



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT

FACTUAL SUMMARY OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON

GreenData4All

Disclaimer: This document should be regarded solely as a summary of the contributions made by stakeholders in the open public consultation as in the title. It cannot in any circumstances be regarded as the official position of the Commission or its services. Contributions to public consultations cannot be considered as a representative sample of the views of the EU population.

1. Introduction

This summary report was prepared for the public consultation carried out as part of the GreenData4All (GD4A) initiative. The public consultation was conducted between 5 February 2025 and 30 April 2025 to collect the views of EU citizens and stakeholders on their relationship with environmental data (General part), the availability and accessibility of environmental data (Part A), and on the revision and simplification of the INSPIRE Directive (Part B).

2. Contributions received

2.1. Overview

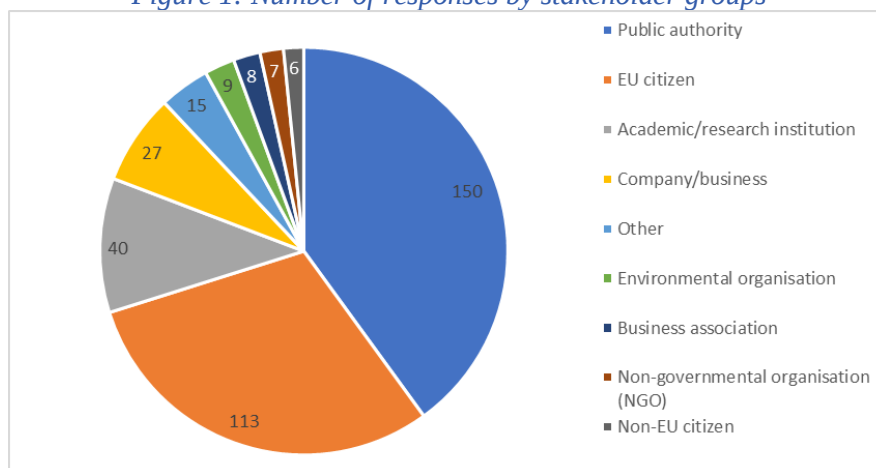
375 respondents answered to the EUSurvey survey published on the “Have Your Say” website of the Commission (1).

In addition to the answers to the survey questions, the public consultation received 25 attachments from survey respondents. Of these, 22 were deemed relevant to the consultation, providing additional information and elaborating on the survey responses.

2.2. Respondents

Public authorities formed the largest group of respondents (150), followed by EU citizens (113), academic and research institutions (40), companies and businesses (27), environmental organisations (9), business associations (8), NGOs (7), non-EU citizens (6) and other actors (15).

Figure 1: Number of responses by stakeholder groups



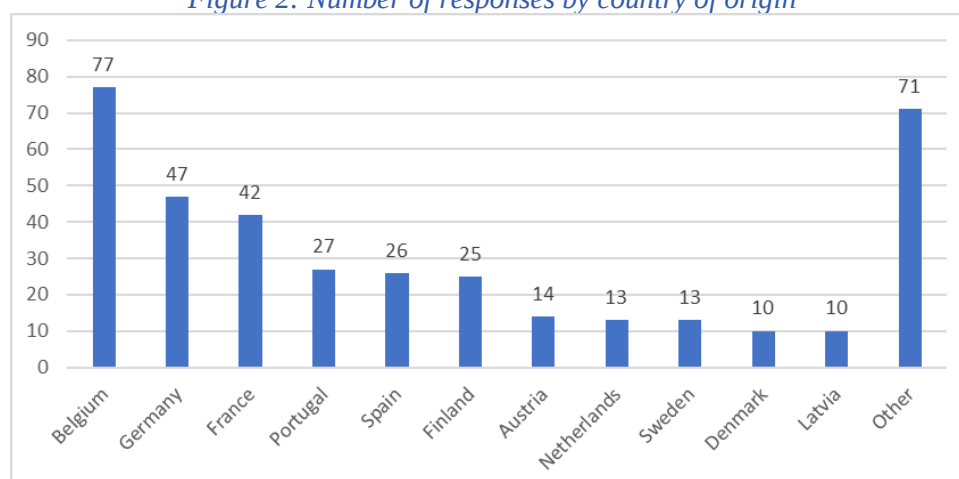
Source: Public consultation (n=375).

In terms of geographical distribution, respondents came from Belgium (77), Germany (47), France (42), Portugal (27), Spain (26), Finland (25), Austria (14), the Netherlands (13), Sweden (13), Denmark (10), Latvia (10), Italy (8), Czechia (7), Croatia (5), Ireland (5), Poland (5), Switzerland (5), Hungary (4), Lithuania (4), Slovakia (4), the United Kingdom (4), Greece (3), Iceland (3), Norway (3), Estonia (2), Romania (2), the United States (1), Luxembourg (1), Cyprus (1), Colombia (1), Ecuador (1), Bosnia and Herzegovina (1), and

(¹) https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13170-GreenData4All-updated-rules-on-geospatial-environmental-data-and-access-to-environmental-information_en

Bulgaria (1).

Figure 2: Number of responses by country of origin



Source: Public consultation (n=375). “Other” includes countries that received less than 10 responses.

Among the respondents from public authorities (150 of all 375 respondents), most have a national (88 of 150 respondents) (59%) or regional (38 of 150 respondents) (25%) **scope**. Fewer respondents have a local (19 of 150) (13%) or international (5 of 150) (3%) scope.

In terms of **organisation size**, 156 non-citizen stakeholders who responded to the consultation (256 of all 375 respondents were non-citizen stakeholders) were from large organisations with 250 or more employees, accounting for 61% of the non-citizen responses. 51 (20%) came from medium-sized organisations (50 to 249 employees), 29 (11%) from micro-enterprises (1 to 9 employees) and 20 (8%) from small organisations (10 to 49 employees).

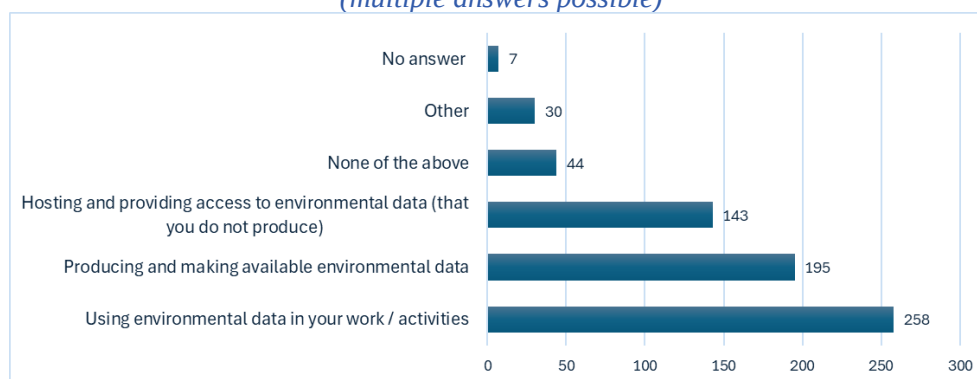
3. Results

General questions

This part was completed by all 375 respondents and aimed to gather basic information about their relationship with environmental data.

Respondents dealt with environmental data in multiple roles. A total of 258 identified as data users, 195 as producers, and 143 as hosts or providers.

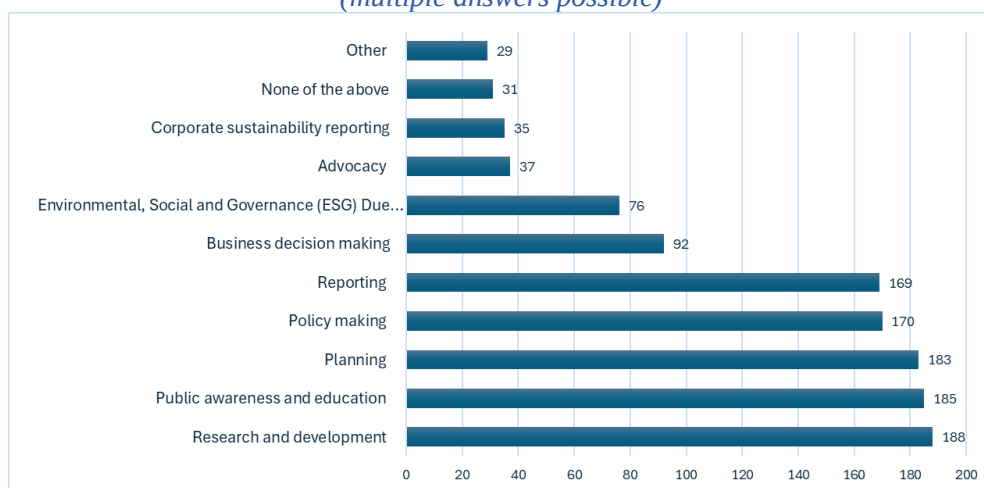
Figure 3: Roles of respondents in relation to environmental data by number of responses (multiple answers possible)



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

Environmental data is used for research and development (188 mentions), public awareness and education (185), territorial and environmental planning (183), policymaking (170), compliance and reporting (169), business decision-making (92), corporate due diligence (76), and sustainability reporting (35).

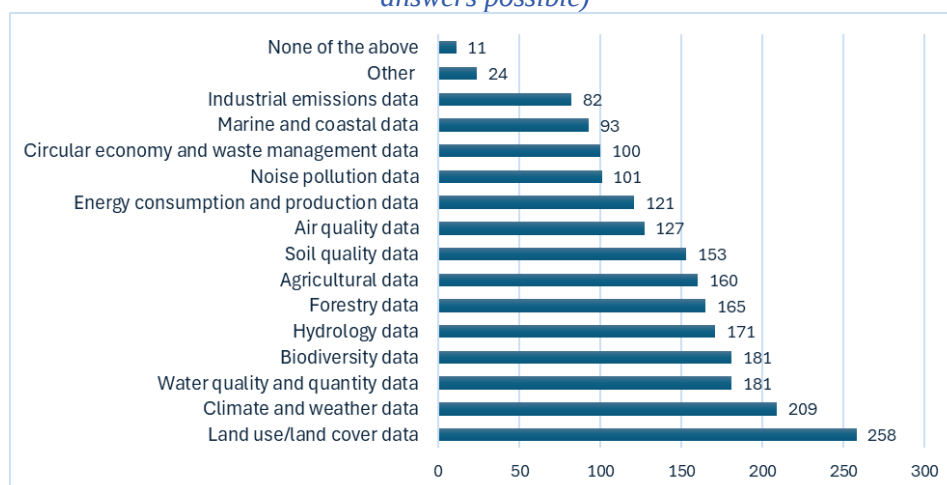
Figure 4: Purposes for which respondents use environmental data by number of responses (multiple answers possible)



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

The top ten of the most accessed data types by the respondents included land use and land cover (258), climate and weather data (209), water quality and quantity (181), biodiversity (181), hydrology (171), forestry (165), agriculture (160), soil quality (153), air quality (127), and energy consumption and production data (121).

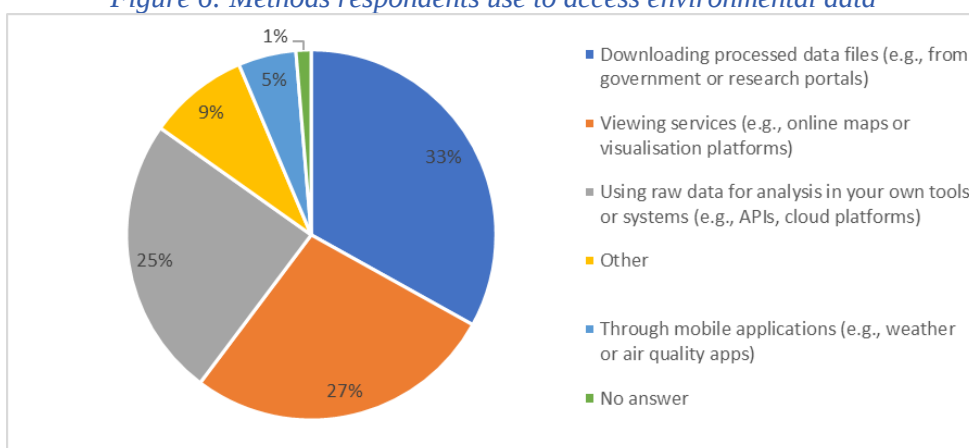
Figure 5: Types of environmental data most frequently used by number of respondents (multiple answers possible)



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

Data is accessed through downloading processed files (124) (33%), viewing services (102) (27%), raw/API access (92) (25%), other means (34) (9%), or mobile applications (19) (5%).

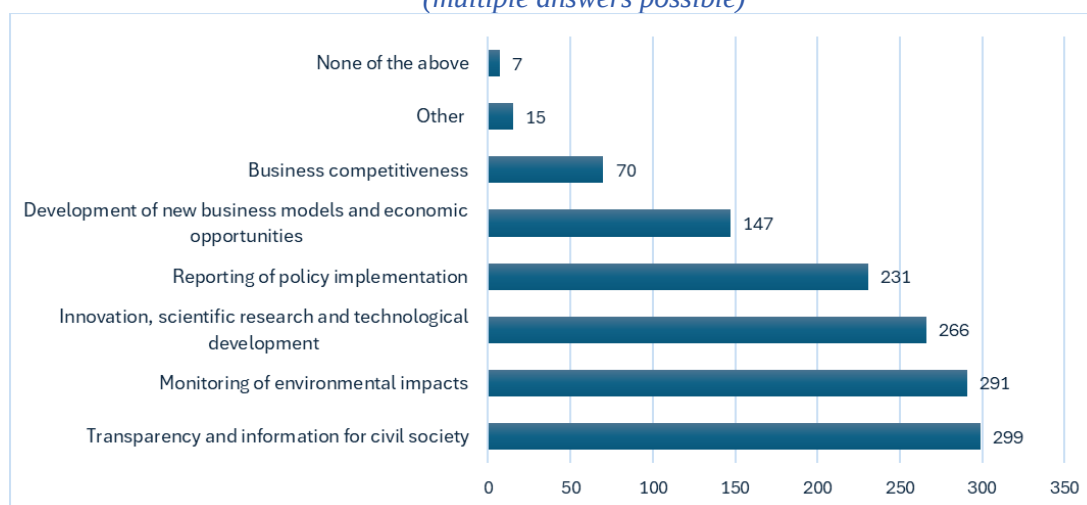
Figure 6: Methods respondents use to access environmental data



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

Cited benefits of making public environmental data more accessible were transparency and information for civil society (299 respondents), monitoring of environmental impacts (291), support for innovation, scientific research and technological development (266), reporting of policy implementation (231), development of new business models and economic opportunities (147), business competitiveness (70), and other (15). Among those who selected “Other,” comments highlighted diverse perspectives, such as improved land-use planning, efficiency in public administration, cost-effectiveness, and resilience of critical infrastructure systems.

Figure 7: Benefits of improving access to public environmental data by number of responses (multiple answers possible)



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

PART A: Better availability and accessibility of green data

This part was completed by all 375 respondents. In this section, all respondents were asked to assess the current state of environmental data availability and accessibility, identify key

barriers to data reuse, and express their views on which types of data ⁽²⁾ and support services should be prioritised.

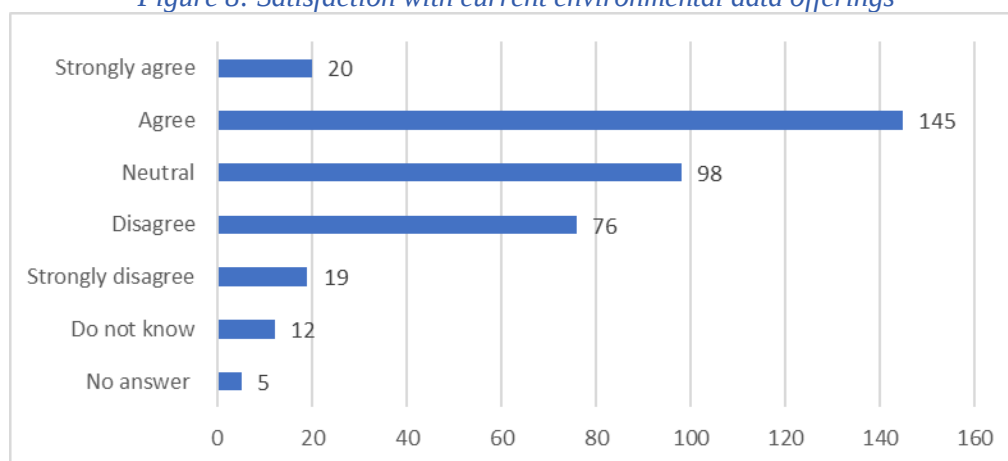
334 respondents considered it very important to make environmental data accessible to public authorities, civil society, research institutions, and businesses. 26 found it moderately important. Only 3 considered it slightly important and 4 not at all important. 3 respondents were neutral and 5 did not provide an answer.

Table 1: Importance of making environmental data accessible to public authorities

N=375	N	%	Valid
Very important	334	89%	90
Moderately important	26	7%	7
No answer	5	1%	-
Not at all important	4	1%	1
Neutral	3	1%	1
Slightly important	3	1%	1

When asked whether current environmental data offerings meet their information needs, a combined 165 of respondents expressed a positive view, with 145 agreeing and 20 strongly agreeing. However, 95 gave a negative assessment of which 76 disagreed and 19 strongly disagreed. 76 remained neutral, while 12 answered “*Do not know*” and 5 did not respond.

Figure 8: Satisfaction with current environmental data offerings



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

Moreover, respondents were asked to assess a range of potential obstacles to the reuse of non-personal environmental data. Significant barriers identified were the fragmentation of data sources and the lack of interoperability across datasets. Specifically, 155 (41%) respondents stated that data being fragmented across many producers made it difficult to find comprehensive data, and 147 (39%) reported that datasets shared by different producers having incompatible formats, structures, and standards strongly prevented reuse.

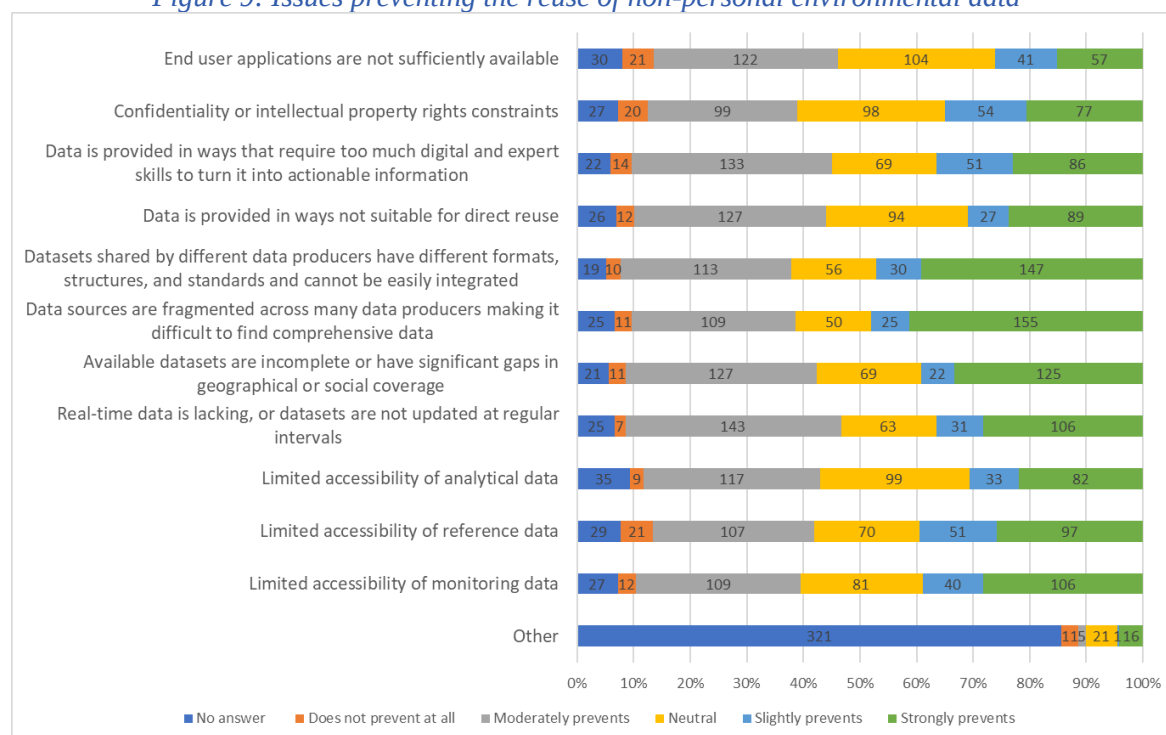
⁽²⁾ In the context of the GreenData4All impact assessment, environmental data is grouped into four main categories. Reference data provides the structural basis for environmental analysis, offering consistent elements like maps and registers. Monitoring data captures environmental changes over time through regular measurements, while thematic or domain-specific data focuses on particular environmental issues such as land use or biodiversity. Finally, analytical data combines and interprets other data types to support modelling, forecasting, and policy evaluation.

Another concern was that available datasets are often incomplete or have significant gaps in coverage, which was cited by 125 (33%) of respondents as a strong barrier.

Further issues included the lack of real-time data or the absence of regular updates, as well as limited accessibility to specific types of data, such as monitoring, reference, and analytical data. While these were still viewed as important, they were less frequently rated as strongly problematic. On the other hand, several potential barriers were seen as less critical. These included data being provided in ways not suitable for direct reuse, the requirement for advanced digital or technical skills to process data, constraints linked to confidentiality or intellectual property rights, and insufficient availability of end user applications.

54 respondents provided input under the “Other” category. Their qualitative comments pointed to a wide range of supplementary challenges. These included poor metadata quality, limited comparability between national datasets, lack of access to high-resolution or disaggregated data, inconsistent use of APIs, and language barriers. Several highlighted that reuse is particularly difficult when datasets are not machine-readable or lack detailed attribute information.

Figure 9: Issues preventing the reuse of non-personal environmental data

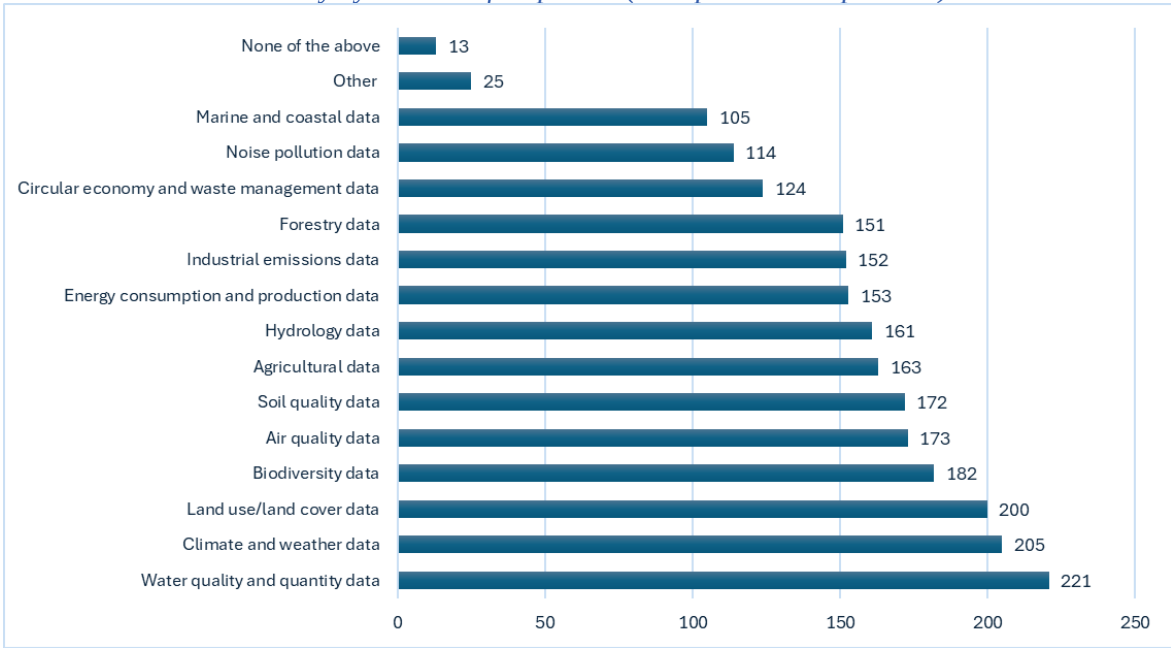


Source: Public consultation (n=375).

Respondents prioritised the types of environmental data for enhanced accessibility and reusability as follows: water quality and quantity data (221 respondents), climate and weather data (205), land use/land cover data (200), biodiversity data (182), air quality data (173), soil quality data (172), agricultural data (163), hydrology data (161), energy data (153), industrial emissions data (152), forestry data (151), waste and circular economy data (124), noise pollution (114), and marine and coastal data (105). This ranking suggested i) strong interest among the respondents in core datasets that support environmental monitoring, land planning, and climate action, and ii) the importance of sectoral integration and environmental performance tracking.

13 respondents indicated that none of the provided types of data should be prioritised, while 25 selected “Other”. Those who selected “Other” included, for example, calls to prioritise real-time data, geospatial reference data, hydrogeological and geophysical datasets, fisheries and aquaculture data, and data held by private operators. Some highlighted the need for improved metadata and dataset specifications, while others emphasised that prioritisation should depend on the specific use case or originate from public sources only.

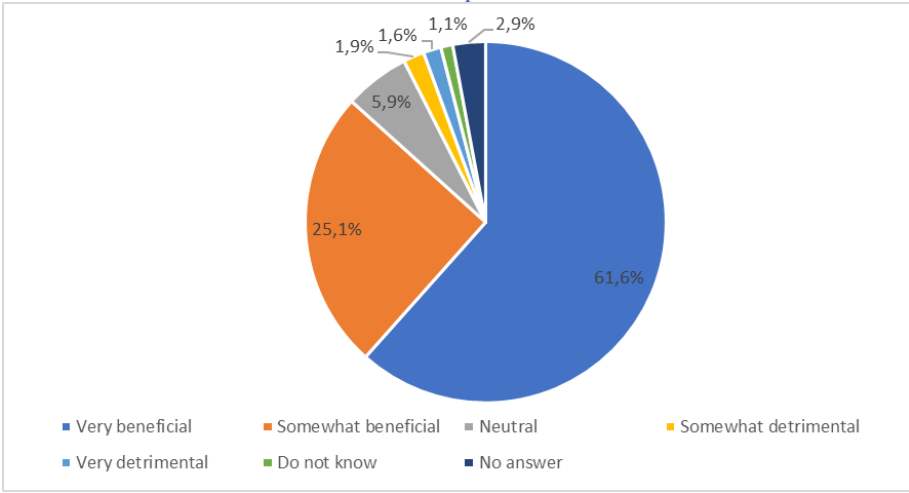
Figure 10: Environmental data that should be prioritised for improving accessibility and reusability by number of responses (multiple answers possible)



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

325 respondents supported accessibility of all types of environmental data (reference, monitoring, thematic/domain, and analytical data) were made accessible through a common portal or data marketplace. 231 considered it “very beneficial”, and an additional 94 viewed it as “somewhat beneficial”. Some respondents perceived it as “somewhat detrimental” (7) or “very detrimental” (6), while 22 remained neutral. Some respondents selected “do not know” (4) or did not respond (11).

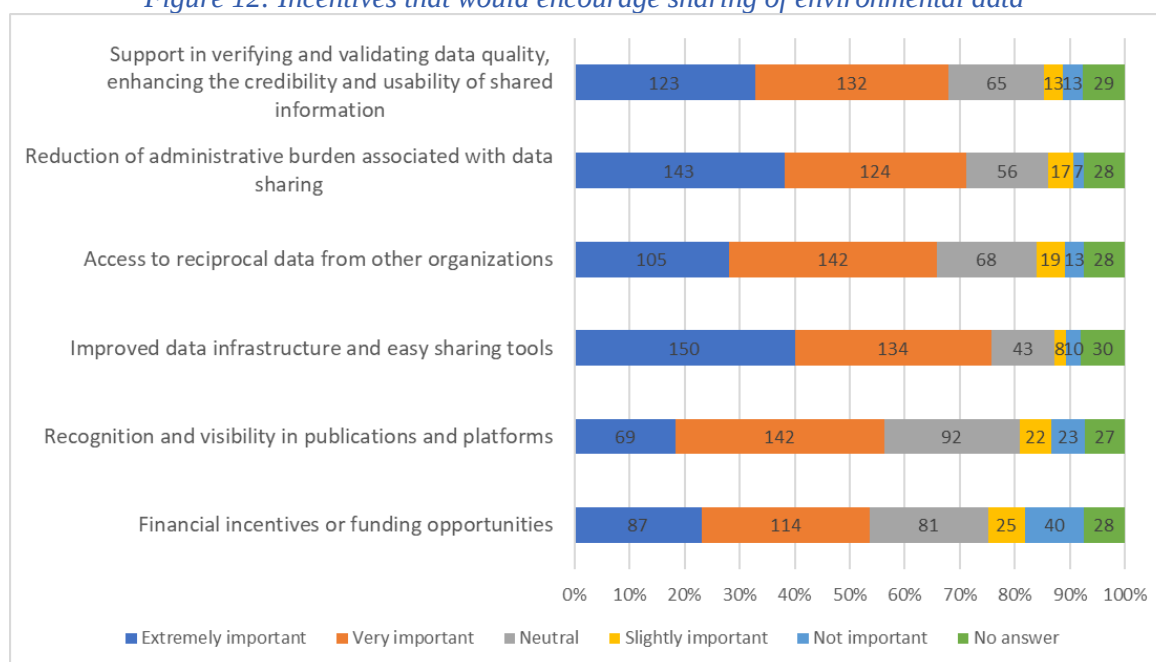
Figure 11: Benefits of sharing all types of environmental data through a common portal or data marketplace



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

When asked what incentives would most effectively encourage respondents or their organisations to share more environmental data, respondents identified several key motivators. The most frequently cited factor was the availability of improved data infrastructure and easy sharing tools. 150 rated this as “extremely important”, and an additional 134 selected “very important”. The reduction of administrative burden and the opportunity to access reciprocal data from other organisations each received over 120 “very important” responses and strong support in the “extremely important” category as well. Many respondents also indicated verifying and validating data quality as a major driver, with 123 rating it “extremely important” and 132 “very important”. Financial incentives and recognition or visibility in publications and platforms, while still valued, were slightly less emphasised: fewer respondents rated these as “extremely important” compared to the top-ranked technical and structural enablers.

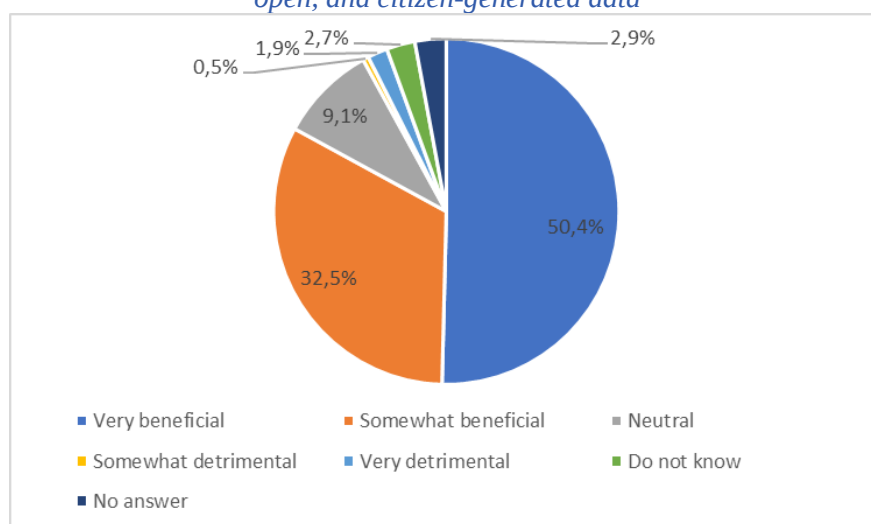
Figure 12: Incentives that would encourage sharing of environmental data



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

Extending the scope of a common portal or data marketplace beyond public sector data to also include publicly funded research, non-open environmental data, and citizen-generated data received strong support. 189 respondents considered such an expansion to be “very beneficial”, and an additional 122 regarded it as “somewhat beneficial”. Some participants expressed concerns, with 2 respondents viewing the extension as “somewhat detrimental” and 7 as “very detrimental”.

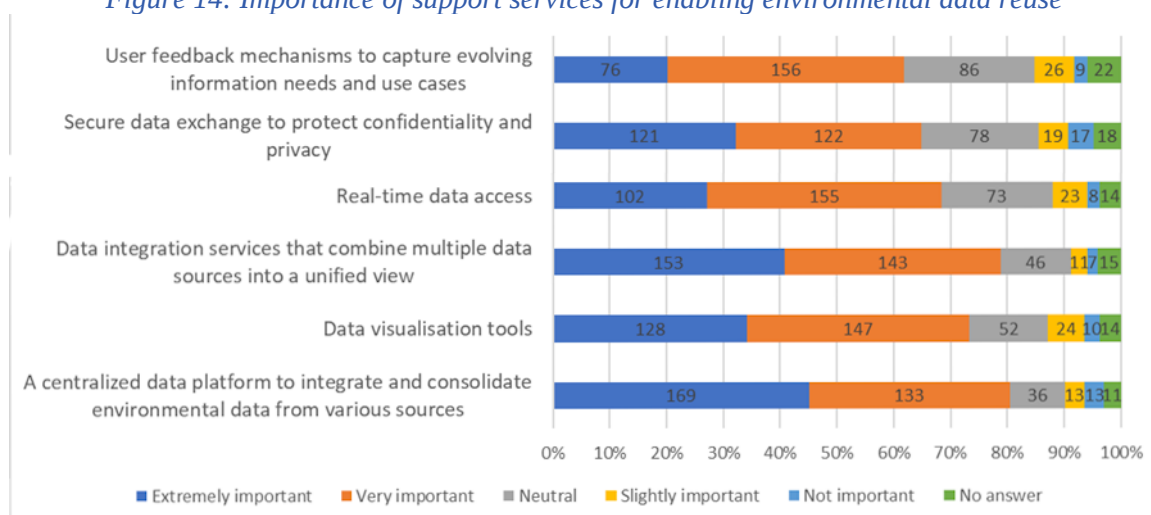
Figure 13: Benefit of extending a common environmental data portal to include research, non-open, and citizen-generated data



Source: Public consultation (n=375).

As regards the importance of various services that could support the reuse of environmental data, respondents broadly recognised the value of all proposed services albeit with some variation in perceived priority. A centralised data platform for integrating and consolidating data from different sources received the strongest support, with 169 respondents rating it as “extremely important” and another 133 as “very important”. Similarly, 153 respondents viewed data integration services as “extremely important”, followed closely by real-time data access (102 “extremely important”, 155 “very important”) and data visualisation tools (128 “extremely important”, 147 “very important”). Secure data exchange mechanisms to protect confidentiality and privacy were considered by 243 respondents as either “extremely” or “very” important. User feedback mechanisms received support in the “extremely important” category from 76 respondents, and in the “very important” category by 156 respondents.

Figure 14: Importance of support services for enabling environmental data reuse



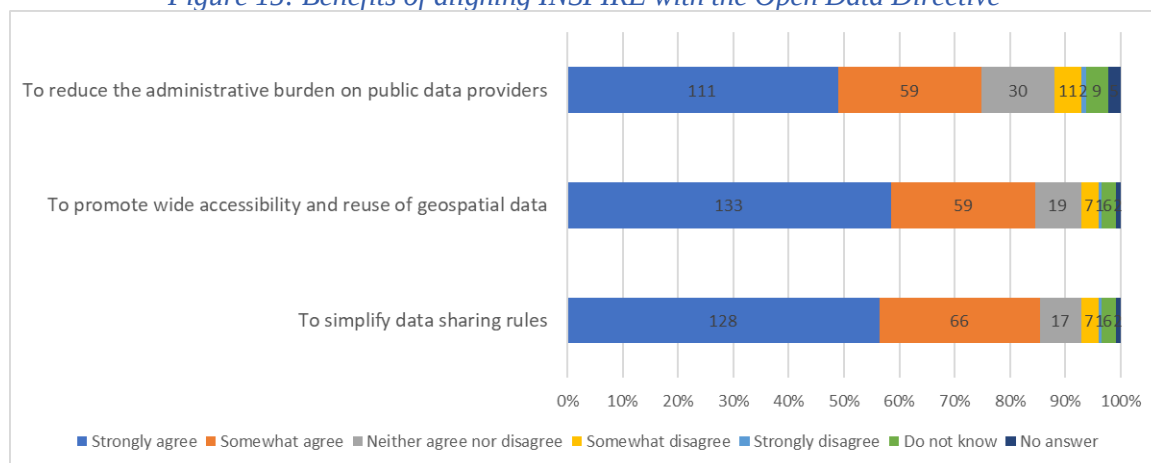
Source: Public consultation (n=375).

PART B: Revision and simplification of the current INSPIRE Directive

In part B of the public consultation, respondents were invited to provide their views on the revision and simplification of the INSPIRE Directive, including its technical requirements and governance structure. This section was intended for stakeholders familiar with the current data governance system. Out of the 375 total respondents, **227 respondents** chose to continue and answer the questions in Part B.

Respondents were asked about the perceived benefits of aligning the INSPIRE Directive with the Open Data Directive (ODD). 133 (49%) respondents strongly agreed that alignment would promote wider accessibility and reuse of geospatial data, 128 (56%) strongly agreed it would simplify data-sharing rules, and 111 (49%) strongly agreed it would reduce administrative burden.

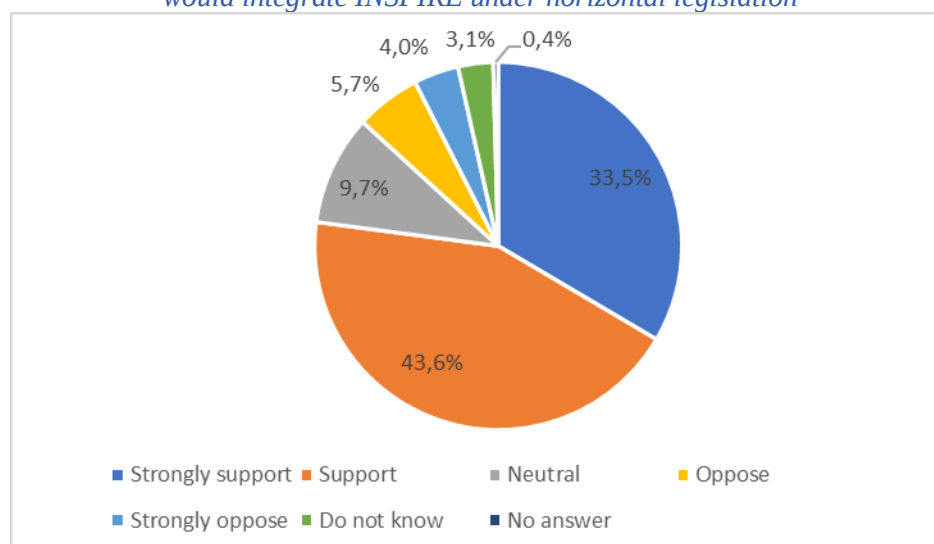
Figure 15: Benefits of aligning INSPIRE with the Open Data Directive



Source: Public consultation (n=227 respondents who completed Part B).

Establishing a common governance structure for data sharing was strongly supported by 76 respondents and supported by 99. 22 respondents were neutral, while 13 opposed and 9 strongly opposed. A further 7 did not know, and 1 did not answer.

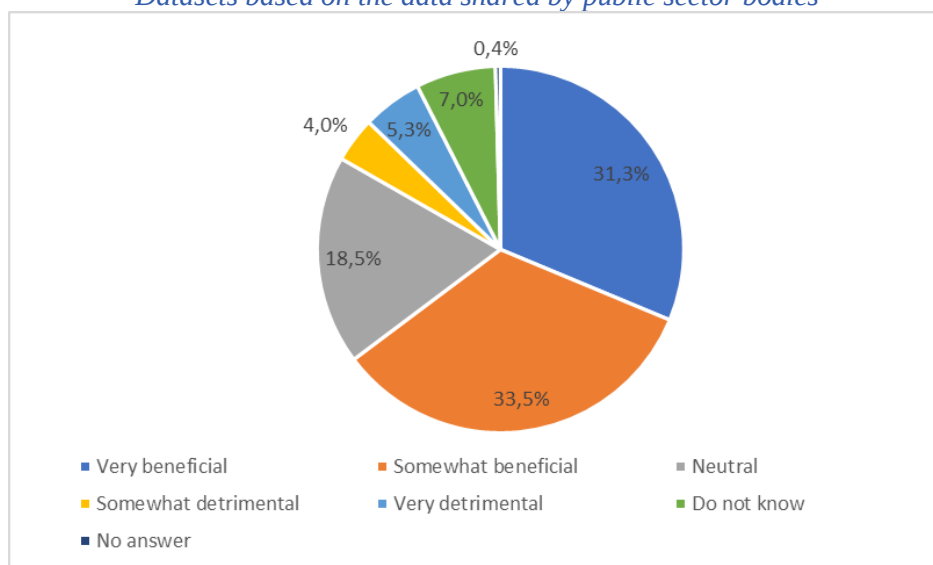
Figure 16: Support for the establishment of a common governance structure for data sharing that would integrate INSPIRE under horizontal legislation



Source: Public consultation (n=227 respondents who completed Part B).

Regarding the involvement of data intermediaries in creating harmonised high value datasets using data from public sector bodies, 71 respondents considered it very beneficial, 76 somewhat beneficial, 42 were neutral, 9 viewed it as somewhat detrimental, 12 as very detrimental, 16 did not know, and 1 did not answer.

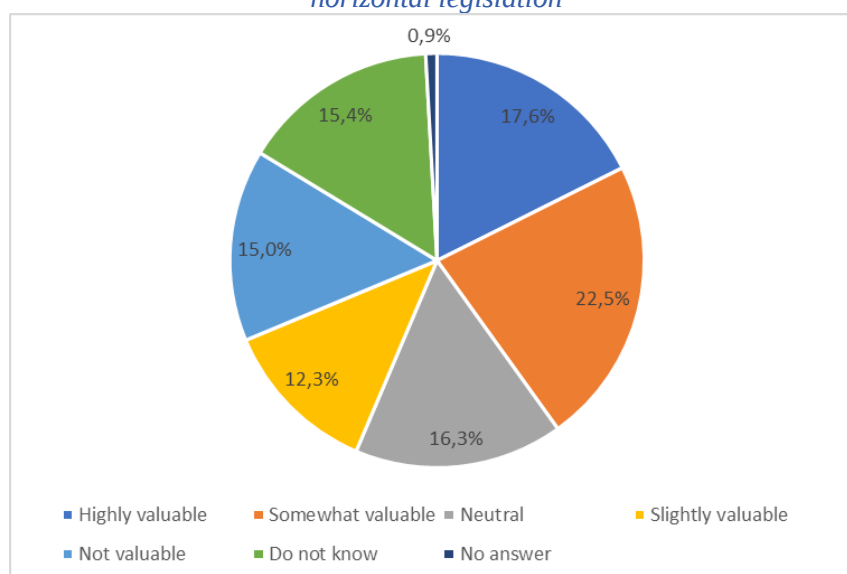
Figure 17: Benefit of involving data intermediaries in the creation of harmonised High-Value Datasets based on the data shared by public sector bodies



Source: Public consultation (n=227 respondents who completed Part B).

The value of maintaining INSPIRE as a stand-alone instrument if fully aligned with horizontal legislation was considered highly valuable by 40 respondents, somewhat valuable by 51, 37 were neutral, 28 viewed it as slightly valuable, and 34 as not valuable. Additionally, 35 did not know, and 2 did not respond.

Figure 18: Value of maintaining INSPIRE as a stand-alone instrument if fully aligned with horizontal legislation



Source: Public consultation ((n=227 respondents who completed Part B).

Individual contributions (position papers)

In addition to the answers to the survey questions, the public consultation received 25 attachments from survey respondents. Of these, 22 were deemed relevant to the consultation, providing additional information and elaborating on the survey responses. Position papers were shared by respondents from all stakeholder groups, the largest group coming from public authorities involved in the implementation of the INSPIRE Directive.

The position papers touched on several aspects, including current data use and challenges, reflections on possible changes to the INSPIRE Directive, the need for a common European data portal or marketplace, datasets prioritization and alignment with the list of high value datasets, governance, data accessibility and simplification.

An in-depth analysis of the position papers will be included in the synopsis report of the consultation strategy.