

Abstract

The focus of this master thesis is the concept of environmental democracy at the level of the Aarhus convention. Environmental democracy rights which are the rights to access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters were mentioned for the first time at the global level in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in 1992. With this Principle the main role of public participation in decision-making in environmental matters was acknowledged and it had a significant impact on fulfillment of sustainable development goals. To these days the most important elaboration of Principle 10 in international law is Aarhus Convention signed within the framework of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in 1998.

Main research question of this thesis is if it is possible to measure environmental democracy on the level of the region of UNECE, so the implementation of the Aarhus Convention provisions by its member states. Therefore, the research problem is the creation of the theoretical framework and the methodological procedure for building of composite indicator which will measure environmental democracy rights at the level of Aarhus convention. That will be demonstrated on the first pillar of the Convention. This thesis is of a theoretical nature. For meeting the set goal, it uses the qualitative research methods and procedures, which are content analysis and method of building composite indicator demonstrated on the first pillar of the Convention. In this thesis there was created the conceptualization and operationalization of the provisions of the first pillar of the Aarhus Convention (Article 4 and 5) into measurable indicators and an evaluation framework for their interpretation.

Outcome of this master thesis is the theoretical framework and the methodological procedure for the creation of the indicators for the first pillar of the Convention and their evaluation. That can be used also for the creation of indicators measuring implementation of its other two pillars. That will lead to the building of the Environmental Democracy Index based on Aarhus Convention, which will be constructed by Czech NGO Arnika.