ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION
Veolia Environnement SA v. mary rich
Case No. D2026-0716

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Veolia Environnement SA, France, represented by IP Twins, France.

The Respondent is mary rich, United States of America (“United States”).

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <veoliaenvironment.com> is registered with Spaceship, Inc. (the “Registrar”).

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on February 19, 2026. On February 20, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On February 20, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (Redacted for Privacy Purposes) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on February 23, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint on the same day.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on February 25, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 17, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on March 25, 2026.

The Center appointed Kaya Köklü as the sole panelist in this matter on March 27, 2026. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant is the holding company of the Veolia Group, which provides a wide range of services in the field of water, waste and energy management. The Complainant, through its affiliated companies, is present in many countries and employs nearly 215,000 employees worldwide.

The Complainant is the owner of the VEOLIA trademark, which is registered in numerous jurisdictions. The Complainant is, among others, the registered owner of the International Trademark Registration No. 919580, registered on March 10, 2006, for VEOLIA, designating the United States and others, and covering protection for various goods and services in classes 9, 11, 16, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, and 42.

The Complainant further operates its main website at "www.veolia.com".

The Respondent is reportedly located in the United States.

The disputed domain name was registered on January 12, 2026.

According to evidence provided in the Complainant, the disputed domain name resolved to a website in Chinese language with adult content. At the time of the Decision, the disputed domain name does no longer resolve to an active website.

On February 17, 2025, the Complainant sent a request letter to the Registrar (followed by various reminders) seeking deactivation of the website associated with the disputed domain name. On February 18, 2025, the Registrar refused the request, stating that it merely provides registration services and does not own the disputed domain name.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

In its Amended Complaint, the Complainant further argues that the Registrar refused to deactivate the website associated with the disputed domain name and, on that basis, submits that the Registrar should be treated as an additional respondent in this proceeding.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

6.1. Preliminary Issue: Proper Respondent

The Panel notes that the Complainant claims to include the Registrar as a respondent due to its alleged failure to deactivate a linked website. The Policy, however, is directed solely at the domain name registrant, and the Registrar's role in these proceedings is purely administrative. There is no basis under the Policy to assert claims against, or seek relief from, the Registrar.

Accordingly, the Panel does not consider the Registrar to be named as respondent in the present proceeding and will not address the Complaint insofar as it is directed against the Registrar.

6.2. Substantive Issues

According to paragraph 15(a) of the Rules, the Panel shall decide the Complaint in accordance with the Policy, the Rules and any rules and principles of law that it deems applicable.

In accordance with paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant must prove that each of the three following elements is satisfied:

(i) the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark in which the Complainant has rights; and

(ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and

(iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

As per paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the complainant bears the burden of proving that all these requirements are fulfilled, even if a respondent has not substantively replied to the complainant's contentions. *Stanworth Development Limited v. E Net Marketing Ltd.*, WIPO Case No. D2007-1228.

Concerning the uncontested information provided by a complainant, the Panel may, where relevant, accept the provided reasonable factual allegations in a complaint as true. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.3.

It is further noted that the Panel has taken note of the WIPO Overview 3.1 and, where appropriate, will decide consistently with the consensus views captured therein.

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of the VEOLIA trademark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.2.1.

The entirety of the VEOLIA mark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the VEOLIA mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms, here "environment" (which is the corresponding English term for the second part of the Complainant's French company name "environnement") may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 1.8.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.
Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of "proving a negative", requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant's prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Rather, and in light of the composition and nature of the disputed domain name, the Panel finds that the Respondent intentionally attempted to capitalize on the reputation and distinctiveness of the Complainant's VEOLIA trademark, which is incompatible with any finding of rights or legitimate interests.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent's registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.1.

In the present case, the Panel believes that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant and its VEOLIA trademark when registering the disputed domain name. It is obvious to the Panel that the Respondent's choice of the disputed domain name, which comprises the VEOLIA trademark in its entirety together with the term "environment", demonstrates its prior knowledge of the Complainant and a clear intent to target the Complainant and its mark, to take unfair advantage of its reputation, and to mislead Internet users.

As regards bad faith use, the Panel is convinced that the Respondent used the disputed domain name to capitalize on the reputation of the Complainant and its VEOLIA trademark in order to attract Internet users to its website with adult content. Given the distinctive and coined nature of the Complainant's VEOLIA mark, this supports the Panel's finding of bad faith.

The fact that the disputed domain name currently not resolves to an active website does not - given the above-noted circumstances (notably, reputation of the Complainant's VEOLIA mark, and the failure of the Respondent to submit a response to the Complainant's contentions in the present proceeding) - prevent a finding of bad faith.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <veoliaenvironment.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Kaya Köklü/
Kaya Köklü
Sole Panelist
Date: April 10, 2026