



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL  
ENVIRONMENT

The Director-General

Brussels,  
ENV.B.2

Vera DELEJA-HOTKO  
Open Knowledge Foundation

**By email:** [REDACTED]

Dear Ms Deleja-Hotko,

**Subject: Your application for access to documents: Ref EASE No 2023/1563**

We refer to your request for access to documents dated 09/03/2023, registered under the above-mentioned reference number and our holding reply Ares(2023)2482516. We would like to sincerely apologise for the delay in our reply.

Your application was as follows:

*“Under the right of access to documents in the EU treaties, as developed in Regulation 1049/2001, I am requesting the following documents:*

*Documents related to meetings/communication in relation to PFAS.*

*in more detail:*

- 1. All agendas of these meetings/workshops/events/gatherings/...;*
- 2. A list of all attendees, including the name of the company, group, or organisation of any kind each attendee represents;*
- 3. All presentations shown during the course of these meetings/workshops/events/gatherings/...;*
- 4. All documents prepared by the DG for the purpose of these meetings and given out or distributed among the attendees (such as – but not limited to – handouts, leaflets, briefings or background notes);*
- 5. All presentations by any other speaker – be it industry representative, academic, Member State representative, or attendee of any kind – shown during the course of these meetings/workshops/events/gatherings/...;*
- 6. All reports, summaries, minutes, notes, or record-keeping of any kind produce by DG as an outcome of these meetings/workshops/events/gatherings/...”*

With a follow-up correspondence you limited your request to the time period from January 2019 to 20/03/2023 (date of your reply to our clarification request).

Please note that due to the scope of your request covering also areas falling under the responsibility of other Directorates-General, this reply relates only to the documents held by DG-Environment. You have received the replies from the other respective Directorates-General.

We identified 85 documents falling in the scope of your request. They are listed in the attached register of identified documents.

The Directorate-General Environment does not hold any documents corresponding to point 2 of your request.

As specified in Article 2(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, the right of access as defined in that regulation applies only to existing documents in the possession of the institution.

Given that no such documents, corresponding to the description given in point 2 of your application, are held by the Directorate-General Environment, we are not in a position to fulfil your request in that regard.

Having examined the documents requested under the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents, we have come to the conclusion that:

- We are pleased to fully disclose documents 2 (link), 7, 8, 10, 21, 24, 30, 45, 46, 47, 61, 72, 73, 75, 76, 79, 85.
- Parts of documents 31 and 54 have been blacked out as their content is out of the scope of your request.

*Protection of personal data:*

- Some parts of documents 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, listed in the annex, contain personal data that have been redacted. A complete disclosure is prevented by the exception concerning the protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual outlined in Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, because they contain the following personal data:
  - the names and contact information of Commission staff members not pertaining to the senior management;
  - the names and contact details of other natural persons;
  - abbreviated signatures of natural persons.

Article 9(1)(b) of the Data Protection Regulation does not allow the transmission of these personal data, except if you prove that it is necessary to have the data transmitted to you for a specific purpose in the public interest and where there is no reason to assume that the legitimate interests of the data subject might be prejudiced. In your request, you do not express any particular interest to have access to these personal data nor do you put forward arguments to establish the necessity to have the data transmitted for a specific purpose in the public interest.

Consequently, we conclude that, pursuant to Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, access cannot be granted to the personal data contained in the requested

documents, as the need to obtain access thereto for a purpose in the public interest has not been substantiated and there is no reason to think that the legitimate interests of the individuals concerned would not be prejudiced by disclosure of the personal data concerned.

*Protection of commercial interests*

- Documents 14, 34, 41, 43, 80, 83 may be partially disclosed.

The third parties concerned have been consulted and they informed the Commission that full disclosure of these documents would undermine the protection of commercial interests. Consequently, some parts of the documents have been blacked out as their disclosure is prevented by the exception to the right of access laid down in Article 4(2) first indent of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. In particular, the originators of the documents argued that specific information contained in them is confidential, claiming that its disclosure would undermine the commercial interests of the originators and/or of their clients.

- Disclosure cannot be granted for documents 84 and 86.

The third parties concerned have been consulted and have informed the Commission that the disclosure of these documents would undermine the protection of commercial interests. Consequently, disclosure of these documents is refused as their disclosure is prevented by the exception to the right of access laid down in Article 4(2) first indent of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

In addition, documents 1, 3, 27, 31, 54, 65, 82 were drawn up for internal use under the responsibility of the relevant services of the Directorate-General for Environment. They solely reflect the services' interpretation of the interventions made and do not set out any official position of the third parties to which the documents refer, which were not consulted on their content. They do not reflect the position of the Commission and cannot be quoted as such.

Finally, please note that the documents originating from third parties are disclosed to you based on Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. However, this disclosure is without prejudice to the rules on intellectual property, which may limit your right to reproduce or exploit the released documents without the agreement of the originator, who may hold an intellectual property right on them. The European Commission does not assume any responsibility from their reuse.

In accordance with Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, you are entitled to make a confirmatory application requesting the Commission to review this position.

Such a confirmatory application should be addressed to the Secretariat-General of the Commission within 15 working days upon receipt of this letter. You can submit it in one of the following ways:

**by asking for a review via your portal<sup>1</sup> account** (available only for initial requests submitted via the portal account),

**or by mail:**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-request>

European Commission  
Secretariat-General  
Transparency, Document Management & Access to Documents (SG.C.1)  
BERL 7/076  
B-1049 Bruxelles

**or by email to:** [sg-acc-doc@ec.europa.eu](mailto:sg-acc-doc@ec.europa.eu).

Yours sincerely,

Florika FINK-HOOIJER