

EN

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Answer given by Mr Kadis
on behalf of the European Commission
(18.7.2025)

1. The Commission is working to address the issue of non-indigenous species (NIS) in the Mediterranean within the framework of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and the Invasive Alien Species Regulation¹. The GFCM's 2030 Strategy recognises the priority of addressing NIS. Several pilot projects and research programmes have been developed to collect data and establish mitigation measures. Due to the regional nature of the expansion of NIS, the GFCM established a regional NIS observatory in the Eastern Mediterranean to push forward data collection and information sharing with the intent to expand its activity to the entire region. Also, Member States under the Marine strategy framework directive (MSFD) set up monitoring programs and take appropriate measures to reach a good environmental status for NIS.

2. The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) can be used to finance campaigns and aid in raising awareness among fishers, and the public about the risks and commercial possibilities associated with NIS. Additionally, the GFCM observatory aims to contribute to promoting awareness and help share best practices.

3. The EMFAF is already being used for actions related to mitigating populations of NIS. The Commission cooperates with national authorities that are responsible to include such actions in their national EMFAF programmes. Various Mediterranean Member States have put in place measures and solutions to deal with NIS. This includes potential compensation to fishers, as exemplified by Cyprus, where a scheme has been put in place to compensate fishers for their pufferfish catches². Similarly, Greece has funded innovative projects which help turn this threat into economic opportunity³.

¹ Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, OJ L 317, 4.11.2014, p. 35.

² www.moa.gov.cy/emfaf.

³ This Greek example of turning pufferfish into fishmeal is particularly relevant here: https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/news/turning-toxic-pufferfish-invader-aquaculture-feed-2023-12-22_en#:~:text=The%20pufferfish%2C%20originating%20from%20the,to%20have%20no%20commercial%20value.https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/news/turning-toxic-pufferfish-invader-aquaculture-feed-2023-12-22_en.