

# Guidelines to the Candidate List of (potentially) invasive alien plant species of Switzerland

**Invasive Alien Plants Working Group  
of the Scientific Commission of InfoFlora**

Current version: 09.01.2025

## Aims of list

The main purpose of the Candidate List (CD List) is **to raise awareness**, in other words: **to draw the attention of expert botanists** to certain alien plants, possibly presenting a threat to biodiversity, health and economy in Switzerland, and **to achieve their awareness and gain further information**.

It is especially helpful for the Working Group 'Invasive Alien Plants' of InfoFlora (hereafter abbreviated as IAP-WG) to select (new) candidate species that may be submitted to a full risk assessment via the Swiss invasion potential risk assessment process ("[SIPRA](#)"), including also (S)EICAT, for listing on the national lists of invasive alien plants of Switzerland ([link to lists](#)).

In this respect, **the CD list represents a working step** after the 'taxonomic' assessment by InfoFlora (that leads to the inclusion of a new alien species in the national Checklist of the wild vascular flora of Switzerland) and before the full risk assessment via SIPRA (incl. (S)EICAT).

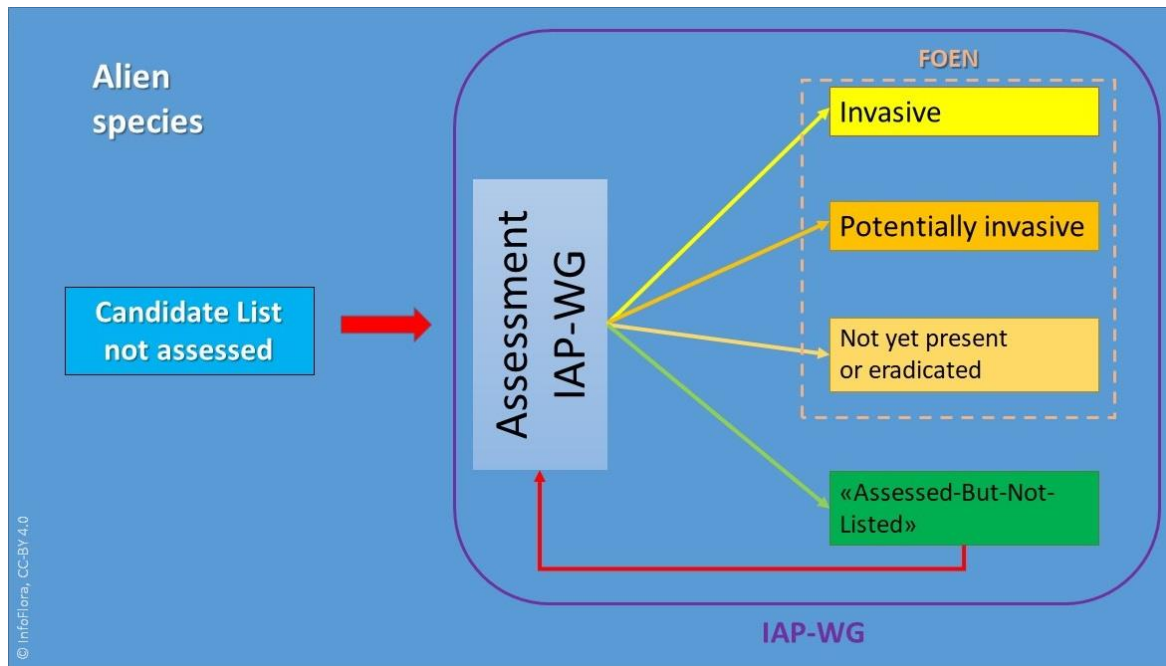
**Disclaimer:** The CD List has **no legal value**. It is not a quarantine list and does not constitute a recommendation for regulations or management actions.

## Which species can be listed?

Species eligible for the CD List are **not listed yet** on the lists of invasive and potentially invasive alien plants of Switzerland (cfr. [FOEN 2022](#)) or on the List of assessed-but-not-listed species (by InfoFlora, in preparation), or any legal list of Switzerland (e.g. annex 2.1 and 2.2 of [Release Ordinance, RO](#)).

They are typically at early stages of the establishment or expansion process or could be, for example:

- Alien species that are present in Switzerland in the wild (either as casual or established) and display a recent expansion dynamic;
- Alien species that occur in Switzerland in cultivated conditions only (e.g. gardens), but are considered problematic in neighboring/EU countries and are likely to escape and establish in the wild in Switzerland;
- Alien species that do not occur at all in Switzerland but are considered problematic in neighboring/EU countries and are likely to be brought, escape and establish in Switzerland.



Flow chart with the lists of invasive or potentially invasive alien plants in Switzerland and the other lists related to the assessments by the InfoFlora Working Group 'Invasive Alien Plants' (IAP-WG).

## How do listing and list update work?

### 1. The process

- 1.1. The list is dynamic and regularly updated by the IAP-WG.
- 1.2. The IAP-WG accepts and examines two kinds of requests to the CD List submitted as *proposals*: requests about new species to be added (see 2.) and requests about species that are already listed on the CD List (see 3. and 4.).
- 1.3. Proposals can be submitted by anybody (private person or authority) who, thus, becomes and acts as the *proponent*.
- 1.4. Each species represents a proposal (in other words: 1 request = 1 proposal = 1 species).
- 1.5. Proposal **submission deadline is May 31** for consideration in the same year.
- 1.6. Proposals are discussed by the IAP-WG in a dedicated meeting, and a decision is taken for each proposal by consensus and will be documented.
- 1.7. A proposal can be
  - *accepted as is*,
  - *accepted after revision* (with revisions to be done within a given deadline),
  - *rejected*, with or without recommendation for re-submission in the next year.
- 1.8. The updated CD List is published at least once a year and made available online in the same year (see below).
- 1.9. Legal recourse by the proponent is excluded.

### 2. New species

- 2.1. A *proponent* can submit a request for a non-listed alien species to be added to the CD list (as explained in "What species can be listed"), with following options:
  - i) *new addition to the CD List for further information*,
  - ii) *new addition to the CD List with justified urgency for a full risk analysis via the SIPRA*.

- 2.2. For the request, the proponent needs to submit the relevant information in form of a *proposal of new addition* [[download template .docx](#)] to the IAP-WG (via [neobiota@infoflora.ch](mailto:neobiota@infoflora.ch)).
  - 2.3. Accepted species are added to the CD List along with the proposal documentation (publication of the documentation is anonymous).
3. Species already on the CD list
    - 3.1. For each species on the CD list the original proponent and/or the WG IFL can request that a listed alien species is either:
      - i) *kept on the CD List (especially after the maximum listing time of 5 years),*
      - ii) *transferred to full risk analysis* via the SIPRA and eventually listed on the national lists.
    - 3.2. For the request, the proponent needs to submit a *proposal on current listing* [[download template .docx](#)] consisting of the relevant information supporting the request.
4. Listed species to be removed
    - 4.1. Species do not remain listed indefinitely on the CD List but are kept for up to five consecutive years or five consecutive meetings of the IAP-WG; after this time, the species is removed unless new information is provided to support further listing.
    - 4.2. Removed species actually remain on the list as “removed” along with the removal year, but can be added again on the CD List after submission of a new proposal (cfr. 2.).

## To the proposal form to submit requests for the CD List

→ [Proposal Form \(Word .docx template\)](#)

## To the current Candidate List of Switzerland

→ [Candidate List](#)

## Help increase information on Candidate species

There are several things you can do to help us increasing information on a Candidate species:

- **Presence reporting** Report accurately the species occurrences via FlorApp, by attaching photos and estimating its abundance. Do not forget to report the Origin of the population (especially, if it is cultivated!).
- **Field study:** If work in a research institution or have the possibility to do some research on your own or to collaborate with a research institution, you can carry out a (small) project in which you document/describe the species' biology and ecology along seasons or some aspects of it. Features to look at typically correspond those of the criteria considered by the full risk assessment (see [Catalogue of criteria](#)). We recommend to publish your study officially and share the publication with the WG-IFL by email at [neobiota@infoflora.ch](mailto:neobiota@infoflora.ch).

Any information can contribute to support decisions by the IAP-WG, as whether the species should be removed from the list or should be assessed and therefore provide valuable information for the assessment of its invasive potential.