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Statens tilsyn for planter, fisk, dyr og næringsmidler



Request of a risk assessment of Australian red claw (*Cherax quadricarinatus*)

1. Background

The Australian red claw (*Cherax quadricarinatus*) is commonly used in aquaculture and has recently garnered interest as a potential candidate for land-based aquaculture in Norway.

Establishment of new aquaculture facilities with this species in Norway requires permission from the Norwegian Food Safety Authority. The Norwegian Food Safety Authority assess all aspects of Australian red claw farming with respect to impact on fish health and welfare.

Introduction of *Cherax quadricarinatus* for aquaculture purposes requires permission under the Regulation on alien organisms, pursuant to the Norwegian Nature Diversity Act. To evaluate applications under this regulation, the Norwegian Environment Agency require assessments of the risks of negative impacts on native biodiversity associated with import and farming of this species. The possible introduction of hitchhiking organisms should be taken into account when addressing risks to biodiversity. Biodiversity is here defined as the diversity of ecosystems, species and genetic variations within species, and the ecological relationships between these components (see the Norwegian Nature Diversity Act § 3). If permission is granted, the Norwegian Environment Agency may put forward terms and conditions that are deemed necessary in order to prevent negative impacts on native biodiversity.

The Norwegian Environment Agency and the Norwegian Food Safety Authority request VKM to carry out assessments of the potential risks stemming from import and farming of Australian red claw. Given that there is a large overlap between the two assignments, both issuing agencies have requested VKM to answer the terms of references in a single report.

3. Terms of Reference

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority requests VKM to assess factors of relevance to animal health in relation to import and farming of Australian red claw crayfish (*Cherax quadricarinatus*), restricted to risks of pathogen and infectious disease transfer.

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority requests VKM to provide answers to the following questions:

- a. Which pathogens could potentially be introduced by the import of red claw crayfish to Norway? What is the risk of disease outbreaks amongst Norwegian native fauna caused by such pathogens? The risk is to be assessed regardless of exporting country.
- b. What is the risk of infection among Norwegian native fauna given that the farmed animals are set in quarantine before being released within the aquaculture facility?
- c. What is the risk of infection for Norwegian native fauna stemming from the import of Australian red claw given that the crayfish is released into aquaculture facilities that:
 - i. Filtrate and drain the wastewater through a public wastewater facility.
 - ii. Fulfils the requirements for disinfecting intake water and effluent water stated by the regulation relating to cleaning and disinfection of intake water to, and effluent water from aquaculture related operations.
- d. In addition to the measures stated in c, are there further measures that may lower the risk of infection or methods for treating the wastewater of an aquaculture facility, that may be better suited to reduce the risk of pathogen transfer to native fauna stemming from the import of Australian red claw?

The request includes neither import of Australian red claw crayfish for ornamental purposes nor further placing on the market.

4. Time frame

The request should be treated as an ordinary case. We ask that the risk assessment is completed and sent to the Norwegian Food Safety Authority within 24.11.2016.

5. Contact persons

The contact persons in the Norwegian Food Safety Authority are:

- Jonathan Vaz Serrano, adviser, e-post: jodvs@mattilsynet.no
- Friede Andersen, leader, Section fish health and fish welfare, e-post: friede.andersen@mattilsynet.no