

SUBMISSION RE:

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE AARHUS CONVENTION AND PRTR PROTOCOL IN IRELAND.

The Aarhus Convention establishes a number of rights of the public, that is both individuals and their associations with regard to the environment.

1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

the right of all persons to receive information that is held by public authorities.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The right to participate in environmental decision making.

3. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The right to review procedures, to challenge public decisions that have been made without respecting the above two rights on environmental law in general.

In Ireland with regard to many planning decisions which have been made the public has been excluded from information at the beginning of planning decisions.

Eg. Developers has "chats" or "consultations" with planning authorities without the knowledge of the public which can influence planning applications and the environment. Very often public only know about a development when a planning application has been lodged.

This is not in the spirit of the Aarhus Convention.

This has led to many Judicial Reviews which could have been avoided if there was complete participation FROM INCEPTION of a proposal "WHEN ALL OPTIONS ARE OPEN".

Further influence causing the non implementation of the Aarhus Convention is that the government did not do an Environmental Impact Assessment on the National Renewable Energy Action Plan.

We request that from now on the public shall have all information right from the "idea" of a proposal to access to justice if the environment or people could be affected.

A major example of not doing this is the recent bog slide during a wind farm development in the west of Ireland where shocking irretrievable environmental damage has occurred.

Yours

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