

**Question for written answer E-001376/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Josep-Maria Terricabras (Verts/ALE) and Ernest Maragall (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Combating the apple snail plague in the Ebro Delta (Spain)

The Commission has expressed concern regarding the economic and environmental damage caused by apple snails of the genus *Pomacea* in the Ebro Delta (Spain) – the only area in the EU that has so far been affected – and the threat that this species poses to the wider EU area. The fight against this invasive species has been largely based on Commission Implementing Decision 2012/697/EU as regards measures to prevent the introduction into and the spread within the Union of the genus *Pomacea* (Perry), and between 2010 and 2013 it was primarily financed by the EU. The plague has not yet been successfully eradicated, and there is a serious danger of it spreading across Europe.

1. What proposals does the Commission have in mind to ensure that measures endorsed by the government and applied by farmers to combat the apple snail plague do not lead to considerable economic losses for farmers nor damage the biological ecosystem of the delta?
2. Does the Commission intend to classify the fight against apple snails as a priority issue in the framework of EU policy, under which special intervention, programmes and strands of research could receive EU funding through programmes such as Leader+ and Horizon 2020?
3. Has the Commission considered demanding that the fight against the apple snail plague be extended to the Ebro river, given that the snails reproduce in and spread via the river?