

**QUESTIONNAIRE TO ASSESS IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES
ON ELECTRONIC INFORMATION TOOLS (DECISION II/3)**

Please fill in and return this questionnaire to the Aarhus Convention secretariat by
20 November 2006

Secretariat: Fax: +41 22 917 0634, E-mail: michael.stanley-jones@unece.org

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1. In your country, which categories of environmental information (according to para 9 (c) of the *Recommendations* annexed to decision II/3) are publicly accessible through the Internet:

a) Reports on the state of the environment are:

- i. Generally available X Partly available Not available
- ii. Please provide internet link <http://www.ymparisto.fi/ymparistontila>
- iii. Are reports on the state of the environment legally required to be available?
Yes X
No
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to meet requirements (according to article 5, para 3) for progressive improvement in the availability of this information?
Yes No
- v. Comments

b) Texts of legislation, regulations, rules and other legally binding instruments on or relating to the environment are:

- i. Generally available x Partly available Not available
- ii. Please provide internet link <http://www.ymparisto.fi/lait>
- iii. Are texts of legislation, regulations, rules and other legally binding instruments on or relating to the environment legally required to be available? Yes x No
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to meet requirements (according to article 5, para 3) for progressive improvement in the availability of this information?
Yes No
- v. Comments

c) Texts of policies, plans and programmes on or relating to the environment, and environmental agreements are:

- i. Generally available x Partly available Not available

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- ii. Please provide internet link <http://www.ymparisto.fi/ymparistonsuojelu> +
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/luonnonsuojelu> +
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=228&lan=FI>
- iii. Are texts of policies, plans and programmes on or relating to the environment legally required to be available? Yes ☒ No ☐
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to meet requirements (according to article 5, para 3) for progressive improvement in the availability of this information? Yes ☐ No ☐
- v. Comments
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d) Environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation, where it is held in electronic form, is:

- i. Generally available ☒ Partly available ☐ Not available ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=467&lan=FI>
- iii. Are environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation legally required to be available? Yes ☒ No ☐
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes ☐ No ☐
- v. Comments
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e) Reference to where environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation can be accessed is:

- i. Generally available ☐ Partly available ☒ Not available ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=467&lan=FI>

f) Data on environmentally significant releases and transfers of pollutants, within the scope of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR), are:

- i. Generally available ☐ Partly available ☒ Not available ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=11090&lan=fi> +
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=16083&lan=fi> +
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=16084&lan=fi> +
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=16085&lan=fi>
- iii. Are PRTR data legally required to be available? Yes ☒ No ☐
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes ☐ No ☐
- v. Comments
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g) Information on mechanisms related to access to justice within the meaning of the Convention is:

- i. Generally available ☐ Partly available ☒ Not available ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link ☐ For example;
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=18050&lan=fi>

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- iii. Is information on mechanisms related to access to justice legally required to be available? Yes ☒_x_ No ☐__
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes ☐__ No ☐__
- v. Comments

2. In your country, among documentation forming an integral part of any licensing or permitting process subject to the provisions of article 6, and where held in electronic form, which categories of environmental information are publicly accessible through the Internet:

- a) Applications for licences or permits are:
- i. Generally available ☒_x_ Partly available ☐__ Not available ☐__
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=96&lan=FI> +
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=19878&lan=FI>
- iii. Are applications for licenses or permits legally required to be available? Yes ☒_x_ No ☐__
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes ☐__ No ☐__
- v. Comments

- b) **Draft** licences or permits and their attached conditions are:
- i. Generally available ☐__ Partly available ☐__ Not available ☒_x_
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable:
e.g. <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=1493&lan=FI>
- iii. Are draft licenses or permits legally required to be available? Yes ☐__ No ☒_x_
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes ☐__ No ☒_x_
- v. Comments

- c) Final licences or permits and their attached conditions are:
- i. Generally available ☒_X_ Partly available ☐__ Not available ☐__
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable
- iii. Are final licenses or permits legally required to be available? Yes ☐__ No ☒_x_
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to meet requirements for progressive improvements for this information? Yes ☐__ No ☒_x_

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v. Comments

d) Comments of third parties on draft permits and conditions are:

i. Generally available ___ Partly available ___ Not available _x_

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable _____

iii. Are comments of third parties legally required to be available? Yes ___ No _x_

iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to meet requirements for progressive improvements for this information? Yes ___ No _x_

v. Comments

e) Where it is not available in electronic form, a reference to where documentation forming an integral part of any licensing or permitting process subject to the provisions of article 6 can be accessed is:

i. Generally available ___ Partly available ___ Not available _x_

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable _____

iii. Is such a reference legally required to be available? Yes___ No_x_

iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes ___ No _x_

v. Comments

3. In your country, which categories of environmental information (according to the paragraph 9 (d) of the *Recommendations* annexed to decision II/3) are publicly accessible through the Internet:

a) Environmental monitoring data held by or on behalf of public authorities, including spatial attributes are:

i. Generally available ___ Partly available _X_ Not available ___

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable

<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=87&lan=fi>

iii. Is such information legally required to be available? Yes_x_ No___

iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes _x_ No ___

v. Comments

All environmental monitoring data bases will be made available through the ymparisto.fi portal

b) Product information that enables consumers to make informed environmental choices is:

i. Generally available ___ Partly available _X_ Not available ___

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable

<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=12129&lan=fi>

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- iii. Are such data legally required to be available? Yes___ No_x_
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes _x_ No __

v. Comments

c) Good practice information and guidelines on better environmental management are:

- i. Generally available __ Partly available _X_ Not available __
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable <http://www.ymparisto.fi/yrietykset>
- iii. Is such information legally required to be available? Yes___ No_x_
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes _x_ No __

v. Comments

d) Appropriate metadata or background information so that the methods, processes and standards of data collection are transparent to future data users is:

- i. Generally available _X_ Partly available __ Not available __
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=62171&lan=fi> +
<http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?contentid=95306&lan=fi>
- iii. Is such information legally required to be available? Yes_x_ No__
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes __ No __

v. Comments

e) Meta-information including catalogues of data sources and details of the scope of information held by public authorities and mechanisms for the provision of access to environmental information is:

- i. Generally available _x_ Partly available __ Not available __
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable
<http://wwwi5.ymparisto.fi/i5/tuotesel.htm>
- iii. Is such meta-information legally required to be available? Yes_x_ No__
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes __ No __

v. Comments

4. In your country, what proportion of members of the public has electronic access:

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a) In their place of residence?

More than 80% _ 60-79% _X(?) 40-59% X(?) 20-39% _ Less than 20% _

b) In their place of work (employment, school etc.)?

More than 80% _X_ 60-79% _ 40-59% _ 20-39% _ Less than 20% _

c) In a publicly accessible facility (internet café, public library, kiosk etc.)?

More than 80% _X (?) 60-79% _ 40-59% _ 20-39% _ Less than 20% _

5. In your country, has the scope of environmental information that is electronically accessible since 2005:

Generally increased _X_ Partly increased _ Remained the same _ Declined _

6. For the majority of Internet users in your country, what is the most common form of Internet access:

Dial-up (telephony) ___ Wi-Fi (wireless networking) ___ Broadband _X(?) Don't know: X_

Broadband is a term that encompasses DSL, cable and satellite high-speed Internet connections. DSL stands for "Digital Subscriber Line". Variants include ADSL, HDSL, IDSL, VDSL and SDSL.

7. Please describe any methods or measures that are used to gauge the level of actual use of environmental information accessed electronically in your country (for example, tracking of web traffic statistics on official environmental information sites):

We are trying to monitor the actual use of our web service www.ymparisto.fi / www.environment.fi or different pages in it but the method is not yet ready and working

8. Please identify in the table below the
a) main users of environmental information in your country, and
b) methods used to assess their information needs.

You may choose one or more categories.

a) Main User	b) Methods
Government	Environmental web Service in 3 languages: Finnish: www.ymparisto.fi / English: www.environment.fi / Swedish: www.miljo.fi
Academia / Schools	Environmental web Service in 3 languages: Finnish: www.ymparisto.fi / Swedish: www.miljo.fi English: www.environment.fi / Especially Research issues: www.ymparisto.fi/tutkimus Research in English: http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=4079&lan=en
General Public	Environmental web Service in 3 languages: Finnish: www.ymparisto.fi / Swedish: www.miljo.fi English: www.environment.fi / Especially frequently asked common issues of public: www.ymparisto.fi/minajaymparisto which is not in English

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Nongovernmental Organizations	Environmental web Service in 3 languages: Finnish: www.ymparisto.fi / Swedish: www.miljo.fi English: www.environment.fi /
Private sector For companies, firms and communities	Especially www.ymparisto.fi/yritykset / in English: http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=18313&language=en + Finnish: www.ymparisto.fi / Swedish: www.miljo.fi English: www.environment.fi /
Others (Please identify)	

9. If your Ministry or agency has assessed user needs for environmental information, please briefly describe how successful it has been.

Parliamentary policymakers are seen as one of the main indicator users. The assumption is that Members of the Parliament (MPs) are generally overloaded with masses of information and they would welcome any tools to that help them focus and digest information. To narrow down the sample, the research was carried out with the members of two Parliamentary committees: The Environment Committee and the Committee for the Future. The former deals with housing, planning, building, waste management, environmental protection and nature conservation, and the latter with matters involving development models, research concerning the future and the evaluation of the social consequences of technological development and technology.

The study was carried out in two parts: first the indicator work was presented to a chosen parliamentary committee and later all MPs who were present were interviewed personally. In addition a Finnish Member of the European Parliament and the Minister for the Environment were interviewed as well. They both have been provided with the indicator set when it was launched. Finally, after the MPs had continuously made references to the Information Service of the Parliament as a reliable source of information, the head of the service was also interviewed. The total number of interviews was 28.

Furthermore user needs were gathered up with a questionnaire which was sent to a number of customers including general public.

These studies have helped us to develop our website, to prioritize our work. Some of the customers don't know what the www.ymparisto.fi –portal includes. This means that we have to do a lot of marketing.

10. In your country, how is progress on improving electronic access to environmental information being communicated to the public?

For example through media by doing press releases or by brochures etc.

11. What concrete steps have been undertaken to ensure that information is available electronically? Please include reference to national web portals or other sites of interest.

Large national environmental web portal: in Finnish: www.ymparisto.fi / in Swedish: www.miljo.fi and in English: www.environment.fi

12. Is public access to environmental information through the Internet or other electronic means provided as a matter of practice or is there a legally enforceable right to such access?

If possible, please include reference to relevant national policies or provisions of national law referring to this right.

Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999)

13. Has your country formulated and implemented **national “e-government” strategies** for the use of electronic tools to facilitate administrative processes and services, to make public administration more transparent and efficient in providing available environmental information and dealing with requests for such information from the public? Please include relevant title(s), name(s), contact information of responsible officer(s) and timeframe for implementation.

Government Information Society Programme, http://www.tietoyhteiskuntaohjelma.fi/en_GB/

14. In which types of environmental decision-making process (in the sense of articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Convention) may public participation take place electronically? What are the main steps in the process? If possible, please give concrete examples.

For example preparation of a policy programme, legislation, environmental permit or environmental impact assessment. At first a public notice on the internet which focus on the aim of the process. Then a first draft, and after that a final draft for comments.

15. Have comprehensive environment-related programmes, including specific training programmes linking the use of information technology applications to the promotion of good environmental governance, been developed and implemented in your country?

- a) Yes ☒ No ☐
- b) Is the training programme:
 - i. Ongoing ☐ Periodic ☐ One-time ☒
 - ii. Financed through international assistance ☐
State-financed (National or local government) ☒
Privately-financed (philanthropy, NGO, private sector) ☐
Other (please describe) ☐
- c) Please provide the date(s) of initiation and target audience of environment-related training programmes:

Several courses for those who use environmental information in their work organized by Finnish Environment Institute, Regional Environment Centres and Statistics Finland. Demonstrations for general public in exhibitions.

16. Please describe any measures taken to promote the involvement of different stakeholders representing both providers and users of information, including civil society and private sector institutions, in the development and use of electronic tools to provide environmental information to the public?

Information providers and users have been members of the steering group when preparing new data systems and electronic tools. Please look also the answer for the question 9.

17. What are the most important challenges and obstacles in your country to the use of electronic tools to implement the *Recommendations* contained in decision II/3?

You can use the enclosed list of possible challenges on page 10 as reference.

No major obstacles. One of the challenges is to catalyse public participation during the preparation of policy programmes, legislation, environmental permits or environmental impact assessments.

18. Does your country have an Aarhus Clearinghouse National Node web portal? If yes, please identify the website address (url):

No

19. Does your country have a designated Aarhus Clearinghouse National Node Administrator or contact point responsible for collecting, managing and updating the information contained in the national node? Yes X

No

Responsible for content management:

Name: Ms. Eija Lumme

Title:

Organization: Ministry of the Environment

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Technical contact:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

20. Date of launch of national node of the Clearinghouse: (Month/Year) _____

21. How often does your national node administration update the National Clearinghouse web portal? Monthly ____ Quarterly ____ Annually ____ Never ____

22. Approximately how many resource entries in the Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy (<http://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org>) reflect national content?

More than 10 ____ 5 to 10 ____ Less than 5 ____ None ____

23. What method of communicating resource entries to the Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy does your organization or agency prefer to use? Does it submit information:

By email to aarhus.clearinghouse@unece.org ____

By email to staff of the Aarhus secretariat ____

By email to national experts serving on Task Force ____

By email to Clearinghouse National Node Administrator ____

Using Clearinghouse's online form accessible to registered content managers ____

Other (please specify) _____

24. Please describe any measures undertaken to promote the involvement of different stakeholders representing both providers and users of information, including civil society and private sector institutions, in the national node of the Clearinghouse.

25. Please provide any additional comments below.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

Aarhus Convention Secretariat

Information Tools	Relevant provisions of the Aarhus Convention	Challenges & obstacles to ICT Implementation
<p>ELECTRONIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet • E-mail • Electronic Community Notice Boards/ Billboards • CD-Rom • Electronic data accessible through bar-code scanning • Electronic data accessible through touch-tone dialling • SMS – Short Messaging System • Public electronic information kiosks • Telephone Hotlines/Fax TV Teletext • Other (to be specified) <p>NON-ELECTRONIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brochures • Exhibitions • Green community reps • Info-shops (walk in) • Libraries • Newspapers • Open days • Posters • TV, Cinema, Radio • Other (to be specified) 	<p>ARTICLE 4, PARA. 1</p> <p>Response to requests for environmental information in the form requested</p> <p>ARTICLE 5, PARA. 3</p> <p>a) Reports on the state of the environment b) Texts of legislation on or relating to the environment c) Policies, plans and programmes on or relating to the environment, and environmental agreements d) Other information, to the extent that the availability of such information in this form would facilitate the application of national law implementing the Convention.</p> <p>ARTICLE 6</p> <p>Public participation in decisions on specific activities which may have a significant effect on the environment</p> <p>ARTICLE 7</p> <p>Public participation concerning plans, programmes and policies relating to the environment</p> <p>ARTICLE 8</p> <p>Public participation during the preparation of executive regulations and/or generally applicable legally binding normative instruments</p>	<p>INSTITUTIONAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited scope or extent of environmental data collected in your country • Limited standardization of data sets • Poor cooperation with other agencies collecting environmental data • Limited interest in utilizing ICT among: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Data providers (you) -Data users (pls. Quantify) • Other priorities (pls. Detail) • Lack of time to explore/implement <p>ECONOMIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited market availability of equipment • Lack of IT service providers • Lack of technical support • High cost of online access • High cost of equipment • Poor state of telecommunication networks <p>CULTURAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited expertise/know-how <p>LEGAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear rules, legislation on environment and informational responsibility <p>OTHER (to be specified)</p>