



**POTENTIAL RISK OF SPREAD OF *PHYTOPHTHORA RAMORUM* IN
MEDITERRANEAN WILD ENVIRONMENTS AND NURSERIES**

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Phytophthora ramorum is an introduced, invasive pathogen in Europe, firstly recorded in Italy in 2002 in a nursery. A study was carried out in order to evaluate the risk of spread of the pathogen in wild environments and nurseries in Italy. Sixty-five coniferous and broad-leaved shrubs and trees native of Mediterranean basin were tested for susceptibility to *P. ramorum* by mean of leaf and stem inoculation. Potential of sporulation of *P. ramorum* on these species was also tested. The 65 hosts varied widely in susceptibility, ranging from 0% to 95% leaf area infected. Significant variability has been observed when stems have been inoculated. Six and fifteen species showed no disease when respectively leaves and stems were inoculated. The results indicated that species belonging to mediterranean macchia vegetation were less susceptible than cold- and warm-temperate ones. However they supported a higher rate of pathogen sporulation. The production of sporangia occurred even on asymptomatic leaves. The risk of establishment and spread of *P. ramorum*, based on the hosts distribution and susceptibility, and potential of pathogen sporulation in Italy has been predicted and mapped. The possible implications in the epidemiology of the pathogen of sporulation potential and symptoms development are discussed.