

**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.ecokg.caresd.net , www.caresd.net, http://ecomon.caresd.net/Doklad
- 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 Legally they are required to be available, however, essential part of information is held in state bodies, and, in their turn they are not capable to provide effective systemization and access to it. In addition, it is worth to note that very often alternative reports prepared by the NGO or within international projects provide statistical information, which is far different from the state reports and have different points to the same problem.

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

- i. Generally available Partly available X Not available
- ii. Please provide internet link www.caresd.net, www.toktom.kg, www.adviser.kg
- 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 Fulltest and operationally updated legislative information is available on commercial sites, which charge fees for access to such information. State organizations and NGOs most often can create statistical resources, which lose their relevancy within a year or two.

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

- i. Generally available ___ Partly available X Not available ___
 - ii. Please provide internet link www.ecokg.caresd.net, www.caresd.net
 - iii. Are texts of policies, plans and programmes 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 No one limits access to texts of policies, plans and programmes, but very often organizations engaged in these processes and activities have no desire or potential to disseminate them publicly.
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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 X Not available ___
 - ii. Please provide internet link www.ecokg.caresd.net , www.expertise.caresd.net
 - iii. Are environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation 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 The main problem in this case concerns not the access to Environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment documentation, but a system of its conducting. Strategic environmental assessment system just began to form in Kyrgyzstan.
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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.expertise.caresd.net

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 ___ No X
- iv. If not generally available, do you have plans to progressively improve access to this information? Yes ___ No X
- v. Comments _

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PRTR system is only being formed now, however there are certain successes already in this area.

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 http://ecomon.caresd.net/aarhus ,
www.expertise.caresd.net, _____
 - iii. Is information on mechanisms related to access to justice 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
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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 X Not available ___
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable www.ecokg.caresd.net
- 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

All forms and documents required for licensing are filled out only by off-line method. In 2006 with CARNet support an official site of KR State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry was developed, which posts samples of forms and filled out licenses. But this completes the digital activity.

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

- i. Generally available X Partly available ___ Not available ___
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable www.ecokg.caresd.net
- 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 ___ No ___

v. Comments _

Samples of licenses should legally be held only in the organizations where their immediate issuance and fillings take place, i.e. by off-line method. Provision of electronic samples of license started to be practiced this year, only after development of a new version of state agency site.

c) Final 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 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 X No ___

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 X No ___

v. Comments

Comments of third parties on draft permits and conditions are mainly provided by the NGO and projects financed by international organizations. National institutions of such kind are just forming.

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___ NoX

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

v. Comments

Such information is available, but there is often a problem with their conversion into electronic form and further systemization. Most part of information is concentrated in state structure, which have weak potential for their processing and further dissemination.

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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 Not available
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable www.ecokg.caresd.net , www.caresd.net, http://ecomon.caresd.net/Doklad
- 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

Reports on the state of environment are updated annually – this has become possible due to the joint activity of international organizations and the state agency of the KR.

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

- i. Generally available Partly available Not available X
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable
- iii. Are such 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

Main problem is lack of desire or stimulus of civil society and state officials to make informed environmental choices.

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.caresd.net
 - 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 X
- ii. Please provide internet link, if applicable

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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

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 X 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% X Less than 20% ___

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

More than 80% ___ 60-79% ___ 40-59% X 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) X Wi-Fi (wireless networking) Broadband 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):

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.

Read paragraph 9

You may choose one or more categories.

a) Main User	b) Methods
Government	
Academia / Schools	
General Public	
Nongovernmental Organizations	
Private sector	
Others (Please identify)	

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

CARNet Network initiated and developed a unique method and conducts annual survey titled "Information Priorities and Capacity of Civil Society and Decision-Makers in the Environment and Sustainable Development Area in Central Asia and Russia". Survey is conducted in all Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and in one region of Russian Federation –Altai Territory. Region of Russian Federation was chosen for pilot comparison and assessment of data. Outcomes of survey are published in print and electronic form on the portal www.caresd.net.

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

Public is a main engine in creating and promoting of a system of electronic access to environmental information. On the initiative and under the pressure of public, state organizations regularly update their sites and try to post as much information as possible on them.

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.

Regional network CARNet supports activity on increasing the number and quality of electronic content in CA countries. In particular, with its support in 2006 there have been developed sites of the KR State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry (www.ecokg.caresd.net), and several NGOs (for example, NGO "Independent Environment Expertise" www.expertise.caresd.net) – which received an opportunity to post and disseminate results of their activity. Also a site of scientific institutions has been developed, which possesses useful environmental information (example, Institute of Water Problems and Hydropower under the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.caresd.net/iwp/>)

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.

There is not yet a legally enforceable right for access to information on environment and sustainable development in Kyrgyzstan. But there is a program on developing of E-Governance, as part of which an electronic access to information is being developed currently.

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.

Yes, there is a strategy, but I don't know its coordinators after the revolution.

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.

CARNet Network, state agency and a number of NGOs have jointly organized discussion of a number of draft bills in the environmental area "Environmental Code of the KR", "Law on Biological Safety" – which could be taken part by everyone and left comments to the project of the document. All received comments have been taken into account by the developers.

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:

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?

Electronic information campaigns launched in Internet by CARNet Network are a good example of that. Many of them were successful, such as "Ratification of Stockholm Convention in the KR", "Let us Save Chatyr-Kul Lake", etc. In these campaigns electronic mass media like the portal www.caresd.net acted as accumulator, source and disseminator of information and analytical materials on the theme. In addition, regional electronic discussions can be noted, which were organized on the portal. www.caresd.net:

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.

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: _____

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 ____

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.

Development of a system of access to information in environment and sustainable development area in electronic form to a great extent depends on the promotion of Best Practices taking place in Central Asia. Awareness raising not only of the public but also of state officials of ICT opportunities, positive tendencies and lessons gives an opportunity to develop a new system of promoting of the Aarhus Convention, based not only on the laws (which are not often executed), but also on the best practices taking place in neighboring countries and even within one country. However, it is important to remember that increase of a number and the quality of electronic information in environment and sustainable development area depends on the technical equipment and qualification of state organizations and NGO working in this area.

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>