**Interview Schedule (Public Authority)**

Introductory Questions

Thank you for meeting with us to be interviewed for our project on how Scottish public authorities disclose environmental information. My name is [ ] and I will be the person conducting the interview with you today.

This interview is part of the “Uncovering the Environment: The Use of Public Access to Environmental Information” project that is being conducted by the University of Dundee. I am going to be asking you about your experience in holding and providing access to environmental information to members of the public.

If you want to take a break or stop the interview, please just tell me and we will stop the interview immediately. Additionally, if you do not want to answer a particular question just say so and we can skip over it.

* Please tell me about your role within [insert public authority].
  + Structure of public authority in responding to requests?

Proactive Disclosure of Environmental Information

I am now going to ask you a few questions on environmental information that is freely available from you without the public having to submit a request under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004. Examples of this type of information include [tailor examples to fit individual PA’s that are being interviewed]. However, there is a much wider range of proactive disseminated environmental information that what we have listed.

* How does the public authority actively disseminate environmental information?
  + What impact does proactively disclosing environmental information have on your day-to-day running?
  + What percentage of your time at work do you spend proactively disclosing environmental information?
* How often is environmental information that is actively disseminated accessed by the public?
* What subject matter generates the most interest?
* How is this environmental information used?
  + Basis of making a complaint or as means of taking part in decision-making processes?
  + What do you think of the use of the information you disclose?
* Has the reception of this actively disseminated environmental information been positive or negative?
  + Does proactively disclosing environmental information have any impact on request you receive?

Submission of Requests for Environmental Information

In this section I will be asking you about the requests for environmental information that you receive under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

* What subjects attract the most requests for environmental information?
  + Is there any patterns (in terms of the volume of requests or time that a request is submitted) to the environmental information that people want to access?
* What motivates requesters to submit requests for environmental information?
  + Why do you think this?
* How would you categorise the individuals who submit requests for environmental information?
  + Environmental Organisations, lawyers, journalists etc?
* How does the public authority receive requests for environmental information?
  + Email, letter, phone, face-to-face?
* Are requesters able to formulate and submit “good quality” requests for environmental information?
  + Do requesters ask for assistance from the public authority?

Responding to Requests for Environmental Information

In this section I will be asking you about how you respond to requests for environmental information.

* What is your opinion on the time limit given to Scottish public authorities to respond to requests under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004?
* When does the authority charge for the disclosure of environmental information?
  + What does your fee schedule say?
* Are requesters satisfied with how the authorities respond to requests?
* How is this information used?
  + What do you think of the use of the information you disclose?
* What impact has disclosing environmental information on request had on how the public authority conducts its business?

Internal Reviews and Appeals to the Scottish Information Commissioner

In this section I will be asking you about whether you have received any complaints from requesters about how you have processed and responded to their requests for environmental information.

* Has the authority received requests for an internal review on how the authority has processed and responded to a request for environmental information?
  + What are they about?
* What is your experience with internal reviews?
  + How are internal reviews conducted at [insert public authority]?
  + Broadly, what is the result of internal reviews conducted at [insert public authority]?
* Tell me about your experience with the Scottish Information Commissioner in regards to their powers to hear complaints from members of the public.
  + Do you agree with the decisions of the Scottish Information Commissioner?

Public Participation in Environmental Decisions

In this section I will be asking you about whether you think the provision of environmental information has led to the public being more willing and able to participate in environmental decision-making processes.

* Do you think that making environmental information accessible has helped the public become more informed on environmental matters?
* Do you think that the increased availability of environmental information had an impact on how individuals participate in environmental decision-making procedures?
  + [If Yes] What is the impact that the increased availability of environmental information has had?

Conclusion

This is the final section of the interview.

* Overall, what is your opinion on how the right of access to environmental information is used by the public?
* Do you think that the right has benefited the general public?
* How has the right affected [insert public authority]?
  + Positive or negative impact?
* What do you think could be done to improve how the right is used?
* What do you think could be done to improve how environmental information is disclosed?
* Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. We have discussed proactively disclosed environmental information, the submitting of and processing requests for environmental information, review procedures and public participation in environmental matters. Would you like to go back to any of these areas to add something?