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Open Access Legal-Environmental Information Sources in Spain and Europe

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ABSTRACT: Effective understanding and study of legal issues related to the environment require access to reliable and high-quality sources of information (mainly, legislation, case law, and doctrine). This article provides an organised presentation of the main Open Access sources of legal-environmental information in Spain and Europe.

It is an exploratory, descriptive and qualitative study, based on the practical experience of the author as a documentalist in an environmental law research centre. The article describes law and case law databases (the official bulletins), official institutions and public research centres, journals, blogs and bulletins. It is highlighted that there is no official database of environmental law, therefore it is necessary to search using the general sources of law.

In general, these sources provide access to official documents, or to information created or reviewed by experts, and they are regularly updated. Open Access to these sources is essential as it enhances transparency in the field of research in environmental law, in line with Sustainable Development Goals, resulting in an improvement in legal frameworks.

KEYWORDS: Information sources. Environmental law. Legal information. Environmental information.

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INTRODUCTION

The ISO 9000:2015 defines “information” as “meaningful data”, considering data as “facts about an object”, and object as “anything perceivable or conceivable”. However, data is just data; it is its cognitive use that gives it an actual meaning, turning it into useful information.

Legal information is “that generated in the creation, application, spreading or researching of Law” (Maciá Gómez, 1998). From this definition, it can be understood that legal information encompasses all that has been generated during the legislative process: from its creation to its application, including related documentation. Traditionally, legal information has been classified into three types:

- Legislative: law in its wider sense: rules, laws, decrees, rules, etc. Institutions are obliged to publish the promulgated dispositions through official bulletins, and this law is compulsory for all citizens of a region.
- Judicial: includes all the case law from any judicial body. Spanish jurisprudence is established by the rulings of the Supreme Court when at least two of these rulings interpret the law in the same way. Case law from other courts is considered minor jurisprudence; it does not settle a precedent but can be consulted for informational purposes (Gutiérrez Gutierrez, 2015). This category also includes official publications from the Consejo General del Poder Judicial (Rodríguez Benito, 2020) and other justice organisms (such as the European Court of Human Rights, ECHR, or the Court of Justice of the European Union, CJEU).
- Doctrine: legal doctrine refers to the intellectual works that review, criticise and/or improve the legal system, as well as those that analyse rulings from various courts, including theses, papers, monographs, reports, and similar works.

All this information is found in their equivalent documents and is stored in specialised primary information sources. Other authors (Páez

Maña, 1991; Mikelarena Peña, 2001) add a fourth category, “parliamentary information”, which pertains to the interventions of parliamentarians during sessions to draft legislation and other acts; however, this information can also be included under legislative information.

For the concept of environmental information, article 2 of the Aarhus Convention defines it as:

“any information in written, visual, aural, electronic or any other material form on:

- a) The state of elements of the environment, such as air and atmosphere, water, soil, land, landscape and natural sites, biological diversity and its components, including genetically modified organisms, and the interaction among these elements;
- b) Facts, such as substances, energy, noise and radiation, and activities or measures including administrative measures, environmental agreements, policies, legislation, plans and programmes, affecting or likely to affect the elements of the environment within the scope of subparagraph (a) above, and cost-benefit and other economic analyses and assumptions used in environmental decision-making;
- c) The state of human health and safety, conditions of human life, cultural sites and built structures, inasmuch as they are or may be affected by the state of the elements of the environment or, through these elements, by the factors, activities or measures referred to in subparagraph (b) above;”

Razquín and Ruiz de Apodaca (2007, p.123) synthesise the definitions from the Aarhus Convention into six summarized categories:

- “a) Environmental elements (air, ground, landscape, biodiversity...).*
- b) Factors (physical or natural agents, substances...).*
- c) Measures (politics, administrative, rules, plans...).*
- d) Reports on the execution of environmental law.*

e) Economic analyses.

f) Health, civil protection and human conditions of living.”.

Environmental information is complex due to its own characteristics. Cueva Martín and Ginés Huertas (2010) highlight the following points:

- Complexity of the concept of “Environment” and the elements and mechanisms involved in it.
- Multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity produce a wide range of sources and dispersion.
- Terminological imprecision.
- Disparity among issuing organisations.

It is important to note that this study is focused on legal-environmental information, which can be defined as information involved in the legislative process, at any of its stages, that affects in any manner the elements or the environment we live in.

Ensuring Open Access to this information is crucial, as it contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals (especially 16.10, guarantee of public access to information). Furthermore, environmental information stands out for its cross-cutting nature, impacting a wide range of fields related to the SDGs and current challenges such as climate change or energy transition. Law serves as both a weapon and a tool to protect the environment and the planet we inhabit.

Reliable information sources are vital to enrich the quality of the information distributed in the media. There is a vast amount of environment-related content in news, radio or TV, but a lack of specialised information sources is noted (Cantero de Julián & Herranz de la Casa, 2023). Moreover, it is confirmed that the use of information sources can breed innovation and sustainability, even if there is still uncertainty of what sources should be used (González Silva & Belmar Castro, 2022). This is

why research on information sources is needed, to clarify which sources are reliable and of quality, and how they can be used.

By the 1990s, several studies had already examined sources of legal environmental information. Creagar (1991) offers a comprehensive handbook on international environmental law sources, from encyclopedias to judicial decisions, including guidelines for developing effective research strategies. Perkins Spyke (1995) compiles a list of secondary sources focused on federal environmental law in the United States. Additionally, Raeder (1997) explores websites that offer general environmental information, some of which include legal resources. However, these studies are now outdated, as the landscape of environmental law and information sources has evolved significantly since then.

In the Spanish context, there is a moderate amount of literature regarding legal information sources. Some studies have focused on legal information databases (Páez Mañá, 1991), official bulletins (Martínez Navarro, 2001), and general legal sources (Mikelarena Peña, 2001). Yet, there is a noticeable gap in the literature, with a lack of studies in subsequent years, until the works of Becerra Pérez and Botía Fuentes (2010), describing an information system for lawyers and clients during legal processes, and Borrajo Félez and Gaspar Fuentes (2011), focusing on an internal information portal for Aragonese parliamentarians. These two studies do not examine general information sources, but rather address specific information services or products for targeted users. More recently, studies by Gutiérrez Gutiérrez (2015), Rodríguez Benito (2020) and López Zamora (2022) have filled this gap, providing updated insights into legal information sources. There are also some studies focused on legal journals and research systems as an information source, such as Sá Osorio (2011), Andrés Aucejo (2017) or Mercadal Cuesta (2024).

There are also studies related to environmental information sources. Cueva Martín and Ginés Huerta (2010) offer a variety of resources (physical and digital) to study the environment in a broader sense, some of them with legal information. Ramos Simón, Arquero Avilés, Cobos Serrano, et al. (2013) examine the information needs of citizens through public administration offices, analysing the format and content of their

websites. There are also studies about environmental information from a bibliometric perspective (Oliveira & Valentim, 2022).

Nevertheless, our objects of study are not purely legal or environmental information sources, but information sources of legal-environmental content. In this context, the study of Drnas de Clément (2010) deserves special attention. The article aims to establish a formal corpus that underpins the theories of International Environmental Law, which, while rooted in Public International Law, possesses its own characteristics. From this legal framework, the relevant information sources can be identified as they serve as the foundation for constructing this system.

As stated, there is a need to effectively communicate environmental issues, and in the case of legal information, reliable and high-quality sources are essential for policymakers, researchers and communicators. While there are works on legal sources and environmental sources separately, there is a notable lack of research on legal-environmental information sources. This justifies the relevance of this paper, which presents and describes legal-environmental information sources, setting a starting point for those interested in the topic.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The main goal of this paper is to identify the legal-environmental information sources that are Open Access and of interest for Spanish researchers or policy makers, as well as those European sources of great relevance.

As a secondary goal, the paper establishes a classification of these sources based on the content they provide, along with a brief description of each resource. This study is not intended to be exhaustive but may serve as an introduction for those interested in environmental law research. It is a general presentation that can be expanded according to individual need.

The elaboration of this paper has been structured in 3 phases:

- 1) Bibliographic exploration in both general and specialised databases.

- 2) Identification of the sources:
 - a. Selected from the bibliography.
 - b. Selected by the author based on their experience as a documentalist in a research centre in environmental Law.
- 3) Analysis and description of the selected resources.

The study includes the main public official sources that either create or disseminate legal-environmental information. Some private institutions have been included as they offer Open Access information free of charge. All the resources are digital and Open Access. The geographic scope of these sources is primarily Spanish, but some European sources have been included due to their relevance to the European background for lawmakers in Spain.

Each resource includes a brief description focusing on the content they provide and their general characteristics.

OPEN ACCESS LEGAL-ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SOURCES

INSTITUTIONS

Spanish legal documents originate from the different branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial.

Typically, laws are proposed by the government through the ministries or by Parliament. Parliament consists of two chambers: Congress and Senate. Congress can accept or reject laws proposed by the government and may also propose its own laws. Once approved by Congress, the proposal is sent to the Senate for review and final approval (or modification). Briefly, we can find different documents depending on their source. For example, Organic Laws originate from Parliament; Royal Decrees, Regulations or Ministerial orders come from the Central Administration; and Laws, Decree-Laws and Orders are issued by the

Autonomous Communities. The various courts (Supreme Court, National Audience, High Courts of Justice, Court of First instance and Offices) are responsible for proclaiming and publishing rulings, sentences and orders that constitute case law or jurisprudence.

In this research, the websites of the Spanish Government, Parliament and the various courts are omitted, in favour of specific institutions that are specialized in environmental law.

In Spain, there are two ministries with responsibilities related to the environment: the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge (Ministerio para la Transición Ecológica y el Reto Demográfico, MITECO) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Alimentation (Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, MAPA). Ramos Simón et al. (2013) confirmed that online environmental information was abundant in the public institutions' websites, but the heterogeneity of the information was still an issue, making it difficult to access the information. They proposed a rearrangement of the websites, even mentioning that the valuable information offered by these ministries was hidden in the internet due to the abundance and repetition of sources.

Currently, these websites are better structured and a wide range of information can be found in the ministries' websites, including general information, cartographic information, Open Data databases, statistics, planning documents, economic information, authorities, employment, strategies, etc. There is also legal information, which is the focus of this analysis. Both ministries have a "Press room" section featuring official statements, news, agenda, and other information about their activities. Furthermore, regarding participation and access to justice, they maintain a list of open procedures subject to public information, and they both provide information services where users can request tailored information.

Starting with the MITECO, its responsibilities are divided into three areas, so the information presented is classified into the following sections:

- Energy
 - Energy efficiency

- Electric energy
- Nuclear energy
- Renewable energies, co-generation and waste
- Hydrocarbons and new fuels
- Mining and explosives
- Environment
 - Water
 - Biodiversity and forests
 - Environmental quality
 - Climate change
 - Coast and marine environment
- Demographic challenge
- Although there is legal information regarding each topic in each of the sections, there are a few sections of general interest:
 - Functions and structure.
 - Directory.
 - Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (RTRP)
 - Strategic framework for Energy and Climate.
 - Plans, strategies, and roadmaps.
 - Legislative activity.

The first two sections enable citizens to fully understand the responsibilities and operational scope of the Ministry, as well as providing information about the personnel within the Ministry and the legislation that defines its structure and functions.

The next three sections inform citizens about current actions of relevance, focusing on topics such as the RTRP, energy transition or climate

change. Finally, the legislative activity section directs citizens to the various databases (mentioned below) where the different laws are published.

Continuing with the MAPA, the information they provide aligns with their actions, which are classified into the following topics:

- Agriculture
- Cattle industry
- Fisheries
- Alimentation
- Rural development

There is also a specific section for the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union, presented from historical, technical, and legislative perspectives. Similar to the previous ministry, legal information can be found in each individual section. The legislative activity section is likewise similar, with links to the external databases. However, it also includes legislative compilations elaborated by the BOE on the topics pertinent to the MAPA's responsibilities.

It is worth mentioning that both ministries have libraries that are part of the Spanish Network of Environmental Libraries (Red de Centros de Información y Documentación Ambiental, RECIDA). This network is formed by more than 150 libraries across Spain, including university libraries, research centres, public libraries and other information centres related to the environment. RECIDA libraries provide access to information on demand and undertake initiatives such as publishing guides or educational activities, thereby adding a degree of transversality to the legal aspect of the environment. Even in the 1990s, the importance of frequent visits to libraries to check for new publications in the field of environmental law was highlighted by Perkins Spyke (1995). Today, however, it is not only about browsing the physical shelves but also paying attention to the digital resources that libraries increasingly offer.

Although we focused on these ministries, there are others such as the Ministry of Transport and Sustainable Mobility or the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Technology, which may also have useful information due to the transversality of environmental law.

Regarding the judicial aspect, the Attorney General's Office (Fiscalía General del Estado) has a specific Office for Environment (Fiscalía de Medio Ambiente). From 2006 to 2020, they published an Annual Report detailing the activities of the Office, classified by topic, which serves as a summary of the most significant events and cases managed by the institution.

European legal-environmental information comes from the analogous institutions for creating and executing law. In summary, the European Commission serves as the executive body and they have the right to initiate new laws. These proposals are then sent to the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union for review, approval, or rejection. Finally, the CJEU ensures the proper application of EU law, and it can be consulted by all the State members, EU institutions and citizens.

The website of the European Commission is organised by directorates, each following a similar structure and offering information about policies and legislation, including strategic documents, law proposals or the status of their implementation. They also offer statistical information, datasets, guides, technical reports, standards, publications, news and events. Within each section, content is classified by topic, facilitating access to the desired information. The relevant directorates for Environmental law are:

- Directorate – General, Agriculture and Rural Development
- Directorate – General, Climate Action
- Directorate – General, Energy
- Directorate – General, Environment
- Directorate – General, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
- Directorate – General, Mobility and Transport
- Directorate – General, Regional and Urban Policy

The Council of the European Union shares its website with the European Council (European Consilium). This page offers a variety of information that is useful for environmental law researchers. On the “Topic” pages, they compile information about recent meetings, press releases, and policies related to the activity of both councils. Some relevant topics include: agriculture, climate neutrality, energy, environment, fisheries, regional development or transport. Of particular interest is the section “Research and publications”, which provides access to:

- Datasets on the Council’s public register; requests for public access to documents; and council votes on legislative acts.
- Reports and publications.
- Infographics.
- Research papers.
- Educational resources.

They also maintain a library and archive with a wide range of information resources relevant to the work of these councils. They offer as well access to databases for treaties and agreements, and legislative acts under the ordinary legislative procedure.

Although the European Parliament’s website does not have a specific environmental section, it offers information of interest regarding the legislative process in the European Union. They have created a “Legislative Train Schedule” (image 1), which visually displays the progress of legislative proposals. Some initiatives, such as “Sustaining our quality of life: food security, water and nature” (the fourth on the list) are of special relevance to environmental law, serving as a tool to stay updated on ongoing processes.

Image 1: Legislative train schedule of the European Parliament

The screenshot displays the 'Legislative Train Schedule' website. At the top, there are tabs for 'EC Priorities' and 'EP Committees'. Below these, a dropdown menu shows 'Commission 2024-29'. The main table lists six legislative priorities, each with a corresponding number of initiatives at various stages of the legislative process.

			Legislative Initiatives	Announced	Tabled	Blocked	Close to adoption	Adopted / Completed	Withdrawn
1	A NEW PLAN FOR EUROPE'S SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS	①	0	32	53	10	5	7	0
2	A NEW ERA FOR EUROPEAN DEFENCE AND SECURITY	①	0	8	21	0	0	2	0
3	SUPPORTING PEOPLE, STRENGTHENING OUR SOCIETIES AND OUR SOCIAL MODEL	①	0	5	11	2	0	1	0
4	SUSTAINING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE: FOOD SECURITY, WATER AND NATURE	①	0	7	8	2	1	0	0
5	PROTECTING OUR DEMOCRACY, UPHOLDING OUR VALUES	①	0	5	8	2	0	0	0
6	A GLOBAL EUROPE: LEVERAGING OUR POWER AND	①	0	11	7	5	0	0	0

Lastly, the European Committee of the Regions is an advisory body with consultative functions, capable of making recommendations on legislative proposals providing a regional perspective. Although they cannot initiate legislative proposals, and do not have the right to approve or reject a law, they can be of great importance as they assess proposals and issue an opinion. It is structured in six commissions, two of them related to environmental law: Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy, and the Commission for Natural Resources.

On their website, there are press statements, news, events, reports, publications and details on citizen participation. While some of these documents may not be strictly legal, they are of particular interest due to the significance of the institution that produces them.

Besides these institutions involved in the legislative process, there are three Spanish research centres that contribute to environmental law research by providing doctrinal articles, reports, papers, and scientific information from experts.

The first is the International Institute of Law and Environment (Instituto Internacional de Derecho y Medio Ambiente (IIDMA)), a private organisation declared to be of public interest, created in 1997 with the aim of contributing to sustainable development and environmental protection through legal analysis. They collaborate with the United Nations

and participate in various projects related to climate litigation. On their website they offer access to articles and reports, and they also maintain a blog (described below).

Secondly, the Tarragona Centre for Environmental Law Studies (Centre d'Estudis de Dret Ambiental de Tarragona (CEDAT)) is a research institute, founded in 2009, that belongs to the Universitat Rovira i Virgili, a Spanish public university. As a research centre, they focus on environmental law research, and they perform different tasks such as: formative activities, collaboration with universities, services to public administration and private companies, support for citizen platforms and NGOs, etc. Their researchers participate in different conferences and courses, and they publish articles and monographs. The CEDAT also publishes a journal (*Revista Catalana de Dret Ambiental*) and a newsletter (both described below).

Finally, we must mention the International Centre of Environmental Law Studies (Centro Internacional de Estudios de Derecho Ambiental (CIEDA-CIEMAT)), which belongs to the Research Centre for Energy, Environment and Technology (Centro de Investigaciones Energéticas, Medioambientales y Tecnológicas), dependant of the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities of Spain. This public research institution, established in 2005, is dedicated to the study and dissemination of environmental law. They maintain a strong digital presence, including a digital journal (*Actualidad Jurídica Ambiental*, described below) and active social media accounts on Twitter/X, and LinkedIn. The library houses approximately 5,000 books and provides access to journals and legal databases. It is also part of the RECIDA network, previously mentioned. The centre can be contacted for information about different environmental-legal topics. They also organise a range of online educational activities and their researchers publish their results in journals, reports, and other formats.

DATABASES

The databases presented here offer either official legislation and/or official case law emanated from the courts. It is important to note that

there is no legal public database focused on environmental law or case law (although some private initiatives exist), hence environmental information must be retrieved from general law databases.

Regarding legislation, meaning the officially published laws and regulations, at the European level it starts on the database Eur-lex. It serves as the comprehensive repository for EU legal texts, including all texts published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), as well as case law from the CJEU and the General Court. Other legal information can be found, such as international agreements, preparatory acts, official reports and communications.

The OJEU, aforementioned, is the official publication containing the new legislation and communications. The current version was established in 2003 with the Treaty of Nice, but it is an evolution of the *Journal Officiel de la Communauté Européenne du Charbon et de l'Acier*, which began in 1952. It is managed by the Publications Office of the European Union (same as Eur-lex). It is structured in two sections:

- Series L (legislation): EU secondary law (regulations, directives, decisions, opinions and recommendations) and international agreements.
- Series C (Information and notices): preparatory acts, announcements, summaries of judgments from the CJUE, reports, statements, etc.

While there is no specific section for environmental law in any of these resources, the advanced search function allows users to filter by the terms of the Eurovoc thesaurus, facilitating searches for specific topics.

In Spain, the equivalent of the OJEU is the Official Bulletin of the State (Boletín Oficial del Estado, BOE). The electronic version of the BOE has been published since 2009, but inherits content from *La Gazeta*, published between 1661 and 1959 (also digitised and accessible in the BOE database). It is divided into five sections, plus a section for the Constitutional Court.

1. General dispositions.
2. Authorities and personnel.
3. Other dispositions.
4. Justice administration.
5. Announcements.
6. Constitutional Court

The BOE website provides access to other databases, such as the constitutional jurisprudence, prosecutorial doctrine and opinions from the Council of the State. Whilst there is no specific section for environmental law, it is true that the Editorial BOE has published compilations that are regularly updated on many topics, including environment, water, energy, food and agriculture, and fisheries.

The BOE is replicated in all the Autonomous Communities and Provinces in Spain. Each of them follows a similar structure, and interested individuals must regularly check these official bulletins to stay up-to-date with the published information. Similarly, the Congress also has an official bulletin that compiles both official publications and the records of the sessions, although environmental content is scarce. There is a database that compiles all the legislation of the Autonomous Communities, called *Calex*, which offers an index by topics.

Case law can be found in the various resources mentioned earlier; however, there are also specific databases specialised in case law.

At the European level, the main database is *Infocuria*, an information service provided by the CJEU and the General Court. The CJEU offers bulletins and guides that feature select jurisprudence on specific topics on its website; however, there is no dedicated section for environmental case law. To locate relevant cases, users can filter the *Infocuria* database by already assigned topics.

The ECHR also has a database containing all of its rulings, *HUDOC*. While it allows searches by keywords, these are related to the different

articles and sections from the European Convention of Human Rights, meaning users must be familiar with reading case law and know precisely which article they wish to search for. On the ECHR's website there are also recordings of the hearings, organised by State and date, alongside other publications, statistical data, reports, and more.

In Spain, jurisprudential information is managed by the General Council of the Judiciary (Consejo General del Poder Judicial, CGPJ). The CGPJ guarantees the independence of the judiciary, can make proposals for judges, and is responsible for producing reports, amongst other functions. All the information is processed through the Judicial Documentation Centre (Centro de Documentación Judicial, CENDOJ), which handles both case law and rulings from various courts, along with other documents. The CENDOJ Database provides access to the case law from:

- The Supreme Court.
- The National Audience.
- High courts of justice
- Provincial Audiences
- Military and unipersonal courts.

The advanced search does not offer filters related to searching by topic, so users must either be specific with their keywords or know which ruling they are looking for, including the code number, date of ruling, or any identifying information.

As previously mentioned, the jurisprudence from the Constitutional Court is published in the BOE. However, it has its own database of jurisprudence, with a thesaurus and an ontology to filter the search by accepted terms.

In summary, none of these official bulletins and databases include sections specifically related to the environment, so users should be experienced or know exactly what they are seeking, as searches using natural language can sometimes yield inaccurate results due to the legal

vocabulary. For further analysis of these general sources, we suggest reading works such as Gutiérrez Gutiérrez (2015), Rodríguez Benito (2020) or López Zamora (2022).

JOURNALS

All the journals listed below (table 1) are digital and double-blind peer-reviewed. Four of them are fully Open Access, while the last one operates on a hybrid model, where some articles must be purchased, although each issue includes a selection of free or Open Access papers.

The average lifespan of these journals is 20 years, demonstrating a long-standing trajectory that guarantees their quality and reflects the interest of readers. It is noteworthy that the four Open Access journals are published by public institutions (universities and research centres). Although each journal may have a specific focus (Spain or Europe), they all publish works relating to the legal systems of other countries, both within and outside Europe. They publish two or three issues on average, aligning with the average frequency of Spanish law journals (Mercadal Cuesta, 2024).

We must highlight the journal *Actualidad Jurídica Ambiental*. According to Mercadal Cuesta (2024), the publications from this journal represent 10,52% of all the Spanish publications in law journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. It is published daily on weekdays, although a monthly compilation is released to facilitate access to the items published during the month. This frequency allows readers to stay updated on legislative and jurisprudential news more swiftly than in other journals, which typically publish two or three issues per year. Furthermore, in addition to articles, comments and book reviews, this journal features an Agenda section, providing information about seminars, courses and other events, as well as a Bibliographic References section, which offers a curated bibliographic repertoire, classified by topics, including thesis, books, chapters, and papers from other journals.

Table 1: Environmental Law journals.

Title	Publisher	Geographic scope	Creation date	Frequency	Content
Actualidad Jurídica Ambiental	Centro Internacional de Estudios de Derecho Ambiental (CIEDA-CIEMAT)	Spain, Ibero-America (specific section), International	2011	Daily	Articles, comments, notes, case-notes, book reviews, agenda, bibliographic references
Law, Environment and Development Journal	University of London and International Environmental Law Research Centre (IELRC) (Switzerland)	European, International	2005	Semiannual	Articles, case-notes, book reviews, other documents
Medio Ambiente & Derecho: Revista electrónica de Derecho Ambiental	University of Seville	Spanish, International	1998	Semiannual	Studies
Review of European, Comparative & International Environmental Law	John Wiley and Sons, Inc	European, International	1992	Quarterly	Articles, case notes, book reviews
Revista Catalana de Dret Ambiental	Generalitat de Catalunya and Centre d'Estudis de Dret Ambiental de Tarragona	Spanish, International	2010	Semiannual	Studies, notes, reports, book reviews

BLOGS

This section includes six blogs, primarily originating from private initiatives led by experts or institutions (table 2). The information they offer is both relevant and up-to-date, with most posts addressing significant issues in environmental law. These contributions are authored by knowledgeable experts or groups, and nearly all the blogs include an Agenda section that details various events related to environmental law.

The average lifespan of these blogs is 9,6 years. Even if they all have posted information within the last year, the posting frequency varies. Two of the blogs, *Blog de Derecho Ambiental* (CGAE) and *RADA*, have only posted once, in January 2023 and June 2023. This may suggest they are not regularly updated; however, the information presented in these blogs is of interest.

It is worth noting that the *AEPDA blog* focuses on administrative law, so it may include topics not directly related to environmental issues. Nevertheless, environmental law is a branch of administrative law, so related content is included. Additionally, the publishers of these blogs maintain a presence on social media, and readers are encouraged to follow them to stay updated.

Table 2: Environmental Law blogs.

Title	Publisher	Creation date	Last update	Content
Asociación Española de Derecho Administrativo (AEPDA)	AEPDA	2010	22/01/2024	Legislation, Case law, Agenda, News, Bibliographic references
Blog de Derecho Ambiental (Consejo General de la Abogacía Española, CGAE)	José Manuel Marraco – CGAE	2012	13/01/2023	Articles

Blog de Derecho Ambiental (IIDMA)	IIDMA	2018	27/12/2023	Articles, News, Agenda
Blog de la Red de Abogados y Abogadas para la Defensa Ambiental (RADA)	RADA	2016	Junio 2023	Agenda, News
Esdejusticia	Diego Gómez Fernández	2016	18/01/2024	Articles, News
Terraqui	Terraqui	2014	24/10/2023	Articles, News, Agenda

BULLETINS

Bulletins are secondary information sources for legal research, usually elaborated by libraries (Mikelarena Peña, 2001) or research institutions, with a great focus on the digital aspect. They can include just references or add a brief summary, index, or some other kinds of information.

All the bulletins listed below (table 3) present the latest legislation published in the official bulletins. Two of them also include significant rulings from different courts of justice. Most are released monthly, except for one that is issued weekly. Their average lifespan is 10 years, with the newest one being published in March 2023.

It should be noted that the CDAMAZ is also part of the aforementioned RECIDA network. In addition to this bulletin, it provides access to legal information on demand, in collaboration with other RECIDA libraries. The CDAMAZ bulletin stands out as the only weekly publication, which accelerates access to information compared to the monthly bulletins. Furthermore, it is the oldest bulletin at 19 years, and its coverage is more comprehensive than the others.

Table 3: Environmental Law bulletins.

Title	Publisher	Geographic scope	Creation date	Frequency	Content
Boletín de Actualidad Jurídica Ambiental	Ilustre Colegio de Abogados de Barcelona (ICAB) – Sección de Derecho Ambiental	International, Europe, Spain, Catalonia	2023	Monthly	Legislation, Case law, Documents, Bibliographic references, News
Boletín del CEDAT	Centro de Estudios de Derecho Ambiental de Tarragona (CEDAT)	International, Europe, Spain, Catalonia	2009	Monthly	Recognition, Agenda, News, Legislation, Case law, Bibliographic references
Boletín de Legislación Ambiental	Comunidad de Madrid	Europe, Spain, Madrid	2018	Monthly	Legislation, Legal reports
Boletín legislativo semanal	Centro de Documentación del Agua y del Medio Ambiente de Zaragoza (CDAMAZ)	Europe, Spain, Aragon, Zaragoza	2005	Weekly	Legislation, Legal reports

CONCLUSION

This study has identified a diverse array of legal-environmental information sources available in Open Access, particularly relevant to Spanish researchers, while providing European context.

Government institutions, ministries and judicial bodies, both Spanish and European, play a vital role in generating, storing and disseminating legal-environmental information through their official websites. These platforms make information clear and accessible to users, offering specific legal insights into current environmental issues.

While the information displayed on these websites may appear redundant, the vast amount of legislation and jurisprudence produced daily necessitates the organization of this information into accessible formats. However, legislative and case law databases often lack the specialised tools needed to efficiently locate environmental documents, relying primarily on basic keywords or the Eurovoc thesaurus. This generalization can pose challenges for researchers and policymakers seeking relevant information. Although the BOE provides compilations by topic (with many of them related to the environment), such resources are not available on European databases, and case law databases require a certain level of jurisprudential knowledge for effective searching.

The research centres mentioned add a valuable insight to the field, promoting a deeper understanding of environmental legal issues. They not only serve as information repositories, but also maintain a variety of information products and services (journals, bulletins, publications and libraries) that make the complex subject of environmental law more accessible to the public, while still addressing a specialised audience.

The journals highlighted in this study have an average lifespan of 20 years, indicating their quality and sustained interest among researchers and readers. These journals are valuable for identifying relevant and popular topics based on the published works. They also provide extra information about formative activities, news, or latest publications. Notably, the journal *Actualidad Jurídica Ambiental*, with its daily publication schedule, stands out as one of the most relevant information sources.

Similarly, the blogs included offer insight into current topics of interest, with an average lifespan of 9,6 years, which also demonstrates a longstanding tradition. As the posts of the blog are signed by personal authors, they present different points of view, serving as forums to discuss complex issues.

While there is currently no dedicated Open Access database for environmental law, the bulletins described can aid in staying informed about newly enacted legislation and the latest court rulings. In particular,

the *Boletín legislativo semanal*, produced by the CDAMAZ, is significant due to its weekly publication schedule.

Finally, the importance of environmental libraries must be emphasised. The library of the CIEDA is the only one specialised in environmental law, while the libraries within the RECIDA network are focused on broader environmental topics. Some of these libraries feature sections or resources about environmental law that can be borrowed and exchanged throughout the libraries of the network.

In conclusion, while this research does not encompass the entirety of available resources, the included ones are some of the most useful and frequently used by the staff at a research centre focused on environmental law, affirming their quality and relevance. This paper serves as a starting point for further investigation into legal-environmental information, an area that, as demonstrated, remains largely unexplored. Thus, this work represents a preliminary approach to a broader study on this subject.

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