



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
CLIMATE ACTION

Legal Affairs, Inter-Institutional Relations & Communication

Brussels

**By registered letter with acknowledgment
of receipt**

Neil Roberts
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London TW1 3SP
United Kingdom

Advance copy by email: ask+request-7746-5b639d4d@asktheeu.org

Subject: Your application for access to documents – GestDem 2020/1424

Dear Mr Roberts,

We refer to your e-mail dated 9 March 2020 in which you make a request for access to documents, registered on 10 March 2020 under the above-mentioned reference number.

You have made the same request for access to documents to the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) which was registered under reference Gestdem 2020/1414 and to the Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV). Please note that this letter replies to these three different requests.

In addition, I note that you have made the same request to the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), which was registered under reference Gestdem 2020/1630. You will receive soon a reply from DG RTD as regards their request.

In your emails you requested access to “*any assessments made by or for the commission in the last 5 years of the increased risk of human disease spread caused by climate change or the effects of climate change, and any work by or for the commission on mitigating those risks*”.

Having consulted the relevant services, we have identified the following documents under the scope of the request:

| | Author | Reference/name |
|----------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | European Commission | Climate change and health: A discussion of the latest international and European reports and the implications for Europe |
| 2 | European Commission | Adaptation to climate change-related health effects in Europe – September 2019 report |
| 3 | European Commission | Assessment of global climate change impacts on human health - Ares(2016)5622193 |
| 4 | European Environment Agency | Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe 2016 – chapter 5.2. |
| 5 | European Commission | Staff Working Document on ‘Adaptation to climate change impacts on human, animal and plant health’ |
| 6 | European Environment Agency | More action needed to protect Europe’s most vulnerable citizens from air pollution, noise and extreme temperatures |
| 7 | European Commission | Human Health Impacts of Climate Change in Europe |
| 8 | European Commission | Scoping paper: Adaptation to climate change-related health effects in Europe - – October 2019 report |

Please find the documents and links enclosed with this letter. However, I regret to inform you that I cannot give you access to some parts of the documents 1 and 2. A complete disclosure of these documents 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. These documents contain personal data such as: names and contact information of Commission staff members not pertaining to the senior management; names and contact details of other natural persons; and other information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person.

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 any arguments to establish the necessity to have the data transmitted for a specific purpose in the public interest.

Consequently, I 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.

As regards document 3, please note that the document has been prepared for the European Commission. However, the scientific results and views are those only of the authors, and the Commission is not liable for any use of the information or its veracity including the validation of its scientific data. Therefore, the document does not reflect the position of the Commission and cannot be quoted as such.

Documents 4-8 are publically available. Please see enclosed in the table below the links to these documents:

| | Link to the document |
|----------|---|
| 4 | https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/climate-change-impacts-and-vulnerability-2016 |
| 5 | https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/adaptation/what/docs/swd_2013_136_en.pdf |
| 6 | https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/unequal-exposure-and-unequal-impacts/ |
| 7 | https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC86970/lfn26494enn.pdf |
| 8 | https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/research_and_innovation/groups/sam/hlg_sam_102019_scoping_paper_cch.pdf |

Available information

In addition to the documents identified, I would like to provide you with some further relevant information. The Commission prepared or supported different reports and publications related to the relation between health and climate change. See below a summary of this information:

The European Commission's group of **Chief Scientific Advisors**, through the Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM), is currently developing a **Report on Adaptation to climate change-related health effects**, expected to be published around June 2020.

Supported by a Commission grant, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the European Commission started in 2017 a joint 18-month project to analyse developments in health policies to address adaptation to climate change in European Union countries and to compile a selection of good practice case studies. More details on this project and the resulting final report '**Public health and climate change adaptation policies in the European Union (2018)**' are available on the WHO web site.

The **Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)** has developed several demonstrators such as the **European Health Service**, which provides tailor-made climate information e.g. on vector-borne diseases. C3S is implemented by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) on behalf of the European Commission.

For many years, **EU research and innovation programmes** have been funding research projects on climate change and health, including on the risk of spread of infectious diseases. For instance, in 2018 the Commission published a call for project proposals on

‘Mining Big Data for Early Detection of Infectious Disease Threats Driven by Climate Change and other Factors’

Moreover, the **Climate-ADAPT platform**, a partnership between the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA), includes several sections and database items related to projected novel health risks from infectious diseases. See the link below for more information:

<https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/eu-adaptation-policy/sector-policies/health>

In addition, the EEA has developed the Extreme temperatures and a health indicator (<https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/metadata/indicators/extreme-temperatures-and-health>) and studied the relation between extreme temperatures and health (<https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/heat-and-health-2/assessment>).

Finally, the Commission works in close cooperation with the **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)**, an independent EU agency which is carrying out important work in the area. Its European Environment and Epidemiology (E3) Network investigates climate change and related threats to public health. ECDC researchers also have published a large number of reports, book chapters, and scientific papers addressing climate change and infectious diseases in Europe. ECDC reports to a Management Board whose members are nominated by the Member States, the European Parliament and the European Commission.

Means of redress

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

Such a confirmatory application should be addressed within 15 working days upon receipt of this letter to the Secretariat-General of the Commission at the following address:

European Commission
Secretariat-General
Unit C.1. ‘Transparency, Document Management and Access to Documents’
BERL 7/076
B-1049 Brussels, or by email to: sg-acc-doc@ec.europa.eu

Yours sincerely,

Luca DE CARLI
Head of Unit