**Question for written answer E-003142/2025**
**to the Commission**
Rule 144
**Sander Smit (PPE)**

Subject: Combat invasive species with a knife and fork: a pragmatic solution for fishing and water quality

The Chinese mitten crab and American crayfish have been present in the Netherlands for almost a century and are now widespread in Europe. Both these invasive alien species cause significant damage to riverbanks and water quality through their digging and grazing, which lead to clouding and nutrient enrichment and impede ecological goals under the Water Framework Directive. These species also pose a problem for the fishing industry, damaging fishing nets, eating caught fish and competing with commercial fish species.

Catching them in a targeted manner for consumption is an effective way to keep populations in check and to minimise the damage. Marketing outside the Member State is crucial in this regard. However, their inclusion on the Union list of Regulation (EU) 1143/2014 hampers this because cross-border trade is prohibited – even if reproduction or restocking is excluded.

1. Does the Commission share the view that detecting and disposing of populations of this species found in nature is very expensive and that catching them in a targeted manner for commercial sale is the most effective way to minimise the damage, promote control and prevent further spread?

2. To what extent is the Commission willing to support Member States in a request for an exemption from the trade ban for the marketing of invasive species for consumption throughout the European Union, on the basis of Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 1143/2014?

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