



Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security¹

Sixth update of the National Report for the Implementation of the AARHUS Convention in ITALY

2025

**The following report is submitted on behalf of Italy in accordance with Decisions I/8, II/10
and IV/4**

Date: 11 June 2025
Implementation of the Report

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¹ Regulation concerning amendments to the organisational regulation of the Ministry of Ecological Transition referred to in Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers of 30 October 2023, no. 180.

I. Process by which the report was prepared: provide a brief summary of the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the type of public authorities that were consulted or contributed to its preparation, how the public was consulted and how the outcome of the public consultation was taken into account, as well as on the material that was used as a basis for preparing the report

The 2025 National Report was drawn up by the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security (MASE) and perfected by the Higher Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA). In order to receive comments from the public, the provisional version of the sixth update report was put out for consultation on 27 May 2024 on the appropriate section of the Ministry's website. The draft report was also sent by e-mail to Regions, Regional Environmental Protection Agencies, NGOs dealing with the environment. Following receipt of the contributions, the Office responsible for the MASE drafted a second version which was put out for consultation on 11 June 2025. The report submitted therefore takes into account the comments of the public and the additions of the various institutions that submitted contributions.

During the public consultations, four contributions were received from non-governmental organisations, aimed not so much at drawing attention to specific aspects of the implementation of the Convention as at highlighting certain specific critical issues.

The Autonomous Province of Trento has sent a document illustrating its main environmental information and participation activities for the period 2020-2024. The information is taken from the chapter entitled “Environmental Culture” in the Report on the State of the Environment in Trentino 2024, which aims to provide evidence of the implementation of the Aarhus Convention at provincial level (<https://rapportoambiente.provincia.tn.it/?s=Aarhus>).

II.: Particular circumstances relevant for understanding the report: Report any particular circumstances that are relevant for understanding the report, e.g., whether there is a federal and/or decentralized decision-making structure, whether the provisions of the Convention have direct effect upon its entry into force, or whether financial constraints are a significant obstacle to implementation (optional).

Regions and Autonomous Provinces have the legislative capacity conferred by national laws. For the sake of brevity, the Report focuses more on measures at a national level.

ARTICLE 3

III. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the general provisions in article 3, paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8

- (a) **With regard to paragraph 2, measures taken to provide assistance and guidance to the public**
In Italy, the Digital Administration Code (CAD) is a single text that brings together and organises the rules regarding the computerisation of the Public Administration in relations with citizens and businesses. Established by Italian Legislative Decree no. 82 of 7 March 2005, it was subsequently amended and supplemented first with Italian Legislative Decree no. 179 of 22 August 2016 and then with Italian Legislative Decree no. 217 of 13 December 2017 to promote digital citizenship rights and render them effective. With the latest regulatory action, the CAD has been improved both by simplifying the language and by replacing the previous technical rules with guidelines, under the guidance of AgID (Agenzia per l'Italia Digitale [Agency for a Digital Italy]).

The institutional website of MASE www.mase.gov.it underwent a major restructuring, which was completed in December 2021; as part of these activities, the necessary additions were made to accommodate AgID indications on the design, development and maintenance of Public Administration websites, with particular attention to usability, security, accessibility and a people-oriented design approach. In 2023, work was started to proceed with a subsequent revision of the institutional portal to improve the organization and availability of content by users.

The contents of the site are constantly updated, also through the collaboration between the Directorates-General (DG), the Departments and the Press and Communication Office, coordinated by the DG Technological Innovation and Communication (ITC) as part of an inter-directional Editorial Committee in which all the Offices participate.

The section dedicated to Transparent Administration is constantly updated, thus increasing the amount of information made available online.

There is a dedicated section dedicated to the Aarhus Convention. The ISPRA website also hosts a page relating to the Convention, as well as the site of some other regional administrations.

(b) With regard to paragraph 3, measures to promote environmental education and awareness

An important step forward was taken with Italian Law no. 92 of 20 August 2019, which made the transversal teaching of civic education, which also includes environmental education, mandatory in schools of all levels.

A step forward has also been taken as part of the activities of the Training and Information Working Group of the REACH Technical Coordination Committee (established by Ministerial Decree of 22 November 2007), since on 1 September 2021 <http://www.reach.gov.it/> the platform "At school with REACH and CLP - Together to be safer" was published on the www.reach.gov.it portal - Chemicals: let's inform citizens - dedicated to students and teachers of lower and upper secondary schools. The platform aims to increase knowledge on chemicals and mixtures present in everyday life, to inform on how to use them safely, promoting changes in habits, aimed at reducing exposure to substances that can pose a risk to the environment and human health.

The teaching material was prepared by the Training and Information Working Group and saw the participation, in the elaboration of the contents, in addition to the MASE, of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Enterprise and Made in Italy, the National Centre for Chemicals, Cosmetic Products and Consumer Protection of the National Institute of Health (ISS-CNCS), ISPRA and with the collaboration of the Ministry of Education and Merit.

Such teaching material is freely available to teachers and students after logging in to the site.

In 2023, two notices of the #IoSonoAmbiente (#IamEnvironment) initiative were published, governed by Article 1-ter of Decree-Law No. 111 of 14 October 2019, converted, with amendments, by Law No. 141 of 12 December 2019, which provided for information and training campaigns in schools to raise awareness among students on environmental issues and, in particular, on tools and actions to combat, mitigate and adapt to climate change.

To this end, a specific Fund called "#IoSonoAmbiente Programme" has been set up at the Ministry and two calls have been published, promoted by the Ministry of Education and Merit in agreement with the MASE and the Ministry of University and Research aimed at schools of all levels. More than 130 projects presented by schools were funded for activities aimed at students for the dissemination of the values of

sustainable development and the promotion of knowledge paths in the field of environmental protection issues.

In addition, in 2023 an agreement was signed with CUFAA – Command of Environmental Forestry and Agri-food Units of the Carabinieri Corps – to promote environmental education initiatives through a plan of information activities aimed at citizens.

In addition to this, there are training and information events aimed at environmental education that have been carried out by MASE during participation in national fairs and events and which have seen the participation of numerous students from schools and university faculties. In particular, the events held at the KeyEnergy, ECOMED, ECOMONDO and REMTECH fairs are worth mentioning.

The MASE has also created the "It depends on us" platform ("Dipende da noi"), in implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), which dedicates a considerable share of the funds allocated to our country to the ecological transition and, with this in mind, pays great attention to the tool of environmental education.

Mission 2 "Green revolution and ecological transition" aims to strengthen the sustainability and resilience of the Italian economic system, ensuring an environmental transition that is as fair and inclusive as possible. In particular, the M2C1-3.3. "Culture and awareness on environmental issues and challenges" aims to increase the level of awareness on climate change scenarios and their consequences; educate about the options available for the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles and consumption; promote the adoption of virtuous behaviours, also at the community level (involving teachers, families, local stakeholders, etc.).

In this sense, the "It depends on us" platform represents a tool to deepen the most important issues related to the ecological transition: from climate change to sustainable development, from the protection of biodiversity to the defence of the sea and its role in the life of the planet, from the circular economy to transform waste into a resource up to renewable energy, key to abandoning fossil fuels. On these and other topics, from 2022 to 2026, multimedia content (podcasts, videos, news and insights, etc.) and original educational materials on environmental issues have been and will be offered to reach and raise awareness among as many recipients as possible.

As of March 31, 2024, 60 podcasts, 30 videos, 4 video lessons, 44 infographics and over 200 news and insights have been published.

Through programme agreements, stipulated by the Ministry the Forestry Carabinieri, the Harbourmaster's office and the Coast Guard Environmental Communication Campaigns have been organised in order to spread "participatory" environmental safety.

In December 2020, the Budget Law (Italian Law No. 178 of 2020) identified resources – €8 million for the two-year period 2021-2022 – to support pilot environmental education projects for primary and secondary schools located in the municipalities of the Biosphere Reserves and in the UNESCO World Natural Heritage sites, as well as in the national terrestrial and marine protected areas (in whose territory the so-called environmental economic zones - ZEAs are located).

In October 2023, the second edition of the Call for Proposals was published, which defined the criteria and methods for allocating the fund (equal to € 4,000,000 per year). With subsequent decrees of December 2023, the resources were allocated and transferred to the sites whose project proposals were considered eligible.

In terms of education and awareness-raising, MASE continues to collaborate with both national and

international NGOs, allocating funds and collaborating on various issues.

In the field of environmental education, ISPRA promotes the "Programme of environmental and sustainability education initiatives" aimed at schools, which includes projects that address different environmental issues/problems from an interdisciplinary perspective and with methodological approaches that favour learning methods based on experience, observation, laboratory activities and participation.

The "Walking in the environment" project is also available, which includes a monographic guide published on the ISPRA website and a multimedia educational path that can be used online on the "Digital Education" web platform.

With this Programme, ISPRA intends to contribute to the development of an environmental culture oriented towards sustainability and conscious citizenship.

In collaboration with other entities, ISPRA also produces the "Map of the educating city" promoted by the Municipality of Rome, the "Bioeconomy Changemakers Festival" organised by the European Commission and APRE, the "ScieNcE Together NET" project (Scienzainsieme) under the Horizon programme.

In addition, the "STE(A)M Learning Ecologies" (SLEs) project funded under the Horizon Europe Programme should also be mentioned. In particular, ISPRA participates with classroom and outdoor educational activities related to the theme of *Posidonia oceanica* and its potential for conservation, recovery and reuse with a view to circular economy.

The National Network System for Environmental Protection (SNPA), composed of ISPRA and the 21 Regional Agencies and Autonomous Provinces for the Environment (ARPA-APPA), promotes environmental and sustainability education among its priority functions (art. 3, lett. g), Law 132/2016). ISPRA and ARPA-APPA carry out sustainability education programs in this area, environmental education meetings at schools, projects, etc., with which the expert scientific knowledge of which the SNPA is the bearer is combined with a pedagogical role. The SNPA, alongside the MASE and the MUR, the Regions and the Associations, contributes to the national strategy for environmental education. The ARPA-APPA promote, among other things, the collection, processing and monitoring of technical-scientific data relating to air, water and soil and manage environmental training and education initiatives, also with the involvement of citizens.

ISPRA, in collaboration and with funding from MIMIT, has created the "Let's Circulate" ("Facciamo Circolare") campaign, launched in 2023. The initiative aims to promote more sustainable consumption among citizens, aligning itself with the fundamentals of the circular economy, with a particular focus on reducing food waste and improving separate waste collection.

ISPRA, also in order to strengthen the relationship with its stakeholders, since 2020 has been preparing and publishing the Sustainability Report on the institutional page in order to increase accessibility and understanding of environmental policies.

In addition, to promote scientific knowledge and bring the public closer to research, ISPRA actively participates in various scientific dissemination initiatives, including:

- European Researchers' Night
- Genoa Science Festival
- Rome Science Festival
- World Geodiversity Day.

Another important initiative of ISPRA is the permanent exhibition "Animals, Plants, Rocks, Minerals: " at the Museum of Civilizations in Rome.

c) With reference to paragraph 4, measures taken to ensure appropriate recognition of environmental associations

With regard to the recognition and support of groups/associations, it is the Constitution of the Italian Republic itself that recognises the value of citizens' associations. The protection of legitimate interests (Italian Law 241/1990) establishes that the same possibilities to participate in the decision-making process are provided both to the individuals concerned and to associations representing collective interests, where such interests may be prejudiced by the decision in question.

Specifically, the Italian legal system promotes the environmental protection efforts of associations and provides for their recognition pursuant to Article 13 of Italian Law no. 349 of 8 July 1986. Therefore, associations established for at least three years that operate in the field of environmental protection can submit an application to the MASE to obtain recognition as an "environmental protection association" if they meet the requirements. In addition to being included in the list published on MASE's institutional website, recognition gives the Association the right to act in court both as a civil party in criminal proceedings and through the filing of appeals before administrative courts in relation to unlawful acts or measures that have relevance from the point of view of the protection of the environment and the ecosystem (pursuant to Article 18, paragraph 5 of Italian Law 349/86). Moreover, note that the Ministry has prepared a specific institutional website dedicated to such Associations in order to streamline the submission and acquisition of requests, introducing greater transparency and efficiency in the administrative procedure.

There are currently 83 environmental associations recognised by MASE (in 2004 there were 52, while in 2013 there were 72).

d) With regard to paragraph 7, measures taken to promote the principles of the Convention at an international level

(i) **Italy regularly promotes intra- and inter-ministerial coordination to align its position within the framework of the international forums in which it participates. On such occasions, the principles of the Aarhus Convention and the Almaty Guidelines are considered.** Conferences called "States General" are periodically held, with the aim of listening to the requests of civil society on hot topics such as climate change

(ii) **Information about international forums is increasingly circulated through electronic channels:** in particular social media (especially X and Facebook) and portals managed by public administrations, civil society and private sector organisations.

In 2021 a Twitter (now X) account was activated, aimed at young people and relating to Youth4Climate (see below).

(iii) There have also been several **initiatives to promote public participation in international forums.** As part of the **negotiation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, Italy continues its practice of accrediting at least one NGO representative in the official delegation. Moreover, in order to facilitate broad participation in COPs, where possible Italy also accredits representatives of the press and other governmental and non-governmental actors who have requested it as "overflow".

From COP25 (2019) to COP29 (2025), the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security hosted a

comprehensive programme of meetings, seminars and presentations in the Italian Pavilion on the sidelines of the UNFCCC negotiations. Each edition featured around 50 events over the two weeks of negotiations, involving universities, public administrations, international organisations, civil society and the private sector, ensuring broad and diverse participation. Numerous initiatives were proposed and organised directly by young people, NGOs and universities.

Finally, the Minister of the Environment and Energy Security, as well as other high-level figures attending the UNFCCC COPs, met bilaterally with delegations of NGOs and youth associations to discuss both issues related to the negotiations and important national matters.

Furthermore, Italy, as a member of the **Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT)**, whose donors are both governments and non-governmental institutions/philanthropic associations, has successfully requested, and keeps supporting, that a representative of an environmental NGO participate in the ICAT Advisory Committee.

In terms of forestry policy, Italy, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry, participates in various European and international forums. Among its many activities, Italy is involved in the secretariat of **SILVA MEDITERRANEA**, the FAO Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions, which was set up to support Mediterranean countries in developing their forestry policies and to provide a platform for dialogue and cooperation through specific working groups. Italy contributes both technically and institutionally, supporting the Secretariat and helping to advance work on sustainable forest management, land use, reforestation and climate resilience, with a particular focus on involving local communities and young people. During the Seventh Mediterranean Forestry Week (MFW) held in Antalya, Turkey, in March 2022, a central role was assigned to young people working in the Mediterranean forestry sector, including rural areas and youth organisations. Through a bottom-up approach, the participation and visibility of young people in the forestry sector was promoted, enabling the emergence of a unified regional voice for young people. The recommendations of the youth component were shared with professionals and high-level decision-makers in the form of a Youth Statement, which was also included in the regional consultations of the XV World Forestry Congress. A Mediterranean Youth Taskforce was then established ([About MYTF](#)).

(iv) The Ministry of the Environment has promoted the principles of the Convention in other international forums and settings.

Since 2021, the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (MASE) has been promoting the involvement of younger generations in climate action processes through the Youth4Climate and Youth4Capacity initiatives, which aim to provide financial support, capacity building activities, networking opportunities and structured channels for participation in international events and negotiations.

- e) With regard to paragraph 8, measures taken to ensure that persons exercising their rights under the Convention are not penalised, prosecuted or harassed.** The protection of legitimate rights and interests is guaranteed through access to judicial remedies that provide for two degrees of judgement. Inspections, sanctions, and other restrictive measures are allowed only to the extent envisaged by law and in compliance with constitutionally guaranteed rights of freedom and fairness.

IV. Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 3

V. Further information on the practical application of the general provisions of article 3

YOUTH4CLIMATE INITIATIVE

Launched in 2021, Youth4Climate has quickly evolved into an initiative through the collaborative efforts of MASE and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Since April 2022, the UNDP Centre in Rome has taken the central role of Secretariat of the initiative, guiding its operations and strategic direction.

Youth4Climate operates on several dimensions to:

- Scaling up youth-led solutions by offering substantial tools, resources and direct grants, enabling young innovators to bring their projects to life.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing through an engaging online platform. The platform serves over 25,000 members as a hub for exchanging insights, discovering opportunities, and sharing experiences.
- Strengthen youth engagement by promoting inclusive participation in major global events, including the UNFCCC Climate Weeks and other relevant assemblies, highlighting commitment to integrating youth voices into the climate discourse.

Youth4Climate has achieved several important milestones, underlining its impact and ongoing commitment to empowering the next generation of climate leaders. Especially:

- i) 150 projects funded in 52 countries, for a total of \$2.5 million, with a particular focus on inclusion (50% led by women) and Africa (47% of projects).
- ii) Three editions of the Call for Solutions (2023, 2024, 2025), involving young people from over 120 countries.
- iii) Four high-level annual events (Milan 2021, New York 2022, Rome 2023, Turin 2024), in addition to participation in numerous strategic international events.
- iv) Over 25,000 young people active on the Youth4Climate platform, which continues to grow by offering training, mentorship and networking opportunities.

YOUTH4CAPACITY PROGRAMME

The Youth4Capacity Programme, launched in 2023, is a joint initiative of the UNFCCC and MASE aimed at strengthening young people's skills in climate and sustainable development through virtual and face-to-face training activities, mentorship programmes and networking opportunities. The programme has organised capacity-building events at Climate Conferences (COPs), Climate Weeks and international events, including a major event in Morocco in collaboration with local stakeholders, helping to promote a global community of young people capable of developing and implementing integrated actions in support of climate action.

Participation in the project Strengthening Aarhus Centres in the OSCE area to promote good environmental governance and sustainable development

In 2023, MASE contributed financially to the OSCE-led project to strengthen the Aarhus Centres in the OSCE area to promote good environmental governance and advance the implementation of sustainable development principles.

The Centres are one of the most effective instruments promoted by the OSCE to support the implementation of the three pillars of the Aarhus Convention.

The Centres serve as a platform to engage citizens, governments and the private sector in addressing environmental challenges, raising public awareness of environmental issues, disseminating environmental information and helping citizens exercise their environmental rights.

The project, specifically, has contributed to:

1. strengthen the technical and managerial skills of the staff of the Aarhus Centres;
2. establish strategic partnerships with national and local institutions, international organisations, academia, the private sector and other key stakeholders;
3. facilitate knowledge sharing, networking, communication and participation in environmental democracy.

Establishment of a Consultation Panel with Youth Associations

MASE, in collaboration with the Minister for Sport and Youth and the National Youth Council (CNG), has announced the establishment of a Youth Consultation Panel on climate, energy, and sustainability, as provided for in the Memorandum of Understanding signed on January 22, 2025, by Minister Gilberto Pichetto, Minister Andrea Abodi, and President Maria Cristina Pisani. The Panel will act as a bridge between institutions and young people, promoting the sharing of ideas, proposals, and innovative solutions. The **document submitted for consultation** outlined the main aspects: from its composition, which will include institutional representatives and delegates from youth associations most active in the field of sustainability, to its operating procedures, coordinated by the National Youth Council. The goal is to build a constant and structured dialogue that can translate into concrete contributions to the dialogue on climate change and sustainability. To further strengthen the inclusive nature of the initiative, MASE launched a public consultation inviting organizations and stakeholders to submit comments and suggestions. The contributions received will be carefully examined by the administrations involved, although the institutions' decision on whether to accept the comments remains final. This initiative confirms the Ministry's commitment to promoting youth participation and working with the younger generation to build a path towards a more sustainable and shared future.

v) Relevant websites

- [Portal *It depends on us*](#)
- [The Youth 4 Climate Platform](#)

- Consultation Panel with Youth Associations

ISPRA pages dedicated to training and information on the environment:

- Environmental education and training
- Walking in the environment – Interactive educational path
- ISPRA data and indicators
- Database of environmental indicators
- Path in national environmental policy
- EcoAtl@nte
- Portal of the Geological Survey of Italy
- Chemical Risk Management Tools
- Waste knowledge framework

ARTICLE 4

vi) **Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on access to environmental information in article 4**

In the Italian legal system there are 3 forms of access to documents and information held by PAs:

- **Access to administrative documents, regulated by Italian Law 241/90 (procedural or documentary access)**, which gives the right to view and extract copies of administrative documents only to those who are able to demonstrate the existence of a concrete, direct and current interest corresponding to a legally protected situation and connected to the document being displayed.
- **Civic access envisaged by Article 5, paragraph 1, of Legislative Decree no. 33/2013 (simple civic access)**, understood as the right of anyone to request the publication of documents, information and data on the institutional website that are required to be published but instead have not been.
 - **FOIA-type civic access (Freedom of Information Act) introduced by Italian Legislative Decree no. 97/2016 and provided for in Article 5, paragraph 2, of Italian Legislative Decree 33/2013 (generalised civic access)** that provides for the right of anyone to access data and documents held by PAs, in addition to those subject to mandatory publication, limited solely by the protection of legally relevant public and private interests. The protection of public interests – with resulting deferral or refusal of access to documents – coincides with public security, national security, defence and military matters, international relations, data on financial stability, conduct of investigations on crimes, regular performance of inspections. The protection of private interests is linked to the protection of personal data, the need to ensure the secrecy of the correspondence, and the guarantee of economic and

commercial interests. Access is also prevented in the case of State secrets and in the other cases envisaged in Article 24 of Italian Law 241/90.

The two forms of civic access mentioned differ from the procedural access provided for by Law 241/90 in that they are functional to ensure widespread control by citizens over the pursuit by public bodies of institutional functions and the use of public resources; the two forms of civic access, in fact, do not presuppose subjective limitations: it is not necessary to justify the request for access and to demonstrate the ownership of a concrete, direct and current legal interest corresponding to a legally protected situation. Generalised civic access differs from simple access first of all because it is not aimed at requiring the publication of documents, information and data, but their viewing and extraction of copies; consequently, it does not have to be exercised only with regard to documents, information and data for which there are publication obligations, as in the case of simple civic access, but refers to additional documents and data.

In all cases of request for access to administrative documents, the investigation procedure must be completed within 30 days of the submission of the application. In the case of procedural access and in the case of generalised civic access, if the administration identifies counterparties, it shall transmit the request for access to them. Within 10 days, the counterparties may submit a reasoned objection to access. In the case of procedural access, the refusal, deferral and limitation of access are allowed in the cases and within the limits established by Article 24 of Law 241/1990 and must be justified. In the case of generalised civic access, the refusal, deferral and limitation of access must be expressly justified with reference to the significant public and private interests that have limited access. In the event that part of the document is excluded from the right of access (procedural or civic), access must be granted to the remaining part. Access (procedural or civic) cannot be denied if it is sufficient to make use of the power of deferral.

With reference to access to **environmental information**, Italian Law no. 349/1986 already provided for an important distinction with respect to Law 241/90 as it stated (art. 14, par. 3) that: "Any citizen has the right of access to information on the state of the environment, in accordance with the laws in force, available at the offices of the public administration [...]". Similarly, Italian **Legislative Decree no. 195/2005** (Implementation of Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information) provides (Article 3, paragraph 1) that: 'the public authority shall make available [...] the environmental information held to anyone who requests it, without the latter having to declare his or her interest'. This decree regulates the right of access to environmental information held by public authorities, to ensure that such information is made available to anyone who requests it and is disseminated in easily consultable forms and formats. Article 3 goes on to establish the deadline within which the public authority is required to make environmental information available to the applicant (Article 3(2)) and the possibility of requesting a specific form or format in which to receive the information, as well as the relevant exceptions to this possibility (Article 3(4)).

The following Article 5 of the decree regulates the "Cases of exclusion of the right of access", providing in paragraph 1 for a series of situations in which access to environmental information is denied and in paragraph 2 the cases in which access is denied because the disclosure of the information would be detrimental to conflicting interests.

In cases of total or partial refusal of the right of access, the public authority must specify the reasons for the refusal and inform the applicant of the procedures envisaged against the decision (Article 5, paragraph 6).

In this regard, Article 7 of the decree regulates the protection of the right of access, providing for the

possibility of the applicant to act against the decisions of the public authority within the deadlines and in the manner indicated (through judicial appeal or through the review of the decisions to the Ombudsman - in the case of acts of municipal, provincial and regional administrations - or to the Access Committee, in the case of acts of the central or peripheral administrations of the State).

Finally, Article 6 of the decree provides for the (possible) tariffs that will be applied for the purpose of making the requested environmental information available.

Regarding the **determination of the costs envisaged for civic access**, it is noted that Article 5, paragraph 4, of Italian Legislative Decree no. 33 of 2013 provides that "*The release of data or documents in electronic or paper form is free, except for the reimbursement of the cost actually incurred and documented by the administration for reproduction on physical media*". With circular no. 1 of 2019, the Minister of Civil Service intervened by detailing the costs related to civic access, and in particular regulating what is to be understood by "*reproduction on physical media*".

With regard to **access to administrative documents**, pursuant to Italian Law no. 241 of 1990, Article 25, paragraph 1 provides that "*The right of access is exercised by examining and extracting copies of administrative documents.... The examination of documents is free. The issue of a copy is subject only to reimbursement of the cost of reproduction, without prejudice to current provisions on stamp duty, as well as research and viewing rights*". Presidential Decree no. 184 of 12 April 2006 also established that "*the copy of the documents is issued subject to the payment of the amounts due pursuant to Article 25 of the law according to the procedures determined by the individual administrations*" (Article 7, paragraph 6). To this end, with Italian Ministerial Decree no. 121 of 28/06/2012, the Ministry of the Environment regulated the costs relating to the exercise of the right of access via extraction of a copy.

Finally, access to environmental information is generally free of charge, except as established in Article 25, paragraph 1, of Law No. 241 of 7 August 1990, relating to the issue of copies, as envisaged in Article 6 of Italian Legislative Decree no. 195 of 2005. That said, the latter provision establishes that in specific cases the public administration may "*charge a fee to make environmental information available, determined by it on the basis of the actual cost of the service. In such cases, the public shall be adequately informed of the amount of the fee and the circumstances in which it may be charged*". Therefore, all costs should be known in advance and shown to the public.

In the event of denial of procedural access, express or tacit, postponement of the same, or failure to respond within the appropriate deadline, the applicant may exercise the remedies provided for by Article 25, paragraph 4, Law 241/1990, namely: submit, within thirty days, an appeal to the Regional Administrative Court (TAR); alternatively, against the acts of municipal, provincial and regional administrations, the applicant may request, within the same deadline, the Ombudsman competent for the territorial area, if established, to review the aforementioned determination (if such a body has not been established, the competence is attributed to the Ombudsman competent for the immediately higher territorial area); alternatively, with regard to the acts of the central and peripheral administrations of the State, this request is forwarded to the Commission for access referred to in Article 27 of Law 241/1990 (CADA), established at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, as well as to the defendant administration.

In the event of denial of civic access, the applicant may seek the remedies provided for by Legislative Decree 33/2013 in Article 5, paragraphs 7 and 8: he/she may submit a request for review to the corruption prevention officer who must decide within the following 20 days; in the case of acts of the administrations of the regions or local authorities, the applicant may also appeal to the competent Ombudsman for the territorial area, where established (if such a body has not been established, the competence is attributed to the competent Ombudsman, for the territorial area immediately superior); against the decision of the corruption prevention officer or the Ombudsman or as an alternative to it,

there is the possibility of appealing to the administrative judge (TAR) within 30 days.

In both cases of refusal, if the applicant decides to appeal to the Regional Administrative Court, he/she will be required to pay a court fee of 300 euros. However, Article 13, paragraph 6-bis, letter a) of Presidential Decree no. 115/2002 (Consolidated Law on Court Fees) provides for a case of **exemption from the payment of the court fee**, for appeals brought **against the denial of access to environmental information pursuant to Legislative Decree 195/2005**.

vii) Obstacles encountered in the implementation of Article 4

With regard to the legislation on access to environmental information, an element of difficulty remains, represented by the large number of public authorities present in the country and the inconsistent methods and procedures put in place at a local level. The drive towards the digitisation of the public administration, confirmed by the establishment of the Department for Digital Transformation at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, should certainly help improve the situation.

In addition, some NGOs reported difficulties in finding certain information on environmental aspects (such as mine management, water quality and PFAS) at national or regional level.

The MASE has undertaken to provide clarifications in collaboration with the competent authorities in relation to what is or is not subject to legal obligation with regard to the release of information, which in some cases may be complex.

viii) Further information on practical cases concerning the provisions on access to information, for example: Are there statistical data available on the number of requests made, the number of refusals and the reasons?

The cases of refusal to access information are scrupulously listed (Law 241/90, art. 24; Legislative Decree 195/05, art. 5; Legislative Decree 33/2013, art. 5-bis)

The “Transparent Administration” portal of the Autonomous Province of Trento contains a special section dedicated to the dissemination of environmental information, with detailed indications of the websites and web pages of the Provincial Structures where the information can be found.

ix) Relevant websites

ARTICLE 5

x) Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on the collection and dissemination of environmental information in article 5.

a) Measures taken to ensure that public authorities possess and update environmental information, that there is an adequate flow of information to public authorities, in the event of an emergency appropriate information is disseminated immediately and without delay.

The dissemination of environmental information, in Italy, was initially regulated by **Law 349/86** which, by establishing the Ministry of the Environment, states that it is required to disseminate information on the state of the environment and to raise public awareness on environmental issues. This task is carried out, *inter alia*, through: the website (www.minambiente.it), the Report on the State of the Environment, the National Library of the Environment established by Law 426/98.

Legislative Decree 33/2013 (art. 40) takes a step forward by establishing that all the administrations

referred to in Article 2, paragraph 1, letter b, of Legislative Decree 195/2005 (state, regional, local public administrations, autonomous and special companies, public bodies and concessionaires of public services, as well as any natural or legal person who performs public functions related to environmental issues or exercises responsibilities under the control of a public body) are required to publish on their institutional websites the environmental information they hold for the purposes of their institutional activities. Specific importance must be given to this information in a special section called "Environmental information".

Regarding the collection and monitoring of environmental information, the main hub is the SINA (National Environmental Information System), established by the MiTE at the end of the 1990s and coordinated and managed by ISPRA since 2001. SINA uses territorial hubs consisting of regional focal points (PFRs), which are supported by the regional environmental information systems (SIRA) whose management, pursuant to Italian Law no. 132 of 28 June 2016, is entrusted to the local Agencies for the protection of the environment (ARPA/APPA). SINA, the PFRs and SIRA constitute the national environmental information network called SINAnet:

Access to the SINAnet network data is guaranteed to all citizens regardless of the existence of a legally relevant interest ([Data and Indicators — English](#) and [Data – SNPA – Sistema nazionale protezione ambiente](#)).

The air quality data of the regional monitoring networks are transmitted to ISPRA every day in almost real time and [made available through the SINA](#); at the beginning of each year, the final data relating to the previous year, fully validated and definitive, are then transmitted. On the basis of the latter, compliance with the objectives and limits established by the legislation is assessed. ISPRA has the task of transmitting all information on the assessment of air quality in Italy to the European Commission (Decision 2011/850/EU). In the event of exceedances of the limit values, the Regions are obliged to plan air quality improvement measures. This latest information on the remediation measures is also transmitted by the Regions to ISPRA, which collects it and sends it every year to the European Commission. ISPRA also develops indicators of the state and trend of air quality that are available for download in the database of environmental indicators in the atmosphere section. ISPRA's national inventory of emissions into the atmosphere, on the other hand, makes it possible to identify the main sources of emissions at national level and describe their trends over time. Information relating to water, in the standard formats established by pertinent regulations, is contained in the Information System for the Protection of Water in Italy (SINTAI). The information and official data concerning water are submitted to ISPRA by the competent local authorities in compliance with the obligations of the European Union and international agreements on reporting ([SINTAI](#)).

In 2021 the SINTAI was updated with the [WebGIS section](#), a service that ISPRA disseminates the information and official data acquired and developed in compliance with the obligations of the EU and international agreements on reporting and data flows concerning water on the national territory.

The service allows to "query" the vast database edited by ISPRA and to return the updated and georeferenced data on the map. This configuration is suitable for different levels of complexity of consultation and detail of the data, depending on the type and needs of the. Currently, the topics that can be consulted reflect data on the collection, treatment and discharge of wastewater (91/271/EC), nitrate pollution of agricultural origin (91/676/EC) and the EIONET/SOE data flow. It is also possible to consult the monitoring of emerging chemicals included in the Watch List (2013/39/EU).

All data are made freely available through the institutional website and allow detailed information relating to geological cartography, geognostic and geophysical data, on the geological heritage, on

geological and natural risks, on contaminated sites, on land use, cover and consumption (Geology, Soil and contaminated sites — English).

In addition, as part of the activities relating to biodiversity, the following are worth mentioning:

- the National Biodiversity Network – a shared data management system which aims to: a) improve the dissemination and sharing of biodiversity data, making them available for pure research, applied research, education and training; and b) to represent a national strategic tool for informed political decisions, which guarantee a sustainable use of our country's natural resources;
- the Nature Map, whose information system combines two main strands of activity: the cartographic creation of Italian terrestrial ecosystems throughout the national territory; and the evaluation of each mapped territorial unit to give information on the state of the ecosystems and to highlight the areas of greatest natural value and those most risk of degradation.
- Natura 2000 database - contains the maps and Standard Forms of the SCIs/SACs and SPAs designated pursuant to Directives 92/43/EEC "Habitats" and 2009/147/EC "Birds".

Finally, the Waste Register is organized into a national section, at ISPRA, and into regional sections or sections of the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano, at the regional agencies and the autonomous provinces for environmental protection (see following lett c) of Article 5).

Italian Law 132/2016, which establishes the National System for the Protection of the Environment (SNPA), which includes ISPRA and the Regional and Provincial Agencies for the protection of the environment, in Article 1, paragraph 1, defines the purpose of the SNPA which is to “*ensure uniformity and effectiveness in the exercise of the assessment and public control of the quality of the environment in support of environmental sustainability and health prevention policies to protect public health*”. To this end, SNPA performs important functions such as: monitoring the state of the environment, controlling the sources and factors of pollution of environmental areas and the pressures on the environment deriving from phenomena of anthropogenic or natural origin, the public dissemination of technical-scientific data and official knowledge on the state of the environment and its evolution, partnerships with schools and universities for the preparation of environmental dissemination and education programmes, the evaluation of structures, functions and services (art. 3). The law also establishes the essential levels of environmental technical performance (Lepta) and the national network of accredited laboratories (art. 12). ISPRA is assigned a role of direction and coordination, aimed at making the activities of the National System homogeneous, from a technical point of view (art. 6).

As far as **emergencies** are concerned, the Civil Protection Service, as reorganised in accordance with Italian Law 225/1992 and subsequent amendments, up to the regulatory reorganisation measure, which took place organically with the enactment of the *Civil Protection Code* in 2018 (Italian Legislative Decree no. 1 of 2 January 2018), aims to protect the population and the environment in the event of emergencies and other disasters, both natural and man-made. Civil protection legislation provides for the obligation to take all possible measures, especially in the context of the provincial emergency plans, to prevent and deal with such events, including the dissemination of any useful information by all public authorities (Italian Legislative Decree 195/2005). Moreover, the MASE and ISPRA websites are used as official information dissemination tools for the scientific community, the media and the public.

(b) With regard to paragraph 2, describe the measures taken to ensure that public authorities make information available and accessible to the public

Institutional websites currently represent the main tool for the dissemination of environmental legislation

and data (publications, reports, databases).

Among the tools promoted by ISPRA and the SNPA with the aim of making information available and accessible to the public, Citizen Science should be considered. Citizens participate in a network or in organised groups through data collection activities and the production of information, measurements, estimates, models, observations, evaluations, interpretations or elaborations, with the aim of expanding personal awareness and scientific knowledge of the phenomenology to which they are connected.

Citizen Science for the SNPA is an opportunity for partnership between institutions and citizens. Law 132/2016 establishing the National System for the Protection of the Environment provides, among the functions attributed to it, the development of knowledge and the production, promotion and public dissemination of technical-scientific data and official knowledge on the state of the environment and its evolution, as well as the dissemination to the public of environmental information pursuant to the legislative decree of 19 August 2005, No. 195. The SNPA promotes the scientific correctness of the information collected with and from citizens and the consequent knowledge of any correlation parameters with the reference systems. Regarding biodiversity, ISPRA's National Biodiversity Network (NNB) provides for the publication of databases also populated with data collected from Citizen Science activities. Through Citizen Science, citizens participate in the decision-making process, to the extent that the data they provide complement those of official monitoring (e.g. for mapping), and therefore in support of policies. The SNPA, together with the partners of citizen science projects, works to share initiatives and exploit its results with public decision-makers and with the economic and social partners concerned.

Another measure to support the availability and accessibility of information to the public was introduced in 2020 with an experimental non-financial reporting project and the related publication of the [Sustainability Report](#), which since 2021 has contained a specific section providing a snapshot of the ways in which the Institute creates environmental knowledge.

In 2021, ISPRA also launched the [EcoAtl@nte](#), a tool for participation, transparency and communication. The EcoAtl@nte is a multimedia product at the service of the citizen that allows access to the main environmental information collected within the SINA. It is an interactive access point to environmental and territorial data, which allows the autonomous development of thematic maps and the consultation of dashboards connected to environmental databases. In 2023, the EcoAtl@nte was joined by a traditional version of an atlas, the first edition of the [Atlas of Environmental Data](#) (see following letters d) and e)), a volume which presents an overview and selection of the main environmental data, offering a cartographic representation and allowing direct connection, via QRcode, to the databases and interactive maps published in SINA. In 2024, the [second edition](#) was published.

[Here](#) is the link to the section of the ISPRA website where you can find the main thematic web platforms related to the institutional website that allow greater transparency and use of information by the public.

Open data sets on specific environmental issues, such as those listed below, are also accessible through the MASE website.

Also worth mentioning is the MASE [Naturaitalia Portal](#), a website both for specialists and non-experts whose objective is the dissemination of content relating to protected areas, the enormous heritage of natural resources of our country, and more generally the policies and initiatives carried out at the institutional level for the protection of biodiversity and for the protection of the marine environment.

Available online from 2011, the Naturaitalia Portal conveys information related to the institutional activities carried out by the competent Directorate General, allowing its use and dissemination according to standardized methods and in line with the paradigms of web 2.0.

In line with the INSPIRE directive (Directive 2007/2/EC) as well as with the provisions of Law no. 979 of 31/12/1982, the portal contains a section dedicated to the National Biodiversity Network – NNB and above all the SI.DI.MAR (Sea Defence System) Database, which preserves the results of the analyses of Italian marine waters carried out for over twenty years as part of the "Marine and coastal monitoring programmes" that the Ministry has coordinated and financed.

All this information provides a very valuable snapshot of the quality of Italian marine environments from an ecological point of view.

In addition, on the portal there is a DB of reports of possible pollution, collected from 2000 to 2019, which can provide a wide range of cases on the events that occurred and their type, a valuable help in decisions to be taken in the event of pollution or danger of pollution, a service that the competent Directorate has been carrying out for about 30 years with a deployment of means unique in Europe, to protect and safeguard the 8000 km of Italian coastline, a unique heritage to be preserved and enhanced.

Another experience associated with the National Biodiversity Network is ISPRA's Network for the study of Mycological Diversity (NDM), which was designed with the aim of creating a national database accessible to all in which the surveys of macromycete fungi are collected and published.

"Strategy for the Marine Environment" Portal - dedicated to the implementation in Italy of Framework Directive 2008/56/EC on the Strategy for the marine environment, transposed by Italian Legislative Decree 190/2010. This information tool has the function of providing details on national actions concerning the Marine Strategy, in accordance with the provisions of Art. 16 of the aforementioned decree, which requires that MASE ensure suitable tools for informing the public. In fact, it is possible to access the Public Consultation through this website.

"Maritime Environmental Administration" Portal – dedicated to the publication of all updates concerning international conventions relating to maritime environmental safety. The aim is to keep operators in the naval sector updated on the various environmental issues covered by the agreements.

Centralised Information System (SIC) on MSFD monitoring data - has as its objective the collection, management and sharing at a national and Community level of data from the Monitoring Programmes under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC). SIC makes the information standards, methods and data uploading flows – including formal quality controls – available to ARPAs and monitoring actuators. The reports envisaged by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the associated monitoring data are also freely accessible from the SIC home page and are divided into the different sections on the platform.

Information portal called "Portal for the remediation of polluted sites – Sites of national interest (SIN)". makes available the documentation relating to the individual remediation procedures in progress (cartography, degree of contamination, etc.).

REACH Portal: is the tool through which the Technical Coordination Committee provides timely, homogeneous and detailed information on chemicals, providing free access to the databases managed by MASE, ISS and ECHA (European Chemicals Agency) on chemicals. The Administrations that are part of the Technical Coordination Committee for the implementation of the REACH Regulation are, in addition to the MASE, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers - Department of European Policies, ISPRA, the National Institute of Health - ISS and the representatives of the State-Regions Conference.

Database of banned substances (restricted or authorised) - <https://bancasostanze.mase.gov.it/>: collects information on more than 1,500 substances subject to bans, restrictions and authorisation obligations

under the REACH Regulation, Regulation (EC) no. 850/2004 on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and Regulation (EC) no. 2024/590 on substances that reduce the ozone layer and subsequent amendments and additions. The objective is to facilitate access to public information on chemicals of particular concern such as Carcinogenic, Mutagenic and toxic for Reproduction (CMR), Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic (PBT), very Persistent and very Bioaccumulative (vPvB) substances, substances with endocrine disrupting properties, substances considered as persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and substances harmful to the ozone layer.

Informambiente portal - created by ISPRA in 2022 to comply with the request for maximum publicity of environmental data provided for in Article 6 of Decree-Law no. 111 of 14 October 2019 (converted into Law no. 141. of 12 December 2019 so-called "Climate Law"), and also accessible from the Transparent Administration section of the MASE.

Over the years, the offer of multimedia content has grown considerably: live streaming of institutional events, scientific documentaries on the Ispravideo Youtube channel and video interviews published on IspraTv.

Since 2016, a section for the dissemination of open data on the environment has been created, which in 2023 has been renewed and enriched with other datasets. In addition, ISPRA makes 10 open datasets available through the National Portal of Open Data of the Public Administration.

In addition, the direct connection between the citizen and the Administration is guaranteed by the Public Relations Office (U.R.P.), a structure capable of providing information to users:

- on the organizational structure, on the offices and access hours, on the methods of providing services
- on the administrative procedures under the competence of the Ministry, on the relevant managers, on the conduct and timing of the conclusion of the procedures
- on access to administrative documents in application of the law on administrative transparency.

In this context, it is worth mentioning the initiative of the ISPRA URP which, as part of the SI-URP Network project for the structured involvement of all the URPs of regional and provincial environmental agencies (System established by Legislative Decree 132/2016), has activated a section within the SNPA Portal dedicated to access to environmental acts, documents and information. The latter, through a single national telematic access, facilitates the public in the use of the services offered and operates as a one-stop shop, providing users with systematic, consistency and authoritativeness of the action of dissemination of the environmental information held. The System has made available to users two online forms available at this link both for requests for access to documents, simple civic access, generalised civic access and access to environmental information, and for requests for general and organisational information relating to the Bodies of the System.

Finally, the SI-URP has adopted an online module for the coordinated survey of customer satisfaction to offer users an additional way of active participation in the services offered and to the administrations a tool for identifying measures aimed at the continuous improvement of the service offered.

In addition, for the systematization of correct and transparent information for the public, the MASE has drawn up the **2024 and 2025 Communication Plans**. The Plans aim to coordinate the communication activities implemented by the Ministry, aimed at accompanying the development and implementation of environmental and energy policies and making the choices adopted known and fully understandable. This commitment is aimed at allowing public opinion to acquire an ever greater and full awareness of the problems to be faced, of the solutions identified at national and international level and, conversely,

of the risks from an environmental and socio-economic point of view associated with the lack of action in the various fields.

Considering its centrality in the communication and information processes towards the general public, stakeholders and other Administrations, the MASE is carrying out a technological and content restructuring of the institutional website in order to make it more usable, accessible, as well as fully consistent with the Guidelines on accessibility and design of IT tools issued by the Agency for Digital Italy of the Presidency of the Council.

To properly promote the content relating to projects and topics of particular importance, specific web initiatives (platforms, portals, newsletters, etc.) linked to the institutional website have been launched, offering important information tools managed by the individual organisations.

Below are the **main web platforms related to the institutional website that allow greater transparency and access to information by the public.**

“It depends on us” Portal- web platform funded by the PNRR with which the MASE aims to strengthen knowledge on the main environmental and climate challenges of our time. Please refer to the provisions of Section 3 (b) in this regard.

CRReIAMO PA Project website " Competences and Networks for Environmental Integration and Improvement of the PA" - this is the tool used to inform the public about the project on strengthening administrative capacity- with a collection of documents, development of training content, and information.

Project website “Mettiamoci in RIGA”- the website is organised into sections and subsections dedicated to the collection of documents, the development of information content, and the further study of the training and informative materials produced within each project line. "Mettiamoci in RIGA" aims to offer public administrations and other subjects with environmental skills paths to strengthen the administrative and technical capacities of the staff already in force at the recipients, to produce a change in terms of increased ability to plan, design and implement interventions in the environmental field according to well-defined times and rules.

Knowledge Platform (PDC) - Good Practices for Climate and the Environment – it is a knowledge management platform that collects, systematises and makes available to the public the technical knowledge achieved in the context of the projects financed in Italy by the direct management programmes of the European Commission such as LIFE and Horizon 2020. The platform is updated daily with news on national and Community calls for funding and new regulations and environmental policy and ensures integrated multimedia and multichannel communication and an immediacy and ease of use that allows direct access to the technical content of good practices (about 185 projects) related to eight environmental issues (waste, resource efficiency, soil, urban environment, water, nature and biodiversity, climate and energy).

ETS Portal - for the implementation of the European Union Emissions Trading System (EU ETS). The Portal allows the interactive connection between MASE/ETS Committee with the parties interested in issuing authorizations to emit greenhouse gases pursuant to Legislative Decree 47/2020 and subsequent amendments.

Monitorpiani Portal - collects the documentation and data of the waste management planning of Regions and autonomous provinces, allowing these bodies to fulfil legal obligations automatically and digitally. This tool has the advantage of allowing the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces to adapt their Plans to the standard necessary for them to comply with the regulatory requirements and allows the Ministry

to analyse and process the information provided by the local authorities.

SEA - EIA – IPCC permit - Environmental Assessment and Authorisation Portal - in addition to this portal, which represents the single point of access to all environmental assessment and authorisation procedures relating to plans, programmes, projects and installations of state competence governed by Part Two of Italian Legislative Decree 152/2006, the MASE has drawn up a "Charter of intent for transparency and participation in Environmental Assessments" in collaboration with central and local administrations, environmental, trade and citizens' associations, to give concrete meaning to citizens' rights in terms of information and participation in decision-making processes on environmental issues. Created through the CReIAMO PA project, the Charter is aligned with the Aarhus and Espoo International Conventions and the Kiev Protocol and emphasizes the importance of transparency and participation, acting as a tool to improve information and communication processes, increase the effectiveness of sustainability policies and promote a culture of participation in environmental assessments.

As part of the same project, an official CReIAMO PA YouTube channel was created, where several explanatory videos were produced. These videos underline the importance of environmental assessment procedures in the citizens' lives. Among these, a noteworthy video, produced by the Italian Focal Point of the Espoo Convention, underlines the importance of transparency and public participation in line with the principles of the Aarhus Convention. The video (available at this [link](#)), presented during the 1st Mediterranean Subregional Meeting (Rome, 28-29 May 2024), provides information on environmental assessments in a transboundary context (Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment and its Protocol on Environmental Assessments - Kiev Protocol).

A direct connection between the public and the Administration is guaranteed by the **Public Relations Office (URP)**, a structure that is able to provide information to users on:

- Organisational structure, offices and access times, and on how services are provided.
- Administrative procedures falling within the competence of the Ministry, those responsible, the progress and timing of the conclusion of proceedings.
- Access to administrative documents under the administrative transparency law.
- The office responds to citizens' requests received at the email address urp@mite.gov.it. If it is not possible to respond directly, the URP will forward the request for information to the competent office, notifying the interested party.

In this context, the ISPRA initiative that has given new life to the SI-URP project with a structured involvement of all the URPs of the regional and provincial environmental agencies that are all part of the new National System for the Protection of the Environment (Italian Legislative Decree 132/2016) has developed and launched a section in the SNPA Portal dedicated to access to environmental records, documents and information that, through a single national electronic gateway, facilitates users in the use of the services offered to them and operates as a one-stop information desk, offering the user (citizen/company/associations/institutions) systematic, coherent and authoritative dissemination of the environmental information held.

With regard to **accessibility to international laws, decrees and regulations on environmental issues**, the MASE provides on its website wide access to these documents which, with the restructuring in progress, will be more easily accessible to the citizen thanks to the implementation of the current internal research tools. Other sources of information for public authorities are the various institutes and bodies

that perform studies and collect data, such as CNR (National Research Council), ENEA (National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Economics for Sustainable Development), ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics), ISS (Higher Institute of Health) and universities.

As regards accessibility **to international laws, decrees and regulations on environmental issues**, the MASE provides on its website wide access to these documents which, with the restructuring in progress, will be more easily accessible to the citizen thanks to the implementation of the current internal research tools. Other sources of information for public authorities are also the various institutes and bodies in charge of carrying out studies and collecting data such as CNR (National Research Council), ENEA (National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Economy for Sustainable Development), ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics), ISS (National Institute of Health) and Universities.

(c) With reference to paragraph 3, measures taken to ensure that environmental information becomes progressively available through electronic databases easily accessible to the public by telematic means

The geographical, territorial and environmental data and information collected by ISPRA and SNPA are available in a specific section of the institutional website, catalogued and made public and accessible, even in real time, as part of the National Environmental Information System (SINA) which, with Law no. 132/2016, has taken on a strategic role for the distribution of territorial-environmental information, ensuring the effective connection between the initiatives implemented by the various subjects in the collection and organization of data, the consistent maintenance of information flows and the dissemination of data to public administrations, researchers, professionals and all citizens.

In addition, pursuant to Article 40 of Legislative Decree no. 33 of 14 March 2013, "Reorganisation of the regulations concerning the obligations of publicity, transparency and dissemination of information by public administrations", in the "transparent administration" section entitled "environmental information" common to all public administrations are published and updated.

In particular, the National Section of the Waste Register by electronic means is worth mentioning in order to provide a constantly updated and rapidly available knowledge framework on waste by the public. The national waste register consists of databases containing freely available and downloadable information on urban and special waste and on the national list of companies authorised to manage waste. In particular, the municipal waste databases contain information on:

- production and separate waste collection (municipal detail);
- management costs of urban hygiene services (municipal detail);
- management system (detail for each plant).
- The databases on special waste contain information on:
 - production of hazardous and non-hazardous waste up to the regional detail, with breakdown by chapter of the European list and by Ateco activity code;
 - management of hazardous and non-hazardous waste up to regional detail, with breakdown by individual recovery and disposal operation.
- For the management of special waste, there is also a section containing the list and related data on the quantities managed of some of the main types of management plants.
- On the site there is also information on:
 - authorizations issued to waste management plants pursuant to art. 208, 209, 211, 213 and 214 of Legislative Decree no. no. 152/2006, inserted by the competent territorial administrations (until 2021);
 - authorizations, starting from the 2017 data, contained in the single model of environmental declaration

(MUD) referred to in Law no. 70 of 1994.

In the Waste Register there is also a section "Surveys and data requests" used for the collection of information on specific issues in the field of waste (for example, on the prevention measures adopted at municipal level). The data from the Waste Register relating to the production and separate collection of urban waste cover 100% of Italian municipalities (7,904 in 2022). In addition, the Registry contains processed data from over 650 municipal waste management plants, over 300,000 special waste producers and about 10,500 special waste management plants.

All the data presented on the site can also be downloaded, up to the municipal detail in the case of the production and separate collection of urban waste, with regional detail for the production of special waste and at the level of individual plants and authorization in the case of management.

Between February 2023 and February 2024, the Waste Registry website recorded over 990,000 accesses with a daily average of about 2,500 accesses. In total, the pages visited were, in the same period, over 2.4 million. Most of the accesses (more than 50%) concerned the pages relating to the production and separate collection of the municipalities.

(d, e) With regard to Chapter 4, measures taken to publish and disseminate national reports on the state of the environment and to disseminate the information referred to in paragraph 5

On its website, ISPRA allows access to publications and environmental information.

Of particular note is the Database of Environmental Indicators which, in a dynamic and timely manner, disseminates detailed information of high scientific soundness.

Organized into 39 Environmental Themes, with over 300 indicators structured in sheets containing descriptive information (metadata). This tool provides information on the implementation of environmental measures required on the basis of specific legislative or cooperation instruments, and to know and disseminate information on the state of the environment in Italy. During 2023, the database was further enhanced. The main innovations introduced concern the organisation of content, navigation methods and the Dashboard. Through the Aggregation Catalogue it is possible to consult the aggregated indicators in different ways, depending on the information needs. It provides a snapshot of the state of the environment in Italy, which has so far been clearly reported by the Yearbook of environmental data, and marks a further development. The official environmental statistics/data provided by this Information System also flow into the reports prepared by the European Environment Agency, in particular the SOER (State Of the Environment Report). The information base of the database allows the creation of the "SNPA Environment Report", the "Report on the State of the Environment" published by the MASE, which must be presented to Parliament every 2 years. In addition, it allows the processing of other inter-thematic reports including:

- "Italy and the environment. State, Prospects and Scenarios 2023" - provides an overall reading of the state of the environment in Italy observed through the lens of the main economic-environmental strategies such as the European Green Deal and the VIII European Environment Action Programme (EAP). The integrated reading of the country's environmental conditions is accompanied by the evaluation of trends with respect to the national and international objectives set, i.e. the interpretation of the trend of environmental phenomena in progress.
- "SNPA Environment Report 2023" - offers a detailed overview of the state of our environment based on objective, reliable and comparable information that allows us to assess the achievement of the numerous objectives set and to effectively address future environmental challenges through the analysis of 21 indicators.

- "Environment in Italy: an overview. Yearbook of environmental data 2023" - outlines, in a concise and clear way, a picture of the health conditions of the environmental components and their complex interrelationships, through the indicators of the Environmental Indicators Database. The information base is able to respond to different knowledge needs in the environmental field. In addition, the document offers different levels of reading: textual (extended or in the form of a highlight), graphic and symbolic. The publication makes it possible to understand environmental phenomena and their trend over time, providing useful information for monitoring national and international sustainability policies.
- "Indicators, indices and scenarios for the analysis of the main environmental trends 2022": the document analyses the main emerging environmental issues (natural capital, climate change, circular economy and environment and health) through different approaches whose common thread is the use and enhancement of the trends of the most significant indicators present in the "Database of environmental indicators".
- "Walking in the environment", 2022 - addressed to an audience of young students and non-experts, the document is recognised by the Ministry of Education as a contribution to the National School ReGeneration Plan. The virtual walk through the environment winds along six paths. For each path explored, the state of health of the environment in which we live is described in an easily understandable way. The objective photographs of reality are flanked by curiosities and suggestions (books, films/documentaries, musical pieces). The publication is also translated into the multimedia version, or interactive educational path. The two products constitute a real information-educational project, conceived and developed to present information on the state of the environment by transforming it into learning content suitable for the chosen targets.
- "Open ecological transition. Where is the Italian environment going? 2021" - is a snapshot of a country on the move, a clear summary of the many dynamics that contribute to Italy's ecological transition. The document brings to the attention of the company the most important aspects of each environmental problem or phenomenon, pointing out the critical issues but also the results already achieved or achievable.
- "Atlas of Environmental Data" - supports and integrates the EcoAtlas, offers a series of interactive cartographic paths useful for exploring the environmental data collected and catalogued in the National Environmental Information System, in line with the Database of the Yearbook of Environmental Data (now the Environmental Indicators Database), which, in line with the main national and international interthematic core sets, makes available over 300 statistical indicators on the state of the environment in Italy. There are also several projects aimed at expanding the set of ISPRA territorial indicators to meet new national and international information requests. For example, the "PON Environmental Statistics Project for Cohesion Policies 2014-2020", under which, from the official launch of the project (May 2018) until 2023, 46 indicators have been published. All project outputs (data, metadata and indicators) are published through ISPRA's communication channels and, in particular, a dedicated section can be consulted in the Environmental Indicators Database.
- Users can identify the volumes of interest in the publication section of the ISPRA institutional website, divided into Editorial Series. Among the editorial series there is that of reports, among which it is worth mentioning in particular:

- Urban waste report - the document provides a "snapshot" of the urban waste management cycle in Italy, from collection to disposal. The report is accompanied by a summary version and, for greater dissemination of information, recently also by a complete version and a summary in English;
- Special waste report - is the result of a complex activity of data collection, analysis and processing and is accompanied by a summary version, and for a greater dissemination of information, recently also by a complete version and a summary in English.

It is also worth mentioning:

- ISPRA, National Hydrological Balance: focus on drought and natural availability of renewable water resources. Update to 2023.
- ISPRA, Monitoring of the potentially toxic microalgae *Ostreopsis cf. ovata* along the Italian coasts: Year 2023.
- SNPA, The climate in Italy in 2023.
- SNPA, Controls, monitoring and environmental inspections Snpa Aia/Rir referring to 2021 data.
- ISPRA, Environmental damage in Italy: SNPA activities and framework of actions 2021-2022. 2023 edition.
- ISPRA, Italian Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2022. National Inventory Report 2024.
- ISPRA, Greenhouse gas emissions in Italy: reduction targets to 2030
- ISPRA, Italian Emission Inventory 1990-2022. Informative Inventory Report 2024.
- SNPA, National Report on Pesticides in Water. 2021 data.

The ISPRA Library, specialised in environmental issues, is open to the public and UNI EN ISO 9001 certified; it carries out study and research activities for internal and external users with the aim of collecting, disseminating and disseminating environmental information. The material can be queried through an online catalogue, which is also structured for the search for cartographic material with different themes owned by the Library and which allows to download certain categories of maps. In addition to ample opening hours to the public, the offer of reference services to the public also makes use of qualified personnel capable of carrying out complex and customised bibliographic searches that allow, where the material is not present on site, to activate the retrieval through Document Delivery and interlibrary loan services.

Among the **reports edited directly by MASE**, worthy of mention are the State of the Environment Reports, **the last of which was published in 2020**.

It is also worth mentioning the "**Normattiva**" project in implementation of Article 107 of Law no. 388 of 2000 which had provided for the establishment of a fund intended for the financing of "initiatives aimed at promoting the computerization and classification of current legislation in order to facilitate research and free consultation by citizens, as well as to provide tools for regulatory reorganization activities" and had entrusted this task to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Senate of the Republic and the Chamber of Deputies. [https:// www.normattiva.it](https://www.normattiva.it)

Other ISPRA sites relevant for the implementation of Article 5:

Also of interest is the "**Normattiva**" project in implementation of Article 107 of Italian Law no. 388 of 2000 which had provided for the establishment of a fund for the financing of "initiatives aimed at promoting the computerisation and classification of current legislation in order to facilitate its search and

free consultation by the public, as well as to provide tools for the activity of regulatory reorganisation", and had entrusted this task to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Senate of the Republic and the Chamber of Deputies.

Other ISPRA websites relevant for the implementation of Article 5:

Pesticide Portal

The Pesticide Portal provides information on the national monitoring of pesticides in surface and groundwater. In the portal it is possible to view and consult maps with contamination levels, obtained by comparison with the legal limits (Environmental Quality Standards, abbr. SQA). For each monitoring point, geographical information, the level of contamination, the pesticides searched for and found are returned. The annual reports on the monitoring of pesticides in water and related statistical data can also be downloaded.

Coastal Portal

The Coastal Portal provides information on coastal planning and management, as well as knowledge of long-term coastal evolution, due to the action of the sea, human activity and climate change, aimed at monitoring the evolution of the natural and anthropogenic elements that determine the coastal structure.

MOSAICO Platform

Starting from September 2023, the MOSAICO Platform allows public access to the Database on Contaminated Sites through a Web Application for uploading and controlling data, OGC Services and GIS Web Applications for viewing data on local remediation procedures with different levels of access and functionality. The data contained in the regional registries are uploaded to MOSAICO by the Regions and Autonomous Provinces. The platform is updated annually.

Industrial Emissions Portal

Italy estimates and reports annually the quantities of greenhouse gases and pollutants released into the atmosphere from sources relevant to the national inventory. The <https://emissioni.sina.isprambiente.it/> portal provides the time series of emissions into the atmosphere, the quarterly estimates of greenhouse gas emissions and the most relevant documents accompanying the official communications relating to the national inventory.

National Platform for Adaptation to Climate Change

The National Platform on Adaptation to Climate Change was promoted on the initiative of MASE and was created by ISPRA. The Platform aims to promote the exchange of information between the central administration, local authorities and all stakeholders, starting with citizens, on the issue of adaptation to climate change, thus representing the main information tool in Italy on this issue. The general purpose is therefore to inform, raise awareness and make available data, indicators, case studies and operational tools to all citizens, promote and support Local Authorities in decision-making and planning processes on adaptation to climate change, as well as facilitate access to the documents of the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC).

Information on local good practices

GELSO - Local Management for Sustainability is an environmental information tool that proposes an

integrated approach to environmental sustainability and aims to identify, evaluate and disseminate local good sustainability practices implemented in Italy.

Land consumption, territorial dynamics and ecosystem services

The report is a product of the National System for Environmental Protection (SNPA) which, together with the attached cartography and indicator databases, provides an updated picture of land cover transformation processes and makes it possible to assess the impact of land consumption on the landscape and ecosystem services.

Furthermore, with reference to the mechanism of technical connection in the environmental sector between the State and the Regions provided for in Italy by Law no. 132 of 28 June 2016 through the establishment of the National Network System for Environmental Protection (SNPA) and aimed at standardising the essential levels of environmental technical performance of the Environmental Protection Agencies of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces on the national territory with the coordination of ISPRA, all decisions taken by the Council of the National System, its coordinating body, are regularly published online and made accessible to the wider public on the official website of the SNPA.

Moreover, ISPRA and the System proactively guarantee the maximum dissemination of the main information on the environment through the organisation of public events, ad hoc press conferences and the presence on social media in relation to the SNPA National Environment Reports, official documents that periodically represent the updated status of the data collected in the country in a coordinated and uniform manner on environmental issues of greater importance and competence of the national system. Similarly, the Binding Guidelines and other technical publications of the System are widely disseminated on the web, on which extensive training is offered within the System and outside it.

(f, g) With regard to paragraph 6, measures taken to encourage operators whose activities have a significant impact on the environment to regularly inform the public about the environmental impact of their products and activities; measures taken to provide information referred to in paragraph 7

Since 2010, the Ministry of the Environment has been promoting the **National Environmental Impact Assessment Programme** to measure and improve the environmental performance of the private and public sectors. The program is aimed at Italy's top companies as well as small and medium-sized companies belonging to the main sectors of the Italian production sector and public bodies including municipalities. The programme, which certifies both products (goods and services) and organisations, during its experimental phase focused mostly on an analysis of the carbon footprint of all the various environmental indicators due to its dual nature as an environmental driver closely linked to climate change and added value to the competitiveness of Italian companies in international markets. Over the years, the Programme has involved about 200 entities, including companies, municipalities and universities. The companies that join the program, following the signing of a Voluntary Agreement with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security, complete their path with certification by a third party in order to be able to communicate the final results in compliance with the "Guidelines for Communication within the Environmental Footprint Assessment Programme" and ensure maximum transparency of the entire process.

VIVA - The Sustainability of viticulture in Italy is the program of the Ministry of the Environment

that since 2011 has promoted the sustainability of the Italian wine sector and represents the public standard for the measurement and improvement of the sustainability performance of viticulture in Italy. VIVA provides both a product and organisational analysis based on the use of four indicators: Air (climatic footprint), Water (water footprint), Territory (social and economic sustainability) and Vineyard (agronomic management of the vineyard), accompanied by the relevant technical specifications. The results obtained, certified by an independent third party, are accessible to the public thanks to the **VIVA label** issued by the Ministry that bears a QR code linking to a web page, ensuring communication with the consumer. More than 200 companies participate in the programme, in order to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and to promote the issue of sustainability throughout the wine chain, an intense information campaign has been organised complete with a website, newsletters, training courses for the application of the sustainability indicators provided by the programme for company staff, consultants and stakeholders interested in the programme.

(h) With regard to paragraph 8, measures taken to promote mechanisms to ensure that sufficient product information is made available to the public

The Ministry, in order to improve knowledge of the tools for the implementation of policies on more sustainable production and consumption, has also invested in **communication for the dissemination of green public procurement-GPP (Green Public Procurement)**, through a dedicated website (the links are given in chapter XIV).

National "Made Green in Italy" scheme for the assessment and communication of the environmental footprint of products

The Made Green in Italy (MGI) scheme aims to guide companies towards the use of the environmental footprint to promote the competitiveness of national products in the context of the growing demand for products with high environmental qualification. The potential of the MGI scheme, in terms of supporting the competitive capabilities of Italian companies, lies in the fact that the scheme is the only certification capable of combining the environmental sustainability performance of products with the dimension linked to the excellence of the national production system. The MGI scheme provides for the use of a recognisable logo to be affixed to the products and a detailed declaration, available via QRcode, which provides consumers with clear, uniform and complete information, to the benefit of market transparency and "healthy" competition between companies. The Manual for the use of the logo is aimed at illustrating the methods of communication, dissemination and use of the logo relating to the MGI Scheme, in accordance with the provisions of art. 7 and Annex IV of the Regulation, referred to in Ministerial Decree no. 56 of 21 March 2018.

To date, 31 "Product Category Rules" (SmPCs) have been published, i.e. the documents that contain methodological indications for companies that intend to adhere to the MGI scheme. The products already MGI certified concern the following categories: Italian extra-virgin olive oil, textiles, laundry rental services, multipurpose PE bags, piping systems, steel and cast iron castings.

EU Ecolabel is the European Union's eco-label created with the aim of promoting products that have a lower impact on the environment throughout their life cycle and provide consumers with accurate, non-misleading and scientifically based information on the environmental impact of products.

In October 2022, the fifth edition of the "Ecolabel Award 2022 – 30 years of EU Ecolabel Balances and

Perspectives" was organized, during which the brand's thirtieth anniversary was celebrated. In 2023, a new dissemination brochure dedicated to the EU Ecolabel products most used on board pleasure boats was created, an agile tool for raising awareness of sustainable procurement.

EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme), based on the EU Regulation (EC) 1221/2009 is a voluntary management system mainly intended to improve the environment and to provide organisations, control authorities and stakeholders with an assessment and management tool aimed at the continuous improvement of environmental performance. In 2022 and 2023 editions of the EMAS Italy Award were organised, which awarded those organisations that have best interpreted and applied the inspiring principles of the European scheme.

Several dissemination products have been produced, such as brochures on good practices for EMAS. Newsletters are published for both tools and social profiles have been activated. The competent Italian national body with the task of applying the EU schemes is the Ecolabel and Ecoaudit Committee, established at the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security and composed of representatives of the MASE, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Enterprise and Made in Italy and the Ministry of Health. In addition to issuing certifications and participating in the European Commission's working groups, the Committee is entrusted with the important task of implementing initiatives for the information and promotion of the two systems.

To meet the needs of the business world, EMAS and Ecolabel schools have also been established on the Italian territory, dedicated to the training of professionals that want to adhere to the EMAS Regulation and/or equip their products and services with the EU Ecolabel label.

In 2024, Italy confirmed its leadership at European level in terms of the number of Ecolabel licenses (501 licenses for a total of 15,306 certified products).

Participation in the European Night of Researchers 2022 and 2023 editions was also organised as part of the ISPRA-MIMIT initiative "Facciamo circolare" as an awareness-raising and public dissemination activity of EMAS and Ecolabel.

Moreover, Law no. 132 of 28 June 2016 assigns to the SNPA the function of control, with sampling, analysis and measurement, and inspections, of the sources and factors of pollution of the environmental matrices and of the pressures on the environment deriving from phenomena of anthropogenic or natural origin, and the related impacts. In the activities of checking the compliance of an industrial plant in the IEA, ISPRA's control involves the need to verify not only the generic compliance with the law, but also particular requirements established in specific administrative acts: the authorisations.

Since Legislative Decree 33/2013 on the "Reorganisation of the discipline concerning the obligations of publicity, transparency and dissemination of information by public administrations" has led to a strong development in the field of transparency, guaranteeing public access to environmental information, ISPRA, also pursuant to Directive 2003/4/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2003 on public access to environmental information, constantly structures environmental information in periodic reports for the purpose of an active and systematic dissemination to the public of the data obtained from the monitoring and control activities on IEA installations that impact the environment, including the most critical plants.

In January 2021, ISPRA entered into a collaboration agreement with MASE and ANCI (National Association of Italian Municipalities) on the dissemination to the public of information on the safety of plants at risk of major accidents through the new Seveso Query online portal.

Seveso Query contains the information relating to industrial plants communicated by the operators,

together with the results of the evaluation of safety reports and inspections. The data collected are available, by territorial competence and through access to the reserved area, to all administrations that need them. Now those of a public nature are made usable, updated in real time.

(i) With regard to paragraph 9, measures to establish pollution registers at a national level

Italy signed the PRTR (Pollutant Release and Transfer Register) protocol in 2003 and ratified it with Italian Law no. 91 of 17 July 2020. And before the signing of that protocol there was the INES national register (National Inventory of Emissions and their Sources) established by Italian Legislative Decree 372/1999 (subsequently amended and replaced by Italian Legislative Decree 59/2005). In order to implement European Regulation (EC) no. 166/2006 on the establishment of a European Emissions and Transfers Register (E-PRTR) in Italy, the INES data collection procedure was reformulated and the National PRTR Register replaced the INES register starting in 2008.

xi) Obstacles encountered in the implementation of each paragraph of Article 5

xii) Further information on the practical application of Article 5

xiii) Relevant websites

- [ISTAT Environment and Energy Archive](#)
- [Civil Protection Department](#)
- [National Geoportal](#)
- [National Biodiversity Network](#)
- [Website dedicated to GPP](#)
- [Knowledge Platform](#)
- [Naturaitalia Portal](#)
- [REACH Portal](#)
- [“It depends on us Portal”](#)

Some ISPRA websites relevant for the implementation of Article 5:

- [ISPRA](#)
- [SNPA](#)
- [URP](#)
- [ISPRA Library](#)
- [ISPRA National environmental informative system](#)
- [Database of environmental indicators](#)
- [Non-financial accounting](#)
- [National Information System for the Protection of Italian Waters](#)
- [Portal of the Geological Survey of Italy](#)

Databases

- [Inventory of establishments at risk of major accidents involving dangerous substances](#) (Legislative

Decree no. 105 of 26 June 2015 – Transposition of Directive 2012/18/EU "Seveso Ter") called Seveso Query.

- [Pesticide Portal](#)

ARTICLE 6

xiv) Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities in article 6

(a) With regard to paragraph 1, measures taken to ensure that the provisions of Article 6 are applied for (i) permits concerning the activities listed in Annex I to the Convention and (ii) permits not concerning the activities listed in Annex I but having a significant environmental impact Article 6, which ensures public participation in the authorisation procedure for certain specific activities, is mainly implemented in **Italian Legislative Decree no. 152/2006** as amended by Italian Legislative Decree no 91/2014 (converted into **Italian Law 116/2014**) and **Italian Ministerial Decree 30/03/2015** (regarding projects under the responsibility of the Regions and Autonomous Provinces). In fact, in part II Italian Legislative Decree 152/2006 regulates the procedures for the **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**, the **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** and the **Integrated Environmental Authorisation (IEA)** providing for articulated consultation mechanisms with all social stakeholders.

In the case of plans or projects that are likely to have significant effects on a site in the Natura 2000 network, the “**Valutazione d’incidenza**” (**VIncA**), introduced by Article 6 of Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive), is applied. “Valutazione d’incidenza” is a prevention tool that analyses the effects of plans and interventions in a dynamic ecological context such as that of Natura 2000 sites. With the adoption of the National Guidelines for “Valutazione d’incidenza” (OJ 303 of 28.12.2019), guidance has been provided to the competent authorities on the modalities of public participation and of access to environmental information in relation to the procedures referred to in art. 6, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Habitats Directive.

The **REACH regulation** (EC no. 1907/2006) concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemical substances also establishes that citizens of the European Union can participate in the decision-making processes on chemical substances. This participation is guaranteed through the public consultation procedure followed by the ECHA (European Chemicals Agency) with an invitation to interested parties to express observations, opinions, proposals and comments at certain stages of the required procedure. Notices on current consultations (translated into Italian) are available on the [REACH portal](#).

(b) Measures to ensure that the public concerned are adequately, promptly and effectively informed of decision-making on environmental issues as envisaged in paragraph 2 Article 3-*sexies* of Italian Legislative Decree no. 152/2006 allows "access to information relating to the state of the nation’s environment and countryside" **regardless of the demonstration of a legally relevant interest** and ensures public participation in the process of drawing up, modifying and reviewing proposals

for plans or programmes related to the environment before decisions are taken on them.

Public awareness of Environmental Assessment procedures is ensured by the **competent authority** (MASE or regional competent authorities), which for the duration of the public consultation phase envisaged by the regulation publishes on its website:

- For the Strategic Environmental Assessment (VAS) procedure: announcement of commencement of the procedure, the proposal of the plan or programme and the environmental report.
- For the Environmental Impact Assessment (VIA) procedure: the main documents filed (preliminary project, preliminary environmental study), and the notice published in the press by the proposer in national newspapers and in a regional newspaper (for projects under state responsibility) or a regional or provincial newspaper for projects administered regionally).
- For the issuance of the integrated environmental authorization (AIA): the competent authority publishes the authorization application on its website within thirty days of receiving it, accompanied by various information, including that provided by the applicant for authorization;
- For all procedures: the possibility of submitting observations.

The **authority** is responsible for publishing a notice in the Official Journal of the Italian Republic or in the Official Journal of the region or autonomous province concerned.

(c, d) Measures to ensure that the timing of public participation procedures complies with paragraph 3; with regard to paragraph 4, measures to ensure that public participation takes place at an early stage of the decision-making process

The timing for submitting observations changes based on the specific evaluation procedure, but is never less than 30 days:

MASE, or the competent regional authorities, may acquire and evaluate any observations received after the terms set by the law, consistent with the timing envisaged by Italian Legislative Decree no. 152/2006 and subsequent amendments for the performance of technical and structural activities and for the expression of the final measure.

(e) With regard to paragraph 5, measures to encourage the prospective permit applicant to identify and involve the public, providing information on the objectives of its application prior to submission

In Italy, the evaluation processes for Community programmes in the 2014-2020 programming period presented an opportunity to develop procedures, methods of participation and, above all, forms of inter-institutional cooperation (surveys, questionnaires, meetings) that now constitute a solid foundation for administrations and that are also of great help for evaluation processes in other planning areas.

With regard to the programmes co-financed by the 2021-2022¹⁷ cohesion policy, the MASE, as the National Environmental Authority for the SEA, in agreement with the Department for Cohesion Policies – Presidency of the Council of Ministers, and with the Agency for Territorial Cohesion, has drawn up a technical and methodological guidance document for the Managing Authorities of national and regional programmes and the Regional SEA Competent Authorities, for the application of the DNSH principle to programmes co-financed by the Structural Funds subject to SEA or SEA assessment. The document is available on [this page](#).

(f, g) With regard to paragraph 6, measures to ensure that competent authorities provide the

public concerned with all information relevant to the decision-making process referred to in Article 6; with regard to paragraph 7, measures to allow the public to submit comments, information, analyses or opinions relevant to the proposed activity.

The availability of technical and administrative documentation relating to environmental assessment procedures by the relevant competent authorities ensures public participation in decision-making processes. The participation procedures allow the public to present any **observations** or requests for information, analysis or opinions deemed relevant not just *"in writing or, as the case may be, during hearings or public investigations in the presence of the applicant"* as envisaged by the current text of Article 6 of the Convention, but also **"electronically"**, in the manner established by Italian Legislative Decree no. 82/2005 as amended.

(h) With regard to paragraph 8, measures taken to ensure that the results of public participation are taken into due consideration in decision-making

The results of the consultations must be duly taken into account and form an integral part of the plan, programme or project documentation. In fact, in accordance with the methods of the various procedures, the documentation must provide evidence of how such considerations have been taken into account. The comments presented by the public are made available online by the MASE and many Regions.

(i) With regard to paragraph 9, measures taken to ensure that the public is promptly informed of the decision

The provision of the Environmental Impact Assessment process by the EIA/SEA Commission and the Decree on environmental compatibility is published in newspapers, in the Official Journal, or in the Official Journal of the Region and on the website of the competent authority.

(j) With regard to paragraph 10, measures taken to ensure that when a public authority reconsiders or updates the operating conditions for an activity referred to in paragraph 1 the provisions laid down in paragraphs 2 to 9 shall be applied, with appropriate amendments and where appropriate

Public participation is also envisaged in the screening procedure aimed at defining whether or not the project or plan presented – or modifications and extensions thereto – may have a significant environmental impact and therefore should be subject to an additional EIA/SEA procedure. Monitoring ensures a control of significant impacts on the environment deriving from the implementation of the approved projects, the implementation of the approved plans and programmes and the verification of the achievement of the sustainability objectives established and therefore makes it possible to identify any need for application of the provisions of para. 2-9 of Article 6.

Monitoring is carried out by the relevant Authority in cooperation with the competent Authority, also working with environmental agencies and ISPRA.

(k) With regard to paragraph 11, measures taken to apply the provisions of Article 6 to decisions concerning the release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) into the environment

In 2005, the Ministry of the Environment established the web platform called Italian Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) with the following goals:

- Implement the obligations set out in the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, ratified by Italian Law no. 27 of 14 January 2004 on public awareness and participation (Article 20 of the Cartagena Protocol).

- **Implement the Aarhus Convention and the Almaty Amendment on GMOs; comply with European Union legislation (Directive 2001/18/EC) and Italian legislation (Legislative Decree no. 224 of 8 July 2003) on information and public consultation on GMOs.**

xv) Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 6.

While public participation is envisaged and regulated at a legislative level in a detailed manner, there are still weaknesses relating

to the actual participation of the public in these decision-making processes. Above all there is a need for:

- An increased attitude to participate and cooperate.
- National guidelines on participation, partnership and consultation.

With regard to a case involving the issuance of an integrated environmental authorisation (AIA) pursuant to Article 29-quater of Legislative Decree 152/2006 for a major steel plant, two environmental NGOs, in a contribution to this report, indicate alleged unequal treatment of the observations submitted in accordance with the law compared to the counter-arguments of the operator requesting the integrated authorisation. The plant is located in an area of high environmental and health risk, which is already under judicial investigation for emissions.

An NGO complains about alleged irregularities in the authorisation procedure for a motorbike trail through a state-owned forest area.

An NGO complains about alleged irregularities in the public participation procedure within the services conferences relating to a wind farm.

An NGO complains about alleged irregularities in the public participation procedure and authorisation procedure for the construction of a “primary transformer substation” within a park area to upgrade the electricity grid.

These cases concern procedures falling within regional competence. As reported by the NGOs themselves, they have already referred the matter to the competent authorities.

xvi) Provide further information on the practical application of the provisions on public participation in decisions on specific activities referred to in Article 6

See Article 5 XI.b regarding the "Charter of Intent for Transparency and Participation in Environmental Assessments" drawn up by the MASE in collaboration with central and local administrations, environmental, trade and citizens' associations, to give concrete meaning to citizens' rights in terms of information and participation in decision-making processes on environmental issues.

Example of territorial application: The Autonomous Province of Trento reports that in the period 2020-2024, 24 EIA/single provincial authorisation procedures were initiated, along with eight preliminary consultations with related public consultations.

In the period 2020-2024, a total of 14 public consultations were held as part of the same number of SEA processes relating to provincial plans or programmes.

In the period 2020-2024, no comments were submitted on a total of 31 integrated environmental authorisation procedures.

xvii) **Relevant websites**

- MASE web page dedicated to the EIA, SEA and IEA

ARTICLE 7

xviii) Practical and/or other provisions made for the public to participate during the preparation of plans and programmes relating to the environment pursuant to article 7. Describe the transposition of the relevant definitions in article 2 and the non-discrimination requirement in article 3, paragraph 9.

The text of Article 7 calls for the application not only of paragraphs 3, 4 and 8 of Article 6, but also of paragraph 7 of Article 6 (thus ensuring that the participation procedure allows the public to present any observations on plans, programmes and policies of an environmental nature in the same forms as those already envisaged in the previous Article 6 with respect to participation in decisions relating to specific activities).

Legislative **Decree 152/2006** and subsequent amendments (see in particular Legislative Decree 128/2010), containing "Environmental regulations", transposes EU Directive 2001/42 and reorganizes Italian environmental legislation by integrating with the discipline deriving from the directives relevant European Unions. Part Two, Title II, regulates the **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** which can be considered the main tool for public participation in decision-making processes.

Italian Legislative Decree no. 152/2006 and subsequent amendments (see in particular Italian Legislative Decree no. 128/2010), containing "Environmental regulations" transposes EU Directive 2001/42 and reorganises the Italian legislation on the environment, updating it with the regulations deriving from the relevant European directives. Part Two, Title II regulates the **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**, which can be considered the primary instrument for public participation in decision-making processes.

At the local level, public participation is also promoted through numerous **legislative and/or statutory provisions**. One example is the Regional Law of Emilia Romagna no. 15 of 22 October 2018, which in Article 6 establishes various instruments for promoting participation: it provides, for example, for “a special annual session on the participation of the Legislative Assembly” and a “report of analysis and evaluation of the experiences of participation carried out in the regional territory”.

xix) Opportunities for public participation in the preparation of policies relating to the environment provided pursuant to article 7.

The term "policies" incorporates plans, programmes, strategic and regulatory documents that contribute to defining an orientation. Public participation in the preparation of environmental policies is promoted using the methods enumerated in the previous section and through **online public consultations**.

Between 2022 and 2024, the Ministry of the Environment launched numerous online consultations on **strategies, programmes and action plans**, such as the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (PNACC), the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (PNIEC) (2019), the Long-term Strategy on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (2019), the National Strategy on Sustainable Development, the National Hydrogen Strategy, and related revisions.

PNIEC, an example of extensive consultations

At the end of 2019, Italy sent the European Commission the **Integrated National Plan for Energy and Climate Plan (PNIEC)** for the period 2021-2030 aimed at identifying national policies and measures to comply with European objectives on climate change and renewable energies.

Preparation of the PNIEC involved the following:

- Online public consultation: started on 20 March 2019 using a dedicated online portal and ended on 5 May 2019.
- Expert consultation: outside experts such as independent authorities, concessionaires like TSO (TERNA, SNAM), distributors, research bodies and universities, independent experts and trade and workers' associations.
- Discussion with regions and local authorities: the PNIEC proposal was the subject of a discussion with the Regions and local authorities during the conference of state-regions-cities and local governments.
- Recommendations from the European Commission: Italy took an active part in all meetings of the technical group held between 2018 and 2019.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment: the two phases of consultation were carried out.
- Discussions with other member states: in 2019 consultations were launched with the neighbouring/interested countries: Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, Austria and Malta and will continue.

Subsequently, during the preparation phase of the "proposal" for the update of the National Plan, the MASE launched numerous activities to involve all public bodies and stakeholders in the sector. These include a consultative questionnaire hosted on MASE website in May 2023 (26 May 2023) aimed at citizens, businesses, workers' and trade associations, non-profit organisations, professionals in the sector, financial institutions, investment funds, etc.

National Strategy on Sustainable Development: in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of Italian Law 221/2015, MASE updates the Strategy every three years after consulting with the recognised environmental associations. The last update was in 2022, approved by CITE Resolution No. 1 of 18 September 2023. In addition to the updated strategy document, the Resolution includes the National Programme for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development and the Regulations of the Forum for Sustainable Development, the mechanism for the active involvement of non-state actors in the implementation process of the SNSvS and Agenda 2030. This update was the result of a long period of joint work with central and local governments and all the organisations that are part of the Forum for Sustainable Development, which had over 340 members as of 31 August 2025.

Thanks to the contribution of the CREIAMO PA Project – Skills and networks for environmental integration and the improvement of PA organizations – promoted by MASE in collaboration with Sogesid SpA and funded by the Department of Public Administration, several workshops were organised for the collaborative review of the contents of the strategic document, as well as in-depth seminars and world cafés. Two national conferences on sustainable development ensured broad public access and the participation of a variety of actors at the start of the review process (March 2021: Preparatory conference

“Together for the future: a sustainable relaunch for Italy”) and its closure (June 2022: national conference on sustainable development).

In February 2025, the process of internal reorganisation of the Forum for Sustainable Development was launched in light of the new regulation. The Forum's work was officially restarted in April 2025 at a plenary meeting at MASE. The [institutional website page Sustainable Development - Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security](#) provides extensive information on the overall process and the work of the Forum for Sustainable Development.

The Italian **Long-Term Strategy for decarbonisation (LTS)**, developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies, outlines the direction that Italy will have to follow for the next 30 years to ensure the decarbonisation of the economic and social system, seeking to arrive at "climate neutrality" by 2050. It was adopted in February 2021. The Strategy will have a profound and wide-ranging impact on the national socio-economic system, therefore several consultations have been organised:

- October 2019: online public consultation in the form of a multiple-choice questionnaire, concluded in November 2019. Section 2 is addressed to civil society in order to learn about respondents' propensity to change their lifestyle and how they think their habits may be influenced by the transition to a low-carbon economy. Section 3 is aimed at experts working in the fields of industry, transport, agriculture and land use, sectors that will play an important role in the decarbonisation process. 61 completed questionnaires were collected, of which 28 came from citizens and 33 from private associations/companies. The sector of greatest public interest was transportation.
- Sectoral technical meetings with trade associations, key players, environmental associations, trade unions, consumers and think tanks, in order to collect information, especially on technologies with greater potential for decarbonisation.

In 2016 the development of the **National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (PNACC)** was launched, and during 2017 and 2018 the contents of the draft PNACC were shared with state public administrations, regional and local institutions, research bodies and various stakeholders. Two electronic public consultations and a scientific review were carried out during the same period. After an examination by the Conference of Regions and Autonomous Provinces, a structured participatory process for the PNACC was initiated, like the one for the SEA procedure, and in June 2020 the request for the start of the verification of eligibility for the SEA of the PNACC was submitted to the competent Authority, thus resulting in a consultation with the Parties Competent in Environmental matters (PCE). All the documentation relating to the Strategic Environmental Assessment procedure is available on the [MASE website](#).

By decree no. 434 of 21 December 2023, it approved the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change. An important step for the planning and implementation of climate change adaptation actions in our country.

In 2024, the National Hydrogen Strategy was adopted. To prepare it, a consultation table was set up between MASE and industry stakeholders, which will be maintained. The Strategy contains a specific chapter on “training, information, consultation and participation”.

Several **Round tables** are also planned to promote a discussion on environmental issues, such as the

coastal erosion round table coordinated by ISPRA with CNR and the university network.

Also worthy of note is Directorial Decree no. 86 of 16/06/2015 that adopts the **National Strategy for adaptation to climate change** which in Art. 2, paragraph 2 calls for the establishment at MiTE of a “**Permanent Forum** for the promotion of information, training and decision-making capacity of the public and stakeholders” and a “**National Observatory** composed of local and regional representatives for the identification of territorial and sectoral priorities, as well as for the subsequent monitoring of the effectiveness of adaptation actions”.

On 3 August 2023, the Ministerial Decree (no. 252) of the MASE was signed adopting the National Strategy for Biodiversity to 2030 and establishing its governance bodies. The new governance consists of the Management Committee (Central and Territorial Administrations), the Committee Secretariat, the Consultation Table (associations, alliances, confederations) and the technical-scientific support role of the Higher Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA).

The National Strategy for Biodiversity to 2030 is the result of a long participatory process of study, comparison, drafting, consultation, evaluation and review, conducted with the technical support of ISPRA. The process involved central and local administrations, bodies and stakeholders and the final document was submitted for public consultation on the MASE website from 21 April to 22 May 2022. On 3 August 2023, the aforementioned Ministerial Decree no. 252 of the MASE was signed. The National Biodiversity Strategy 2030 provides for the identification of 2 strategic objectives: to build a coherent network of terrestrial and marine Protected Areas; restore terrestrial and marine ecosystems, divided into 8 areas of intervention (Protected Areas; Species, Habitats and Ecosystems; Food and Agricultural Systems, Animal Husbandry; Forests; Urban Green; Inland waters; Sea; Soil). In addition to those of intervention, there are the transversal areas, the "Vectors" that can facilitate, strengthen and contribute to the achievement of strategic objectives and the international areas (Italy for Global Biodiversity), with respect to which national and European strategic policies should be able to align.

xx) Obstacles encountered in the implementation of Article 7

xxi) Further information on the practical application of the provisions of Article 7

The Autonomous Province of Trento reports the approval of the following plans, guidelines and strategies for the period 2021-2024, with related public participation:

Provincial Energy and Environment Plan 2021-2030 (2021)

Fifth update of the Provincial Waste Management Plan, for the part relating to urban waste (2022) and related Addendum (2023)

Water Protection Plan 2022-2027 (2022)

Stelvio National Park Plan (2023)

Forestry guidelines for the 16th legislature (2020)

Provincial strategy for sustainable development (2021)

xxii) Relevant websites

- [Italy's long-term strategy on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and consultations](#)
- [Integrated energy and climate plan](#) and the [MASE page dedicated to the SEA consultations of the PNACC](#)

- [National Strategy for Sustainable Development](#)
- [National Hydrogen Strategy](#)
- [Coordination of 21 local agendas](#)
- [MASE page dedicated to EIA, SEA and IEA](#)
- [National Sustainable Development Strategy](#)
- [Portal Clearing House Mechanism Italy for the Biodiversity](#)

ARTICLE 8

xxiii) Efforts made to promote public participation during the preparation of regulations and rules that may have a significant effect on the environment pursuant to article 8.

Currently there is no institutional procedure governing public participation in the preparation of legislative acts at a national level, but mechanisms have been established that allow public involvement in legislative activities (e.g. during "parliamentary hearings" representatives of the public/associations are invited to comment on draft legislation under discussion at the level of the parliamentary committee, interested parties can also submit their comments "electronically", in the manner envisaged by Italian Legislative Decree 82/2005 and subsequent amendments).

Another tool used for public consultations is that of "**petitions**", provided for in Article 50 of the Constitution, which states that: "All citizens may address petitions to the Chambers to ask for legislative measures or to express common needs".

These are therefore instances that represent common needs, and not personal cases. Petitions are made through the collection of signatures, which are the most suitable tool to testify to the effective adherence of citizens to the petition. They may be submitted by individuals or groups of citizens and informally, both in terms of procedure and content. Once received, the petition is assigned to the relevant Parliamentary Committee. The petitions tool is also widespread at the level of local government (Regions, Provinces, Municipalities).

Another important instrument of participation is that of the popular initiative bill, provided for by Article 71, paragraph 2, of the Constitution: "The people exercise the initiative of laws, through the proposal, by at least fifty thousand voters, of a project drawn up in articles".

This instrument is further detailed by Articles 48 and 49 of Italian [Law No. 352 of 25 May 1970](#) (containing "Rules on referendums provided for by the Constitution and on the legislative initiative of the people"), which establish that the project, accompanied by the signatures of the proposing voters, must be presented to one of the Presidents of the two Chambers. As regards the content, the proposal must contain the draft drafted in articles, accompanied by a report explaining its aims and rules. It is also possible to present a bill of popular initiative at the regional level.

In addition, all legislative proposals and information on ongoing parliamentary activities are published on the [Parliament's website](#). It is then possible to contact the members of parliament by email.

The direct democracy tool of the "**referendum**" is also widely used, usually to repeal a law, provided for by Article 75 of the Constitution, paragraph 1, which provides that: "A popular referendum shall be held to resolve on the total or partial repeal of a law or an act having the force of law, when five hundred thousand voters or five Regional Councils request it". In addition, the aforementioned Law no. 352 of 25 May 1970 provides detailed rules on the referendum institution.

At the regional level, the founding Statutes of the regions and the autonomous provinces affirm the principle of public participation (both by individuals and by associations) in the legislative,

administrative and governmental activities of the regional institutions (see for example the Statutes of the regions of Umbria and Bolzano). Finally, it should be noted that in the preparation of legislative measures, especially draft laws based on government initiatives, the impact analysis of the measure (introduced by Italian Law no. 246 of 2005) must specify the categories and the parties – public and private – addressed by the regulatory intervention, and, most importantly, the proposals and considerations of such parties must be taken into account through appropriate consultation procedures. An estimate of the information costs and related administrative costs to citizens and businesses that are introduced or eliminated must also be presented.

xxiv) Describe the difficulties encountered in the implementation of Article 8

It is sometimes difficult for administrations to systematically activate direct participation processes that follow predictable and structured rules throughout the regulatory process. The fragmentation of associations – not always aggregated in second-level networks – multiplies the number of interlocutors and therefore reduces their representativeness.

xxv) Provide any information on the practical application of the provisions on public participation in the area of competence of Article 8

The Autonomous Province of Trento has reported on the approval of its Provincial Economic and Financial Document (DEFP).

The DEFP, governed by the combined provisions of the provincial law on provincial planning (l.p. 4/1996) and the provincial accounting law (l.p. 7/1979), identifies - by 30 June of each year and with reference to the following three-year period the policies to be adopted to achieve the medium- and long-term objectives set out in the Provincial Development Programme (PSP) – now known as the “Provincial Strategy” – in line with the Legislative Programme. The DEFP is a general document, in which environmental planning may be referred to.

The DEFP for the three-year period 2025-2027 (DEFP 2025-2027) was approved by Provincial Council Resolution No. 990 of 2024, after the opinion of the Council of Local Authorities and subsequently that of the competent Provincial Council Commission had been obtained. The budget adjustment was then presented by the President of the Province to the Provincial Council, which approved it on 27 July 2024.

ARTICLE 9

XXVIII. List legislative, regulatory and other measures that implement the provisions on access to justice in article 9.

(a) With regard to paragraph 1, measures to ensure that: (i) any person who considers that his request for information has not been handled in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the Convention may lodge an appeal; (ii) the procedure is rapid and free of charge; that the final decision is binding on the public authority and that any refusal is justified in writing

National legislation has been introduced to regulate the matter by means of the following legislative measures:

- **Italian Law 241/1990** (articles 22-28): dictates the general regulations for access to administrative documents, in article 25 establishing the methods for exercising the right of access and lodging appeals.

The aforementioned article states that in the event of express or tacit refusal of access, the applicant may lodge an appeal with the competent Regional Administrative Court, or request an administrative review of the Determination (review procedure), respectively by the Commission for access to administrative documents established by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers for the acts of the central and peripheral administrations of the State, and by the local Ombudsman for the acts of local administrations (municipal, provincial and regional). This review procedure is free of charge and rapid, as it is concluded within 30 days of the submission of the relevant application. In addition, the decision is binding: if the Ombudsman or the Access Committee considers the refusal or deferral to be unlawful, they inform the applicant and notify the disposing authority. If the latter does not issue the reasoned confirmatory measure within thirty days of receipt of the communication from the Ombudsman or the Commission, access is granted.

- **Italian Legislative Decree no. 104/2010 (art. 116):** regulates judicial appeals against decisions and inaction related to requests for access to administrative documents and for the protection of civic access related to the failure to comply with transparency obligations. The appeal is proposed by notification to the administration and to at least one other party. It is a special proceeding, with deadlines to appeal that are halved (30 days), the applicant may intervene in court without a lawyer (see Article 23 of Legislative Decree 104/2010), the use of chamber proceedings and the issuance of the decision in simplified form. An appeal against the regional administrative court's decision may be lodged with the council of state (second instance) within the following 30 days. If the proceeding is concluded in a favourable manner, the regional administrative court or the council of state directly provides access to the information by means of a binding judgement.
- **Italian Legislative Decree no. 195/2005:** regulates the right of access to environmental information held by public authorities, to ensure that this information is made available to anyone who requests it and is disseminated in forms and formats that can be easily consulted. Article 7 of the decree regulates the protection of the right of access, providing for the possibility of the applicant to act against the decisions of the public authority within the terms and in the manner specified above pursuant to Law 241/1990 (appeal in court and review of decisions by the Ombudsman and the Commission for access). Furthermore, as mentioned above (see para VII), in the case of appeals brought against the denial of access to environmental information, Presidential Decree no. 115/2002 (Consolidated Law on Court Fees) provides for a case of exemption from the payment of the filing fee.
- **Italian Legislative Decree no. 152/2006:** the Consolidated Environmental Law regulates the "right of access to environmental information and participation for collaborative purposes", establishing in Article 3 *sexies*, paragraph 1, that anyone, without being required to demonstrate the existence of a legally relevant interest, can access information related to the state of the environment and the countryside in the national territory.
- **Italian Legislative Decree no. 33/2013:** Article 5 (entitled "Civic access to data and documents"), paragraphs 7, 8 and 9, provides for the possibility for the applicant to take action against the decisions of the public authority within the terms and conditions governed by the law (review by the person responsible for transparency and preventing corruption, appeal to the Ombudsman, judicial appeal).

(b) Measures to ensure that, within the framework of national legislation, the public concerned who meet the criteria set out in paragraph 2 of the Convention have access to appeal procedures to oppose decisions, acts or omissions concerning the provisions of Article 6 of the Convention

The Italian legislative system allows the "interested public", including non-governmental organisations that promote the protection of the environment, to participate in the decision-making process, so that the decision taken takes due account of these interests. In fact, a decision is considered unlawful if it violates

the rules governing the exercise of the discretionary power of the Public Administration, including those relating to the consultation of interested parties. An administrative appeal may be lodged against a decision that is deemed to be unlawful (Italian Presidential Decree 1199/1971 "Simplification of procedures relating to administrative appeals") and judicial to the Regional Administrative Court, as provided for by the aforementioned Legislative Decree 104/2010.

The administrative appeal mentioned consists of an application submitted to a public administration to challenge an administrative measure considered illegitimate or unjust. The types of administrative appeal (hierarchical appeal, appeal in opposition and extraordinary appeal to the President of the Republic), the methods of submission and the terms of the procedure are established by Presidential Decree 1199/1971 referred to.

Note that the principles of the Convention are contained in the general rules for participation in the administrative procedure enumerated in Italian Law 241/1990 and subsequent amendments, and implemented in the provisions governing participation in specific environmental procedures, such as the EIA, SEA and IEA procedures.

Article 9 of Italian Legislative Decree no. 152/2006 (Consolidated Environmental Law) establishes that according to the general rules on appeals against unlawful administrative acts it is always possible to challenge **decisions, acts or omissions** subject to the provisions on public participation **with respect to EIAs**.

(c) With regard to paragraph 3, measures to ensure that the public has access to administrative or judicial proceedings against acts or omissions of private persons or public authorities that contravene the provisions of national environmental legislation

Any individual or group of individuals may take legal action against a decision or omission of the public authority that infringes their subjective right or legitimate interest. Furthermore, Italian Law 349/1986 gives **environmental protection associations**, recognised by Ministry of the Environment according to the criteria established by Article 13 of the same law, the right to file appeals with administrative courts for the annulment of administrative acts harmful to the environment, and to intervene in proceedings for environmental damages. Established case law also gives environmental protection associations that are not recognised pursuant to Article 13 of the aforementioned law standing to bring suit based on an actual and non-occasional commitment to environmental protection as an institutional task of the association. The access to justice guaranteed to associations, in addition to protecting the interests represented by the latter, also has a significant weight on public opinion. The introduction of the so-called climate litigation, in fact, has an important role in promoting awareness of the climate issue in general, but also of the impact that the latter has on the enjoyment of fundamental human rights. Read in this light, access to justice represents an incentive for states to increase the ambition of their climate policies.

Specific rules apply for **the prevention and remedying of environmental damages**. Italian Legislative Decree no. 152/2006 and subsequent amendments attributes the right to act for prevention and remedying of environmental damages to MASE. Local authorities, natural or legal persons and environmental protection associations are recognised as having standing to submit complaints and observations to the Minister of the Environment – through the Prefectures – accompanied by documents and information concerning cases of environmental damage or threat of environmental damage, in order to request State intervention to protect the environment (Article 309, para 1, of Italian Legislative Decree

152/2006). The following Art. 310 gives these parties standing to appeal for the annulment of acts and measures adopted in violation of the provisions on environmental damage, as well as against the silence of the Ministry for the cost damage suffered due to the delay in the implementation of precautionary measures, prevention or containment of environmental damage.

ISPRA, the Regional Agencies for the Protection of the Environment and law enforcement (police, forestry corps, environment Carabinieri, Italian finance and customs police) are assigned the task of carrying out checks through inspections in order to verify any violations of environmental standards or authorisations issued. In the event of infractions, the penalty procedure is initiated with the imposition of sanctions of an administrative (fine, suspension of the authorisation) or criminal nature. Finally, safeguards and preventive measures such as the suspension of a business, plant closures and seizures can be implemented by order of a public authority, the mayor or the Minister of the Environment.

(d) With regard to paragraph 4, measures to ensure that the procedures referred to in paragraphs 1 to 3 provide appropriate and effective remedies

For paragraph 4, court decisions are public, being filed with the clerk of the court or published on the court's institutional website. In particular: as regards administrative justice, the judgments are published on the Administrative Justice portal, in the "Decisions and opinions" section; as regards civil justice, the Ministry of Justice's Merit Database was established in 2023 ; for the decisions of the Court of Cassation, there is the SentenzeWeb database in civil and criminal matters, for judgments of legitimacy.

(e) With regard to paragraph 5, measures ensuring that information on access to administrative and judicial appeals is provided to the public

Italian Legislative Decree no. 195/2005 provides that, in cases of total or partial refusal of the right of access, the public authority must inform the applicant of the procedures to appeal the decision (Article 5, paragraph 6, Legislative Decree 195/2005). More generally, on the web page of the Ministry of the Environment a section is dedicated to "Access to justice in environmental matters in Italian legislation", in which the various forms of access to justice that can be exercised are explained. As a form of facilitation of access to justice, as mentioned, there is an exemption from the payment of the filing fee in the event of appeals against the denial of access to environmental information (para VII and XXVIII).

XXIX. Obstacles encountered in the implementation of article 9.

Access to justice in Italy is guaranteed according to the criteria established by legislation and case law. With regard to acts/omissions of individuals that violate environmental laws, the inspection mechanism is quite expansive, providing for the involvement of several public authorities in the process.

However, the judicial protection of the underlying interests is not exempt from implementation complications, given that in proper climate litigation the subject of the judgment is not exactly attributable to one of the jurisdictions outlined by the Italian judicial system.

It is worth mentioning the case of the first environmental lawsuit initiated against the Italian Government, the so-called 'Last Judgment' ("Giudizio Universale"), brought by the association "A Sud - Ecologia e Cooperazione ONLUS" for climate non-compliance, defined as the insufficient commitment to the promotion of adequate policies to reduce climate-altering emissions, which results in the violation of numerous fundamental rights recognised by the Italian State.

The proceedings were brought before the Ordinary Court of Rome, asking the latter to declare the Italian State's failure to comply with its commitments in the fight against climate change and to order it to a specifically quantified reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, as well as compensation for the damage

caused by such allegedly unlawful conduct.

The first ruling of the Court of Rome declared the action inadmissible and devolved jurisdiction to the Administrative Court, bringing the material conduct concerned back to the exercise of an authoritative power.

However, the Judge recognised the lack of specific precedents on the issue at issue and the objective complexity and seriousness of the planetary emergency that gave impetus to the request. The ruling can be found on the [“Last Judgment” website](#).

XXX. Further information on the practical application of the provisions on access to justice pursuant to Article 9

Evaluation of financial barriers

Article 24 of the Constitution states that “Anyone may bring cases before a court of law in order to protect their rights under civil and administrative law. Defence is an inviolable right at every stage and instance of legal proceedings. The poor are entitled by law to proper means for action or defence in all courts”.

Free legal aid, already granted in criminal proceedings and labour disputes, was extended to civil and administrative proceedings by Italian Presidential Decree 115/2002 “Consolidated law on costs of justice” (Article 74, paragraph 2).

Article 119 of the aforementioned Decree **also extends the right to free legal aid to non-profit entities or associations that are not engaged in business** (both criteria must be met) **and in compliance with the conditions for admission to legal aid envisaged by Article 76 and the taxable income limits set by the aforementioned Decree**, with the necessary adaptations in relation to the nature of the entity or association.

Below are the main costs incurred when seeking justice in environmental matters, aside from fees for lawyers and experts (if required in court).

First, the fee to initiate the judicial proceeding – Filing Fee for registration (*Contributo Unificato di iscrizione a ruolo*) – the amount of which is established by Article 13 of the aforementioned Italian Presidential Decree 115/2002. This fee must be paid again if additional grounds are filed (in the case of administrative proceedings) and in the event of an appeal. Environmental protection associations must also pay this fee since such bodies can resort to legal aid at the expense of the State if they meet the legal requirements.

Payment of the unified fee is also required for appeals filed with the administrative court and the council of state, pursuant to Article 13, paragraph 6 bis of the Consolidated law on costs of justice. The regulatory system limits favourable tax treatments to a highly circumscribed area, also with a view to reducing litigation. Article 8 of Italian Presidential Decree 115/2002 establishes that the costs of justice shall be borne by the party that is called upon to pay them by law or by the judge. If the party qualifies for free legal aid, the advance is paid by the tax authorities or booked in debt. In essence, the general rule provides for the payment of expenses by those who request access to justice, which can then be claimed against the losing party in the event of a victory.

At the conclusion of the process, Italian Legislative Decree no. 104/2010, extending the rules of civil proceedings relating to the losing party to the administrative process, establishes that the losing party in the proceedings must bear the costs of judgement of the other, in the amount established by the judge

(Article 26, paragraph 1, Legislative Decree 104/2010). The court may also order *ex officio* that the losing party in the proceedings pay the successful party a sum not exceeding twice the amount of the costs of the proceedings in the event of a reckless lawsuit (Article 26, paragraph 2, Legislative Decree 104/2010).

The Italian legal system provides for an exemption from the payment of the filing fee for certain proceedings in the environmental field: for example, the appeals envisaged by Article 25 of Italian Law 241/90 against the denial of access to the information referred to in Italian Legislative Decree no. 195/2005 on public access to environmental information (Italian Presidential Decree no. 115/2002, Art. 13, para. 6 bis. letter a); civil actions for compensation for environmental damages proposed in the criminal proceedings, when only the sentencing of the responsible party is requested (Italian Presidential Decree 115/2002, Art. 12).

XXXI. Relevant websites

- [National Association of Italian Ombudsmen](#)
- [Codacons - Coordination of associations for the defense of the environment and the rights of users and consumers](#)
- [Ministry of Justice – free legal aid in civil and administrative proceedings](#)
- [Database of administrative justice decisions](#)
- [Civil Justice Decision Database](#)
- [Database of legitimacy judgments of the Court of Cassation](#)
- MASE webpage "[Access to justice in environmental matters in Italian legislation](#)"

XXXII. Where appropriate, indicate how the implementation of the Convention contributes to the protection of the right of every person of present and future generations to live in an environment appropriate to his or her health and well-being.

ARTICLE 6 BIS AND ANNEX I BIS

XXXIII. Legislative, regulatory and other measures implementing the provisions on genetically modified organisms pursuant to article 6 bis and Annex I bis.

The authorisation procedures for the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) into the environment for experimental purposes and for placement on the market are regulated at the level of the European Union by **Directive 2001/18/EC** on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms and by **Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003** on genetically modified food and feed.

Directive 2001/18/EC was transposed into Italian law by **Legislative Decree no. 224 of 8 July 2003**.

The competent national authority (CNA) for the implementation of the provisions of Italian Legislative Decree no. 224/2003 is the Minister for the Environment.

Article 12 of Italian Legislative Decree no. 224/2003 assigns the CNA the task of organising the **public**

consultation and ensuring **access to information** through a specially created website listing applications for authorisation (notifications) to place GMOs on the market and for the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment for experimental purposes (Annex VIII of the Decree).

In order to comply with the obligations provided for by current legislation on public information and participation in decision-making processes on GMOs, the MASE has created the **web platform called Italian Biosafety Clearing House (BCH)**. In the Italian BCH, the sections relating to public information and public consultation have been created and are constantly updated.

To comply with the obligations envisaged by current legislation on information and public participation in decision-making processes regarding GMOs, the MASE has created a **web platform called Biosafety Clearing House (BCH) in Italy**. The Italian BCH contains sections relating to public information and public consultation that are constantly being updated.

The **section on public information** describes the authorisation procedures at the European Union and national level for the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment for experimental purposes and for placement on the market. Moreover, all authorisation measures that have been issued are made available.

In **the section dedicated to public consultation**, it is reiterated that the following are subject to public consultation for each notification submitted pursuant to Title II of Italian Legislative Decree no. 224/2003:

- A summary of the technical file containing the information necessary for the assessment of the environmental risk associated with the deliberate release of the GMO into the environment.
- An environmental risk assessment.
- Any new information on risks to human, animal and environmental health.

As provided for in Annex VIII of Italian Legislative Decree no. 224/2003, to facilitate participation in public consultation procedures, a **consultation list** has been drawn up, which includes the competent institutional entities at the central and local levels, trade associations, non-governmental environmental and consumer protection organisations; the subjects on the list are notified at the start of each public consultation. Any natural or legal person, institution, organisation or association that so requests may be added to the list, thus becoming entitled to access the documents and information regarding each new notification received. Registered entities may submit comments on the notification during the 30-day public consultation phase, after which the competent national authority transmits the comments received by ISPRA, which plays the role of the abolished Commission referred to in Article 6 of Legislative Decree no. 224/2003.

Directive (EU) 2015/412, amending Directive 2001/18/EC, provides for a two-step mechanism through which Member States may limit or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs on their territory. At the first stage, during the authorisation procedure for a GMO, the Member State which intends to restrict or prohibit its cultivation may request the applicant to restrict the geographical scope of the cultivation of the GMO. In the second stage, after the authorisation of the GMO at the level of the European Union, if the adaptation of the geographical scope has not been agreed to or has not been requested, the Member State can still adopt measures to limit or prohibit the cultivation of the GMO on grounds that must not conflict with

the risk assessment for the environment and human health performed during the authorisation procedure. Directive (EU) 2015/412 was transposed into Italian law by Legislative Decree no. 227 of 14 November 2016. Public information on the measures to limit or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs on the national territory is provided through the institutional websites of the Ministries (Environment and Energy Security, Agricultural Policies and Health) and the Regions and Autonomous Provinces of Trento and Bolzano.

XXXVI. Web addresses relevant to the implementation of Article 6bis

- [Italian Biosafety Clearing House](#)
- [MASE webpage on Biosafety, GMOs and access to genetic resources](#)

XXXVII. Update on compliance cases

With regard to reports of possible non-compliance by Italy, two cases (called ACCC/C/2023/202 and ACCC/C/2023/205), relating to alleged shortcomings in public participation, were deemed unfounded, and therefore closed by the Compliance Committee.

To date, there are 3 cases pending before the Compliance Committee relating to Italy:

Case ACCC/C/2015/130 – procedure concluded in 2021 with binding recommendations to Italy (*Decision VII/8j concerning compliance by Italy*) relating to the cost of judicial procedures to access justice in environmental matters in the Italian procedural system. Specifically, the costs that non-profit associations have to bear to bring an action before the judicial authorities in environmental matters would be in contrast with the principle of the Convention to ensure reasonable and not excessively onerous costs.

Italy has set up an inter-ministerial technical table to define possible regulatory proposals aimed at reducing the cost of access to justice in environmental matters.

During the intersessional period, Italy periodically informed the Compliance Committee on developments related to the resolution of the non-compliance issue, participating in the Open Sessions called by the Committee, representing the complexity of the process for defining regulatory changes and the need to have a longer period of time. Furthermore, discussions have recently been started with the Communicant in order to be able to advance in the definition of shared solutions.

Case ACCC/C/2023/200 - The Communication refers to the alleged non-compliance with Articles 2(5), 3(1) and (4) and 9(2), (3) and (4) relating to access to justice for non-registered environmental associations, complaining that Italy does not have a clear, transparent and consistent framework for the recognition of standing to bring proceedings for non-registered environmental associations and the non-compliance with the articles in relation to orders the costs against the unsuccessful claimants in environmental disputes. Italy has already provided useful elements outlining the legal framework and practice relating to recognition and being able to stand trial.

We are waiting for future discussions with the Compliance Committee.

Case ACCC/C/2024/209 - The Communication concerns the alleged incorrect application of the provisions of Article 6 of the Aarhus Convention in relation to paras. (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8) and (9). Articles 6 (2) - (9) of the Convention in relation to the public participation procedure during the

decision-making process of the project "Intervention AN58 International Route E78 Grosseto - Fano". The Directorate General for European and International Affairs and Sustainable Finance of the MASE has involved the competent Legal Department of ANAS.

Italy submitted the relevant information in April 2025. We are waiting for future discussions with the Compliance Committee

In summary, the raised issues of non-compliance refer to the non-compliance with the provisions of the Convention relating to the cost of judicial procedures to access justice in environmental matters in the Italian procedural system and regarding aspects of public participation.

With regard to the costs of access to justice, in our system the possible problematic and potentially burdensome aspects for NGOs relating to procedural costs can be traced back to three points:

- the unified filing fee, which is a fee to be paid to start a trial;
- the costs of the unsuccessful party that the Party who has brought a legal dispute must reimburse to the other party, the winner in the proceedings;
- the recognition of free legal aid only to entities and individuals with an income not exceeding approximately 11,000 euros.

It should be noted that these provisions are applied across all judgments. The issue of reducing procedural costs for environmental matters only, in compliance with the Aarhus Convention, is being examined by this Ministry, in coordination with the competent administrations in the field (primarily the Ministry of Justice, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Economy and Finance). It should be noted that this is a problem that is not easy to solve in the short term due to the economic repercussions and the delicate legal issues involved.

As regards the second pillar relating to public participation, it is believed that Italy has advanced and specific legislation that corresponds well to the dictates of the Convention (see the relevant paragraphs of this Report for the description of this legislation) and which is scrupulously applied.