

**Question for written answer E-001949/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Japonica rice from non-EU countries pose a threat to Italian production – the Commission should adopt the safeguard clause

75% of Italian rice producers grow the japonica rice variety, producing the high-quality arborio and carnaroli rice cultivars.

Many Italian associations of rice producers are complaining about the unfair competition regarding imports of japonica rice – which is still exempt from EU duty – from Cambodia and, above all, Myanmar.

The penalties hitherto imposed on those two countries, however, concern only the indica rice variety, and if the current import trend continues along those lines until the end of the rice-growing year, imports could reach 131 000 tonnes – 46 000 tonnes more than the previous year's record level.

Italy is the leading European producer of japonica rice and growing Asian competition has already led to a collapse in the price of Italian rice.

In view of this, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How does it intend to address this unfair competition with regard to japonica rice?
2. Will it extend the safeguard clause to this European rice variety, too?
3. What measures will it take to support Italian rice growers who are being adversely affected by unfair competition from South-east Asia, where low-cost production is possible also at the expense of human rights and environmental and health standards?