

# **Environmental Information Centres, Resources and Services**

*Inventory and Needs Assessment for Central and Eastern Europe*

Edited by  
**KRISTINA VILIMAITE**

Szentendre, Hungary  
**2004**

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**THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER**  
*for Central and Eastern Europe*

## **About the REC**

The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) is a non-partisan, non-advocacy, not-for-profit international organisation with a mission to assist in solving environmental problems in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The REC fulfils this mission by promoting cooperation among non-governmental organisations, governments, businesses and other environmental stakeholders, and by supporting the free exchange of information and public participation in environmental decision making.

The REC was established in 1990 by the United States, the European Commission and Hungary. Today, the REC is legally based on a charter signed by the governments of 28 countries and the European Commission, and on an international agreement with the government of Hungary. The REC has its head office in Szentendre, Hungary, and country offices and field offices in 16 beneficiary countries which are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, FYR Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.

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Creating a directory that covers all of Central and Eastern Europe required the hard work and devotion of a number of people. The REC is especially grateful to all the libraries and information centres that found time to fill in the questionnaire and thus make the directory a reality.

Special thanks go to Jerome Simpson for his guidance and support in preparation of this directory. I would also like to

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And last, but not the least, I give my sincere thanks for the invaluable work performed by the REC country and field office staff involved in the publishing of this directory.

**Kristina Vilimaite, Editor**  
Information Programme

The Regional Environmental Center  
for Central and Eastern Europe  
Szentendre, Hungary



# Introduction

## Why this directory is needed

More than 4 million Internet websites contain the phrase “environmental protection,” so it may seem that enough environmental information exists online to satisfy the pickiest reader. One might even ask if we still need collections of printed environmental information, i.e. environmental libraries. However, it is not just the numbers that matter. Libraries have advantages over the Internet, including their collections of classified information, the greater factual reliability of their holdings and their greater accessibility to a wider number of users. In addition, libraries often provide access to the Internet for disadvantaged people.

Two legal documents support the existence of environmental libraries. First, we should mention the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention). This convention, which entered into force in 2001, calls on governments to proactively make information about the environment available to the public and provide it upon request. Second, the European Union directive on public access to environmental information entered into force at the beginning of 2003 and should be implemented in EU member states by February 14, 2005. Among other things, its purpose is to ensure that environmental informa-

tion is made systematically available to the public.

Environmental libraries have a role to play in the implementation of these legal documents. This directory provides information about 361 libraries in Central and Eastern Europe that have environmental publications in their collections. The inventory maps collections in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) to facilitate public access. The needs assessment clarifies what should be done to improve their services and identifies future priorities.

This directory has three purposes. First, it aims to improve access to environmental information in Central and Eastern Europe. Second, it makes a snapshot of the situation of the environmental information centres, resources and services in CEE. Third, it analyses the needs of environmental libraries and environmental information specialists in the region.

## Who should use this directory

The directory is designed for use by environmental information specialists as well as other environmental stakeholders, including researchers, governmental officials, NGOs, businesses and others seeking environmental information. The directory also targets donors and support agencies, governmental and intergovernmental institutions such as the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), the UNESCO Communication and

Information Sector and other international bodies and watchdogs with an interest in examining library development, information society, and the digital divide. The key findings chapter identifies the current status, priority needs and obstacles facing libraries and thereby outline the activities needed to strengthen the provision of environmental information around the region.

### **How the research was done**

The survey was performed using a standard seven-page questionnaire (see the Annex) that was translated from English to the local languages of 15 Central Eastern European countries. The questionnaire was developed based on the known requirements of the Aarhus Convention for providing access to environmental information, the knowledge and experience of the REC Information Programme in environmental information management and the reports of the European Environment Agency on state of the environment information reporting (including the DPSIR approach, a conceptual framework that assesses Driving forces, Pressures, States, Impacts and Responses). The questionnaire sought to build on the Directory of Libraries and Environmental Information Centres covering six CEE countries that was published by Czeslaw Jan Grycz and Barbara K. Rodes in 1994.

The survey aimed to inventory specialised environmental libraries as well as collections of environmental publications in non-specialised libraries. The latter included collections held by organisations that run a publicly accessible library as an ancillary activity. Therefore the questionnaires were sent to many institutions, including ones that we were not sure had collections of environmental

information. The REC country and field offices mailed the questionnaires to the biggest public libraries; libraries of relevant research institutes and universities; governmental, non-governmental and international organisations; enforcement agencies and municipalities and similar organisations that may have had collections of environmental publications. Library associations were notified of the survey in each country to achieve a wider audience and to seek their support. Those that responded are thus considered environmental libraries and will be called so in this publication. Some of them hold just a few items about the environment; however, we inferred from their wish to be listed in this directory that they plan to expand their environmental information collections. The ones that did not respond either do not consider themselves as environmental libraries or simply did not wish to fill in the questionnaires. As the survey was sent out to a wide variety of recipients, not just environmental libraries, no realistic return rate for the questionnaires may be given.

The data was gathered between February and April 2003. Whenever possible, the data gaps were filled in using information provided on the Internet or through personal contacts with the respondents via e-mail or phone. The key findings chapter summarises information retrieved from the questionnaires and analyses differences among different types of environmental libraries. The number and types of institutions inventoried in each of the countries varies significantly, therefore no statistical comparison of the situation between countries or regions has been carried out.

## How to use this directory

This publication contains the following parts: key findings of the survey, an introduction, a matrix of environmental libraries by topic, 15 country-specific chapters and one sub-chapter for Kosovo (which is currently under interim United Nations administration), and an annex. Maps of the countries concerned accompany the key findings and each of the country chapters.

The chapter on key findings describes the general situation of environmental libraries in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as information on the obstacles and needs of the libraries, along with conclusions and recommendations for improving their services.

The country chapters and the sub-chapter on Kosovo include profiles of environmental libraries listed in alphabetic order by their name in English. A sample profile with some explanations is included overleaf.

The matrix will help the user with an interest in specific environmental topics in certain countries. Environmental libraries are grouped by country and listed by their English names in alphabetical order on the very left column of the matrix. The top row of the matrix lists, in brief form, environmental topics (their extended descriptions are given on the inside cover of the directory). After locating a relevant library the user should turn to the profiles of the institutions in the country chapter for more details.

The annex contains the original questionnaire translated into local languages and used during the survey.

This directory is also available online <[www.rec.org/REC/Databases/EnvInfDirectory](http://www.rec.org/REC/Databases/EnvInfDirectory)>. The online database version offers the following search functionality

that can be used separately or in any combination for the search:

- by the organisation names in English;
- by country;
- by languages spoken;
- by environmental topics covered;
- by services offered; and
- by the type of publication.

In addition, through the above mentioned website, environmental libraries may submit a new entry to the database or update an existing entry by filling in the online questionnaire.

## Sample Profile

English name of the organisation →

Includes information about the number of employees, about the main users and about the collection of environmental publications. The description of the organisation was formed automatically based on the questions answered by the institution in the questionnaire and slightly edited afterwards. →

Specifies the number and types of publications in the library and the amount of them in English. A hyphen indicates that either the institution did not state whether the material in English was available or said that it was unavailable. In some cases the percentage may refer to summaries of articles in English (e.g. when from 10 periodicals 2 percent are in English). →

Services provided by the environmental library →

**Infoterra Romania Office of Environmental Information and References**

*Infoterra Romania - Oficiul de Informare si Documentare pentru Mediu*

**Description of the organisation:** The national focal point of the United Nations Environment Programme's Infoterra office in Romania was founded in 1974. The organisation employs three people, two of whom specialise in environmental information. The main users of the environmental information services are students, researchers, government officials, and the business and economic community. At least one-fifth of its holdings were published after 1995.

CONTACT DETAILS

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**Tel:** (40-21) 311-3308  
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**Mailing address:** 12, Libertatii, Of. Post 42, CP 82 Bucharest, sector 5, Romania  
**Web address:** www.romnet.ro/infoterra  
**Working language:** Romanian  
**Other languages spoken:** English, Russian, German, French  
**Opening hours:** Weekdays 10:00-16:00

PROFILE DETAILS

**Catalogue and information resources:**  
[infoterra.mappm.ro/eng/biblioteca.html](http://infoterra.mappm.ro/eng/biblioteca.html)

**Environmental topics covered in the collection:**  
*National monitoring data:* Air quality; soil quality; water quality; biodiversity and landscapes; industrial emissions  
*Assessments, solutions and responses:* Pressures and damage within the country; global problems; legislation, policies, strategies; technologies and management systems/standards; educational resources; emergency response procedures/accident preparedness  
*Information about stakeholders and events:* Product manufacturers and service providers (including consultants); professionals; events

Type of publication	Number of titles	Percentage in English
Books	10,000	70%
Periodicals	200	60%
Reference material	400	15%
Electronic databases and directories	35,000	60%

**The collection is updated quarterly.**  
**Services offered:** Interlibrary loans; photocopying; reference services; computer facilities (including online access)  
**Membership:** Not required

← Name of the organisation in local language

← The person who is able to respond to the queries

← Contact information, including: telephone, fax, e-mail, mailing and web addresses

← Languages that can be used for communication

← Informs what environmental topics can be found in the library. For the extended descriptions and full list of the topics, please refer to the inner side of the cover

← Frequency of the collection update with new publication

← Informs about the membership requirements, visiting costs and membership fees if relevant



## KEY FINDINGS

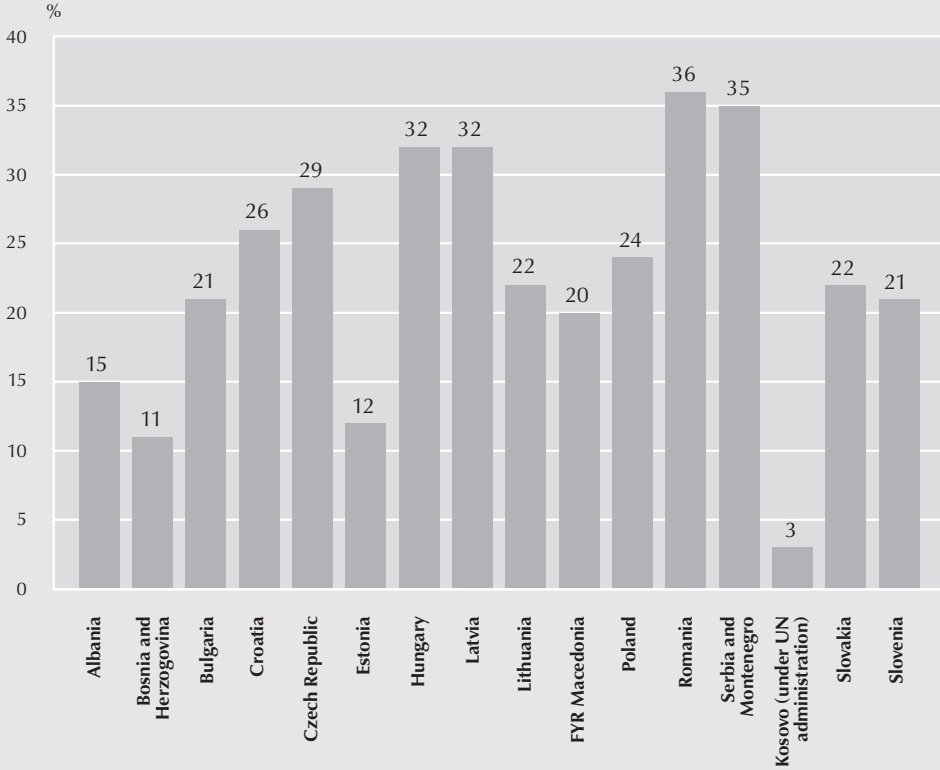
# Key Findings



KEY FINDINGS

FIGURE 1

### Geographical distribution of environmental libraries included in the directory



KEY FINDINGS

ple, the Rhododendron Environmental and Nature Protection Association, an NGO from Romania, works on local and regional environmental and nature protection problems (according to their website), and has more than 900 publications.

Second, many public and university libraries collect environmental publications, but the subject is given little priority over others collected by the library. For example, the University Library of Podgorica has 31 environmental publications, and the National Library of Albania has 227 environmental publications. Unfortunately, many public libraries have rather small collections on environmental

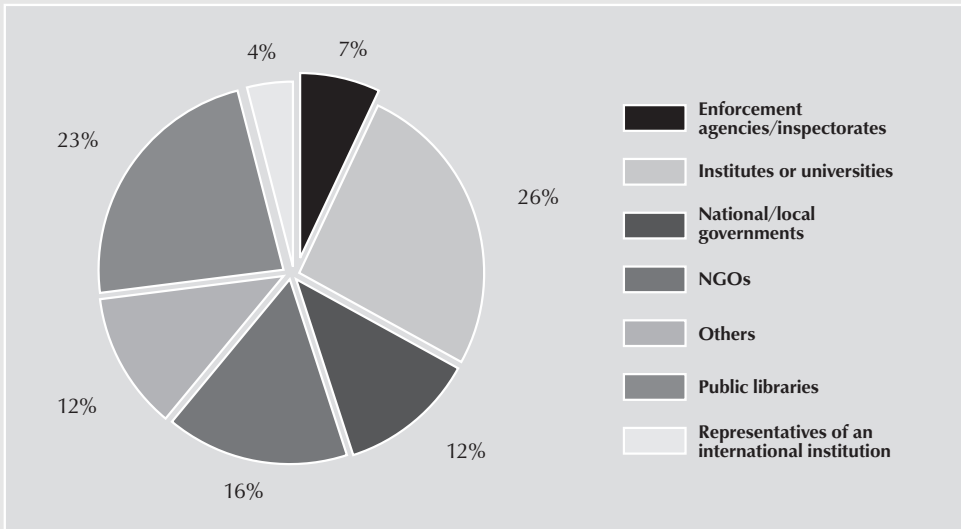
topics: almost half from the total of 84 have less than 300 items.

Third, some of the institutions that could host environmental libraries (e.g. for better implementation of the Aarhus Convention) do not develop them. For example, the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy of the Republic of Slovenia has 850 publications, and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of Serbia and Montenegro has 264.

The last reason is that the environment is a relatively new field of study; environmental monitoring is a new practice and the publishing of environmental data is a recent phenomenon.

FIGURE 2

### Institutions that hold collections of environmental information in Central and Eastern Europe



### Quality of the collections and the frequency of update

Figure 4 shows that 22 percent of all institutions update their collection with environmental information once per year. Twenty-four percent of environmental libraries update their collections monthly and 25 percent quarterly. Eighteen percent of institutions do it on a weekly basis. Public libraries and institutes/universities more frequently fall into the annual update category than other institutions (26 and 23 percent, respectively). National/local governments and NGOs update most frequently at 29 and 28 percent, respectively, refreshing their collections weekly. However, 82 percent of institutions are not satisfied with the frequency of updates.

Thirty-eight percent of institutions stated that at least one-fifth of their environmental information was published

after 1995. Figure 5 shows how current the collections of different types of environmental libraries are. Representatives of international institutions, NGOs and national/local governments have more up-to-date collections in comparison with other types of institutions (64, 52 and 48 percent, respectively).

Only one-third of the surveyed libraries indicated they have adequate environmental information resources to answer most of the queries they receive, though actually 58 percent of enforcement agencies/inspectorates, 57 percent of representatives of international institutions and 45 percent of national/local governments indicate they have adequate environmental information resources. Fewer public libraries (26 percent) and libraries at institutes/universities (22 percent) answered this question positively (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 3

### Size of environmental information collections by type of institution

Institutions with collections of environmental publications	Number of collections	Small collections (fewer than 1,000 titles)	Large collections (number of titles)		
			>1,000	>10,000	>20,000
Enforcement agency/inspectorate	26	19 (73%)	7	1	-
National/local government	42	31 (74%)	11	3	-
NGO	58	40 (69%)	18	1	-
Other	43	30 (70%)	13	2	-
Public library	84	60 (71%)	24	10	4
Representative of an international institution	14	10 (71%)	4	-	1
Scientific/technical institute or university	94	60 (64%)	34	11	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>250 (69%)</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>

### Environmental topics in the collections

This section provides an overview of which institutions collect information on a variety of environmental topics. However, based on the answers of the questionnaire it is not possible to judge the richness of the collections in respect to particular topics. Information was collected on about 18 topics that were arranged into three groups. The topics are listed in full in the inside cover of the directory, with an overview in Figure 7.

National monitoring data (the first group) is best covered by the surveyed respondents. On average, 61 percent indicated they have information on one or more sub-topics (e.g. air, soil and water quality, biodiversity and land-

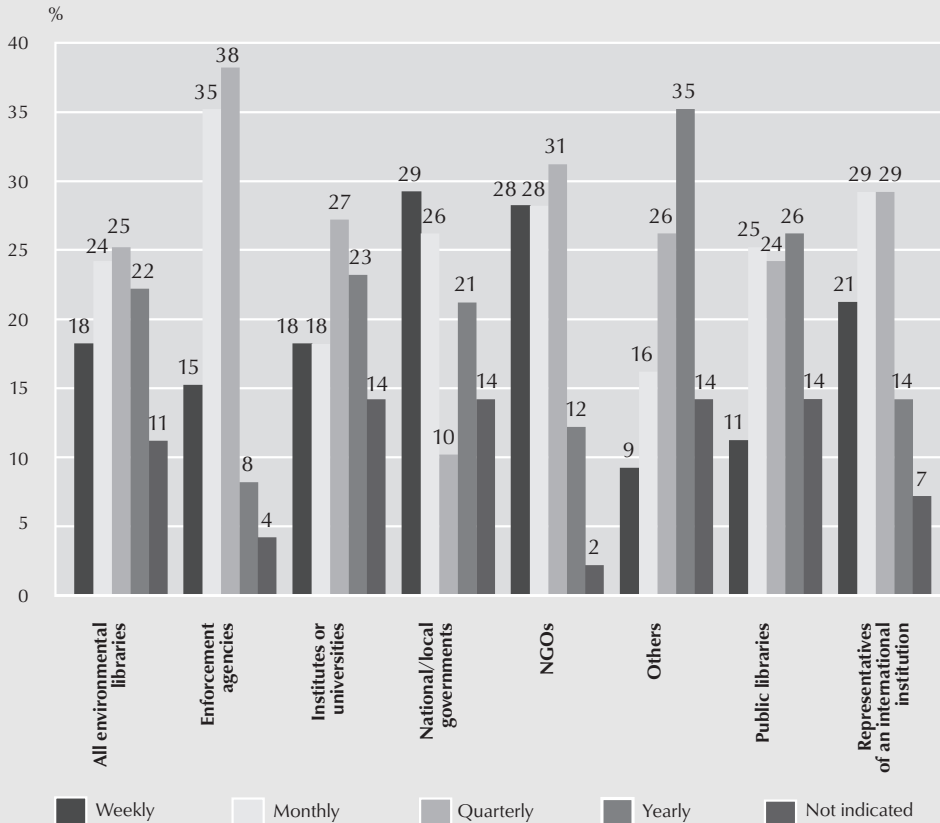
scapes). Environmental assessments, sustainable solutions and practical responses (second group), in addition to reference information about environmental stakeholders and events (third group) exist in 55 percent and 39 percent of the libraries, respectively.

Figure 7 shows that the following individual environmental topics are widely available within surveyed libraries' collections: legislation, policies, strategies (72 percent), pressures and damage in the countries (71 percent), national monitoring data regarding water, air quality, and biodiversity and landscapes (69, 65 and 64 percent respectively) and global problems (63 percent).

Less than one-third of the libraries' collections contain information on:

FIGURE 4

### Frequency of updates of the collections with environmental information



- product manufacturers and service providers (27 percent);
- emergency response procedures/accident preparedness (27 percent);
- opportunities to participate in decision-making processes (30 percent);
- international financing/assistance programmes (31 percent); and
- industrial polluters (33 percent).

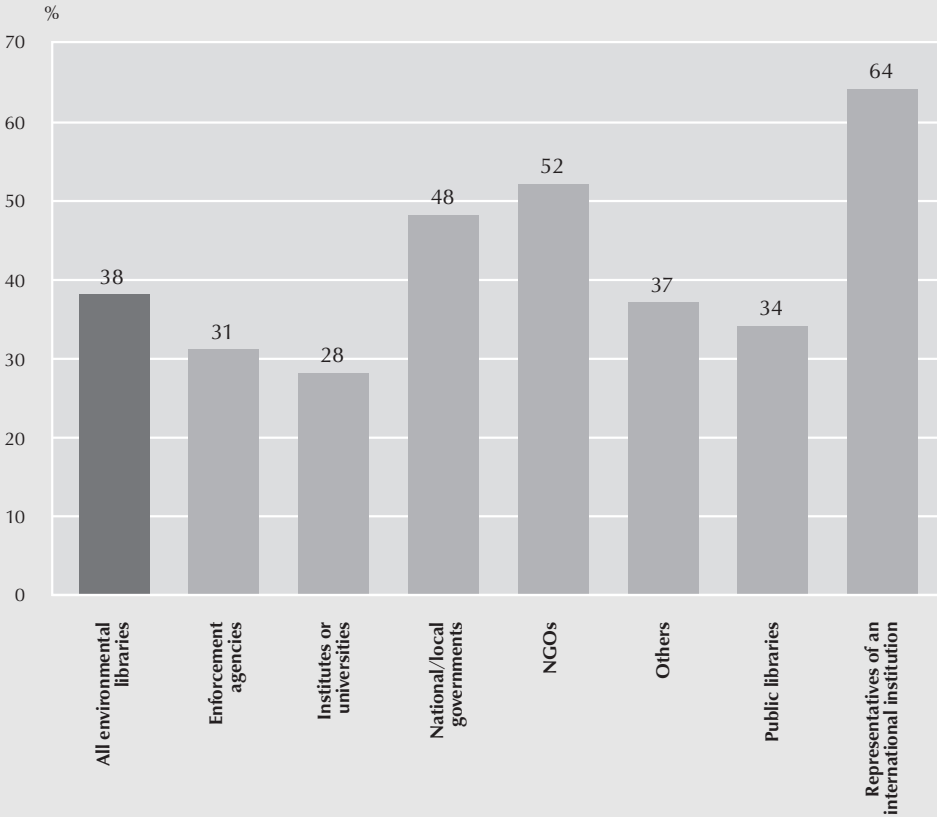
Coverage of a particular topic by different types of environmental libraries

varies significantly. For example, publications on emergency response procedures/accident preparedness are available at 12 percent of NGO collections and 58 percent of enforcement agencies/inspectorates. Ninety-three percent of libraries at international institutions and 66 percent of institutes/universities hold legislation, policies and strategies.

Figures 8, 9 and 10 indicate which topics are covered by which kinds of libraries according to the three previously mentioned broad categories. Interestingly, only 42 percent of enforcement

FIGURE 5

**Percentage of institutions claiming at least one-fifth of their environmental information was published after 1995**



KEY FINDINGS

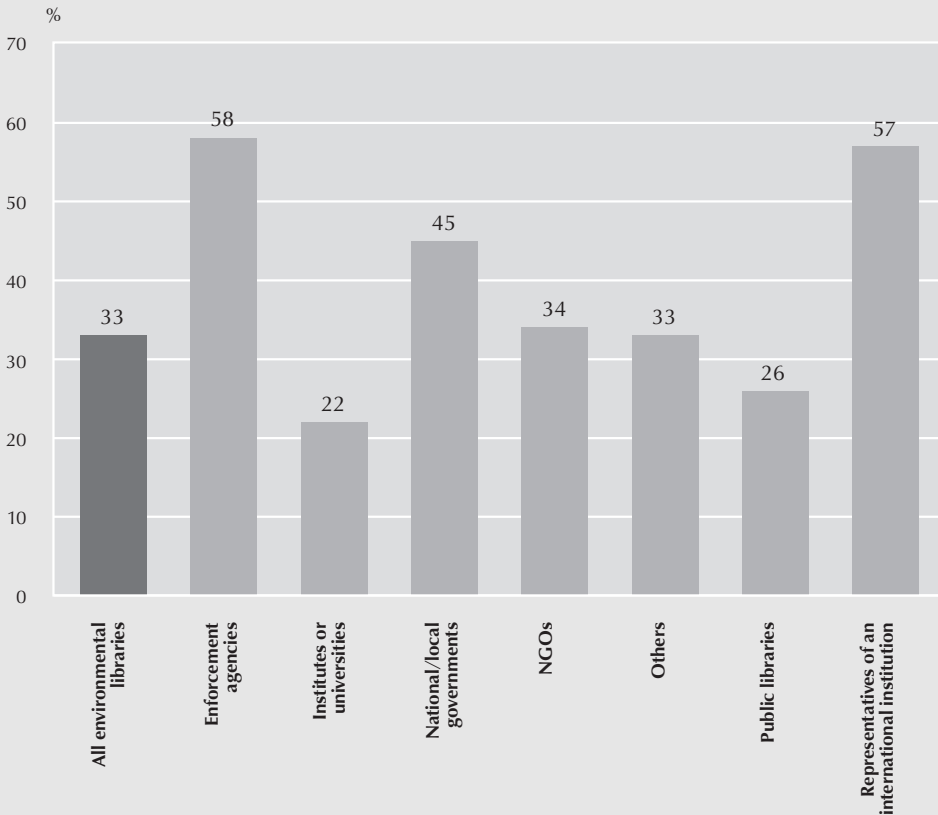
agencies/inspectorates and 57 percent of national/local government institutions have educational resources, while these are covered best in the collections of NGOs (79 percent). This may indicate that governmental institutions rely heavily on enforcement measures while education of environmental stakeholders is not a priority for many of them. Just half of NGOs, governmental institutions and enforcement agencies have information on opportunities to participate in decision making. Of course, this information should not necessarily be available in public libraries.

**Electronic capacity, accessibility and services**

Seventy-nine percent of organisations inventoried have their own web page, and 53 percent of libraries have an electronic, bibliographic catalogue. However, only one-third of the institutions have their library catalogue or their own environmental information resources available on the Internet, and these are mainly at institutes/universities and public libraries (63 and 49 percent, respectively, have their catalogue or information resources online). Figure 11

FIGURE 6

### Percentage of institutions claiming they have adequate environmental information resources to answer most of the queries they receive



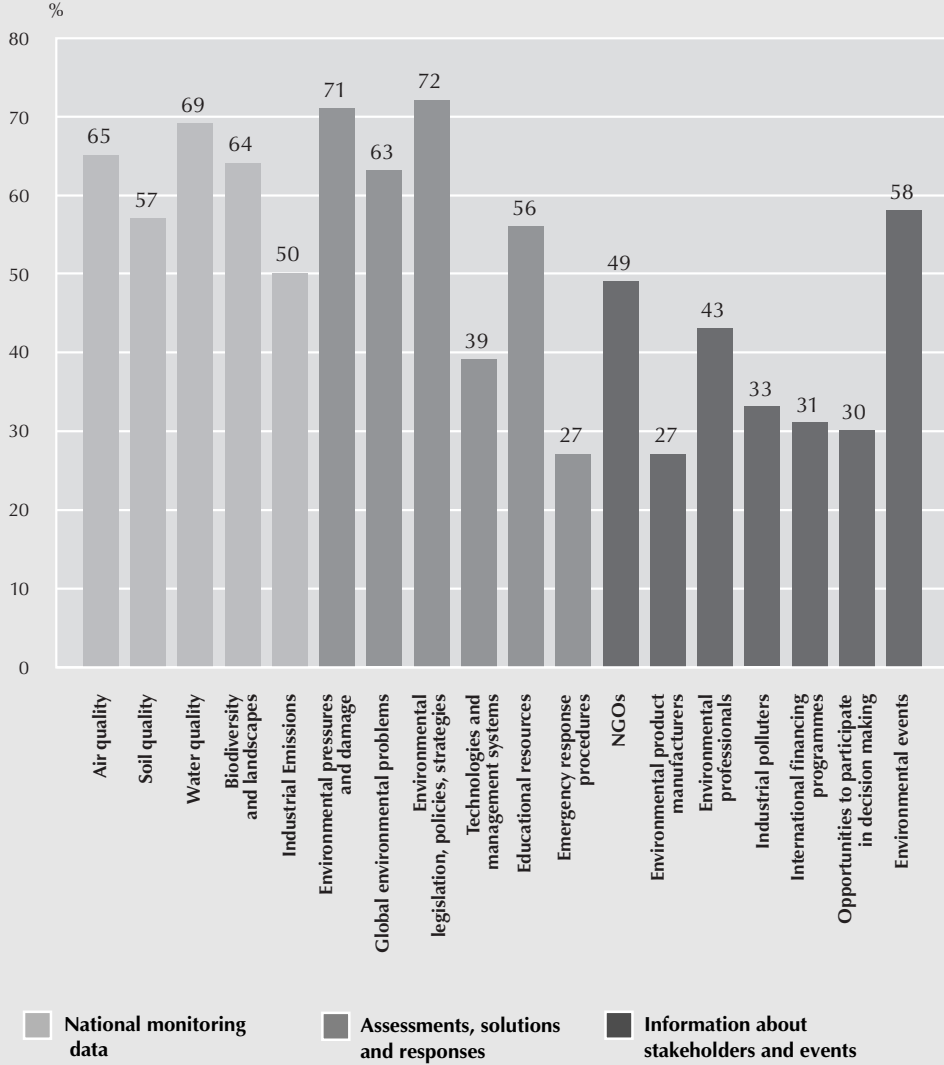
illustrates that while 31 percent of enforcement agencies/inspectorates and 43 percent of national/local governments have an electronic catalogue, only 8 percent and 14 percent, respectively, have their library catalogue or information resources available online.

Among those 53 percent of libraries that have an electronic catalogue, the most popular cataloguing software used is various versions of CDS/ISIS (by UNESCO), as well as Microsoft Access and Excel. Some of the libraries use national and even international integrat-

ed online catalogues. An interesting example of an integrated system is the Co-operative Online Bibliographic System and Services (COBISS). This integrated catalogue is a shared cataloguing system that links the autonomous library information systems of Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, the republics of Montenegro and Serbia, and Slovenia. From those libraries that have an electronic catalogue, 75 percent indicated that the currently used software satisfies the needs of staff and visitors, while 20 percent stated the opposite.

FIGURE 7

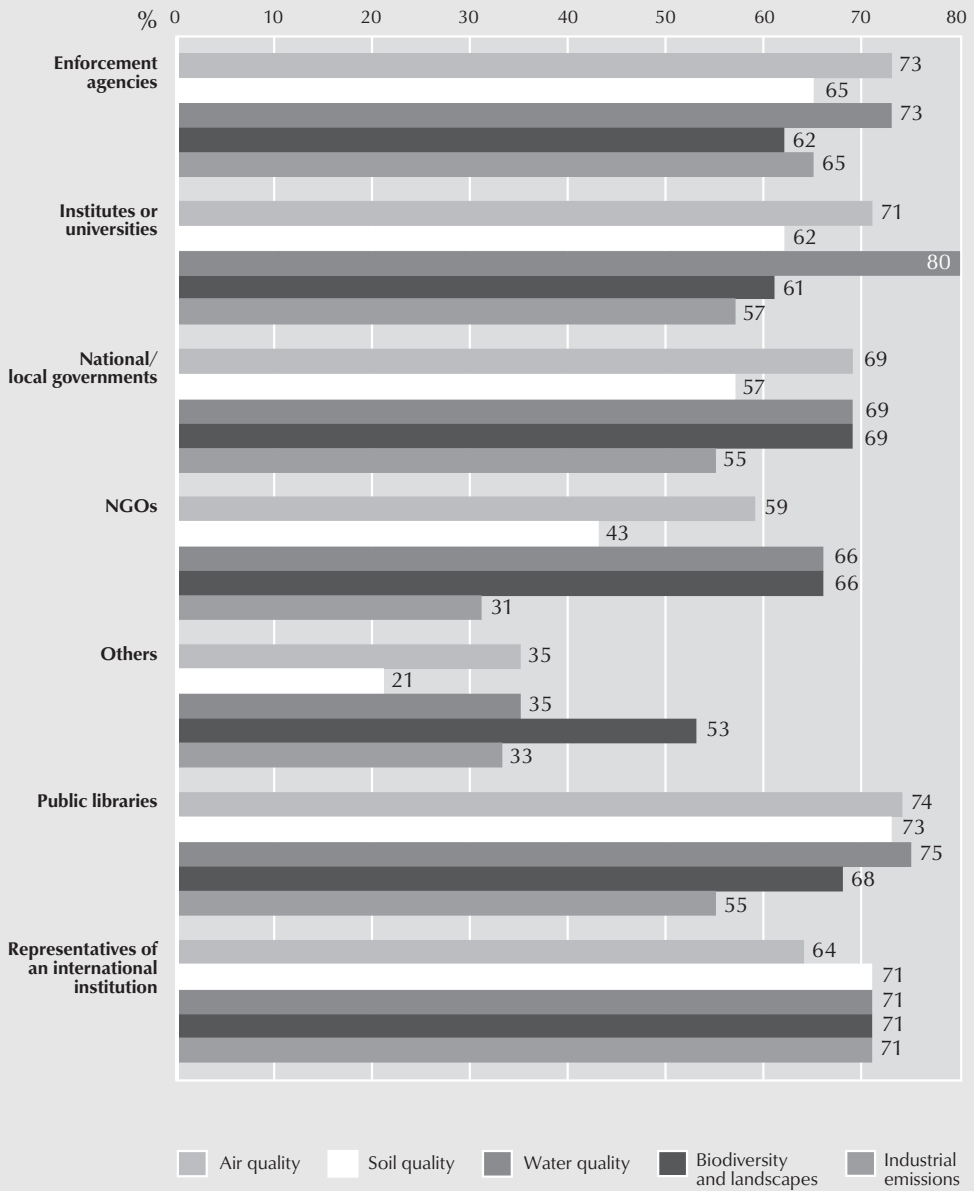
Topics covered by the collections of the environmental libraries



KEY FINDINGS

FIGURE 8

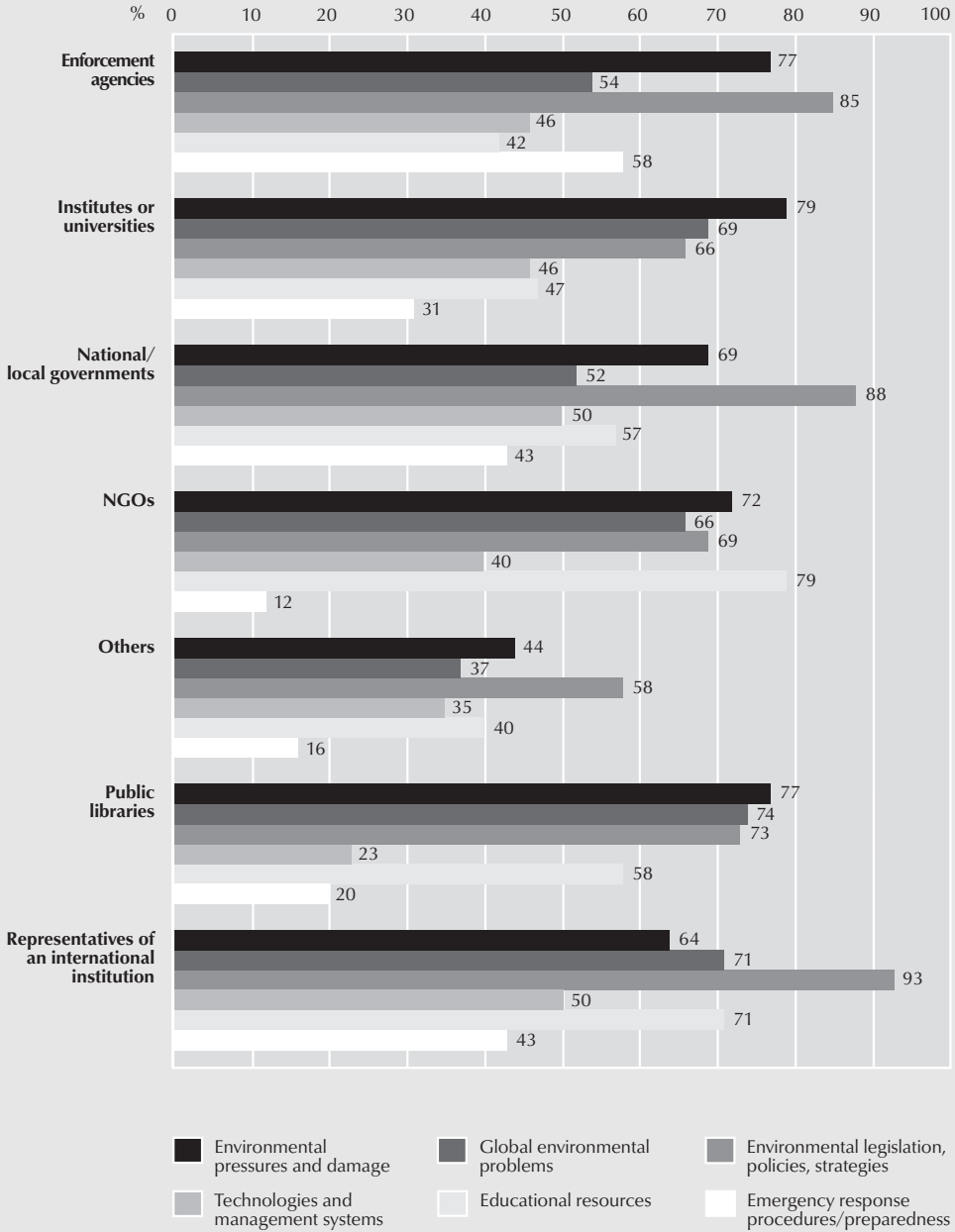
### Percentage of environmental libraries holding national monitoring data in their collections



KEY FINDINGS

FIGURE 9

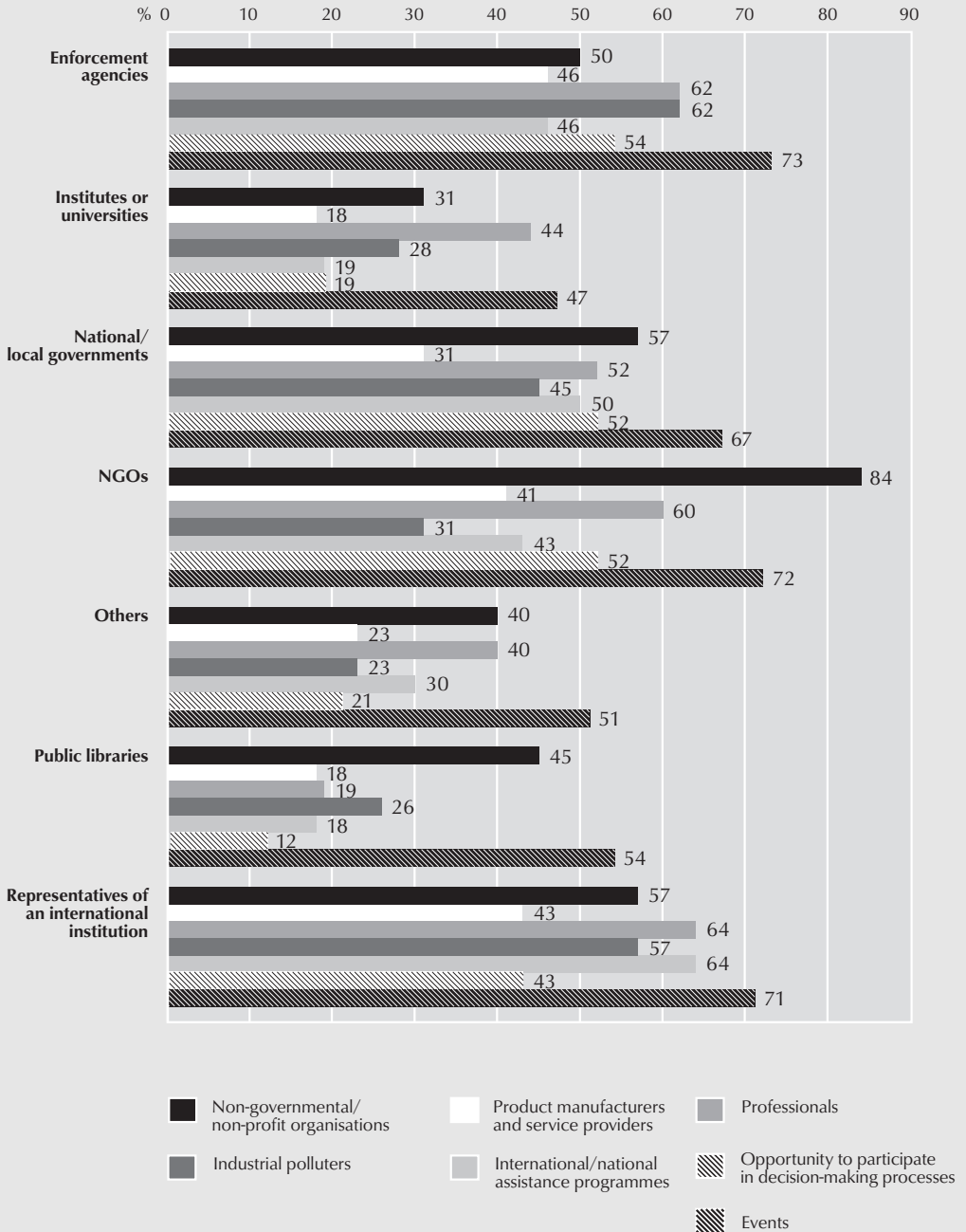
Percentage of environmental libraries holding information on environmental assessments, sustainable solutions and practical responses in their collections



KEY FINDINGS

**FIGURE 10**

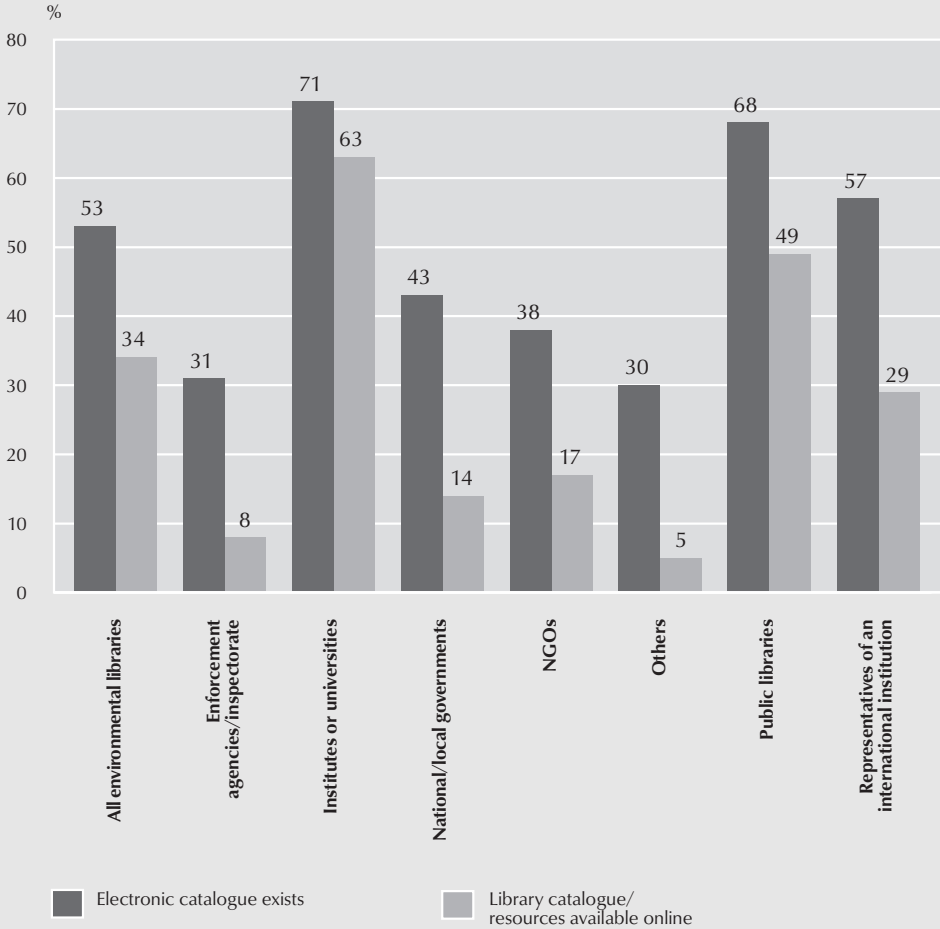
**Percentage of environmental libraries holding reference information about environmental stakeholders and events in their collections**



KEY FINDINGS

FIGURE 11

**Percentage of libraries with an electronic catalogue and library catalogue/information resources available online**



KEY FINDINGS

Twenty-eight percent of libraries market their environmental information services externally to outside clients beyond the institution’s premises and staff. As Figure 12 shows, this practice is more common among public libraries and representatives of international institutions.

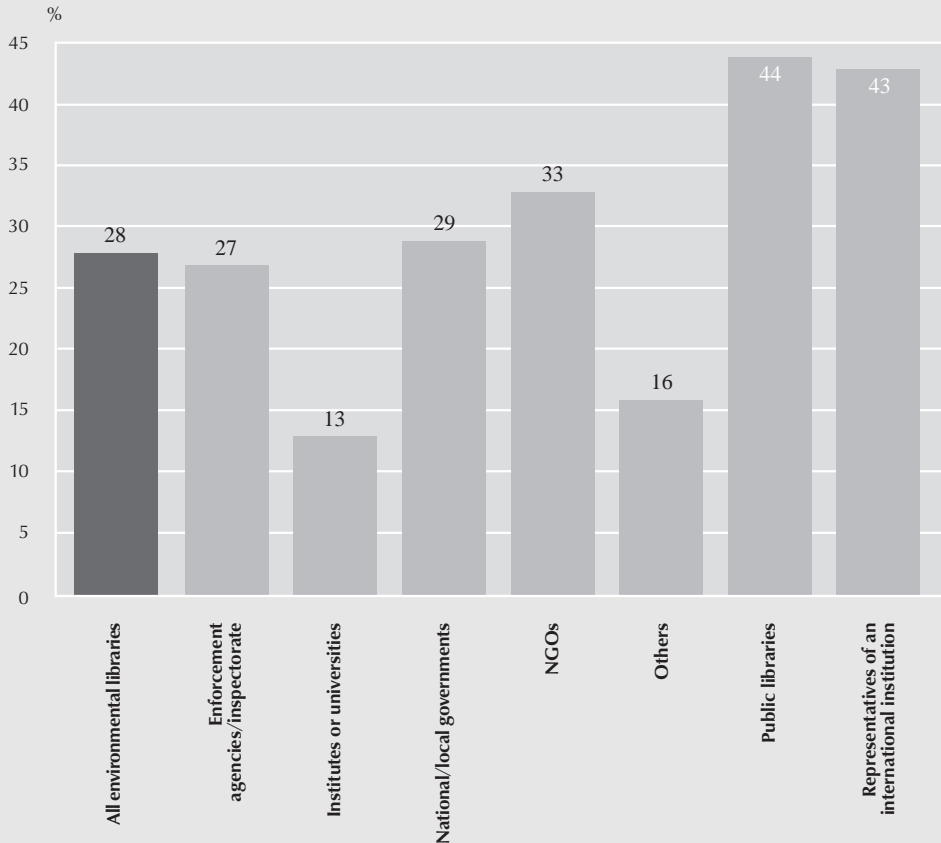
Ninety-eight percent of institutions can be contacted by e-mail. Among foreign languages, English is the most commonly used by the staff of environmental

libraries (83 percent of institutions), followed by Russian (38 percent) and German (28 percent).

Forty-nine percent of organisations participate in an interlibrary loan scheme (i.e. a cooperative arrangement among libraries by which one library may borrow materials from another). Most of those that provide interlibrary loan services are public libraries (90 percent) and the libraries at institutes and universities (78 percent).

FIGURE 12

### Percent of institutions that market their environmental information services externally



Only 8 percent of environmental agencies/inspectorates, 7 percent of NGOs and 29 percent of national/local governments offer this service. On-site access to computer facilities (including Internet access) is provided by 52 percent of all environmental libraries. Seventy-five percent of public libraries, 71 percent of libraries at international organisations, 27 percent of environmental agencies/inspectorates and 31 percent of national/local governments also provide this service. Figure 13 gives

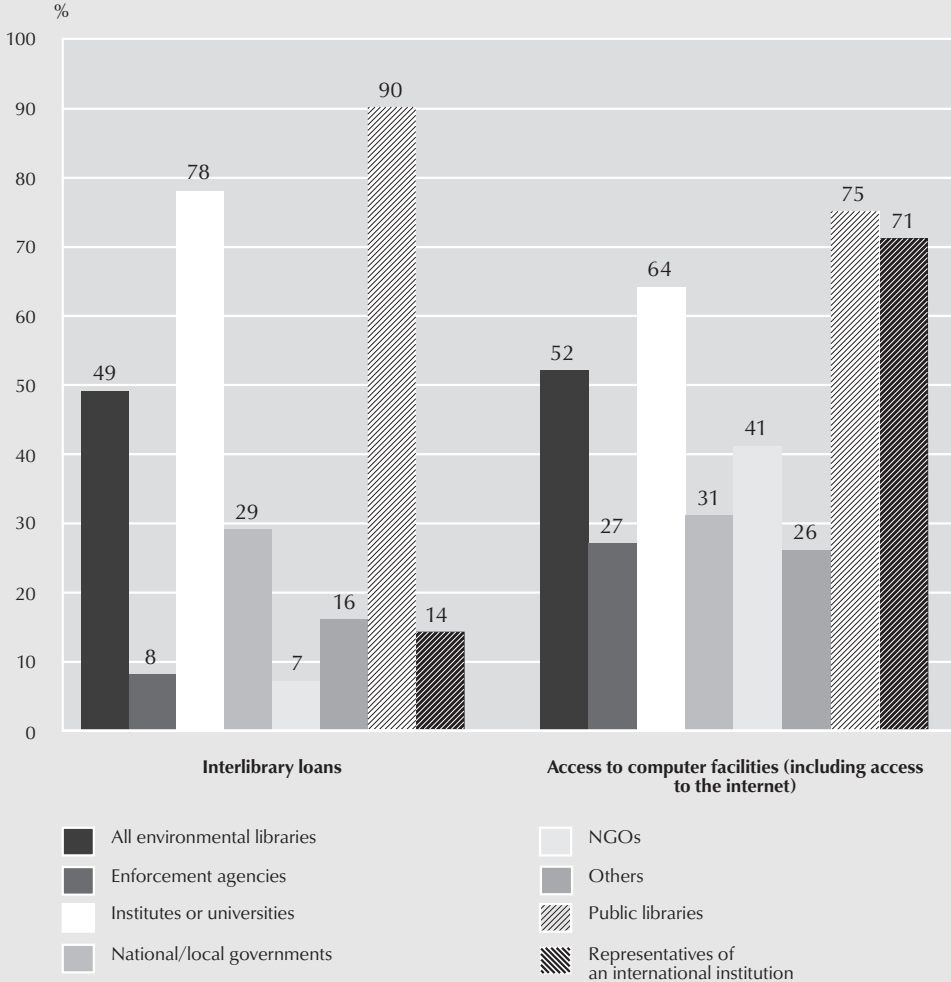
more information on the availability of these services.

#### Funding of environmental libraries

During the survey, environmental libraries were asked to indicate their funding sources (state budget, internal budgets, projects financed by donor, cost recovery through client services/membership fees, etc.) in percentile values and, optionally, to indicate the annual budget for the acquisition of environmental infor-

FIGURE 13

Specific services provided by environmental libraries



KEY FINDINGS

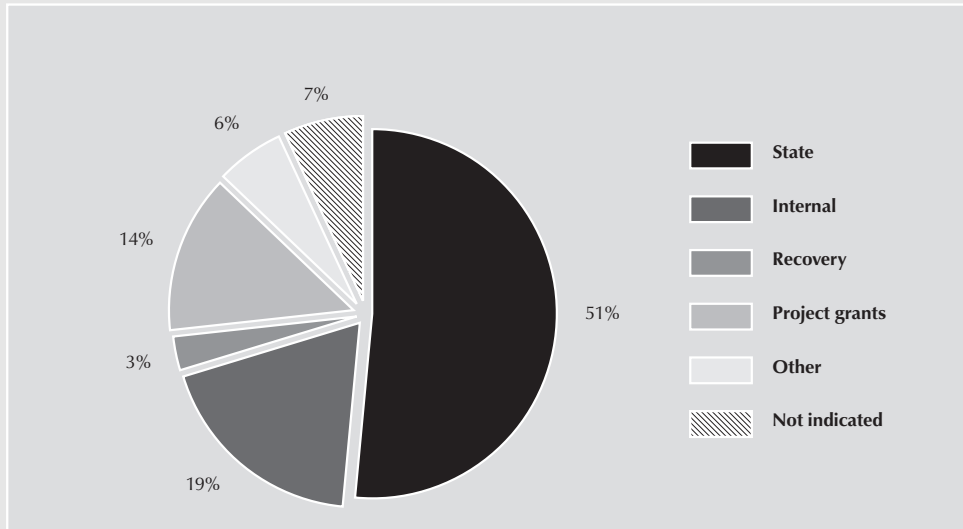
mation resources in euros. Only a few institutions answered the latter question. Therefore, in this section all the statistics about funding sources are based on a relative share of funding sources as indicated by the individual libraries.

The main source of funding for environmental libraries covered by this directory is the state budget (52 percent). Other most common funding sources are

internal budgets of organisations (19 percent) and donor financed projects (14 percent). Figure 14 illustrates the share of funding sources of environmental libraries. Figure 15 provides further details on sources of funding of environmental libraries by the type of institution. The “other” category mainly includes donations of publications and funding from the budgets of municipalities.

FIGURE 14

## Sources of funding for environmental libraries



The high percentage of state funding is due to the fact that 68 percent of environmental libraries are located in enforcement agencies/inspection agencies, national/local governments, public libraries and universities, which clearly receive their primary funding from state budgets. In enforcement agencies and inspection agencies, state funding for environmental libraries accounts for 88 percent of the funding for libraries, while in the other three types of institutions mentioned above, it is 67, 65 and 62 percent, respectively.

Project grants are commonly used funding sources for libraries of international organisations (43 percent), followed by NGOs (38 percent). State funded institutions, while not relying on grants, use this type of funding as well, at 3-8 percent (see Figure 15).

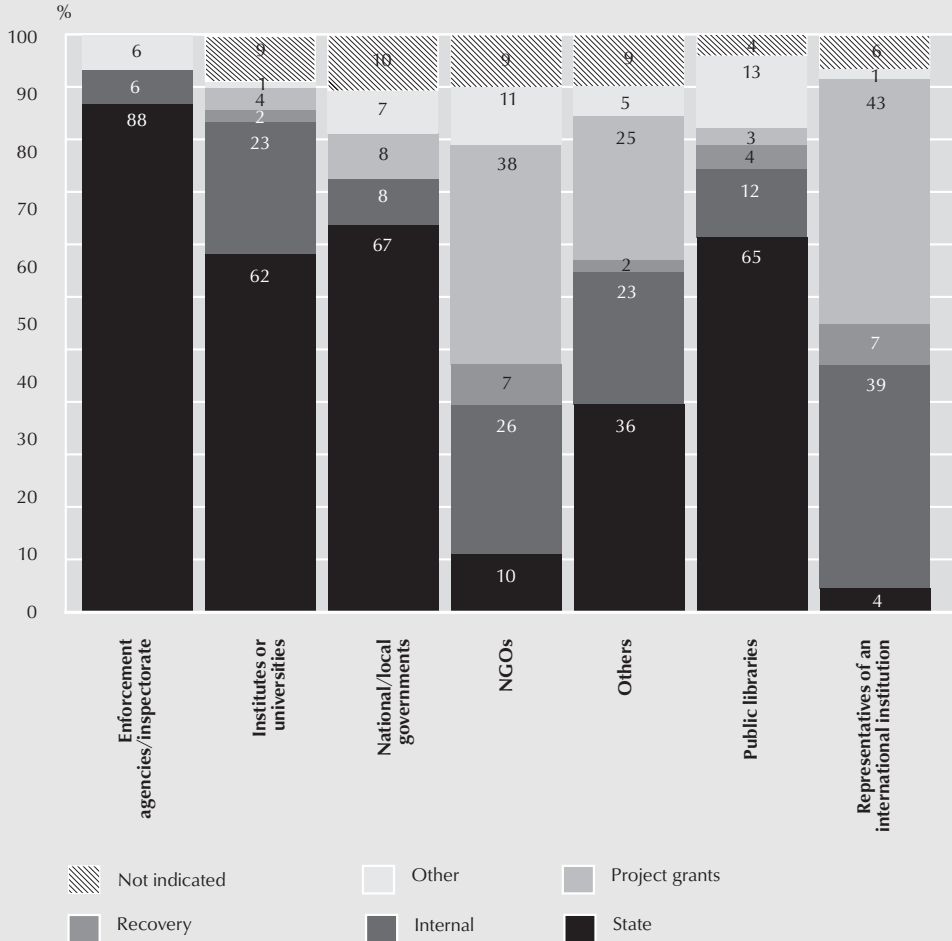
Cost recovery (e.g. the charge for services or membership fees) is the least

used source of funding for environmental libraries (3 percent). Again, representatives of international organisations and NGOs rely more on recovery (each fund the libraries with 7 percent from recovery) than other institutions do.

None of the libraries of national/local government or enforcement agency/inspection agencies indicated that they collect membership fees, while this is a practice among 53 percent of public libraries, 26 percent of institutes/universities and 22 percent of NGOs. The membership or annual fees range from less than EUR 1 to more than EUR 10. For example, in the National Library of Latvia, the membership fee is EUR 1 for five years; in Medvescak Public Library in Croatia it is EUR 6.5. The J.E. Purkyne University, Library of Faculty of Environmental Studies (Czech Republic) collects annual membership fee equal to EUR 1.5, in Osijek Public and University Library (Croatia) it is EUR 11.

FIGURE 15

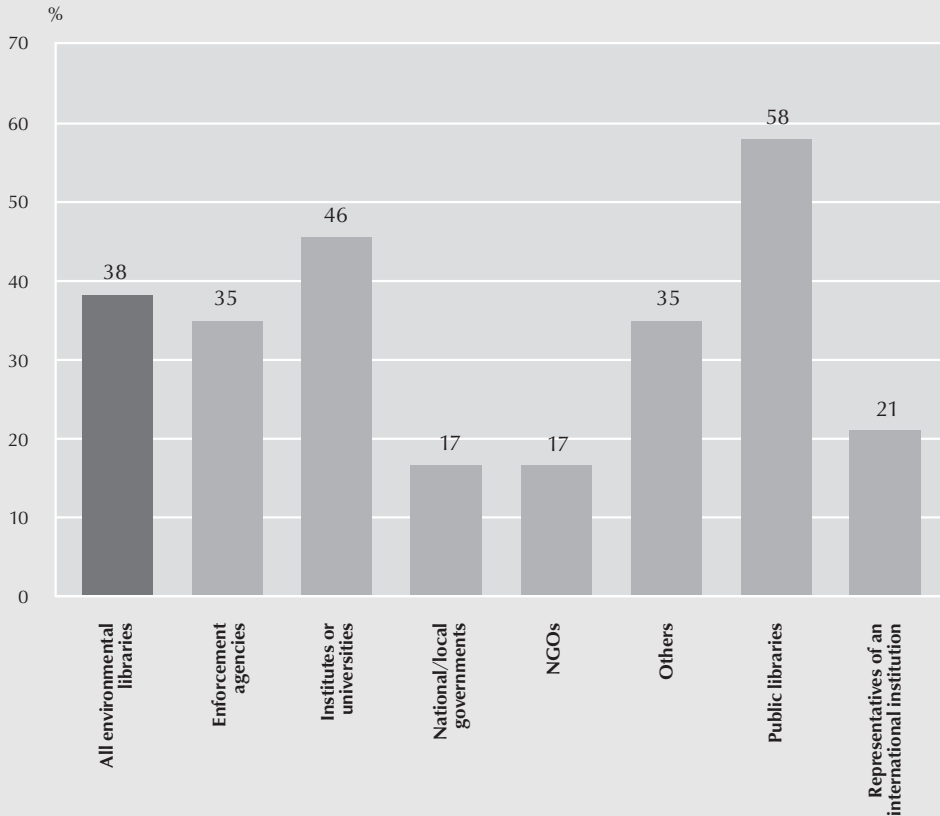
### Sources of funding for environmental libraries by type of institution



KEY FINDINGS

FIGURE 16

### Percentage of institutions where maintaining an environmental information collection is not a priority



## Needs, priorities and obstacles

### Environmental information collections as a priority

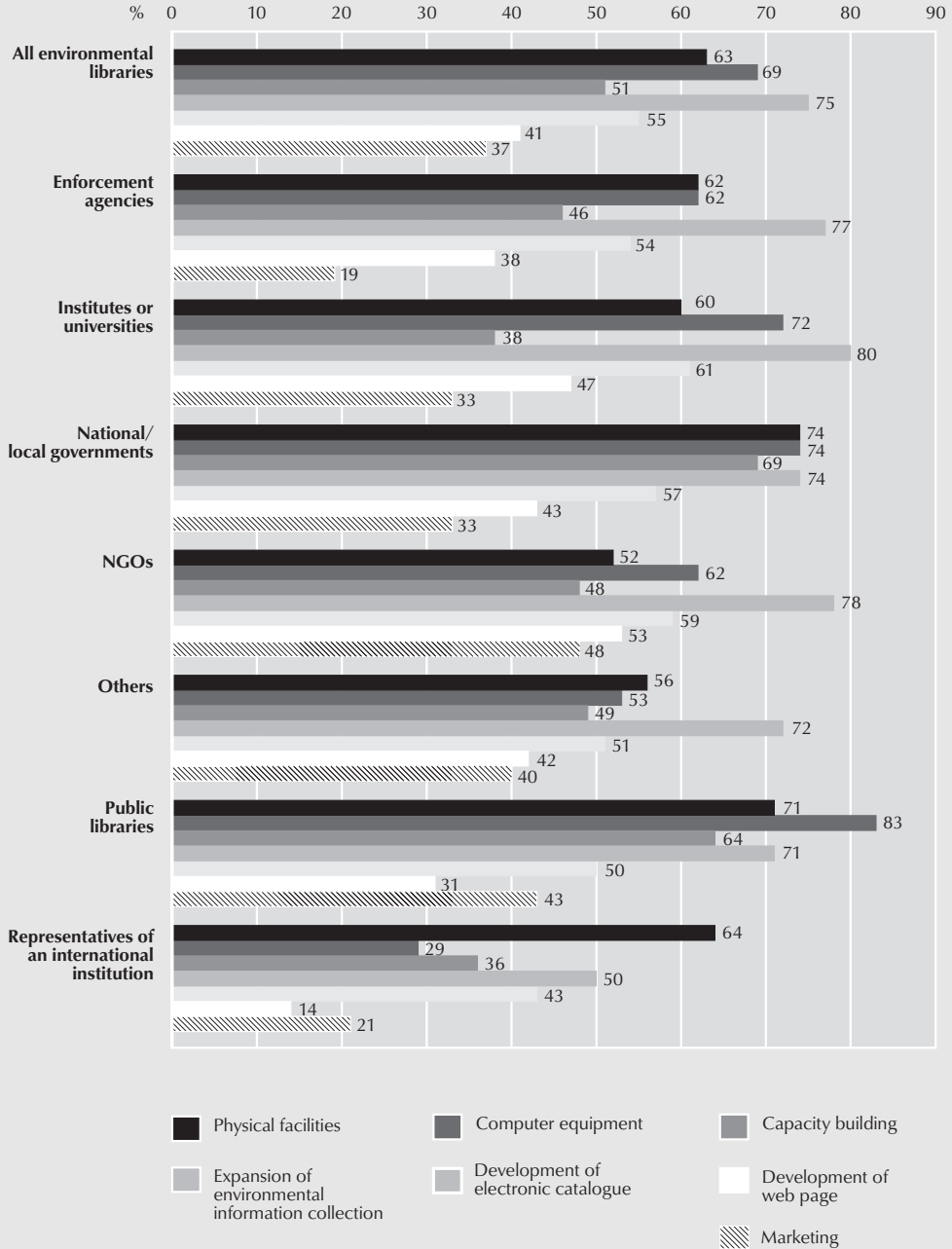
Figure 16 shows that only 17 percent of national/local governmental institutions and NGOs, and 21 percent of representatives of international institutions from all that are included into this directory stated that maintaining environmental information collections is not a priority. Thirty-five percent of enforcement agencies/inspectorates stated the same. These low percentages indicate that among those types

of institutions the existence of environmental libraries is generally a priority. It is important not to forget that, for most of them, having an environmental library is just one of many activities.

A different situation exists among public libraries and the libraries of institutes/universities where collections of environmental information have much less priority over other topical collections. Fifty-eight percent of public libraries and 45 percent of institutes/universities indicated that maintaining environmental information collections was a low priority.

FIGURE 17

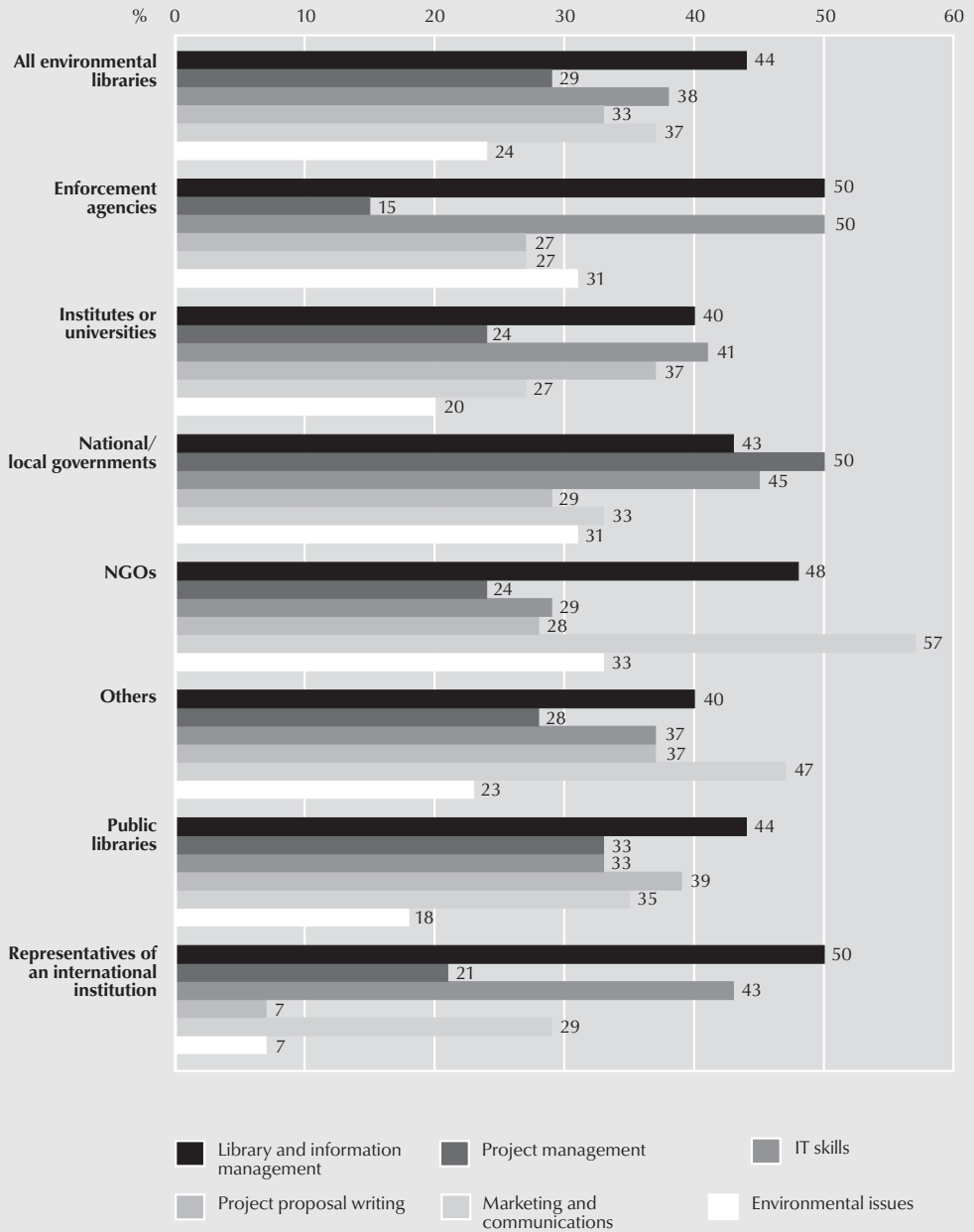
Priority needs of environmental libraries (percent of total)



KEY FINDINGS

**FIGURE 18**

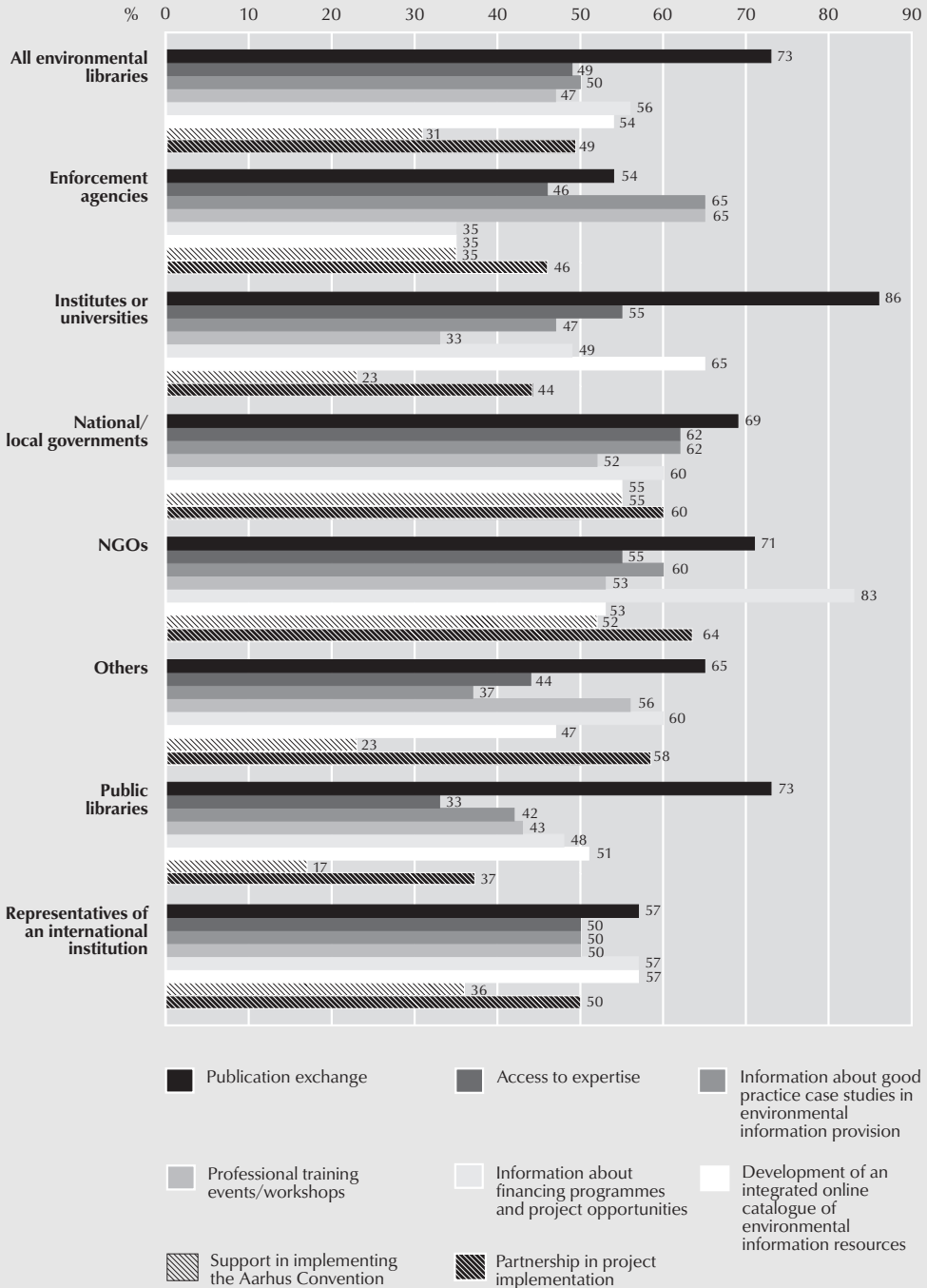
**Priority areas for capacity building of environmental libraries (percent of total)**



KEY FINDINGS

FIGURE 19

### Priority areas for cooperation with other organisations dealing with environmental information



KEY FINDINGS

## Priority needs of environmental libraries

Environmental libraries across the region illustrated their priority needs as follows: expansion of environmental information collection — 75 percent, acquisition of computer equipment (software and hardware) — 69 percent, and expansion of physical facilities (space, shelves and the like) — 63 percent. Figure 17 provides more information, including other priority needs such as development of an electronic catalogue, capacity building and the development of a web page. The figure indicates that marketing of the library services is more of a priority to NGOs, while national/local governments and enforcement agencies/inspectionates prioritise it less. Capacity building is one of the higher priorities of national/local governments (69 percent) and public libraries (64 percent). Acquisition of computer equipment is the highest priority for public libraries (83 percent) and is highly rated by the national/local governments (74 percent). National/local governments are also in need of physical facilities (74 percent), which is among the priorities of public libraries as well (71 percent). The expansion of environmental information collection is clearly a priority for NGOs and enforcement agencies/inspectionates.

## Need for capacity building

Capacity building of environmental information specialists was mentioned as a priority need by half of the libraries. However, some respondents ticked concrete topics for capacity building without listing it among their priority needs. It can be inferred then that in total 87 percent of the institutions are interested in capacity building. Library and information management deserves most interest among the topics, followed by the

strengthening of information technology (IT) related skills, and marketing and communications (see Figure 18).

Library and information management is among the highest priorities in capacity building for all types of organisations. It is the highest priority of representatives of international institutions, public libraries and enforcement agencies/inspectionates. Enforcement agencies/inspectionates similarly prioritise the strengthening of IT skills; for the national/local governments it is second in importance among seven; for institutes and universities it is number one.

Capacity building in the management of environmental information projects is the highest priority for national/local governments. Public libraries are highly interested in development of skills for project proposal writing.

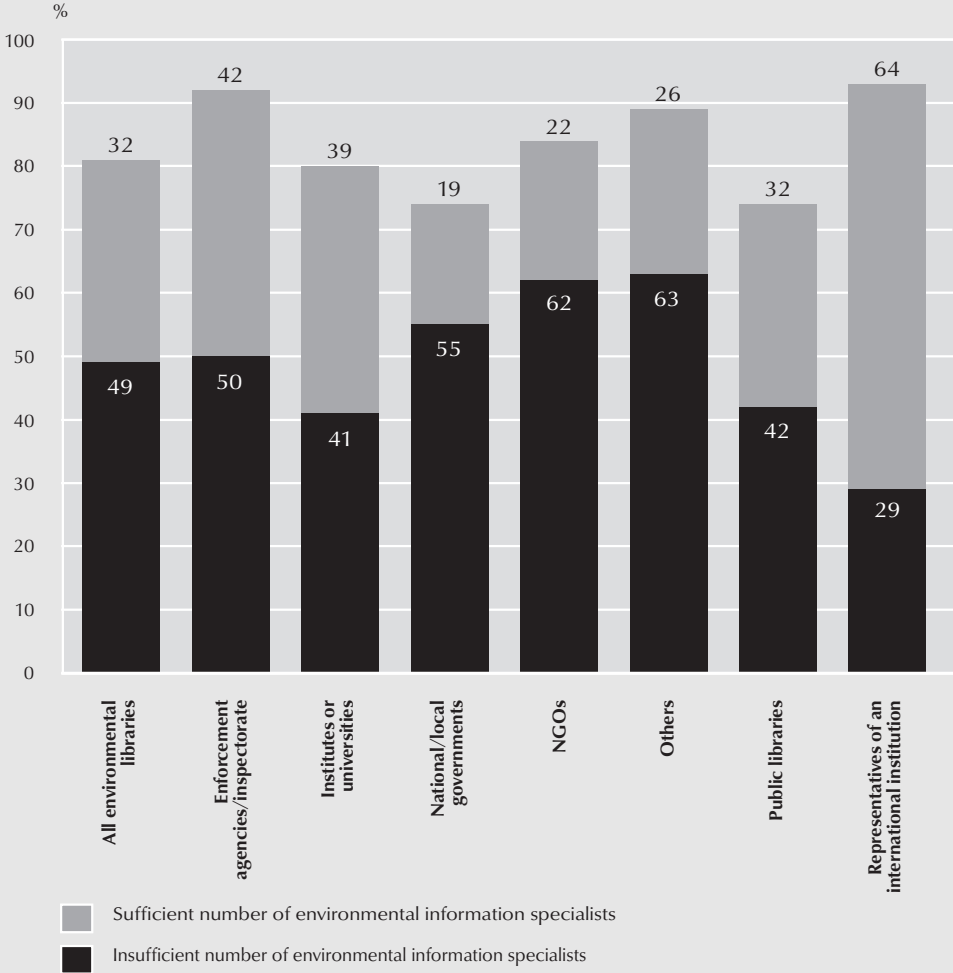
Among the environmental issues in need of capacity building, specific environmental topics such as water, biodiversity, waste, and forest protection were listed most often. Many topics were mentioned by one or two organisations, e.g. environmental policy and law, environmental communication and education, NGOs participation, and environmental information resource management. A similar example is Baia Mare City Hall's need for capacity building in implementing the Aarhus Convention and interest in better understanding European structures in information management.

## Priorities for cooperation

Ninety-six percent of the libraries surveyed indicated interest in cooperating with other environmental libraries. Three quarters of them indicated that they could benefit from sharing books free of charge with other organisations that are dealing with environmental information. Half or more of all respondents are interested in

FIGURE 20

### Need for environmental information specialists by type of institution



KEY FINDINGS

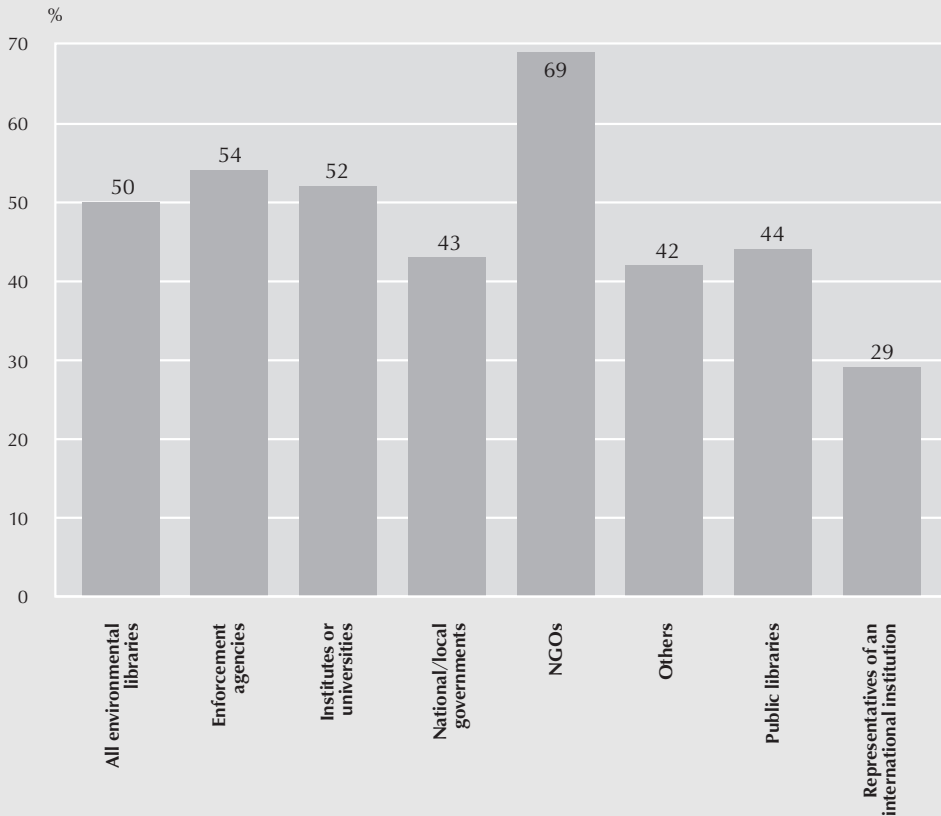
sharing information about financing programmes and project opportunities for the development of environmental libraries, developing an integrated online catalogue of environmental information resources in Central and Eastern Europe and receiving or exchanging information about good practice case studies in environmental information provision. Figure

19 provides an overview of all priority areas for cooperation.

Figure 19 shows that 55 percent of national/local governments and 35 percent of enforcement agencies/inspectorates would cooperate with other organisations to obtain support in implementing the Aarhus Convention. Although this topic is of interest to 52

FIGURE 21

### Percentage of institutions claiming current funding is insufficient to maintain an up-to-date, relevant collection of environmental resources



percent of NGOs, the motivation in this case should be rather different — NGOs could act as watchdogs over implementation and benefit from the rights given by the Aarhus Convention. It is worth noting that both national/local governments and enforcement agencies/inspectorates are highly interested in receiving information about good practice case studies in environmental information provision (62 and 65 percent, respectively), which is closely in line with the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

Partnership in project implementation for developing environmental libraries is most interesting to NGOs and national/local governments. Professional training events/workshops on the environmental information subjects are the most attractive to enforcement agencies/inspectorates.

### Challenges and obstacles

While 53 percent of libraries have an electronic catalogue, 14 of them claim there is no need for it. The remaining 146 libraries indicated that they do not have

an electronic catalogue for the following reasons: for 83 percent an obstacle is limited funds, 51 percent have an insufficient number of employees and 32 percent have insufficient skills among the staff.

Half of the respondents indicated that the number of environmental information specialists is insufficient in their environmental library. The lack of environmental information specialists is most felt at environmental libraries of national/local governments and NGOs (see Figure 20).

As mentioned before, only a quarter of environmental libraries update their collections weekly and only a third of the surveyed libraries indicated they have adequate environmental information resources to answer most of the queries they receive. Not surprisingly, a majority of the institutions (82 percent) expressed dissatisfaction with the frequency of updates. The number of titles acquired could be increased through: financial resources (indicated by 95 percent of institutions), information about relevant publications (58 percent), physical facilities (40 percent) and more employees (33 percent).

Half of the institutions expressed a concern that current funding is hardly sufficient to maintain an up-to-date, relevant collection of environmental resources. See Figure 21 for more details.

## Conclusions and recommendations

This section summarises the main findings of the research to provide recommendations on how the environmental libraries in Central and Eastern Europe could be developed.

- Many environmental libraries have small collections that are in need of development. Sixty-nine percent of respondents have less than 1,000 items in their collection, only 38 percent claim to have at least one-fifth of their environmental information published after 1995, and 33 percent have adequate environmental information resources to answer most of the queries they receive.
- Environmental libraries at national/local governments and enforcement agencies/inspectionates are not fully employed to meet the requirements of the Aarhus Convention, as only a limited number of them (45 and 58 percent, respectively) have adequate information resources to answer the queries they receive, and slightly more than half (52 and 54 percent) have information on opportunities to participate in decision-making processes, including the time and venue.
- Only 18 percent of institutions update their collection with environmental information on a weekly basis. The majority of environmental libraries (82 percent) are dissatisfied with the frequency with which their collections are updated; 95 percent stated that financial resources are necessary to increase the frequency, while 58 percent indicated that they need more information about relevant publications.
- Forty-nine percent of the libraries need more employees dealing with environmental information.
- In general, national/local governments and NGOs consider maintaining their environmental information collections a priority. Only 17 percent of respondents among these groups stated that it is not a priority for them, while the same was said by 58 percent of public libraries.
- Environmental libraries across the region illustrated their priority needs as follows: expansion of the environ-

- mental information collection — 75 percent, acquisition of computer equipment (software and hardware) — 69 percent, and expansion of physical facilities (space, shelves and the like) — 63 percent.
- The need for capacity building of environmental information specialists is very high (indicated by 87 percent of respondents), especially in the fields of environmental library and information management (44 percent), information technology skills (38 percent) and marketing of libraries and their environmental information services (37 percent).
  - Nearly every library (96 percent) stated that they would benefit from cooperation with other organisations dealing with environmental information, especially in the sharing of books free of charge with other organisations (73 percent). Other priorities for cooperation are: information about financing programmes and project opportunities (56 percent), development of an integrated online catalogue of environmental information resources (54 percent) and information about good practice case studies in environmental information provision (50 percent).
  - The marketing of environmental library services to external users is neither practised extensively (by 28 percent of libraries only) nor perceived as a priority by the respondents. Marketing is last among the needs of the libraries (37 percent), and the same amount of institutions need capacity building on this topic.
  - E-mail is an appropriate medium for communication for 98 percent of environmental libraries, and the most suitable language is English, which is spoken in four-fifths of the libraries.
  - Libraries at enforcement agencies/ inspectorates would benefit from receiving information about good practice case studies in environmental information provision, from professional training events/workshops (65 percent each) and from publication exchange (54 percent). The most common priority needs in this group are: expansion of environmental information collection (77 percent), computer equipment and physical facilities (62 percent each). Both environmental library and information management and IT skills are priority needs for capacity building (50 percent).
  - Libraries at national/local governments would benefit from publication exchange (69 percent) as well as from receiving information about good practice case studies in environmental information provision and access to expertise of environmental professionals (62 percent each). The most common priority needs in this group are: expansion of the environmental information collection, physical facilities and computer equipment (74 percent each). Priorities for capacity building are management of environmental information projects (50 percent) and the development of IT skills (45 percent).
  - Public libraries would benefit from publication exchange (73 percent), development of an integrated online catalogue of environmental information resources (51 percent), and information about financing programmes and project opportunities (48 percent). The most common priority needs in this group are: computer equipment (83 percent), physical facilities (71 percent), and expansion of environmental information collection (71 percent). Priorities for capacity building are

# Annex Questionnaire

## QUESTIONNAIRE

# Annex Questionnaire

## Questionnaire

### 1 GENERAL INFORMATION: DESCRIPTION OF YOUR INSTITUTION

#### 1.1 Your organisation:

(Please tick only one. Choose the description that is the closest to your organisation.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental information unit within national/local government   | <input type="checkbox"/> NGO environmental resource centre/library                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental information unit within enforcement agency/inspectorate   | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental library within scientific/technical institute or university |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public library  | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent environmental library   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National office/focal point of an international institution (e.g. European Commission Information Centre, UNEP-INFOTERRA focal point, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below)  |
- 

#### 1.2 Contact details:

Key contact person  Ms  Mr    
(to whom information requests can be addressed) Name Surname

Language of your institution:

Other languages spoken  English  Russian  
 German  Other (please specify):

Name of your organisation in local language (please use only Latin characters):

Name of your organisation in English:

Mailing address:

Street address City Postal code Country Telephone:      Country code      Area code      Number  
1:                                2:                    *(The same as above)*      Fax                    *(The same as above)*      E-mail URL 1 (organisation web address) http:// URL 2 (library catalogue/online resources) http:// 

---

**1.3 Is your library/information unit a member of an existing association/network of libraries?** Yes     No

If yes, please indicate the name and web address of the association/network below:

http:// 

---

**1.4 In which year was your library/information unit founded?**

**1.5 Employees:**

How many people are employed by your organisation?

Of this number, how many are specialists in environmental information?

Do you think the number of staff specialised in environmental information is sufficient?

Yes  No

If no, how many are needed?

**1.6 At what times are your information services open to the public?**

Weekdays from  to

Weekends from  to

Other (*please specify below*):

## 2 COLLECTIONS AND RESOURCES OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

### 2.1 What types of environmental information resources do you maintain, and how many?

Please indicate the number of titles of environmental information resources you possess (and not the total number of holdings) and what percentage of this number are in English.

Type of publication	Number of titles (please round off)	Percentage in English (approximate)
Books	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Periodicals (journals, magazines)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Reference material (dictionaries, atlases, monographs)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Grey literature/reports	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Maps	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Audio and video material	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
CD-ROMs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Electronic databases and directories	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Microfilms	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
GIS datasets	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
Other (please specify):	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> %

### 2.2 Please indicate the environmental topics covered by your library/information unit.

(Please tick all relevant categories.)

**National monitoring data regarding:**

- Air quality
- Soil quality
- Water quality

Biodiversity and landscapes Industrial emissions**Environmental assessments, sustainable solutions and practical responses:** Environmental pressures and environmental damage in your country (e.g. transport pollution, energy production and use, waste, tourism, etc.) Global environmental problems (e.g. climate change, eutrophication, etc.) Environmental legislation, policies, strategies (national and international) Environmental technologies and environmental management systems/standards (e.g. cleaner production technologies, EMAS, ISO 14001) Educational resources (e.g. eco-friendly purchasing, energy saving) Emergency response procedures/accident preparedness**Reference information about environmental stakeholders and events:** Non-governmental/non-profit organisations Environmental product manufacturers and service providers (including consultants) Environmental professionals (e.g. government officials, lawyers, journalists, researchers, experts) Industrial polluters International financing/assistance programmes Opportunities to participate in decision-making processes including the time and venue (e.g. related to investments with environmental impact, policies, legislation) Environmental events (e.g. exhibitions, seminars, conferences)

---

**2.3 How regularly do you update your environmental information collection?** Weekly  Quarterly Monthly  Once per year or less often

---

## 2.4 How many publication titles related to the environment do you acquire per year?

## 2.5 Are you satisfied with the frequency with which you update your collection and the number of new titles you acquire?

Yes  No

If no, what would you need to increase the frequency/number of titles?  
(You may tick more than one.)

- Physical facilities (space, shelves)  More employees  
 Financial resources for acquisitions  Information about relevant publications  
 Other (please specify below)

## 2.6 Level of automation: Do you have an electronic catalogue of your information resources?

Yes

If yes, what type of software do you use? (Please specify the name, the version and the year.)

Does this software satisfy the needs of staff and visitors?

Yes  No

No

If no, what are the reasons?  
(You may tick more than one option.)

- There is no need  
 Limited funds  
 Insufficient number of employees  
 Insufficient skills of staff for setting up and/or operating the electronic catalogue.

## Questionnaire

## 3 SERVICES AND USAGE

## 3.1 Which principal services do you offer?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On-site reading facilities    | <input type="checkbox"/> Lending services                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reservation services          | <input type="checkbox"/> Interlibrary loans                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open access shelving          | <input type="checkbox"/> Photocopying                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reference services            | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer facilities (including online access)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting/conference facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to environmental information via website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below): | <input type="text"/>   |

## 3.2 Who are the main clients/users of your environmental information services?

(Please tick all the appropriate user groups on the left.)

(Please rank in order of importance: 1, 2, 3, etc., where 1 is the most significant user group, 2 is less significant, 3 is even less significant, etc. Please do not assign the same number to different groups)

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government officials                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NGOs and other non-profit organisations | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business and economic community         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Media                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private persons                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify below)                                     |                          |
| <input type="text"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="text"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="text"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Questionnaire**

**3.3 Do your clients have to become members of your institution to use your services?**

Yes  No

If yes, are any groups exempt? Please indicate who:

If there is a membership fee, how much is it in euros?

For becoming a member  EUR    For annual membership  EUR

For a single time visit  EUR

---

**3.4 Number of visitors and requests:**

What is the average number of environmental information related requests handled per month by e-mail, phone, fax?

What is the average number of visitors received per month?

QUESTIONNAIRE

## Questionnaire

## 4 YOUR LIBRARY/INFORMATION UNIT AND ITS NEEDS

**4.1 Where does funding for your library/information unit come from?***(Please indicate the applicable percentage for each source.)*

State budget	<input type="text"/>	%
Organisation's internal budget (non-state funded)	<input type="text"/>	%
Cost recovery through client services, membership fees, etc.	<input type="text"/>	%
Project(s) financed by donors (both foreign and national)	<input type="text"/>	%
Other (please specify the source and the percentage below)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	%
	<input type="text"/>	%

**4.2 What is the annual budget of your library/information unit for environmental information resource acquisition in euros?***(Optional)*
 EUR
**4.3 What are the most urgent needs of your library/information unit?***(Please tick all the appropriate boxes on the left)**(Please rank in order of importance: 1, 2, 3, etc., where 1 is the most significant user group, 2 is less significant, 3 is even less significant, etc. Please do not assign the same number to different items)*

<input type="checkbox"/> Physical facilities (space, shelves, etc.)	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer equipment (hardware and software)	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Expansion of environmental information collection	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Development of electronic catalogue	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Development of webpage	<input type="text"/>

<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing	<input type="text"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**4.4 Do you cooperate with other environmental information resource centers (common projects, publication exchange, etc)?**

Yes       No

**4.5 In which areas could you benefit from cooperation with other organisations dealing with environmental information (e.g. the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe)?**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publication exchange  | <input type="checkbox"/> Information about good practice case studies in environmental information provision                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to expertise of environmental professionals  | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional training events/workshops   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information about financing programmes and project opportunities  | <input type="checkbox"/> Development of an integrated online catalogue of environmental information resources in Central and Eastern Europe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support in implementing the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention) | <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership in project implementation  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify below):  |

QUESTIONNAIRE

#### 4.6 If capacity building of environmental information specialists in your organisation is needed, which fields are the most important?

*(You may choose more than one category.)*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library and information management | <input type="checkbox"/> Project management                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information technology skills      | <input type="checkbox"/> Project proposal writing            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing and communications       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please specify below)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental issues               |  |