

Question for written answer E-001305/2019 to the EU Commission

Rule 130

Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Capture, sterilisation and release of species included in the List of Species of Union Concern

EU Regulation 1143/2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species states that management measures for such species included in the Union list 'shall consist of lethal or non-lethal physical, chemical or biological actions aimed at the eradication, population control or containment of an invasive alien species'.

Some Member States have applied management methods which imply the capture, sterilisation and release of species included in the Union list. In some cases, these methods have been developed by projects funded under the LIFE programme, such as the sterilisation of released transmitter 'Judas' raccoon dogs (*Nyctereutes procyonoides*) in Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

In the case of the eradication of the American grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) from central Italy, some individuals have also been captured, sterilised and released.

In addition, promising innovative methods are under development to reduce the fertility of invasive alien species, such as gene drive and parenteral injection with appropriate fertility control agents.

Can the Commission confirm that, when applied in the context of management plans approved by the national competent authority, capture followed by sterilisation/neutering and release in the natural environment constitutes a method in line with the requirements of Regulation 1143/2014?

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**Answer given by Mr Vella on behalf of the European Commission
(25.4.2019)**

Capture followed by sterilisation/neutering and release in the environment is a method that national competent authorities can consider in the context of management measures in application of Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 . Such decision should be taken after consideration of the characteristics of each species in relation to the specific circumstances of the Member State, including the potential impact of sterilised species by predation, competition, transfer of diseases etc.