



DECISION

Date	20 March 2012
Application code	APP201146
Application type	To import for release any new organism under section 34(1)(a) of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996
Applicant	Camellia Memorial Trust Incorporated
Date application received	20 March 2012
Consideration date	20 March 2012
Considered by	The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
Purpose of the application	Importation of ornamental <i>Camellia</i> species
The new organisms approved	<p>Genus: <i>Camellia</i> Linnaeus 1735</p> <p>Section: <i>ArcheCamellia</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>amplexicaulis</i> <p>Section: <i>Camellia</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>albo-sericea</i>• <i>bailinshanica</i>• <i>brevigyna</i>• <i>changii</i> (syn. <i>azalea</i>)• <i>compressa</i>• <i>cryptoneura</i>• <i>jinshajiangica</i>• <i>jiuxiensis</i>• <i>lapidea</i>• <i>longicaudata</i>• <i>longituba</i>• <i>magniflora</i>• <i>oligophlebia</i>• <i>omeiensis</i>• <i>phelloderma</i>• <i>tunganica</i>• <i>villosa</i>• <i>xifongensis</i> <p>Section: <i>Eriandria</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>melliana</i>

- Section: Furfuracea
- *gaudichaudii*
- *pubifurfuracea*
- *suaveolens*

Section: Longipedicellata

- *longipedicellata*

Section: Luteoflora

- *luteoflora*

Section: Oleifera

- *gauchowensis*

Section: Paracamellia

- *kissi*
- *shensiensis*
- *weiningensis*

Section: Protocamellia

- *albogigas*

Section: Pseudocamellia

- *chungkingensis*

Section: Theopsis

- *elongata*
- *euryoides*
- *jiuyishanica*
- *parvi-ovata*

Section: Tuberculata

- *acuticalyx*
- *anlungensis*
- *hupehensis*
- *leyeensis*
- *pyxidiacea*
- *rhytidocarpa*
- *rubituberculata*
- *tuberculata*



1. Summary of decision

- 1.1 The applicant (Camellia Memorial Trust Incorporated) has applied for approval to import for release 43 species of camellia under section 34(1)(a) of the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (the HSNO Act).¹
- 1.2 Application APP201146 to import for release 43 species of camellia is **approved** under section 35(2).

2. The Application

Application Receipt

- 2.1 Application APP201146 was formally received on 20 March 2012

Notification

- 2.2 This application was not required to be publicly notified under section 53 as the decision has been made through the rapid assessment process (section 35).
- 2.3 However, the EPA has undertaken targeted consultation with Regional Councils and relevant experts.

Information available for the consideration

- 2.4 The information available for the consideration comprised:
 - The application and references therein;
 - Submissions resulting from the targeted consultation; and
 - Internal EPA advice.

3. Legislative criteria for application

- 3.1 The application was lodged under section 34(1)(a) of the HSNO Act.
- 3.2 The application was considered in accordance with the relevant provisions of the HSNO Act and the Methodology. In particular, the EPA considered:
 - a) whether the application meets the criteria specified in section 35(2);
 - b) whether the organisms would be likely to fail the minimum standards specified in section 36;
 - c) the relevant matters in Part 2 of the HSNO Act; and
 - d) the relevant clauses in the Methodology.

¹ Unless otherwise specified, references to sections in this decision refer to sections of the HSNO Act.



- 3.3 The substantive issues arising from the legislative criteria are discussed in the following sections of this decision.

4. Criteria for rapid assessment under section 35

- 4.1 The EPA evaluated whether the application could be assessed under the rapid assessment pathway. Each of the criteria for rapid assessment is below.

Are any of the organisms unwanted organisms as defined in the Biosecurity Act 1993 (section 35(2)(a))?

- 4.2 The EPA is satisfied that the camellias are not unwanted organisms as defined in the Biosecurity Act 1993.

Could the organisms form self-sustaining populations anywhere in New Zealand, taking into account the ease of eradication (section 35(2)(b)(i))?

- 4.3 Camellias are an extremely popular garden plants in rural and urban settings in New Zealand. When considering the ability of the camellias to establish self-sustaining populations, and the ease of eradication of such populations, the EPA notes that there are approximately 40 species already present in New Zealand, and they are not known to spread in New Zealand, even in the garden environment. They produce very low levels of seeds and the seed is viable for only a short time. Although the occasional seedling is not unknown, in most cases seeds that do germinate are outcompeted by faster growing plants. For example where camellias and rhododendron have planted in native forest in New Zealand, self-sustaining populations have not formed (as seen at Pukeiti adjacent to Egmont National Park). For this reason, camellias are recommended for planting by Weedbusters.
- 4.4 In camellias' natural range they are dispersed by co-evolved rodents (i.e. not just any rodent). This is supported by the New Zealand experience where even though we have introduced species of rats and mice, there are no records of rodents dispersing camellias to form self-sustaining populations in New Zealand.
- 4.5 The EPA does not expect the new species of camellia to behave any differently from the species already present in New Zealand.
- 4.6 The EPA considers that it will be **highly improbable** that the organisms form a self-sustaining population anywhere in New Zealand. However if such a population did form, it would be easy to detect and eliminate.



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Could the organisms displace or reduce valued species (section 35(2)(b)(ii))?

4.7 The nearest living plant in the New Zealand flora to the genus *Camellia* (Family Theaceae) is *Myrsine* in the Family Myrsinaceae but please see Appendix 3 of the application for a detailed comparison. The EPA understands that these camellias will not hybridise with valued species, therefore it is **highly improbable** that the camellias could displace or reduce a valued species after release.

Could the organisms cause deterioration of natural habitats (section 35(2)(b)(iii))?

4.8 As discussed in section 4.3, camellias are not known to spread in New Zealand, even in the garden environment.

4.9 The EPA considers that it is **highly improbable** that the camellias could cause deterioration of natural habitats.

Could the organisms be disease causing or be a parasite, vector or reservoir for human, plant or animal disease (section 35(2)(b)(iv))?

4.10 The applicant mentions four viruses that potentially transmit between camellias. No vector has been identified for camellia leaf yellow mottle virus (CLYMV), and it is specific to camellias. The applicant mentions camellia yellow mottle virus (CYMV), and camellia infectious variegation virus (CIVV), but the EPA has identified that these are both synonyms for CLYMV. Both CLYMV and camellia mosaic virus are spread by mechanical inoculation, via grafting or contact between plants i.e. they are not vectored by wind or insects.

4.11 The EPA notes that, as with the camellia already present in New Zealand, the 43 species of camellias may be infected with camellia-specific viruses. However, this does not mean that these camellias will be a reservoir for plant disease.

4.12 The EPA considers that it is **highly improbable** that the 43 species of camellias will be disease-causing, be a parasite, or be a vector or reservoir for human, plant or animal disease.

Will the organisms have any adverse effects on human health and safety or the environment (section 35(2)(b)(v))?

4.13 There is no evidence that any of the 43 species of camellia will have any adverse effects on human health and safety or the environment. For example, there are no reports of allergies to camellia pollen either in New Zealand or overseas.

4.14 The EPA considers that it is **highly improbable** that the camellias will have any adverse effects on human health and safety or the environment.



5. Minimum standards in section 36

- 5.1 For the reasons described above, the EPA is satisfied that the organisms meet the minimum standards specified in section 36.

6. Summary of submissions

- 6.1 Three submissions were received in response to the targeted consultation undertaken. Two were in support (Gore District Council and Manawatu District Council), and one neither supported or opposed the application but expresses biosecurity concerns (Federated Farmers).
- 6.2 The EPA notes that MAF state they “...*didn’t notice any particularly concerning information about the potential invasiveness of Camellia species.*”

7. Decision

- 7.1 After reviewing all of the information contained in the application, the EPA was satisfied that the application met the requirements of section 34. In any event, in accordance with section 59(3)(a)(ii), the EPA waives any information requirement that has not been met.
- 7.2 The EPA is satisfied that the threshold for approval under section 35(2) has been met, and taking into account:
- (a) whether the organisms would be likely to fail the minimum standards specified in section 36;
 - (b) the relevant matters in Part 2 of the HSNO Act; and
 - (c) the relevant clauses in the Methodology
- it has decided to exercise its discretion and approve the import and release of the 43 species of camellia under section 35(2).
- 7.3 Therefore application APP201146 **is approved** without controls.

Rob Forlong, Chief Executive
Environmental Protection Authority

20 March 2012

Approval codes: NOR100018-NOR100060



Approval numbers for organisms in application APP201146

Organism	Approval code
<i>Camellia acuticalyx</i>	NOR100057
<i>Camellia albogigas</i>	NOR100056
<i>Camellia albo-sericea</i>	NOR100054
<i>Camellia amplexicaulis</i>	NOR100019
<i>Camellia anlungensis</i>	NOR100055
<i>Camellia bailinshanica</i>	NOR100053
<i>Camellia brevigyna</i>	NOR100050
<i>Camellia changii</i>	NOR100051
<i>Camellia chungkingensis</i>	NOR100048
<i>Camellia compressa</i>	NOR100052
<i>Camellia cryptoneura</i>	NOR100049
<i>Camellia elongata</i>	NOR100047
<i>Camellia euryoides</i>	NOR100059
<i>Camellia gauchowensis</i>	NOR100060
<i>Camellia gaudichaudii</i>	NOR100042
<i>Camellia hupehensis</i>	NOR100044
<i>Camellia jinshajiangica</i>	NOR100046
<i>Camellia jiuxiensis</i>	NOR100045
<i>Camellia jiuysishanica</i>	NOR100038
<i>Camellia kissi</i>	NOR100040
<i>Camellia lapidea</i>	NOR100058
<i>Camellia leyeensis</i>	NOR100043
<i>Camellia longicaudata</i>	NOR100036
<i>Camellia longipedicellata</i>	NOR100034
<i>Camellia longituba</i>	NOR100035
<i>Camellia luteoflora</i>	NOR100037
<i>Camellia magniflora</i>	NOR100041
<i>Camellia melliana</i>	NOR100039



<i>Camellia oligophlebia</i>	NOR100033
<i>Camellia omeiensis</i>	NOR100030
<i>Camellia parvi-ovata</i>	NOR100029
<i>Camellia phelloderma</i>	NOR100032
<i>Camellia pubifurfuracea</i>	NOR100027
<i>Camellia pyxidiacea</i>	NOR100031
<i>Camellia rhytidocarpa</i>	NOR100028
<i>Camellia rubituberculata</i>	NOR100026
<i>Camellia shensiensis</i>	NOR100025
<i>Camellia suaveolens</i>	NOR100022
<i>Camellia tuberculata</i>	NOR100024
<i>Camellia tunganica</i>	NOR100023
<i>Camellia villosa</i>	NOR100021
<i>Camellia weiningensis</i>	NOR100018
<i>Camellia xifongensis</i>	NOR100020

