

## **ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

### **MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

Fourth session  
Chisinau, 29 June – 1 July 2011

Procedures and mechanisms facilitating the implementation of the Convention:  
Reports on implementation

#### **IMPLEMENTATION REPORT SUBMITTED BY GREECE**

*Article 10, paragraph 2, of the Convention requires the Parties, at their meetings, to keep under continuous review the implementation of the Convention on the basis of regular reporting by the Parties. Through decision I/8, the Meeting of the Parties established a reporting mechanism whereby each Party is requested to submit a report to each meeting of the Parties on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken to implement the Convention, and their practical implementation, according to a reporting format annexed to the decision. For each meeting, the secretariat is requested to prepare a synthesis report summarizing the progress made and identifying any significant trends, challenges and solutions. The reporting mechanism was further developed through decision II/10, which addressed, inter alia, the issue of how to prepare the second and subsequent reports.*

## I. PROCESS BY WHICH THIS REPORT HAS BEEN PREPARED

1. The Ministry of Environment ,Energy and Climate Change (MoEECC )has been established in 2009 ,replacing existing Ministry for the Environment ,Physical Planning and Public Works in order to confront the continuous environmental problems and to adopt a new development model – the model of Green Development- that will secure a better quality of life for every citizen.Regarding the process by which this report has been prepared, the **MoEECC**, has invited the following Public Authorities for consultation and contribution to the preparation of the present report: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education,lifelong learning and Religious Affairs, Ministry of Regional Development and Competitiveness, Ministry of Interior ,decentralization & e-government,Ministry of Justice,Transparency and Human Rights, Ministry of Rural Development and Food, Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Islands and Fisheries,Ministry of Infrastructure ,Transport and Networks, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Hellenic Food Authority (EFET), and Hellenic Ombudsman.Additionally the following departments of the **MoEECC**, the, Regions of Greece,,Competent Bodies and NGOs have also been invited for contribution and comments to this report.: Department of International Relations and EU Affairs, Special Service for the Environment, Environmental Planning Directorate, Bureau of National Network for Environmental Information , Air Pollution and Noise control Directorate,Special Secretariat for Water (former Central Water Service), Special Management Service of the Operational Programme “Environment and Sustainable Development”(EPPER),Spatial Planning Directorate, Urban Planning Directorate , Special Projects Upgrading areas Directorate,Inspection Secretariat of Environment and Energy,Directorate General for Energy,Special Secretariat Forests,Directorate General of Development , Directorate General for Protection of Forests and Natural Environment,the National Centre of Environment and Sustainable Development,as well as 13 regions of Greece including their local authorities and prefectures and the NGOs Mediterranean Information Office.(MIO- ECSDE), WWF Hellas ,Greek Society for the Protection of Environment and Heritage, as well as Green Peace (Greece).. .....

Taking into consideration the restriction on the length of national implementation reports prepared as official United Nations documents, this edition is shorter than the first draft report which includes more detailed information .

.This report has been based on the report from the previous reporting cycle and has been updated with new information.Recent reports of the **MoEECC**,such as the recent report to EC on directive 2003/4, recent studies, as well as relevant inputs of public authorities to the parallel OECD<sup>1</sup> environmental performance review preparation, concerning issues of this report, have also been taken into consideration.

2. The above participation included a consultation period of approximately 11 weeks before the first draft is displayed on the Internet ( by e-mail,regular mail and where necessary, with clarification meetings and discussions). After the completion of the first draft, it was displayed for public consultation on the **official** website of **MoEECC** for four weeks. A special e-mailbox has been set up for the public and NGOs to submit comments on the first draft of the report. Submitted comments have been integrated. Decisions 1/8 and 11/10 on reporting were taken into consideration and where possible the recommendations of the Convention’s Compliance

---

<sup>1</sup> Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development.

Committee. It is the second report of Greece, and due to recent local and regional elections there was a delay of the answers of regional and local authorities to the questionnaire but efforts were made to meet the quality requirements of the information included in the Report.

## **II. PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES RELEVANT FOR UNDERSTANDING THE REPORT**

3. According to Article 101 of the Constitution, the administration of the State is organized in accordance with the principle of decentralization. Regions constitute another level of administrative organization provided by law. According to Article 102 of the Constitution, the administration of local affairs belongs to the local government agencies. The first level of local government (the municipalities and the communes) has been also established. Finally, relevant laws provide for the second level of local government, the prefecture government whose authority extends to the territory of all the local government agencies of a prefecture. A new Law "Kallikratis" (L.3852/10 OJG 87/7 -6-2010) that comes into force on 1-11-2011 established the first level of local government that consists of local municipalities and the second level of local government that consists of 13 Regions. Besides the State decentralization that consists of 7 decentralized administrations, also established, as well as the merging of some municipalities and communities and the abolition of prefecture government. 13 governors elected for 13 Regions in November 2010

4. International treaties and Conventions require, according to Article 28 of the Constitution, a national law voted by the Parliament, through which they are ratified and are not applied directly or have a direct effect upon its entry into force. Greece ratified the Convention at the end of 2005 and thus became a Party (see art. 3). For the purpose of a better understanding of this report, it should be noted that the implementation of the Convention in Greece is generally based on EU Directives, which have already been transposed into national law (see art. 3).

## **III. LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND OTHER MEASURES IMPLEMENTING THE GENERAL PROVISIONS IN PARAGRAPHS 2, 3, 4, 7 AND 8 OF ARTICLE 3**

### **Article 3, paragraph 2**

5. In Greece, there is a complete legal framework regulating access to environmental information and access to information and ensuring that officials and authorities assist and provide the required guidance.

6. The Convention was ratified by the Greek Parliament in December 2005 through Law 3422/12-12-2005 (*Official Journal of the Government* (OJG) A 303 /2005). According to article 3, paragraph 9 (a), of Joint Ministerial Decision (JMD) 11764/653/2006 (OJG 327B/17-3-2006) through which the Directive 2003/4/EC, on public access to environmental information was transposed, officials are required to support the public in seeking access to information. The 2003/4/EC Directive was formulated by the European Commission (EC) for the better implementation of the first pillar of the Convention by the EU Member States. According to Article 3, paragraph 1, of the above-mentioned JMD, public authorities make available environmental information held by or for them to any

applicant at his request within the deadlines set by law. **A circular issued by the Ministry of Environment** , Energy and Climate Change (**MoEECC**) was sent to Environmental Administration at national and at regional level, giving guidance concerning Aarhus Convention and the above JMD on public access to environmental information and asking the officials to support the public in seeking access to information.

According to the reports received by administration at national and regional level , officials, in their majority , are supporting the public in seeking access to information however as a main problem and obstacle is reported lack of human and other resources(staff and funding) as well as heavy work load.

7. In Greece, the right of access to information is not limited only to environmental issues. Due to restrictions on the length of the reports detailed legal information on this issue is included in the previous report of Greece.

8. **Lists of public Authorities are publicly accessible** in the Citizens Service Centers (CSCs) as well as in the CSCs' Web site. Citizens Service Centres (CSCs) have been established by the Ministry of Interior, Decentralization and E- Government in regions, prefectures and local authorities all over Greece by law 3013/2002. CSCs are effectively assisting the citizens in dealing with public administration, and in accessing information and documents. . The CSC website has been designed and developed for efficient electronic information and service for citizens, where a "Guide for the Citizen" is displayed. In addition, it now gives citizens the possibility to submit comments and electronic applications regarding a wide series of administrative documents, thus implementing a substantial step towards e-governance in Greece. The Citizen Service Call Centre (1500) is also an important step towards citizens' information.

Ministry of Interior, proceeded to the publication of the newspaper "journalists", which promotes information to citizens on key issues of Public Administration. The creation in the Ministries and in its supervised bodies, in prefectural governments and in local authorities to a level of more than 20,000 inhabitants, reception offices of the Citizens, aiming to organize and systematize the provision of information to citizens and provide guidance for immediate and accurate service.

9.

A Citizens' Service Office operates within the (**MoEECC**) assisting and informing citizens about the competent departments of the Ministry where they can find the required information and if possible, bringing them in contact with the competent officials. A Citizen's Service Office and /or a Public Relations Department operates also in other Ministries to assist citizens in dealing with public administration. A Press Department operates in every ministry , competent for diffusing press releases regarding each ministry's activities. A special help desk, which consists of officers especially appointed for public information and assistance on relevant issues, has been established by the Managing Unit of the Operational Environment Programme (EPPER) under the **MoEECC** . Access to environmental information concerning the EPPER is also acquired through the respective website ([www.epper.gr](http://www.epper.gr)) and ([www.epperaa.gr](http://www.epperaa.gr)), constantly updated. Also operates a website to complete a form of direct communication with the service. Representatives of environmental NGOs participate in the Steering Committee of EPPER kai EPPERAA Environmental information is also accessed through the Ministry's official website ([www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr)), redesigned. recently and continuously updated . Environmental information of other ministries is accessed through their official websites.

10. In addition, citizens have the possibility to submit, through the established line of communication with the citizens their questions and comments on the issues of the **MoEECC**. In the **MoEECC** as well as in regional administration, almost every competent official is required to inform the public on the certain issues of his responsibility because due to the large scope of environmental information and the complexity and difficulty of the issues, expertise is needed. Another reason is the lack of sufficient staff. The examination of the information is taking place in the premises of the Public Authority where the information is held and can be accessed and photocopied. The National Network for Environmental Information (NNEI), established in the **MoEECC**, is an important action towards disseminating of environmental information (see below under art. 5, para. 1).

**An Investors Service for renewable energy sources (RES) projects** recently created in the (**MoEECC**) aiming to strengthen and accelerate investment in renewable energy sources.

### **Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4**

11. In the framework of actions for environmental education (EE) and education for sustainable development (ESD), Greece is following the UNECE and UNESCO<sup>2</sup> processes at a satisfactory level. Within these processes:

(a) A National Commission for ESD has been set up, which includes NGOs as well as museums, etc.;

(b) The Ministry of Education has set up a programme of action for the United Nations Decade of ESD (2005–2014), identifying focus issues for each year, and has invited NGOs to participate in the implementation of the programme;

(c) Collaboration of the **MoEECC** with the Ministry of Education in the framework of ESD;

(d) The **MoEECC** /former Central Water Agency, Special Secretariat of Water for implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive, is undertaking the following support actions:

- (i) Establishment and operation of a related website;
- (ii) Translation of the Water Framework Directive guidance documents;
- (iii) Education of the competent authorities' personnel, public information and awareness (ongoing);

(e) With the support of the Ministry of Education's Operational Programme (EPEAEK, funded by the Community Structural Funds, the Cohesion Fund and national funds) and in coordination with the **MoEECC**, projects have been approved which focus on enhancing awareness, education, training and participation in decision-making bodies of protected areas. NGOs are running these projects and local civil society is a key target group, as are local administrative bodies;

---

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

(f) **MoEECC** supports awareness-raising efforts, giving priority to information, education and training programme issues;

(g) In the context of the Decade of ESD, the Ministry of Education formulated a National Strategy and the progress and evaluation indicators;

(h) During the period 2004-2007, 18,500 programmes of environmental education and 27000 programmes of health education took place in primary education; 19,000 programmes of environmental education and 18,000 programmes of health education took place in secondary education; 4,686 school programmes were financed by the EU through Aegean University; as were 380 financed school programmes on gender equality – RCGE and 820 financed interventional school programmes – by the National Youth Institute in cooperation with 6,000 schools;

(i) There are 35 national thematic networks, each one in 120 schools. Subjects coincide with all ESD activities;

(j) The training of 15,000 educators is in process, as well are teacher trainings;

(k) Periodical materials on sustainable development are being produced by Centres of Environmental Education (CEE);

(l) All academic years in the period 2005–2014 are denoted according to sustainability principles in the framework of the Decade of ESD;

(m) The Programmes of School Activities consist of a contemporary curriculum developed in the framework of either the school unit or environmental networks /collaborations of schools;

(n) A National Network of Centres of Environmental Education has been developed;

(o) 6,000 programmes of school awareness activities per year have been conducted;

(p) There are now national, regional and local thematic networks of school activities (e.g. biodiversity, energy, rivers);

(q) Production of educational material at the regional and local levels;

(r) Pilot regional programmes (schools for recycling);

(s) Cooperative activities with public sectors, universities, NGOs and local communities;

(t) The Mediterranean Information Office (MIO–ECSDE) has established the Circle of Mediterranean Journalists for Environment and Sustainable Development at the Mediterranean level;

(u) Press releases of the **MoEECC**, on the occasion of the ratification of the Convention by the Parliament, as well as on the transposition of the relevant Directives 2003/4 and 2003/35 for the information of the public on its environmental rights, have been published in newspapers and also displayed on the official MoE website;

(v) An information leaflet on Convention was published by the Athens Bar Association making available information to the public on its environmental rights under the Convention;

(w) A conference on the implementation of the Convention was held in 2007 on the initiative of the Hellenic Society for the Protection of the Environment and the Cultural Heritage in cooperation with the Athens Bar Association and the MoE, as well as representatives from the Council of State, the Ombudsman, the EU, and other stakeholders;

(x) A lot of workshops, seminars and presentations were organized, at central and prefecture level as well as publications and information leaflets were produced by the competent State bodies, for the information and awareness raising of the public and all interested parties on alternative waste management issues;

- (z) A law guide for the environment issued in 2009 by WWF Hellas and Greek Ombudsman available for the public and displayed on its websites, includes issues on access to information .

The provisions of Law 2742/1999 on Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development (art. 4) involve NGOs in environmental decision-making within the National Council for Planning and Sustainable Development

- informing the public on urban planning through the public consultation
- the participation of **MoEECC** / Directorate of Spatial Planning in the information and awareness programs of the National Center for Public Administration.

(z) According to the opinion of an NGO and a member of the public, broader public information is necessary regarding the environmental rights provided by Convention, together with training lessons on environmental rights included in the school curricula in the framework of environmental education.

12. **a MoEECC** has set the initiative “**Green Action-Clean Forests**” urging the citizens to actively contribute into actions of voluntary service and simultaneously, encouraging local communities citizens and NGOs to develop co-operations, as well as to take initiatives for organising environmental actions, for the protection of Forests. With the motto “**Green Action-Clean Forests**”, **MoEECC** in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, organized the cleaning of forests of the National Park of Schinia-Marathon in Attica (700 students, 41 teachers, 60 NGOs, 1300 attendees) and in forestall paths on the island of Skopelos (800 volunteers and students) ( **April / May 2010.** )

**b MoEECC** participated in the 75th International Fair in Thessaloniki. (September 2010) The messages were "Innovation in clean technologies," Balance of nature, biodiversity, quality of life-sustainable city ", .

c. A competition “ AthinaCh4” that falls within the Programme ATHENS ATTICA 2014 for young architects.

**d Development Intervention Program** of the **MoEECC** for the period 2010 to 2015:

Among its four pillars is the Strengthening of mechanisms and institutions of environmental governance through a set of actions. The total investment budget is included under this pillar is the € 846,7 million and is expected to create more than 2,400 jobs.

e. A study entitled "Program reassessment 69 Important Bird Areas for their classification as Special Protection Areas for Birds." (August 2007) Development of action plans for the protection of priority species, with funding from the EPPER.. The purpose of this study was to update the ornithological and ecological data for 69 regions

f. The local port authorities in cooperation with local government, organize or assist existing network of volunteers from environmental organizations, cultural associations, federations, tourist associations, fishermen- scouts clubs, student clubs, etc. who participate in the Voluntary Cleanup of the coasts. Ministry of Civil Protection ( Directorate of Marine Environment Protection (DMEP) conducts training seminars of port authorities and regional pollution control plants in protecting the marine environment and new techniques for dealing with marine pollution incidents, Running since 2003 the interministerial pilot training volunteers program "protect myself and others". The program is implemented in cooperation

with municipalities and other stakeholders. A (CD ROM) entitled " Clean sea reflects our culture" distributed to all stakeholders.

### **Article 3, paragraph 4**

The implementation of Special Actions for supporting the NGOs in the field of the Environment is financed, with a total budget of €1 million in the framework of the Special Service for managing the Operational Programme Environment 2000–2006 (EPPER) and the Operational Programme Environment and Sustainable Development 2007–2013 (EPPERAA). In addition a special project on environmental awareness of the citizens is also financed, For EPPER, the relevant budget comes up to €2 million, and for EPPERAA the relevant budget is not yet defined.

In the same framework of EPPER 2000–2006, a special project on Publicity and Promotion is provided concerning the results from the implementation of the project with total budget €2 millions, while in EPPERAA the budget of the whole activity is estimated to rise up to €10 million for the period 2007–2013.

The implementation of the Operational Programmes of (EPPERAA is monitored regularly by an established Monitoring Committee, with approved Rules of Procedure, in which several representatives from competent bodies, civil society, and NGOs participate.

In the framework of Operational Environmental Programmes (OEP) 2000–2006, funds have been bound for environmental awareness raising programmes, with a total budget of €2.8 million. Funds were made available to school units, classrooms or groups of teachers and students, in order to set up and complete environmental programmes. This has led to the founding of more than 200 registered non-governmental environmental and ecological organizations in Greece, whose members are often either teachers or former students who participated in one of the environmental education programmes during their schooling years.

13. NGOs in Greece are very active in awareness-raising activities. According to the opinion of an NGO, they are supported less often by Greek funds and more often by direct EU funds: 22 projects were initiated by universities and scientific institutes in the framework of the Development Assistance Programme of the MoEECC . These activities were implemented by 19 universities and 19 NGOs that were included in the Programme; the budget allocated to NGOs accounted for 45 per cent of the total budget. Projects implemented in the framework of the Programme were fully funded from Greek national funds. Moreover, Greece, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports, coordinates and assists NGOs and other agencies in the implementation of development programmes in accordance with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, with the focus on combating poverty.

14. Since 2002, Greece has been the lead country of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI). MED EUWI also serves as a platform for promoting strategic partnerships between the EU and the Mediterranean and South-East European countries as well as between government, civil society and the private sector.

15. NGOs are officially registered and recognized as partners in various ministries.



16. In Greece, the general public and the NGOs can submit comments and proposals on environmental issues at the preliminary stages of the decision-making process as well as public consultations.,

17. The Ministry of Education collaborates with the public sector on a range of activities with local government and environmental NGOs to promote the principles of sustainable development in initiatives linked to academic years.

18. According to the legislation for the protection and sustainable management of water resources in Greece (Law 3199/2003, art. 3, para. 6, and art. 6), which integrates the public participation requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the active involvement of interested parties is ensured through their representation to the National and Regional (in the 13 Regional Water Districts) Water Councils that are being developed as part of the administrative framework of the country. The National and the 13 Regional Water Councils are advisory boards in which all national and regional interested groups are represented, such as the involved organizations, NGOs, etc. .

19. According to Laws 1650/86 and 2742/99, 27, Management Bodies were established in protected areas of Greece. The Administrative Councils of these bodies are composed by representatives of central, regional and local authorities, representatives of local stakeholders groups, researchers and NGOs. Management Bodies are supported by the Third Community Support Framework and national funds. Moreover, the Natura 2000 Committee (provided under Law 2742/1999) consists of representatives from ministries, universities and NGOs.

20. Actions for the management of protected species are undertaken in the framework of various projects. Major projects have been funded by the EC financial instrument, Life-Nature. National funds (e.g. the former ETERPS Fund of the MoEECC ) have also been allocated. Major beneficiaries of these projects are research institutes, development companies and NGOs.

21. Representatives from academic sector, NGOs and private sector can be invited in the meetings of the Hellenic Interministerial Committee for GPP recently established ,thus obtaining commitment on the collaborative design and implementation of the GPP NAP from both the public, and private sector as well as NGOs and academic networks

22. Establishment of National rural network which aims at exchanging information and networking between agencies dealing with rural development and includes as members of the Network Environmental Organisations (WWF).Establishment of the Monitoring Committee of the Rural Development program, also involving environmental organizations.Participation in consultation processes in preparation of action of all actors involved (Prefectural governments, environmental organizations, cooperatives, producer organizations, etc.)

23. Projects mainly aimed at the implementation of nature conservation actions have been financed also from a national funding instrument which incorporates a percentage of the money coming from the tax for gas. Through this instrument (former ETERPS Fund),

approximately €7.5 million (from national funds) were allocated for the period 2000–2007, including for the programme “Voluntarism and Environmental Protection” (total of €1 million) and the Programme on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development. The **MoEECC** has drawn up the Register of Environmental NGOs. In total, around 260 environmental NGOs were inventoried in mid 2007 nationwide by the Environmental Team of the Institute of Urban and Rural Sociology of the National Centre for Social Research” (<http://www.ekke.gr/estia/>) under a project financed by the MoE.

24. In Greece, there is not one single entity responsible for registering and inventorying NGOs active both on general as well as on environmental matters. Apart from the above inventory, registries are also kept by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for different purposes. In addition, **MoEECC** has also inventoried the environmental NGOs which it has funded over the years, either with core funding or for the implementation of specific projects following a certain call. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the other hand, and in particular its Service for the Implementation of the Development Assistance and Cooperation Programme of Greece (the so-called Hellenic Aid Service) has been inventorying (since 2000) NGOs active in all fields (e.g. medicine, humanitarian, environment, education) that fulfil certain “quality” criteria and are thus eligible to receive State funding to implement, as intermediaries, development aid and cooperation projects in third/developing/recipient countries.

### **Article 3, paragraph 7**

25. Greece promotes the Convention’s principles of transparency, access to information and public participation in international forums, international environmental negotiations and decision-making processes. The **MoEECC** as well as other ministries invite NGO representatives to participate as experts in international meetings. Those representatives have as far as possible been included in Greek delegations as expert members, for which their travel expenses have been partially or fully reimbursed. NGOs can also participate, upon invitation, in national preparatory meetings for international meetings.

26. Greece, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports, coordinates and assists NGOs and other agencies in the implementation of development programmes, in accordance with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, with the focus on combating poverty. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through YDAS-2 (Rehabilitation and Development Directorate), handles Greece’s relations with the OECD Development Assistance Committee, participating in its working groups and networks as well as in the Ministerial Councils

27. NGOs were invited by the MoE to participate in the preparation of an environmental performance review, under the auspices of OECD (2007–2008).

28. Greece has been the lead country of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI), which since 2002 has served as a platform for promoting strategic partnerships between the EU and the Mediterranean countries as well as

between government, civil society and the private sector. One key recent development is the initiation of the “Country Policy Dialogues” on water for Mediterranean non-EU partner countries.

29. The partner countries of the Development Assistance Programme of **MoEECC** belonged to the wider geographic subregion of South-Eastern Europe, and activities were implemented by NGOs and Universities which covered, inter alia, capacity-building as well as environmental information and awareness, training and education on environment and sustainable development. The actions and projects selected for funding were characterized by applicability, sustainability, perspective of actions and transferability, as well as accountability and transparency of all activities.

30. Greece participated in the following meetings:

(a) The High-level International Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries in Vilnius (17–18 October 2005) promoting environmental education, ESD and environmental awareness;

(b) The Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007).

31. Greece participates in the following projects:

(a) The Project of Associated Schools;. in cooperation with the lead agency, UNESCO<sup>3</sup>: programmes have been implemented within the framework of the Decade of ESD by 20 of the 80 schools participating in the network

(b) The South-Eastern Mediterranean Environmental Project (SEMPEP), a network of 40 schools. It began as programme of environmental education.

(c) The official launching in Athens of the United Nations Decade of ESD in the Mediterranean Area (2005), where the Convention’s principles were mentioned by the **MoEECC**.

The Marine Environment Protection Directorate provides constant information to the institutions of the Greek shipping industry and other specialized institutions, shipping center operators eg ELKETHE about international forums and meetings for the environment to give them the possibility to participate.

32. The contribution of Greece to tsunami relief in South-East Asia, the development and humanitarian assistance offered by Greek State agencies and the ever-expanding presence of civil society in international assistance projects show that the awareness of Greek public opinion has indeed been raised and that the view has taken root that our country must participate and assist countries that face natural disasters. Greece supports such initiatives and is participating in the discussions already taking place within the

---

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

United Nations framework with interventions intended to increase transparency and enhance the United Nations monitoring systems, while making its actions more effective.

33. **The Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative** In October 2010 the Greek Government presented the launch of the Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative in collaboration with leaders from across the Mediterranean and with the support of the European Investment Bank. It aims to accelerate the region's responses to the impacts of climate change and lead by example the transition to a low carbon development model.

34. **During** the Hellenic Chairmanship of the Human Security Network<sup>4</sup> (HSN) (May 2007-May 2008) Greece chose to focus its activities on the human security implications of climate change in developing countries. The objective of the Hellenic Chairmanship was to raise awareness on the impact that changing living conditions, as a result of climate change, can have on peoples' security in developing countries, with a special emphasis on three specifically vulnerable groups, namely women, children and populations fleeing their homes as a result of climate change. [Seeking to actively contribute to the international dialogue for adequate policy planning to confront climate change implications on human security, the Hellenic Chairmanship proceeded, in co-operation with competent International Organizations, to the elaboration of a number of relevant policy texts. The main findings and policy proposals of these papers were presented at a High-Level International Conference \(Athens, May 2008\) concluding the works of the Hellenic HSN Chairmanship.](#)

35. [Many awareness raising events on environmental issues organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. from end 2008 to 2010 .](#)

36. Cooperation between Greece and nine European countries for the prevention and monitoring of forest fires promoted by the **MoEECC** , which participated in the program entitled «European Forest Fire Monitoring using Information Systems - EFFMIS».

### Article 3, paragraph 8

37. There is a complete legal framework in Greece, as already mentioned, ensuring the exercise of the rights of the persons under the Convention. The right of access to information, is provided and guaranteed by the Constitution as well as by the Administrative Procedure Code.

(a) According to Article 461 of the Constitution all Greek citizens are equal before the law. Citizens have also the constitutional right of previous hearing. Articles 4 to 25 of the Constitution provide for the protection of human rights, including the free development of one's personality and recognition of the value of human dignity;

---

<sup>4</sup> The Human Security Network (HSN) is an informal international forum in co-operation with international organizations, civil society and the academia, aiming at raising awareness at the international level regarding new forms of threats that endanger human security. Member states of the HSN include: Canada, Norway, Switzerland, Ireland, Austria, Slovenia, Jordan, Mali, Chile, Costa Rica, Thailand, as well as South Africa with observer status.

(b) Every act of the State must be in conformity with the law and must also be provided for by a law. According to the opinion of one NGO, the environmental NGOs can be critical of governmental actions, decisions, etc. without repercussions (if there is a real basis for criticism);

(c) The citizens, in the framework of their protection, have several possibilities for administrative and judicial review as well as actions for compensation according to the civil liability provisions (see art. 9).

#### **IV. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 3**

38. The obstacles and problems identified and stated by the involved public authorities are:

(a) An inflexible timetable, which does not facilitate a relationship between school and society through active learning;

(b) Incomplete training of educators;

(c) The non-existence of up-to-date relevant educational materials;

(d) The non-existence of institutional framework of cooperation with NGOs;

(e) Activities of educators and students are on a voluntary basis (a single-digit number percentage of educators and students participate in programmes);

(f) Little (insufficient) financial support in the framework of environmental education;

(g) The implementation of the Convention is a major task demanding the collaboration of several ministries and sectors as well as the regions, prefectures and local government;

(h) Lack of sufficient resources;

(i) According to the opinion of one NGO, there is no apparent link between issues relating to access to justice and environmental issues in school curricula. However, it is not yet clear what these links should be. Through ESD, the development of critical thinking of students could be interpreted indirectly as serving this purpose.

#### **V. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 3**

39. No information was provided under this heading.

#### **VI. WEBSITE ADDRESSES RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 3**

<http://www.ypeka.gr> ,<http://www.mfa.gr>,[http:// www.yen.gr](http://www.yen.gr), [http:// www. ypepth.gr](http://www.ypepth.gr) ,  
[www.remth.gr](http://www.remth.gr),<http://www.medies.net>, [www.epperaa.gr](http://www.epperaa.gr),  
<http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/index.php?obj=4c177c316a3ceb>,  
<http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/index.php?obj=4c1776c316a3cch>,[http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/index.php?obj=f37198c7cdaff10d\(INFODESK\)](http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr/index.php?obj=f37198c7cdaff10d(INFODESK))

**VII. LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND OTHER MEASURES IMPLEMENTING  
THE PROVISIONS ON ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION IN  
ARTICLE 4**

**Relevant definitions**

40. Concerning relevant definitions in article 2 and the non discrimination requirement in article 3, see information under article 5 of the Convention.

41. No particular difficulties concerning the definitions in article 2 and the interpretation and management of the definition “environmental information” were met. Limited difficulties identified in some cases such as the required annual balance sheet of a legal person performing public administrative functions under national law and some difficulties raised concerning the exceptions and in particular the identification of confidentiality of industrial information.

**Article 4, paragraph 1**

42. According to Law 3422/12-12-2005(OJG A 303/2005), public authorities, in response to a request of environmental information, make such information available to the public including where requested copies of the actual documentation containing or comprising such information. Article 7 of the JMD 11764/653/2006 also stipulates that public authorities provide copies of the actual documentation upon request and some exceptions are provided concerning the form or format of the required information (see under art. 4, para. 1 (b); art. 5 of the Administrative Procedure Code, referring to access to documents (OJG A45/9-3-1999), provides and regulates similar issues). Upon application, the Special Environmental Service and the other competent departments provide in due time the information requested concerning official documents or other documentation concerning the files on environmental impact assessment (EIA) and strategic impact assessment (SEA) submitted to it, as soon as the public participation process has begun. No internal consultation document concerning open judicial procedures is provided.

*Article 4, paragraph 1 (a)*

43. In Greece, access to environmental information of any person without having to state an interest, is provided first of all under law 3422/12-12-2005 (OJG A 303/2005). Access to environmental information of any person without having to state an interest is also ensured in article 3, paragraph 1, of JMD 11764/653/2006 (OJG B 327/17-3-2006). According to this article of the above JMD, every natural or legal person can access environmental information by submitting a relevant written request without having to state an interest. The written request enters the public authority’s register (protocol) under a certain number and a registration receipt is given to the applicant.

Public Authorities in their majority make available environmental information held by or for them to any applicant at his request .However due to lack of staff and work overload the deadlines set by law are not always met. As a main problem and obstacle is reported lack of human and other resources (staff and funding). If a request is formulated in a too general

manner, the public authority asks and assist the applicant to a possible degree to specify the request .

If the information requested is not held by or for the public authority to which the request is addressed , the public authority transfers the request to the competent authority usually but not always within 3 days due to limited human resources and informs the applicant accordingly.

As reported by some competent authorities in any case requested by the public information (eg on fisheries management measures,) either provided to the citizen all details of official Journal of Government (OJG)with relevant legislation to be able to find it in the National Printing Office and its official website or provided the document in printed form.

As reported by some regional authorities priority is given to access to environmental information requested in writing or orally at any hour of the operation of the Authority. [In that case](#) processed information [is not provided immediately](#) but only information for the creation of activities and projects and the approval of environmental conditions of the above activities and projects

44. According to the Constitution (Article 10), the competent service or authority is obliged to reply to requests for information and for issuing documents (see art. 3). According to article 5, paragraph 1, of Law 2690/1999 regarding the Administrative Procedure Code, every interested person is entitled to access to administrative documents by submitting a relevant request. A special interest is required only for access to private documents held by public authorities, on matter concerning the applicant (art. 5, para. 2, of law 2690/1999). Finally, Directive 2003/98/EC on the further use of public sector information has been incorporated into the Greek legislation by law 3448/2006, providing the right for further use by persons or legal entities of documents held by public sector bodies, for commercial or non-commercial purposes other than the initial purpose for which the documents were originally produced.

*Article 4, paragraph 1 (b)*

45. Taking into account those referred in the above point (under art. 4, para. 1) and according to article 4, paragraph. 1 (b), subparagraphs (i) and (ii), of the Convention ratified by law 3422/2005 and article 3, paragraph 7, of the JMD 11764/653/2006, the form or format of the information is supplied as follows: where an applicant requests a public authority to make environmental information available in a specific form or format (including in the form of copies),the public authority makes it available unless it is already publicly available in another form or format which is easily accessible by applicants. Further details on the above issue are regulated under the above JMD (art. 3, para. 7).

**Article 4, paragraph 2**

**Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle.**

**Article 4, paragraphs 3 and 4**

**Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle.**

**Article 4, paragraph 5**

**Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle.**

**Article 4, paragraph 6**

**. Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle.**

**Article 4, paragraph 7**

**. Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle**

**Article 4, paragraph 8**

**. Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle**

**VIII. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 4**

46. The obstacles and problems identified by the involved public authorities are:

- (a) Lack of resources (staff, funds for copies etc.);
- (b) Administrative burden due to lack of staff and because in some cases request is general or unreasonable and officials ask and assist the applicant to specify the request or submit documentation with more details;
- (c) In many cases, due to the complexity and a volume of the requested information, a collaboration with other authorities is required which is time consuming
- (d) Administration usually informs the applicant within the time limits mentioned above; However due to lack of human resources and work overload a possible excess of the provided time limits by the public authorities is stated as a possible obstacle in the implementation of this article.

The obstacles and problems identified and stated by the involved public authorities are



(e) Limited difficulties, concerning the interpretation and management of the definition “environmental information” identified in some cases such as the required annual balance sheet of a legal person performing public administrative functions under national law and some difficulties raised concerning the exceptions and in particular the identification of confidentiality of industrial information.

(f) Some authorities noticed that no record is kept in groups of related activities to be monitored systematically.

(g) By some prefecture authorities is reported lack of material and technical infrastructure (lack of storage for studies, lack of computers and related programs for creating databases), lack of electronic filing, increased volume of work and documents for distribution (at prefecture level there is a requirement for conducting environmental audits), lack of communication between the Ministry and Regional Services, Lack of staff training

(h) According to Ombudsman the main problems of effective implementation of the principles of the Aarhus Convention due in principle to non suitable infrastructure of these services to facilitate public access to environmental information

(i) By some prefecture authorities is reported as the main obstacle the time required to provide environmental information to citizens and the complexity of the responsibilities of the Authority mainly focused on the environmental licensing of projects and activities. In most cases information is given orally or by telephone contact and therefore requests are not recorded.

(j) By an NGO is reported that the response of the authorities services is better, the more "senior" are, and as close to the subject of the environment. Problems enlarge when someone seeks environmental information in services with another principal object, and away from the center [eg, a Municipality]. However, it is reported that environmental services are relatively well-acquainted with the Aarhus Convention, although delays [the workload, etc.] is a problem. A major problem also creates the distance in some areas - for example, to find an EIS, to travel by the seat of the county, and photocopying a copy in case there is lack of electronic databases of environmental information.

## **IX. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 4**

Most departments do not have available statistical data. A few can provide such statistical information upon request. Hellenic Ombudsman has received a numerous public complaints and petitions concerning denial to access to environmental information affecting almost all authorities responsible for environmental or planning authorization (licensing) of both the Central Administration and Local Government eg. Directorates of Environment and Planning, Directorates of Development, of Prefectures and Regions, headquarters of Ministries, Urban municipalities and Regions and supervised institutions of MoEECC. The investigation of these petitions, according to Ombudsman indicates that the main problems of effective

implementation of the principles of the Aarhus Convention due in principle to non suitable infrastructure of these services to facilitate public access to environmental information.

By an NGO it was reported that it is important to know what is the number of petitions received by the central and regional government on environmental information all over Greece as well as the number of requests for environmental information received by the central and decentralized government all over Greece and its content, but most departments do not have available statistical data and only a few departments can provide such statistical information upon request.

#### **X. WEBSITE ADDRESSES RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 4**

47. <http://et.diavgeia.gov.gr> , [www.minagric.gr](http://www.minagric.gr) ,  
[www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr), [www.ggb.gr](http://www.ggb.gr), [www.agrotikianaptixi.gr](http://www.agrotikianaptixi.gr)

#### **XI. LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND OTHER MEASURES IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS ON THE COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION IN ARTICLE 5**

48. Law 3422/2005 provides for collection and dissemination of environmental information. In addition, article 7 of JMD 11764/653/2006 (OJG B 327/17-3-2006), which transposed Directive 2003/4/EC, also regulates the dissemination of environmental information through electronic databases and public telecommunication networks.

49. The relevant definitions in article 2 and the non-discrimination requirement in article 3 of the Convention are described and met by Law 3422/2005, by which the Convention was ratified. The above article 2 definitions of the Convention are also met in article 2 of JMD 11764/653/2006, which transposed Directive 2003/4/EC.

50. In addition, according to Article 4, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, of Constitution (1975/1986/2001), all Greeks are equal before the law. Greek men and women have equal rights and equal obligations. All persons possessing the qualifications for citizenship as specified by law are Greek citizens. Article 5 (a) paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Constitution also states that all persons are entitled to information, as specified by law and all persons are entitled to participate in the Information Society. In addition, law 3304/2005 on the “implementing of the principle of equal treatment regardless of racial or ethnic origin, religious or other beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation” constitutes a landmark in the promotion of the principle of equality and the protection of human rights in Greece. By this law, two EU Directives were transposed into the Greek legislation: EC Directives 2000/78 and 2000/43 “for the promotion of the principle of equal treatment and the fight against discrimination on grounds of race, nationality, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation”.

51. There are also two bodies in Greece with similar responsibilities both assigned with combating discrimination in the private sector: the Labour Inspectorate (SEPE), whose

competence covers ordinary employment contracts, and the Equal Treatment Committee (ETC) of the Ministry of Justice, whose competence covers the rest of the private sector. The General Secretariat for Equality of the Ministry of the Interior also plays an important role in the implementation of the principle of equal treatment and the gender equality. At the same time, a Permanent Committee on Equality and on Human Rights as well as a Permanent Committee on Institutions and on Transparency operate in the Greek Parliament.

### **Article 5, paragraph 1**

#### *Article 5, paragraph 1 (a)*

**MoEECC** operates the following monitoring systems to assure the production and update of environmental data for the following environmental sectors: air quality, air emissions, water quality and quantity, industry, emissions from stationary combustion sources installations and vehicles, fuel, waste, noise and Ozone Depleting Substances.

52.

<b>Monitoring Main and Inventory activities</b>
Air-quality monitoring
Water quality, water quantity and ecological status monitoring
Air emissions monitoring (main industrial installations emissions)
Combustion and fuel monitoring programmes
Inventory of local and waste management authorities reporting on waste quantities, treatment and management
Noise monitoring
Environmental inspectorate monitoring
Air emissions trade registry
Ozone Depleting Substances

<b>Datasets</b>
Water quality, water quantity and ecological status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• River basins</li> <li>• Wastewater treatment plants</li> </ul>
Air quality
Air emissions
Industries and other installations
Combustion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stationary combustion sources installations</li> <li>• Vehicles</li> </ul>
Nature and biodiversity NATURA 2000 network Habitat types within NATURA 2000
Noise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise measurements from motorcycles</li> <li>• In situ measurements of noise from installations</li> <li>• Measurements from noise control stations</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noise barriers and implementation bodies</li> </ul>
Environmental impact assessments
Waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste generation sources</li> <li>• Waste treatment and final disposal installations</li> <li>• Hazardous waste</li> <li>• Municipal waste</li> <li>• Register of waste management bodies</li> </ul>
CORINE land cover

*Article 5, paragraph 1 (b)*

53. The National Environmental Information Network is an horizontal mechanism for the collection and dissemination of data, through the Internet or an intranet, in relation to the main environmental sectors (air, water, nature, waste, emissions, legislation). It comprises a national repository of environmental data and a mechanism for exchanging data between relevant environmental administrative services as well as for providing data to the public.

59 The project for the modernization and extension of the network was completed earlier this year under the E.C. Structural Funds. The system is now Web based involving more environmental organizations as active users and more external interested people and organisations as viewers. A big part of the data of the system is available to the public. It also includes spatial data and services providing support for responding with environmental data to the INSPIRE Directive. The content of the System concerns the main environmental topic areas where the MoEECC collects data (air, water, natural environment, wastes, Combustion, Fuels, Industry, Noise, environmental impact assessment studies and areas like waste recycling, Ozon Depleting Substances, Physical Planning, etc.). A new functionality has been added based on INTERNET technologies to facilitate and encourage electronic submission of Environmental Impact Assessment studies which will also provide more visibility on this area.

The system also includes functionalities for supporting national EIONET communication as well as for operating the **Clearing House Mechanism for the Aarhus Convention**.(completed)

*Article 5, paragraph 1 (c)*

54. In case of an air pollution episode, information on the evolution will be disseminated on an hourly basis through the Internet, radio and TV messages, and implementation of relevant measures (directions to people affected etc).

55. **Flood protection and prevention:** According to Law on water (3199/2003), transposition into national law of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the 13 Regional Water Directories are the competent authorities for taking the appropriate measures for flood mitigation on a river basin basis.

56. **Forecasting and early warning:** this issue is handled in Greece by several operational centres. Comprehensive activities and plans that have been undertaken in the field of early warning and forecasting include:

- (a) Traditional measuring instruments, radar and numerical weather forecasts;
- (b) Identification and mapping of high-risk areas through the National Bank of Hydrological and Meteorological Information, a data bank in which all the hydrological and meteorological data measured during the last 100 years have been collected and elaborated, using the most up-to-date computer science and telecommunications;
- (c) Development of an effective and reliable early-warning and forecasting system, supported by meteorological information, to inform, at the respective level, flood authorities and citizens in threatened areas;
- (d) A national emergency plan for civil protection (XENOKRATIS), covering the emergency management before, during and after the flood events.
- (e) Measures linked to public information and awareness-raising: information for the general public through the media (TV, leaflets, posters, the Internet, etc.) on possible flooding events because of forecasted heavy rains and thunderstorms and on self-protection instructions.
- (f) In cases endangering the health of the general public relating to fishery products for which the Competent Authority is aware, then subsequently informed in writing all competent Prefectural Fisheries Services, Veterinary Medicine and Public Health Services as well as the fishing operators in the region.
- (g) Monitoring and protection of **bathing waters** and the marine environment .

#### **Article 5, paragraph 2**

57. Concerning air quality in the city of Athens, an online system is regularly providing information on the measurement values of a series of pollutants, as well as on pollutants exceeding basic standards and potential announced measures.
58. Public information is distributed in the following ways:
- (a) By fixed phone message (tel. Nr. 1448, three messages per day);
  - (b) Through the Internet ([www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr)) in Greek and English on daily basis:
    - (i) Analytical description of the air quality situation, max and average, pollutant values for the present day and the previous one;
    - (ii) Extended presentation of ozone exceedance;
    - (iii) 3-monthly and yearly reports.
59. .

#### **Article 5, paragraph 3**

60. On the above environmental areas, **MoEECC** has established relevant databases with data from the respective monitoring systems and registers as well as information on relevant activities, plans, measures, institutional structure etc. Part of the above is being

displayed on the **MoEECC** website. The final objective is to gradually include all necessary data and information.

(a) **National Environmental Information Network**: It is a national repository of environmental data and a mechanism for exchanging data between relevant environmental administrative services as well as for providing data to the public

(b) **National Data Bank of Hydrological and Meteorological Information**: ([www.hydroscope.gr](http://www.hydroscope.gr)) It is a distributed database and a wide area network for exchanging and disseminating hydrological and meteorological information produced by relevant organizations belonging to the network. The bank includes data measured during the last 100 years that have been collected and elaborated, using the most updated computer science and telecommunications. A new project is on going today under the EC Cohesion Funds which will upgrade and update the database with more recent information and relevant analysis and assessments. The system also provides information to the Internet;

(c) Communication tools used to convey environmental information to a non expert audience and to high level decision makers (e.g. Web-based tools, user-friendly brochures, aggregated indices, etc.);

(d) **Specific website**, in the framework of **the implementation of alternative management of packaging and other waste (law 2939/2001)**, linked directly with the Internet homepage of **MoEECC**, provides environmental information in respect to alternative management (recovery and recycling) of packaging waste, emissions limit values (ELVs), used tires, waste oil, waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), batteries and accumulators, and construction and demolition waste;

(e) **Aarhus Clearinghouse Mechanism**, in the framework of the implementation of the National Environmental Information Network (completed ).

(f) Participation to the European Environment Agency's (EEA) ozone-related website, with data from Athens City;

(f) Electronic tool to facilitate the application of the European Waste Catalogue. The tool will be accessible on the website of the **MoEECC** (under development);

(g) **Clearing House Mechanism on Biodiversity**, bringing together seekers and providers of environmental information and contributing to making environmental information and data flows available to the public;

(h) A website is under development by the former C.W.A. (now Special Secretariat of Water) which will serve as an active information and discussion forum in the framework of actions supporting Water Framework Directive implementation. It will include national reports and any other related documentation or information (e.g. data maps.).

(i) The Investor Service for RES projects **includes in the register** any decision of licensing production electricity from renewable energy issued by the Regulatory Authority for Energy (RAE) after completion of review of such decisions. (Law 3851/2010 (art.2 para 2) .

(j) [Geodata.gov.gr](http://Geodata.gov.gr) is an initiative facilitating open access to the Greek government's geospatial data. The website provides users the opportunity to search and download statistical and geographical information.

(k) National Geospatial Information Infrastructure ( [Law 3882/2010](#) transposition of Directive 2007/2/EC (**Inspire**) of the European Parliament and Council of March 14, 2007 and other provisions. (GG A/166/22.09.2010).

(l).MoMAIF is creating an information system (website) that gives details on all applications for permits relating to the introduction of alien or locally absent species in accordance with the Regulation (EC) 535/2008 .(under development)

(m) **National Information System for Energy:(NISE).**The purpose of **NISE** of ( **MoEECC** ) is to develop infrastructure for energy information services to the public and the creation of a tool to support decision making on Energy Policy and Planning.**The main sections of NISE**.include:related to energy agencies, legislation, standards.. It comprises of : a) **A database descriptive information** b.)**A geographic Information System (GIS)**and c) **A Database Statistical information.**

(n) On the official site [www.epperaa.gr](http://www.epperaa.gr) published the Operational Programmes EPPER and EPPERAA, (Operational Programme for Environment and Operational Programme for Environment and Sustainable development), annual reports, invitations , notices announcements as well as environmental legislation.

(o)The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ( directorate YDAS-2,) handles Greece's relations with the OECD Development Assistance Committee. It maintains the official statistical database on development assistance provided by Greece and sends detailed statistical data to the Development Assistance Committee, in fulfilment of the country's obligation. YDAS-2 also draws up the Annual YDAS Report, which is submitted to the Parliament, as well as other publications, such as Greece's *Contribution Towards Attaining the Millennium Development Goals*.

p) [Program "Diavgeia"](#)(Clarity )enhancing transparency through mandatory display on the internet and disclosure of decisions and acts of administration. ([Law 3861/2010](#) GG 112/13.7.2010 Issue A)

#### **Article 5, paragraph 4**

61.

**Regular posting on the official site of the MoEECC ([www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr)) and in Aarhus Clearing House Mechanism of various Reports submitted to E.C. following relevant reporting obligations, on the basis of respective national laws. (EC Directives transposed in the Greek legislation, ratified international environmental Conventions and multilateral agreements).**

The national state-of-the-environment report (2008completed) posted on the official site of the National Center of Environment and Sustainable Development.([www.ekpaa.gr](http://www.ekpaa.gr))

62. The daily Report **on Air Pollution Levels** indicates the air pollution as reported by the Ministry's measuring stations in Attica and Oenofita (Boeotia prefecture). Information is also given in case of exceedance of the Public Information and Alarm levels. Athens Air pollution daily report available also on the INTERNET. Annual Report on "Air Pollution in Athens-2006" available also on the INTERNET. Published the report "Air Pollution in Athens-2009" -- --

A planned project "on evaluation of environmental noise", will produce noise maps of Athens Municipality (Competition will be launched early 2011). A Project for mapping of noise in the Airport,of Athens and relevant action plans. ( completed ) Under Directive 2002/49 on the evaluation and management of environmental noise 13 new competitions will be launched in 2011 ( 5 competitions for the region, 6 for Athens and 2 for Thessaloniki)

Environmental data in Greece is collected and processed in compliance with EU Legislation on environmental reporting obligations, in relevant formats and with the use of standard and state-of-the-art scientific methods and technical solutions.

#### **Article 5, paragraph 5**

63. See above under article 5, paragraphs 1 to 4.

#### **Article 5, paragraph 6**

64. Programmes, inter alia, for the funding of several organizations for EMAS<sup>5</sup> registration and ISO14001 certification as well as for the awarding of the Eco-label are being implemented under the third CSF. Ministerial Decision 15624/1025/2004 provides for funding for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as does Ministerial Decision 24378/2233/2006 for SMEs as well as industrial and tourist enterprises. In addition, there are no fees for EMAS registration. Under the scheme, all EMAS-registered organizations submit regularly updated environmental statements, including, inter alia, the environmental impact of their activities and products.

In recent years, the register of EMAS certified organizations is growing rapidly in Greece. The number of registered organizations jumped from 1 in January 2001 to 10 in January 2004 and to 55 in December 2007. In September 2010 total number of Emas registered entities was 68 and of Emas registered sites was 820 Registered organizations come from diverse business areas, as well as organizations, universities and local authorities. Moreover, companies providing environmental services added to the registry and the public sector started showing interest as well. The annual European EMAS awards ceremony organized in Athens in 2006, and EC granted Greece the award for the Member State with the largest increase in registrations among old Member States. In 2009 European EMAS Award in small organisations received by a Greek company EMAS registered. Enterprises from all sectors (manufacturing, services, trade, tourism) have been receiving funding for the development of EMAS, ISO 14001 certification and Eco-label. An increasing interest from businesses has been noticed as 180 enterprises have been included in the latest round of the pertinent call of the Operational Programme “Competitiveness” of the third CSF.. Law 3325/2005 encourages companies from the Attica region whose operation carries significant environmental effects to establish and achieve EMAS or ISO14001 certification by 2010.

The active records of the *European Eco-Label* in Greece currently include 37 companies and 278 products. The eco-label awarded by the ASAOS in the following categories:

1. paints and varnishes and outdoor  
2. Detergents  
3. mattresses  
4. Textiles

The mark is also awarded in 9 hotels (accommodation service).

---

<sup>5</sup> Environmental Management Scheme.



11. GPP in Greece: Greece is currently in the process of undertaking its first steps towards the development of a National Action Plan on Green Public Procurement (GPP) and associated policy. Ministry for the Environment Energy and Climate Change oversees the process from design to implementation of the NAP. An interministerial committee established, responsible for the development and implementation of the NAP on GPP in Greece. Representatives from academic sector, NGOs and private sector can be invited in the meetings,

Ministry of Regional Development and Competitiveness, announced the following financing Programmes supporting enterprises in the Framework of the Project Competitiveness and Enterprises (ESPA 2007-2013): 1. **The Programme Green Enterprise 2009**: It focuses on the inclusion of environmental dimension and policy by Micro and SMEs (enterprises). 2. **The Programme Green Infrastructure 2009**: It focuses on the management of waste by the enterprises in order to guide Micro and SMEs to the implementation of sustainable management of waste.

#### **Article 5, paragraph 7**

65. Selected data from databases of the above mentioned environmental fields (air quality, air emissions, water quality and quantity, industry, emissions from stationary combustion sources installations and vehicles, fuel, waste, noise) is published on the website of the MoEECC in the section on the National Environmental Information Network (see art. 5, para. 1 (a)).

#### **Article 5, paragraph 8**

66. The Cartagena Protocol, which was ratified through law 3233/2004 (OJG A 51/18-2-2004), provides for a Biosafety Clearing House Mechanism. Actions being taken for the development of a certification of products from sustainable forestry constitute a major challenge (see eco-labelling of products under art. 5, para. 3).

#### **Article 5, paragraph 9**

##### **Registry of emissions' trading allowances (Greenhouse Gas Emission Allowances)**

The [National Center for Environment and Sustainable Development \(NCESD\)](#) in collaboration with the Emissions Trading Office of (MoEECC) established and maintain a register to record the precise issue, holding, transfer and cancellation of the GHG emissions' trading allowances.. (JMD 54409/2632/27-12-2004 (OJG 1931 B 2004 transposition of Directive 2003/87/EC as amended by Directive 2004/101/EC) The registry is accessible to the users only, through: <https://registry.ekpa.gr/crwebekpaaproductio/startApp.do>. It also provides information to the public, at: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ets/account.do> and <https://registry.ekpa.gr/crrepekpaaproductio/en/index.htm>

**Inventories of GHG Emissions (annual)** provide information on emissions of GHG and other gases from energy production and transport, industrial processes, solvent and other products, agriculture, waste and use changes land and forestry. The inventory describes the methods for calculating emissions, presented activity data and emission factors used and calculate the uncertainty in the estimation of emissions. The annual national inventories submitted each April 15 to the Secretariat of the Convention on Climate Change, cover emissions from 1990 until two years prior to submission.

**National reports (communications)** are a requirement of our country to the Secretariat of the Convention on Climate Change and submitted at specified intervals specified by the Secretariat of the Convention. Include state policies and measures pursued by individual countries to reduce emissions and actions to raise awareness and education on climate change and the description of adaptation measures.

**Emissions Monitoring and Reporting** According to JMD 54409/2632/2004, the operator of any facility shall a. monitor greenhouse gas emissions from the installation and b. provide information on emissions of GHG and other gases from energy production and transport, industrial processes, solvent and other products, agriculture, waste and use changes land and forestry. c. submit to Emissions Trading Office an audited report prepared in accordance with the principles of monitoring and reporting requirements.

**European Pollutant Emission Register (EPER)**. In the framework of Directive 96/61/EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC), and the [European Pollutant Emission Register \(EPER\)](#), two reports were drafted and rendered in public (Reports EPER 1 and 2) in the years 2004 and 2006 with statistical and inventory data. Most important industries in Greece monitor continuously the main pollutant emissions aiming at enhancing the relevant inventories of the country. The E-PRTR is an extension of the EPER, providing reporting on additional activities and pollutants, and releases pollutants into the ground for waste (hazardous or otherwise) other facilities and releases from diffuse sources. In addition, provides an annual submission of information, as opposed to every three years by under EPER. On 31-3 - each year MoEECC gives releases and waste for about 150 units (facilities) to EC that fall under its obligations according to the Regulation.

## **XII. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5**

67. Possible problems may occur from:

- (a) Delayed flow of information to the central administration;
- (b) Delays in rendering of reports and data to the public.
- (c) Lack of staff.

(d) By some authorities reported no systematic and continuous maintaining of records. Because of the fragmentary nature, either sent outside time limits or is of medium quality.

## **XIII. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 5**

68. In the framework of the Environmental Accounts–Statistics and Sustainable Development Index, a particular estimation system is being established according to the proposed methodology of Eurostat (General Secretariat of National Statistical Service).
69. In cooperation with Eurostat, the NAMEA accounts for air emissions and energy are being established (General Secretariat of National Statistical Service, annual data for five years).
70. A project is being implemented to produce estimations regarding forest accounts, according to the Eurostat methodology, in the framework of the Environmental Accounts programme (General Secretariat of National Statistical Service, annual data for five years).

#### **XIV. WEBSITE ADDRESSES RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 5**

71. [www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr) – Ministry of Environment Energy and Climate Change (MoEECC)  
[www.minenv.gr/emas](http://www.minenv.gr/emas) [www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr) – site for EMAS of MoEECC  
[www.edpp.gr](http://www.edpp.gr) – National Environmental Information Network;  
[www.ekpaa.gr](http://www.ekpaa.gr) – National Centre for the Environment and Sustainable Development;  
[www.mfa.gr](http://www.mfa.gr) – Ministry of Foreign Affairs;  
[www.noa.gr](http://www.noa.gr) – National Observatory of Athens;  
[www.okxe.gr](http://www.okxe.gr) – Hellenic Mapping and Cadastral Organization;  
[www.minenv.gr/medeuwi](http://www.minenv.gr/medeuwi) – EU Water Initiative/Mediterranean Component;  
[www.minenv.gr/3/31/313/31303/g3130304.html](http://www.minenv.gr/3/31/313/31303/g3130304.html) and <http://www.organismosathinas.gr/> – Organization for Planning and Environmental Protection of Athens;  
[www.minenv.gr/3/31/314/g314.html](http://www.minenv.gr/3/31/314/g314.html) and ; <http://orth.gr/default.aspx?lang=2> – Organization for Planning and Environmental Protection of Thessaloniki  
<http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu> – EIONET;  
<http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel> and [www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr) – Eco-label.  
[www.hydroscope.gr](http://www.hydroscope.gr) National Data Bank of Hydrological and Meteorological Information:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ets/account.do> and  
<https://registry.ekpaa.gr/crrepekpaaproductio/en/index.htm>

#### **XV. LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND OTHER MEASURES IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISIONS ON SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES IN ARTICLE 6**

**Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle.**

#### **XVI. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 6**

72. One obstacle is possible delays during the procedure of making the EIA studies public.

## **XVII. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 6**

**No statistical data is available.**

Through the website '[Open Governance](#)' citizens can be informed on the legislative initiatives of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change and participate in public consultation (see more under article 8 )

In compliance with the -**JMD 11014/703/2003**(OJG 332B/2003) , Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment relating to aquaculture operations are forwarded to the Directorate of Aquaculture and Inland Waters, by the competent Office of MoEECC , for an opinion.

These studies are also transmitted by MoEECC, to the concerned Prefecture Councils to acquaint and inform the citizens and their representative bodies (for the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment) and publicizing the case and opinion (for the Environmental Impact Studies).

The submitted preliminary environmental impact assessment referred to the Rules of Licensing of Production and Supply of Electricity (D5/IL/V/F1/17951,G.G.. 1498/A.8-12-2000) provided in the permit stage of production and therefore not part of the environmental licensing of establishments which follow the license production. Although before the opinion of the Energy Regulatory Authority (RAE), there is the possibility of objections which take into account both the Authority and the Minister.Finally summaries of licenses production are displayed on program clarity.

## **XVIII. WEBSITE ADDRESSES RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 6**

73.

[www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr) Ministry of Environment,Energy and Climate Change.

[www.biodiv-chm.gr](http://www.biodiv-chm.gr); – Site of Clearinghouse Mechanism of Biodiversity in Greece;

[www.ekpaa.gr](http://www.ekpaa.gr) – National Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development;

[www.edpp.gr](http://www.edpp.gr) – National Environmental Information Network;

[www.epper.gr](http://www.epper.gr) – Operational Programme for the Environment;

<http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu> – EIONET

[www.unece.org](http://www.unece.org) – UNECE:

[www.opengov.gr](http://www.opengov.gr)

**XIX. 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**

Legislation and Information provided under this Article, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle.

**XX. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE PREPARATION OF POLICIES RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 7**

Legislation and information under this heading remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle

**XXI. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 7**

74. Participatory processes can take a lot of time and money, affecting the timely implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive (e.g. possible delays, potential changes in the plans). Another obstacle is a lack of public ability and willingness to participate.

**XXII. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 7**

75. : Regional Environmental and Spatial Planning Directorate has worked as a licensing authority to local-scale projects and is responsible for the design of the Regional Waste Management System (P.E.S.D.A.).

Experience to date, no recorded problems and obstacles to information and public participation

The provisions of Law 2742/1999 on Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development (art. 4) to involve non-governmental organizations in environmental decision-making within the National Council for Planning and Sustainable Development - informing the public on urban planning through the public consultation

Through the website '[Open Governance](#)' citizens can be informed on the legislative initiatives of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change and participate in public consultation (see more under article 8 )

**XXIII. Website addresses relevant to the implementation of article 7**

76. [www.unfccc.int](http://www.unfccc.int), [www.ypeka.gr](http://www.ypeka.gr), [www.ekpaa.gr](http://www.ekpaa.gr), [www.ypan.gr](http://www.ypan.gr), [www.unece.org](http://www.unece.org).

**XXIV. EFFORTS MADE TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION DURING THE PREPARATION BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES OF EXECUTIVE REGULATIONS AND OTHER GENERALLY APPLICABLE LEGALLY BINDING RULES THAT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 8**

**In October 2009 was established in Greece the Greek Open Government Initiative.** In order to ensure the diffusion of information and to involve all citizens and stakeholders in the decision making mechanism, a website has been created, giving the opportunity for participation on the consultation of draft laws , ministerial decisions etc.The Opengov.gr has been designed to serve the principles of transparency, deliberation, collaboration and accountability and includes three initiatives:

**Electronic deliberation.** Since October 2009 almost every piece of draft legislation, or even policy initiative by the government, are posted in opengov.gr, open to public consultation. Citizens and organisations can post their comments, suggestions and criticisms article-by-article.

Since October 2009 until November 2010 a total number of 22 acts (draft laws,executive technical regulations,JMD and policy initiatives) of the Ministry of MoEECC were sent by the Ministry to opengov site for public consultation .During the period of the public consultation 7007 comments were sent by the members of the public to opengov site.

Since October 2009 until November 2010 a total number of 110 acts ((draft laws,executive technical regulations,JMD and policy initiatives)of all the Ministries were also sent by the Government for public consultation to opengov site.

[Law 3861/2010](#) (112/13.7.2010 Gazette, Issue A) and [Program “Diavgeia”](#)(Clarity) established mandatory display on the internet and disclosure of all decisions and acts of administration, thus enhancing transparency on government actions.

Since 1991 MD 70000/1380/1991 (B 480) established "Publicity in the acts of MoEECC."

77. By an NGO was asked how many visits recorded and with what object on the portals of administration Since this comment was very lately submitted could not be investigated and included in the present report . Nevertheless there are detailed data already included in this report concerning the number of visits and comments of the public participating in consultations with every Ministry on opengov.gr where there are detailed records of the content of comments.

78. By a member of the public it was highlighted the importance of site "OpenGov.gr" and the programme "clarity " and its effective contribution to public participation and transparency as well as the establishment of the separate MoEECC.

Consultation is also provided by law either as a consultation with national representative bodies or as a general public consultation. In the Parliament, a Permanent Committee on the Protection of the Environment established in 2005 contributes in the consideration and debating of environmental issues.

79. Some indicative cases of public participation under article 8, apart from the cases stated above under article 6 and 7, are the following:

(a) According to Law 1650/86 for the protection of the environment, for the designation of protected areas, a Specific Environmental Study (SES) is a prerequisite. After its completion, the SES is approved and then, together with the draft legislation text for the designation of the area is available in public. Comments are incorporated and then the legislative text is signed by the competent Ministers;

(b) According to Laws 1650/86 and 2742/99, 27 Management Bodies have been established in protected areas of Greece covering approximately 1.7 million ha. Administrative Councils of these bodies are composed by representatives of central, regional and local authorities, representatives of local stakeholders' groups, researchers and NGOs. Management Bodies are entitled to draft regulations for administration and functioning for their areas.

#### **XXV. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 8**

80. No information was provided under this heading.

#### **XXVI. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 8**

81. No information was provided under this heading.

#### **XXVII. WEBSITE ADDRESSES RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 8**

. [www.opengov.gr](http://www.opengov.gr)

<http://diavgeia.gov.gr/>

<http://et.diavgeia.gov.gr>

#### **XXVIII. LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND OTHER MEASURES IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ARTICLE 9**

**Legislation and Information provided under Article, 9 on access to justice, remain the same as it is in the Report of the previous reporting cycle. Concerning fees in the judicial procedure will increase through the new law that comes into force in 2011.**

#### **XXIX. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 9**

82. According to the opinion of an NGO, there is a relative scarcity of resources for access to justice.

**XXX. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 9**

83. The president of the court may at the applicant's request, exempt poor litigants from the duty to pay stamp fees and the deposit for the submission of an application if it is deemed that the applicant is in poor financial condition. In addition, Law 3226/2004 (OJG A24/2004) provides for legal aid for poor litigants in cases of civil, commercial and criminal law.

84. A small number of quasi-judicial recourses at administration level submitted before the above Special Committee in the Ministry of Interior for the modification or reconsideration of the acts or omissions of a Public Authority regarding public access to environmental information.

Hellenic Ombudsman, as reported, has received a numerous public complaints and petitions concerning denial to access to environmental information.

**XXXI. WEBSITE ADDRESSES RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 9**

85. [www.Ministryofjustice.gr](http://www.Ministryofjustice.gr) – Ministry of Justice; [www.ste.gr](http://www.ste.gr) – Council of State;  
[www.dsa.gr](http://www.dsa.gr) – Athens Bar Association; [www.synigoros.gr](http://www.synigoros.gr) – Hellenic Ombudsman  
[www.minenv.gr/eyep](http://www.minenv.gr/eyep) – Hellenic Environmental Inspectorate.

**XXXII. CONTRIBUTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION TO THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT OF EVERY PERSON OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS TO LIVE IN AN ENVIRONMENT ADEQUATE TO HIS OR HER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

86. The Convention's implementation constitutes an important step forward in the efforts of the international community to ensure a sustainable environment for future generations. Greece believes that the existence of time frames, practical implementation measures and the possibility for Governments to work together with civil society provide the foundations for effective environmental protection.

**XXXIII. LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND OTHER MEASURES IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS ON GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 6bis AND ANNEX I bis**

*Answer:* The European Union directive that refers to the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment (2001/18/EC), was incorporated into our national law with JMD 38639/2017/21-9-2005 (GG 1334/21-9 -2005). This directive regulates the deliberate release of GMOs both for research purposes and for placing on the market, always with a focus on the protection of the environment and human health. According to JMD as Competent Authority responsible for the deliberate release of GMOs for research and development purposes has been designated the Ministry for Environment Energy and Climate Change and Competent Authority responsible for



the deliberate release of GMOs for placing on the market is the Ministry of Rural Development and Food. In addition, Articles 12 and 27 of the said JMD provides a clear process for public consultation and access to information. Article 15 of the above JMD provides for public participation regarding their placing on the market (for commercial use).

Note that under this JMD not submitted a request (notification file) to Ministry of Environment ( YPEKA) for experimental cultivation of GMOs and therefore is not available for public consultation and participation in decision making. Similarly, not submitted a request for cultivation of GMOs to Ministry of Rural Development and Food for placing on the market purposes . In addition JMD 11642/1943/2002 which transposed Directive 98/81 regarding contained use of Genetically modified microorganisms (GMMs),also provides in Article 12 for public participation. Labeling and traceability of GMOs are also provided by EU Regulation 1830/2003.

B. As to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, ratified by L.3233/2004 (Gazette 51 / A ' / 18.2.2004),in article 23 of the Protocol ,public information and participation procedures are provided to support the requirements of paragraph 2 of Article 6 of the Convention.

#### **XXXIV. OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 6bis AND ANNEX I bis**

No available information

#### **XXXV. FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 6bis AND ANNEX I bis**

No available information

#### **XXXVI. WEBSITE ADDRESSES RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 6bis**

The list of authorised genetically modified organisms and the exact scope of authorisation is in the register of GM food and feed in the EU, on the site:

[www.ec.europa.eu/food/dyna/gm\\_register/index\\_en.cfm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/food/dyna/gm_register/index_en.cfm)

\*\*\*\*\*