



E- Government working group „Environmental Information“ in Austria

**"Information is the currency of
democracy" (Thomas Jefferson)**

**Coordination Centre for
Environmental Information**

**6th Eastern European
eGov Days 2008**

Prague, 23.-25. April 2008

Hans Jörg Krammer

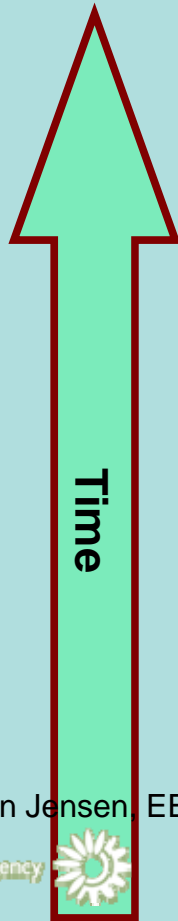
Rudolf Legat

Contributions by J. Hrebicek, S. Jensen and F. Kruse





e-Environment Environmental Information - History



- SEIS, 2008
- Directive INSPIRE, 2007
- Directive on Public Access to Environmental Information, 2003
- Directive on Reuse of Public Sector Information, 2003
- 6th Community Environment Action Programme, 2002
- Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, 1998
- Declaration of the UN Rio Conference on Environment and Development, 1992
- Declaration of the UN Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, 1972

Source: Stefan Jensen, EEA

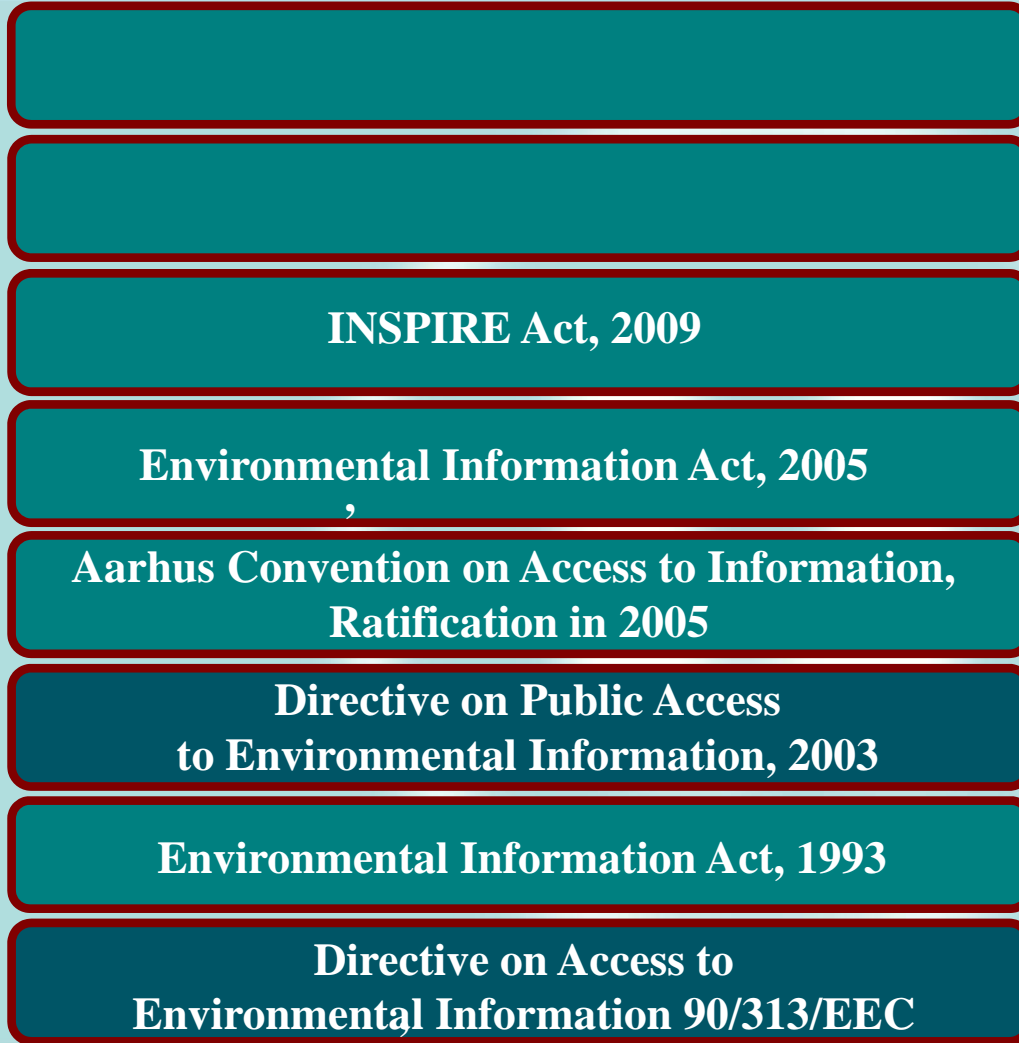
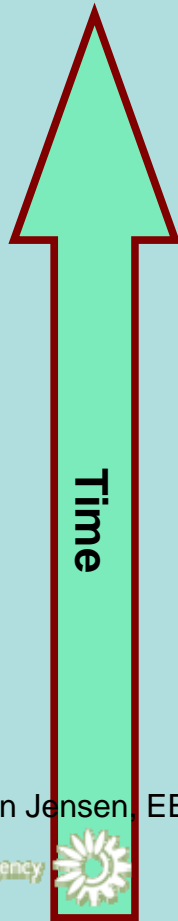


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e-Environment Environmental Information - Austria



Source: Stefan Jensen, EEA



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Environmental Information as an Element of Democracy

Timely and innovative EI is the basis for raising environmental awareness, for active involvement of citizens in environmental measures and thus an element of democracy.

The basic idea that access to EI improves environmental standards is based on the following considerations (Röger, Rz 4 zu § 1; van Schwanenflügel, DÖV 1993/2, 95):

- The right of access to relevant data increases transparency and enhances public participation in decisions taken by the public authorities. Access to EI is thus a step towards participation and democratisation of environmental law. (**participation effect**).

(Büchele/Ennöckl, UIG Kommentar, nww, Graz 2005)

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Coordination Centre for Environmental Information – EIA section 10

Umweltbundesamt is the leader of a coordination centre whose task consists in supporting the information exchange between information providing bodies and in proposing suitable measures to facilitate access to environmental information, as well as in ensuring the high quality of environmental information.

<http://www.umweltbundesamt.at/umweltinformation/koordinierungsstelle>

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The Coordination Centre for Environmental Information at Umweltbundesamt

Aim → ensure easy access to environmental information for everybody by

- Providing a list of information providing bodies („informationspflichtigen Stellen“)
- Ensuring exchange of information between them
- supporting
 - active dissemination of information (Internet-portals)
 - Ensure high quality of information
 - high comparability

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Work programme of the Coordination Centre

I

- Supporting unified structures
 - For active dissemination of information
 - Easy access, easy to find
 - systematic structure
 - clear, comparable, up-to-date
 - For passive access to information according EIA section 2 (§ 2 UIG)
 - For the quality of environmental information
 - Ensuring up-to-date, exact and comparable environmental information

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Work programme of the Coordination Centre

II



- Facilitating access to information (unified structures, eGovernment, Internet) by
 - naming contact persons and information points
 - publishing registers of publicly available information (metadata registries)
 - setting up publicly accessible information networks and databases
 - publishing information on authorities and their responsibilities

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Work programme of the Coordination Centre

III

- Supporting the exchange of information between information providing bodies („iS“)
 - By using the existing **eGovernment** structures
 - Existing eGovernment structures are used to ensure cooperation between the **federal government, provinces, cities and municipalities, as well as industry/economy**
 - Setting up a working group for environmental information (**UW-UI**) within the framework of “Cooperation **BLSG**” (Bund-Länder-Städte-Gemeinden) under the umbrella of “Platform Digital Austria”

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The Coordination Centre (KUI) provides information

- KUI informs the public about its activities on the Internet at <http://www.umweltbundesamt.at/koordinierungsstelle/>.
- KUI also provides information on the Environmental Information Act (EIA 2004, UIG 2004) at HELP.gv.at <http://www.help.gv.at/Content.Node/166/Seite.1660000.html>
- The platform of the **working group Environmental Information (UW-UI)** on the Reference Server at http://reference.e-government.gv.at/UW-UI_Umweltinformation.1024.0.html

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Structured access to information via thematic classification

- Directive 2003/4/EC uses thematic and functional categories to describe environmental information. This theme classification should:
 - provide quick and easy access for the lay user to the relevant theme,
 - Be easy to adopt to the requirements of users (obtaining information) and information providers (structuring the information provided), and
 - Be guided by the term “environmental information” as defined in Directive 2003/4/EG and by the criteria for providing EI set out therein.

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Thematic Categories (beispielhafte Auswahl)

| | Kurzbezeichner (Portaloberfläche) | Langbezeichner (Tooltipp) | Erläuterung (Hilfetext) |
|----|--|---|--|
| 1 | Abfall | Abfall , Entsorgung und <i>Abfallwirtschaft</i> | Alle beweglichen Dinge, deren sich ihr Besitzer entledigt, entledigen will oder entledigen muss, sowohl Abfälle zur Beseitigung wie auch Abfälle zur Verwertung. |
| 2 | Boden | Boden | Zustand und Veränderung des Bodens und Wechselwirkung mit anderen Umweltbestandteilen (Gewässerboden siehe Gewässer). |
| 3 | Energie | Energie und Energietechnik | Ressourcenökonomie der Energiebedarfsdeckung, insbesondere Ressourcennutzung und Ressourcenschonung. |
| 4 | Chemikalien | Chemikalien und Gefahrstoffe | Vom Menschen in die Umwelt gebrachte chemische Stoffe. |
| 5 | Forstwirtschaft | Forstwirtschaft | Wirtschaftliche Nutzung von Wäldern. |
| 6 | Gentechnik | Gentechnik | Gentechnisch veränderter Organismen und Viren in der Umwelt, sowie Methoden und Anwendungsgebiete. |
| 7 | Geologie | <i>Geologie</i> und Bergbau | Umweltaspekte der Gewinnung mineralischer Ressourcen (Bergbau). |
| 8 | Gesundheit | Gesundheit , Wohnhygiene | Umwelt und Gesundheit, Nahrungsmittelkontamination, Wohnhygiene. |
| 9 | Landwirtschaft | <i>Landwirtschaft</i> | Landbau zur Pflanzen- und Tierproduktion (aber: Waldbau siehe Forstwirtschaft). |
| 10 | Lärm&Erschütterungen | Lärm , <i>Lärmschutz</i> , <i>Erschütterungen</i> | Lärm (Schallemissionen und Immissionen) und Erschütterungen. |
| 11 | Luft&Klima | Atmosphäre , Klimawandel , <i>Klimaschutz</i> | Atmosphäre, Luftgüte, Klimawandel, Klimaschutz |

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Functional Categories

| | Kurzbezeichner (Portaloberfläche) | Langbezeichner (Tooltip) | Beschreibung (Hilfeseiten) |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1 | Rechtliches | Rechtsvorschriften, Verwaltungsvorschriften, Verträge, Vereinbarungen, Genehmigungen, Normen (Rechtsakte) | Rechtsakte der EU, des Bundes, der Länder und der Kommunen über die Umwelt bzw. mit Bezug zur Umwelt. Umweltrelevante Genehmigungen, Zulassungsentscheidungen und Umweltvereinbarungen, auch technische Vorschriften und Normen. |
| 2 | Konzeptionelles/ Programme | Konzepte, Pläne, Programme, Projekte | Wortlaut bzw. Informationen zu politischen Konzepten, Plänen, und Programmen, einschließlich Förderprogramme, Projekte, und Pilotvorhaben |
| 3 | Statusberichte | Status-, Umsetzungs- und Projektberichte | Berichte und Bestandsaufnahmen über den Stand der Umsetzung von Rechtsvorschriften, Konzepten, Plänen, Programmen, Projekten und Pilotvorhaben. |
| 4 | Umweltzustand | Berichte und Veröffentlichungen zum Zustand der Umwelt | Darstellungen der Qualität und der Belastung der Umwelt, inklusive regelmäßig erscheinender Umweltzustandsberichte. Dies beinhaltet auch interpretierte Daten und Karten. |
| 5 | Daten/Karten | Daten, Karten, Messwerte | Daten oder Zusammenfassungen von Daten, die nicht interpretiert oder in Berichtsform vorliegen, sowie Karten, Luftbilder, Planzeichnungen und andere Geodaten. |
| 6 | Risikobewertungen | Risikobewertungen, UVP | Darstellung und Bewertung des Umweltrisikos aufgrund planerischer und anderer Maßnahmen, Umweltverträglichkeitsprüfungen (UVP) |

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BLSG Working Group UW - UI



„Erste Tagung der E-Government Bund Länder Arbeitsgruppe Umweltinformation“

25.-26. April 2007, BMLFUW, Stubenring 12, 1010 Wien

„Erste Arbeitsgruppensitzung“

28. Juni 2007, Umweltbundesamt, 1090 Wien

„Zweite Arbeitsgruppensitzung“

25. Oktober 2007, Umweltbundesamt, 1090 Wien

„Dritte Arbeitsgruppensitzung“

7. Februar 2008, Umweltbundesamt, 1090 Wien

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UW-UI: 1st Meeting April 2007 fears & expectations I

- dual work – white spots on the EI landscape
- lack of resources
- optimise costs
- area of conflict UIG – DSGVO – electronic data registers – special administrative laws
- varying speed of implementation
- create awareness within one's own organisation
- seek for a joint procedure
 - for the federal gov – federal provinces – municipalities
 - and other information points ("iS")

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UW-UI: 1st Meeting April 2007 fears & expectations II

- joint solution for the federal provinces
 - based on the organisation model of www.geoland.at
 - no central database, but central access
 - no separate structures for information from the delegated federal administration provincial administration
- Make this portal solution usable for a wider circle
→ **One-Stop-Shop**
- eGovernment compatibility must be granted
 - barrier free access (WAI – Standards)
- Further development of recommendations for the thematic and functional classification of EI

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Conference of Ministers for the Environment of the Federal Provinces on 23.3.2007

Political requirements of LURK on WG UW-UI:

1. Assessment of the current state of basic structures and databases?
2. Which basic structures and costs are additionally necessary?
3. Which IT- options can be used to reduce costs?
4. Is it necessary to collect or combine further data in order to comply with the obligation to provide information?

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WG UW-UI: Further procedure / activities

- Working group UW-UI
 - Develop a recommendation for active dissemination of EI
 - Analyse IT options, clarify the need of recourses, formulate the recommendation
- ... a joint influence on laws and ordinances from the viewpoint of active dissemination of EI
- produce activity reports for the conference of environment ministers from the federal provinces (LURK) and federal ministers (& governors)
- submit materials to the Commission to comply with the reporting obligations
- involve federal ministries, province authorities, cities and municipalities
- step-by-step implementation – create practical solutions

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SEIS – Shared Environmental Information System

Development of a Shared Environmental Information System in Europe

- improved usage of environmental data
- „Streamlining and harmonisation of monitoring and reporting obligations“
- INSPIRE as a core element

Parties involved: „Group of 4“ (Go4)

- DG ENV
- EEA
- Eurostat
- JRC

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SEIS - Commission Communication

February 1st, 2008:

- Commission Communication COM(2008) 46 final: „Towards a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS)” released
- links with INSPIRE and streamlining of reporting and monitoring provisions
- suggest policy options to go from ‚Concept to Reality’

February 5th, 2008: press release:

- „Commission proposes to improve and streamline the European system for collecting, analyzing and reporting environmental information”

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SEIS Principles (1)

- Common principles for timely, reliable and relevant information on the state of environment:
- *Information should be managed as close as possible to its source;*
- *Information should be collected once, and shared with others for many purposes;*
- *Information should be readily available to public authorities and enable them to easily fulfil their legal reporting obligations;*

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SEIS Principles (2)

- *Information should be readily accessible to end-users, primarily public authorities at all levels from local to European, to enable them to assess in a timely fashion the state of the environment and the effectiveness of their policies, and to design new policy*
- *Information should also be accessible to enable end-users, both public authorities and citizens, to make comparisons at the appropriate geographical scale (e.g. countries, cities, catchment areas) and to participate meaningfully in the development and implementation of environmental policy;*

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SEIS Principles (3)

- *Information should be fully available to the general public, after due consideration of the appropriate level of aggregation and subject to appropriate confidentiality constraints, and at national level in the relevant national language(s)*
- *information sharing and processing should be supported through common, free open source software tools.*

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What benefits will the SEIS bring?

- **Simplification and efficiency**
 1. the content of information requirements in thematic environmental legislation,
 2. the content and procedure for reporting at international level, and
 3. more efficient organization of data-gathering activities within Member States.
- **Better regulation, better policy**
- **Empowering citizens**

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What actions are necessary to realise SEIS?

- implementation of the **INSPIRE directive**
- further development of the **GMES initiative**
- revising the **Standardized Reporting directive 91/692/EC**, and
- **Community financial support** allocated for this purpose through the Research Framework Programmes, LIFE+, the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and the Structural Funds.
- coordination by **European Environment Agency**

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SEIS Implementation 2008

EEA Activities in 2007-2008 with EIONET towards SEIS Implementation Plan 2007-2008

- Priority Data Flow Reporting (AT = 100% !)
- Reportnet Tools
- Indicator Management Service
- Land-Water-Biodiversity Integrated Assessment
- Ozone Web Extension
- Landcover, WISE, Air Quality Data Services
- SEIS Country Visits

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Technical implementation – Environmental Portals

- **European level:** SEIS (Shared Environmental Information System)
- **Regional:** e.g. Information Infrastructure for the North and Baltic Sea (NOKIS); [http:// nokis.baw.de](http://nokis.baw.de)
- **National** (examples):
 - DE: PortalU – <http://www.portalu.de>
 - CZ: Geoportal – <http://geoportal.cenia.cz>
 - AT: Koordinierungsstelle für Umweltinformation – <http://www.umweltbundesamt.at/umweltinformation/koordinierungsstelle>
 - CH: Metainformationssystem Envirocat – <http://www.envirocat.ch>
- **Sub-national:**
 - Umweltportal Hessen
 - Umweltobjektkatalog Bayern
 - and many others

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EEA SEIS Country Visit 2008

- 29. April 2008: EEA SEIS Country Visit together with 4th meeting of WG Env. Inf., at the Austrian Federal Chancellery
- Planned Presentations:
 - Online air quality data on www.umweltbundesamt.at (Johannes Mayer, U)
 - EEA near-to-Real-time Ozone Data Information (Stefan Jensen, EEA)
 - WISE - Data Service Bathing Water (Stefan Jensen, EEA)
 - INSPIRE (Maximilian Pock, BMLFUW)
 - GEOLAND (Thomas Zalka, BGLD)
 - LUIS Steiermark (Franz Pichler-Semmelrock, Stmk)
 - Wiener Umweltinformationssystem (Johann Mittheisz, Wien)
 - WISA (Stefan Nemetz, U)

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Conclusion

Timely and innovative environmental information is the basis for

- raising environmental awareness,
- active involvement of citizen in environmental processes
- and thus an element of political democracy

Umweltbundesamt

- acting as coordination centre for environmental information
- which also has to comply as an information point ("iS") with reporting obligations

will provide its contribution.

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UIG Kommentar

Büchele / Ennöckl

UIG Umweltinformationsgesetz

Kommentar

NWV Neuer Wissenschaftlicher Verlag

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Thank you

We are happy to answer any questions.



Thank you for your attention !

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