

**Question for written answer E-001853/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Carmen Crespo Díaz (PPE)

Subject: Measures to support the Spanish and Portuguese fleets affected by the proliferation of the invasive species of Asian seaweed (*Rugulopteryx okamurae*)

The Iberian Atlantic fishing fleet is suffering serious consequences owing to the proliferation in their fishing grounds, over the last two years, of the invasive species *Rugulopteryx okamurae*, better known as Asian seaweed. This species originally appeared on the coasts of Portugal and in the Gulf of Cadiz in Spain and has been spreading along the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts, causing numerous losses to the fleets in these fishing areas, as this species invades fishing grounds, preventing fishing altogether in some areas. Asian seaweed was included in the Spanish catalogue of exotic species compiled by the Spanish Government's Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge (MITECO).

However, the Spanish fleet is not receiving aid from the Spanish Government or European funds to alleviate the impact of these losses.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission intend to provide aid to the fishing fleet to alleviate the effects of this invasive algae?
2. Has the Spanish Government asked the Commission for aid for the fleet – or for research to be carried out – with a view to halting the spread of this species?

Submitted: 27.9.2024