

Convention on Access to Information, Public
Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice
In Environmental Matters

Task Force on Access to Information

Third meeting

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda:

Access to environmental information on products:

Implementation outlook

Access to Environment-related Product Information: Implementation Outlook

Background paper¹

Prepared by the Chair with the support of the secretariat

This document contains a “cut and paste” compilation of the relevant extracts from the synthesis report² submitted to the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth session (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 30 June – 1 July 2014)³ and reports on the implementation of article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8, of the Aarhus Convention provided in the national implementation reports submitted by Parties to the Convention in the 2014 reporting cycle⁴. The document also includes a summary table indicating the Parties that provided specific information on article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8. When provided, all paragraph numbers from the original synthesis report and 2014 national implementation reports are indicated in parentheses at the end of each copied paragraph in this document.

Delegates are invited to consult this document in advance of the meeting in order to gain an overview of the status the implementation of article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8, of the Aarhus Convention and to discuss further needs to be addressed under the auspices of the Task Force on Access to Information.

¹ This document was not formally edited.

² Available from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html#/

³ Available from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_main.html#/

⁴ Available from <http://apps.unece.org/ehlm/pp/NIR/index.asp>

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I Summary table of reporting on the implementation of article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8, of the Convention

Symbols used in table:

- X ,= The Party included information on obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8 respectively in 2014 reporting cycle (question 11, paragraphs f and h, of the reporting format)
- = The Party did not report specifically on the implementation of article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8, in that reporting cycle (question 11, paragraphs f and h, of the reporting format respectively)

Party	Article 5, para. 6 2014	Article 5, para. 8 2014
Albania	—	—
Armenia	X	X
Austria	—	—
Azerbaijan	—	—
Belarus	X	X
Belgium	X	X
Bosnia and Herzegovina	X	X
Bulgaria	X	X
Croatia	X	X
Cyprus	X	—
Czech Republic	X	X
Denmark	X	X
Estonia	X	X
European Union	X	X
Finland	X	X
France	X	X
Georgia	X	X
Germany	X	—
Greece	X	X
Hungary	X	X
Iceland	X	—
Ireland	X	X
Italy	X	X
Kazakhstan	—	X

Kyrgyzstan	X	X
Latvia	X	X
Lithuania	X	X
Luxembourg	X	X
Malta	X	X
Montenegro	X	X
Netherlands	X	X
Norway	X	X
Poland	X	X
Portugal	X	X
Republic of Moldova	—	X
Romania	X	X
Serbia	X	X
Slovakia	X	X
Slovenia	X	X
Spain	X	X
Sweden	X	—
Switzerland	—	—
Tajikistan	—	X
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	—	—
Turkmenistan	—	—
Ukraine	—	—
United Kingdom	X	X

II. Extracts from the Synthesis report on the implementation of Article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8, of the Aarhus Convention

The following is extracted from the Synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/2014/6):

General provisions (article 5)

1. Almost all reporting Parties made reference to the numerous legal norms regulating collection and dissemination of environmental information in different areas by various means and by different public authorities, non-governmental institutions and organizations. Parties from the EU and Norway have developed detailed legislative provisions to transpose the EU directives and regulations. While countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia have their own legislation to implement the main provisions of article 5, practical implementation of such norms faces financial and technical obstacles (89).

2. In terms of the collection and dissemination of environmental information, Parties from the EU and Norway emphasized the use of electronic resources, the digitalization of administrative services and documents (information) and the improvement of existing electronic tools to make them more user-friendly. Parties from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and SEE reported on improving web pages, electronic databases and registers (including

cadastres). In addition, these countries reported an active engagement of Aarhus Centres in the collection and distribution of environmental information to the public, as well as in awareness-raising activities for the public authorities and the public, which resulted in increasing the amount of environmental information available to the public (90).

Encouraging operators to inform the public (article 5, paragraph 6)

3. The legal obligation for operators of facilities whose activities have a significant impact on environment to inform the public regularly on the environmental impact of their activities and products is mentioned by a few Parties from the EU and Norway subregion (e.g., Austria, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia), while all the Parties reported on the legal norms requiring such operators to submit the information on their environmental performance, the level of emissions, discharges, waste generation, etc., to public authorities, statistical offices and local authorities. In Sweden, annual environmental reports of operators can be submitted electronically through the Swedish Portal for Environmental Reporting (101).

4. Parties from the EU and Norway mentioned voluntary arrangements with business resulting in eco-labelling, eco-auditing and environmental management and reporting practices as a result of the transposition of EU legislation. Eco-labelling practices are mentioned by the Parties from the EU and Norway as part of the EU eco-labelling scheme, while a few Parties from this subregion maintain their national labelling practices (e.g., Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom). Parties also noted their commitment to implementation of the EU energy labelling regulations. Italy reported the launching of a voluntary partnership with companies to evaluate their environmental footprint, involving 200 partners from the fashion, wine and food industries as pilot sectors (102).

5. The legislative framework for eco-labelling and environmental management systems in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and SEE countries is still weak or absent. As an exception, voluntary eco-certification and eco-labelling are foreseen by legislation in Belarus, while the creation and operation of an Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is under way. In Kazakhstan, eco-labels under the Law "On Food Safety" were awarded to 74 companies. Serbia reported the introduction of an eco-labelling scheme and the promotion of EMAS and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) systems for industries on voluntary basis (103).

Availability of product information (article 5, paragraph 8)

6. Parties from the EU and Norway described their legislative provisions and practices aimed at disseminating sufficient product information to consumers, while a few countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and SEE reported on basic legal regulations and practices on this issue. A few Parties from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and SEE mentioned that producers were required to inform consumers about GMOs in products and food (e.g., Serbia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine). Sweden has a national system of certified environmental product declarations to ensure readily accessible, quality-assured and comparable information on the environmental impact of products and services. France requires operators of passenger, goods or removals transport services to notify users about the quantity of carbon dioxide emissions for their services (105).

7. The EU listed laws requiring producers to make information concerning the energy efficiency and energy performance of their products available to consumers (106).

III. Extracts from the national implementation reports providing the outlook of the implementation of article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8, of the Convention

Armenia

8. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* Armenia's legislation provided for the adoption of any special measures to encourage operators whose activities may have a significant impact on the environment to inform the public. Such an opportunity is provided by the draft of the RA Law "On Environmental Impact Assessment and evaluation of impacts on the

environment."

9. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* The Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia, and, in particular, included in its structure the National Institute of Standards, engaged in information issues related to the food industry. Many commercial organizations have received the right to the international certification of products, such as management of pharmaceuticals and medical technologies. In this area, the State Security Service for foodstuff companies, established in 2012, plays an important role. If we talk about genetically modified organisms (GMOs), at the present time the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Armenia discussed a package of amendments to the law "On Food Safety" (27.11.2006). In particular, it provides for labeling of GMOs. Also under discussion are the amendments and additions to the law "On Protection of Consumers' Rights" (26.06.2001) at the stage of discussion of the draft law "On biosafety of genetically modified organisms." Changes and additions to the law "On food safety" were not accepted, and the scope of the use of GMOs remains unregulated, and public awareness is not satisfactory. The Ministry of Environmental Protection has prepared a draft of the RA Law "On biosafety of genetically modified organisms." The project is included in the agenda of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia. Together with the project, references are made to a number of laws and regulations, which are considered adopted after the adoption of the Law. In recent years, several NGOs participated in the development and implementation of voluntary eco-labeling (e.g., labeling of environmentally friendly agricultural products, NGO "Eco-Globe"), although non-governmental organizations and academics are very aware, in particular on the draft law that was introduced by the parliamentary hearings. Near Government regulations were approved: "Technical Regulations requirements, StVZO for food contact substances and their labeling in Armenian" (25.10.2007 *п.* N1282), Requirements to form marking information in Armenian food and food additives imported into RA (21.12.2006 *п.* N1838), the procedure for the labeling and development of organic agricultural products as well as products located in the transitional phase of organic farming (19.03.2009 *п.* N283), procedure for the organization of organic agriculture, the production of plants and plant products (including beekeeping products), developing organically, packaging, sale and labeling (11.06.2009 *п.* N662) (106).

Belarus

10. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* Voluntary environmental certification and eco-labeling of products and production facilities are provided by the law "On Environmental Protection", "On Protection of Consumer Rights", "On the conformity assessment requirements of technical regulations in the field of technical standardization". In order to declare conformity of production and the right of consumers to obtain reliable information and implement informed choices of foods, the "natural product" food labeling sign was introduced. On 01-06-2008 at RB, technical codes of practice were introduced as part of the TKP 126-2008 "Food Labeling rules, main provisions of the sign 'natural product'". The Environmental certification in Belarus is one of the important elements of the state policy in the field of environmental protection, aimed at protecting the interests of the state, society and its citizens in the field of environment, safety and conservation of biological diversity (82).

11. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* In accordance with Article 12 of the Law "On Protection of Consumer Rights", raw food materials and food products produced in areas of radioactive contamination should have a document established by the legislation on agriculture and harvesting of agricultural products or sanitary-epidemiological population well-being, according to the content of permissible levels of radionuclides, indicating the place of production of raw and processed food products, manufacturer, compliance indicators, and content of permissible levels of radionuclides. State Enterprise "Ekologiyainvest" is actively pursuing work on the development, implementation and certification of environmental management systems, and publishes on its website the list of organizations certified to provide for the protection of the environment (84).

Belgium

12. *Federal authority:* f) (Paragraph unchanged from 2011 report) With respect to paragraph 6: This provision relates on the one hand to providing information about activities and on the other hand to providing information about products. Both aspects are the subject of two different levels of competence in the Belgian rule of law.

13. Providing information about products is a federal competence.

14. Providing information about activities is a regional competence.

15. With regard to the provision of information by operators whose activities have a significant impact on the environment, we should in the first instance refer to Regulation (EC) No 761/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2001 allowing voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) (OJ L 114, 24.04.2001).

The main lines of the EMAS Regulation can be summarised as follows. The basic principle is that companies in the industrial sector can participate voluntarily in the evaluation and improvement of their environmental performance. In addition, the public must be informed of this. A system of environmental verifiers and registration is used. Before a registration can be made, the sites in question must meet a number of requirements, such as the drawing up of an environmental policy, review, programme, management system, audit, and statement.

16. On the basis of the co-operation agreement of 30 March 1995 (B.S., 03.10.1995) between the federal state and the Regions, this matter is applied in a co-ordinated way in Belgium.

Apart from EMAS, "internal environmental performance" was integrated into the Flemish Parliament Act of 5 April 1995 containing general provisions regarding environmental policy in the Flemish Region. This regulation provides for a partial environmental performance system, which means that certain categories of installations are obliged to meet only the elements that are essential for government policy.

17. A first relevant regulation mentioned in this respect is the compulsory environmental audit. This may be either a one-off or a periodical (that is three-yearly) environmental audit. This is to be understood as a systematic, documented and objective evaluation of the management, organisation and equipment of the installation or activity concerned in terms of environmental protection. Concretely, it is examined, among other things, how the plant provides information externally and an explanation is also given of its production methods.

18. Moreover, the Flemish Parliament Act containing general provisions regarding environmental policy also provides for the drawing up of an annual integrated environmental report for specific categories of installations. This report consists of four partial reports: an annual emission report, a waste register, noise and immission measurements.

19. h) (Paragraph unchanged from 2011 report) With respect to paragraph 8: Product information is a federal competence. See the federal report (www.health.fgov.be)

20. *Walloon Region:* (f) Roll-out of annual environmental reporting to the public authority via the Walloon Government's draft.

21. The decrees of 11 September 1985 organizing environmental impact assessment, as integrated in the environment code, and of 11 March 1999 concerning the environment permit both cover the procedure for granting permits to establishments engaged in activities that have environmental impacts.

22. A prior impact study is required for a series of activities that can potentially have significant environmental impacts. Information meetings are to be held at the start of the impact study process and a public inquiry is required as part of the environmental permit investigation process.

23. In addition, a decree of 22nd November 2007 amending the decree of 11 mars 1999 on environmental permits, adopted in 2007, has established a mandatory annual reporting on environmental data for the installations concerned by the PRTR Protocol.

24. (h) An agreement has been signed with a non-profit association of consumer defence and environmental protection associations to set up an "ecological consumption network" to raise consumer awareness and inform and help consumers to make more environmentally friendly and healthier consumption choices.

25. *Brussels Capital-Region: Paragraph 6:* see Ord. art.16 § 2

26. *Paragraph 8:* See Law of 21 December 1998 (published in *Moniteur Belge* of 11 February 1999) on product standards designed to promote sustainable production means, environmental protection and public health, art.5, §1, 6°.

27. Practically speaking, this means: awareness of the public of the need to behave in such a way and buy products that damage to the environment is kept to a minimum (see above).

28. *Flemish Region:* (f) European Regulation 761/2001 (EMAS): companies must supply information on the environmental impact of their activities.

29. For certain categories of plants, an environmental audit and integrated annual environmental report is obliged according to the “Internal Corporate environmental care”.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

30. f) Relevant Articles are Art.73 of the LoPE FBH/92, LoPN RS/72 LoPN BD. The public is informed by the relevant bodies. With regards to eco-marking and control, relevant regulations are Chapter XIII LoPE FBH/IX, LoPN RS/XII LoPN BD. Regulations on eco-marks were established in the FBH (Official Gazette FBH No 92/07), while at the time this report was being written the RS was in process of establishing the regulations.

31. h) Relevant articles are Art. 93 and 94 of the LoPE FBH/111 - 114 LoPN RS/89 and 90 LoPN BD, as well as the Charter on eco-marks FBiH. Apart from this Article 52 LoGMO is also relevant.

Bulgaria

32. *Subpoint (f):* With Art. 137 - Art. 141 of the EPA, the legislative requirements for the application of the EU Ecolabel Scheme are established in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel. The EU Ecolabel is a voluntary commitment of the business and focuses on production and consumption of products and services with reduced negative impact on the environment throughout their life cycle. The logo of the EU Ecolabel ensures consumers that products and services have the highest environmental performance achieved on the Community market. Information is accurate, not misleading and scientifically sound, and facilitates consumer choice. Actual information for the Scheme, the organizations on the territory of Bulgaria and the products obtained the right to use the logo of the EU Ecolabel is kept on the website of MoEW and regularly updated.

33. Art. 132-141 of EPA establish legislative requirements for the application of the Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) according to Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), repealing Regulation (EC) No 761/2001 and Commission Decisions 2001/681/EC and 2006/193/EC. The objective of EMAS is to promote continuous improvement of the environmental performance of organizations through: creation and implementation by the organizations a system for environmental management; systematic, objective and periodic evaluation of the performance of such systems; provision of information on environmental performance; open dialogue with the public and other stakeholders, as well as active involvement of employees in organizations and appropriate training. Actual information for the Scheme and the organizations on the territory of Bulgaria which are registered under Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 is kept on the website of MoEW and regularly updated.

34. The European Commission has published criteria for the products and services subject of environmental friendly/“green” public procurement (also voluntary instrument of EU as the EU Ecolabel). Criteria for “green” public procurement cover 19 product and service groups identified as most appropriate, given the high consumption, high market share, significant environmental impacts. These criteria are published on the websites of the Commission and the MoEW.

35. *Subpoint (h):* As a member of the EU, Bulgaria uses some other instruments, except EU Ecolabel, that provide information about the environmental characteristics of products and services, including eco-design, energy labeling etc.

Croatia

36. *Paragraph 6:* As part of the CNPEPR, the public has access to information on operators exceeding the thresholds prescribed for the release and transfer of pollutants and produced, collected and treated waste from the EPR as well as polluters and their sites.

37. The operators, manufacturers and service providers implementing high environmental protection standards can be awarded an eco-certificate (ISO, a national ecolabel Environmentally Friendly). We are currently in the process of introducing the European Union environmental protection label (EU Ecolabel) and the EMAS (a system for environmental management and independent organisation assessment).

38. *Paragraph 8:* Art. 219 of the EPA prescribes that producer, that is the person placing a product on the market, shall be obliged in cases it is so prescribed to put, prior to placing a product on the market, an instruction on the packaging or on the technical document accompanying the product informing the consumer about the environmental impact of the product and of the packaging, and instructing how to handle the product and packaging after their use. The EPA also prescribed fines for violations of provisions of Art. 219.

39. The Sustainable Waste Management Act (OG 94/13) and the Ordinance on Packaging and Packaging Waste (OG 97/05, 115/05, 81/08, 31/09, 156/09, 38/10, 10/11, 81/11, 126/11, 38/13 and 86/13) are also relevant in this context. Pursuant to the mentioned Ordinance, a Decision on requirements regarding packaging labelling (OG 155/05, 24/06 and 28/06) has been issued. It regulates in more detail the system for packaging labelling, depending on the type of packaging.

40. The following documents are also relevant in this context: Regulation on Limit Values of the Content of Volatile Organic Compounds in Certain Paints and Varnishes used in Construction and Vehicle Refinishing Products (OG 69/13), Regulation on the Quality of Liquid Oil Fuels (OG 108/13) and the Regulation on the Quality of Bio-fuels (OG 141/05, 33/11), which prescribe that, prior to being placed on the Croatian market, the products must have an intelligible label in Croatian informing the consumers of the content and limit values.

The public can also access the information on the approved biocide products, the list of which is regularly published by the Ministry of Health on its website. The annual list of biocide products is prepared by the Minister of Health pursuant to the Biocide Products Act (OG 63/07, 53/08 and 49/11).

Cyprus

41. *Paragraph 6:* In the case of waste management, information is provided through (a) the obligation of the Waste Management Permit holders to submit to the competent authority a yearly report on quantities, type and final destination of the waste received, (b) the producers' responsibility to submit a yearly report on the quantities of packaging, electrical and electronic equipment, batteries and accumulators and vehicle tyres they put on the market, (c) the individual and collective take back systems formed under the producers responsibility principle, (d) independent studies carried out by the competent authority and (e) surveys carried out by the Statistical Service. An electronic data base is under preparation in order to facilitate this procedure.

Czech Republic

42. *Regarding article 5, paragraph 6:* There is the Integrated Pollution Register and the Information System for the Fulfilment of Reporting Duties (ISPOP) through which the polluters are legally obliged to report pollutants released to the environment (Act No. 25/2008, on the Integrated Pollution Register). Enterprises and companies that have products with a certificate authorizing them to use the label "environmentally friendly product" and that have applied an environmental management/audit system make use of comparative advantages and mostly inform the public about such activities through the available information sources.

43. *Regarding article 5, paragraph 8:* Under an EU Directive, the obligation to designate electrical appliances with energy labels has been implemented in Act No. 406/2000 Coll., on Energy Management. In addition, it is also possible to obtain the label "environmentally friendly product" both for the Czech Republic and the whole of the EU within the scope of voluntary environmental protection tools. In addition, Council Regulation (EC) No. 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products is directly applicable in the Czech Republic, followed by Act No.

242/2000 Coll., on Organic Farming. These regulations regulate the use of designations “bio-product”, “bio-food” and “other bio-product”.

Denmark

44. *Paragraph 6:* In connection with the Danish Environmental Protection Act there is a duty to provide information on certain heavily polluting enterprises through green accounts. Other enterprises are able to have published voluntary green accounts.

45. On the basis of the various plans for the aquatic environment, farmers have been submitting fertiliser accounts for a number of years. Since January 2008, these have been made public on the internet.

46. Through product labelling (e.g. the EU ecolabel, the Flower, and the Nordic ecolabel, the Swan) enterprises can confirm that a product meets specific environmental quality requirements.

47. Enterprises can also register according to the voluntary European Community environmental management scheme (EMAS). An EMAS-registered enterprise in Denmark must annually publish a statement regarding its environmental performance verified by an independent third party. Danish enterprises are encouraged to adopt the EMAS scheme by the EPA.

48. *Paragraph 8:* On the EPAs website there is a full catalogue of approved pesticides.

49. In addition, the EPA provides good advice on a spray garden on the website godthavemiljo.dk and helps the garden owners who want to spray in the garden, to choose the least harmful pesticides.

50. Administration of the ecolabels the Flower and the Swan in Denmark is headed by Ecolabelling Denmark assisted by an ecolabelling board set up by the Minister for the Environment following recommendations from a number of organisations representing the interests of retailers, industry, the environment, and consumers.

51. The Danish state inspection logo, known as the red Ø logo, is used for organic production. It signifies that the latest preparation of the product has taken place in a Danish company inspected by the public authorities. Only authorities under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries carry out inspection under the government rules for organic production. Application of the logo is voluntary for the producer.

52. Inspection of organic foods in Denmark applies to all stages from stable to table, and is carried out at least once a year.

Estonia

53. *Paragraph 6:* In 2003, Estonia, together with other countries, signed the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs), which should be ratified either in 2005 or 2006. The protocol was accepted by Estonia in August 2007.

54. Information concerning factors that may be hazardous to human health or the environment must be disclosed immediately. Such provisions are included in the Environmental Register Act, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the Environmental Auditing Act, the Environmental Monitoring Act, the Ambient Air Protection Act and the Release of Genetically Modified Organisms into the Environment Act.

55. *Paragraph 8:* Access to information regarding goods and services offered on the commodities market is regulated primarily under the Consumer Protection Act adopted in 1993 and enforced in 1994. Product safety and the related provision of information to consumers is regulated under the Product Safety Act. Pursuant to section 3 of the Consumer Protection Act obtaining necessary and truthful information on the goods and services offered in order to make an informed choice is one of the fundamental rights of consumers (clause 2). A consumer has the right to obtain necessary information on safety, protection of health, property and economic interests related to goods or services offered.

56. Disclosure of data is regulated by specific laws or EU regulations, e.g. REACH (EC) No 1907/2006 and Regulation concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products (EU) No 528/2012.

57. The Environmental Management System Act establishes in accordance with Regulation (EEC) No. 1221/2009 allowing voluntary participation by organisations in a European Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) the rights and obligations of respective institutions in Estonia. In accordance with its section 50, the Ministry of the Environment must prepare a strategy and plan of activities for promoting environmental management and auditing systems for promoting the European Unions environmental management and auditing system and for organizing the necessary information campaigns and training. The strategy is approved by the Government of the Republic. The same act also establishes the national provisions detailing the application of the voluntary eco-label of the European Union. Regulation (EC) No. 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council on EU eco-label award scheme which is directly applicable also in Estonia, establishes in article 12 the obligation of the Member States and the European Commission to promote the use of eco-label by performing information campaigns for consumers, producers, merchants, distributors and the public.

European Union

Year: 2014

58. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* The EU has adopted regulatory acts on voluntary eco-labelling and eco-auditing schemes: Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel [11] and Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS). [12] It is to be noted that the Ecolabel Regulation provides for the consultation of stakeholders when establishing Ecolabel criteria for product groups (see, in particular, Article 7 of the Regulation).

59. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* The European Union has adopted several legislative acts that aim at ensuring, in a mandatory manner, that producers make available to consumers information concerning the energy efficiency and energy performance of their products:

- (a) Directive 2010/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the indication by labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy-related products; [13]
- (b) Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of eco-design requirements for energy-related products. [14] Its Article 14 deals specifically with consumer information;
- (c) Regulation (EC) No 1222/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the labelling of tyres with respect to fuel efficiency and other essential parameters; [15]
- (d) Directive 1999/94/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 1999 relating to the availability of consumer information on fuel economy and carbon dioxide emissions in respect of the marketing of new passenger cars. [16]

60. Both Directive 2010/30/EU and Directive 2009/125/EC provide for the adoption of delegated acts on the eco-design and energy labelling of energy related products: see http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/labelling/household_en.htm. Before such acts are adopted, stakeholders are consulted via the Ecodesign Consultation Forum: see http://ec.europa.eu/energy/efficiency/ecodesign/forum_en.htm.

61. Reference is also made to the European Energy Star Programme, a voluntary energy-labelling programme for office equipment. The Energy Star logo helps consumers identify office equipment products that better protect the environment by saving energy (Regulation (EC) No 106/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 January 2008 on a Community energy-efficiency labelling programme for office equipment (recast); [17] see <http://www.eu-energystar.org/>.

62. The European Business Awards for the Environment, which are presented every two years, recognise and reward European companies that set an example by successfully bringing together innovation, economic viability and environmental concerns; see <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/awards/index.html>.

Finland

63. *Article 5, paragraph 6* - Measures taken to encourage operators whose activities have a significant impact on the environment to inform the public regularly of the environmental impact of their activities and products:

64. In the 1990s voluntary environmental control methods were introduced concerning the industrial protection of the environment. These systems also involve informative tasks. Since 1996, all organisations have the opportunity to implement the global ISO 14001 environmental system. Moreover, organisations have also had access to the voluntary EU environmental management and auditing system EMAS. A new EU Regulation ((EC) No. 1221/2009) came into effect in January 2010 (90).

65. *Article 5, paragraph 8* - Measures taken to develop mechanisms with a view to ensuring that sufficient product information is made available to the public:

66. The Nordic environmental mark, i.e. the swan logo, was established in 1989 by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Its goal is to instruct consumers in choosing from among the relevant range of products those that place the smallest impact on the environment. At the same time, it strives to promote product development in a direction which is positive to the environment. The ecolabel of the European Union, the "euro flower", is based on Regulation of the European Parliament and Council (EC) No. 66/2010 on the system of granting a Community ecolabel. The goals of the system are similar to the Nordic label system (92).

67. The purpose of the European energy labels is to inform consumers about the energy efficiency of appliances. The label is based on directive 2010/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, which was approved on 19 May 2010. Several delegated regulations have been issued based on the directive, which include more detailed provisions on the energy labels of different devices. The scope of the directive covers all products related to energy. The Commission's Directive has been implemented in Finland by the Act on Requirements of Ecological Design and Energy Labels (1005/2008, amended 1009/2010). In addition to the official labels, environmental labels may also be contained in other products. Such labels include "luomu" [organic], the EU origin label and the "fair trade" label (93).

France

68. *Paragraph 6* - Under Act No. 2001-420 of 15 May 2001 on new economic regulations (NRE), publicly traded companies must include in their annual reports a section on their social and environmental management and the manner in which they take into account the social and environmental repercussions of their activities (72).

69. Act No. 2010-788 of 12 July 2010 extended this obligation under the New Economic Regulations Act to certain non-publicly traded companies whose balance sheet total or turnover and number of employees exceed certain thresholds. Decree No. 2012-557 of 24 April 2012 sets these thresholds at 100 million euros for the balance sheet total or the net turnover and 500 permanent employees (averaged over the course of the financial year). It also establishes a list of information required from all the companies concerned and a list of supplementary information to be provided only by publicly traded companies (73).

70. The NF-Environnement standard, which appears on the labels of certain products, enables consumers to make more environmentally aware choices (see information below, provided with regard to paragraph 8) (74).

71. *Paragraph 8* - An official French environmental label, NF-Environnement, has been in existence since 1991. It is the property of the French Standards Association (AFNOR), which manages and promotes it. Associated with it is a logo which, when attached to a product, guarantees that it meets specific criteria. The purpose of the NF-Environnement label is to guide consumer choice while encouraging industries to improve the environmental quality of their products. A list of NF-Environnement environmental labels may be consulted at: www.afnor.fr. (77)

72. Article L. 112-10 of the Consumer Code has arranged a trial period during which consumers will be informed of the carbon equivalent content of products and packaging as well as the consumption of natural resources and the environmental impact that can be attributed to products over their life span (78).

73. An evaluation report on the trial has been submitted to Parliament and is available at: http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Affichage_environnemental.pdf (79)

74. The report concludes that it is necessary – in the expectation of a European Union measure – to take an approach that will be progressive, proactive, adapted to the given sector of economic activity, consistent with measures at the European level, compatible with international trade rules and based on the methodological reference frameworks developed over more than five years by the French Standards Association and the Environment and Energy Agency (ADEME) (80).

75. Furthermore, Article L. 121-15-4 of the Consumer Code, which applies Directive 2010/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 on the indication by labelling and standard product information of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy-related products, provides that "Where advertisements, in whatever medium, present products covered by EU energy labelling and indicate their sale price, they are to include a reference to the energy efficiency class of these products that is as visible, legible and intelligible as the price labelling" (81).

76. In addition, Act No. 2010-788 of 12 July 2010 on national commitment to the environment provides that "any person who markets or organizes a passenger, goods or removals transport service must provide the service user with information relating to the quantity of carbon dioxide emitted by the mode or modes of transport used to carry out this service" (82).

77. Article 229 of the same Act allows environmental protection associations to file civil claims against misleading business practices and advertisements that contain environmental information (83).

78. A consumer law currently at the draft stage aims to promote responsible consumption through the provision of information about the availability of detachable product components, in order to limit wastage. Detaching and replacing components may avoid the need to replace a defective appliance in its entirety, at a lower cost to the consumer. This will also help to develop the social economy and the not-for-profit sector, since many entities trading in detachable components fall into these categories (84).

Georgia

79. *Paragraph 6:* f) The national legislation contains no provision or norm corresponding to this paragraph, which would offer incentives to the operators of small and medium enterprises.

80. *Paragraph 8:* h) The Decree of the Minister of Agriculture of Georgia (December 11, 2009) on Approval of Additional Requirements for Food Labeling establishes additional requirements for food products of all types, that circulate on the territory of Georgia and is aimed at ensuring protection of consumers' economic interests.

Germany

81. (f, h) The provision of information to consumers about the environmental impact of products, pursuant to Article 5 (6) and (8) of the Convention, is safeguarded not only through mandatory product labelling provided for in relevant areas of European and German law, but also through voluntary measures, e.g. various environmental certificates or labels. For example, the BMU's Blue Angel eco-label is awarded by RAL gGmbH in collaboration with the organisations and Länder represented on the Environmental Label Jury and the UBA. The organic production logo eco-label pursuant to Regulation (EC) 834/2007 can be used on a voluntary basis for all unprocessed agricultural products and agricultural products intended for human consumption. It is currently used by 4,269 companies for 66,941 products (31 August 2013). The Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food is the authority responsible for dealing with registrations for the scheme, which is monitored through Germany's system of public and private controls. The Eco-Audit Regulation (EC) 1221/2009, last amended in 2009, not only encourages voluntary participation by organisations

in a European eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), but also promotes the publication of environmental data, including data on the production process. In September 2012, there were 8,208 sites registered under EMAS throughout the EU.

Greece

82. *Article 5, paragraph 6* - Programmes, inter alia, for the funding of several organizations for EMAS 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 (21).

83. Until 2009, the register of EMAS verified organizations was growing rapidly in Greece. The number of registered organizations jumped from 1 in January 2001 to 10 in January 2004 and to 69 in June 2009. During the last couple of years the register of EMAS verified organizations has stabilized to 42 organizations with 787 sites, showing a significant decrease (almost 40%) from the 2009 peak registrations. Recent deletions are mainly due to financial constraints of organizations and failure to provide their environmental statements, although most organizations claim to continue informally implementing their environmental management system. The number of EMAS environmental verifiers has also been reduced, due to the limited uptake of EMAS (22).

84. For the promotion of EMAS in the market, the registration of organisations remains free of charge. Also, EMAS has been incorporated in many priorities and actions of the sectoral Operational Programmes (OP) “Competitiveness-Entrepreneurship” and “Fisheries” of the Ministry of Development and Competitiveness, which, along with the OPs of other Ministries, have been developed to implement Greece’s strategic planning for the period 2007-2013, based on the reference document “National Strategic Reference Framework” (NSRF) for the Programme period 2007-2013. In the framework of the above OPs, Programme cycles are launched regularly for the financial support of businesses and organizations to achieve the objectives of specific priority axes, which, inter alia, provide funding for EMAS/ISO14001 implementation (e.g. priority axes “Aquaculture, Processing and Marketing of Fisheries and Aquaculture” and “Sustainable Development of Coastal Fishing Areas” of the OP Fisheries and priority axes “Improvement of the Business Environment” and “Strengthening of Entrepreneurship and Extroversion” of the OP Competitiveness-Entrepreneurship) (23).

85. Recently, Law no. 3982/2011 (OJG A’143/17-06-11), regarding the simplification of the licensing procedure for technical professional and manufacturing activities, and Law no. 4014/2011 (OJG A’209/21/09/11), regarding the simplification of the environmental permitting process of projects and activities have introduced new incentives (financial and regulatory relief) for the uptake of EMAS from manufacturing and related operations. According to this legal framework, the duration of the Environmental Permit is extended by four years in the case of manufacturing units that are EMAS registered and by two years in the case of units that apply ISO 14001 or an equivalent environmental management system and whilst the EMS system is in force. For the manufacturing and related operations that manage hazardous waste and are EMAS registered, the required insurance fee is reduced by 50%. Furthermore, for the activities that are EMAS registered, Law no. 3982/2011 introduces the possibility for reductions in the amount of financial insurance (collateral) related to environmental liability. Such reductions can be determined through joint decisions of the Minister of the Environment, Energy and Climate Change and the Minister of Development and Competitiveness. Law 4014/2011 also foresees the development of an electronic Environmental Information Registry (EIR) in the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, regarding the process of approval, renewal, modification and implementation monitoring of the environmental permits of projects and processes. The national EMAS Competent Body (the Hellenic EMAS Committee) will have access to EIR, through a special electronic license, for the recovery of any relevant environmental information available, facilitating thus the compliance check of EMAS organisations with legal and regulatory requirements. Law 4014/2011 also stipulates that the Environmental Inspectorate must take into account the implementation of EMAS when scheduling its environmental inspections Programme, with the possibility of less frequent inspections to EMAS registered organisations (24).

86. Finally, to facilitate public access to environmental information, the EMAS official website is regularly updated and the EMAS register was redesigned in September 2012 to provide additional information for all registered

organisations and sites, as well as all the environmental statements available in electronic format of the EMAS registered organisations (even multiple versions for previous years) (25).

87. The European eco label has been awarded to 18 detergent products (2 companies), to 281 paints and varnishes products (22 companies) and 10 hotels. The aforementioned licenses, currently valid, have been issued by the National Competent Body - the Hellenic Council for Ecolabel Awards - ASAOS, which forms an integral part of the Hellenic Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (26).

88. As far as GGP issues are concerned, Greece is currently finalising the National Action Plan and associated policies on Green Public Procurement. This contains mainly an assessment of the existing situation regarding public procurement in Greece, sets targets for the following years, specifying the measures that will be taken in order to achieve them (27).

89. *Article 5, paragraph 8* - 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-labeling of products under art. 5, para. 3) (29).

90. *Article 5, paragraph 3 (as referenced above)*: (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 (16).

Hungary

91. *Article 5, paragraph 6* - Implementation of the objectives of article 5, paragraph 6, of the Convention are fostered in Hungary by the EU eco-label regime and the national “environmental friendly product” award, and the EU Environmental Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS).

92. The national product quality/conformity assessment scheme was introduced in 1993. The ministry responsible for the environment and regional development determined the conditions for participation in the scheme and established the legal predecessor of the “Environmentally Friendly Product Non-profit Company” (www.kornyezetbarat-termek.hu), whose principal responsibility is the coordination and administration of the scheme.

By the date of EU accession, Hungary has introduced the legal and institutional framework necessary for participation in the EU eco-label scheme. Administration of the EU scheme in Hungary also falls under the competence of the Environmentally Friendly Product Non-profit Ltd.

93. All information relating to the national and EU eco-label schemes can be downloaded in English and Hungarian from the specific eco-label website of the ministry responsible for the environment as well as the website of the Environmental Friendly product Non Profit Kft: <http://www.kornyezetbarat-termek.hu>. The website also provides access to data on organisations that meet all domestic and EU eco-label qualification criteria and are granted the environmentally friendly and eco-label rating. Upon EU accession, Hungary also joined the EU EMAS scheme. The designated competent body is the National Environment, Nature Conservation and Water Chief Inspectorate, while accreditation is the responsibility of the National Accreditation Body.

94. Information on the legal and institutional framework of EMAS, on EMAS registrations and accredited verifiers is published on the specific website of the ministry responsible for the environment (<http://emas.kvvm.hu/>). It also contains the environmental declarations of EMAS-registered bodies and provides topical EMAS-related news (98).

95. h) The set-up of the National Park Trademark system commenced in early 2010. The aim is to support local producers, the local population and service providers who conduct activities in areas rich in natural values, with traditional methods and in harmony with the interests of nature conservation. The trademark is granted to products and services produced, provided in protected natural areas which fulfil the certification criteria. The trademark provides a quality guarantee to buyers and consumers, indicating that the product or service was produced in an environmentally

friendly form, in good quality. Since October 2010 over 150 products of 70 producers has received the Trademark. The trademark allocation was held as part of the National Parks Week event (99).

Iceland

96. *Paragraph 6:* The operation permit of polluting industry establishes requirements for monitoring and reporting on the operation and its environmental effects. According to regulation 851/2002 on green accounts all activity that has an operation permit must keep green accounts which are audited by independent bodies. The green accounts provide information on the use of raw material and substances and polluting emissions from the activity in question and are published on the Environment Agency's web site.

Ireland

97. *Paragraph 6:* f) Ireland has fulfilled its obligations by encouraging operators whose activities have a significant impact on the environment to inform the public regularly of the environmental impact of their activities and products through the establishment of www.envirocentre.ie. This website is an environmental information portal from Enterprise Ireland, which is designed to enhance environmental awareness and improve performance in Irish industry and contains information on the EU Eco Management Audit Scheme (EMAS).

98. *Paragraph 8:* h) Ireland has taken the following measures to ensure that sufficient product information is made available to the public to facilitate the public in making informed environmental decisions.

99. The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is charged with implementing significant aspects of government policy on sustainable energy and climate change abatement. It provides a comprehensive information portal to consumers on a variety of schemes to promote energy efficiency in Ireland. See for example: www.seai.ie/Power_of_One/.

100. Ireland has established product labelling mechanisms to assist consumers to make informed choices:

- *Eco-labelling:* Businesses are encouraged to partake in the voluntary European eco-labelling scheme established in 1992 to encourage businesses to market products and services that are kinder to the environment, see www.irdg.ie/eco-label-initiative.

101. Under the Enterprise Ireland Ecolabel Initiative, companies can apply for support towards validation, testing and application for an eco-label for a particular product.

- *Motor Vehicles:* Under EU and Irish law it is mandatory for the fuel economy and CO₂ emissions of new passenger cars to be clearly displayed, allowing consumers to make informed purchasing choices on both environmental and economic grounds. This is implemented by the European Communities (Consumer Information on Fuel Economy and CO₂ Emissions of New Passenger Cars) Regulations 2001 (S.I. No. 339 of 2001).
- *Electrical Appliances:* In line with EU law, Ireland has implemented a range of legislation providing for the labelling of electrical appliances. The full suite of legislation is outlined at: www.seai.ie/Power_of_One/Appliances_and_Labelling/Legislation. Retail outlets are regularly inspected for compliance with the energy labelling regulations.

Italy

102. *Paragraph 6:* f) Concerning the encouragement of operators, the voluntary agreements between the MoE and private companies or public services providers, in order to improve environmental performance of the latter, as well as to increase the periodic compilation of environmental reports by enterprises, has been strengthened through a National Program for the Evaluation of the Environmental Footprint which involves more than 200 partners. The objective of these partnerships is to identify "carbon management procedures" and to support the application of low emission technologies and best practices in the production's processes and within the life cycle of products/services production, through increasing competitiveness of the Italian enterprises while using ecological standards, giving a stimulus for the revision of production and distribution cycles and an opportunity to create an increased awareness of consumers. The pilot sectors are in particulars: fashion, wine and food.

103. Many industrial sites have registered to the EC eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), a management tool for companies and other organizations focusing on their environmental performance, which envisages that participating sites make public a report on their environmental performance in return for being certified with an EMAS logo. In order to facilitate the use of EMAS by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), an agreement between the MoE and the main business association (Confindustria) was signed in 2002. Within this framework, a public fund is used to contribute to consulting fees that SMEs are faced with.

104. Furthermore, the possibility of applying to EMAS logo has been granted to industrial districts. An example of EMAS obtained by industrial districts is the one in Pordenone area (north-eastern Italy) specialised in furniture production, based on an agreement involving the Provincial Government, the Region, the MoE and a committee of local furniture producers.

EMAS as well as integrated product policies have recently been applied with success to tourist sites. Similarly, environmental reporting is encouraged on the basis of the Corporate Social Responsibility of enterprises. An example of best practice is represented by the autonomous Province of Trento that in 2009 has enabled the EMAS certification in 51 Municipalities, 2 Public Services Agencies and 2 Parks.

105. The MoE actively encourages Italian enterprises towards ecoinnovation within the EU framework which provides support and incentives for techniques, technologies, products, processes and services, sustainable and replicable at European level, reducing environmental impacts and contributing to a more efficient use of natural resources, including energy. Being the National Contact Point, the MoE has organized a series of national and regional information days on the annual call for proposals and made available to all interested parties information relating to the development of proposals, either via the website, telephone, or through direct meetings with proponents.

106. Moreover, in the context of projects promoting “Corporate and Social Responsibility” - CSR, companies are encouraged to adopt voluntarily high social and environmental standard according to international norms and principles, and to make them public preparing reports containing measures and strategies adopted to improve environmental performance.

107. The Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Economic Development, together with the MoE, has prepared, also through public consultation, the 2012-2014 National Plan for the Corporate Responsibility with the objective to increase the “responsibility culture” among enterprises, citizens and communities.

108. *Paragraph 8: h)* The national register on pollutant releases and transfers was established as the INES register under Legislative Decree 372/1999 (subsequently amended and substituted by Legislative Decree 59/2005) for the reporting years 2002 to 2006 and then it was replaced by the national PRTR in 2008. The INES register is an inventory containing qualitative and quantitative information on pollutants released into water and into air by specific facilities defined at the EU level. Those facilities listed in EU Directive 96/61/EC concerning integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) and fulfilling the criteria set out in Ministerial Decree of 23 November 2001 must report under INES. Every year the data for the INES Register are collected through an on line procedure. The competent authorities validate the data and send the results to ISPRA, which analyses the data, draws up statistics and fills in the INES register. These data are sent to the EU by the MoE every three years. To implement in Italy the EU Regulation 166/2006 regarding the establishment of a European Pollutant Emission Register (E-PRTR) INES data collection procedure needed to be redesigned. Although the PRTR related national legislation (Presidential Decree n. 157/2011) was adopted only in October 2011, the national PRTR data collection was operationally implemented by ISPRA already in 2008 and has been taking place on a yearly basis since then. EU Regulation 166/2006 requires annual reporting from the EU Member States: presently in Italy 5 data collection cycles have been completed (i.e. in 2007-2008-2009-2010 and 2011) while the collection of data referred to 2012 is ongoing. Data collections from 2007 to 2011 are available to the public on the European PRTR website. The national website for the INES/PRTR register still needs to be re-designed in order to accommodate also the national PRTR data.

109. ISPRA is in charge of providing and disseminating environmental information related to the INES register. E mail addresses are available to facilitate the public request of information on the Register, its collection of data, and interpretation of the information contained in the Register and accessibility.

110. Italy has signed the PRTR Protocol in 2003 and the ratification procedure is still on-going.

Kazakhstan

111. *Paragraph 8:* Government regulation of food safety is carried out in accordance with the Law “On Food Safety” (#301 of July 21, 2007). Art.1 of this law identifies the concepts of labelling, eco-friendly food products, a sign of clean food products. In compliance with Art.17 (2 (6)) of the Law on the documents, leaflets (package insert), label, counter, collar label, labels, decals (stickers), except for the information specified by the legislation of the RK on the safety of food products, taking into account the types of food products must be listed on the state and Russian languages information about the composition, including the presence and quantity of food additives, feed and feed additives, dietary supplements, genetically modified (GMO). According to Art.282 of EC nature users have to inform consumers about food and feed produced from GMOs through labelling. EC does not specify the level (in percentage) the content of GM products, and commits to label all, without exception, products containing or consisting or produced from GMOs.

Kyrgyzstan

112. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* According to the Law "On guarantees of access to information", charged with the duty to provide information to public authorities, local governments, citizens, public associations, enterprises, institutions, organizations and officials, access to information is provided by the publication and dissemination of relevant materials through periodicals, on television and radio programs, web sites, and mailing lists (142).

113. Measures similar to those specified in paragraph 6 of Article 5 of the Convention, and which are specially designed for small and medium enterprises are not accepted (143).

114. National legislation stipulates the right of people to be informed about the risks to which people may be exposed in certain places of stay in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the necessary steps for security ("Law on Civil Protection" 20.07.09g. № 239), but does not stipulate the obligation of state agencies and businesses to provide information about the possible impact (144).

115. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* There are no legal requirements and / or practices relating to public participation in awarding or monitoring the use of eco-labelling (148).

116. 2008 amendments to the Law "On Protection of Consumer Rights" oblige producers to provide information about the product (marked) and the presence in food ingredients derived from the use of genetically modified organisms (149).

Latvia

117. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* Articles 38 and 39 of the EPL set out for voluntary environmental management activities: implementation of eco-labeling and of an environmental management and audit system, and also provision of better information to the public on operator’s activities, as well as product information. Information on European eco-labeling and its implementation in Latvia is available on the ESB website (<http://www.vpvb.gov.lv/lv/ekomarkejums/informacija>) (144).

118. Article 6, paragraph 3, of the Law on Pollution stipulates operators’ obligation to provide environmental protection institutions and the public with information on the results of monitoring defined by the permit and the impact of polluting activities on human health and environment (145).

119. Public reports are available at the LEGMC website www.meteo.lv under the section “Environment” (146).

120. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* Choice of environmentally friendly products is encouraged by: EU eco-labeling; Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) has been implemented in several municipalities; also applicable are quality and management systems (ISO 9001 and ISO 14001), pure technologies, and various product labelling (153).

121. The association “Green Liberty” has done research on environmental influence of various products and human activities and environmentally friendly choices (see www.zb-zeme.lv) (154).

122. The website of the Food and Veterinary Service provides information about food products, novel food and food additives (155).

123. All chemical substances and mixtures shall bear labels indicating basic information on the respective substance or mixture including environmental hazard information according to the Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, amending and repealing Directives 67/548/EEC and 1999/45/EC, and amending Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006. The respective Latvian regulatory enactment is CM Regulation No. 107 “Procedure for Classification, Labeling and Packaging of Chemical Substances and Products”, dated 12 March 2002 (156).

124. Article 26.1 of the Law on Circulation of Genetically Modified Organisms stipulates that food products containing genetically modified organisms, consisting of them or being produced from them, shall be placed for sale separately from other food products in such a way as to be easily identifiable (157).

Lithuania

125. *Paragraph 6: f)* Acting in accordance with the Economic Entity Environmental Monitoring Regulations approved by Order No D1-546 of the Minister of Environment of 2009, economic entities perform pollution source monitoring and environmental monitoring, provide monitoring data to the relevant authorities and inform the public in established cases. For instance, economic entities performing regular measurements of emissions from sources of pollution into the air and surface water are obliged to publish the results of regular measurements of pollutant emissions/discharges on the Internet and update them regularly. Other economic entity environmental monitoring data are provided to the public in accordance with the procedure laid down in legal acts governing the provision of information to the public (see Article 3). Operators must use funds received for the transfer of emissions trading allowances and Kyoto units for implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental pollution (installation of environmentally-friendly technologies, increase of energy efficiency, use of renewable energy sources, reforestation and/or afforestation, research and its dissemination, consultations and training to economic entities, public information and education on climate change policy management and implementation issues and other measures). Each calendar year, operators must submit reports on the allocation and use of funds received for the transfer of emissions trading allowances and Kyoto units under the procedure laid down by the Minister of Environment to bodies authorised by the Minister. The reports are published on the MoE website.

126. Participation by organisations in an EC eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS) is governed by Regulation (EC) No 761/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council allowing voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS). A Government resolution on the application of this Regulation has been adopted and a scheme implementation programme has been approved in Lithuania. Companies that have installed EMAS inform the public about their results every year. These companies and companies marking their products with an eco-label are enabled to inform the public by disseminating information on the EPA website.

127. Economic entities performing monitoring of activities, introducing advanced technology and participating in a Community eco-management and audit scheme on a voluntary basis are encouraged by MoE letters of thanks.

128. h) Implementing the Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters in respect of the award of the Community Ecolabel, the EPA follows Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the EU Ecolabel (hereinafter “the Regulation”) and the criteria for the award of the Community Ecolabel for relevant product groups. The Regulation and the criteria for the award of the Community Ecolabel for relevant product groups are published on the EPA website at <http://gamta.lt> under the rubric of “Pollution Prevention: Environmental Labelling” and are available to the public. The rubric of “Pollution Prevention: Environmental Labelling” has been regularly supplemented since the European Commission Directorate General for the Environment announced new criteria for the award of the Community Ecolabel. The Control Organisation and Pollution Prevention Division of the EPA Environmental Protection State

Control Department organises seminars and invites industry, science and community-based organisation representatives to provide them with information on the opportunities and benefits of the award of the Commission Ecolabel.

Luxembourg

129. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* On a broader scale, it would be appropriate to mention the "label SDK". Companies can voluntarily participate in a controlled management of their waste. The SDK label, issued by the Administration of the environment and the Chamber of Trade, shows that the waste is managed ecologically. It is also a way for the companies to do "green" advertising.

130. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* The Government has initiated a series of incentives designed in particular to promote national products intended for human consumption from environmentally friendly crops (including "Naturflesch").

Malta

131. *Paragraph 6: f)* With respect to paragraph 6, measures taken to encourage operators whose activities have a significant impact on the environment to inform the public regularly of the environmental impact of their activities and products;

132. Specific reporting conditions are currently being incorporated in environmental permits. Actions were also taken to ensure that, prior to the issue of permit, continuous dialogue and dissemination of relevant information to the interested parties is effected through the processing of planning applications.

133. Encouraging operators to actively disseminate information: While reporting conditions are incorporated under the Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Regulations, 2002 (LN 234/02, as amended) and are actively incorporated in environmental permits, no such reporting requirements for small and medium-size enterprises.

134. *h)* With respect to *paragraph 8*, measures taken to develop mechanisms with a view to ensuring that sufficient product information is made available to the public;

135. As a Member State of the European Union, Malta established the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCAA), which took over the responsibilities of the Malta Standards Authority, as the competent body that administers the EU Eco-Label Scheme in Malta. Through the enactment of the Environment and Development Planning Act, 2010 (Cap. 504), environmental information related to the land-use planning process was made more accessible. The submission of the application, formerly published on a weekly basis, is now also the subject of notification to the neighbouring and adjacent developments. The Local Councils are de facto contributors since they are informed of the application and of the decision sittings. Access to planning applications and the all concomitant environmental data was given for free to all NGOs who requested it.

136. Also, through the work of the twining project, relevant entities that hold key environmental information were earmarked and trained to provide data.

137. Product information: As noted above, the MCCAA was established by the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority Act (Cap. 510) as the competent body for the EU Eco-Label Scheme in Malta. Both MEPA and civil society monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the measures enacted by the Environment and Development Planning Act, 2010 (Cap. 504). Civil society is aided through regular meetings with the media, the ENGOs and other stakeholders.

Montenegro

138. *Paragraph 6: f)* Refer to the provisions of the Law on Environment, Article 29, 63 and 64.

139. *Paragraph 8: h)* Refer to the provisions of the following regulations: Law on Environment, Article 23 and 64; Law on Chemicals, Article 11; Decree on substances that deplete the ozone layer and alternative substances, Article 20, 23; Waste Management Law, Article 11; Decree on the notification procedure of placing the packaging and packed

products on the market, establishing a system for acquisition, collection and treatment of waste packaging and operation of that system, Article 3, Item 29.

Netherlands

140. *Paragraph 6: f)* Chapter 12, article 12, paragraphs 2–4 of the Environmental Management Act (Wet milieubeheer) requires that the operators of about 250 of the largest companies in the Netherlands draw up an environmental report. This should contain an overall description of the adverse effects caused by the establishment, including a summary of the relevant data, measures taken and facilities installed in order to protect the environment. According to article 12, paragraph 7, anybody shall be allowed to consult this report free of charge, or to receive a copy of that report. This regulation has been repealed with effect from 30 June 2005.

141. *Paragraph 8: h)* The Netherlands encourages the use of ecolabel and other (Dutch or international) product certification or hallmark systems (“milieukeur”). The government also subsidizes an independent organisation (“Milieu centraal”) which provides consumers with product information.

Norway

142. *Paragraph 6: f)* The Norwegian Environmental Information Act requires all public and private undertakings to hold information about factors relating to their operations that may have an appreciable effect on the environment, and to supply such information on request. Similar provisions for product-specific information have been included in the Product Control Act. Undertakings are required to provide information as soon as possible and no later than one month after the request was received. This time limit can be extended to two months. The Appeals Board for Environmental Information, which is regulated under Section 19 of the Environmental Information Act and in the Regulations pursuant to the Act, has been established to consider appeals against refusals of requests for environmental information. The existence of the Appeals Board ensures proper evaluation and control of whether requests for environmental information are treated in accordance with the provisions of the Act. The reader is referred to the translation of the Act (<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/doc/laws/Acts/environmental-information-act.html?id=173247>). Annually the Board decides in approximately 10 to 15 cases. In 2012 seven appeals were received by the Board, five less than in 2010 and three less than in 2011.

143. Under the Accounting Act, enterprises are required to take active steps to provide information about factors relating to their operations that have had an appreciable environmental impact. There are also voluntary environmental certification schemes, which include requirements to provide environmental information.

144. Regulations on warning labelling, including labelling to indicate environmental hazards, apply to chemicals that are marketed as such, i.e. as substances or preparations. The warning labelling system is based on a comprehensive, internationally harmonised set of rules for the classification of chemicals.

145. There are also voluntary eco-labelling schemes (the Nordic Swan and the EU Ecolabel), and environmental declaration schemes.

146. A website has been set up to help enterprises and individuals find their way around Norwegian legislation (www.regelhjelp.no). Here are the most important regulations for 58 different industries collocated in a clear manner. This is believed to be particularly useful for small and medium-sized enterprises with limited resources.

147. *Paragraph 8: h)* When the Environmental Information Act was adopted, amendments were also made to the Product Control Act. These entitle the general public to receive information directly from producers, importers, processors, distributors and users of products. This includes information on whether products contain components or have properties that may cause injury to health or environmental damage, what these properties are, and what significant injury to health or environmental disturbance is caused by production and distribution of the product. All information held by a public body on products must also be disclosed unless specific grounds for exemption apply.

148. There are several voluntary ecolabelling schemes, of which the Nordic Swan is in most widespread use. This scheme is run by a foundation. Proposals for criteria for licensing different product groups are drawn up by highly

qualified experts, and public consultations are held on the proposals, which are also published on the Internet for comment;

149. As mentioned above a website has also been established at www.erdetfarlig.no, providing consumers with information on chemicals in consumer products, advise on which products to chose, as well as how to dispose of the products.

Poland

150. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* Environmental declarations concerned with obtaining EMAS certificates are made available through Internet register (88).

151. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* According to the Law on Environmental Protection, a product introduced to the market should meet the requirements of environmental protection. The product should be labelled with information concerning the consumption of fuel or other materials, the size of emissions related to product use, environmentally safe use, dismantling, re-use or disposal of the product. The products vendor must also make information available at the point of sale (92).

152. According to the Law on Environmental Protection, advertisements or other means of promoting a product or service should not contain contents promoting the consumption model in conflict with the principles of environmental protection and sustainable development, in particular the use of wildlife images to promote products and services that may have negative impact on the natural environment (93).

Portugal

153. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* For an environmental policy to be effective it is necessary and even indispensable to support the mechanisms of voluntary membership, which advocate and rely on good sustainability practices - information, transparency, accountability; examples of this are ISO 14001 environmental certification, EMAS registration, EU Ecolabels or even awards such as the Blue Flag of Europe (for beaches, pleasure boat ports and marinas, and pleasure craft), ECO XXI (for municipalities), the Green Key (for hotel units), etc.

154. With regard to the ISO 14001:2004 standard, up to 1 March 2013, 903 certifications were awarded in Portugal by the eight existing certification bodies, accredited in the Portuguese Quality System.

155. Two registrations were made in Portugal under the EC Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) in 2012. At the end of this year, 62 organisations were registered (which corresponds to a total of 110 registered activity sites). Two new registrations and one extension of a registration were awarded by September 2013, making a total of 59 registered organisations (which corresponds to a total of 115 registered activity sites).

156. Of note in relation to environmental labelling is the EU Ecolabel System (Regulation (EC) No 66/2010 of the Parliament and the Council of 25 November) as a market instrument, also voluntary, which aims to stimulate supply and demand for products and services with reduced impact on both the environment and health during their production and consumption, promoting products and services with high environmental performance. In Portugal, 18 ecological labels had been assigned to products of 16 different companies by 30 August 2013.

157. The ecodesign of products is an essential element of the EU strategy for the 'Integrated Product Policy', which is considered a preventive approach aimed at optimising the environmental performance of products while preserving their functional and safety characteristics, and cannot have negative impacts on health or increased costs for consumers. The Ecodesign Directive (Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 21 October) is a Framework Directive, which is considered a fundamental component of European policy to improve the energy and environmental performance of products in the domestic market not directly introducing mandatory requirements for specific products, but merely setting the conditions and criteria for the introduction of "Implementing measures". The Ecodesign Directive is complemented by Directive 2010/30/EU of the European Parliament and the Council of 19 May, on the indication of the consumption of energy and other resources by energy-related products, through labelling and

standard indications concerning the products. In this context, the European Commission established a Work Plan for the 2012-2014 period, to improve the energy efficiency and environmental performance of products throughout their life cycle. It considers 18 priority products and has the main objective of the reduction of CO2 emissions and reducing energy consumption.

158. IGAMAOT, under measures to encourage operators of facilities with environmental impact to improve the environmental performance of their activities or products, has implemented risk analysis systems for planning inspection activities at IPPC installations and WWTP serving populations of more than 10,000 inhabitant equivalents. Also implemented is a system of risk analysis for economic agents covered by the REACH Regulation in respect of some sectors in which this Regulation applies. Currently under way is the development of a system of global environmental risk analysis, a risk analysis system for operators covered by the Seveso directive and a system of risk analysis for operators managing electrical and electronic waste, thus widening the scope of activities in which the planning of the inspection activity is performed based on an analysis of systematic risk, to direct resources to areas that have a higher risk.

159. The use of the tool for informal conflict resolution and strategic communication with industry associations representing the sectors of activity that have been the subject of action by the IGAMAOT tool has permitted an increase in the awareness of operators to the environmental impacts associated with incorrect conduct, thus enhancing legal compliance. The activity of IGAMAOT is reflected on the website www.igamaot.gov.pt and in published documents.

160. IGAMAOT also has an ongoing multiyear objective to "improve the integration of companies and the population in environmental terms at the Sines Light Industrial Zone and Estarreja Industrial Zone", which aims to promote cross-communication involving the central authorities, companies, local authorities and the population, especially in the industrial areas in question, where the businesses and the surrounding community are geographically close to each other, and where there are several complaints about the respective activity. This project also aims to promote inter-company communication, which is beneficial - especially if they are located in the same geographical area – as it aids in identifying common hazards and measures for joint action, maximising and coordinating prevention measures to ensure the protection of the environment and human health. IGAMAOT is implementing two methods of the IMPEL network to develop this multi-year goal:

- Informal resolution of conflicts, constituting a methodology that is proven and effective in solving environmental issues of industry/population antagonism, which aims to achieve compromise solutions in a consensual manner;
- Assessment of the performance of companies based on their compliance management systems (SBS - based supervision system), which is an innovative approach in which the inspection authorities perform the supervision of the management systems implemented by companies through a methodology audit that assesses the quality levels of the internal control of the operator and its risk management, thus gauging the level of self-regulation and the degree of legal compliance achieved (goal-setting).

161. In the area of forest management, ICNF is the sector's standardisation body (ONS) for Sustainable Forest Management, according to the protocol of cooperation in the field of standardisation between the national standardisation body, Portuguese Institute of Quality, and ICNF. Accordingly, ICNF and in its capacity of ONS, is responsible for the coordination of the Technical Committee of Standardisation for Sustainable Forest Management (CT 145), an entity aimed at standardising the definitions and requirements for sustainable forest management in which individual and collective entities interested in these matters participate on a voluntary basis, organised into three areas: environmental, economic and social, and ensuring public participation in this topic.

162. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* For more effective communication that makes it easier for consumers to make sound environmental choices, the General Directorate for Consumers institutionally promotes the consumer website at www.consumidor.pt which includes concerns for sustainability.

163. The civil society organisations include DECO, the consumer association, which also provides specific information on the environment: <http://www.deco.proteste.pt/>

164. Environmental NGOs have also performed extensive work in this field, such as Quercus (Eco-home project <http://www.ecocasa.pt/> and the daily media shows: on the TV “Green Minute” and on the radio “One minute for the Earth”) and GEOTA (“Oceans Campaign”, with Greenpeace, aimed at retailers and consumers, with the goal of creating sustainable fish markets <http://www.greenpeace.org/portugal/pt/O-que-fazemos/Campanha-Dos-Oceanos-Mercados-em-Portugal/>).

Republic of Moldova

165. h) With respect to *paragraph 8*, measures taken to develop mechanisms with a view to ensuring that sufficient product information is made available to the public;

166. The eco-labeling practice does not exist because the provisions on eco-labeling in the Republic of Moldova are not at place; in consequence there are no set requirements for public participation at allocating, monitoring and use of eco-labeling. In this regard there has been prepared a draft law and Regulation on Eco-label which were not supported later.

167. The legislation of the Republic of Moldova by Law on Consumer Protection in the art. 20 Part 1 states the conditions on informing the consumer about the proposed products and services which is performed compulsory through identification product/service element and indicating their characteristics, that are placed on a visible location and have a readable look on the product label, packaging or technical data sheet, user guide or other document accompanying the product or service depending on what is required in compliance with their intended use.

168. Part 3 of the same article establishes that the manufacturer (packaging company) should provide information on the product name, manufacturer brand name and (if needed phone number), the regulatory act, the weight / volume, the basic qualitative characteristics, composition, supplements used , possible risks, the use, handling, storage, conservation, contraindications and energetic value of the packed food, producing country, the warranty period, operating period, the validity and production date in accordance with technical regulations and national standards.

Romania

169. f) With respect to *paragraph 6*, measures taken to encourage operators whose activities have a significant impact on the environment to inform the public regularly of the environmental impact of their activities and products;

170. The Environment Protection Law established that:

- the operators have the obligation to ensure the records of the result and shall inform the competent environmental authorities on the self-monitoring results of pollutant emissions and the threats or the accidents that occurred. The operators shall also inform the competent authorities and the public in case of accidental polluting discharges or major accidents.

- the operators whose activities have significant impact on the soil or subsoil shall inform the competent environmental authorities and the other authorities on any accident situation which put in danger the environment and to operate for the reconstruction of it.

171. Under Article 26 of GD No.878/2005, the operators whose activities have a significant environmental impacts shall inform the public, on a quarterly basis, on the environmental consequences of their activities/products, by posting the information on their website and other means of communication.

172. h) With respect to *paragraph 8*, measures taken to develop mechanisms with a view to ensuring that sufficient product information is made available to the public;

173. In December 2009 Regulation (EC) No. 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and Council on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), repealing Regulation (EC)

No 761/2001 and Commission Decisions 2001/681/EC and 2006/193/EC, known as Regulation EMAS III, published in the Official Journal of the European Union L342 of 22.12.2009.

174. EMAS - allows the voluntary participation of organisations in all the business sectors, whether public or private, wishing to continuously improve their environmental performance and promote the provision of information to the public and other stakeholders on the environmental performance of the activities, services and products that obtained EMAS registration, by publishing the environmental declaration.

175. The national legal framework for EMAS includes:

- Government Decision No. 57 of 26 January 2011 on setting up measures to ensure the implementation of the provisions of Regulation (EC) No. 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and Council of 25 November 2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), repealing Regulation (EC) No. 761/2001 and Decisions 2001/681/CE EC and 2006/193/EC of the Commission;

- Order No. 1541 of 6 June 2011 approving the Rules of Organisation and Operation of the EMAS Committee and EMAS Office;

- Order No. 2086 of 17 August 2011 approving the Registration Procedure for the community eco-management and audit system - EMAS.

176. Romania adopted GD No.661/2011 on establishing measures to ensure the national implementation of the provisions of the Regulation of the European Parliament and Council (EC) No. 66/2010 of 25 November 2009 on the EU eco-label.

177. The EU Eco-Label Commission consists of 3 representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, one representative of the Ministry of Economy, one representative of the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism, one representative of the National Environmental Protection Agency, one representative of the National Authority for Consumer Protection, one representative of the National Environmental Guard, three representatives of the environmental research institutes, two representatives of the employers' organisations, two representatives of environmental non-governmental organisations.

178. During 2013 - 2014 the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is organising a campaign to promote the European eco-label under the project "Research services to prepare a study on ways to promote the European Union (EU) eco-management and audit system (EMAS) nationally and to encourage voluntary participation in EMAS of the organisations under the EMAS-related European legislation and the community eco-labelling scheme, assumed in the implementation of Regulation of the European Parliament and Council (EC) No 66/2010 of 25 November 2009 on the eco-label".

179. Such seminars will be organised in all the 8 development regions of Romania.

180. The purpose of the seminar is to facilitate access to information through the use of functional media, to inform the public on the objectives and main components of such European instruments, to inform and train public or private organisations on how to apply and register, the long term benefits of obtaining the eco-label and registering with EMAS.

181. The national legal framework for Eco-labelling includes:

- GD No. 661/2011 on establishing measures to ensure the national implementation of the provisions of the Regulation of the European Parliament and Council (EC) No. 66/2010 of 25 November 2009 on the EU eco-label.

- Order No. 2129/21.08.2011 on approving the individual competence of the EU Eco-Label Commission;
- Order No. 2468/12.10.2011 on approving the Rules of Organisation and Operation of the EU Eco-Label Commission.

Serbia

182. *Paragraph 6: f)* Article 53 of the LEP stipulates that an ecolabel is established for products intended for general consumption, except for foodstuffs, agricultural and other products made in accordance with the legislation regulating organic production, the production of beverages, pharmaceutical products and medical equipment whose production, marketing, consumption and disposal cause less environmental pollution compared to similar products, or if they are produced from recycled waste.

183. See also the Rule book on detailed conditions and procedure for gaining the right to use an ecolabel and on the appearance and ways of using ecolabels for products, processes and services (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia No. 3/2009).

184. Article 44 Paragraph 3 of the LEP states that legal and natural entities may register a certified environmental protection management system in order to become part of the system of environmental protection management and control of the EU (EMAS system), in compliance with this law.

185. The National Programme for Protection of the Environment specifies that environmental protection management systems (ISO 14000, EMAS) for industrial sites should be widely promoted as a voluntary measure. Businesses should be stimulated to implement the environmental protection management system. A register of businesses that set up environmental protection management systems should also be established.

186. The data obtained from the Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Serbia, 302 businesses have ISO 14001 certified systems.

187. *Paragraph 8: h)* Article 52 of the LEP states that producer or distributor shall be obliged to issue a warning on the declaration of raw material, semi-product or finished products of environmental pollution and damage to human health, which the product or its packaging causes or may cause. The warning must contain instructions for use or handling of the product, its contents and packaging in the process of production, use and disposal in compliance with the standards in force and instructions for handling.

188. Please refer to the provisions of Article 53-54 of the LEP (ecolabel) and Article 84 Item 4 of the Law on Food Safety.

189. Law on Nature Protection in Article 7 specifies that packaging must not be harmful to human health or to the environment. Packaging and re-packaging of products must be done in such a way so as to ensure that health and sanitary standards regarding products are met and product quality preserved.

190. Article 41 of the Law on Advertising prohibits advertising that unjustifiably exploits people's concern for preserving health or environment, as well as their lack of knowledge on ways and means for environment protection, namely advertising that encourages or approves actions that are not in accordance with the regulations on environmental protection. (Article 42) Article 43 stipulates that an advertisement may not contain untruthful claims that a product or a service has a positive or negative effect on the protection of health or the environment, especially by emphasising words "environmentally safe", "eco-friendly", "eco-food", "healthy food" and similar words or symbols with the same meaning. The behaviour violating these provisions is defined as an offence in Article 108, Paragraph 1, Item 31.

191. The Law on Food Safety contains special provisions related to "tracking and labelling new food, genetically modified food and genetically modified animal food" (Article 63).

Slovakia

192. *Paragraph 6: f)* The Act No. 205/2004 Coll. on collection, storage, and dissemination of environmental information as amended posterior.

193. Small and medium-sized enterprises issue annual reports informing the public on the impact of their activities on environment.

194. In accordance with § 15 paragraph 1 subparagraph p) of the Act No. 137/2010 Coll. as amended by the Act No. 318/2012 Coll., operators of incinerators having a capacity of 2 and more tons of waste being incinerated per hour shall annually elaborate a report on operation and control of the incineration plant and submit it to the district environment office until 15 February of the following year.

195. *Paragraph 8: h)* In terms of § 5 paragraph 6 of the Act No. 469/2002 Coll. on environmental labeling of products as amended posterior (amendment No. 351/2012 Coll.) the MoE shall ensure that the process of proposing and determining of groups of products and special conditions for granting the national environmental label can be attended by parties interested, in particular the representatives of producers, importers and sellers, including micro, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, trade unions, environment protection associations, and consumer protection associations, science and research institutions, public administration bodies, authorized persons, and accredited workplaces.

196. In terms of § 15 of the Act No. 469/2002 Coll. as amended by the Act No. 351/2012 Coll. the MoE shall ensure that the public has the possibility to express its opinion on the determination of groups of products, as well as on the proposal of special conditions for granting the national environmental label. In the MoE Bulletin, the ministry annually publishes a list of products that were granted the environmental label and uses other forms of active process of informing the public on the system of environmental labeling of products.

Slovenia

197. *Paragraph 6: f)* Article 104 of the ZVO-1 provides for the environmental protection register kept and managed by the Ministry for the purpose of implementing its tasks and procedures. This register contains:

1. records of persons holding environmental protection permits;
2. records of providers of environmental protection public utility services; and
3. records of persons holding authorisations or certificates for performing environmental protection activities.

198. *Paragraph 8: h)* Article 31 of the ZVO-1 provides for eco-labelling and a system of environmental management of organisations. Article 31 lays down that in order to promote the production of products or provision of services that have a less detrimental impact on the environment throughout their life-cycle than other products of the same kind and thus contribute to the efficient use of environmental components and a high level of environmental protection, the Ministry may award such products the eco-label.

199. Article 32 of the ZVO-1 regulates the system of environmental management of organisations. In order to promote more appropriate environmental management and public information on the environmental impacts of their activities, the Ministry enables companies, sole traders, institutes and other organisations or parts or associations thereof to participate in the Community eco-management and audit scheme.

Spain

200. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* The twelfth additional provision of Law 27/2006 requires public authorities to encourage economic operators, when required to do so, to inform the public regularly of those activities or products that have or could have a significant impact on the environment. In this regard, the national and Autonomous PRTR inventories include data on emissions from companies with greater pollution potential. Moreover, Regulation (EC) No.

761/2001 of the Council of the European Union allows public and private organisations, both non-profit and otherwise, to voluntarily join the Community Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS). Eco-labelling and organic farming production allow for similar mechanisms for the dissemination of information on private activities and products that could have a significant impact on the environment (70).

201. In the Autonomous Communities, initiatives have been adopted for consumers and producers of waste to encourage a reduction of the latter at source and for urban users on best practices in energy consumption, water use, waste separation and, in some cases, financial aid for actions to implement environmental management systems (71).

202. The economic operators, particularly the big distributors, have informed about their contribution to the reduction of the use of non-reusable, non-biodegradable plastic bags, through their own public campaigns or through campaigns promoted by the MAGRAMA (72).

203. *Article 5, paragraph 8:* In Spain, the labelling of food products is regulated in Royal Decree 1334/1999 (July 31), approving the general rule of labelling, presentation and advertising of food products, and transposing the relevant European legislation. This regulation applies to ready to consume food and drink products as well as to restaurants, hospitals, canteens and similar establishments (74).

204. Regarding the European Union Ecolabel, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment is currently drafting a Royal Decree implementing the eco-labelling in Spain according to Regulation (CE) No 66/2010, which will replace the currently in force Royal Decree 598/1994 (75).

205. Similarly, the labelling of fish products, dangerous substances, noise from domestic appliances, energy consumption, etc., have their own national regulation covering environmental information (76).

206. Some Autonomous Communities control the labelling of electrical appliances and the symbols of integrated waste management systems. Both these authorities and some local governments have produced green shopping guides and incorporated sustainability criteria in public competitions for goods and services (77).

Sweden

207. *Article 5, paragraph 6:* Consumers are entitled to information about the contents of a product, how it has been produced and the quality of the product, etc. so to be able to assess the consequences of their choices. Producers in Sweden are responsible for providing and disseminating information about the environmental properties of products. The Environmental Code also contains requirements concerning the environmental impact of goods and services. The systems regulated by law also include the classification and marking of chemical products, product information sheets and environmental reports.

208. Businesses can also certify their products using environmental labels to show that the products comply with specific environmental requirements (for example the Swan, TCO labelling, the EU Flower label, the KRAV label).

Tajikistan

209. *Paragraph 8:* The Ministry of Health Protection is responsible for analyzing the norms and provisions about the quality and safety of food stuff, materials and articles, also diet and children nutrition, food and biological additions to guarantee their conformity with the international norms not less than for 5 years. It should be mentioned that informational materials on the quality of food production, being imported into Tajikistan were published in Media for several times.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

210. *Article 5, paragraphs 6 and 8:* The UK Government believes that changes to the way we produce, use and dispose of products and provide services can result in big reductions in the major environmental impacts. The

Government's aim is to develop more integrated approaches to tackling product impacts right across their life cycle. This involves identifying product sectors with the most significant impacts and finding the best combination of market measures to bring about improvements. These measures include encouraging businesses to manage their impacts on the environment, raising public awareness and developing tools to improve green claims and other labelling. Information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/encouraging-businesses-to-manage-their-impact-on-the-environment> (45).

211. WRAP (funded by Defra, the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government) have set up the Product Sustainability Forum to encourage organisations to work collaboratively on product environmental information. The Forum is a collaboration of over 80 organisations including grocery and home improvement retailers and suppliers, academics, NGOs and UK Government representatives. It provides a platform to work together to measure, reduce and communicate the environmental performance of the grocery and home improvement products (<http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/product-sustainability-forum>). Data and information will be published and freely available on the internet. The Product Sustainability Forum is working with UNEP to develop collaborative actions with similar initiatives around the world (46).

212. Other bodies which provide information to the public, to enable them to make informed environmental choices about products and services, include:

- (a) The Food Standards Agency (<http://www.food.gov.uk/>);
- (b) The Department of Energy and Climate Change (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change>);
- (c) The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-energy-climate-change>);
- (d) The Trading Standards Institute (<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/>);
- (e) The Carbon Trust, which helps businesses and the public sector cut carbon emissions (<http://www.carbontrust.com/>) (47).

IV. Conclusions

(a) General Remarks

213. The Parties reported on various tools that are used to stimulate operators to inform the public regularly of the environmental impact of their activities and products as well as to ensure that sufficient product information is made available to the public in a manner which enables consumers to make informed environmental choices.

214. The current document demonstrated that these tools were applicable to different categories of products and that different kinds of information were included in the scope of environment-related product information.

215. No criteria for the sufficiency of environment-related product information to be made available to the public were mentioned.

216. Eco-labeling approaches vary across the region and there might be a need to have a forum to exchange experiences and good practices in eco-labeling in order to provide the public with sufficient information in a manner which enable consumers to make informed environmental choices and facilitate trade in green products. This would also help promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, which have been included as a stand-alone goal in the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

(b) Encouraging operators to inform the public (article 5, paragraph 6)

217. Most of the EU member states utilize the EU's Eco-Label to identify and verify environmentally friendly products and services, or those products and services that employ "Green" public procurement methods. Similarly, the Nordic countries make use of the Nordic Swan eco-label in addition to the EU Eco-Label. The European Union also

mentions the region's voluntary Energy Star Programme, which labels office equipment with information about energy consumption.

218. Regarding the auditing of polluting enterprises, most EU countries note that they highly encourage companies to participate in the European Community Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS). This voluntary scheme encourages companies to constantly improve their environmental performance and to willingly provide and regularly update information about their business practices and environmental outputs to the public.

219. Some countries in Eastern Europe stated that they currently do not have any national provisions on eco-labelling, but that draft laws and regulations on eco-labelling have been prepared.

220. Many countries encourage companies operating within their borders to promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by voluntarily adopting high social and environmental standards according to international norms and principles and by encouraging companies to make these standards public and easily accessible in their reports and strategies.

(c) Availability of product information (article 5, paragraph 8)

221. Several EU countries described agreements of cooperation that have been signed between the government and groups of non-profit associations for consumer defence and environmental protection organizations. These agreements aim to raise consumer awareness and inform and help consumers to make more environmentally friendly and healthier consumption choices when purchasing groceries, housewares, and other durables. One country mentioned that it hoped to work with various international organizations to promote similar cooperative actions elsewhere in the world. Other agreements were designed to allow environmental NGOs to educate the public on local and national environmental status information via radio, television, and online media.

222. Some countries have created national regulations and legislation that 1) allow environmental protection associations the right to bring civil suit claims against misleading business practices or advertisements that contain misleading or incorrect environmental information, or 2) provide annual, public lists of biocide products, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), fertiliser use accounts from farms, etc., and require the clear labelling of these products before they are allowed to enter the national market.

223. Some Nordic countries have established websites that allow enterprises and individuals navigate national environmental legislation, which is of particular use to small and medium-sized enterprises with limited resources.

224. Other countries have established national trademark systems, which grant trademarks to products and services that fulfil specific certification criteria, either by being produced in a particular environmentally-friendly way, or by originating from resources obtained from sustainably managed or protected natural areas. These types of trademarks serve as a guarantee for consumers of environmentally friendly production and good quality.
