

**Question for written answer E-002548/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Mireia Borrás Pabón (Pfe)

Subject: Possibility of authorising the collection and sale of the invasive algae
Rugulopteryx okamurae under Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014

The brown algae *Rugulopteryx okamurae*, which has been on the list of invasive alien species of Union concern since 2022, has caused serious environmental and economic damage since arriving in the Strait of Gibraltar in 2015. There is estimated that up 100 000 tonnes of it is to be found in areas such as Algeciras and Tarifa, harming marine biodiversity, the fishing and tourism sectors and causing problems for local authorities.

Despite its invasive nature, scientific studies and local initiatives have shown that it can be safely used to make products in sectors such as agriculture, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, bioplastics, biogas and aquaculture. However, current legislation prohibits its exploitation for economic purposes – even collecting and transporting it are illegal – thus curtailing efforts to manage it as well as opportunities for innovation in the circular economy.

Under Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 exceptions may be granted for reasons of public interest if appropriate containment measures are applied.

Does the Commission intend to look into the possibility of authorising the limited industrial use of *Rugulopteryx okamurae*, thereby allowing its exploitation as an economic resource in regions such as the Campo de Gibraltar?

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