011](#)).

*X. attenuatus* is regarded to be a secondary pest ([Borowski et al. 2012](#)). The authors conclude that although *X. attenuatus* participated in the process of dying back of alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) stands in Poland the species was not expected to cause die back of alder over a large area.

Ambrosia beetles may also cause wood degradation and dark staining when it excavate its galleries into the sapwood, as a result of their symbiotic fungi ([Robideau et al. 2015](#)). Ambrosia beetles in general may cause serious damage as vectors of pathogenic fungi but there seems to be no reports of such associations with *X. attenuatus* ([Humble and Allen 2006](#)).

The risk that *X. attenuatus* should cause the extinction of native beetles through competition is assessed to be small. There are some reports that *X. attenuatus* has become relatively common in areas that it has invaded, e.g. in Poland ([Borowski et al. 2012](#); [Borowski et al. 2013](#)) but competition between different species of ambrosia beetles is regarded to be minimal in the three-dimensional xylem habitat that they occupy within the wood ([Kühnholz 2001](#)).

It cannot be excluded that that the impact of *X. attenuatus* could increase in the future since there are many examples of similar beetle-fungus symbioses that has shifted from colonizing dead trees to colonizing live trees in their introduced ranges ([Hulcr and Dunn 2011](#)). Typically this is a shift from being a secondary pest on a wide range of host to becoming a primary pest on a narrow range of hosts. One example is the redbay ambrosia beetle *Xyleborus glabratus*, and its fungal partner *Raffaelea* spp. This symbiosis has started to kill trees of the family Lauraceae within its new range and has eradicated mature redbay (*Persea borbonia*) along the southern Atlantic coast of North America and is now threatening the avocado-growing regions ([Hulcr and Dunn 2011](#)). Similarly, *X. germanus* had been in the apple growing regions in New York for a long time but it only recently

began to kill the trees and now hundreds of trees are killed annually in this region (Agnello et al. 2014, 2016). Subsequently the uncertainty associated with the impact assessment is rated as high.

#### Rating of the magnitude of potential impact within Sweden

|                      | Very small                          | Small                               | Medium                   | Large                    | Very large               | Uncertainty rating <sup>a</sup> |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Economic</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | High                            |
| <b>Environmental</b> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | High                            |
| <b>Social</b>        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | High                            |

<sup>a</sup>Low/medium/high

#### 14 Overall assessment of risk

The results presented in this rapid PRA shows that *Xyleborinus attenuatus* does not fulfil all of the criteria for a union quarantine pest, e.g. it is widely distributed within the EU territory (Fig. 1). In addition, it indicates that *X. attenuatus* does not fulfil all criteria for a protected zone quarantine pest for any part of Sweden, e.g. due to limited possibilities to prevent natural spread from areas where the pest is established and that the impact was assessed to be small.

#### 15 Risk management options

*Xyleborinus attenuatus* was first found in Sweden in 2002 and since then it has been found in seven more locations (Fig. 2). This indicates that it is now established in such a large area that eradication would be very difficult and require extensive resources.

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