



The Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

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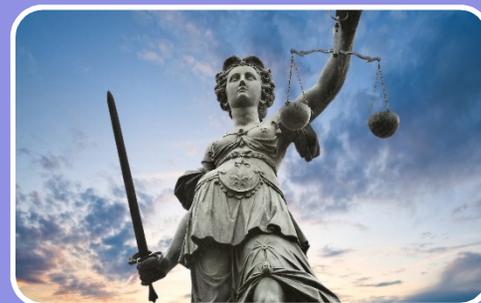
To contribute to the protection of the right of every person of present and future generations to live in an environment adequate to his or her health and well-being.



The right to information



The right to participate



The right to justice



Access to environmental information

Convention requirements

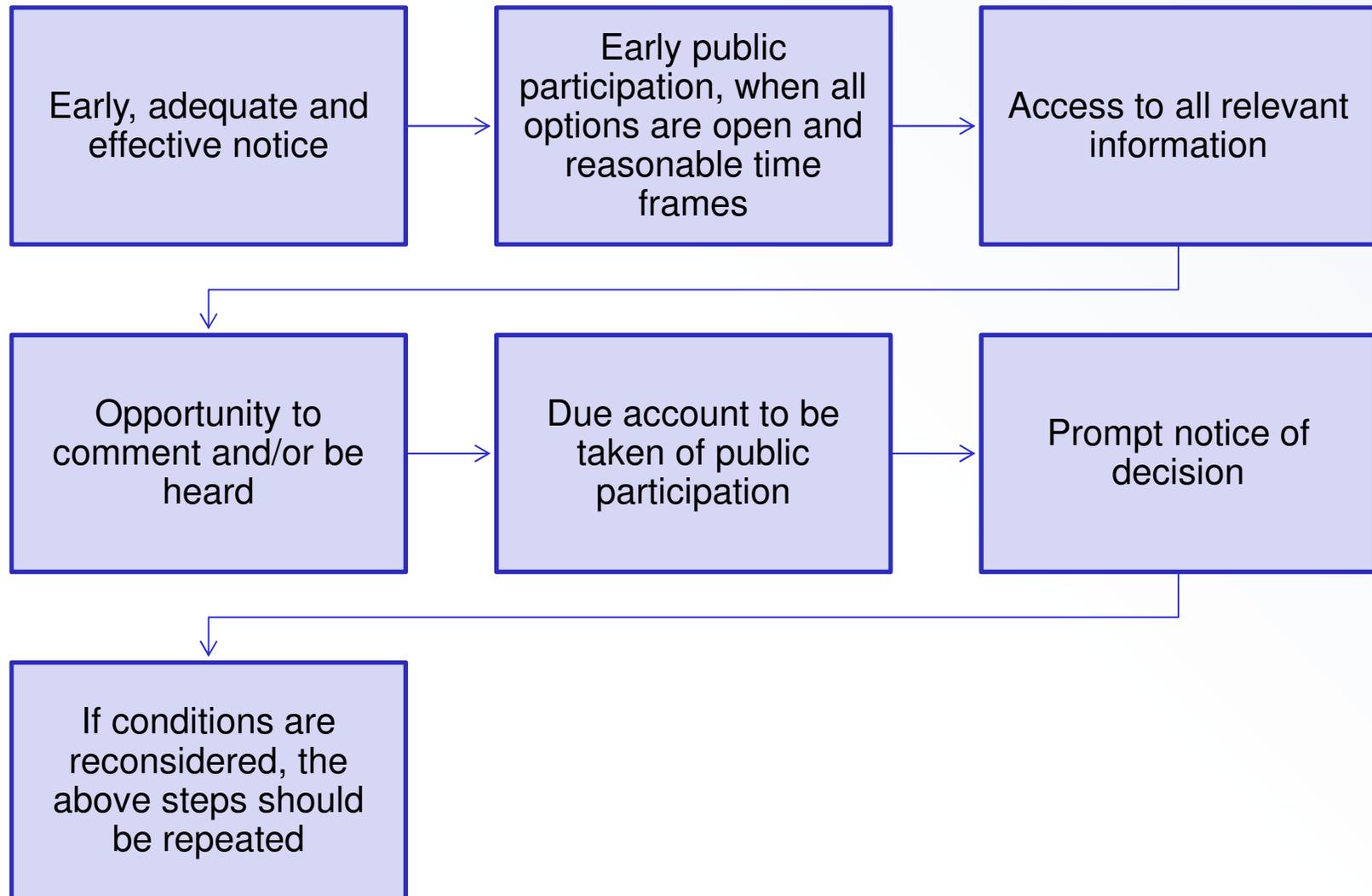
- Information on the state of the environment, on policies, measures taken, state of health and safety where affected by the state of the environment;
- Normally within at least 1 month from the date of request and without having to explain the reasons for requiring it;
- Active obligation to disseminate information in the possession of authorities.

Questions for an auditor

- Is all necessary information adequately available?
- Is the information comprehensive and understandable?
- Is the information timely?
- Are the sources for disseminating information adequate?



Access to decision making





Access to justice



Review
procedures
to challenge
public
decisions, in
particular:

- To challenge a refusal or inadequate response to request for information;
- To challenge the legality of a plan or programme or a decision on a specific activity;
- To challenge actions or omissions that contravene national environmental law.



Implementation challenges

- How to define „environmental information“?
- Who is „the public“ or „the public concerned“?
- What are „the plans and programmes relating to the environment“?
- Can non-residents ask for information, participation and access to justice?
- What constitutes „internal communication“?
- At which moment should the public participation be provided?
- What is the adequate way of notifying about decision-making procedures?
- How much time should be afforded to the public to become acquainted with the material?
- Who are „members of the public“ for access to justice purposes?



Thank You!

For further information:

<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/introduction.html>