Dear Ms Bescherer,

We are writing concerning your request for access to Commission documents registered on 13/02/2024 under case number 2024/0851.

Your application concerns a very large number of documents, which need to be assessed individually. Such a detailed analysis cannot be carried out within the normal time limits set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

The handling of your request involves the assessment of a very large number of documents, some of them originating from third parties. The analysis of these documents, together with the need to consult the third parties concerned in accordance with Article 4(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, cannot be expected to be completed within the normal time limits set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

However, Article 6(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 also provides for a possibility to confer with an applicant informally with a view to finding a fair solution when an application relates to a very long document or concerns a very large number of documents.

In accordance with the case law of the EU Courts, such a solution can only concern the content or the number of documents requested, not the deadline for replying. This means that the scope of the request must be reduced in a way that would enable its processing within the extended deadline of 15 + 15 working days.

Based on the above-mentioned provision, we would kindly ask you to specify the objective of your application and your specific interest in the documents requested, and whether you could narrow down the scope of your application (i.e. the subject matter(s) and/or timeframe covered), so as to reduce it to a more manageable amount of documents.

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In order to help you to narrow down your application, please note that the documents listed in Annex 1 have been identified as falling under the scope of your request.

According to our first estimates, the handling of your request would take 64 working days\(^3\), broken down as follows:

- identification of the documents falling under your request: 5 working days;
- retrieval and establishment of a complete list of the documents identified: 5 working days;
- assessment of the content of the documents in light of the exceptions of Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001: 15 working days;
- third-party / Member State consultations under Article 4(4) and 4(5) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001: 7 working days;
- final assessment of the documents in light of the comments received: 10 working days;
- drafting of the reply: 2 working days;
- redaction of those parts of the documents to which one or several exceptions apply: 10 working days;
- internal review and approval of the draft decision: 5 working days; and
- preparation of the reply and the documents for dispatch (scanning of the redacted versions, administrative processing etc.): 5 working days.

It follows that, according to our first estimates, a maximum of 20 documents could possibly be dealt with within a reasonable timeframe.

In order to enable us to respect the time-limits of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, please reply to this proposal for a fair solution **within five working days at the latest**.

In the absence of a reply within five working days, we will restrict the scope of your application to those parts that can be dealt with within a reasonable timeframe.

Yours faithfully,

Pilar PALMERO VAQUERO

Head of Unit

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\(^{3}\) Taking into account other applications for access to documents and other tasks that the staff concerned are likely to have to deal with during the same period.
Enclosure: List of identified documents.