



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels
MARE/A2/

LUCA RINALDI
VIA CORDUSIO 4,
MILANO (ITALY)
C/O SALA STAMPA NAZIONALE

ADVANCE COPY BY EMAIL :
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BY REGISTERED LETTER WITH ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

Subject: Your application for access to documents – GESTDEM 2021/0593

Dear Sir,

We refer to your e-mail dated 5 February 2021 in which you make a request for access to documents, registered on 8 February 2021 under the above mentioned reference number.

You request access “For the period between 1 January 2019 to date:

- *a list of all lobby and industry meetings and/or calls held by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, including any Cabinet Members and/or officials, during which “deep-sea mining” and/or “seabed mining” and/or “marine minerals” were discussed. The list should include: date, individuals attending and organisational affiliation, as well as the issues discussed;*
- *all minutes and other reports of these meetings and/or calls;*
- *all documents prepared for the purpose of the meetings issued both in preparation and after the meetings took place.*
- *all correspondence, including attachments (i.e. any emails, mail correspondence or telephone call notes) between the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, including any Cabinet Members and/or officials, and any lobby group and/or industry representative discussing “deep-sea mining” and/or “seabed mining” and/or “marine minerals”.*

My services have found one document that might fall within the scope of your application :

- Call on Deep Sea Mining with the IASS - Ares(2020)7208562 – 30/11/2020

Having examined the document requested under the provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to documents, I regret to inform you that your application cannot be granted.

This document is a short report of a call held between Commission staff and representatives of the Institute for Advanced sustainability Studies (IASS) and contains their views on ongoing processes within the International Seabed Authority. Those opinions were made in the legitimate expectation that these would not be made public. In addition, the information contained in the document relates to ongoing international negotiations between the EU and the International Seabed Authority. Quality relations and mutual trust with the International Seabed Authority, a strategic partner of the EU, are paramount for the conclusion of future agreements. In support of this view, the General Court has acknowledged in a recent judgment¹ that the way in which the authorities of a third country perceive the decisions of the European Union is a component of the relations established with that third country. This applies as well to relations with international organisations. In this light, the pursuit and the quality of those relations depend on that perception and can justify the application of the exception of Article 4(1)(a), third indent, of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001, which relates to the protection of international relations.

Therefore this document cannot be disclosed as it is covered by the above mentioned exception.

We have considered whether partial access could be granted to the document requested. However, it is entirely covered by the exception provided for in Article 4(1)(a), third indent, of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

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 within 15 working days upon receipt of this letter to the Secretariat-General of the Commission at the following address:

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

or by email to: sg-acc-doc@ec.europa.eu

Yours faithfully,

Charlina VITCHEVA

¹ Judgment of the General Court of 27 February 2018, Case T-307/16, CEE Bankwatch Network v European Commission, EU:T:2018:97, paragraphs 88-90