

**Question for written answer E-014508/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Arne Gericke (ECR)

Subject: Removing the raccoon (*Procyon lotor*) from the Union list of invasive species

Invasive alien species are plants and animals which are introduced into a natural environment by humans and which present a danger to the economy, health or ecology of their new environment. On the basis of this definition, and under the terms of Regulation (EU) No 1143/2014 on the management of invasive alien species, which came into force on 1 January 2015, raccoons were added to the Union list of invasive species; their numbers in Europe have subsequently fallen.

1. Is the Commission aware that raccoons have been living in parts of Germany for more than 100 years, that they were deliberately introduced into the wild at Ebersee in North Hessen in 1934, and that they are classified as an 'established native species' under the German Federal Nature Conservation Act?
2. On what scientific criteria and studies has the Commission based its classification of the raccoon as an invasive species? Is the Commission aware of the scientific findings of Dresden Technical University's 'Raccoon Project'?
3. Does the Commission see any scope for removing raccoons from the Union list?