**Dendrolimus sibiricus** L.

The Siberian moth, *Dendrolimus sibiricus* is a severe pest in regions it inhabits due to its role as a defoliator of conifer trees stands. It is presumed to have originated in North-Eastern Asia and has apparently been spreading westwards towards the Ural Mountains. Currently the geographical range of this species includes Russia (Siberia, Russian Far East), Kazakhstan, China (north) and Mongolia (north) and Korea. The Siberian moth may be closely associated with biomes characterized as: boreal forests, temperate grasslands, temperate broadleaf and mixed forests and temperate coniferous forests. The pest attacks either stressed (i.e. drought) or healthy trees. Outbreaks have been reported in five-needle pine, fir, larch and spruce forests.

The damage the Siberian moth causes to its hosts in its native range results in cascading ecological, economic and social impacts. The risk of the pest being introduced to regions with host species, either by natural or human-related dispersal, is high. The distribution of species to the west of the Ural Mountains is prevented by mild winters.

Outbreaks vary in size and extent depending on factors including population density, dispersal behaviour, forest type, and host availability. In Siberia maximum mortality of forests caused by outbreaks is observed at elevations of approximately 200 meters and minimum mortality at about 300 meters. The insect inhabits latitudes higher than the historical northern limit of severe outbreaks, but the potential for catastrophic outbreaks is limited by cold climate conditions.

Management of the spread of this moth includes prevention of the movement of plants for planting and cut branches of host plants from infested areas to non-infested areas. Wood should be debarked or heat-treated, or originate in a pest-free area, or be imported during winter; and isolated bark should be treated to destroy contaminating insects.

**Reference:**

Global Invasive Species Database (GISD) (2011) *Dendrolimus sibiricus* Chetverikov

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