

EN

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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(22.8.2025)

The fungus causing ash dieback, *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*, is not a regulated quarantine pest at EU level. Based on the biology of this pest and its distribution on the Union territory, the Commission and the Member States concluded that it was not feasible to eradicate it or prevent its further spread and therefore, it did not fulfil the criteria for Union quarantine pest status according to the Plant Health Regulation¹.

EU co-financing opportunities available in the plant health area² are normally foreseen for regulated quarantine pests³ or pests that qualify as quarantine pests for the Union territory.

Under Horizon 2020, the Commission has funded the research project POnTE⁴ targeted pests threatening EU agriculture and forestry. The project focused on the development of early detection and surveillance tools for *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*⁵, as well as knowledge and practical solutions against the spread of ash dieback and other emerging plant pests. Additionally, EU-funded projects like HOMED⁶ and B4EST⁷ supported sustainable forest management and resilience against threats like ash dieback. Under Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programme, a European co-funded partnership on Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future⁸ is proposed, where Member States are encouraged to join.

¹ Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02016R2031-20250105>.

² Single Market Programme https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/single-market-programme_en.

³ Plant pests listed in Annexes II and III of Regulation (EU) No 2019/2072 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02019R2072-20250227>.

⁴ POnTE (Pest Organisms Threatening Europe) <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/635646>.

⁵ POnTE: <https://www.ponteproject.eu/factsheets-hf/ponte-project-findings-and-achievements-forestry-pathogens/>.

⁶ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/771271>.

⁷ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/773383>.

⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/HORIZON-CL6-2025-01-CIRCBIO-15>.