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Introduction

The environment is one of the most important issues facing countries around the world, given its profound significance for human life and the planet. At the international level, discussions on the environment have begun to

encompass different dimensions, such as the human right to a clean environment¹. This ensures that discussions are not limited to the environment in the abstract, but also involve various political, economic, social and cultural elements.

The legal recognition of the right to a clean environment emerged from a series of legal and conceptual shifts, driven by factors related to the right's hybrid nature and its far-reaching, cross-border and intergenerational implications. Humans have shifted from being beneficiaries of natural resources, which they exploited irrationally and irresponsibly, to being victims of the consequences of their actions in their relationship with nature.

This situation is exacerbated when we consider the harm to the interests of future generations, as environmental risks and problems are difficult to resolve and have long-lasting effects. This has led to the need for collaboration to prevent environmental degradation, promote the values of cooperation and environmental solidarity, and balance competing interests. It is at this point that the new right to the environment emerges as a participatory, solidarity-based right for future generations.

Therefore, it is the duty of society as a whole to intervene by any means necessary to prevent waste, preserve the natural environment and its resources, eliminate sources of pollution and manage the environment in a way that achieves these goals, while also promoting development, in order to protect the interests of future generations. The media is perhaps the most prominent means used in this regard, as it now covers the environment and everything related to it. This has become known as environmental media.

Environmental media has become a mechanism for overcoming and mitigating environmental problems. It is one of the most important components in preserving the environment, based on creating environmental awareness and acquiring and transferring knowledge. It raises awareness of the dangers of tampering with the environment and encourages interaction with it. It spreads new values related to protecting the environment and calls for the abandonment of harmful behaviours. It relies on environmentally friendly programmes.

To gain a better understanding of the subject and clarify the effective role played by environmental media in addressing the most important environmental issues, the following question is posed:

To what extent can environmental media contribute to environmental protection and preservation?

and preserving the environment?

To address the various ideas raised by this topic and arrive at concrete conclusions about the role of environmental media in this respect, we followed a methodological plan divided as follows:

First theme: The concept of environmental information.

Second theme: The legal enshrinement of the right to environmental information in Algeria.

Third theme: The limits of environmental information as a mechanism for protecting and preserving the environment.

The first axis: The concept of environmental communication

Due to the unique nature of the environment and the negative impact it has suffered, particularly as a result of industrial and technological development, environmental communication has become a subject of great interest and study in recent times. This is due to the relationship between humans and the environment, which encourages the former to actively contribute to preserving their surroundings.

However, this contribution does not come about through the enjoyment of certain rights, including the right to information. This right is a means of educating members of society about the environment and raising

¹ The first global conference on the environment was held in Stockholm, Sweden, between June 5 and 16, 1972, and was known as the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, where participants adopted a set of principles for sound environmental management, including an action plan and several continents related to the environment. Its declaration included 26 principles that placed environmental issues at the center of international concerns. See: <https://www.un.org/ar/conferences/environment/stockholm1972>

environmental awareness. It spreads a proper understanding of contemporary environmental issues and builds convictions about the environment.

To define environmental media, various related concepts must be addressed, such as the environment, the right to the environment and environmental awareness.

First: General Concepts.

A. Definition of the environment.

The term 'environment' has been in use since ancient times, with Greek and Roman scholars writing about it. However, the first person to use the term in this context was the German scientist Ernst Haeckel² in 1866. He combined the Greek words *oikos*, meaning dwelling, and *logos*, meaning science, to define the environment as 'the science that studies the relationship between living organisms and their environment'³.

The International Conference on the Environment in Stockholm in 1972 defined it as "a set of natural, social and cultural systems in which humans and other organisms live, from which they derive sustenance, and in which they carry out activities"⁴.

Alternatively, it could be described as "the framework in which a person lives, from which they derive the essentials of life, such as food, clothing, medicine and shelter, and in which they interact with their fellow human beings"⁵.

B. Definition of the right to the environment.

The first principle of the Stockholm Declaration affirmed that "human beings have a fundamental right to freedom, equality, and adequate conditions of life in a quality environment that permits a life of dignity and well-being..."⁶

The right to the environment is the right of every person to coexist with the environment, provided it remains capable of meeting the requirements of life for current and future generations. This right encompasses a balanced and natural environment that is suitable for the survival and development of all living creatures.

It is also the right to secure an environment that is suitable for human life, and to live in a balanced environment that allows for a dignified, prosperous and developed life. This environment must be defended and secured for every individual⁷.

It is also the right to a balanced environment as a value in itself, which requires an obligation to preserve and improve natural systems and resources. This is the right to a natural environment suitable for the survival and development of all living beings, including humans⁸.

C. Definition of environmental awareness.

Environmental awareness is defined as "an individual's understanding of their role in relation to the environment".

It is also the concept that provides individuals with the basic knowledge, skills, attitudes and sensibilities necessary to integrate effectively with their environment within the framework of their established responsibility to ensure the preservation of the environment for present and future generations.

It is also defined as 'an individual's awareness of environmental issues and problems, their understanding of the causes and effects, and how to deal with them. This awareness is influenced by everything around the individual, whether positive or negative, in terms of knowledge and feelings.'

D. Definition of environmental justice.

It is a concept that has gained significant attention in recent years due to the increasing risks to the environment and the demand from affected countries, organisations and individuals for solutions to address this challenge.

² Ernst Haeckel was a German scientist interested in zoology, nature, and biology. He was born on February 16, 1843, in Potsdam, Germany, and died on August 9, 1919. He coined many biological terms, including "environment." See this: <https://www.imdb.com/people/https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki>

³ Frank N. Egerton, History Of Ecological Sciences, Part 47 Ernst Haeckel's Ecology, Journal The Bulletin Of The Ecological Society Of America, July 2013, Volume 94, Issue 03, PP 222-224. <https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi>

⁴ Amid Muhammad Taraf, Terrorism, Pollution, and the Global System, University Studies Foundation, Beirut, 2002, p. 15.

⁵ Kamal Razik, "The Role of the State in Protecting the Environment," Al-Bahith Magazine, Issue 05, Blida, Algeria, 2007, p. 96.

⁶ Azouz Naïma, The Role of Environmental Media in Promoting Environmental Rights: Algeria as a Case Study, Journal of Human Rights Studies, Vol. 02, No. 02, 2018, p. 47.

⁷ Muammar Rateb Muhammad Abdul Hafiz, International Environmental Law and Pollution, D.T., Dar Al-Kotob Al-Qanuniya, Egypt, 2008, p. 68.

⁸ Ali Ben Marah, International Liability for Transboundary Pollution, Doctoral Thesis in Public Law, Faculty of Law, University of Algiers 1, Ben Youssef Ben Khedda, Algiers, 2007, p. 19.

It can be defined as achieving accountability and fairness in protecting and defending the rights of all individuals in society with regard to the effects of environmental change, as well as holding those responsible for environmental change-related mistakes accountable⁹.

The US Environmental Protection Agency defines it as the fair and meaningful participation of all people, regardless of race, colour, national origin, tribal affiliation or disability, in decisions affecting human health and the environment. This participation ensures that people enjoy full protection from disproportionate and adverse impacts on human health and the environment, including risks related to climate change and the cumulative effects of environmental burdens. full protection from disproportionate and adverse impacts on human health and the environment, including risks related to climate change and the cumulative effects of environmental burdens¹⁰.

Second: The definition of environmental media.

Environmental media is one of the most important aspects of environmental awareness. When used effectively, it can positively impact raising environmental awareness, spreading a sound understanding of contemporary environmental issues and guiding audience understanding and perception of these issues, building certain convictions towards the environment. Environmental media is a relatively new field that began to grow after the World Environment Conference held in Stockholm in 1972. We will address various related concepts as follows:

A. What is meant by 'environmental media'?

It is a compound term consisting of two concepts: 'media' and 'environment'. Environmental media is the objective and honest presentation of environmental news, information and facts. It provides people with the knowledge they need to form a sound opinion on environmental issues by highlighting environmental problems before they occur. Environmental media conveys knowledge, interest and concern for the environment to the public¹¹.

When addressing topics related to the environment and related issues, writers must consider the content of their articles, ensuring they provide accurate information and knowledge of sources, events, and their expression. They should also familiarise themselves with the structure and work of environmental organisations and programmes, both globally and locally, as well as environmental treaties and their developments.

This is achieved by qualified individuals in the fields of environmental science and media using the media to raise awareness of environmental issues and create public opinion that interacts positively with those issues. It is the process of creating and disseminating scientific facts related to the environment through the media in order to raise environmental awareness and encourage development.

B. The meaning of the right to environmental information

This is a privilege granted to a person by law and protected by legal means, entitling them to dispose of property recognised as their exclusive property as its owner or beneficiary.

Access to environmental information is essential for exercising the right to the environment. Every citizen has the right to access, consult and use environmental information held by public authorities. This enables them to exercise their right to the environment, protect it and seek legal recourse to defend their rights¹².

C. The importance of environmental media.

It plays a vital role in raising awareness of environmental issues among Arab and global communities. It is a key factor in creating environmental awareness and spreading the concept of sustainable development. The significant qualitative shift in the speed and scope of environmental and development-related information has helped to raise awareness of environmental issues.

It is a tool for social change, aimed at creating a society that can interact positively with the environment and develop a sense of responsibility towards it. Societies now need this type of media that cares about the environment and its issues. This leads to raising environmental awareness among citizens by transferring knowledge and encouraging the abandonment of harmful habits and behaviours.

The second axis: The legal enshrinement of the right to environmental information in Algeria

International law enshrines the right to environmental information, meaning that every human being has the right to access information related to environmental facts, regardless of discrimination or distinction. We also find that domestic laws in many states enshrine this right through legislation relating to the environment. Algerian legislation is among these laws, as it has not overlooked this right, but enshrined it in some legislation, albeit late and insufficient.

⁹ Kishan Khoday, Leisa Perch, Green Equity : Environmental Justice For More Inclusive Growth, International Policy Center For Inclusive Growth, Research Brief, N° 19, 2012, P1. <https://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/handle/11058/15366>

¹⁰ Ahmed Abdul Rasul Jafar, Environmental Climate Justice, Nineveh Journal of Legal Studies, Issue 03, Volume 02, June 2025.

¹¹ Jafal Iman, Belkheiri Radwan, Environmental Media in Algeria: Reality and Challenges, Al-Risala Journal of Media Studies, Vol. 03, No. 04, December 2019, p. 28.

¹² Azouz Naima, The Role of Environmental Media in Promoting Environmental Rights: Algeria as a Case Study, op. cit., p. 49.

This can be attributed to the recent emergence of environmental media in the national media landscape, which has developed alongside industrial growth and population density, leading to the spread of various types of waste. The right to environmental information has evolved over time, particularly during periods of political control over management and supervision, which has disrupted democracy, the foundation of freedom and the right to information. We will now address the various laws that have dealt with the right to environmental information.

First: Decree No. 88-131, which regulates the relationship between the administration and citizens.

This decree¹³ is considered the legal basis for individuals' right to information, as it established the first set of rules relating to this right. Jurisprudence considers this text to establish the right of public access to all administrative documents, obliging the administration to inform citizens of the regulations and measures it enacts through the use of any appropriate means of publication and information¹⁴. It also obliges the administration to regularly publish instructions, circulars, memoranda and opinions relevant to citizens¹⁵.

Unless otherwise specified and unless publication in the Official Gazette is decided upon, it shall be published in the official bulletin of the relevant administration. This bulletin shall be prepared and published in accordance with the provisions of the current regulations. Article 10 guarantees the right of access to data held by the Archives Department¹⁶, while Article 30 requires all employees to respect this right, under penalty of disciplinary action¹⁷.

Second: Law 83-03 on environmental protection was enacted.

The growing concern for the impact of the environment on development is reflected in Law No. 83-03 on environmental protection¹⁸, the basic text containing the general principles and foundations of environmental protection law.

The law aims to guide various state programmes in this area, defining the legal framework for national environmental protection policy. This policy aims to protect natural resources, prevent and combat all forms of pollution and harm, and improve the living environment and quality of life¹⁹.

The law also includes provisions regarding the right to participate in and be informed about environmental matters. It allows for the establishment of associations to contribute to environmental protection, but does not specify or clarify the role these associations can play or how they can intervene in this field. Furthermore, this law does not give them a role in environmental education and awareness, which is the foundation of environmental democracy.

Therefore, under the previous environmental legislation, associations were unable to fulfil their desired role in environmental protection and were not involved in educating and raising environmental awareness within the community.

Third: through Law 03-10 on the environment.

This law enshrines the right to environmental information and access, emphasising its importance by adopting it as an environmental principle. This principle states that every person has the right to be informed about the state of the environment²⁰.

Chapter II of Law 10-03, under the heading 'Environmental Management', addresses the issue of environmental information and access. This chapter consists of: 'an environmental information authority; the establishment of environmental standards; the planning of environmental activities carried out by the state; and a system for assessing the environmental impact of development projects²¹'.

¹³ Decree 88-131, dated 20 Dhu al-Qa'da 1408, corresponding to July 4, 1988, regulates relations between the administration and citizens, J.R. No. 27 dated July 6, 1988.

¹⁴ See Article 08 of Decree 88-131, *ibid*.

¹⁵ See Article 09 of Decree 88-131, *ibid*.

¹⁶ Article 10 of Decree 88-131: "Citizens may consult administrative documents and information, subject to the provisions of the regulations in force concerning information that is confidential and protected by professional secrecy..."

¹⁷ Article 30 of Decree 88-131: "Employees must perform their duties in accordance with the legislation and regulations in force and shall not be permitted to invoke any excuse, in particular the following: ... obstructing access to administrative documents that are available for consultation, refusing to provide information ...".

¹⁸ Law 83-03 dated 22 Rabi II 1403, corresponding to February 5, 1983, relating to environmental protection, J.R. No. 06 dated February 8, 1983.

¹⁹ See Articles 02 and 03 of Law 83-03, *ibid*.

²⁰ See Article 03 of Law 03-10, *ibid*.

²¹ See Article 05 of Law 03-10, *ibid*.

Based on the above, we can conclude that Algerian lawmakers have covered all aspects of environmental information, from the environmental database to the processing and classification of this information. They have also divided the right to environmental information into general and specific rights.

Public law is regulated in Article 7, which states that: ‘Every natural or legal person has the right to request information from the relevant authorities regarding the state of the environment. This information may relate to all data available in any form²²,’ including written, visual, oral and automated forms relating to the state of the environment. This covers the state of water, air, soil, plants, land, natural sites and measures, procedures, programmes and plans aimed at ensuring environmental protection.”

The right to environmental information is regulated in Article 8, which stipulates that: ‘Any natural or legal person in possession of information relating to environmental factors that may have a direct or indirect impact on public health shall be required to report this information to the local authorities and/or the authorities responsible for the environment.’²³

Fourth: through Municipal Law 11-10.

This law²⁴ grants municipalities broad powers in managing development options and priorities through citizen participation. The president of the municipal council is required to take all necessary precautions and preventive measures to ensure the safety and protection of persons and property in public places where a disaster or accident could occur, within the framework of the law and applicable regulations.

Through this law, Algerian lawmakers have also tasked the president of the municipal council with ensuring public cleanliness on streets, in squares and on public roads; taking the necessary precautions and measures to combat and prevent communicable or infectious diseases; and ensuring compliance with environmental cleanliness and protection regulations²⁵.

The legislator has incorporated environmental information into the third chapter of the law, entitled ‘Citizen Participation in Municipal Affairs’, implicitly recognising citizens’ right to environmental information and their right to participate in environmental protection. This is evident in Article 11 of the law, which recognises citizens’ right to access information and participate in environmental protection²⁶.

Third theme: The limits of environmental media as a mechanism for protecting and preserving the environment.

Despite legislative developments recognising the right to environmental information in Algeria, some environmentalists believe that environmental law within the framework of sustainable development has not kept pace with comparable legislation in addressing the issue of environmental information. This is despite the fact that the preliminary draft was clear and comprehensive in terms of the elements required to establish a system that covers all aspects. In our view, this can be attributed to a number of shortcomings and deficiencies, which can be summarised as follows:

First: the inadequacy of environmental protection laws in establishing a comprehensive legal system for environmental information rights

By studying various environmental laws, particularly those relating to the right to environmental information, we have found that they tend to be general in their approach to certain concepts, resulting in a lack of precision and clarity when presenting environmental information. Furthermore, these laws do not explicitly stipulate or specify the types of environmental information; they only refer to it in general terms and urge the administration to provide it, without specifying the method or manner of doing so.

²² See Article 07 of Law 03-10, *ibid*.

²³ See Article 08 of Law 03-10, *ibid*.

²⁴ Law 11-10, dated 20 Rajab 1432, corresponding to June 22, 2011, relating to municipalities, J.R. No. 37, dated July 3, 2001.

²⁵ Article 94 of Law 11-10, *ibid*.

²⁶ Article 11 of Law 11-10 “... The municipal council shall take all measures to inform citizens of their affairs... The municipal council may also present a report on its annual activities to citizens.”

One of the most significant shortcomings of environmental protection law is the absence of clear provisions that guarantee the right of access to environmental information by obliging the relevant authorities and bodies to provide this information to the media and general public.

Furthermore, the legislator has not enshrined any form of protection for journalists and media professionals in the Environmental Protection Law who may be subject to prosecution or harassment as a result of their coverage or exposure of environmental abuses and violations. This in itself is an obstacle to them addressing issues that may expose them to such practices and actions.

Furthermore, we have observed through the Environmental Protection Law that Algerian legislators have paid considerable attention to penalties and environmental measures while neglecting the role of the media in addressing environmental problems as observers, conveyors and revelators of information.

Second: there is an absence of a genuine procedural system to activate and enforce the right to environmental information.

Reading the law on environmental protection reveals that the Algerian legislator has explicitly enshrined citizens' right to environmental information. However, despite this recognition, they have neglected the procedural aspect that would guarantee the implementation of this right. There is a clear vacuum and deficiency that is exploited by various bodies and institutions that reject this idea. This is particularly evident in the absence of any legal obligation to provide or disclose environmental information, regardless of its type or nature.

Another challenge faced by individuals seeking environmental information is the weakness, neglect or difficulty of practical, administrative and judicial procedures for appealing against bodies that refuse to provide environmental information. In our view, this is because they are not required to publish environmental reports or data. In other words, these bodies are subject to weak oversight, whether administrative or judicial, direct or indirect, in the area of providing environmental information.

Third: there is weak or non-existent coordination between the media and environmental agencies.

Poor coordination is a major obstacle in various departments and agencies, and, in relation to our topic, it is one of the most significant issues limiting the effectiveness and impact of environmental awareness and the resolution of environmental problems. This is due to the absence of a clear strategy, methodology or shared vision among relevant bodies in the media and environmental sectors, such as television channels, radio stations, newspapers, websites and electronic platforms, to address and communicate environmental issues on an ongoing basis. It is also due to a lack of involvement of environmental institutions in environmental decisions and initiatives, especially those active within the community.

This would also involve training media personnel in environmental protection and employing specialists in environmental affairs to ensure that information is not treated casually or superficially, and that false or misleading information and reports are not published.

Fourth: there is difficulty in accessing environmental information

As mentioned earlier, environmental media deals with a range of information and events related to the environment. The unavailability of this information for any reason directly affects transparency and environmental justice. Furthermore, difficulty accessing this information due to administrative, political, technical or economic obstacles is a clear indication of a lack of commitment to international and national environmental principles established by legislators.

Conversely, this situation is considered an escape from accountability or participation in environmental protection and weakens the process of monitoring incidents and violations affecting the environment..

Conclusion:

The media provides individuals with an objective and honest translation of news and facts. Environmental media achieves environmental awareness, acquires and transfers knowledge, and prepares the public to interact with it by raising awareness, spreading values related to protecting the environment, and calling for harmful behaviour to be abandoned.

The right to information is based on raising public awareness of all environmental issues. Administrative bodies are required to publish all legal actions that impact the environment, except where excluded by law. This necessarily leads to individuals being involved in environmental decision-making.

However, it is preferable for this participation to take place before the final decision is issued, since informing or participating after the decision has been made is pointless. This issue has not been addressed by Algerian legislators in the environmental legislation or related texts. Based on the above, we have reached the following conclusions:

- Environmental media disseminates environmental concepts and values that reinforce the ethical and terminological foundations and principles of the environment.

- Algerian lawmakers have enshrined the right to environmental information and access at two levels. At the first level, this right is considered public, and at the second level, it is considered private.

- The administration contributes to environmental protection by regularly informing the public of relevant information, particularly on environmental issues, to raise awareness.

- Despite the enactment of Law 03-10 on environmental protection, this right is not being put into practice, i.e. the parameters for exercising the right to environmental information and access are unclear.

- There are no explicit provisions to activate and strengthen the role of administrative or judicial oversight bodies to ensure full compliance with the implementation of this right. In Practice.

Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative analytical-descriptive methodology based on documentary analysis of legal, media, and institutional sources related to environmental protection and information rights. The methodology includes:

1. Legal Framework Analysis: Examination of international conventions (Aarhus Convention, Rio Declaration, Stockholm Conference), Algerian environmental legislation (Laws 83-03, 03-10, 11-10), and relevant decrees.
2. Content and Media Review: Evaluation of environmental media content across Algerian public communication platforms and journals to identify trends in environmental awareness.
3. Comparative Dimension: Assessment of best practices in environmental information dissemination in international contexts.
4. Sociological Interpretation: Linking legal and media dimensions to public perception, community participation, and sustainable development strategies.

The research is interpretive and integrative, emphasizing conceptual clarity, policy relevance, and the synergy between environmental law and communication studies.

Ethical Considerations

The research follows institutional and international ethical standards. No experiments or data involving human participants were conducted. All materials are based on publicly available legal and academic documents. The authors affirm intellectual integrity, proper citation of all sources, and avoidance of plagiarism or manipulation. The analysis reflects independent academic judgment, free from political, economic, or institutional influence.

Author Contributions

Hamid Abrous: Conceptualization of the research problem, theoretical framework, legal analysis, and drafting of the introduction and results.

Aissani Djamel: Methodological design, media content analysis, data interpretation, and critical revision of the manuscript.

Both authors contributed equally to the discussion, synthesis, and final approval of the manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The views and conclusions expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of their respective universities.

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