

**Question for written answer E-004107/2025/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Flags of convenience for the Russian shadow fleet

The Russian shadow fleet is notoriously difficult to track because of constant changes of name and flag, unclear ownership structures and lack of insurance. Countries such as Panama, Barbados, Gabon and Guinea provide flags of convenience to vessels linked to the Russian shadow fleet. This enables these vessels to continue their activities despite EU sanctions against Russia. The shadow fleet transports oil on rusty, often uninsured ships with unclear ownership. Over the past year, at least five tankers from the Russian shadow fleet have caused oil spills in European waters.

1. What is the Commission's view on countries such as Panama, Barbados, Gabon and Guinea issuing flags to Russia's shadow fleet?
2. Does the Commission intend to take any action, including proposing targeted sanctions or other restrictive measures, against these countries in order to prevent the Russian shadow fleet from continuing to operate with their assistance?
3. If the owners of shadow ships cannot be identified and held accountable, who does the Commission believe will have to take responsibility and bear the costs of potential environmental disasters and oil spill clean-up?

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