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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on
Access to Information, Public Participation
in Decision-making and Access to Justice
in Environmental Matters

Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-Making

Eleventh meeting

Geneva, 12–13 December 2024

Items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the provisional agenda

OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLES 6, 7 AND 8 OF THE AARHUS CONVENTION

Background paper¹

Prepared by the secretariat

This paper directs participants to selected information from the 2021 national implementation reports submitted by the Parties to the Convention² with regard to the implementation of the public participation pillar of the Convention (responses to questions XV-XXVII). Specifically, it provides an overview of the implementation of articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Aarhus Convention and highlights key trends, good practices and challenges on the basis of the information provided by the Parties.

The document is relevant for the following subjects to be considered by the eleventh meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making under the Aarhus Convention: (a) participation of groups and persons in vulnerable situations in decision-making; (b) public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context; and (c) public participation in decision-making related to (i) agriculture and fishery; (ii) oceans, seas, and marine resources; (iii) climate change and (iv) emerging technologies.

Participants are invited to consult this document in advance of the meeting to gain an overview of issues to be discussed during this meeting, the challenges encountered by the Parties in implementation, and to discuss good practices and further needs to be addressed under the auspices of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making.

¹ The document was not formally edited.

² Available from: <https://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org/national-reports/reports>

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Chapter 1: Participation of groups and persons in vulnerable situations in decision-making

1. Germany

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

In environmental policy, many decisions are taken that have direct impacts on the living conditions of citizens. The BMU has therefore been striving for years to enhance the involvement of the public in issues of environmental policy relevance. The lifeworlds and views of citizens are taken into account in decision-making. To this end, the BMU has carried out an array of public participation procedures on diverse environmental policy topics:

To mark the 23rd UN Climate Change Conference (COP 23) in Bonn, the BMU launched a youth dialogue [<https://www.bmu.de/publikation/unser-klima-unsere-zukunft/>]. Some 200 young people debated the issues surrounding climate change. The outcomes were used to compile a youth report titled “Unser Klima! Unsere Zukunft!” (Our Climate! Our Future!). This contains the key recommendations and findings of the dialogue events and shall provide the foundation for developing Germany’s climate policy in a manner that does justice to the views of the young generation.

2. Kyrgyzstan

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

В рамках проекта «Устранение больших рисков устаревших пестицидов в Кыргызстане» ОФ «Милиеконтакт» совместно с партнерами ОФ «Эко-ой», ОО «Биос», ОО «Охрана материнства и детства» провели инвентаризацию старых складов хранения пестицидов в Ошской области и переупаковали согласно международным стандартам около 90 тонн устаревших пестицидов.

Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8:

Проекты НПА по вопросам обеспечения конституционных прав, свобод и обязанностей граждан; правового статуса общественных объединений, средств массовой информации; государственного бюджета, налоговой системы; экологической безопасности; борьбы с правонарушениями; введения

новых видов государственного регулирования предпринимательской деятельности должны подлежать правовой, правозащитной, гендерной, экологической, антикоррупционной и иной научной экспертизе. (Закон «О нормативных правовых актах КР»).

3. Norway

I. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The [Planning and Building Act](#) lays down that the public must be involved in decision-making processes for plans to which the Act applies. Section 5.1 and 5.2 of the Act requires the planning authorities to actively provide information and accommodate at an early stage of the planning process, and to give individuals and groups the opportunity to play an active part in the planning process. The Act and national guidelines for children and youth in planning processes (not available in English), especially emphasizes the need to accommodate information to and participation of these groups as stakeholders and representatives of the sustainability perspective. Updated guidance on the participation of these groups in planning and building processes is available (not in English). The regional and local councils for elderly people, people with disabilities and youth established pursuant to Section 5-12 of the Local Government Act (no updated version in English) have the right to express their views on matters concerning the groups they represent. Central government plans, municipal master plans and local development plans shall as a general rule be subjected to two thorough public hearings, once at the beginning of the process and then again when a draft plan has been proposed. The same requirements apply pursuant to Section 50 of the [Svalbard Environment Act](#). The provision on accommodating participation applies to anyone who proposes plans, whether public organs or private entities or persons.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

National guidelines operationalizing procedures and possibilities set out in the Planning and Building Act have been developed. Among these are guidelines on children and youth in planning, registration of childrens paths (by Norsk form and Statens kartverk) and guidelines on participation in planning (also in english).

4. Serbia

Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6:

Certain associations consider that there are insufficient regulations and mechanisms to ensure the involvement of vulnerable groups in environmental decision-making and that, although there is a declarative commitment to involve members of vulnerable groups in decision-making and policy making, in practice there are no mechanisms that create conditions for their equal participation. The big challenge often lies in the (un)availability of information and the manner of informing the public, which is not always adapted to the needs of certain vulnerable groups. In addition, the importance of their involvement is largely not recognized in the field of environmental protection, which is largely caused by the lack of data on how environmental challenges affect different categories of the population differently.

5. Sweden

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Sweden has five official national minorities: Jews, the Roma, the Sami, the Swedish Finns and the Tornedalers. The Sami are also an indigenous Swedish people. According to Section 5 of the National Minorities and National Minority Languages Act (2009:724), the official national minorities shall be given the opportunity to influence on issues that affect them. In addition, it is the duty of the administrative authorities to as far as its possible consult with the official national minorities in such issues. The responsibility applies in the same way to all official national minorities throughout the country. Today, consultation is held on all levels of the society, but the scope and approach vary widely. At the municipal level consultations are mostly held in those municipalities which are part of the administrative area for one of the languages Finnish, Meänkieli and Sami language. The interpretation of the scope and approach of the consultation differs between the different municipalities and administrative authorities. The pre-conditions for holding consultations may also vary between the municipalities and administrative authorities. Against this background a new Section was introduced to the act in January 2019, which clarifies that consultation refers to a structured dialogue with the official national minorities in order to take into account their views and needs in the decision-making process. In addition, a new provision has been introduced which regulates the obligation of administrative authorities to consult with children and young people belonging to an official national minority on issues that affect them. The provision also states that the forms of consultation with children and young people must also be adapted to their pre-conditions.

6. Tajikistan

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

С 2012 года действует Координационный Комитет Пилотной Программы по Адаптации к изменению климата, в состав которого входят помимо заинтересованных министерств и ведомств представители гражданского общества. Комитет принимает решения по реализации климатических инвестиций в Таджикистане в рамках РПРС. Молодёжный ЭкоЦентр и Климатический Клуб экоНПО являются членом Координационного Комитета РПРС.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

Таджикистан принимает активное участие в Реализации Пилотной Программы по адаптации к изменению климата (РПРС), которая реализуется Правительством РТ совместно с АБР, ВБ и ЕБРР. Ряд общественных организаций имеющих потенциал в сфере управления климатическими рисками, планирования и реализации мер, смягчающих негативное воздействие изменения климата, имеющих опыт в повышении осведомленности населения привлекаются ПРТ к участию в принятии решений по дальнейшему развитию РПРС, реализации отдельных компонент программы, разработке Национальной стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата в Таджикистане. Так на протяжении 2013- 2016 г. общественными организациями МЭЦ, Фонд «Кухистон», «Хамкори бахри таракиёт», «Центр по чрезвычайным ситуациям и изменению климата», «Национальная Ассоциация фермерских хозяйств» и др. проведены работы по оценке уязвимости сообществ к

изменению климата, разработаны местные планы действий, созданы общинные информационные центры, проведены тренинги по внедрению адаптационных мер и устойчивому водопользованию, землепользованию и сельскому хозяйству. В рамках процесса разработки Национальной Стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата, ряд ОО вошли в состав Межведомственной Рабочей группы и сделали важные предложения по учету в Национальной стратегии интересов общин, малоземельных фермеров, женщин и уязвимых групп населения.

III. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

В 2015 г создана Рабочая Группа по Разработке Национальной Стратегии адаптации к изменению климата. В её состав помимо ключевых министерств входят представители гражданского общества. Общественность принимает участие в процессе подготовки Стратегии, даёт рекомендации по разработке разделов стратегии. МЭЦ является членом Рабочей группы по Разработке Национальной Стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата.

В процессе разработки климатической политики в РТ обеспечиваются возможности для участия общественности в разработке Национальной Адаптационной Стратегии и Плана действий по адаптации к изменению климата.

Широкие возможности для участия в принятии решений, в обсуждении хода реализации стратегических правительственных документов предоставлены общественности в рамках реализации Рамочной конвенции по изменению климата. Так, например, при содействии общественности в 2014г. было разработано Третье национальное сообщение по изменению климата. В рамках реализации Концепции перехода РТ к УР до 2030 года в 2013- 2016 г.г. при МЭЦ продолжала действовать программа по образованию для УР. Программа включила в себя: проведение дебатов среди молодёжи, тренинги для молодёжи и преподавателей по вопросам окружающей среды и УР, проведение летних экологических лагерей. Совместно с Комитетом охраны окружающей среды Душанбе и ОО, Центром дополнительного образования Министерства образования и науки РТ были проведены общественные информационно- просветительские акции «День Земли», «Всемирный День охраны природы».

7. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The Equality Act 2010 places duties on public authorities to promote disability, gender and race equality, which includes requirements to involve or consult the various equalities strands in the work of the authority.

Chapter 2: Public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context

1. Austria

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Austria transposed the EIA Directive 85/337/EEC (amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC, 2014/52/EC, codified by Directive 2011/92/EU), the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and the Aarhus Convention at the project level into national law in the Federal Act on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA Act 2000, Federal Law Gazette I No. 697/1993, last amended by Federal Law Gazette No. 80/2018).

2. Azerbaijan

Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8:

In addition, draft decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On approval of the Rules and terms of environmental impact assessment, including transboundary impact assessment" were prepared and submitted for approval to the state authorities, "On Approval of the Rules for Strategic Environmental Assessment," "On Approval of the Cases of the Need to Prepare the Environmental Section of Construction Projects, on Amendments to Decision No. 122 of March 3, 1992 "On Payments for Use of Natural Resources, Application of Penalties for Environmental Emissions, and Use of Funds Collected from These Payments", "On approval of the "Rules of financing the State ecological expertise", on amendments to the Decision #147 dated September 30, 2004 "On approval of some normative acts concerning hunting in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan".

Order No. 2271 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan of September 21, 2020 "On amendments to Order No. 59 of January 15, 2004 "On some issues arising from the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal" came into force.

3. Bulgaria

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

According to article 92, paragraph 1 of EPA, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) shall mandatory be conducted of any development (investment) proposals for execution of construction, activities and technologies listed in Annex 1 hereto (compliance with Annex I of the Convention).

Article 93, paragraph 1 of the EPA envisages the need of conduct of EIA shall be evaluated for:

3. any extension or modification of development proposals according to Annex 1 hereto and Appendix I to Article 2 of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, which have

already been approved or are in the process of being approved, have been executed or are in the process of being executed, provided any such extension and/or modification may cause a significant adverse impact on the environment;

4. Croatia

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

In general, the EPA (Articles 162 – 166) prescribes the right and manner of participation of the public and the public concerned in the process of drafting implementing regulations and/or generally-applicable legally binding normative instruments, as well as strategies and programmes referring to the environment, as noted in the previous report. The EPA also prescribes that the public proposals and opinions and the outcomes of transboundary consultations concerning draft proposals of strategies, plans and programmes and in an individual procedure have to be taken into consideration in the SEA and EIA procedures (Art. 73, Art. 89).

5. Cyprus

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

According to Article 40³, the Environmental Authority maintains an EIA Registry in printed and electronic form, made available to the public in which the following information is listed:

8. Any document submitted by another state in the case of transboundary impacts

II. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Access to information and participation under the Industrial Emissions Law

The provisions for access to information and public participation under the Industrial Emissions Law (N. 131(I)/2016) ensure that early and effective opportunities are given to the public concerned to participate in the following procedures:

1. The granting of a permit for new installations,
2. The granting of a permit for any substantial change to existing installations,
3. The granting or updating of a permit for an installation where a derogation on emission limit values may apply,
4. The updating of a permit or permit conditions for an installation, when the pollution caused by the installation is of such significance that the existing emission limit values of the permit need to be revised or new values must be included in the permit.

³ Law 127(I)/2018.

In the above cases, the competent authorities inform the public through a notification in the Official Gazette, in two widely circulated newspapers and via the internet, at the beginning of the decision making process or at the latest as soon as the information can reasonably be provided, about:

2. Where applicable, the fact that a decision is subject to a national or transboundary EIA or to consultations between Member States, [...]

Participation under the Law on the Management of Waste from the Extractive Industries

The provisions for access to information and public participation under the management of waste from extractive industries Law, ensure that early and effective opportunities are given to the public concerned to participate in the following procedures:

1. The granting of a mining waste management permit,
2. The granting of a permit for any substantial changes,
3. The review of a mining waste management permit,
4. The granting of an approval for a mining waste management plan
5. The granting of an approval for any substantial changes to the management plan
6. The review of a mining waste management plan

In these cases, the competent authorities must inform the public through a notification published in the Official Gazette, two widely circulated newspapers and the internet, at the beginning of the decision-making process or, at the latest, as soon as the information can reasonably be provided, about:

- The application for a permit or, as the case may be, the proposal for the review of a permit or permit conditions, including the description of the elements contained,
- Where applicable, the fact that a decision is subject to a national or transboundary EIA or to consultations between Member States, [...]

6. Czechia

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6

Follow-up proceedings (meaning follow-up proceedings following an environmental impact assessment) are considered by law to be proceedings with a large number of participants (these otherwise mean, according to the Administrative Procedure Code, proceedings with more than 30 participants). Participants in the proceedings with a large number of participants may be notified of the commencement of the proceedings by a public ordinance. Therefore, as a rule, the notice of initiation of proceedings, which falls within the scope of Article 6 of the Convention, is published on the official notice board of the administrative body. The situation is similar for the phase of the EIA process, about which information is also published on the website (publicly available portal https://portal.cenia.cz/eiasea/view/eia100_cr), based on the rules set for the EIA process.

The administrative body responsible for conducting **follow-up proceedings** also publish, together with the notice of initiation of proceedings

a) the application together with a notice that it is a project subject to environmental impact assessment, or a project subject to transboundary environmental impact assessment, together with information where the relevant documentation for follow-up proceedings can be examined; [...]

7. Finland

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the EU Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (2001/42/EC) govern the assessment of the environmental impacts of plans and programmes and also contain obligations concerning the participation of the public. The Protocol and the Directive have been transposed into national legislation by several different statutes, with the main ones being the Act on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (200/2005, the SEA Act) and the SEA Decree (347/2005).

8. Germany

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

It should also be noted in this context that Germany has been a Party to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) since 2002.

Under the SEA provisions in the UVPG [Gesetz über die Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfung], public consultation is undertaken in a manner similar to that applicable to EIAs (Section 42 (1) UVPG makes reference to Sections 18 (1), 19 and 22 UVPG); the same applies to transboundary public consultation (sentence one of Section 61 (1) UVPG makes reference to Section 56 UVPG).

9. Greece

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Each OP or ROP financed by ESI Funds and which is likely to have significant effects on the environment is subjected to the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment Study (SEIA) process before its adoption by the EU. The SEIA constitutes a precondition for the program's approval in compliance with the Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programs on the environment" and the Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD with n. 107017 (Government Gazette - FEK 1225/B/2006), which harmonized the Directive into National Law. During the SEIA process of the draft plan or program, the

consultation process carried out by the public authorities and the public concerned in accordance with the JMD. The competent authority makes publicly available the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment Study (SEIA) folder, before its adoption, to acknowledge and give to the public the opportunity to comment their views in writing or electronically, if they wish, via the website of MEE (www.ypeka.gr) or on the respective website of the competent regional authority. The competent consulting authority besides the electronic means, it may use any other appropriate means such as public hearings, interviews, open discussions, dialogue via internet, making the public participation meaningful. The conclusions are sent to the competent authority within 45 days by the delivery of the folder. In case that the pertinent authority considers that the implementation of a program could have significant effects on the environment in another EU Member State or at the request of a State in EU, which may suffer significant environmental effects by the implementation of a Greek program, the relevant authority must forward as quickly as possible the relevant documents of SEIAS to Member State concerned before adopting the SEIAS. Moreover, any additional information concerning transboundary environmental effects of the program's implementation is forwarded to the other Member State including guidelines and measures to prevent, reduce or eliminate such effects. The transboundary consultation process with the other EU Member State and the public concerned is described in detail in the above JMD. In addition, the relevant authority ensures that the information referred to the program and any other relevant information related to the likely transboundary environmental effects, as well as the information concerning the envisaged measures to reduce or eliminate such effects are made available within a reasonable time to the public authorities and the public concerned.

10. Hungary

II. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

According to the Espoo Convention on the Inspection of Transboundary Environmental Effects, signed in Espoo (Finland) on 26 February 1991, during an international environmental impact assessment process, the same right of participation is to be granted to the public of the affected Party as to the Party who makes the emission. In light of this, if Hungary participates as affected Party in an impact assessment made in another country for a locally planned investment, rules for public hearing and for written comments is derived from the issuing country's regulations. In these procedures, the ministry responsible for the environment will ensure that the project documentation received from the issuing party is published and, if necessary, a public forum is held. Written comments on the documentation can be sent by post to the Environmental Protection Department of the AM or electronically to espoo@am.gov.hu. The received comments, along with the official Hungarian standpoint are forwarded to the issuing party.

II. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The environmental assessment of plans and programmes likely to have a significant impact on the environment is regulated in general by the Kvt., and in detail by Government Decree 2/2005 and Government Decree 132/2010 (21 April) on the promulgation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, adopted in Espoo on 26 February 1991, adopted in Kiev on 21 May 2003. This legislation is in line with the relevant EU directive, Directive 2001/42/EC. Thus, the Hungarian regime covers all fundamental elements of the

assessment cycle such as preparation of the environmental report, commenting by other authorities and the public, international consultations, and consideration of the comments and the findings of the consultation in the finalization of plans and programmes. The applicable legislation requires that in case of plans and programmes with mandatory environmental inspection, the scope and methods of public consultation must be determined early in the procedure, upon the finalization of the scope and content of the assessment. The public must be informed by the author of the plan or programme of the environmental report and the modalities of submitting comments. This information must be provided in the manner that best suits the size of the public concerned, from local media to national newspapers and internet notices. A commenting period has to be at least 30 days. The opinions received have to be taken into consideration before the adoption of the plan or programme.

The Protocol to the Espoo Convention requires that the strategic environmental assessment of plans and programmes should also address significant transboundary environmental and health impacts. In practice, in these procedures, the ministry responsible for the environment ensures the publication of the plan or programme documents and the related environmental assessment provided by the issuing party and the involvement of the bodies responsible for environmental protection and the public in the procedure. Written reviews on the published data may be sent via e-mail to the Environmental Preservation Department of the Ministry of Agriculture's address at skv@am.gov.hu. The comments received will be forwarded by the ministry responsible for the environment to the issuing party (plan owner) together with the official Hungarian position on the work version of the plan or programme and the related environmental assessment.

11. Ireland

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

In the case of a planning application subject to EIA: Article 130A requires that a planning authority's or An Bord Pleanála's weekly list, as the case may be, indicate that a proposed development may have transboundary environmental effects, where that is the case.

Regulation 1946/2003 on the transboundary movement of GMOs which is regulated in Ireland under the Genetically Modified Organisms (Transboundary Movement) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 54 of 2004).

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

The requirements introduced into the above legislation include: notification requirements including transboundary notifications

III. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

In respect of the other sectoral plans, these provisions were set out by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004) as amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 200 of 2011):

- Article 15 requires the competent authorities to take into account submissions and opinions expressed in the consultation procedures under articles 13 and 14 (Article 14 provides for transboundary consultations).

12. Italy

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

PNIEC, an example of extensive consultations

At the end of 2019, Italy sent the European Commission the **Integrated National Plan for Energy and Climate (PNIEC)** for the period 2021-2030 aimed at identifying national policies and measures to comply with European objectives on climate change and renewable energies.

Preparation of the PNIEC involved the following:

- Discussions with other member states: in 2019 consultations were launched with the neighbouring/interested countries – Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, Austria and Malta – and continued afterwards.

13. Kyrgyzstan

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

1. КР применяет положение Конвенции в части участия общественности в принятии решений по вопросам о целесообразности разрешения планируемых видов деятельности, перечисленных в приложении. Эти процедуры законодательно закреплены в национальном законодательстве, изложенном выше. Кроме того, Кыргызстан, являясь Стороной Конвенции Эспоо, применяет ее положения по объектам, имеющим трансграничное воздействие.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

Органами государственной статистики не ведется статистика по участию общественности в принятии решений по конкретным объектам.

К таким примерам можно отнести: при непосредственном участии неправительственных организаций была разработана Стратегия развития страны, в которую был включен раздел «Экологическая безопасность»; компания по ратификации Стокгольмской конвенции – проведена «Сетью по защите общественных экологических интересов в КР»; ОО «НЭЭ» (Кыргызстан) и ЭО «Зеленое спасение» (Казахстан) приостановлен трансграничный проект по строительству автодороги Чырпыкты-Чон-Кемин без положительного заключения государственной экологической экспертизы;

14. Latvia

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

National legislative acts also regulate cases, when proposed activities have a potential transboundary impact.

15. Lithuania

Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6:

The Lithuanian public is facing the limitation of the rights laid down in Article 6 in a transboundary context. A mere 50 km away from Lithuania's largest city, the capital Vilnius, Belarus is building a nuclear power plant in Astravets. The greatest concern around this project arises from the facts that the public was not and is not being informed properly of the processes related to the selection of a construction site for project of the Astravets nuclear power plant, development of this project and it has failed to obtain detailed explanations to the questions raised. Another concern is compliance of this project with the requirements of international legislation, especially in the field of nuclear safety, and the assessment problems that arise. After the failure to resolve the existing problems by cross-border negotiations, on 25 March 2015 Lithuania appealed to the Compliance Committee of the Aarhus Convention concerning compliance of Belarus' actions with Article 3, paragraph 9 and Article 6, paragraphs 2 to 4, 6 and 8 in the development of the Astravets nuclear power plant project.

16. Luxembourg

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

On the international level, Luxembourg

- is a Contracting Party to the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and has ratified the two related amendments and the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment,

The amended Classified Establishments Act brings the activities listed in Annex I within the scope of a system for granting Class 1 permits under the powers of the Minister responsible for the environment and of the Minister responsible inter alia for health and safety at work. This permit system applies inter alia to all installations and projects covered by Directives 85/337/EEC and 2010/75/EU, the scope of which goes beyond that of the Aarhus Convention, without prejudice, however, to issues of transport infrastructure and restructuring of landholdings, which will be referred to below.

The Act contains provisions relating to transboundary co-operation. Thus, where a planned Class 1 establishment is likely to have a significant impact on human beings and/or the environment in another

State or where a State is likely to be significantly affected by the application, the application documents, including the impact assessment, shall be forwarded to that State as soon as possible, and at the latest by the time the application is published and displayed. Within the framework of bilateral relations between two States, it shall be ensured that the authorities and the public concerned in the State in question have the opportunity to make their opinions known, if possible during the public inquiry and before the public authority has taken its decision, and that the decision made on the permit application is notified to the State in question.

Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6:

So far as concerns transboundary co-operation, the limited number of cases that have arisen implies that bilateral or multilateral information and consultation practices are essentially pragmatic, currently requiring few strict rules and procedures.

17. Malta

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

In all cases the following criteria are taken into account in order to ensure that plans and programmes with likely significant effects on the environment are covered by an SEA namely:

Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

- the transboundary nature of the effects.

18. Poland

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Pursuant to the Act on Provision of Information about the Environment, before issuing or amending a decision requiring public participation, the authority competent to issue such a decision shall, without undue delay, announce to the public information on: [...]

- the proceedings on transboundary environmental impacts, if any. [...]

II. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Pursuant to the Act on Provision of Information about the Environment, the authority preparing a draft document requiring public participation shall, without undue delay, announce information on: [...]

- the proceedings on transboundary environmental impact, if any.

19. Portugal

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

The current legal EIA framework is established by Decree-Law No. 151-B/2013 of 31 October, amended and republished by Decree-Law No. 152-B/2017 of 11 December, which transposes into domestic law Directive no. 2014/52/EU, of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 16 April, on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. Decree-Law no. 151-B/2013 also reflects the commitments undertaken by the Portuguese Government under the Convention on EIA in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention), approved by Decree no. 59/99 of 17 December. Decree-Law No. 152-B/2017 of 11 December, entered into force on 1 January 2018.

II. Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8:

Water and Health: In 2018, ERSAR promoted the extended consultation procedure for the document establishing the objectives relating to the Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 convention, on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes of UNECE/WHO Europe. At the public consultation and public participation session, submissions were received from local public administration entities, companies, water sector associations and private citizens. Where relevant, these contributions were integrated into the final Protocol objectives document.

20. Republic of Moldova

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

The impact assessment at national level is carried out in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VI of Law No. 86/2014, and in the case of drafts that have a potential transboundary impact, according to the provisions of Chapters IV and V of Law No. 86/2014 and the requirements of the Convention on environmental impact assessment in transboundary context areas (hereinafter-the Espoo Convention), adopted at Espoo, Finland on 25 February 1991, ratified by Parliament Decision no. 1546/1993 Law no. 86/2014 to art.19 sets out the programme for carrying out the Environmental Impact Assessment [...].

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 8:

Chapter V of the Regulation on involvement of the public in the elaboration and adoption of environmental decisions is regulated by the Procedure of involvement of the public, namely:

Point 20 In case of involving the public in the process of drafting laws, regulations and decisions on projects at national level, projects with transboundary impact and other legislative and normative acts, the central authority for the environment:

a) shall inform the public through the media about the initiation of the processes of elaboration of the aforementioned acts;

- b) shall set up working groups(public inquiry partnerships), including representatives of NGOs and the public;
- c) shall organize, if necessary, sociological surveys on the timeliness and stipulations of the normative act to be elaborated;
- d) shall invite representatives of the media to the meetings of the working groups, thus ensuring the transparency of their work;
- e) shall forward the draft acts to NGOs, other interested bodies for approval;
- f) shall organize press conferences, round tables, television and radio broadcasts, in which the essence of these acts will be displayed;
- g) shall take note of the complaints, proposals received, modifying, if necessary, the content of the draft documents which are in the process of preparation;
- h) after the approval by the higher courts of the prepared documents or their publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Moldova, shall organize various public activities for familiarizing the population with them (press conferences, round tables, briefings, etc.)

In the case of public involvement in the development of decisions related to projects at national level and those with cross-border impact, the procedure shall be similar to that set out in point 20 of this regulation.

21. Romania

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Moreover, the draft plan or programme and environmental report are subject to public hearing. After the elaboration of the environmental report, the beneficiary of the plan or programme makes public announcements in mass media and posts on its web page about the availability of the plan or programme and environmental report (2 public announcements three days apart). These announcements are made 45 days before the public hearing or 60 days before if the plan or programme has transboundary effects.

The final decision is also announced in mass media by the beneficiary and on the environmental authority's web page. The beneficiary has the obligation to inform the authorities consulted during the SEA procedure, the public and the potentially affected states and to make available to them the following documents:

- The adopted plan/programme,
- A declaration regarding the way the environmental aspects were integrated into the plan/programme, the way the environmental report was prepared, the way the public and other authorities' opinions were taken into account, the way the transboundary consultations were taken into account, the reasons for choosing a particular alternative to the plan/programme,
- the measures for monitoring the effect of the plan/programme on the environment.

22. Serbia

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The Ministry responsible for environmental protection shall conduct the exchange of information on transboundary impact of plans and programmes on the environment (Article 23)⁴. Article 24 stipulates that the strategic assessment report and the results of participation of the authorities, organisations and public concerned and other states in the cases of transboundary impact shall become an integral part of the documentation that provides the basis for plans and programmes.

23. Slovakia

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The measures for public participation in the process of preparing plans and programmes related to the environment (strategic documents) are defined in the individual steps of the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) pursuant to Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment and on the amendment to certain acts as amended. In addition to the assessment of the environmental impact of strategic documents, buildings, facilities, the act also regulates other proposed activities or projects. The act and its amendments take into account the EC directives related to the assessment of strategic documents. Moreover, the act reflects the requirements resulting from the Protocol on SEA for the UNECE Convention on environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context (Espoo Convention) and the Aarhus Convention.

24. Slovenia

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The public can participate in the procedure for preparing acts intended for developing environmental protection policies. Among these, the national environmental protection programme and operational environmental protection programmes are the most noteworthy, as the law expressly requires public participation in such cases, even if said acts do not have the nature of a legally binding act.

At the same time, the requirements of the comprehensive environmental impact assessment (including public participation requirements) are established by law for sectoral plans for managing environmental goods and for plans and programmes concerning water management, forest management, fishery, mining, agriculture, the energy sector, industry, transport, waste management and wastewater management, supplying the population with drinking water, telecommunications, and tourism, provided that these plans are used to lay down or plan activities affecting the environment for which an environmental impact assessment must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of Article 51 of this Act, or that an

⁴ LSEIA.

acceptability assessment is required pursuant to the regulations on the conservation of nature, and for other plans and programmes for which the ministry deems that their implementation could have a significant effect on the environment (Article 40 of the ZVO-1).

25. Sweden

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Under provisions in the Environmental Code, anyone who intends to conduct an activity that requires a permit or a decision on permissibility has to consult with the country administrative board, the supervisory authority, and individuals who are likely to be particularly affected. The corresponding process is also guaranteed in transboundary contexts.

26. Ukraine

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

The expected results include the introduction in Ukraine of more effective environmental impact assessment mechanisms, including in the transboundary context, and extra potential to increase the level of environmental safety in the country.

Pursuant to Article 3 Part 1 of Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Impact Assessment" environmental impact assessment is mandatory when making decisions related to the proposed activities listed in Part 2 and Part 3 of that Article.

The Law contains clearly defined lists of activities that are subject to environmental impact assessment. The lists were formed with reference to the performance criteria, 'thresholds" (capacity, productivity, etc.) and based on the lists provided in the annexes to Directive 2011/92/EU, the Aarhus Convention and the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (the Espoo Convention), as well as the lists of international financial institutions (maintained by World Bank, EBRD, etc.).

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Impact Assessment" on 23 May 2017; Decrees No. 989, No. 1010 and No. 1026 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine were adopted on 13 December 2017. These Decrees approved the forms of all documents created in the environmental impact assessment process. Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Impact Assessment" was enacted on 18 December 2017.

Pursuant to Article 2 Part 1 of the Law environmental impact assessment is a procedure which includes:

[...]

- the authorised body's analysis, as required by Article 9 of the Law, of information contained in the environmental impact assessment report, any other data provided by the business entity, information received from the public during the public discussions or the transboundary impact assessment process, any other information;

In pursuance of Decree No. 847-r "On implementation of the Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part" issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on 17 September 2014, working groups were established to implement Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment, Directive 2009/41/EC on the contained use of GMOs and the Regulation on Transboundary Movement of GMOs.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

The Ministry of Environment has taken the following steps to ensure public discussions of decisions that may affect the state of the environment and to provide free access to information on the work of executive agencies:

Transboundary consultations ("Energoatom" State-owned National Nuclear Energy Generating Company) Rivne NPP Unit 1 and Unit 2 Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure

Ukraine launched the procedure of transboundary EIA of the Rivne NPP site in 2018 pursuant to Paragraph 70 of Resolution No. V1/2 of the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention (2014) introducing the obligation to carry out the EIA by the end of 2019 as part of safety reassessment of Unit I and Unit 2. Public hearings to discuss the EIA Report were held in 2019 in eight Ukrainian regions and in the city of Kyiv. In pursuance to the Espoo Convention guidelines the Ministry of Environment sent the EIA Report in 2019 to potentially affected parties who wished to take part in the transboundary procedure, particularly to: the Republic of Belarus, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, the Republic of Moldova, and to Austria as a stakeholder (a total of 7 countries). The transboundary EIA procedure was completed by two countries in 2020: Hungary and the Republic of Moldova. The procedure is ongoing in the correspondence format with four other countries (the Republic of Belarus, Slovakia, Romania and Austria). Translation of some sections of the EIA Report into Russian remains an unresolved issue with the Republic of Belarus. Slovakia notified Ukraine in July 2020 that it had taken Ukrainian responses to its comments into account and that it would prefer to work in the correspondence format only. Responses to Romania's comments were given in 2020.

EIA of Khmelnytskyi NPP Unit 3 and Unit 4 Construction Project Design

The transboundary environmental impact assessment procedure of the project design was launched in 2010. Consultations were held with Romania, Moldova, Hungary and Slovakia from 2011 to 2013. Consultations were suspended in 2015 due to amendments to the feasibility study (a new equipment vendor, updated regulations, stress test findings). The transboundary consultation procedure was continued by the order of the Interdepartmental Council Coordinating Implementation of the Espoo Convention in Ukraine dated 15 December 2016. The parties concerned (Poland, Hungary, Belarus, Slovakia, Moldova, Romania, Austria — 7 countries) were notified of a review of the updated EIA version in 2017. The consultations were carried out throughout 2017 in the correspondence format.

Updated Law of Ukraine "On Environmental Impact Assessment" entered into force in December 2017, and transboundary consultations continued in a new format. The EIA report for this project design was entered in the Uniform State EIA Register in November 2018. Consultations were carried out and completed with three countries in the first half of 2019: The Republic of Belarus, Austria and Poland. Consultations with Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Slovakia and Romania are ongoing.

Environmental Impact Assessments of Zaporizhzhia NPP and South Ukraine NPP

The EIA procedure for ZNPP and SUNPP sites was launched in 2015.

"Energoatom" State-owned National Nuclear Energy Generating Company carried out public discussions in 2015—2016 as to continued operation of Unit 2 of South Ukraine NPP, Unit 1 and Unit 2 of Zaporizhzhia NPP.

The transboundary consultation procedure started in 2017. Expert consultations were completed with four counties (Romania, Moldova, Poland and Germany), and correspondence consultations were completed with two other countries: Slovakia and Hungary. The Ministry of Environment suspended consultations in 2018 with two remaining parties — the Republic of Belarus and Austria. Consultations were resumed in 2020.

Danube—Black Sea deep-sea fairway (hereinafter referred to as "Danube—Black Sea DSF")

The final resolution pertaining to the implementation by Ukraine of 2010 project entitled "Danube— Black Sea DSF in Ukrainian Delta Section. Comprehensive Development" was cancelled in 2018 by the order of the Interdepartmental Council Coordinating Implementation of the Espoo Convention in Ukraine in pursuance of the resolution of the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention, and to address other issues of the Danube—Black Sea DSF renewal.

The notice of the proposed activities as part of the Reconstruction of Facilities of the Danube—Black Sea DSF in Ukrainian Delta Section was posted in 2020 on the Uniform of Environmental Impact Assessment Register website of the Ministry of Environment of Ukraine in accordance with the applicable laws of Ukraine and the Espoo Convention. The discussion process has been launched in the manner required by law. The transboundary consultation procedure is expected to be carried out with Romania, the party concerned.

III. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Law of Ukraine "On Strategic Environmental Assessment" (enacted on 12 October 2018) aims to harmonise Ukrainian laws with the EU legislation in part of defining the scope and procedure of strategic environmental assessment in accordance with the approach set out in Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 27 June 2001, and to implement the provisions of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Protocol to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context.

Article 16 of the Law of Ukraine "On Strategic Environmental Assessment" states that the customer shall within five working days of approval of state planning documentation post the approved national planning documentation, measures to monitor its effects, and information about consultations and public discussions on its website. The public may also take part in the decision-making process during transboundary consultations of the country of origin (Article 14 of the Law) and transboundary consultations of the state concerned (Article 15 of the Law).

Chapter 3: Public participation in decision-making on agriculture and fishery

1. Austria

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Annex I to the Aarhus Convention, to which the provisions set forth under Article 6 refer, includes projects which are covered by the EIA and IPPC Directives. Further adaptations to the Convention were made at a Federal level in the area of commercial equipment law by way of the 2005 Amendment to Industrial Law (Federal Law Gazette I No. 85/2005) with regard to the 1994 Trade and Industry Act, the Air Pollution Act for Boiler Facilities and the Mineral Resources Act, the 2004 Amendment to the EIA Act 2000 (Federal Law Gazette I No. 153/2004), the Amendment to the Waste Management Act (Federal Law Gazette I No. 155/2004), the Agricultural Amendment Act concerning the Federal Act on Forest and Pastures Usage Rights (Federal Law Gazette I No. 87/2005) and the Immission Control Act in the framework of the 2005 Act adapting the Laws on Environmental Protection (Federal Law Gazette I No. 34/2006).

II. Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8:

In Austria, the social partners – i.e. the above mentioned organizations of business and industry, agriculture, employees as well as the national trade union federation, which are partly established by law – play an important role in the representation of interests of the respective groups of society with regard to generally binding legal regulations which have a significant impact on the environment.

The Acts on the Incorporation of the Federal Chamber of Commerce of Austria (para. 10), of the Chambers of Labour (para. 93, subpara. 2) as well as of the Chambers of Agriculture provide that draft laws (as well as implementation rules) shall be submitted to the chambers by the public bodies for the purpose of review before being brought before the legislative body. Where applicable, these representations of interest conduct respective internal consultation procedures for the purpose of opinion-making and submit statements (expert opinions) to the public bodies. It is then the task of these public bodies to recognize the statements and consider them accordingly. In addition, pertinent working committees made up of members of the responsible public bodies and of the social partners do exist in many cases already prior to official review procedures, for example for the purpose of expert discussion of the predrafts of legal instruments. Environmental NGOs are sometimes also part of these internal consultations. Normally they are consulted on environment related laws in the official consultation process.

2. Azerbaijan

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Public representatives participated in the preparation of the Comprehensive Action Plans "On improvement of the environmental condition of Azerbaijan and the rational use of natural resources in 2014-2020", the draft "Socio-Economic Development Strategy for 2021-2025", held online public hearings of the long-term project on the joint program of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Ministry of Agriculture to support the "Green Agriculture Programme". During the meeting, with the participation of members of the Public Council under MENR and representatives of international organizations were discussed in the draft program to mitigate the negative impact of agricultural activities on the environment, reducing greenhouse gases, cultivation of agricultural gardens, sustainable use of water, land and forests, biodiversity conservation and ecosystems, support the development of aquaculture and organic agriculture, strengthening institutional capacity, etc.

3. Bosnia and Herzegovina

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

[...]

Of relevance are:

- [...]
- Law on Protection of Environment of FBiH (Official Gazette of FBiH: 15/21) (LoPE FBiH),

In accordance with provisions of LoSPLU FBiH and with the Directive on the Content and Stakeholders of a Unified IT System, for the methodology of data collection and processing, and for unified record forms, one needs, among other things, information on threats to the environment (illegal construction, pollution of soil, water, air, etc.), and information on areas in which the danger stemming from consequences of natural and man-made disasters and war-related activities is especially prominent, for the purpose of preparation for the development of plans. The stakeholder of the preparation of the planning document is obliged to provide the document developer with all the available documentation relevant for plan development, and especially with the documentation of the plan of the wider area, water management and forestry resources, environment protection strategy, development plans for economy, agriculture, transport, and information about the geological basis, mineral resources, etc. The stakeholder of the preparation of the planning document is obliged to ensure co-operation and harmonisation of stances with all real estate owners, space users and relevant construction stakeholders, especially with: the relevant administrative bodies, legal persons in charge of water management, forestry, agriculture, transport, energy, mining, tourism, healthcare, education, culture, protection of cultural, historical and natural heritage, protection of environment, defence authorities, the Chamber of Commerce, utilities companies, representatives of religious communities, and to obtain opinions and approvals of relevant bodies and organisations, under the law.

4. Cyprus

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The Law on the Assessment of the Impacts on the Environment from Certain Plans and Programmes (N. 127(I)/2018) introduces environmental considerations in the preparation and approval of plans and programmes, ensuring the assessment of the impacts on the environment from those plans and programmes which could potentially result in significant adverse impacts on the environment. According to the Law, an assessment of the impacts on the environment is required for every plan and programme:

- prepared in the fields of agriculture and animal husbandry, forestry, fishing, mining and quarrying, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water resource management, telecommunications, tourism, land planning and land use; or
- which results in impacts in specially protected areas.

The Law ensures public participation in the decision-making process, whereby "public" is defined as one or more natural or legal persons, as well as their associations, organizations or groups.

Participation under the Law on the Control of Water and Soil Pollution

The provisions on access to information and public participation under the Law on the Control of Water and Soil Pollution (No. 160(I)/2005 as amended by Law No. 181(I)/2013) ensure that early and effective opportunities are given to the public concerned to participate in the following procedures:

1. The preparation and modification or review of the plans or programmes, concerning the protection of waters against the pollution caused by nitrates from agriculture sources,
2. The granting of a Waste Discharge Permit.

In the above cases, the competent authority must inform the public through notifications in the Gazette, two widely circulated newspapers and on the internet, about:

1. Any proposal for such plans or programmes or for their modification or review
2. Any application for a permit,
3. Details regarding either the proposal for a plan or program, or the application for a permit,
4. Details of the competent authority responsible for taking the decision, from which relevant information can be obtained and to which comments or questions may be submitted,
5. An indication that the relevant information is available at the offices of competent authority during working hours,
6. An indication that any opinions or comments from the public concerned may be submitted within 35 days from the date of the notification.

5. Denmark

I. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

With regard to the agricultural area, legislation on the giant hogweed has been issued. According to this legislation, municipal councils must hold public hearings on draft action plans.

II. Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8

Acts and statutory orders for the environmental and agricultural area are usually in hearing for four weeks.

6. Estonia

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

By the autumn of 2020, the Ministry of Rural Affairs had completed a draft development plan for agriculture and fisheries until 2030. In addition, a corresponding strategic plan for the period 2021–2027 is being prepared for the use of the budgetary resources of the EU Common Agricultural Policy, in which a number of institutions and organisations are involved. Several commissions and councils have been set up under the Ministry of Rural Affairs, involving NGOs, such as the Council for Agriculture and Rural Development and the Fisheries Council. NGOs are also involved in the preparation of strategic documents and support measures in the administrative area of the Ministry of Rural Affairs and in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of measures (Rural Development Plan Monitoring Committee).

7. Finland

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) and the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation (FANC) stated in August 2020 that the switch from permits to notifications or registrations impedes participation and appeal opportunities. According to SAK, the impacts of the legislative amendments on the participation and appeal opportunities of the public should be evaluated. The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK) stated that due attention was paid to maintaining participatory and appeal rights even in the notification and registration processes, and these rights are included in the Environmental Protection Act (EPA). The Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) commented that even if participatory opportunities are weakened, in the light of the proportionality principle this is sometimes justified.

SAK regarded the combination of public notices relating to the EIA procedure and statutory land use planning, as well as the joint consideration of permits to speed up construction projects, as a good reform but hoped for more time to be allowed for opinions due to the large scope of the matters. FANC pointed out the same issue.

In its statement in December 2020 FANC makes reference to section 37 of the EIA Act, which concerns the right to appeal a decision regarding whether to apply the EIA procedure. FANC criticises restricting the right to appeal in situations where the public does not have the right to appeal the permit decision for the activity in question.

FANC also draws attention to recent amendments to legislation governing statutory land use planning and to the Mining Act that it regards as having impacts including worsening the state of the environment and the status of those suffering from adverse effects. In addition, FANC criticises the short time limit and the lack of participation procedure in notifications of forest use.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry states that the notified forest use does not have environmental impacts in the meaning of the EIA Act, and the procedure therefore does not fall within the scope of the Convention. MTK states that participatory rights and access to justice in relation to forestry activities are secured in the EPA in line with the Convention.

8. Georgia

I. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

SEA is a mandatory for elaboration of the strategic document and essential amendments thereto, which define future development frame for activities under EAC annexes I-II in defined areas [Agriculture and forestry; fishery; power engineering; production; transport; waste and water resources management; electronic communications; tourism; planning and spatial development].

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Process of integration of issues of Forest Sector Reform Strategy and Action Plan (2016-2021) in different documents (NEAP-3, Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (2021-2027) and its Action Plan (2021-2023)), went on with broad stakeholders' involvement.

Public participation is provided in the approval process of hunting/fishing management plans. Draft plans are placed on the MEPA website for public comments/proposals; public hearings are held. But public doesn't participate, with a few exceptions, such as expressing opinions in various meetings/discussions/conversations. For the development of necessary mechanisms to regulate this situation, the process of developing a new legal framework on regulating hunting/fishing has begun.

III. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 8:

Two laws on agriculture [Law of Georgia on the Agricultural Land Ownership (2019) and the Law of Georgia on Determination of the Designated Purpose of Land and Sustainable Management of Agricultural Land (2019)] elaborated by the Agrarian Issues Committee [Of the Parliament of Georgia] were prepared with the public involvement. The draft law on windbreak prepared by the Committee considers publicity of information and public involvement in the arrangement/restoration of windbreak belts. The Committee conducted annual report hearings of agencies of MEPA with participation of civil sector and opportunity to submit opinions/comments.

9. Germany

I. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

Since late 2015 the federal office for waterways and shipping (Wasserstraßen- und Schifffahrtsverwaltung des Bundes – WSV) has been acting as a partner of the integrated LIFE project termed “LiLa Living Lahn – one river, many interests”. Within the project the WSV has responsibility for elaborating an action plan for the Lahn river by the end of the project in 2025. The action plan shall set out for future infrastructures and uses the types and extent of maintenance work and the transport-related, ecological and other goals for the Lahn. The challenge is to strike a balance wherever possible between competing interests (flood protection, heritage preservation, nature conservation, shipping, water-body maintenance, cost-effectiveness, hydropower use, tourism, agriculture, fisheries, and more). The work takes an integrative, holistic approach. An interactive process involves not only the competent authorities in various sectors and at different tiers of administration but also the wider public (both organised stakeholders and individual citizens). The project aims to gather experience for similar future participation processes.

II. Website addresses relevant to the implementation of article 6:

Information provided by the Federal Nature Conservation Agency (BfN) on agricultural genetic engineering and nature conservation: <https://www.bfn.de/themen/agro-gentechnik.html>

III. Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

In environmental policy, many decisions are taken that have direct impacts on the living conditions of citizens. The BMU has therefore been striving for years to enhance the involvement of the public in issues of environmental policy relevance. The lifeworlds and views of citizens are taken into account in decision-making. To this end, the BMU has carried out an array of public participation procedures on diverse environmental policy topics:

- The BMU set up an online dialogue forum from 10 October to 8 November 2018 to debate its Action Programme for Insect Conservation [<https://dialog.bmu.de/dito/explore?action=startpage&id=90>]. In the debate about agricultural landscapes, protected areas, pesticide applications, soil and water conservation and light pollution, citizens contributed more than 27,000 assessments, more than 1000 comments and some 320 new proposals for measures. To involve young people in particular in the dialogue, a simulation game was conducted in the BMU; here 25 young people elaborated their own proposals on insect conservation, which were taken into account in the Action Programme.

10. Iceland

Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6:

Comments were also received regarding a complaint before the Compliance Committee, cf. Communication ACCC/C/2019/168, concerning alleged breach of the Aarhus Convention, namely Articles 6, 8 and 9 concerning Icelandic legislation for intensive fish farming, Article 21(2)c of Act No 71/2008 on Fish Farming as amended by Act No 108/2018. In connection with that case, Case No 82787 before the EFTA surveillance Authority (ESA) was also mentioned, regarding complaint against Iceland concerning the application of Directive 2011/92/EC. Both cases are still pending.

In the case before the Compliance Committee the communicant alleged that Article 21(2)c of the Fish Farming Act violates Article 6 of the Aarhus Convention since the licensing procedure does not provide for a public participation before the licensing. In observations to the Compliance Committee the Icelandic Government explained i.a. that the only purpose of Article 21(2)c is to provide for an interim measure under the circumstances where an operating license for a fish farm operation has been annulled due to an error in the licensing procedure.

It was also alleged by the Communicant that the legislative procedure of Act No 108/2018 had not fulfilled the requirements of Article 8 of public participation. The Icelandic Government explained i.a. to the Compliance Committee that the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Parliament had recognized the urgency of the matter which had led to the decision not to make the draft bill open for comments.

The Communicant alleged as well that Article 21(2)c of the Act violates Article 9 of the Convention since operation licenses granted under that article cannot be brought before a review procedure. The Icelandic Government explained i.a. to the Compliance Committee that the purpose of licenses issued under Article 21(2)c is to prevent unnecessary loss of value and is only valid for a limited period of time. The temporary operation license was an interim measure, with limited durability, subject to strict conditions to either rectify the procedural error or bring the matter before a domestic court and scaled down operation.

In its observations to the Compliance Committee the Icelandic Government further stated its full commitment to meeting the obligations under the Aarhus Convention and welcomed the review and findings of the Compliance Committee in the matter and declared itself ready to propose adjustments in the legislation as needed.

According to a preliminary assessment of the Internal Market Affairs Directorate at ESA, dated 14 April 2020 (Case No 82787), Iceland has failed to fulfil its obligations under Article 2, 4 to 9 and article 11 of the EIA Directive 2011/92/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The background to the case is the same as in the aforementioned case before the Compliance Committee. The granting of temporary operating licenses and temporary exemptions to hold operating licenses to two fish farms. The Icelandic Government granted the temporary operating licenses after the Judicial Committee in Environmental and Natural Resources declared the initial operating licenses invalid because of flaws in the environmental impact assessments. Comments were received that Iceland has not yet repealed the Act, which is not in accordance with the Aarhus Convention.

In a response letter to ESA earlier this year the Icelandic Government provided an explanation of the Icelandic legislation in question. ESA was also informed of the Governments intentions to propose amendments to national law to minimise the risk of any discrepancies between national law and the Directive 2011/92/EC. Also that the Government had introduced a bill to Parliament where the first adjustment to national law was proposed taking into account the views of the Directorate, cf. the aforementioned Act No 111/2021. The Government informed ESA of the ongoing preparation to propose further amendments to the legislation during the next session of the Parliament to address the views of the Directorate.

Comments were finally received which stated that improvements had not been made concerning public participation in the revision of former Act No. 106/2000, cf. Act No. 111/2021 that was passed in Parliament earlier this year.

As stated before, the main goal of the revision of Act No. 106/2000 was to increase efficiency and to ensure in the best possible way public participation in the process. The new Act No. 111/2021 prescribes a somewhat simplified procedure including the usage of an electronic data system for public consultation.

11. Ireland

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

In respect of the other sectoral plans, these provisions were set out by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004) as amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. No. 200 of 2011):

- Article 9(1) requires an assessment to be carried out for plans and programmes in the following areas: agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use.

12. Italy

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The Italian **Long-Term Strategy for decarbonisation (LTS)**, developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies, outlines the direction that Italy will have to follow for the next 30 years to ensure the decarbonisation of the economic and social system, seeking to arrive at "climate neutrality" by 2050. It was adopted in February 2021. The Strategy will have a profound and wide-ranging impact on the national socio-economic system, therefore several consultations have been organised:

- October 2019: online public consultation in the form of a multiple-choice questionnaire, concluded in November 2019. Section 2 is addressed to civil society in order to learn about respondents' propensity to change their lifestyle and how they think their habits may be influenced by the transition to a low-carbon economy. Section 3 is aimed at experts working in the fields of industry, transport, agriculture and land use, sectors that will play an important role in the decarbonisation process. 61 completed questionnaires were collected, of which 28 came from citizens and 33 from private associations/companies. The sector of greatest public interest was transportation.
- Sectoral technical meetings with trade associations, key players, environmental associations, trade unions, consumers and think tanks, in order to collect information, especially on technologies with greater potential for decarbonisation.

13. Kazakhstan

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

The procedure for conducting public hearings is determined by the authorized body in the field of environmental protection. Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan from April 8, 2016 №491 added article 57-2 "On the public hearings" to the EC.

1. Conduct public hearings, necessarily on the projects:

1) in the areas of agriculture and forestry, mining and manufacturing industries, construction, transport, electricity, heating, water supply, sewerage, waste management and other sectors of the economy according to the list determined by the authorized body in the field of environmental protection;

According to article 57-2 of the EC, public hearings are mandatory for projects that provide for:

1) the procedure in the fields of agriculture and forestry, mining and manufacturing, construction, transport, electricity, heat, water supply, sanitation, waste management and other sectors of the economy in accordance with the list determined by the authorized body in the field of environmental protection;

II. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

In addition, article 5 of the Law " On Public Councils " (No. 383-V of November 2, 2015) establishes Public Councils under ministries, bodies directly subordinate and accountable to the President, as well as under local government bodies. The purpose of the activity of public councils is to express the opinion of civil society on socially significant issues. Article 5 of the Law on Public Councils establishes the powers of Public Councils to:

- discussion of draft budget programs of the administrator of budget programs, draft strategic plans or programs for the development of territories, draft state and government programs;
- discussion of the implementation of the budget programs of the administrator of budget programs, strategic plans or programs for the development of territories, state and government programs;
- participation in the development and discussion of draft regulatory legal acts. They relate to the rights, freedoms and obligations of citizens, with the exception of draft regulatory legal acts of central and local executive bodies, as well as akims, which provide for the adoption of decisions on the establishment (cancellation) of a quarantine zone with the introduction of a quarantine regime in the relevant territory. On the establishment (removal) of quarantine and (or) restrictive measures in cases provided for by legislation in the field of veterinary medicine, as well as the declaration of an emergency of a natural and man-made nature;
- development and submission to state bodies of proposals for improving legislation, etc.

In accordance with the Law "On Public Councils", the Public Council for Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources was established in August 2019 (Order of the Acting Minister No. 20-P of 04.09.2019). The activities of the Public Council are regulated by the Constitution and the current legislation. The Public Council consists of 22 representatives of non-profit and non-governmental organizations and 8 employees of the MEGNR. The Council has 4 commissions in the following areas: ecology, budget, strategic and regulatory, geology and water resources, forestry, fisheries and wildlife. In 2019, three meetings of the Public Council were held: on September 12, November 19, and December 11. In total, during 2019, the Public Council considered 105 draft NPA, of which 99 were approved and recommended for adoption, comments and suggestions were sent to the authors of 6 projects, and 5 projects are under consideration. On December 21, 2020, the composition of the Public Council was expanded (31 representatives of non-profit and non-governmental organizations and 3 representatives of the Ministry) (Ministry Order No. 327-P of December 21, 2020). In 2020, 2 meetings of the Public Council and the Minister's report to the Public Council were held.

A special section has been created on the MEGNR website, where information about the activities of the Public Council and minutes of meetings of its commissions are posted <http://ecogeo.gov.kz/ru>.

14. Kyrgyzstan

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

По инициативе НПО «НЭЭ» было отменено постановление Правительства по переводу озера Чатыр-Куль из категории особоохраняемых территорий в категорию рыбохозяйственных. Статья 6, пункт 11

15. Lithuania

I. Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The right of the public to participate in the formation of policies related to the environment is ensured by providing opportunities for representatives of the public to take part in the activities of different committees, commissions or working groups that decide issues relating to environmental policies.

For example, in accordance with the Law on Angling, an angling council is established that makes proposals to the Ministers of Environment and of Agriculture on issues relating to angling. This council consists of representatives of anglers' associations as well as representatives of the media in the field of angling. Pursuant to the Law on Protected Areas, the public may propose the establishment of new protected areas or adjust their boundaries. The implementation of this right is also ensured by public participation in the legislative process (see the information on the implementation of Article 8).

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

In the preparation of plans and programmes at the national level, public consultations are used in practice, during which the planned actions for the improvement of the state of the environment are presented. For example, in 2018, before republicising and submitting the draft National Air Pollution Management Plan to the relevant institutions for coordination, a public seminar was organised (the invitation was distributed online) to present the measures proposed in this project and argue their need from a health point of view.

Two public consultations took place during the preparation of the National Energy and Climate Action Plan (NECAP). From 13 March 2018 until 15 May 2019 the public was invited to submit proposals for the NECAP measures and a draft version of its content (consultations were published through a dedicated national consultation platform E.pilietis). Following the public consultation and the implementation of the NECAP Commission's recommendations, the NEKS project was adjusted and on 13 November 2019 submitted for the second time for public consultation through the E.pilietis national consultation platform and presented at various events of the climate change week on 22-29 November. The public consultation ended on 4 December 2019. During the events of the Climate Change Week, science, consulting and NGOs and other organisations were invited to participate in a public discussion of the draft plan measures to discuss agricultural challenges and opportunities for meeting climate targets. The measures were also presented to the National Climate Change Committee, which included the social partners.

16. Malta

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Environmental assessments are carried out for all plans and programmes, (a) which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Directive 85/337/EEC, or (b) which, in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of Directive 92/43/EEC.

17. Montenegro

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

The Law on Genetically Modified Organisms, Chapter VI, regulates the matter of intentional introduction of GMO into the environment. Article 34 prohibits introduction of GMOs into the environment in the protected areas, in the areas intended for organic production of agricultural products, and in the areas for development of eco-tourism.

II. Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Article 5 of the Law on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment stipulates that the strategic assessment shall be carried out for plans or programmes when there is a possibility that their implementation shall cause significant impacts on the environment. The strategic assessment elaboration is mandatory for all plans and programmes in the area of agriculture, forestry, fishery, hunting, energy, industry, including mining, transport, tourism, regional development, telecommunications, waste management water management, coastal zone management, urban and spatial planning or land use planning, laying down the framework for future development of projects that are subject to environmental impact assessment elaboration in accordance with the special act, as well as for plans and programmes which, considering the area within which they are carried out, could affect the protected areas, natural habitats and preservation of wildlife.

18. North Macedonia

I. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The Law on Environment is the principal piece of legislation regulating the participation of the public in the process of preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment listed in Article 7 of the Aarhus Convention.

The Chapter Assessment of the environmental impact of specific strategies, plans and programs in Article 65 of the Law, defines all planning documents that are prepared in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fishing, energetics, industry, mining, transport, regional development, telecommunications, waste management, water management, tourism, physical and urban planning and land use, wherewith a basis is created for execution of projects for which assessment of the environmental impact is performed or of all planning

documents that regulate the management of protected areas declared by law or may affect these areas, and a strategic assessment is conducted.

19. Norway

I. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

NOAH – an organisation working for the protection of the rights of animals - express the opinion in their consultative statement that Section 18, third paragraph of the Nature Diversity Act and Sections 23 and 35 of the Wildlife Act, by stating that exceptions from strong protection of endangered species or otherwise forbidden hunting methods are not individual decisions subject to appeals, hinder the public from contesting the exceptions and are therefore not in line with the Aarhus Convention.

These exceptions are only applicable to the implementation of removal of wildlife, salmonides and freshwater fish by the competent authority on its own initiative and for specific purposes pursuant to Section 18 paragraph 3 of the Nature Diversity Act. It follows from the Public Administration Act that such decisions by the authorities are not individual decisions subject to appeal. The provisions in the Nature Diversity Act and the Wildlife Act are only meant to clarify this. The definition of individual decisions in the Public Administration Act is inter alia based on an assessment of where legal safeguards in administrative procedures are most needed. Particular considerations are applicable in the environmental field. Decisions with environmental impacts may be of importance for many people even though they are not decisive for the rights and obligations of anyone. The question of how to protect the need for legal safeguards in the field of environment in the best possible way is a concern in administrative procedures in this field in general and not in the field of game management in particular.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

NOAH – an organisation working for the protection of the rights of animals - criticizes the transfer in January 2018 of the responsibilities for management of wildlife species that may be hunted from the Ministry of Climate and Environment to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. They argue that the transfer without prior consultation or notification to environmental organisations or the general public has led to privileged participation by economically motivated groups such as farmers, hunters and land owners in the development and implementation of policies in this field. They mention the development of two action plans as examples; *The action plan for commercial development on the basis of wildlife species that may be harvested* and *The action plan against wild boar 2020-2024*, and call for guidelines for the development of such plans and programmes.

The Action plan for commercial development on the basis of wildlife species that may be harvested was developed by a working group as an input to agriculture negotiations. The content of the document is primarily a description of possibilities for commercial development and is not considered as a plan as described in Article 7 of the Convention. The Action plan against wild boar 2020-2024 was developed by the Norwegian Environment Agency and the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, in collaboration with invited NGO's. NGO's representing specific animal interest was not represented. The Action plan against wild boar 2020-2024 has not been submitted to public hearing or otherwise made accessible for input from the public. However, the legal measures mentioned in the Action plan has been or will be subject to public

hearing. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food will pay increased attention to the Environmental Information Act and the Aarhus Convention.

20. Poland

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The following projects require a strategic environmental impact assessment:

[...] policies, strategies, plans and programmes in the field of industry, energy, transport, telecommunications, water management, waste management, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and land use, developed or adopted by administrative authorities, setting a framework for the subsequent implementation of projects likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

21. Portugal

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Several examples of public discussions of strategies, plans and programmes in the period covered in this report are presented:

Strategies and plans in the areas of energy and climate change

Roadmap for Carbon Neutrality (RNC2050)

The transition to carbon neutrality is an ambitious challenge requiring the extended and participative involvement of the whole of society, which is why the preparation of the RNC2050 was based on a broad process of involvement of all sectors and the mobilization of Portuguese society.

This involvement took place throughout the different phases of the process, in particular the construction of the macroeconomic scenarios that serve as the basis for the entire prospective modelling. It allowed for the collection of contributions from various institutions and national experts, and gave rise to the three scenarios considered. Cycles of technical workshops were conducted that allowed us to understand the role of the circular economy in the future of different sectors, as well as to inform on the modelling work in the development of some of the main assumptions and trends (this cycle included sectorial workshops on Mobility, Forestry, Agrifood, Construction, Cities, Energy, Waste and Wastewater). Thematic events around the decarbonization of society were held, which included public sessions focusing on the themes of Mobility, the role of Forests in decarbonization, Energy Transition, Fair Transition and Sustainable Financing.

Water resources plans and programmes

The Water Law (Law No. 58/2005 of 29 December, republished by Decree-Law No. 130/2012 of 22 June), supplemented by Decree-Law No. 77/2006 of 30 March, and other regulatory instruments, transpose to

national law Directive No. 2000/60/EC, of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 23 October (the Water Framework Directive - WFD), governing the way in which the planning and management of water resources should be developed <https://apambiente.pt/agua/lei-da-agua>. The following programmes and plans are to be highlighted in the period covered in this report:

- The main goal of the National Programme for the Efficient Use of Water 2012-2020 (PNUEA) is to promote efficient water use in Portugal, especially in the urban, agricultural and industrial sectors, helping to minimise the risk of water shortage and to improve environmental conditions in water resources without jeopardising the needs and the quality of life of populations, as well as the socio-economic development of the country. It associates the improvement of water use efficiency with the consolidation of a new water culture through which this resource is increasingly valued not only for its relevance to human and economic development but also for the preservation of the natural environment, in a perspective of sustainable development and respect for future generations. It also aims to achieve the reduction of the pollutant loads returned to water resources and the reduction of energy consumption, aspects that are highly dependent on water use. <https://apambiente.pt/agua/programa-nacional-para-o-uso-eficiente-da-agua>.

Strategies in the area of agriculture

- The Strategic Plan for the Common Agricultural Policy CAP 2023-2027, currently under development, will guide the application of the future CAP in Portugal. It was subject to a consultation procedure, from 9 November 2020 to 8 January 2021, published at <https://www.gpp.pt/index.php/noticias/plano-estrategico-da-pac-2023-2027-consulta-alargada-4>, with request for contributions via pac_pos2020@gpp.pt.
- The Innovation Agenda for Agriculture 2030 (Terra Futura), approved by Council of Ministers Resolution no. 86/2020 of 13 October, aims to guide the sector's strategy and policies, aiming at a system of agriculture which is even more sustainable, competitive and innovative, and which gives and receives knowledge, https://www.gpp.pt/index.php/terra_futura/terra-futura.
- National Strategy for Organic Agriculture and Action Plan - The XXI Constitutional Government undertook a commitment in its Programme to define a National Strategy for Organic Agriculture and implement an Action Plan for the production and promotion of agricultural products and organic foodstuffs. On 27 July 2017 Council of Ministers Resolution No. 110/2017 was published, approving the National Strategy for Organic Agriculture (ENAB) and the Action Plan (PA) for the production and promotion of agricultural and organic foodstuffs, the DGADR being responsible for coordinating the implementation of the planned measures. This Strategy was the object of public consultation from 2 to 30 September 2016. The DGADR publishes a monthly newsletter on its implementation, at <https://www.dgadr.gov.pt/estrategia-nacional-para-a-agricultura-biologica>.
- The National Irrigation Programme was approved by RCM No. 133/2018 of 12 October - The XXI Constitutional Government's programme provided for the preparation of a National Irrigation Programme (PNRegadios), with the aim of expanding, rehabilitating and modernizing existing irrigation systems and creating new irrigated areas, ideally with the potential to connect to existing ones. The objective is to promote irrigation and other collective infrastructures with a view to sustainability, contributing to the adaptation to climate change, the fight against desertification and a more efficient use of resources. As stated in the introduction of the RCM, the PNRegadios programme, by implementing new hydro-agricultural systems in areas that are most vulnerable to

the effects of climate change, constitutes an important measure of prevention and mitigation of such effects, increasing the resilience and robustness of agricultural systems as well as contributing to the settlement of populations, particularly in the areas most weakened by the dynamics of depopulation. The activities planned in the PNRegadios cover very diverse areas of the national territory. The creation and reinforcement of sources of surface water in the Trás-os-Montes, Beira, Alentejo and Algarve regions is a priority from the perspective of spatial planning and social justice, without prejudice to the need to link up with areas of greater environmental sensitivity, in particular the areas included in the 2000 Nature Networks.

- The National Strategy for Agricultural and Agro-industrial Effluents (ENEAPAI), under public discussion from 10 December 2020 to 22 January 2020, seeks to contribute to the resolution of environmental problems diagnosed in particular with regard to the quality of water bodies originating in the agricultural sector on mainland Portugal; https://www.consultalex.gov.pt/ConsultaPublica_Detail.aspx?Consulta_Id=171.
- The National Strategy for Combating Food Waste (ENCDA) and respective Action Plan, approved by Council of Ministers Resolution no. 46/2018 of 27 April, contains several measures and actions for informing the public and encouraging their participation, in particular:
 - Monthly newsletter <https://www.cncda.gov.pt/index.php/documentos-e-legislacao/newsletters>;
 - Plenary meetings <https://www.cncda.gov.pt/index.php/documentos-e-legislacao/reuniao-plenaria>;
 - Guidelines, manuals and clarifications <https://www.cncda.gov.pt/index.php/documentos-e-legislacao/orientacoes-manuais-e-esclarecimentos>;
 - Launching campaigns <https://www.cncda.gov.pt/images/DocumentosLegislacao/Campanhas>.

22. Romania

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Romania has undertaken the SEA procedures, including public participation phase, (also public hearing meetings) for all the sectoral operational programs developed for 2013-2020. Further, for the 2017-2020 programming period MEWF applied the SEA procedure, including the public participation step, to all the sectoral operational programmes and other plans/programs/strategies in the areas of: transport, economic competitiveness, waste, climate change, agriculture, forestry, energy, industry, mining of mineral resources, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, regional development.

23. Serbia

I. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Law on Agriculture and Rural Development (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 41/09): Article 5; Article 6; etc.

II. Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Article 81 of the LEP states that the participation of the public regarding strategic impact assessment shall be ensured by opening spatial and urban plans, i.e. any other plan or programme from Article 35 of this law to the public scrutiny. The strategic environmental impact assessment is developed for certain plans, programs and principles in the domain of spatial and urban planning or land utilization, agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, energy, industry, traffic, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, infrastructure systems, protection of natural and cultural resources, flora and fauna and their habitats etc., and is an integral part of the plan, program or basis (Article 35). The strategic environmental impact assessment must be harmonized with other environmental impact assessments, as well as with environmental protection plans and programmes and is carried out in accordance with the procedure set out in a special law. Autonomous province or local self-government units, within their rights and responsibilities, define the types of plans and programmes for which the strategic impact assessment will be developed.

24. Slovakia

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Act No. 139/2002 Coll. on fishery as amended

II. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Act No. 364/2004 Coll. on waters and on the amendment to Act No. 372/1990 Coll. on offenses as amended (Water Act) as amended stipulates in Article 13 (2) that the draft riverbasin management plan is worked out by the ministry through an authorized person and administrator of watercourses important to water management in cooperation with state water administration bodies, self-governing regions, other central government bodies concerned and other stakeholders, in particular representatives of municipalities, industrial sphere, water companies, fishery protection and other organizations, whose objects include protection of water and water ecosystems. Further, Article 13 (4) lays down the ministry's duty to make available the following, for purposes of submission of written comments, active participation and consultations, within six months, to the public, water users, self-governing regions, municipalities, and central government bodies concerned:

- a) the time schedule and steps of the preparation of the draft river-basin management plan,
- b) the identified significant water management problems,
- c) the draft river-basin management plan.

III. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

The process of updating the Strategy for the Adaptation of the Slovak Republic to Climate Change in 2017-2018 took place in a participatory manner, in which a working group for adaptation composed of representatives of public administration, academia, and NGOs participated in its preparation. The strategy in question passed through the process of assessing the impacts of strategic documents under Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment, in which the public was given the opportunity to comment.

An action plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Adaptation of the Slovak Republic to Climate Change has been under preparation since 2018 in cooperation with the Forecasting Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. A wide group of experts from the fields of agriculture, forestry, water management, geology, nature protection, spatial planning, energy, industry, etc. was involved in the process, as well as representatives of NGOs, higher territorial units, local governments, and umbrella organizations of local governments (UCMS, Union of cities of Slovakia). The draft action plan was prepared based on the results of a questionnaire survey.

25. Spain

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Andalusia has Law 7/2017, of 27 December, on Citizen Participation of Andalusia and on the web portal of the Regional Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Sustainable Development in its environment area of the Regional Government of Andalusia, it has a special area for public participation, which can be consulted at the following link:

<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/site/portalweb/menuitem.d1a35641276b2bf2490a9d105510e1ca/?vgnextoid=50d9193566a68210VgnVCM10000055011eacRCRD&vgnnextchannel=d869193566a68210VgnVCM10000055011eacRCRD>

<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/site/portalweb/menuitem.d1a35641276b2bf2490a9d105510e1ca/?vgnextoid=50d9193566a68210VgnVCM10000055011eacRCRD&vgnnextchannel=d869193566a68210VgnVCM10000055011eacRCRD>

26. Sweden

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Section 29 of the Industrial Emissions Ordinance (2013:250) states that when a judgment in a permit case is sent to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency or the Swedish Board of Agriculture, the reviewing authority shall particularly draw the attention of the authority to the fact that the judgment or order relates to industrial emission activities so as to make it easier for the authorities mentioned to fulfil their obligation to inform the public under Section 28 of the Ordinance.

II. Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Under the Water Quality Management Ordinance (2004:660) the water authorities have to plan their work so as to enable and encourage the participation of everyone affected by the management of water quality. Before a water authority makes a decision on quality requirements for bodies of surface and ground water and protected areas, management plans and programmes of measures to enable the environmental quality standards to be met or processes other questions under the Ordinance that are of substantial importance, the authority has to consult with the authorities, municipalities, organisations, operators and individuals affected by the decision. A party that prepares a draft of a programme of measures shall, by publishing notices in local newspapers or by other means, give those affected by the programme of measures the opportunity to present comments on the draft for at least six months and shall then present the comments and how they have been taken into account in a separate compilation (chapter 5, section 4 of the Environmental Code and chapter 6, section 7 of the Water Quality Management Ordinance). The notice of the draft programme of measures has to state that the draft is available to the public at the water authority and all county administrative boards and municipalities in the area covered by the programme as well as the time during which, and to whom, comments have to be presented. When a programme of measures has been affirmed, the water authority has to publish a notice to this effect as soon as possible in a local newspaper. Information about water authority consultations is also announced on their websites. The water councils are intended to anchor work on water management locally and to act as a forum to discuss questions related to water resources and water quality within the respective area. They shall involve all affected actors, e.g. municipalities, businesses, fishing associations, nature conservation association and even private individuals.

Every county administrative board has a game management delegation for collaboration in matters concerning game management in the county. These delegations decide on matters including general guidelines for game management and participate in work on preparing predator management plans and minimum levels for the occurrence of large predators. The members of these delegations represent various interests such as hunting and game management, nature conservation, agriculture and forestry, for example members of environmental NGOs.

27. Tajikistan

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

Таджикистан принимает активное участие в Реализации Пилотной Программы по адаптации к изменению климата (PPCR), которая реализуется Правительством РТ совместно с АБР, ВБ и ЕБРР. Ряд общественных организаций имеющих потенциал в сфере управления климатическими рисками, планирования и реализации мер, смягчающих негативное воздействие изменения климата, имеющих опыт в повышении осведомленности населения привлекаются ПРТ к участию в принятии решений по дальнейшему развитию PPCR, реализации отдельных компонент программы, разработке Национальной стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата в Таджикистане. Так на протяжении 2013- 2016 г. общественными организациями МЭЦ, Фонд «Кухистон», «Хамкори бахри таракиёт», «Центр по чрезвычайным ситуациям и изменению климата», «Национальная Ассоциация фермерских хозяйств» и др. проведены работы по оценке уязвимости сообществ к изменению климата, разработаны местные планы действий, созданы общинные информационные

центры, проведены тренинги по внедрению адапционных мер и устойчивому водопользованию, землепользованию и сельскому хозяйству. В рамках процесса разработки Национальной Стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата, ряд ОО вошли в состав Межведомственной Рабочей группы и сделали важные предложения по учету в Национальной стратегии интересов общин, малоземельных фермеров, женщин и уязвимых групп населения.

28. Turkmenistan

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

With the direct participation of the NGO of hunters and fishermen, a draft Law on hunting and hunting management was developed and submitted for adoption to the parliament of the country.

29. Ukraine

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Paragraph 2 of the Procedure for State Registration of Genetically Modified Organisms of Agricultural Plant Varieties in Open Systems adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 23 July 2009, Decree No. 808, requires that state environmental expert conclusions are attached to applications for state registration of genetically modified organisms of agricultural plant varieties in open systems.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7

Law of Ukraine "On Strategic Environmental Assessment" (hereinafter referred to "Law") regulates environmental impact assessment relations, particularly for public health and enforcement of national planning documentation, and applies to the national planning documentation in agriculture, forestry, fishery, energy, production sector, transportation, waste management, water use, environmental protection, telecommunications, tourism, urban planning or land management (schemes) enforced through the activities (or containing activities and facilities) that must be assessed for environmental impact or for potential implications for the Nature Reserve Fund and protected areas network lands and sites.

30. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Environmental Impact Assessment (Fish Farming in Marine Waters) Regulations 1999;

Chapter 4: Public participation in decision-making on oceans, seas, marine resources

1. Belgium

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

The Agriculture, Land Drainage and Irrigation Projects (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017;

Federal authority: The legislation with regard to authorisations for activities in the North Sea, including the list of exceptions, is currently under revision;

The Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (England) (No.2) Regulations 2006;

Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007;

The Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (Wales) Regulations 2007;

II. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The European Union has implemented some of these requirements through Directive 2003/35/EC and its successor legislation and through Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:197:0030:0037:EN:PDF>), which applies to a wide range of public plans and programmes (e.g. on land use, transport, energy, waste and agriculture).

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Adriatic Sea River Basin Agency - ASRBA

Rulebook on Content, Form, Conditions, Procedure of Issuance and Archiving of the Water Permits

II. Website addresses relevant to the implementation of article 6:

Adriatic Sea River Basin Agency – ASRBA - <http://www.jadran.ba/>

III. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The Adriatic Sea River Basin Agency: *“The public participates in the development of river basins management plans, pursuant to Articles 25 and 26 of LoW FBiH/25⁵. Also, the public gains insight into documents used in the development of the management plan. Legal and natural persons can provide comments regarding the draft plan. The public participation is also envisaged in more detailed water management plans and programs, pursuant to Article 41 of LoW of the Federation of BiH.”*

IV. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Pursuant to Articles 44, 45, and 46 of LoPE, the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism prepares a proposal of the FBiH Environment Protection Strategy, which envisages public participation, but does not clearly prescribe the manner in which the public participates. Often the adoption of very important documents is almost unnoticed by the general public due to inadequate information (e.g., uploading to the web site).

ASRBA conducted a public consultation process for the purpose of developing the Draft FBiH Adriatic Sea River Basin Water Management Plan (FASRBWMP). During the public consultation process, all the interested parties were invited to download the Draft Plan from the web site of ASRBA and to send comments and proposals, as well as to participate in workshops and events. The call was published in daily newspapers. As part of the public presentations of the characterisation report and of NFASRBWMP, the public and the interested parties had the opportunity to learn about the project and to ask questions.

As a result, significant issues for ground waters and subterranean waters were identified for Adriatic Sea river basin in FBiH. All the received comments, questions and suggestions were discussed and included into the Plan, together with the official response.

Based on the written instructions by the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism, ASRBA also conducted public consultations during the process of adoption of the Strategic Impact Assessment of FASRBWMP. The Strategic Study was uploaded onto the web site of ASRBA for public comments and questions. The media published information on the development of FASRBWMP and of the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment Study, inviting all the interested parties to attend the public presentation and to send their comments between June and September 2016, including for the Strategic Study. The public presentation was held on 15 July 2016 in Mostar, and participants were representatives of governmental institutions, water users, water pollutants, scientific institutions, professional institutions and the media. The Draft FASRBWMP and the main results of the Strategic Study and the Mud Management Plan were briefly presented, followed by a discussion, but there were no important objections to the Strategic Study. Also uploaded onto the web site was the presentation of SPUO. During the public debate there were no comments or objections to the Strategic Study.

The following activities were conducted by ASRBA⁶ between 2017 and the end of 2019:

- Pursuant to Article 28 of the Law on Waters, ASRBA prepared the Working Plan for the Preparation and Adoption of the Adriatic Sea River Basin Waters Management Plan in the Federation of BiH (2022 – 2027). That document was published on the web site of the Agency, and information was sent to the media (daily newspapers and the web site of the Agency), as well as by post and by e-mail to institutions and to members of the Advisory Council on the beginning of the

⁵ Law on Waters of FBiH (Official Gazette of FBiH: 70/06) (LoW FBiH).

⁶ ASRBA = Adriatic Sea River Basin Agency

preparation of the Adriatic Sea River Basin Waters Management Plan in the Federation of BiH (2022 – 2027). The Working Plan also envisaged public consultations per individual documents.

- On 11 December 2019, they organised a public workshop on the topic of the “Overview of issues of importance to water management as part of the development of the Draft Adriatic Sea River Basin Waters Management Plan in the Federation of BiH (2022 – 2027)”, and they sent invitations to over 140 addresses (institutions of BiH and of FBiH, municipalities, public utility companies, faculties, associations, NGOs, companies, etc). Following the workshop, interested members of the general public had a period of time during which they could send comments and suggestions.
- Further activities on the preparation of the Adriatic Sea River Basin Waters Management Plan in the Federation of BiH (2022 – 2027) are ongoing.

The Plan to Conduct Public Consultations, as part of the process of adoption of the 2016-2021 Sava River Basin Waters Management Plan, was defined primarily on the basis of the FBiH Law on Waters. Pursuant to that, the Sava RBA, as the main stakeholder of the development of the Management Plan, conducted the following activities with the aim to ensure public participation in the development of the Plan:

a. The Draft Plan, with the accompanying documents, was published on 01 March 2016 on the web site of the Sava RBA (www.voda.ba), inviting all the interested parties to gain direct insight into the proposed Draft Plan and its accompanying documents, and to provide their comments no later than 01 September 2016.;

b. An official letter was sent to key actors/participants to get involved in the Plan development process, primarily by sending comments on the Draft Plan, and if they are interested, also by pasting a link to the web address of the Sava RBA, at which the Draft Plan was presented;

c. Invitation to the general public to comment on the Draft Plan was published in daily newspapers in FBiH;

d. An official letter was sent to the media in FBiH with information that the Draft Plan was finalised in order for the media to get involved in informing the public more widely;

e. The Draft Plan was discussed at public debates held in:

- Odžak on 15 March 2016;
- Travnik on 23 March 2016;
- Sarajevo on 29 March 2016.

f. A concise report was prepared on all the comments provided on the Draft Plan with explanations per individual comments.

The 2016-2021 Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of the Plan was adopted in 2017, which contains the plan and programme of transposition of EU environmental regulations, and it is available to the public.

The Sava River Basin Agency, as the main stakeholder of the development of the Sava River Basin Waters Management Plan, also prepared the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of the Sava River Basin Waters Management Plan (2016–2021), and conducted the public consultation process.

The Sava RBA conducted the following activities regarding public participation in the Strategic Assessment procedure:

- a. Draft Strategic Assessment was published on 07 October 2016 on the web site of the Sava RBA (<http://www.voda.ba/nacrt-strateske-studije-o-utjecaju-plana-upravljanja-vodama-za-vodno-podrucje-rijeke-save>) inviting all the interested parties to gain direct insight into the proposed Draft and to provide their comments no later than 20 October 2016;
- b. An official letter was sent to over 100 addresses, to key actors/participants to get involved in the Strategic Assessment development process, and to send their comments on the draft document by pasting a link to the web address of the Sava RBA, at which the Draft Plan was presented;
- c. Invitation to the general public to comment on the draft document was published in daily newspapers in FBiH;
- d. An official letter was sent to the media in FBiH with information that the Draft Strategic Assessment was prepared in order for the media to get involved in informing the public more widely;

The Sava RBA also organised two public debates on the Draft Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of the Sava River Basin Waters Management Plan (2016–2021).

According to the activities related to the development of the draft of the 2022-2027 Management Plan, it is of major importance that issues of relevance to water management, as part of the above-mentioned Draft Management Plan, are presented to the stakeholders and professionals. This document is a key basis for the definition of water management goals and of a program of future measures.

The Sava RBA organised a public debate regarding the “Issues of Relevance to Water Management” document, held on 21 January 2020 at 11:00 hours, at the IBIS STYLES Hotel, located at the following address: Džemala Bijedića 169A in Sarajevo.

The goal of the public debate was for all the participants to be informed about the water-related situation in the Sava River basin in the Federation of BiH, and to discuss current problems and challenges faced by the water sector in the subsequent timeframe.

The public debate encompassed two activities:

- Presentation of the content of the draft of the “Issues of Relevance to Water Management” document and the subsequent discussion;
- Responses to written comments and suggestions by the public;

The invitation was published on the official web site of the Sava RBA, together with the draft of the “Issues of Relevance to Water Management” document. Also, written invitations were sent to 250 addresses (inviting representatives of the State, FBiH and cantonal institutions, municipalities/cities, the Waters Advisory Council, water polluters/users, relevant institutions of the Republika Srpska and the Brčko District, academic community, scientific institutions, the non-governmental sector, representatives of the media...), and there were approximately 150 participants.

In the framework of the public debate process, the public could provide comments and suggestions on the published document in a written form, by either using the form referred to in Annex 1, or as a letter, sent to the following addresses: e-mail: planupravljanja@voda.ba, as well as to the postal address of the stakeholder of the 2022-2027 Management Plan: Sava River Basin Agency, Hamdije Čemerlića 39a, 71000 Sarajevo.

The deadline to provide comments on the presented document was 28 February 2020.

Link: <http://www.voda.ba/znacajna-pitanja-upravljanja-vodama>

V. Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8:

The relevant definitions in Article 2 and the non-discrimination requirement in Article 3, Paragraph 9, were listed in the answer regarding Article 4.

- Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives of the FBiH Parliament (“Official Gazette of FBiH”, No 69/07);
- Rules of Procedure of the RS National Assembly (“Official Gazette of the RS”, No 66/20));
- Rules of Procedure of the BD Assembly (“Official Gazette of BD”, No 17/08, 20/10).
- Rules and Procedures in Drafting Laws and Other Regulations of FBiH (“Official Gazette of FBiH”, No 71/14).

Article 204 of the Rules of Procedure of the Republika Srpska National Assembly/Article 173 of the Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives of the FBiH Parliament /Article 129 of the Rules of Procedure of the BD Assembly define that, following the completed consideration of a draft law, the representative body may decide to hold a public hearing on the proposed draft law, in case the respective piece of legislation regulates issues of special public interest. The public provide specific proposals, suggestions, and comments either at public hearings or submit them by e-mail or often by postal service. Inclusion of public opinion in the final act is not binding; however, reasons for non-inclusion have to be stated. The public is entitled to institute an administrative dispute in case its opinion is not accepted. Also, the environmental protection associations take part in the activities of the Environmental Advisory Council, thus contributing to the preparation of generally accepted and legally binding rules. Public participation in the preparation of regulations and other legally binding rules is promoted, inter alia, through calls to participate in public debates. The Guidelines for Action of RS Administrative Bodies Concerning Public Participation and Consultation in Drafting Laws (“Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska”, No 123/08 and 73/12), define that the regulations identified as being of public interest, shall be posted on the website, for the purpose of submitting comments and suggestions by the public.

As early as 2014, the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism held four public debates on the Draft Law on Environment Protection, thus providing for public participation and for the interested parties to provide their comments and proposals of amendments to the Draft Law. The technical support in organising the public debates was provided by Strengthening Governing Institutions and Processes Project in BiH (SGIP), financed by USAID, in co-operation with the Aarhus Centre in BiH.

The public and the interested parties also participated in 2016 and 2017 concerning the new Draft Law on Environment Protection, Draft Law on the Environmental Fund, Draft Amendments to the Law on Waste Management, by-laws (Rulebook on the Monitoring of Air Quality, Rulebook on Facilities, etc.). The new Law on Environment Protection was adopted only in February 2021.

During the development of legislation and other regulations from the areas of forestry and hunting, one acts in accordance with the FBiH Rules and Procedures for the Development of Legislation and Other Regulations.

FMAWMF conducted consultations on the working draft of the Regulation on Methodology of Determination of the Lowest Basic Price of Water Management Services in FBiH (working draft), on the following dates:

- On 03 October 2019, presentation of information at the Water Management Conference on Results of the UNDP-MEG Project, the only ongoing EU project that implements a fundamental reform and reorganisation of local self-government and of the sector of water management services in BiH,
- On 09 October 2019, consultations with FBiH institutions and with some of the cantonal ministries in charge of water management and utilities,
- On 08 November 2019 the draft was presented to professionals at the 2nd Congress on Waters of BiH,
- On 21 November 2019, presentation and consultations with representatives of JLS and utility companies (approximately 100 participants), who gave their full support to its adoption as soon as possible, and who expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of progress in the adoption of amendments to the Law on Waters.

The adoption of the Regulation will create preconditions for the improvement of infrastructure for the provision of water services and their adequate management. At this moment (before the adoption of the Regulation) the improvement of infrastructure for the provision of water services and their adequate management are entirely limited. That problem was also identified through adopted planning documents in the fields of waters and environment in FBiH/BiH, such as:

- 2010-2022 FBiH Water Management Strategy,
- 2016-2021 Sava River Basin Water Management Plan in FBiH,
- 2016-2021 Adriatic Sea Basin Water Management Plan in FBiH,
- Strategy of Approximation of Environmental Legal Regulations in BiH with EU Acquis in the Area of Environment.

3. Bulgaria

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

According to article 92, paragraph 1 of EPA, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) shall mandatory be conducted of any development (investment) proposals for execution of construction, activities and technologies listed in Annex 1 hereto (compliance with Annex I of the Convention).

The Minister of Environment and Water (MoEW) shall be a competent authority for the purposes of making a decision on EIA for any development proposals, extensions or modifications:

- [...]
- falling within the Black Sea or Danube waters;

which fall under Annex 1 and are subject to a common EIA procedure and at least one of the procedures: issuance of permit for approval of the safety report with regard the construction and operation of a new and the operation of an existing enterprise and/or facility with high risk potential for major accidents with dangerous substances or parts thereof and for planned changes/expansions in existing enterprises and / or facilities with high risk potential; the issuance of an integrated pollution prevention and control permit – IPPC permit. The Director of RIEW is the competent authority in all other cases.

4. European Union

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Public participation concerning plans and programmes relating to the environment by Member States' authorities is ensured through the following legislation:

- The [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#) 2008/56/EC, which foresees in Article 19 public consultation on Member States' marine strategies and participation of interested parties in the implementation of the Directive.

Article 9 of the Aarhus Regulation, combined with the definitions in Article 2, ensure public participation in the preparation of environmental-related plans and programmes by EU institutions and bodies. The Aarhus Regulation requires EU institutions and bodies to provide early and effective opportunities for the public to participate in the preparation, modification or review of environmental-related plans or programmes when all options are still open.

5. France

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Several articles of the Environmental Code have introduced public information and participation procedures with regard to marine environmental policy (*inter alia* Articles L. 219-2 and L. 219-3 of the Code).

6. Georgia

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Aquaculture zone is defined on the basis of stakeholders' consultations and aquaculture permit is issued through public administrative proceeding, under which NEA ensures [Pursuant to the Law of Georgia on Aquaculture (2020)]:

- public access to the information on issuance of extensive aquaculture/aquaculture permits in marine waters;
- consideration of the public comments/opinions on the public hearings/consultation and their outcomes; public accessibility to decisions;
- publication of ecological monitoring results [Monitoring is conducted in accordance to the Law of Georgia on Agriculture]

7. Germany

Website addresses relevant to the implementation of article 8:

Seas: Public participation in reporting on the implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive: <https://www.meeresschutz.info/oeffentlichkeitsbeteiligung.html>.

8. Malta

I. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

ERA may also publish subsidiary plans, defined as: a plan that deals with a specific environmental policy or matter setting out detailed specifications for its implementation, as per Article 48; as well as more detailed plans and policies as per Article 50. Article 51 stipulates the procedure for that preparation of review of such plans. The procedure involves informing the public of the matters the Authority intends to consider and provide for public consultation on such preliminary issues, known as the 'Intent and Objectives' stage. Public consultation for a period of at least six weeks is also provided for after the draft plan has been prepared and published. A second public consultation may also be required in instances where changes are made to the draft plan which do not arise from the submissions received in the first public consultation. The plan is formally adopted by ERA after taking into consideration all the representations submitted to it. All submissions, together with ERAs replies are published on the ERA website (<https://era.org.mt/legislation-policy/national-environmental-policies/>).

The Development Planning Act (Cap. 552) contains similar provisions as regards the preparation of the Spatial Strategy for Environment and Development and other subsidiary plans. The former is a strategic document regulating the sustainable management of land and sea resources covering the whole territory and territorial waters of the Maltese Islands; whilst the latter include subject plans, local plans, action plans or management plans and development briefs. Articles 44 and 53 state that public consultation must be provided for during the preparation of the plan, as well as after the draft has been published in a similar manner as that described above.

The SEA Regulations in Malta are subsidiary regulations under the Environment Protection Act (Cap.549) as the parent act which defines "environment" as meaning the whole of the elements and conditions, natural or man-made, whether together or in isolation, and in particular: (a) the air, water, land, soil and sea, including their bedrock, aquifers and subsurface features; (b) all the layers of the atmosphere; (c) all biodiversity; and (d) the landscape and its features.

II. Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The Authority for Transport in Malta has also conducted targeted consultations with selected stakeholders on certain policies, e.g. local stakeholders were consulted on the National Marine Pollution Contingency Plan in its drafting phase; and also with respect to the recent promulgation of the Oil and Hazardous and Noxious Substances Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation Regulations which establish, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC Convention) and the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (OPRC-HNS Protocol), a regulatory framework for the applicability of the said Convention and Protocol and give force of law to the National Marine Pollution Contingency Plan. During the period under review, consultation started being carried with respect to the forthcoming implementation of Directive (EU) 2019/883 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships, amending Directive 2010/65/EU and repealing Directive 2000/59/EC. A SEA and various public consultation exercises were carried out on the Transport Master Plan 2016-2025. The outcome of public consultation, that is, the listing of the issues raised along with the Authority's responses were published in tabular format on its website.

III. Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 7:

In general, despite using various media and platforms, some entities indicate a low response rate, requiring a considerable increase in effort and resources and a more strategic approach in attempting to reach the public and relevant stakeholders and gain feedback. In some cases, despite reaching out through various platforms (website, use of MEUSAC, and social media), other options were resorted to. For instance, ERA adopted a combination of one-to-one meetings and sector-approached consultations on selected issues (e.g. Natura 2000 site management, particularly marine protected areas), combined with online meetings and traditional methods and modern media.

9. Montenegro

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 8:

In 2018, the Ministry issued a total of 10 public invitations to NGOs to propose candidates for the working group for participation in drafting of: Proposal of Strategy for Chemical Management with Action Plan for 2019-2022; Proposal of National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention; Proposal of Decree on prohibition and restriction of use, putting on the market and production of chemicals that represent an unacceptable risk to human health and the environment; Proposal of the Law on Industrial Emissions; Proposal of the Law on Amendments to of the Law on Integrated Prevention and Control of Environmental Pollution; Proposal of the Law on Alien and Invasive Alien Species of Plants, Animals and Fungi; Proposal of the Law on Protection from Negative Impacts of Climate Change; Proposal of the Law on Establishing a Framework for Marine Environmental Protection; Proposal of the Law on Waste Management; Proposal of amendments to the National Waste Management Plan in Montenegro for the period 2015–2020. In this period, NGOs applied for 5 public calls (for the drafting of the Proposal of the Law on Alien and Invasive Alien Species of Plants, Animals and Fungi, Proposal of the Law on Protection from Negative Impacts of

Climate Change, Proposal of the Law on Waste Management, Proposal of the Law on Establishing a Framework for Marine Environmental Protection, Proposal of amendments to the National Waste Management Plan in Montenegro for the period 2015–2020).

10. Norway

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

National guidelines operationalizing procedures and possibilities set out in the Planning and Building Act have been developed.

The environmental organisation Sabima is critical to the proposed changes in the Planning and Building Act and central planning guidelines for differentiated management of the coastal zone along the seaside. In their opinion, should these proposed changes be adopted, they will limit the planning processes and public participation in the development of decision impacting upon the environment, while making it easier for the municipalities to give dispensations for activities.

The requirements for municipal master plans and zoning plans follow from Sections 11-1 and 12-1. These requirements also apply to coastal zones, regardless of central planning guidelines. In the proposal for revised planning guidelines that was submitted to public hearing on the 5th of June 2020, it is stated in chapter 6 which applies to all zones, that the municipalities are obliged to actively clarify land use in the coastal zone through planning. The proposal for revised guidelines is not considered to impact upon Norway's compliance with its obligations under the Aarhus Convention.

11. Portugal

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Strategy, plans and programmes for the sea

- The National Strategy for the Sea (ENM 2013-2020) is the public policy instrument that presents the vision of Portugal for the period 2013-2020 in relation to the development model based on the conservation and sustainable use of marine ecosystem resources and services, indicating a long-term path to smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth based on the maritime component. It revised and updated the first version of the ENM 2006-2016 (RCM No. 163/2006 of 12 December), "taking into account the increase of national interest for the Ocean as a strategic vector, as well as the paradigm shift, marked both internally and externally, by an institutional context geared to sustainable development". The implementation of ENM 2013-2020 is being applied through the Mar-Portugal Plan, which includes a set of Action Programmes and Projects covering a wide range of domains, which has been periodically updated http://www.dgpm.mam.gov.pt/Pages/ENM_2013_2020_jan.aspx. In this Plan, IPMA seeks to be the central element through the production of knowledge and innovation in the areas of marine natural resources (living, non-living and energy resources) and the various uses of the ocean (activities and services with economic value, including aquaculture). During 2019, programmes of thematic workshops on the ENM Review were carried out for the period 2021-2030, in an open,

participatory and wide-ranging process, involving contributions from all interested parties. These workshops were held in various parts of the country in an attempt to decentralize such events, and an extended period of public consultation took place, from January to the end of 2020 (cf. <https://www.dgpm.mm.gov.pt/consulta-publica-enm2030> and <https://participa.pt/pt/consulta/consulta-publica-relatorio-do-2-ciclo-das-estrategias-marinhas-da-dqem>).

- Law No. 17/2014 of 10 April was published in 2014, which establishes the bases of the Policy for Planning and Management of the National Maritime Space. Article 12 of that law enshrines the information and participation rights of all stakeholders in the process of preparation, alteration, revision and suspension of the instruments for the planning of the national maritime space. Decree-Law No. 38/2015 of 12 March develops Law No. 17/2014 of 10 April, specifically in article 7 on the right to information and article 8 on the right to participation. The terms of participation in the preparation of the Situation Plan (article 17) and public consultation of the proposed contract for management (article 32) are also defined in the scope of the allocation plans. This law also makes the Situation Plan (article 13) subject to environmental assessment, under the terms of law, and makes the Allocation Plans equivalent to projects, for the purposes of applying the legal scheme for environmental impact assessment (article 23).
- Aquaculture production area of Central Portugal - public participation processes between 24 March and 11 April 2014, pursuant to paragraph 5 of Ordinance No. 4222/2014 of 21 March.
- Aquaculture production area of Tavira - public participation processes between 24 March and 11 April 2014, pursuant to paragraph 5 of Ordinance No. 4223/2014 of 21 March.

12. Spain

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

All projects submitted by the Biodiversity Foundation of the Ministry for the Environmental Transition and the Demographic Challenge to the European Commission's LIFE funding tool are subject to a period of consultation, suggestions and prior enrichment. Moreover, supporting letters can be added to them. The projects INTEMARES (Integrated, innovative and participative management of the Natura 2000 Network in the Spanish marine environment), and CERCETA (Plan of coordinated actions for the recovery of the marbled teal in Spain) have been submitted in this format. Hundreds of suggestions and letters of support were gathered in these processes before their final approval and implementation. The proposal "Lifestyle changes to recover nature", a major governance and communication project, is going to be done in the same way.

13. Sweden

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

The Swedish Agency for Marine and Water management has produced a guidance document to support the county administrative boards in the process of regional cooperation prior to the operators' application for re-examination of permits for hydropower plants. It follows from the guidance document that the county administrative boards are recommended to i.a. consult with non-governmental organisations.

14. Ukraine

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

Danube—Black Sea deep-sea fairway (hereinafter referred to as "Danube—Black Sea DSF")

The final resolution pertaining to the implementation by Ukraine of 2010 project entitled "Danube— Black Sea DSF in Ukrainian Delta Section. Comprehensive Development" was cancelled in 2018 by the order of the Interdepartmental Council Coordinating Implementation of the Espoo Convention in Ukraine in pursuance of the resolution of the Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Espoo Convention, and to address other issues of the Danube—Black Sea DSF renewal.

The notice of the proposed activities as part of the Reconstruction of Facilities of the Danube—Black Sea DSF in Ukrainian Delta Section was posted in 2020 on the Uniform of Environmental Impact Assessment Register website of the Ministry of Environment of Ukraine in accordance with the applicable laws of Ukraine and the Espoo Convention. The discussion process has been launched in the manner required by law. The transboundary consultation procedure is expected to be carried out with Romania, the party concerned.

15. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Environmental Impact Assessment (Fish Farming in Marine Waters) Regulations 1999;

Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007;

Chapter 5: Public participation in decision-making on climate change

1. Austria

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The BMK carried out several public participation processes on the following recent environment related policies: National Air Pollution Control Programme, Federal Waste Management Plan, Waste Avoidance and Recycling Strategy, Initiative on Avoidance of Food Waste, Progress Report to the Strategy for Adaption to Climate Change (see also under Art. 3 para 4).

2. Belgium

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Federal authority: Thirteen public participations on programs related to the environment (e.g. on an integrated national climate and energy plan or persistent organic pollutants) have been organized in the period 2016-2020. Public consultations have also been organised with regard to programs submitted to strategic environmental assessment, e.g. with regard to the management of nuclear waste.

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Walloon-Region: Several recent examples of public participation can be mentioned : The Walloon Plan of Waste- Resources (may-june2017), The National Energy Climate Plan (marchapril 2017 and February-march 2018), public enquiry in relation with operation and acoustics of wind turbines (February-mai 2020), or with river basin management plans (2018), prelude to the PARIS ("Action Programs on Rivers through an Integrated and Sector-based approach ") whose public enquiry will take place in 2021, etc.

Website addresses relevant to the implementation of article 7:

Walloon Region:

For air quality and climate:

<http://airclimat.wallonie.be>

<https://energie.wallonie.be/fr/la-contribution-wallonne-au-plan-national-energieclimat-2030.html?IDC=6238&IDD=127763>

3. Bulgaria

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Under article 9 of the Climate Change Mitigation the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy shall be drawn up following consultation with the National Expert Council on Climate Change, which includes representatives of environmental NGOs.

4. Cyprus

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

As mentioned above, once the EIA report is submitted, the public is notified of the submission and of the times and place where the study can be examined. According to Law 127(I)/2018, the report must contain the following information:

3. A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the proposed project and its alternatives, including in particular, population, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climate, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape, and the interrelationship between these factors.

5. European Union

I. Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6:

A pending compliance case against the EU concerning Article 6, ACCC/C/2014/121, has been published on the [UNECE website](#).

In relation to case ACCC/C/2014/121, as part of the European Green Deal, the Commission is reviewing EU measures to address pollution from industrial installations, including in particular Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions⁷ (IED). The review will look at the sectoral scope of the legislation and at how to make it fully consistent with the European Green Deal commitments, in order to progress towards the EU's zero pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment and to support climate, energy and circular economy policies. The Commission will carefully take into account concerns about public participation, also with a view to make it easier, for concerned parties, to seek judicial review where appropriate.

II. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Public participation concerning plans and programmes relating to the environment by Member States' authorities is ensured through the following legislation:

- The [Governance Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action](#), which provides in Article 10 for Member States' to ensure that the public is given early and effective opportunities to participate in the preparation of the draft integrated national energy and climate plan — as regards the plans for the 2021 to 2030 period, in the preparation of the final plan well before its adoption — as well as of the long-term strategies referred to in Article 15. Each Member State shall set reasonable timeframes allowing sufficient time for the public to be informed, to participate and express its views.

Article 9 of the Aarhus Regulation, combined with the definitions in Article 2, ensure public participation in the preparation of environmental-related plans and programmes by EU institutions and bodies. The Aarhus Regulation requires EU institutions and bodies to provide early and effective opportunities for the public to participate in the preparation, modification or review of environmental-related plans or programmes when all options are still open.

⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/environment/industry/stationary/ied/evaluation.htm>.

6. Finland

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

Section 10 of the Climate Change Act (609/2015) lays down provisions on the preparation of climate change policy plans, including the participation of the public. Several consultations, seminars and workshops for stakeholders were organised during the preparation of the medium-term plan for climate change policy.⁸

7. Georgia

Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6:

The Ombudsman indicates on the importance of elaboration of long-term energy policy planning and strategy. It should be noted, that MESD [The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development] has defined elaboration process of the document and will start its development in the nearest future. Besides, draft energy action plan, and energy and climate change integrated action plan, representing one of the components of renewable energy policy document, was elaborated.

8. Germany

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

In environmental policy, many decisions are taken that have direct impacts on the living conditions of citizens. The BMU has therefore been striving for years to enhance the involvement of the public in issues of environmental policy relevance. The lifeworlds and views of citizens are taken into account in decision-making. To this end, the BMU has carried out an array of public participation procedures on diverse environmental policy topics:

To mark the 23rd UN Climate Change Conference (COP 23) in Bonn, the BMU launched a youth dialogue [<https://www.bmu.de/publikation/unsere-klima-unsere-zukunft/>]. Some 200 young people debated the issues surrounding climate change. The outcomes were used to compile a youth report titled “Unser Klima! Unsere Zukunft!” (Our Climate! Our Future!). This contains the key recommendations and findings of the dialogue events and shall provide the foundation for developing Germany’s climate policy in a manner that does justice to the views of the young generation.

The implementation and updating of the Climate Action Programme 2030 adopted by the Federal Government in October 2019 is to be accompanied by broad participation. To this end, the climate action alliance (Aktionsbündnis Klimaschutz) involving representatives of all social groups and of local authorities is to be continued.

⁸ Government Report on Medium-term Climate Change Plan for 2030. Reports of the Ministry of the Environment 21en/2017.

The Länder, too, have introduced effective instruments of public participation deployed when preparing environmentally relevant policies. In Baden-Württemberg, for example, a participation portal has been set up that ensures transparency and facilitates public involvement in the policy-making process. Participation in environmental pricing is documented there, as is the already concluded participation procedure for the Land's integrated energy and climate action plan [<https://beteiligungsportal.baden-wuerttemberg.de/de/informieren/projekte-und-berichte/buergerwerkstatt-umweltbepreisung/> and <https://um.baden-wuerttemberg.de/de/klima/klimaschutz-in-baden-wuerttemberg/integriertes-energie-und-klimaschutzkonzept/oeffentlichkeitsbeteiligung/>].

9. Greece

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

As part of the consultation for the formulation of the Development Strategy in the field of Environment of ESPA 2014-2020, the Executive Authority of MEE organized a development conference, in May 2013, with the participation of a wide range of partners including environmental, social and economic partners, NGOs, research institutes, universities, bodies representing civil society and etc. The thematic sessions were held during the conference in order to better prepare the development strategy in the environmental sector addressed environmental issues such as resource management and protection (water, nature, soil), Energy, RES and climate change issues and entrepreneurship and innovation in the field of resource efficiency, energy and climate change. The results of the above-mentioned discussions, the comments and recommendations of the partners within the thematic meetings and the conclusions of the consultation process during the development conference are accessible to the competent stakeholders and the public concerned on the website of MEE www.ypeka.gr.

10. Italy

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The term "policies" incorporates plans, programmes, strategic and regulatory documents that contribute to defining an orientation. Public participation in the preparation of environmental policies is promoted using the methods enumerated in the previous section and through online public consultations.

Between 2018 and 2021, MiTE launched numerous online consultations on strategies, programmes and action plans, such as the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (PNACC), the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (PNIEC) (2019), the Long-term Strategy on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2019) and the National Strategy on Sustainable Development.

PNIEC, an example of extensive consultations

At the end of 2019, Italy sent the European Commission the Integrated National Plan for Energy and Climate (PNIEC) for the period 2021-2030 aimed at identifying national policies and measures to comply with European objectives on climate change and renewable energies.

Preparation of the PNIEC involved the following:

- Online public consultation: started on 20 March 2019 using a dedicated online portal and ended on 5 May 2019. Expert consultation: outside experts such as independent authorities, concessionaires like TSO (TERNA, SNAM), distributors, research bodies and universities, independent experts and trade and workers' associations were invited to participate with 49 questions.
- Discussions with regions and local authorities: the PNIEC proposal was the subject of talks with the Regions and local authorities during the conference of state-regions-cities and local governments.
- Recommendations from the European Commission: Italy took an active part in all meetings of the technical group held between 2018 and 2019.
- Strategic environmental assessment: the two phases of consultation were carried out.
- Discussions with other member states: in 2019 consultations were launched with the neighbouring/interested countries – Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, Austria and Malta – and continued afterwards.

The Italian Long-Term Strategy for decarbonisation (LTS), developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies, outlines the direction that Italy will have to follow for the next 30 years to ensure the decarbonisation of the economic and social system, seeking to arrive at "climate neutrality" by 2050. It was adopted in February 2021. The Strategy will have a profound and wide-ranging impact on the national socio-economic system, therefore several consultations have been organised:

- October 2019: online public consultation in the form of a multiple-choice questionnaire, concluded in November 2019. Section 2 is addressed to civil society in order to learn about respondents' propensity to change their lifestyle and how they think their habits may be influenced by the transition to a low-carbon economy. Section 3 is aimed at experts working in the fields of industry, transport, agriculture and land use, sectors that will play an important role in the decarbonisation process. 61 completed questionnaires were collected, of which 28 came from citizens and 33 from private associations/companies. The sector of greatest public interest was transportation.
- Sectoral technical meetings with trade associations, key players, environmental associations, trade unions, consumers and think tanks, in order to collect information, especially on technologies with greater potential for decarbonisation.

In 2016 the development of the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC) was launched, and during 2017 and 2018 the contents of the draft PNACC were shared with state public administrations, regional and local institutions, research bodies and various stakeholders. Two electronic public consultations and a scientific review were carried out during the same period. After an examination by the Conference of Regions and Autonomous Provinces, a structured participatory process for the PNACC was initiated, like the one for the SEA procedure, and in June 2020 the request for the start of the verification of eligibility for the SEA of the PNACC was submitted to the competent Authority, thus resulting in a consultation with the Parties Competent in Environmental matters (PCE). The evaluation phase of the preliminary Report has now been launched and consultation on this phase is still open to PCEs. The public will be involved in the next phase of evaluating the Environmental Report.

Several Round tables are also planned to promote a discussion on environmental issues, such as the coastal erosion round table coordinated by ISPRA with CNR and the university network; the information and

consultation round table with consumer associations on the REACH Regulation (see chapter III); the consultation round table on the National Biodiversity Strategy.

Also worthy of note is Directorial Decree no. 86 of 16/06/2015 that adopts the National Strategy for adaptation to climate change which in Art. 2, paragraph 2 calls for the establishment at MiTE of a “Permanent Forum for the promotion of information, training and decision-making capacity of the public and stakeholders” and a “National Observatory composed of local and regional representatives for the identification of territorial and sectoral priorities, as well as for the subsequent monitoring of the effectiveness of adaptation actions”.

Similarly, the governance structure of the National Biodiversity Strategy calls for the establishment of a Joint Biodiversity Committee composed of representatives of central administrations and autonomous regions and provinces, supported for technical and scientific aspects by the National Biodiversity Observatory composed of representatives of institutions, research bodies, protected areas of national and regional importance and scientific companies. Finally, the last body of the governance structure is the Consultation Round Table comprised of representatives of the main economic, production and environmental associations, thus ensuring the full and constant involvement of stakeholders in the process of implementing and reviewing the strategy.

11. Lithuania

I. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

The basis for public participation in the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment is laid down in the Law on Environmental Protection and the Law on Territorial Planning. Legislation implementing these laws and stipulating the provisions of public participation includes:

- (c) the Procedure for public information and participation in the preparation of plans and programmes for climate change management, ambient air and water protection and waste management approved by Order No D1-381 of the Minister of Environment of 26 July 2005.

In accordance with the Procedure for public information and participation in the preparation of plans and programmes for climate change management, ambient air and water protection and waste management, the public must be provided an opportunity to have access to plans and programmes during a period of at least 20 working days from the date of publication of the information on a plan or programme subject to preparation, modification or updating. During this period, the public is entitled to submit comments and proposals that are entered in a register of an established form. Motivated replies are provided to rejected proposals within 10 working days from the final due date for the submission of proposals. The program shall be notified to the public within 10 working days of the approved plan. The reasons are also provided on which decision making was based in the preparation, modification or updating of the specified plans and programmes, and statistical information on public participation is supplied (the number of natural and legal persons that submitted proposals, and the number of these proposals taken or not taken into account).

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Two public consultations took place during the preparation of the National Energy and Climate Action Plan (NECAP). From 13 March 2018 until 15 May 2019 the public was invited to submit proposals for the

NECAP measures and a draft version of its content (consultations were published through a dedicated national consultation platform E.pilietis). Following the public consultation and the implementation of the NECAP Commission's recommendations, the NEKS project was adjusted and on 13 November 2019 submitted for the second time for public consultation through the E.pilietis national consultation platform and presented at various events of the climate change week on 22-29 November. The public consultation ended on 4 December 2019. During the events of the Climate Change Week, science, consulting and NGOs and other organisations were invited to participate in a public discussion of the draft plan measures to discuss agricultural challenges and opportunities for meeting climate targets. The measures were also presented to the National Climate Change Committee, which included the social partners.

12. Montenegro

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 8:

In 2018, the Ministry issued a total of 10 public invitations to NGOs to propose candidates for the working group for participation in drafting of: Proposal of Strategy for Chemical Management with Action Plan for 2019-2022; Proposal of National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention; Proposal of Decree on prohibition and restriction of use, putting on the market and production of chemicals that represent an unacceptable risk to human health and the environment; Proposal of the Law on Industrial Emissions; Proposal of the Law on Amendments to of the Law on Integrated Prevention and Control of Environmental Pollution; Proposal of the Law on Alien and Invasive Alien Species of Plants, Animals and Fungi; Proposal of the Law on Protection from Negative Impacts of Climate Change; Proposal of the Law on Establishing a Framework for Marine Environmental Protection; Proposal of the Law on Waste Management; Proposal of amendments to the National Waste Management Plan in Montenegro for the period 2015–2020. In this period, NGOs applied for 5 public calls (for the drafting of the Proposal of the Law on Alien and Invasive Alien Species of Plants, Animals and Fungi, Proposal of the Law on Protection from Negative Impacts of Climate Change, Proposal of the Law on Waste Management, Proposal of the Law on Establishing a Framework for Marine Environmental Protection, Proposal of amendments to the National Waste Management Plan in Montenegro for the period 2015–2020).

In the period January-October 2020, the Ministry issued 6 public calls for non-governmental organizations to propose candidates for the working group, for: a member of the National Coordination Body for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan of the Radon Protection Programme for the period 2019-2023; Proposal of Decree on the amount of fees, method of calculation and payment of fees due to environmental pollution; Proposal of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Hydrometeorological Affairs; Proposal of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Hydrographic Activity and Proposal of the National Plan for Drought and Cooperation with UNCCD and Proposal of Decrees and Regulations based on the Law on Protection from Negative Impacts of Climate Change. NGOs applied for two public calls (for drafting of the Proposal of the National Plan for Drought and Cooperation with UNCCD and Proposal of Decrees and Regulations based on the Law on Protection from Negative Impacts of Climate Change). A public hearing was also organized for the Draft of the Action Plan for Meeting the Final Criteria in Chapter 27 - Environment and Climate Change, in the period 29.07-28.08.2020.

13. Portugal

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

Strategies and plans in the areas of energy and climate change

- Roadmap for Carbon Neutrality (RNC2050)

The transition to carbon neutrality is an ambitious challenge requiring the extended and participative involvement of the whole of society, which is why the preparation of the RNC2050 was based on a broad process of involvement of all sectors and the mobilization of Portuguese society.

This involvement took place throughout the different phases of the process, in particular the construction of the macroeconomic scenarios that serve as the basis for the entire prospective modelling. It allowed for the collection of contributions from various institutions and national experts, and gave rise to the three scenarios considered. Cycles of technical workshops were conducted that allowed us to understand the role of the circular economy in the future of different sectors, as well as to inform on the modelling work in the development of some of the main assumptions and trends (this cycle included sectorial workshops on Mobility, Forestry, Agrifood, Construction, Cities, Energy, Waste and Wastewater). Thematic events around the decarbonization of society were held, which included public sessions focusing on the themes of Mobility, the role of Forests in decarbonization, Energy Transition, Fair Transition and Sustainable Financing.

After the public presentation of the preliminary results of the RNC 2050, the formal process of public consultation was initiated, which took place over a period of about 3 months via the Participa portal (<http://www.participa.pt/consulta.jsp?loadP=2428>). Various documentation was made available for this purpose. This public consultation received around 83 submissions.

At the same time, public sessions were promoted for the joint presentation of these results and of the preliminary version of the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan (PNEC 2030), in order to provide general public awareness of these two key instruments of energy and climate policy, and to invite contributions and comments which could potentially lead to further improvement of the works. These sessions took place across the country.

- National Energy and Climate Plan (PNEC 2030)

The public discussion of the PNEC 2030 began with the holding of a public presentation session in Lisbon. Subsequently, several joint presentation sessions of the PNEC 2030 and the RNC2050 were held throughout the country, which aimed to promote debate around the main issues on Energy and Climate over the coming decades.

There were also sessions dedicated to specific themes, attended by specialists from a wide range of study areas, to seek solutions for the fulfilment of national goals and objectives associated with the themes involved.

The Public Consultation process was then carried out over a period of 30 days via the online PARTICIPA.PT portal (cf. <https://participa.pt/pt/consulta/plano-nacional-de-energia-e-clima-2030>), with contributions having been received through the “Participa” platform and other channels, such as e-mail and official letter. This public consultation received around 59 submissions

- Infra-national Adaptation Strategies and Plans

A significant part of the territory is currently covered by municipal and/or inter-municipal Adaptation Strategies/Plans (NUTS3). This progress was due to the replication of the work carried out as part of the ClimAdaPT.Local Project (completed in 2016), which marked the start of large-scale infra-national adaptive management. In this Project, a reference method was established for the creation of these strategies (27 were produced), with several events involving communities and local agents, as well as the training of local technicians. ClimAdaPT.Local has provided guidance manuals that support nearly all infra-national adaptation strategies in place and in preparation.

- Climate Change Adaptation Action Programme (P-3AC)

The definition of the lines of action of the P-3AC resulted from the screening and prioritisation of the various adaptation measures listed in the sectorial, municipal and inter-municipal planning exercises. For this purpose, the ENAAC 2020 Coordination Group reviewed and collected submissions from the constituent members of the various sectoral working groups (made up of different types of sectoral stakeholders). The P-3AC was also submitted to public consultation and was the object of an opinion from the Scientific Panel of ENAAC 2020, thus ensuring wide-ranging consideration in the preparation of this reference instrument.

- National Strategy for Hydrogen

The National Strategy for Hydrogen (EN-H2), approved by RCM No. 63/2020 of 14 August, aims to promote the gradual introduction of hydrogen as a sustainable and integrated cornerstone of a broader strategy for transition to a decarbonised economy and carbon neutrality in 2050 (cf. <https://www.portugalenergia.pt/setor-energetico/bloco-4/> and <https://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/gc22/comunicacao/comunicado?i=conselho-de-ministros-aprova-estrategia-nacional-para-o-hidrogenio>). A period was established to hear public opinion, given the strategic and transversal nature, and the impact of EN-H2. This comprised a public consultation which took place between 22 May and 6 July 2020 (cf. <https://participa.pt/pt/consulta/en-h2-estrategia-nacional-para-o-hidrogenio>). At the same time, in-depth dialogue was held with the main players in the sector, with a view to consolidating the main objectives of this Strategy, in particular with regard to the targets for the incorporation of hydrogen in the various sectors (six sessions to discuss the strategy were organised with representatives from the sectors of Innovation and Development, Industry, Transport, Energy and Training, Qualification and Employment).

Portuguese NGOs active in diverse thematic areas, such as the environment, cooperation for development, human rights and local development, have also given increasing importance to the issue of climate change, contributing to greater awareness and information among citizens and monitoring the actions of companies, public bodies and policy decisions in this field.

On the understanding that promoting conversations on the theme of climate change among citizens and civil society is one of the fundamental steps for the success of climate policies, each year the APA has issued invitations with a view to including representatives from civil society in the official Portuguese delegation to the Conference of Parties as part of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. These invitations have been sent to platforms and confederations representing civil society organisations in the fields of environment, development support and entrepreneurship. This initiative not only contributes to the greater awareness of these bodies on the theme of climate change, but also provides better information, aimed specifically at target audiences and also the general public, on the work which is ongoing at the heart of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Water resources plans and programmes

The CNA discussed and approved in plenary, between 2017 and 2020:

- The 2017 drought in the context of adaptation to climate change;

National Action Programme to Combat Desertification (PANCD)

The PANCD review process began in January 2010, more than a decade after the entry into force of PANCD 1999. It meets the obligations and necessary alignment with the guidelines of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) following the adoption of the Ten Year Strategy 2008/2018, which defines new strategic and operational objectives, expected impacts and global and national indicators to be complied with by national programmes for the period in question. These strategic objectives include the sustainable management and recovery of ecosystems of the susceptible areas and the articulation and promotion of synergies with the processes related to climate change and biodiversity in these fields.

Strategies in the area of agriculture

- The National Irrigation Programme was approved by RCM No. 133/2018 of 12 October - The XXI Constitutional Government's programme provided for the preparation of a National Irrigation Programme (PNRegadios), with the aim of expanding, rehabilitating and modernizing existing irrigation systems and creating new irrigated areas, ideally with the potential to connect to existing ones. The objective is to promote irrigation and other collective infrastructures with a view to sustainability, contributing to the adaptation to climate change, the fight against desertification and a more efficient use of resources. As stated in the introduction of the RCM, the PNRegadios programme, by implementing new hydro-agricultural systems in areas that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, constitutes an important measure of prevention and mitigation of such effects, increasing the resilience and robustness of agricultural systems as well as contributing to the settlement of populations, particularly in the areas most weakened by the dynamics of depopulation. The activities planned in the PNRegadios cover very diverse areas of the national territory. The creation and reinforcement of sources of surface water in the Trás-os-Montes, Beira, Alentejo and Algarve regions is a priority from the perspective of spatial planning and social justice, without prejudice to the need to link up with areas of greater environmental sensitivity, in particular the areas included in the 2000 Nature Networks.

14. Romania

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

Romania has undertaken the SEA procedures, including public participation phase, (also public hearing meetings) for all the sectoral operational programs developed for 2013-2020. Further, for the 2017-2020 programming period MEWF applied the SEA procedure, including the public participation step, to all the sectoral operational programmes and other plans/programs/strategies in the areas of: transport, economic

competitiveness, waste, climate change, agriculture, forestry, energy, industry, mining of mineral resources, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, regional development.

15. Serbia

I. Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6:

Certain associations consider that there is a lack of systematic, coherent and transparent public involvement in issues of public interest related to different sectors: nature protection, air protection, health protection, energy, climate change, water management and spatial planning. There is a difference between different sectors and institutions in the way of public involvement. In some, it is more functional in others less, so it can be said that there is an unequal and non-standardized approach to public involvement when looking at all areas that have an impact on the environment.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 8:

In the period from 2017 to 2020, representatives of civil society, as members of the working group, participated in the development of Directives Specific Implementation Plans (DSIPs), as well as in the development of the Action Plan for Strengthening Administrative Capacities, which are accompanying documents of the Negotiating Position for Chapter 27- Environment and Climate Change.

16. Slovakia

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

The process of updating the Strategy for the Adaptation of the Slovak Republic to Climate Change in 2017-2018 took place in a participatory manner, in which a working group for adaptation composed of representatives of public administration, academia, and NGOs participated in its preparation. The strategy in question passed through the process of assessing the impacts of strategic documents under Act No. 24/2006 Coll. on environmental impact assessment, in which the public was given the opportunity to comment.

An action plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Adaptation of the Slovak Republic to Climate Change has been under preparation since 2018 in cooperation with the Forecasting Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. A wide group of experts from the fields of agriculture, forestry, water management, geology, nature protection, spatial planning, energy, industry, etc. was involved in the process, as well as representatives of NGOs, higher territorial units, local governments, and umbrella organizations of local governments (UCMS, Union of cities of Slovakia). The draft action plan was prepared based on the results of a questionnaire survey.

In 2018, a cross-ministerial conference was held with the participation of representatives of the MoE SR, the MTC SR and the Bratislava self-governing region focused on providing information about key strategic documents in the area of climate change. In 2019, under the auspices of the MoE SR and the SEA, a professional conference Climate Change 2019 - Challenges and Solutions was held.

Within the project Improving information and providing advice in the field of improving the quality of the environment, the SEA organizes activities with the aim of improving information and communication on adaptation to climate change at the local and regional levels. In addition to processing information materials and publications, it organizes information days in various regions of Slovakia, which are aimed at supporting local government activities in the field of adaptation. At the same time, the SEA provides professional support in creating local adaptation strategies and action plans focused on the adaptation of local governments to climate change and educational opportunities for public administration in this area through a website called Green Infrastructure in the Process of Adaptation to Climate Change.

17. Spain

I. Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

There are, moreover, other sectoral participation bodies, such as the National Water Council, the National Climate Council, the National Council for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity and the Council for the Rural Environment and the Committee of Rural Development Associations.

II. Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8:

Likewise, there are certain collegiate bodies (National Water Council, National Climate Commission, National Council for Natural Heritage and Biodiversity), which enjoy the participation of social agents and the most representative environmental defense entities which are bound to know the regulatory projects in the aforementioned sectors.

18. Tajikistan

I. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

С 2012 года действует Координационный Комитет Пилотной Программы по Адаптации к изменению климата, в состав которого входят помимо заинтересованных министерств и ведомств представители гражданского общества. Комитет принимает решения по реализации климатических инвестиций в Таджикистане в рамках РПРС. Молодёжный ЭкоЦентр и Климатический Клуб экоНПО являются членом Координационного Комитета РПРС.

II. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 6:

Таджикистан принимает активное участие в Реализации Пилотной Программы по адаптации к изменению климата (РПРС), которая реализуется Правительством РТ совместно с АБР, ВБ и ЕБРР. Ряд общественных организаций имеющих потенциал в сфере управления климатическими рисками,

планирования и реализации мер, смягчающих негативное воздействие изменения климата, имеющих опыт в повышении осведомленности населения привлекаются ПРТ к участию в принятии решений по дальнейшему развитию РРСР, реализации отдельных компонент программы, разработке Национальной стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата в Таджикистане. Так на протяжении 2013- 2016 г. общественными организациями МЭЦ, Фонд «Кухистон», «Хамкори бахри тараккиёт», «Центр по чрезвычайным ситуациям и изменению климата», «Национальная Ассоциация фермерских хозяйств» и др. проведены работы по оценке уязвимости сообществ к изменению климата, разработаны местные планы действий, созданы общинные информационные центры, проведены тренинги по внедрению адаптационных мер и устойчивому водопользованию, землепользованию и сельскому хозяйству. В рамках процесса разработки Национальной Стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата, ряд ОО вошли в состав Межведомственной Рабочей группы и сделали важные предложения по учету в Национальной стратегии интересов общин, малоземельных фермеров, женщин и уязвимых групп населения.

III. Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

По распоряжению Президента Республики Таджикистан представители общественных организаций, отражающие интересы общественности являются членами Правительственных рабочих групп по реализации конвенций, ратифицированных Таджикистаном и принимают участие в разработке Национальных Планов Действий по охране окружающей среды Республики Таджикистан и Национальных отчетов по охране окружающей среды.

При содействии международных организаций только за последние три года с участием общественности были разработаны:

- Третье национальное сообщение по изменению климата (2014г.);

В настоящее время разрабатываются:

- Национальная Адаптационная Стратегия и План действий по адаптации к изменению климата

Существует практика включения ОО в структуры, занимающиеся принятием решений в области окружающей среды. Так, при каждой Конвенции работают Рабочие группы, в которые включены представители ОО - по реализации Орхусской Конвенции, по Сохранению биологического разнообразия, по изменению климата, по борьбе с опустыниванием и других конвенций ратифицированных Таджикистаном. При МКУР ЦА работает Региональная рабочая группа – ОО стран ЦА, создан Региональный общественный Совет при МКУР. В Совете Управляющих РЭЦЦА присутствует представитель от ОО РТ, который принимает участие в принятии решений по деятельности РЭЦЦА. Этот представитель выбирается Клубом экологических ОО республики. Вовлечение представителей общественного сектора в совместную с государственными органами деятельность способствует принятию эффективных решений по экологическим программам и вопросам в странах ЦА и нашей республике.

В 2014г Ресурсным Орхус-Центром Душанбе при КООС организована встреча представителей ОО с Руководством КООС. В течении 2014-2016 годов проведены 8 семинаров в гг. Душанбе, Турсунзода, а также с представителями госорганов, ОО и населения районов республиканского подчинения по Интегрированному управлению водных ресурсов, по ОК, по адаптации к изменению климата, смягчению последствий изменения климата и т.д., подготовлены брошюры по данным тематикам, а также брошюра о деятельности Орхус- Центров в республике с их контактными данными.

IV. Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

В 2015 г создана Рабочая Группа по Разработке Национальной Стратегии адаптации к изменению климата. В её состав помимо ключевых министерств входят представители гражданского общества. Общество принимает участие в процессе подготовки Стратегии, даёт рекомендации по разработке разделов стратегии. МЭЦ является членом Рабочей группы по Разработке Национальной Стратегии по адаптации к изменению климата.

В процессе разработки климатической политики в РТ обеспечиваются возможности для участия общественности в разработке Национальной Адаптационной Стратегии и Плана действий по адаптации к изменению климата.

Широкие возможности для участия в принятии решений, в обсуждении хода реализации стратегических правительственных документов предоставлены общественности в рамках реализации Рамочной конвенции по изменению климата. Так, например, при содействии общественности в 2014г. было разработано Третье национальное сообщение по изменению климата. В рамках реализации Концепции перехода РТ к УР до 2030 года в 2013- 2016 г.г. при МЭЦ продолжала действовать программа по образованию для УР. Программа включила в себя: проведение дебатов среди молодёжи, тренинги для молодёжи и преподавателей по вопросам окружающей среды и УР, проведение летних экологических лагерей. Совместно с Комитетом охраны окружающей среды Душанбе и ОО, Центром дополнительного образования Министерства образования и науки РТ были проведены общественные информационно- просветительские акции «День Земли», «Всемирный День охраны природы».

19. Turkmenistan

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

In Turkmenistan, there is a practice of discussing draft programme documents (conceptions, strategies, plans and programmes), related to the environment, and also collecting and taking into account proposals and recommendations from the public. The discussion of draft conceptions, strategies, plans and programmes is attended by representatives of public associations, including environmental ones, individual citizens, scientists and teachers of specialised higher educational institutions and other activities. An important mechanism for involving the public in the development of environmental policy is their participation in the implementation of various international projects with the support of UNDP, UNEP, GEF, AF, USAID and others. In particular, by involving experts and specialists from public associations, the National Action Plan on Desertification (1997), Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation

of Turkmenistan (2002), National Afforestation Programme of Turkmenistan until 2020 (2013), Sixth National Report on Biodiversity of Turkmenistan (2019) and others. A fresh example in this regard is the preparation and discussion of the draft National Strategy of Turkmenistan on climate change in 2019. Experts from the Aarhus Centre took part in the discussion of the draft Strategy and preparation of recommendations on its content. Most of their recommendations were included in the final version of this document, and then the Strategy was approved in a new version by the Decree of the President of Turkmenistan of September 23, 2019.

20. Ukraine

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 8:

Draft Law of Ukraine "On State Environmental Control" (of 19 February 2020, reg. No. 3091). The 2030 National Climate Change Policy Implementation Concept (adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 07 December 2016, Decree No. 932-r) and the Action Plan to the 2030 National Climate Change Policy Implementation Concept (adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 06 December 2017, Decree No. 878-r), which determine the key priorities and objectives of the climate policy of Ukraine, establish legal and institutional prerequisites for a staged transition to the low-carbon development under the conditions of economic, energy and environmental security and public welfare improvement. The 2050 Low-Carbon Development Strategy of Ukraine (adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 18 July 2018, Protocol Resolution No. 28) pursuant to Article 4 Paragraph 19 of the Paris Agreement which requires that Ukraine, fully understanding its commitments under the Paris Agreement and following the national priorities, makes efforts to achieve the indicative figure of 31—34% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 versus 1990. This is an and fair indicative figure in the context of participation in the global response to the climate change threats. Ukraine plans to review its strategy at least every five years to assess progress and increase its ambition taking the national situation into account.

The following draft regulations have also been developed and are currently at the coordination stages:

- 1) Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On approval of the 2030 National Climate Change Scientific and Technical Programme Concept";
- 2) Draft Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On approval of the 2030 Strategy of Environmental Safety and Adaptation to Climate Change".

The adoption of Decree No. 868 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 30 July 2021, which approved Ukraine's Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement, was an important step for Ukraine.

21. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7:

In Scotland, the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 has extended the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) beyond those required by the original EU Directive (2001/42/EC). This has allowed the public to actively and meaningfully participate in the preparation of public plans,

programmes and strategies, if they were likely to have significant environmental effects. The result being the public has had an opportunity to contribute to the preparation of high-level Scottish strategies. For example, Scotland's National Planning Framework, Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and National Transport Strategy. The Scottish Government hosts a SEA Database, which provides information about all SEA activity in Scotland, and is freely available to the public: <https://www2.gov.scot/seag/publicsearch.aspx>.

Chapter 6: Public participation in decision-making on emerging technologies

1. Italy

Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7:

The Italian Long-Term Strategy for decarbonisation (LTS), developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies, outlines the direction that Italy will have to follow for the next 30 years to ensure the decarbonisation of the economic and social system, seeking to arrive at "climate neutrality" by 2050. It was adopted in February 2021. The Strategy will have a profound and wide-ranging impact on the national socio-economic system, therefore several consultations have been organised:

- Sectoral technical meetings with trade associations, key players, environmental associations, trade unions, consumers and think tanks, in order to collect information, especially on technologies with greater potential for decarbonisation.

2. Spain

Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6:

Autonomous Communities and Local Governments have, in general adopted measures concerning participation, establishing new ways to do so or reinforcing the existing once, especially those derived from Agenda 21 Local in the case of Local Entities. To do so, both levels of government have promoted the use of new technologies. For example, the Autonomous Community of Madrid's Participation Portal:

www.comunidad.madrid/participacion

<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/medioambiente/site/porta/web/menuitem.d1a35641276b2bf2490a9d105510e1ca/?vgnnextoid=50d9193566a68210VgnVCM10000055011eacRCRD&vgnnextchannel=d869193566a68210VgnVCM10000055011eacRCRD>

Further information on the practical application of the provisions of article 7:

In both the National Authorities and in regional and local authorities, citizen participation in the preparation and approval of plans and programs is facilitated by the implementation of new technologies that allow for interactive participation by citizens and whose purpose is to make it transparent and foster it. In the Local Authorities, new ways to participate are being established, or existing ones are being reinforced, especially those derived from the Agenda 21 Local.
