



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/A.2/JF/MS

Subject: CCRUP & MAC recommendation Nr 45 “Proliferation of invasive algae in the Outermost Regions”

Dear Mr Pavón, dear Ms Bermudez,

I would like to thank you for your e-mail of 12 February 2024 and for sharing with the Commission the “*Recommendation on proliferation of invasive algae in the Outermost Regions*” from the Market Advisory Council (MAC) and the Consultative Council for the Outermost Regions (CCRUP).

The Commission appreciates your efforts and concerns and recognizes that the proliferation of invasive algae species in the Outermost Regions is an important problem.

Regarding your recommendation to promote the recovery and resilience solutions for ecosystems that are already damaged by invasive algae, we believe that more and better knowledge, data and evidence are needed to have a better understanding of the actual state of play of specific local ecosystems and potential damage they are facing, and what short- and long-term consequences these ecosystems are facing. More knowledge is needed on environmentally friendly and safe recovery and resilience solutions. Based on such additional knowledge, specific policy actions could be considered. We would appreciate if you could share any additional knowledge and information that you may be able to obtain.

As regards increasing support for research and work with stakeholders on solutions that convert Sargassum and *Rugulopteryx Okamurae* algae into exploitable resources, the Commission agrees with this recommendation, promotes various research and innovation projects and supports European companies that are exploring business opportunities stemming from this threat. Among them, the European Union has financed research

Mr. David Pavón
President of the Executive Committee of CC RUP
dpavon@ccrup.eu
Rua de São Paulo, 3
9760-540 Praia da Vitória
Açores – PORTUGAL

Ms Yobana Bermudez
Chair
Market Advisory Council
yobana.bermudez@conxemar.com
Regus EU Commission
6 Rond-Point Robert Schuman
1040 Brussels
BELGIUM

projects such as ALIEN⁽¹⁾ enabling demographic models to provide a better understanding of how to deal with sargassum, SODA⁽²⁾ creating state-of-the-art sargassum detection algorithms, and a scientific study⁽³⁾ providing seasonal predictions of holopelagic Sargassum across the Tropical Atlantic.

Support to innovations on algae cultivation and processing systems into a variety of products⁽⁴⁾ is available through Horizon Europe and other EU research programmes⁽⁵⁾. Although not specifically dedicated to sargassum or *Rugulopteryx Okamurae* algae, the knowledge generated by the funded projects could be leveraged in that context as well. In addition, EU Member States may financially support sargassum-related projects⁽⁶⁾ under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund.

Finally, I take note of your recommendation to organize field visits to the Outermost Regions affected by the proliferation of invasive algae species and we will consider this idea when possible.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely,

Kestutis SADAUSKAS

on behalf of Charlina VITCHEVA

c.c.: Daniela Costa dcosta@ccrup.eu;
Fabiana Nogueira fnogueira@ccrup.eu

(1) <https://cordis.europa.eu/article/id/84223-immigration-control-for-invasive-seaweed>

(2) Sargassum Operational Detection Algorithms (SODA).

(3) <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2021.722524/full>

(4) In addition to that, algae are already widely used as feed materials: Commission Regulation (EU) 2022/1104 of 1 July 2022 amending Regulation (EU) No 68/2013 on the Catalogue of feed material (OJ L 177, 4.7.2022, p. 4).

(5) Including research actions in Horizon 2020, Cohesion Fund, LIFE programme, European Regional Development Fund, European Structural and Investment Fund etc.

(6) Under Specific Objectives 2.1 (aquaculture), 2.2 (marketing and processing) and 3.1 (community-led local development) could be relevant. Operations are selected by the managing authority based on national eligibility rules.

