

**Question for written answer E-002712/2021  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Rosanna Conte (ID)**

**Subject:** Blue crab threatening the Adriatic Sea

The blue king crab is a species native to the western Atlantic. In recent years, this species has appeared and become established in the Mediterranean Sea, transported by the large ships that sail the oceans, and aided by the effects of climate change, especially the increase in the water temperature.

This invasive species has become particularly widespread in the Adriatic Sea where it has found its ideal habitat. Since there are no predators to combat it, it has reproduced rapidly and uncontrollably, which is having a serious impact on the entire lagoon ecosystem.

Indeed, some worrying imbalances between native species have arisen: shrimps, mussels, sandsmelt, cuttlefish, sea bass and sea bream, especially juveniles. In particular, 'moeche' – tender green crabs that are part of Veneto's culinary tradition – are at risk of extinction. Furthermore, the blue crabs' claws are destroying the seaweed beds of local fish and tearing fishing nets, thereby damaging the activity of fishers, who are already being affected by the economic impact of COVID-19.

In view of this situation:

1. How does the Commission intend to tackle the problem of non-native species in the Mediterranean Sea?
2. Does it plan to make these non-indigenous species fishable and marketable?
3. Will it take into account the effects of this predator on the biomass of the native species subject to scientific assessments and catch quotas?