

Sweden asks EU to stop American lobster invasion

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Sweden has asked the European Union for help to stop an invasion of American lobsters, saying they could wipe out their European cousins with deadly diseases.

The Swedish Environment Ministry said Friday that more than 30 American lobsters have been found along Sweden's west coast in recent years.

It said the American lobster, also known as Maine lobster, "can carry diseases and parasites that could spread to the European lobster and result in extremely high mortality."

It also said interbreeding among the crustaceans could have "negative genetic effects" and threaten the survival of the European species.

Sweden asked the EU to list the American lobster as a "foreign species," which would prohibit imports of live American lobsters into the 28-nation bloc.

U.S. Rep. Chellie Pingree, a Democrat from Maine, said the Swedes were overreacting.

"We have safely exported live lobster to dozens of countries for decades," she said a statement. "Even if it's true that a few Maine lobsters have been found in foreign waters, regulators need to look at the problem more carefully and not just jump to conclusions."

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