
IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI)

Information
package

August 2016



European Union Network for the Implementation
and Enforcement of Environmental Law



Table of contents

1	<i>Why have an IRI?</i> _____	3
2	<i>The real costs of an IRI</i> _____	4
3	<i>How to organise an IRI</i> _____	5
4	<i>Roles and responsibilities</i> _____	8
5	<i>What is it like to have an IRI? The view from Portugal</i> _____	10



1 What is an IRI?

The IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI) is a voluntary peer review where environmental authorities of IMPEL member countries help each other to improve the implementation of EU environmental law. By having an IRI, the host gets free advice for further improvement of their work and best practices are exchanged around the European community.

2 Why have an IRI?



*“There is no doubt about the value of the IRI process for the host country and also those taking part in the review. The question is not **if** an IRI is a valuable instrument, the question is **how** to update, market and organise reviews in such a way that they will appeal to a larger audience than it has done so far”.*

(Patricia Weenink, IRI Review Programme Manager & IRI Ambassador).

10 reasons why every environmental authority should want an IRI

1. IRI helps you work in line with EU regulation.
2. By taking part in an IRI, you take part in IMPEL’s core activity.
3. IRI shares good practice and language is not a barrier.
4. IRI offers your organisation inexpensive, fast and professional support.
5. During an IRI you get advice, not instructions.
6. IRI offers an open discussion to help develop good practice.
7. IRI gives good value for your money and your time.
8. IRI gives you a fresh perspective on your organisation.
9. The host, review team and IMPEL members benefit from an IRI.
10. Enhance your reputation within the EU ... take on an IRI!



3 The real costs of an IRI

One concern that is consistently mentioned when countries consider having an IRI are the costs. The financial cost (€) of an IRI is relatively low. The most significant cost is time resource, for example the staff resource to plan and execute the IRI as a host.

Additional services such as translation and training will increase the costs of an IRI. This represents excellent value for money as all the time given by participants is given for free. Costs of reviews therefore should not be a negative factor when deciding to have a review.

IMPEL	Host
Preparatory meeting: Travel and hotel for team leader and rapporteur	Preparatory meeting: Dinner (1 or 2 evenings)
Project: Travel for 7 participants Hotel for 7 participants Dinner, (2 or 3 evenings)	Project: Dinner, (1 or 2 evenings) Daily transport from hotel to meeting (if not in walking distance) Lunch & Coffee breaks
	Optional: Interpreters during the project English course for colleagues Consultant Translation of the report in own language



4 How to organise an IRI

Getting started

Once an environmental authority has been convinced of the benefits of an IRI then the process of organising the review can begin.

Tasks to get started with the review	Responsible
<p>Go to the IRI page on the IMPEL website and get in touch with an IRI Ambassador.</p> <p>The IRI Ambassadors are: Simon Bingham, Michael Nicholson and Patricia Weenink.</p>	IRI Host
The Ambassador will contact you and discuss your plans. The Ambassador will also help you draft a Terms of Reference (ToR) and appoint a Team Leader and a Rapporteur to your IRI	IRI Ambassador
Write and present ToR to Expert Team and General Assembly	Expert Team Leader
Identify participants: whom do you want to invite to your IRI?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRI candidate, in consultation with ambassador and team leader. • In review team one participant from host country! • Team maximum 7 participants (including team leader and rapporteur).
<p>In advance of the IRI, there will be a 1-day Preparatory meeting. During this meeting the scope of the IRI will be agreed as well as what preparatory work will be needed to be carried out in advance of the IRI review itself. It is not necessary to translate large legislative documents for an IRI!</p> <p>The preparatory meeting is also an opportunity for the Team Leader and rapporteur to meet with senior management to gain 'buy-in' and support for the IRI process and to invite them to take part.</p>	Team Leader and rapporteur with the Hosts of the review (including senior management)
Send information to project team, including completed "Chapter A" of questionnaire.	Team Leader and rapporteur.



During the review

Tasks during the review	Responsible
Review team meeting to discuss expectations and targets for the review. 1-2 hours the evening before the project starts	Review team
Review: The team leader will lead the review. He may invite members of the review team to lead on certain sections depending on their expertise. The host may wish to present an overview for sections of the questionnaire to set the scene for the presentations. The review team will discuss the findings at the end of the day and agree on the points of best practice and areas for development. They will briefly discuss this at the beginning of the following day after having had a chance to sleep on what they have learned!	Review team and IRI host
Write draft report	Rapporteur
Discuss draft report with review team. Draft report of each day will be discussed within the project team the next morning. Text of chapters A and B are provided by host in such a way that they can easily be included in the report.	Review team
Discuss draft report with host – on the last day of the review	Team Leader and rapporteurs and IRI host
Finalise draft report	Team Leader and rapporteurs and IRI host
Presentation of draft report to host at the end of the project. The host could select colleagues that would be interested in hearing the findings of the project, to attend.	Team Leader



After the review

Tasks after the project	Responsible
Finalise report	Team Leader and Rapporteur
Present report to Expert Team	Host
Present report to General Assembly for approval	Host
Finalise financial matters	Host and IMPEL Secretariat
Write article for IMPEL website	Host and Team Leader



5 Roles and responsibilities

Ambassadors

It is important for the host to talk to the “IRI Ambassador” early on in the process to get an idea of what is involved and avoid setting off on the wrong track.

Role of the IRI Ambassador:

- First point of contact for host when thinking about having an IRI
- Plan the IRI and timing
- Help draft the ToR
- After approval, help put together the review team
- Once team leader and team members are appointed they take responsibility for the review but the Ambassador remains available to provide advice

Team Leaders

Once the IRI project has been approved by the General Assembly the review team leader can be selected.

Qualifications for a team leader:

- Needs to be a good Chair person
- Encourages all review team members to participate and contribute
- Experience with previous IRI
- Good use of English
- Diplomatic.

Team Members

The review team should have a maximum of 7 members and this should include at least one experienced team member and someone from an upcoming IRI. It was noted that in previous reviews it has been useful to have a member of the host authority on the review team. They can help with points of accuracy as well as any translation issues. It also shows that the review team is working in cooperation with the environmental authority during the review and that there will be no shocks.

Qualifications for team members

- Familiar with IRI guidance, Doing The Right Things methodology and IRI questionnaire before review
- Knowledge of relevant issues of inspection and permitting
- Actively participates in discussions
- Is confident to speak in English.



Rapporteurs

Ideally two rapporteurs would be chosen for a review. This helps share the burden of capturing the points during discussions and writing the report. One of them should have participated in a previous IRI. Both should be working in an environmental authority or have a good knowledge of the subject.

Both team leader and rapporteur will need to have a good level of spoken and written English. It would also be beneficial if one rapporteur had a good knowledge of the language of the host country.

Qualifications for a rapporteur:

- Is able to write good notes and write up into a report in English
- Has knowledge of the subject matter
- Is also a participant in the project and takes part in discussions.



6 What is it like to have an IRI? The view from Portugal

Isabel Santana works in the inspection department at the Ministry of Environment and Territorial Planning in Lisbon. She is also the Portuguese national IMPEL coordinator. Here she shares her experience of the review that took place in Portugal in October 2009.

Why did you decide to have an IRI?

“We decided to host an IRI because I understood that it would be the best way to show the high management of the Inspectorate the things that we needed to improve in our organisation. It’s also an unique opportunity to have an international team of experts analysing the way you do things to find out how you can make it more efficient.”

What was it like having a review team in your organisation for 4 days?!

“You have to be aware that during those 4 days almost everything else in your own organisation has to wait until the IRI is over. It completely involves the host team and other people in your organisation. It’s important to have the support of senior management. It’s also important that the people in your organization that are involved in the review week, are aware of the objectives and importance of having the IRI so that you can get full internal cooperation. It’s always “extra” work that you are asking for, so people show a better attitude towards it if they really understand the meaning of having an IRI and the advantages that it can deliver.”



Isabel (centre) and the members of the Portugal IRI review team



Was the review useful for the staff that took part?

“Yes. The IRI was also an opportunity for the staff to “stop” and think about their own organization and about the reason certain procedures are in place. It also enables staff have a “helicopter” view of their own organization because they clearly see how the work that they develop is linked to other colleagues’ work and how we are all working for the same overall goal.”

What has changed as a result of the review?

“The major recommendations of the IRI were taken into account in our 2010 activity plan, which means that they will actually be implemented in the Inspectorate. In the beginning of March 2010, the OECD evaluated the performance of the Portuguese environmental policies (OECD Environmental Performance Review of Portugal) and IGAOT was one of the chosen authorities to contribute to that process. The IRI results helped us to show OECD how our Inspectorate is performing.”

How would you rate the experience overall?

“Very positive. Inspiring. Broadens the horizons. Contributes to improve the organisation culture.”

“Any funny/ interesting stories from the review?”

The chosen restaurant for the lunches did not have a great variety of vegetarian food. So our team leader, Simon Bingham, had to eat eggs every single day. We were afraid that he would become a chicken in the end of the review. So it’s important to be aware of the diet requirements of the members of review team in order to have everyone satisfied!”

Would you do it again?

“Yes, but after having fully implemented the previous IRI recommendations.”

Any suggestions for improving the scheme?

“Having more support from IMPEL in the preparation phase (beginning with the establishment of the review team), having special attention with the experts that are part of the review teams (every member of the review team has to be aware of what an IRI and has to know the DTRT methodology). Having some kind of support from IMPEL to implement the recommendations of the IRI. Disseminate the major conclusions of the IRI on the IMPEL website in a “technical resume” (this would be easier to read than the whole final report of the IRI).*”

**Note: These suggestions were considered in the project to provide further support the new scheme*