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Answer given by Mr Kadis
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.8.2026)

1. The Commission recognises that the spread of *Lagocephalus sceleratus* presents challenges for public health, marine ecosystems and coastal communities. The species contains tetrodotoxin, which can cause severe poisoning if consumed, highlighting the importance of preventing its entry into the food chain. It may also affect coastal fisheries through damage to fishing gear and catches, with potential consequences for the economic activity of communities that depend on fisheries.

2. The Commission announced a dedicated policy initiative within the European Ocean Pact[1] to address the issue of Non-Indigenous Species (NIS) threatening fisheries and aquaculture. The Commission also works with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), through an EU-funded GFCM pilot on NIS in the Eastern Mediterranean. This pilot is gathering fisheries-dependent and independent data and establishing a NIS observatory to enhance knowledge and share best practices in tackling the spread of these species. The EU assists Member States through the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), which can support a range of actions, including raising public awareness on the risks associated with the species.

3. The EMFAF provides support to Member States to adopt measures to prevent the further spread of this species and mitigate its impacts. The Greek EMFAF Managing Authority has launched a call, which includes a pilot environmental management measure for *Lagocephalus* in cooperation with scientific institutions. It provides fees to participating fishers for the targeted catching, landing and destruction of the species. A similar scheme is already in place in Cyprus.

[1] Communication of the Commission on the European Ocean Pact, COM(2025) 281 of 5.6.2025. eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0281.