CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE HIGH-LEVEL EXPERT GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

1. BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND MANDATE OF THE GROUP

1.1. Background

By decision of 28 October 2016, the Commission has set up a high-level group of experts on sustainable finance (“the group”).

The group’s tasks shall be to help develop an overarching and comprehensive EU strategy on sustainable finance to integrate sustainability in EU financial policy.

In the light of the UN sustainable development goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change, including its commitment to align financial flows with a pathway towards low-carbon and climate-resilient development, the current financial system needs to be better aligned with EU policies in support of the low-carbon, climate-resilient, more resource efficient and circular economy, sustainable growth and investments.

Sustainable finance includes a strong green finance component that aims to support economic growth while reducing pressures on the environment, addressing green-house gas emissions and tackling pollution, minimising waste and improving efficiency in the use of natural resources. It also encompasses increasing awareness of and transparency on risks which may have an impact on the sustainability of the financial system and the management of such risks by financial and corporate actors through appropriate governance.

Global commitments to address climate change, other environmental degradation and sustainability risks call for an effective and overarching EU strategy on integration of effective policy provisions in the EU financial policy framework. This perspective needs to inform the preparation and implementation of all pertinent fields of financial legislation. This policy also needs to be undertaken in a manner that is proportionate and takes account of the impact on the funding of small projects and businesses through appropriate sequencing or transitional effects.

1.2. Importance of an EU strategy on sustainable finance:

An EU strategy on sustainable finance, in the context of the Capital Markets Union initiative of the EU, should identify, prioritise and sequence the ways in which EU financial policy reform can:

- Enable and galvanise the flow of public and private capital towards sustainable investments, with particular focus on environmental sustainability but also considering other dimensions of sustainability, in ways that allow the EU to ensure sustainable growth and a high level of protection of the environment;
- Explore effective and operational steps that financial institutions and supervisors should take to protect the stability of the financial system from risks related to the environment and its sustainability in particular but also, where relevant, social and governance risks;
• Deploy these policies on a pan-European scale so as to ensure their maximum effectiveness and the integrity of the single market for investors and capital-raisers alike;

• Allow the EU to maintain its international leadership in the development of sustainable markets and shape supporting public policies.

1.3 Mandate of the group in contributing to the development of this strategy:

The mandate of the group is to submit its view on a comprehensive policy road-map for the EU financial policy reforms that responds to the above objectives. The group, in its final report, should recommend to the European Commission a coherent package of policy measures. This report (and earlier interim report) will be made public as an important contribution to the policy debate on the European approach to sustainable finance. The process of preparing these reports and the opportunity for exchange/interaction with a wider population of interested stakeholders will allow this mandate to take account of evolving policy, societal and market dynamics, and to contribute to framing the wider policy debate on these issues.

The work of the group should be set against the back-drop of fast-developing European (and international) markets for some types of green financial assets and financial products related to climate risks, and be informed by the important catalysing effect of public finance instruments and initiatives of development banks (at European and national level). The work shall take account of best practice examples at the international level, EU level and in Member States, and explore the scope for their deployment at EU level.

1.3.1 Focus of the work

The focus of the work is on proposing clear and operational policy recommendations to strengthen the policy framework for financial institutions, corporate capital-raisers, and markets so that it sets appropriate and proportionate (taking account of impact on different categories/size of entity) of obligations, incentives, and signals to:

• Support investors (institutional and retail) in identifying and supporting investment with a demonstrably superior sustainable or environmental impact: This could entail for example reviewing the disclosure obligations of both companies and institutional investors, fiduciary obligations of institutional investors and asset managers and other ways of enhancing transparency and providing relevant information on the full range of environmental risks in particular but also, where relevant, social and governance risks.

• Ensure that regulation is used to favour superior solutions from a sustainable or environmental perspective as appropriate and also where there are proven or tested technical solutions.

• Account for and manage risks to the balance sheet of financial institutions, and to the wider financial system.

The group when elaborating its contribution to the EU’s strategy on sustainable finance will take into account ongoing international work streams on sustainable, green and climate-related finance, such as the G20 Green Finance Study Group and the Financial Stability Board’s industry-led Task Force on Climate-Related Disclosures, as well as emerging initiatives in Member States or at EU level. This work represents an important starting-point for framing sustainable, green finance issues and challenges.
1.3.2 Organisation of the work of the group

The work of the group will be structured in two phases:

1) Identification and assessment Phase corresponding to the first 6 months following composition. In this phase, the group shall identify and prioritise:

- The most critical segments of the market for sustainable finance (e.g. green infrastructure, green financial products such as green bonds and green loans, guarantees and advisory services) and actors who will have a particular responsibility or role in developing these;
- Potential bottlenecks that may hamper sustainable finance (e.g. need for commonly accepted definition of what is sustainable or green, taxonomies, missing data flows, analytical capacities, rules in existing financial legislation);
- Regulatory instruments that will be most relevant to implement an effective sustainable finance policy (e.g. information disclosures, fiduciary obligations, governance arrangements, risk-management, accounting and regulatory capital requirements for sustainable or green investments) and ways in which these levers have been used already in European or national policy.\(^1\)
- Risks for the EU financial system due to its exposure to carbon-intensive assets and ways to minimize risks of financial instability related to the transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient economy (e.g. through stress-testing for the financial sector): discussion of most effective and policy-relevant approaches to identifying, evaluating and mitigating risks.

This phase shall culminate with the publication of an interim report setting out the main focus areas for further work and the financial policy tool-box. This interim report will be presented to stakeholders for views and reactions in June 2017 and reactions will inform the work of the group in phase 2.

2) Development of the policy road-map, corresponding to the second 6 months of the group's work:

- The group should make recommendations on how financial policy should address specific policy challenges (for example information disclosures by issuer and investor, fiduciary duties for institutional investors and asset managers, governance arrangements, approaches for internalisation of sustainability risk by financial institutions, wider systemic capacity for risk analysis).
- It shall develop an integrated road-map, encompassing all relevant actions. This road-map shall provide a clear prioritisation of actions that could be taken at short and long-term, which takes account of all transitioning considerations and the distribution of impacts particularly on smaller projects/issuers/capital raisers; In making proposals, the group should identify areas where public policy intervention is critical to tackling challenges, and distinguish these from areas where market or NGO/agency solutions can be effective;

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\(^1\) The European Commission will carry out a mapping of existing regulatory measures in support of sustainable finance, with a clear focus on green finance as well as of existing measures that may constitute bottlenecks (e.g. by favouring short-termism).
• It shall examine synergies with public finance developments so as to ensure that changes to the policy framework complement the powerful impact of public finance support;

• It shall identify areas on which further work is required as a priority and suggest ways to take its core recommendations forward.

The work of the group should conclude with the submission of the group's report to the Commission, and its presentation to the wider-stakeholder community.

The Commission is calling for applications with a view to selecting members of the group.

2. FEATURES OF THE GROUP

2.1. COMPOSITION

In accordance with Article 4 of the above Decision, the group shall consist of up to 20 members.

a) NGOs representing civil society and which play a leading role in contributing to public and policy debate on shaping the sustainable finance market framework;

b) insurance companies, pension funds, asset managers banks, stock exchanges and other marketplaces and other categories of financial institution active in intermediating investments in sustainable or green finance or in managing risks linked to sustainable development;

c) institutions/organisations providing analysis, data or methodologies that facilitate sustainable or green finance.

Members shall not represent an individual stakeholder, but a policy orientation common to different stakeholder organisations.

2.2. Appointment

Members shall be appointed by the Commission from applicants complying with the requirements referred to in chapter 4 of this call.

Members shall be appointed for 12 months. They shall remain in office until the end of their term of office. An extension of the term by up to 4 months (up to a maximum term of 16 months) may be granted by the Commission if deemed necessary for the completion of the group's mandate and tasks.

Registration in the Transparency Register is required in order for individuals representing a common interest to be appointed.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group’s deliberations, who in the opinion of DG FISMA do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union or who resign, shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

2.3 Rules of engagement and operation of the group

The Commission shall appoint the Chairperson among members of the group.
The group shall act at the request of its chairman with the agreement of DG FISMA, in compliance with the Commission’s horizontal rules on expert groups (‘the horizontal rules’)\(^2\).

In principle, the group shall meet up to 8 times during 2017 on Commission premises in order to discuss and develop its work on sustainable finance. DG FISMA shall provide secretarial services. The first meeting of the group is foreseen for 24/25 January 2017. Dates for further meetings (three) during the first half of 2017 will be communicated.

Members should be prepared to attend meetings systematically, to contribute actively to discussions in the group, to be involved in preparatory work ahead of meetings, to examine and provide comments on documents under discussion, and to act, as appropriate, as 'rapporteurs' on ad hoc basis.

As a general rule, working documents will be drafted in English and meetings will be also conducted in English.

The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. The members that voted against or abstained shall have the right to have a document summarising the reasons for their position annexed to the opinions, recommendations or reports.

In agreement with DG FISMA, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.

Participants in the activities of the group shall not be remunerated for the services they offer. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group shall be reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursement shall be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

The members of the group as well as invited experts and observers are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff, as well as to the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of Union classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443\(^3\) and 2015/444\(^4\). Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

On a proposal by and in agreement with DG FISMA, the group shall adopt its rules of procedure on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups.

DG FISMA or the Chairperson may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group on an ad hoc basis.

Organisations or public entities may be granted an observer status, in compliance with the horizontal rules. Organisations or public entities appointed as observers shall nominate their representatives. Observers and their representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the group and provide expertise. However, they shall not have voting rights and shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group.

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\(^2\) See Article 13.1 of the horizontal rules.


2.4. **TRANSPARENCY**

The group shall be registered in the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities (‘the Register of expert groups’).

As concerns the group composition, the Commission shall publish the following data on the Register of expert groups:

- the name of members; the interest represented shall be disclosed;
- the name of observers;

DG FISMA shall make available all relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants’ submissions, either on the Register of expert groups or via a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. In particular DG FISMA shall ensure publication of the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be foreseen where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001\(^5\).

Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001.

3. **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Interested individuals representing a common interest shared by stakeholders are invited to submit their application to the European Commission, DG FISMA.

Applications must be completed in one of the official languages of the European Union. However, applications in English would facilitate the evaluation procedure. If another language is used, it would be helpful to include a summary of the CV in English.

An application will be deemed admissible only if it is sent by the deadline and includes the documents referred to below. All documents submitted by applicants should be duly filled in, legible, signed and numbered sequentially.

**Supporting documents**

Each application shall include the following documents:

- a cover letter explaining the applicant's motivation for answering this call and stating what contribution the applicant could make to the group;
- a classification form duly filled in specifying the member category for which the application is made (Annex I).
- a selection criteria form duly filled in documenting how the applicant fulfills the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call (Annex II). a *curriculum vitae* (CV) preferably not exceeding three pages. All CVs shall be submitted in the European

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\(^5\) These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.
Additional supporting documents (e.g. publications) may be requested at a later stage.

**Deadline for application**

The duly signed applications must be sent by e-mail to the following e-mail address by 25 November 2016 at the latest to the following e-mail address: FISMA-SUSTAINABLE-FINANCE@ec.europa.eu. The date of the e-mail will be the date of sending.

### 4. **SELECTION CRITERIA**

DG FISMA will take the following criteria into account when assessing applications:

#### 4.1 **Criteria relating to the individual her/himself:**

- Proven professional experience in a senior role with projects, activities and organisations having a clear sustainable finance dimension;
- Strong track-record in contributing to policy debate and commentary on the links between sustainability/environmental issues and the financial system;
- Demonstrable expertise and understanding of the financial system and EU financial regulatory framework, and of how sustainability/environmental factors interact with the financial system and regulatory framework;
- Willingness and capability to commit to the HLEG’s work over the foreseen period (up to a maximum of 16 months), and to present/communicate the work of the expert group;

#### 4.2 **Criteria relating to the common interest of stakeholder organisation(s) which the individual represents:**

- Representativeness and significance of the stakeholder organisation which has nominated the applicant in terms of contribution to the sustainable finance agenda;
- Capacity of the stakeholder organisation to provide informed and researched input, on behalf of the common interest of stakeholders represented, to the group discussions on sustainable finance including on impact of actions on the financial system.

### 5. **SELECTION PROCEDURE**

The selection procedure shall consist of an assessment of the applications performed by DG FISMA against the selection criteria listed in chapter 4 of this call, followed by the establishment of a list of the most suitable applicants, and concluded by the appointment of the members of the group.

When defining the composition of the group, DG FISMA shall aim at ensuring, as far as possible, a high level of expertise, a geographical and a gender balance, as well as a balanced representation of relevant know how and areas of interest, while taking into account the specific tasks of the group, the type of expertise required, as well as the relevance of the applications received.

For any further information please contact FISMA-SUSTAINABLE-FINANCE@ec.europa.eu
ANNEXES:

– Classification form
– Selection criteria form
– Privacy statement
Annex I - Classification form

To be filled in by all applicants

This application is made as:

☐ An individual applying to be appointed to represent a common interest shared by stakeholders in a particular policy area (Type B member); if appointed I shall not represent an individual stakeholder.

Transparency Register identification number: […]

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The applicant shall represent the following interest: (please select one or more options, taking into account the definitions indicated below):

☐ a) Academia/Research
☐ b) Civil society
☐ c) Employees/Workers
☐ d) Finance
☐ e) Industry
☐ f) Professionals
☐ g) SMEs
☐ h) Other (please specify):

Definitions for interests represented

Academia/Research

Universities, schools, research centers, think tanks and other similar bodies performing academic and/or educational activities.

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6 This form must be filled in, signed and returned with the application.
7 If the individuals in question act as self-employed consultants, they should provide their own identification number. If the individuals in question do not act as self-employed consultants, they should provide the identification number of the organisation(s) of which they are employees, see Article 24 of the horizontal rules.
Civil society

Civil society can be defined as the aggregate of non-governmental organisations and institutions that manifest interests and will of citizens or as individuals and organisations in a society which are independent of the government.

Employees/workers

Individuals working part-time or full-time under a contract of employment whether oral or written, express or implied, and having recognized rights and duties.

Finance

The management of revenues or the conduct or transaction of money matters, as in the fields of banking, insurance and investment.

Industry

Companies and groups of companies whose number of employees and turnover or balance sheet total are higher than the ones of SMEs (see below).

Professionals

Individuals operating in a particular profession, such as physicians, nurses, architects, engineers and lawyers.

SMEs

"SME" stands for small and medium-sized enterprises – as defined in EU law: EU recommendation 2003/361.

The main factors determining whether a company is an SME are:

1. number of employees and
2. either turnover or balance sheet total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company category</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Turnover or Balance sheet total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium-sized</td>
<td>&lt; 250</td>
<td>( \leq ) 50 m, ( \leq ) 43 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>&lt; 50</td>
<td>( \leq ) 10 m, ( \leq ) 10 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>&lt; 10</td>
<td>( \leq ) 2 m, ( \leq ) 2 m</td>
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</tbody>
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These ceilings apply to the figures for individual firms only. A firm which is part of larger grouping may need to include employee/turnover/balance sheet data from that grouping too.
Other interest

Interest which is not possible to classify in any other category.

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Please select one or more policy areas in which you/your organisation operate(s):

- Agriculture
- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Audiovisual and media
- Audit
- Banking
- Biodiversity
- Civil protection
- Civil service
- Climate
- Competition
- Conservation
- Consumer affairs
- Culture
- Cultural Heritage
- Cultural Landscape
- Customs
- Development
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Economy
- Education
- Employment and social affairs
- Energy
- Engineering (chemical)
- Engineering (civil)
- Engineering (infrastructure)
- Engineering (IT)
- Engineering (maritime)
- Engineering (space policy)
- Engineering (space research)
- Enlargement
- Environment
- Equal opportunities
- External relations
- External trade
- Finance
- Fisheries and aquaculture
- Food safety
- Forestry
- Fundamental rights
- Humanitarian aid
Title: ........................
Surname\textsuperscript{8}: ........................
First name\textsuperscript{9}: ........................
Date: ............................
Signature ............................

\textsuperscript{8} It is mandatory to use \textit{exactly} the same name used when registering in the Transparency Register.
\textsuperscript{9} Idem
Annex II: Selection criteria form\textsuperscript{10}

Applicants are requested to describe how they fulfil the selection criteria listed in this call\textsuperscript{11}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria relating to the individual:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proven professional experience in a senior role with projects, activities and organisations having a clear sustainable finance dimension;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strong track-record in contributing to policy debate and commentary on the links between sustainability/ environmental issues and the financial system;</td>
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<td>Demonstrable expertise and understanding of the financial system and EU financial regulatory framework, and of how sustainability/ environmental factors interact with the financial system and regulatory framework;</td>
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<td>Willingness and capability to commit to the HLEG's work over the foreseen period (up to a maximum of 16 months), and to present/communicate the work of the expert group.</td>
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<th>Criteria relating to the common interest of stakeholder organisation(s) which the individual represents:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Representativeness and significance of the stakeholder organisation which has nominated the applicant in terms of contribution to the sustainable finance agenda;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity of the stakeholder organisation to provide informed and researched input, on behalf of the common interest of stakeholders represented, to the group discussions on sustainable finance including on impact of actions on the financial system.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{10} This form must be filled in, signed and returned with the application.

\textsuperscript{11} Selection criteria to be specified and adapted as required, in light of the call for applications in question.
Annex III: PROTECTION OF YOUR PERSONAL DATA

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8. Contact information

9. Where to find more detailed information

1. **Introduction**

This privacy statement explains the reason for the processing, the way we collect, handle and ensure protection of all personal data provided, how that information is used and what rights you may exercise in relation to your data (the right to access, rectify, block etc.).

The European institutions are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. As this service/application collects and further processes personal data, Regulation (EC) N°45/2001\(^\text{14}\) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data, is applicable.

This statement concerns the Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities (‘Register of expert groups’) undertaken by the European Commission, Secretariat-General, Head of Unit B.2 (Institutional Affairs). The Register is a database containing a list of Commission expert groups and other similar entities and their sub-groups. For each expert group, the Register provides valuable information including on the Commission department which is running the group, as well as on the group members, mission and tasks. The Register also includes relevant documents which are produced and discussed by expert groups.

Personal data submitted to Commission departments as part of rejected applications are not published on the Register of expert groups. The competent Commission departments keep these data for six months and do not process them for other purposes.

2. **Why do we process your data?**

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Purpose of the processing operation: The European Commission, Secretariat-General, Head of Unit B.2 (Institutional Affairs) (‘the Data Controller’) collects and uses your personal information to ensure transparency on expert groups’ membership and activities.

The processing and publication on the Register of expert’s personal data is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest, since it increases the transparency on Commission expert groups (article 5 (a) of Regulation (EC) N° 45/2001).

Art 27 of Regulation (EC) N° 45/2001 is not applicable.

3. Which data do we collect and process?

The personal data collected and further processed may be:

- Name;
- Professional title;
- Professional profile;
- Nationality;
- Gender;
- Interest represented (only for individuals applying to be appointed as members of expert groups or sub-groups representing a common interest and for the designated representatives of organisations applying to be appointed members of expert groups or sub-groups);
- Information included in the declarations of interest (only for individuals applying to be appointed as members of expert groups or sub-groups in a personal capacity).

4. How long do we keep your data?

The Data Controller only keeps the data for the time necessary to fulfil the purpose of collection or further processing.

When an individual is no longer participating in a group listed in the Register of expert groups, all personal information related to this individual is removed from the Register. The competent Commission departments keep personal information for 5 years after the date where relevant individuals cease to participate in the work of the group.

Declarations of interests of individuals appointed as members or alternate members in a personal capacity of expert groups or sub-groups are published on the Register as long as they are members.

When a group is closed down, it remains published in the Register of expert groups for five years, with the indication ‘Closed’. During such time, personal information other than the above-mentioned declarations of interests is visible on the Register.

An XML file is created daily with all the information regarding active groups. All versions of this file, showing the situation of the Register as of the day it was created, are stored in a file server for 5 years.
5. **How do we protect your data?**

All data in electronic format (e-mails, documents, uploaded batches of data etc.) are stored either on the servers of the European Commission or of its contractors, the operations of which abide by the European Commission’s security decision of 16 August 2006 [C(2006) 3602] concerning the security of information systems used by the European Commission.

The Commission’s contractors are bound by a specific contractual clause for any processing operations of your data on behalf of the Commission, and by the confidentiality obligations deriving from the transposition of Directive 95/46/CE.

6. **Who has access to your data and to whom is it disclosed?**

Information collected is publicly available on the Register of expert groups.

The XML files referred to in point 4 are not available neither via the internal application of the Register or the public version of the Register, and are only accessible to a reduced number of users in the System Owner and System Supplier's teams.

7. **What are your rights and how can you exercise them?**

According to Regulation (EC) n°45/2001, you are entitled to access your personal data and rectify and/or block it in case the data is inaccurate or incomplete.

If you do not wish to have your name published on the Register of expert groups, you may submit a request to the relevant Commission department for a derogation from publication. A derogation shall be granted where justified on compelling legitimate grounds in relation to your specific situation, in particular where disclosure of the experts’ name could endanger your security or integrity.

You can exercise your rights by contacting the secretariat of the competent Commission department or in case of conflict the Data Protection Officer and if necessary the European Data Protection Supervisor using the contact information given at point 8 below.

8. **Contact information**

If you have comments or questions, any concerns or a complaint regarding the collection and use of your personal data, please feel free to contact the secretariat of the competent Commission department, using the following contact information:

The Data Processor:

- *DG FISMA/C1*
- *Niall Bohan, Head of Unit*
- *FISMA-SUSTAINABLE-FINANCE@ec.europa.eu*

The Data Protection Officer (DPO) of the Commission: *DATA-PROTECTION-OFFICER@ec.europa.eu*

The European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS): *edps@edps.europa.eu*
9. **Where to find more detailed information?**

The Commission Data Protection Officer publishes the register of all operations processing personal data. You can access the register on the following link: [http://ec.europa.eu/dpo-register](http://ec.europa.eu/dpo-register)

This specific processing has been notified to the DPO with the following reference: DPO-2194.8.