

**Question for written answer E-004026/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Capture, sterilisation and release of species included on the list of invasive alien species of Union concern

The Region-Northern Adda Park project to eradicate raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) in riverside areas has led to the capture and culling of 69 specimens in three years. Over the next two years, the project will involve the monitoring and removal of remaining specimens.

Under Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, management measures must consist of lethal or non-lethal physical, chemical or biological actions, using methods that do not cause avoidable pain, distress or suffering.

Given the limited size (approximately 70 individuals) of the population in question in the Northern Adda Park (Parco Adda Nord) and the lack of evidence regarding any immediate threats posed by raccoons to species protected under EU Directives 92/43/EEC and 79/409/EEC, the application of humane methods, such as sterilisation and the release of captured animals, would have been a viable alternative for effective eradication.

In the light of the above, can the Commission confirm that, when applied in the context of management plans approved by the competent authorities, the capture, sterilisation and subsequent local release of invasive alien species is in keeping with the provisions of Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 and could therefore be lawfully applied with a view to completing the eradication?