

EN

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Answer given by Mr Kadis
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.3.2026)

Non-Indigenous Species (NIS) are of increasing concern and the Mediterranean Sea has become a hotspot for these invasions. The Commission works closely with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean to address the related challenges. Several pilot projects and research programmes have been launched and will be paramount in collecting data and establishing mitigation measures.

The European Ocean Pact¹ announced a dedicated policy initiative addressing the issue of NIS and the preparation of a document mapping good practices and recommendations on the management of conflicts with predators in aquaculture. The EU Aquaculture Assistance Mechanism is working on this document, expected to be completed by the end of 2026.

The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) helps achieve sustainable fishing and aquaculture and strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the sector and coastal communities. EMFAF national programmes can support the monitoring, surveillance and mitigation of invasive alien species. Under specific conditions, EMFAF can provide for compensation to fishers for the temporary cessation of fishing activities. The Italian authorities may mobilise resources in line with the specific objectives of its EMFAF Programme.

The Commission does not plan to propose adding *Mnemiopsis leidyi* on the list under the Invasive Alien Species Regulation². A risk assessment under Article 5(1) is a required first step. None has yet been carried out. Based on biological characteristics, it is unlikely that its inclusion on the Union list would effectively prevent its impact. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive³ and the Ballast Water Management Convention are also relevant frameworks to address NIS.

¹ https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/european-ocean-pact_en.

² 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. 35–55.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32008L0056>.