

**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 www.mepa.org.mt_____
- 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

SOER report is issued every 3 years

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 www.mepa.org.mt_____
- 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

National policy that all texts are available. www.justice.gov.mt refers

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 ____
- ii. Please provide internet link www.mepa.org.mt_____
- iii. Are texts of policies, plans and programmes on or relating to the environment legally required to be available? Yes ____ No x_

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- 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 x__ No __
- v. Comments

d) Environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation, where it is held in electronic form, is:

- i. Generally available x__ Partly available __ Not available __
- ii. Please provide internet link www.mepa.org.mt_____
- iii. Are environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation 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

Available during consultation process

e) Reference to where environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation can be accessed is:

- i. Generally available x__ Partly available __ Not available __
- ii. Please provide internet link www.mepa.org.mt

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 x__
- ii. Please provide internet link _____
- iii. Are PRTR data 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

Environment documentation uploaded to EEA Website – refers to EPER data

g) Information on mechanisms related to access to justice within the meaning of the Convention is:

- i. Generally available __ Partly available x__ Not available __
- ii. Please provide internet link www.mepa.org.mt
- iii. Is information on mechanisms related to access to justice legally required to be available? Yes __ No __ N/A
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes _x No __
- v. Comments

Under review through a proposed Twinning project

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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 ___ Partly available ___ Not available x___

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable ___www.mepa.org.mt

iii. Are applications for 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 x___ No ___

v. Comments

e-applications not yet available although e-tools have been developed for a number of permitting cycles. Access to information on this point is being improved as part of the implementation of the permitting strategy adopted by MEPA

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 _____

iii. Are draft 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 x_ No ___

v. Comments

Given that the implementation of the permitting strategy is currently underway, and the data management tools are in the process of being introduced, there is scope for improvement.

c) Final licences or permits and their attached conditions are:

i. Generally available ___ Partly available x___ Not available ___

Please provide internet link, if applicable www.mepa.org.mt

ii. Are final licenses or permits legally required to be available? Yes _x No ___

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

v. Comments

Related to land use

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

i. Generally available ___ Partly available _x Not available ___

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 _x No ___

v. Comments

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Comments of third parties are included in reports, which are generally available. This feature will be improved as data management tools for handling of permit data is introduced and improved; however, certain data (e.g. identity of third party) may be kept confidential.

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 x ___ Not available ___

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable www.mepa.org.mt

iii. Is such a reference 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

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 ___ www.mepa.org.mt _____

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

This is subject to availability of resources for the improvement of this service

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 ___ www.mepa.org.mt _____

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

Product information is available through labelling - This is subject to availability of resources for the improvement of this service

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 www.mepa.org.mt

iii. Is such information legally required to be available? Yes___ No_x

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

v. Comments

More guidelines are required for local councils and business

- 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 ☐ Partly available ☐ Not available ☒

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable _____

iii. Is such information 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

In process

- 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 ☐ Partly available ☐ Not available ☒

ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable _____

iii. Is such meta-information 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

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

a) In their place of residence?

More than 80% ☐ 60-79% ☐ 40-59% ☒ 20-39% ☐ Less than 20% ☐

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

More than 80% ☐ 60-79% ☐ 40-59% ☒ 20-39% ☐ Less than 20% ☐

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

More than 80% ☐ 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 ☒ Partly increased ☐ Remained the same ☐ Declined ☐

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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: ___

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):

Not monitored

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 Ministries and Parastatal Bodies Government Bodies Local Councils	Public Participation Direct Communication
Academia / Schools University of Malta All schools Direct requests for info for students	Events On-line requests Publications Electronic and hard copy Public participation
General Public General Public Press Interest Groups	Press Releases Publications Press Releases

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<p>Nongovernmental Organizations</p> <p>Organised NGO's</p> <p>Pressure Groups</p>	<p>Public participation</p> <p>Focal meetings</p> <p>Conferences/seminars</p>
<p>Private sector</p> <p>Consultants</p> <p>Developers/ operators</p> <p>Interested parties</p>	<p>Public participation</p> <p>Focal meetings</p> <p>Conferences/seminars</p>
<p>Others (Please identify)</p> <p>International Organisations</p>	<p>Diverse methods</p>

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

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

Through website and targeted publications. Web - GIS

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.

Policy already set up ...www.mepa.org.mt www.mrae.gov.mt

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.

Refer to 11. Not legally bound to provide ALL info

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.

Refer to www.gov.mt

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.

Land use, EIA 's, SEA'a, Policy Formulation

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:

Ad-hoc training

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?

Ad-hoc initiatives

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.

Establishment of formal tools for data exchange

Backing up of professional networking

Creation of integrated infrastructural base

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 ☒ No ☐

Responsible for content management:

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

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.

N/A

25. Please provide any additional comments below.

N/A

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>