

**Question for written answer E-000716/2018  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Mireille D'Ornano (EFDD)**

Subject: The proliferation of the zebra mussel

The *Dreissena polymorpha*, commonly referred to as the 'zebra mussel', native to the Caspian Sea, started to spread to Europe in the mid-19th century, with an accelerated rate in the second half of the 20th century. Although it is well adapted to its native ecosystem, the zebra mussel causes substantial biodiversity loss in western European ecosystems, particularly through displacing certain species such as the *Margaritifera auricularia*.

The zebra mussel is also causing considerable damage to fish farms.

Biological plant protection solutions have been developed, like the molluscicide Zequanox, the use of which in open water was authorised last year by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

1. The zebra mussel is defined as an invasive species of concern in Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014. Having regard to the prevalence of this species and the cost of eradicating it, will the Commission provide financial support to the areas affected?
2. Does the Commission support research programmes for organic plant protection solutions against the zebra mussel or does it intend to authorise plant protection solutions such as those mentioned above?