



PRESS RELEASE No 4/26

Luxembourg, 15 January 2026

Judgment of the Court in Case C-129/24 | Coillte Cuideachta Ghníomhaíochta Ainmnithe

Access to environmental information (anonymous requests): Member States may require prior identification in order to ensure the proper functioning of procedures, even though EU law does not impose such a requirement

Coillte Cuideachta Ghníomhaíochta Ainmnithe ('Coillte') is a commercial forestry undertaking partly owned by the Irish State. Between 10 March 2022 and 7 June 2022, Coillte received 130 requests for access to environmental information. 97 of those requests originated from anonymous applicants or applicants using pseudonyms generally inspired by film characters and were presented in an identical or almost identical format, without a physical address being provided. The content of those requests was very similar, which led the undertaking to consider them to be part of an organised campaign engaged in for questionable motives and to ask the 'applicants' to confirm their identity.

Having received no response, Coillte rejected those requests as invalid. A total of 81 rejection decisions were challenged before the Commissioner for Environmental Information who, after having examined the first 58 cases, concluded that Coillte could not reject those requests under the Irish national rules.

The Irish court hearing the dispute over the Commissioner's decision asked the Court to interpret the Directive on public access to environmental information ¹ with regard, in particular, to the right to submit anonymous requests for access to information.

In its judgment, the Court rules that, although **the directive does not require the disclosure of the actual name or current physical address of a person requesting environmental information, it does not preclude that information from being requested by the national authorities on the basis of national law.**

Thus, the Court confirms that **Member States may, in compliance with the principles of equivalence and effectiveness, require prior identification where such a requirement is justified in order to ensure the proper functioning of the procedure.** It follows that national rules such as those at issue in the main proceedings, which require the applicant to indicate his or her actual name and current physical address, are compatible with the directive, provided that those rules are not less favourable than those governing similar situations subject to domestic law (principle of equivalence) and do not make it excessively difficult to access environmental information (principle of effectiveness).

NOTE: A reference for a preliminary ruling allows the courts and tribunals of the Member States, in disputes which have been brought before them, to refer questions to the Court of Justice about the interpretation of EU law or the validity of an EU act. The Court of Justice does not decide the dispute itself. It is for the national court or tribunal to dispose of the case in accordance with the Court's decision, which is similarly binding on other national courts or tribunals before which a similar issue is raised.

Unofficial document for media use, not binding on the Court of Justice.

The [full text and, as the case may be, an abstract](#) of the judgment is published on the CURIA website on the day of delivery.

Press contact: Jacques René Zammit ☎ (+352) 4303 3355.

Images of the delivery of the judgment are available on '[Europe by Satellite](#)' ☎ (+32) 2 2964106.

Stay Connected!



¹ [Directive 2003/4/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on public access to environmental information and repealing Council Directive 90/313/EEC.