

Uncovering the Environment: The Use of Public Access to Environmental Information Survey for Public Authorities

Introduction to the Project

Thank you for your interest in taking part in the project “Uncovering the Environment: The Use of Public Access to Environmental Information”. The project is exploring how the right to access environmental information is being used and what impact the right is having on decision-making processes.

We are seeking to gather contact details from public authorities that are interested in being interviewed as part of the project or who would like to be kept up to date on the project's findings and any workshops arising from the project. We are also looking for public authorities to answer a short survey on how they guarantee the right of access to environmental information, either through proactive dissemination or through responding to requests received under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

This survey should take around 5-10 minutes. Participation in this survey is voluntary and you are free to sign up to correspondence from the research team about future findings or workshops without participating in the short survey. You may withdraw from the survey at any time by closing the survey page.

As you progress through the survey your answers will be submitted to the research team when you press "Submit and continue" at the bottom of each page. Please note that once you have submitted your answers you will be unable to return to the previous page or change your answer.

If you wish to withdraw your answers to the questions you have previously answered please email s.x.whittaker@dundee.ac.uk.

Further information about the project and the research team can be found on our website: <https://sites.dundee.ac.uk/envinfo/>. Information on the project is also periodically tweeted from @ISSRDundee, @LawDundee, @Geog_UoD and @dtdchange.

Consent

Click "Submit and continue" to go to the first set of questions. By clicking "Submit and continue" you confirm that you:

- Have read and understood the participant information
- Understand that once you click "Finish", your answers will be submitted to the research team
- Are happy to continue.

Contact Details for Interviews and Project Outputs

1. What public authority do you represent?

2. As part of the project, we are looking for public authorities to be interviewed on their experience with guaranteeing the right of access to environmental information. Would you be willing to be contacted by the research team in order to be interviewed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2.a. If you answered yes, please provide your contact details in the box below.

3. As part of the project, we are also scheduling workshops on the right of access to environmental information and providing updates on the project's findings to interested public authorities. Would you be willing to be contacted about these workshops and the project's findings by the research team?

- ☐ Yes, I wish to be contacted about future workshops and the project's findings
- ☐ Yes, I wish to be contacted about future workshops
- ☐ Yes, I wish to be contacted about the project's findings
- ☐ No, I do not wish to be contacted at all

3.a. If you answered yes, please provide your contact details in the box below.

--	--

Survey Introduction

This project is seeking to identify how the right of access to environmental information is used by the public in order to assess how the right is being utilised and whether the disclosure of environmental information leads to changed outcomes in decision-making processes. Under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, "environmental information" covers a broad range of topics such as the environment itself (including air, water, earth, and the habitats of animals and plants), other things that affect the environment (such as emissions, radiation, noise and other forms of pollution) and policies, measures, reports, plans and laws on the environment.

We aim to use our findings to assist public authorities holding such information to discharge their legal obligations in ways that both satisfy those seeking access to such information and reduce the administrative costs of public authorities.

Survey Format

The survey will consist of four questions on your experiences with guaranteeing the right of access to environmental information. You may close the survey to exit if you decide to not participate in the project. Exiting the survey will delete all responses already given and all other details of your participation.

You are not obliged to participate in this survey, and receiving communications from the research team about the project's findings and future workshops is not dependent on participation in the survey.

Consent

By answering "Yes" and clicking "Submit and continue" you confirm that you:

- Have read and understood the participant information
- Consent to take part in this survey and understand that this consent can be withdrawn at any time
- Understand that once you click "Finish", your answers will be submitted to the research team
- Are happy to continue.

4. Would you like to participate in the survey on how public authorities guarantee the

right of access to environmental information? * *Required*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Survey Questions

5. Are there any particular issues that you would like this project to investigate that could assist you in your day-to-day work?

6. Can you describe a positive experience where the systems providing access to environmental information (whether through proactive dissemination or through responding to submitted requests) worked well, for you or for those seeking information?

7. Can you describe a negative experience where the systems providing access to environmental information (whether through proactive dissemination or through responding to submitted requests) did not work well, for you or for those seeking information?

8. Finally, can you give an example where the public having access to environmental information has made a difference in your role? (This difference can either be positive or negative)

Survey Debrief

Thank you for indicating that you do not want to be contacted for interview as part of the "Uncovering the Environment: The Use of Public Access to Environmental Information" project.

Please click "Finish" to complete the survey.

Conclusion

Thank you for your time and for engaging with the project!

You can follow the progress of the project via the project website at <https://sites.dundee.ac.uk/envinfo/> or on Twitter at @ISSRDundee, @LawDundee, @Geog_UoD and @dtdchange.

If you have any questions regarding the project or wish to get further involved with the project, please feel free to contact Sean Whittaker at s.x.whittaker@dundee.ac.uk.
