

**Question for written answer E-001261/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Unfair competition regarding japonica rice and paddy rice: Italian producers call for higher duties on imports from South-East Asia

Imports into Europe of zero-duty japonica rice from Myanmar have increased exponentially, from 31 500 tonnes in 2018 to 158 700 tonnes in 2020, owing to the EU's EBA aid scheme.

The invasion of Asian rice at very low prices has led to unfair competition that is unsustainable for Italy, which, with its 4 000 farms, is the largest rice producer in the EU.

Asian rice has significantly lower production costs than Italian rice because it does not meet the same EU standards of environmental and social sustainability.

In order to protect Italian products of excellence, the producers of the Consortium for the Protection of Nano Vialone Veronese PGI rice, the Po Delta PGI rice consortium and the Grumolo delle Abbadesse rice district are calling on the EU to adopt the safeguard clause for imports of japonica rice from South-East Asia as a matter of urgency and to introduce duties for paddy rice.

Rice growers also take the view that the EU needs to establish reciprocity of production standards in trade, in order to require non-EU producers to guarantee the same standards of environmental and social protection as those in Europe.

Noting the failure to respect human rights in Myanmar and in other rice-exporting South-East Asian countries, such as Cambodia, and in view of the Italian producers' requests, can the Commission say whether it will respond to those calls to protect Italian rice production from the growing unfair competition from Asia?