

**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

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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.VROM.NL
- 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: VROM.NL gives a variety of national information. Local information generally is published on the sites of the local authorities. Quite often other organisations like certain research institutes also publish relevant information on internet.

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.OVERHEID.NL
- 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
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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: See comments under 1a.
- iii. Are texts of policies, plans and programmes on or relating to the environment legally required to be available?                      Yes: X                      No \_\_\_\_

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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 \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- v. Comments: see comments under 1a

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

- i. Generally available \_\_\_ Partly available: X Not available \_\_\_
- ii. Please provide internet link: [www.eia.nl/](http://www.eia.nl/) [www.mnp.nl](http://www.mnp.nl)
- 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 See comments under 1a, examples are [www.eia.nl/](http://www.eia.nl/) [www.mnp.nl](http://www.mnp.nl)
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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 X Not available \_\_\_
- ii. Please provide internet link [www.eia.nl/](http://www.eia.nl/) [www.mnp.nl](http://www.mnp.nl)

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 \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- v. Comments: PRTR is being implemented in Dutch law. The first report will be available in 2008, covering 2007.

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

- i. Generally available: X Partly available \_\_\_ Not available \_\_\_
- ii. Please provide internet link: [www.overheid.nl](http://www.overheid.nl)
- 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: There is a variety of sites that provide information about access to justice. Authorities provide information on their own sites. They are also legally required to provide necessary information when communicating, for instance concerning permits. Most courts of law have their own sites with relevant information.

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

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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 ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Are applications for licenses or permits 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: All relevant documentation can be consulted. Most authorities are in the proces of digitalizing their documents and files for publication on internet. This process is costly and can take several years.

b) Draft licences or permits and their attached conditions are:

- i. Generally available: ☐ Partly available: ☒ Not available ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Are draft licenses or permits 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: See comments under 2a.

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

- i. Generally available: ☐ Partly available: ☒ Not available ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Are final licenses or permits legally required to be available? Yes: ☒ No ☐
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to meet requirements for progressive improvements for this information? Yes ☐ No ☐
- v. Comments: See comments under 2a.

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

- i. Generally available ☐ Partly available: ☒ Not available ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Are comments of third parties legally required to be available? Yes: ☒ No ☐
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to meet requirements for progressive improvements for this information? Yes ☐ No ☐
- v. Comments: See comments under 2a.

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 ☐
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_

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- 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 \_\_ No \_\_
- v. Comments: See comments under 2a.

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 X Partly available: X Not available \_\_
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable [www.vrom.nl/www.eia.nl/](http://www.vrom.nl/www.eia.nl/) [www.mnp.nl](http://www.mnp.nl)
- 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 \_\_ No \_\_
- v. Comments All recent data is available via internet.

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 \_\_\_\_\_
- 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 \_\_ No \_\_
- v. Comments: see for example [www.milieuentraal.nl](http://www.milieuentraal.nl)

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.milieuentraal.nl](http://www.milieuentraal.nl)
- 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 \_\_ No \_\_
- v. Comments
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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 \_\_

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v. Comments This information is currently not available

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 This information is currently not available

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

a) In their place of residence?

More than 80%: X 60-79% \_\_\_ 40-59% \_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_

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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 (62%) 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): This kind of information is currently not available.

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	Internet/ reports/ files
Academia / Schools	Internet/ reports/ files
General Public	Internet/ reports/ files

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Nongovernmental Organizations	Internet/ reports/ files
Private sector	Internet/ reports/ files
Others (Please identify)	

9. If your Ministry or agency has assessed user needs for environmental information, please briefly describe how successful it has been.  
This information is currently not available.

10. In your country, how is progress on improving electronic access to environmental information being communicated to the public?  
This is done locally and is based on the local developments.

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.  
Detailed information is currently not available. See under 12.

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.  
Currently there is no legal obligation to provide information though internet. However, if the required information is available then it must be provided in the requested format.

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:  
www. andereoverheid.nl

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.  
Starting in 2007: the project Internet consultation draft legislation. This is the first step towards a more active use of internet for legislation.

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: X
- 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:
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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?  
This information is currently not available

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.*

In the Netherlands internet increasingly is used for communication. This means many authorities and organisations publish information including environmental information. One of the challenges is to secure that users can find the requested (environmental) information within the vast quantity of information available. Another challenge is to develop software to process data into useful information. At present much effort is put into geographical based retrieving software. These projects are generally developed privately. In some cases projects are subsidised.

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:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



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Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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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: X

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](mailto: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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

Aarhus Convention Secretariat

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