

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002487/25
to the Commission
Anna Brylka (P/E)
(20 June 2025)

Subject: Clarification on the alleged financing of the NGO ClientEarth by the Commission, Part 2

In the light of a recent media report published in the Brussels Signal on 10 June 2025 citing previous articles from Die Welt and Die Welt am Sonntag, which reported that the Commission was suspected of funding the NGO ClientEarth to the amount of EUR 350 000 under the LIFE Programme to pursue legal actions against coal power plants, I request further clarifications. The report suggests close coordination between Commission officials and the leadership of ClientEarth, which raises concerns about transparency and NGO autonomy. The Commission is asked to provide an answer to the following question.

Will the Commission publish other grant agreements with NGOs to allow for public scrutiny?

Submitted: 20.6.2025

Question for written answer E-002488/25
to the Commission
Anna Brylka (P/E)
(20 June 2025)

Subject: Clarification on alleged financing of the NGO ClientEarth by the Commission, Part 1

In the light of a recent media report published in the *Brussels Signal* on 10 June 2025 citing previous articles from *Welt* and *Welt am Sonntag*, which reported that the Commission was suspected of funding the non-governmental organisation (NGO) ClientEarth to the amount of EUR 350 000 under the LIFE programme to pursue legal actions against coal-fired power plants, I request further clarification. The report suggests close coordination between Commission officials and ClientEarth's leadership, which raises concerns about the transparency and autonomy of NGOs. The Commission is asked to provide answers to the following questions.

1. Is the Commission planning to make available the 2022 ClientEarth grant agreement, including its work programme, to confirm its objectives and show its connection with coal-fired power plants?
2. Is the Commission planning to publish the communications with ClientEarth regarding funded legal actions in 2022-2023?
3. Did the Commission put pressure on or encourage ClientEarth to legally attack or use propaganda against any coal-fired power plants?

Submitted: 20.6.2025

Joint answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(3 September 2025)

1. The Commission has provided the European's Parliament Committee on Budgetary Control with all the documents requested by the Committee ⁽¹⁾ to facilitate the European Parliament's scrutiny in the context of the budget discharge for the financial years 2022 and 2023. Amongst the grant agreements received by the Parliament's Committee for Budgetary Control on 11 January 2024, was the 2022 operating grant agreement with the ClientEarth, which includes the work programme of the organisation ⁽²⁾.

Detailed information on all operating grants financed under the EU programme for the environment and climate action (LIFE) ⁽³⁾ is published online in the LIFE public dashboard ⁽⁴⁾. This dashboard makes available the beneficiaries' details, the amounts of the EU contributions, and the objectives of each operating grant as stated in the grant agreements. It is updated each year after the operating grants have been awarded.

⁽¹⁾ These requests fall under the framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission and have been treated according to the established rules for access to confidential information, as provided for in the Annex II to the said Agreement.

⁽²⁾ Grant agreement with CLIENTEARTH GGMBH for the project LIFE22 NGO-DE-ClientEarth.

⁽³⁾ https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://dashboard.tech.ec.europa.eu/qs_digit_dashboard_mt/public/sense/app/8298c020-48a6-4b84-91f4-f6f2665c0f99/sheet/d2820200-d4d9-4a26-b23b-58e323c803c2/state/analysis. Under the 'Call acronym' tab, select 'LIFE-[year]-NGO-OG-SGA' and scroll down to see the list of grants for each year. Data on objectives is only available for the 2021-2028 financial framework.

2. The Commission confirms that it has not had any exchange of information with ClientEarth regarding legal actions undertaken by the non-governmental organisation (NGO) against coal-burning plants in the period 2022-2023.

3. The aforementioned operating grant awarded to ClientEarth has been concluded under the LIFE programme, which provides financial support for the functioning of NGOs supporting civil society's participation in policy making, through competitive calls for proposals. As a beneficiary of the LIFE programme, ClientEarth has full independence in deciding the content and implementation of its work programme.

The Commission maintains full impartiality and does not require beneficiaries, including NGOs, to undertake advocacy activities for specific political and policy purposes. The Commission has neither demanded nor encouraged ClientEarth to take legal actions against coal-burning power plants.
