

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Cabinet of Commissioner Karmenu Vella
Head of Cabinet

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Mr Philippe Funcken
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Dear Mr Steenwegen, dear Mr Funcken,

Thank you for your letter of 1 February, in which you ask the Commission to take urgent measures to prevent a further spread of *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* and which Commissioners Vella and Hogan have asked me to answer on their behalf.

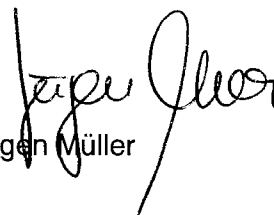
We are fully aware of the danger posed by this newly described pathogenic fungus to European newts and salamanders, including to many species that are listed in the annexes of the EU Habitats Directive.

Given that EU animal health legislation does not currently provide any legal basis for the Commission to adopt harmonised measures for the prevention or control of the infection of wild amphibian populations with *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans*, the Commission services are exploring other options in order to address preventive measures.

In line with the recommendation of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, the Commission will do its utmost to identify effective measures that Member States can implement on the ground and DG Environment is currently preparing for a study contract focussing on the necessary measures.

We are planning to publish the call for tender for this study as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,


Jürgen Müller