

**Question for written answer E-003570/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Transparency of decision-making on TAC Regulations

On 25 October 2019, in response to a complaint by the NGO ClientEarth, the European Ombudsman sent a recommendation<sup>1</sup> to the Council of the European Union calling on it to proactively publish all documents relating to the adoption of TAC (total allowable catches) Regulations at the time when these documents are circulated to Member States or at least as soon as possible.

According to the Ombudsman, 'the decision-making process leading to the adoption of the TAC Regulation can be sufficiently transparent only if the Council makes the relevant documents available proactively, in line with Article 12 of Regulation 1049/2001'. The Ombudsman concludes that the Council's systematic classification of such documents constitutes maladministration.

Bearing in mind that, especially in a field of considerable public interest such as fishing, the utmost transparency is essential to enable European citizens to participate effectively in the EU decision-making process, the Commission is asked to answer the following questions:

1. Does the Council's abovementioned practice of keeping documents relating to TAC regulations secret comply with Regulation 1049/2001 and Article 15 TFEU?
2. What steps will the Commission take to make the decision-making process concerning the annual adoption of TACs transparent and accessible to citizens?

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/recommendation/en/120761#\\_ftn1](https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/recommendation/en/120761#_ftn1).