

IPPC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Division I/1



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UNECE Aarhus Convention, Decision V/9b concerning Austria, further information for the attention of the Compliance Committee

Dear Ms. Marshall,

As requested during the telephone conversation on 16 May Austria is willing to give further information with regard to the relevant legislative procedures on environmental information in particular as regards the Provinces of Styria and Lower Austria.

The Provincial Parliament of the Province of Lower Austria (*Landtag von Niederösterreich*) has passed and therefore adopted the amendment to the respective act (*NÖ Auskunftsgesetz*) on 18 May 2017. The publication of the amendment in the Provincial law Gazette is expected for end of June. An English translation of that amendment is submitted with the information note.

With regard to the Province of Styria an amendment of the Styrian Environmental Information Act (*Steiermärkisches Umweltinformationsgesetz – StUIG*) will be dealt with as part of a package by the subcommittee within the Provincial Parliament (*Landtag Steiermark*) on 6 June 2017. After that, it has to pass the competent committee as well before the amendment will be dealt by The Styrian Parliament in its plenary session. It is foreseen to complete the legislative procedure before the summer break.



We also take the opportunity to inform the Committee on a further meeting to be held on 24 May of the expert working group on the Aarhus Convention of the Environment Ministry and the Provinces involving the relevant Ministries, social partners and environmental NGOs as well. Aim of that meeting is to present the recently adopted Communication by the European Commission on access to justice in environmental matters and to discuss further steps in implementing the Aarhus Convention in Austria.

Against this background we would also draw the attention to the recent statement by the Environmental Committee of the National Council at federal level (*Umweltausschuss des Nationalrats*) which was adopted on 9 May 2017. With that statement the aim has been set to work towards implementation as soon as possible in 2017 in those areas which are referred to in the infringement procedure against Austria initiated by the European Commission. Annexed you will find an English translation of that statement.

Finally, Austria declares its willingness to inform the Committee as soon as possible on the finalisation of the legislative procedure in particular as regards the Province of Styria.

Annexes

With kind regards,

On behalf of the Minister:
Dr Waltraud Petek

Electronically signed.