

ANNEX IV

Public participation in decision-making

1. The public shall be informed (by public notices or other appropriate means such as electronic media where available) of the following matters early in the procedure for the taking of a decision or, at the latest, as soon as the information can reasonably be provided:
 - (a) the application for a permit or, as the case may be, the proposal for the updating of a permit or of permit conditions in accordance with Article 21, including the description of the elements listed in Article 12(1);
 - (b) where applicable, the fact that a decision is subject to a national or transboundary environmental impact assessment or to consultations between Member States in accordance with Article 26;
 - (c) details of the competent authorities responsible for taking the decision, those from which relevant information can be obtained, those to which comments or questions can be submitted, and details of the time schedule for transmitting comments or questions;
 - (d) the nature of possible decisions or, where there is one, the draft decision;
 - (e) where applicable, the details relating to a proposal for the updating of a permit or of permit conditions;
 - (f) an indication of the times and places where, or means by which, the relevant information will be made available;
 - (g) details of the arrangements for public participation and consultation made pursuant to point 5.
2. Member States shall ensure that, within appropriate time-frames, the following is made available to the public concerned:
 - (a) in accordance with national law, the main reports and advice issued to the competent authority or authorities at the time when the public concerned were informed in accordance with point 1;
 - (b) in accordance with Directive 2003/4/EC, information other than that referred to in point 1 which is relevant for the decision in accordance with Article 5 of this Directive and which only becomes available after the time the public concerned was informed in accordance with point 1.
3. The public concerned shall be entitled to express comments and opinions to the competent authority before a decision is taken.
4. The results of the consultations held pursuant to this Annex must be taken into due account in the taking of a decision.
5. The detailed arrangements for informing the public (for example by bill posting within a certain radius or publication in local newspapers) and consulting the public concerned (for example by written submissions or by way of a public inquiry) shall be determined by the Member States. Reasonable time-frames for the different phases shall be provided, allowing sufficient time to inform the public and for the public concerned to prepare and participate effectively in environmental decision-making subject to this Annex.