

Results of survey to inform preparation of an options paper on conduct of the Fourth Cycle of EPRs

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Introduction

1. The Fourth Cycle of the UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) was adopted by the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) in 2020 and endorsed by Ministers in Nicosia in 2022.

2. The document presenting the Fourth Cycle (ECE/NICOSIA.CONF/2022/12) was prepared by the Expert Group on EPRs, including by considering the results of a survey conducted in 2020 collecting views of national coordinators of EPRs in beneficiary countries, CEP Members and observers and regular authors of EPR chapters.

3. In September 2022, the Expert Group on EPRs initiated a discussion aimed at boosting the implementation rate of EPR recommendations, which has an average of 68 per cent. The Expert Group on EPRs' proposals included limiting the number of chapters per review and recommendations per chapter, organizing thematic workshops, promoting bankable recommendations and elaborating roadmaps for implementing recommendations.

4. In October 2022, CEP took note of activities to prepare for the Fourth Cycle and invited the Expert Group on EPRs to prepare additional guidance on the conduct of the Fourth Cycle for the consideration of CEP at its 28th session on 1–3 November 2023.

5. The survey analysed in the present document was intended to collect views from national coordinators of EPRs in beneficiary countries, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and regular authors of chapters. The survey was structured around EPR themes (with one or more themes covered in each chapter), chapters and recommendations. It also allowed the respondent to share other information pertinent for the conduct of the Fourth Cycle. Questions related to SDGs, gender, human rights and vulnerable groups were not included in the survey as they are mandatory to be addressed in EPRs.

6. Sixty-five respondents completed the survey. Twelve of the respondents are national coordinators of EPRs in beneficiary countries (Coordinator in the figures), 26 are CEP Members or observers (CEP in the figures), 4 are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs (EG in the figures) and 23 are chapter authors (Author

in the figures) (table 1.a). Of the 65 respondents, 26 are from beneficiary countries, 18 are from other member States and 21 are experts (table 1.b).

7.

Table 1.a: Respondents to the survey

Capacity	No.
National coordinator of an EPR	12
CEP Member or observer	26
Member of the Expert Group on EPRs	4
Chapter author	23
Total	65

Table 1.b: Respondents to the survey

Capacity	No.
Beneficiary country	26
Other member country	18
Expert	21
Total	65

8. The survey results will be used to prepare an options paper to underpin additional guidance on the conduct of the Fourth Cycle of EPRs to be examined by the Expert Group on EPRs and submitted to the CEP.

I. EPR themes

A. Background

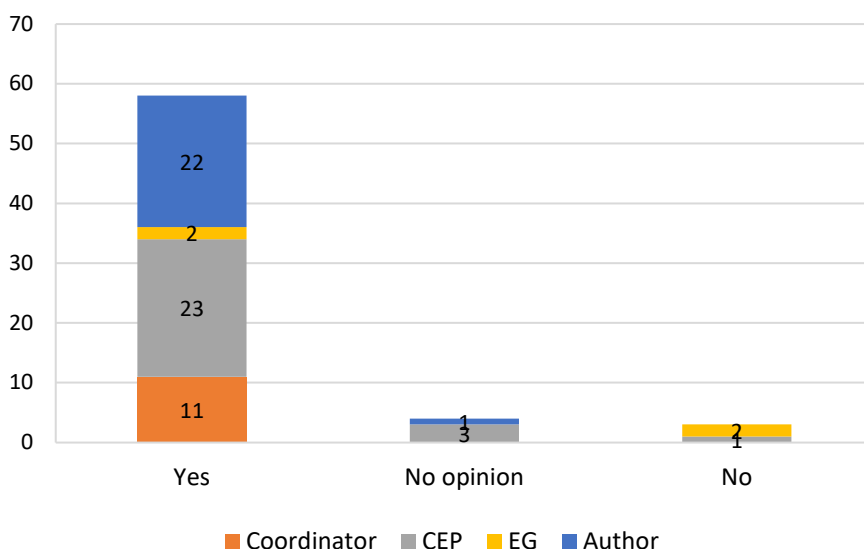
9. The questions regarding EPR themes aimed to collect views on priority themes, noting that multiple themes are often covered in each chapter. In the adopted content of the Fourth Cycle of EPRs, it is stipulated that the decision on the substantive content of Fourth Cycle reviews will continue to be taken in a flexible manner, guided by the specific needs of each reviewed country. Furthermore, Fourth Cycle reviews will cover similar topics to the Third Cycle reviews, addressing environmental governance and financing, the domestic-international interface, media and pollution management, and integration of environment into selected sectors. Moreover, the review of several themes will be strengthened depending on the needs of countries under review, including climate change, green economy and circular economy, environmental human rights, vulnerable groups, and addressing and monitoring progress on the implementation of SDGs.

B. Survey results

10. Respondents were asked whether some themes should be mandatory for an EPR. 58 respondents answered in the affirmative, 3 answered in the negative, and 4 expressed no opinion on the matter.

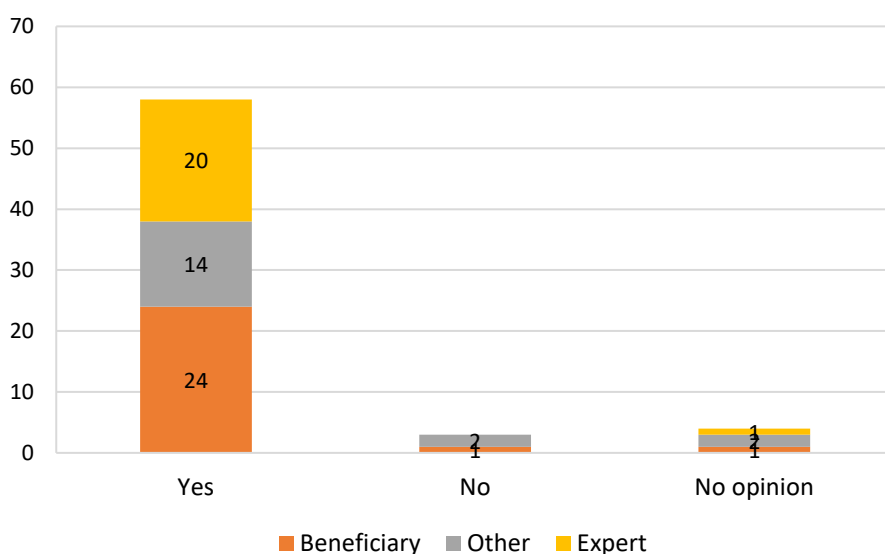
11. As illustrated in Figure 1.a, of the 58 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 11 are national coordinators of EPRs, 23 are CEP Members or observers, 2 are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and 22 are chapter authors. Of the three respondents who answered in the negative, one is a CEP Member or observer and two are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs. Of the four respondents who expressed no opinion, one is a national coordinator of an EPR, two are CEP Members or observers and one is a chapter author.

Figure 1.a: Should some themes be mandatory for an EPR?



12. Of the 58 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 24 are from beneficiary countries, 14 are from other member States and 20 are experts (figure 1.b). Of the three respondents who answered in the negative, one is from a beneficiary country and two are from other member States. Of the four respondents who expressed no opinion, one is from a beneficiary country, two are from other member States and one is an expert.

Figure 1.b: Should some themes be mandatory for an EPR?



13. The respondents who answered in the affirmative to the previous question were asked to select from a list the themes that should be mandatory for an EPR. Figure 2.a illustrates the list of themes, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each theme. Figure 2.b shows the list of themes, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each theme.

14. All respondents were asked to select from a list, which was wider than the previous one, the themes that are important for an EPR. Figure 3.a illustrates the list of themes, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the

Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each theme. Figure 3.b shows the list of themes, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each theme.

15. Respondents were asked to share other ideas on themes that they might have deemed important for an EPR. Nineteen respondents shared their ideas.

- Some respondents suggested specific issues to include in the analysis of the themes identified in the lists above. One CEP Member or observer proposed to include within financing, considerations on sustainable finance and the use of taxonomy and the “Do No Significant Harm” (DNSH) principles and social standards, such as the respect of human rights and transparency and reporting on sustainability. Another CEP Member or observer suggested considering Strategic Environmental Assessments and including within education public awareness-raising. Another CEP Member or observer highlighted the importance of climate adaptation, and in particular of nature-based solutions. One national coordinator of an EPR underlined the importance of ocean management. Another national coordinator of an EPR proposed considering non-state measures to monitor compliance with legal requirements. One Member of the Expert Group on EPRs suggested focusing on the water-food-energy nexus, including production efficiency and virtual water. Another Member of the Expert Group on EPRs underlined the importance of illustrating the best available techniques in all themes. One chapter author proposed to consider spatial planning, and that agriculture should include fisheries and fish-farming. Another chapter author underlined the importance of considering whether physical, spatial, land-use and development planning includes environmental policies, and including ecosystem restoration issues within biodiversity. Another chapter author proposed focusing on population’s health within human health. Four other chapter authors respectively suggested to include considerations on (i) land-use management, statistics and inter- and intra-agency cooperation, (ii) ecosystem services, consumption patterns and renewable energies, (iii) the convergence of public policies, and (iv) accreditation.
- Some respondents focused on the relevance of themes. According to one Member of the Expert Group on EPRs, the themes important for an EPR are the ones that are important for the country under review to get an expert assessment of. One chapter author suggested that some themes should be mandatory, and that it would then be up to the beneficiary countries to select the other themes.
- Some respondents shared their considerations concerning how to structure the analysis of themes. One chapter author proposed to reframe the current EPR structure with the main “strands” (environmental governance & financing; domestic-international interface; media and pollution management and integration of environmental concerns in selected sectors) using, to the extent possible, the so-called “chains of causality” (such as the Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response Framework (DPSIR)), which would result in a more analytical review of countries’ environmental policy efforts along the different themes, and in the avoidance of potential repetitions of some parts, e.g., in the environmental governance and other thematic chapters, in the health and media and pollution chapters. According to the same respondent, the developments along the nexus approach that are under way should be intensified and piloting for selected themes and countries already in the 4th round should be considered. Another chapter author suggested that, since some of the themes are interrelated, they might be addressed under an overarching one. One national coordinator of an EPR suggested enhancing the EPR’s capacity to be a bridge between national environmental policy and global programs, to allow the countries reviewed to soften the transition to international standards through the different tools of the EPR recommendations.

Figure 2.a: What themes should be mandatory for an EPR?

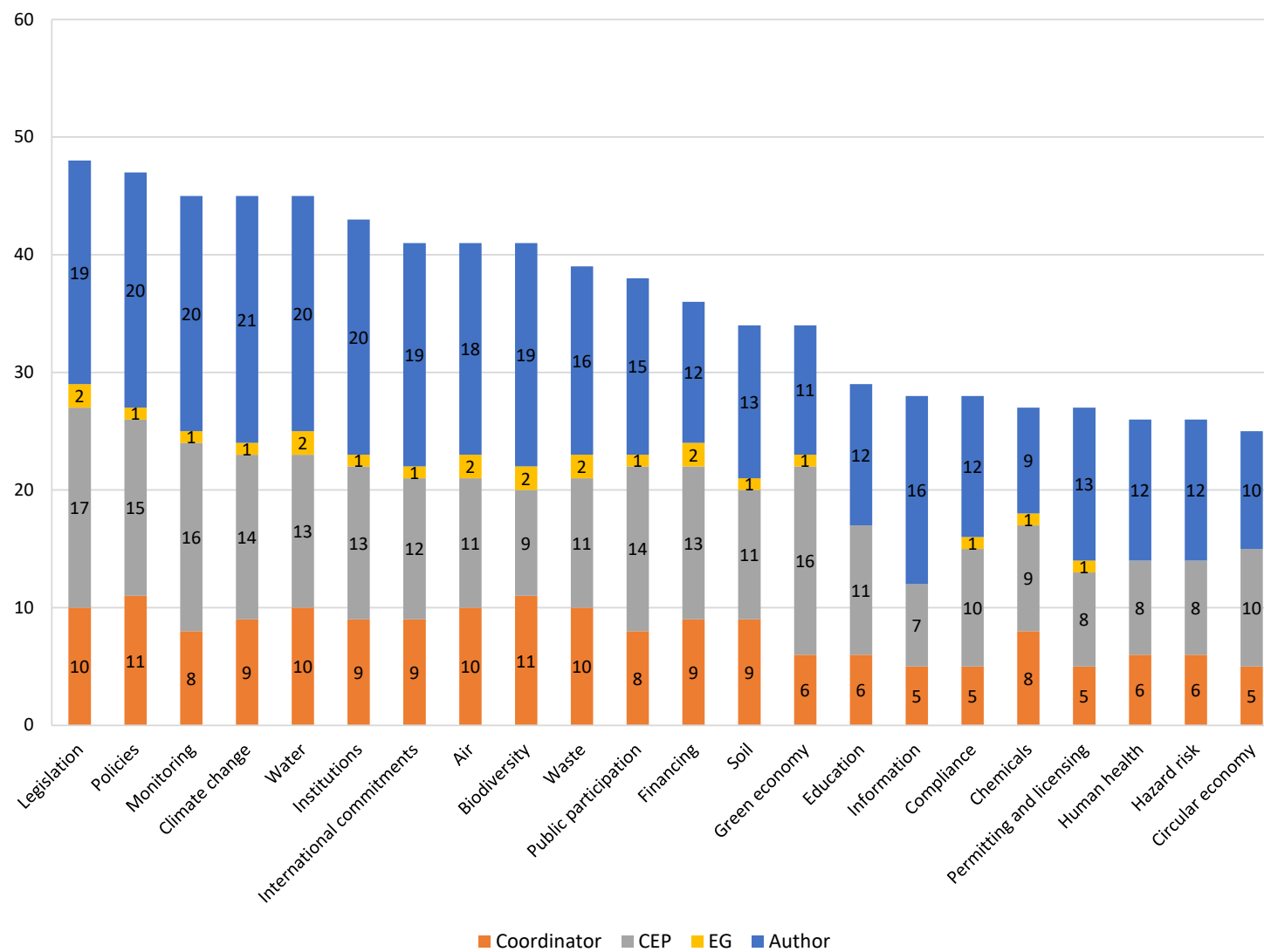


Figure 2.b: What themes should be mandatory for an EPR?

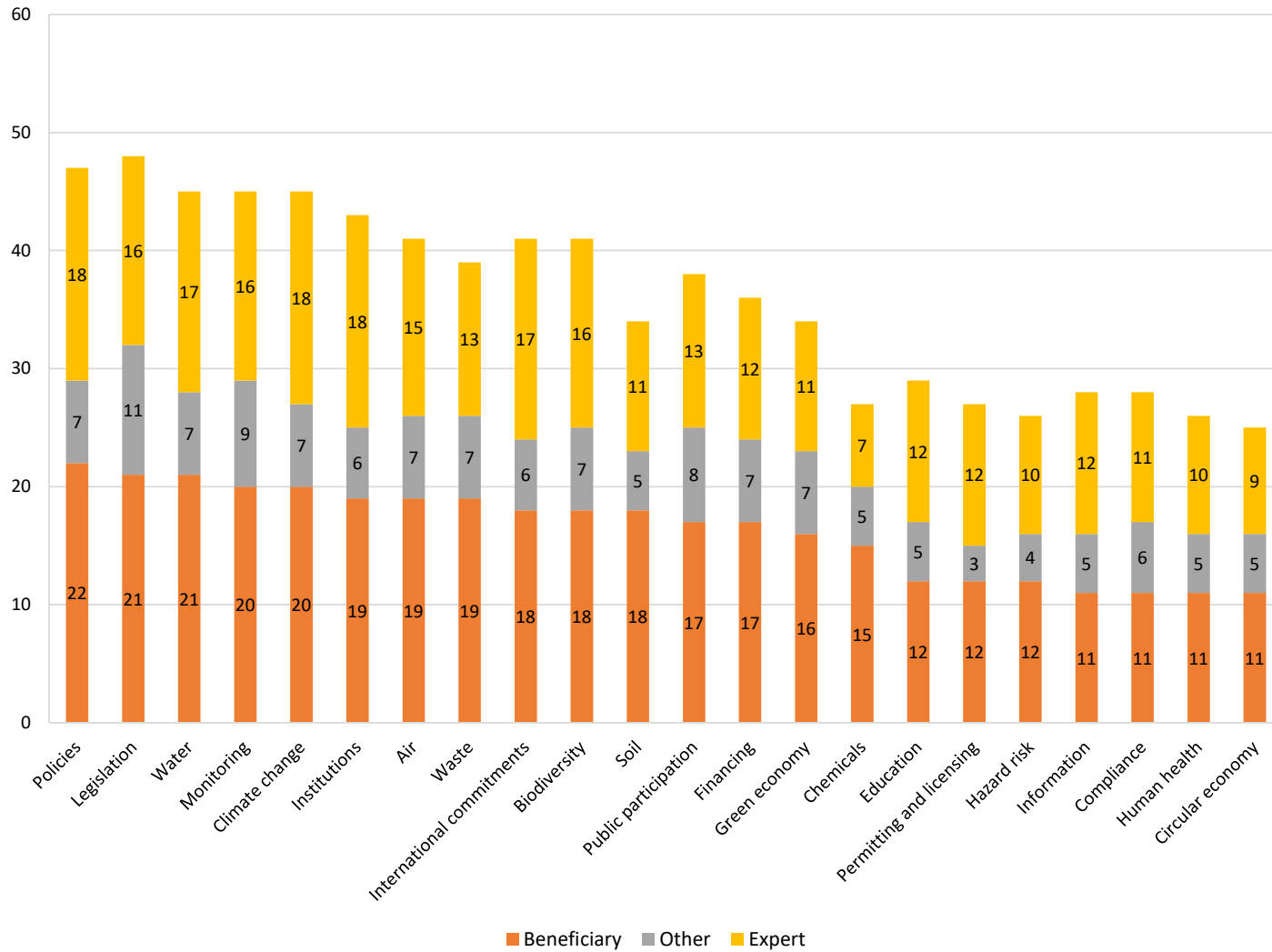


Figure 3.a: What themes are important for an EPR?

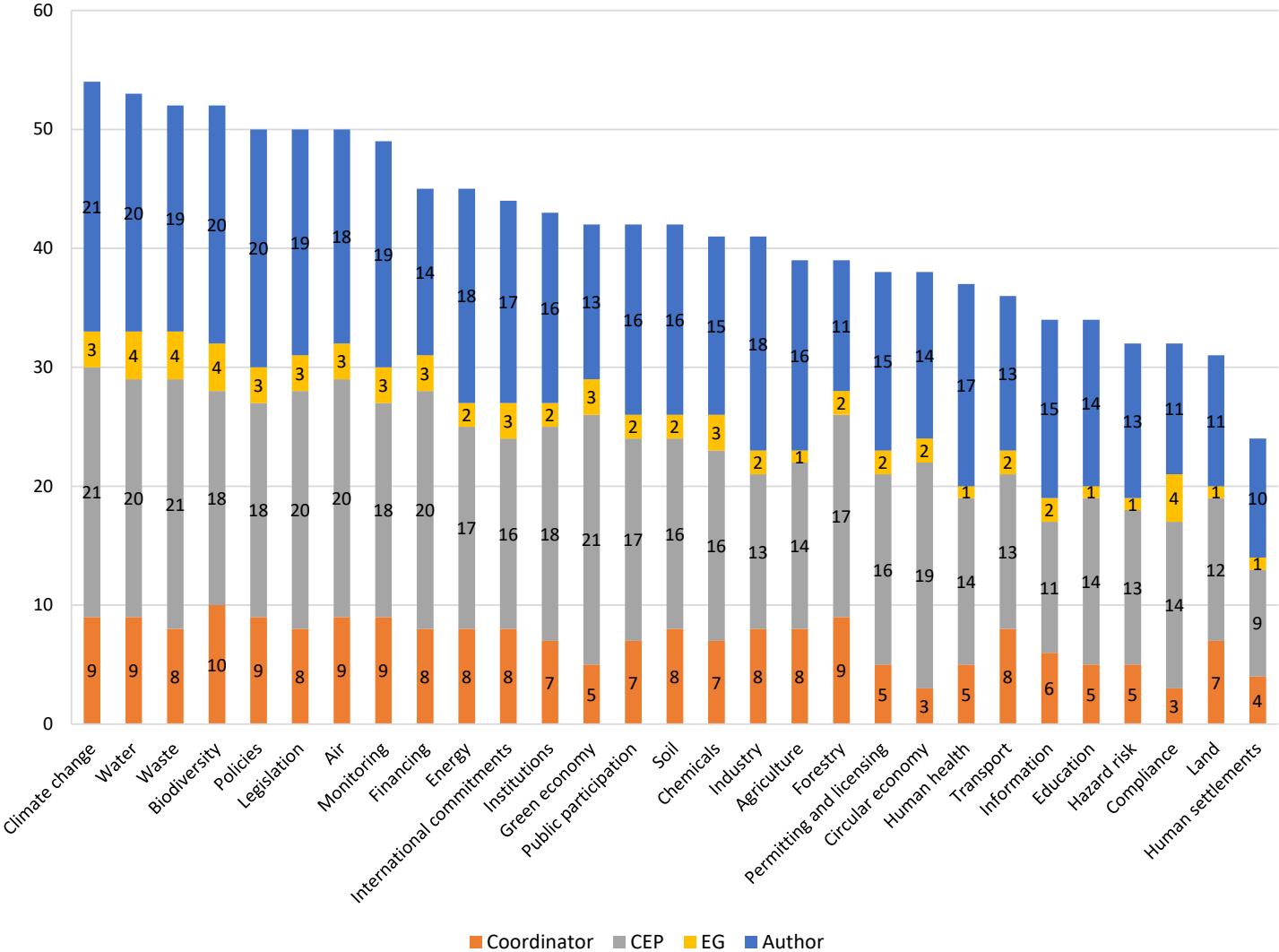
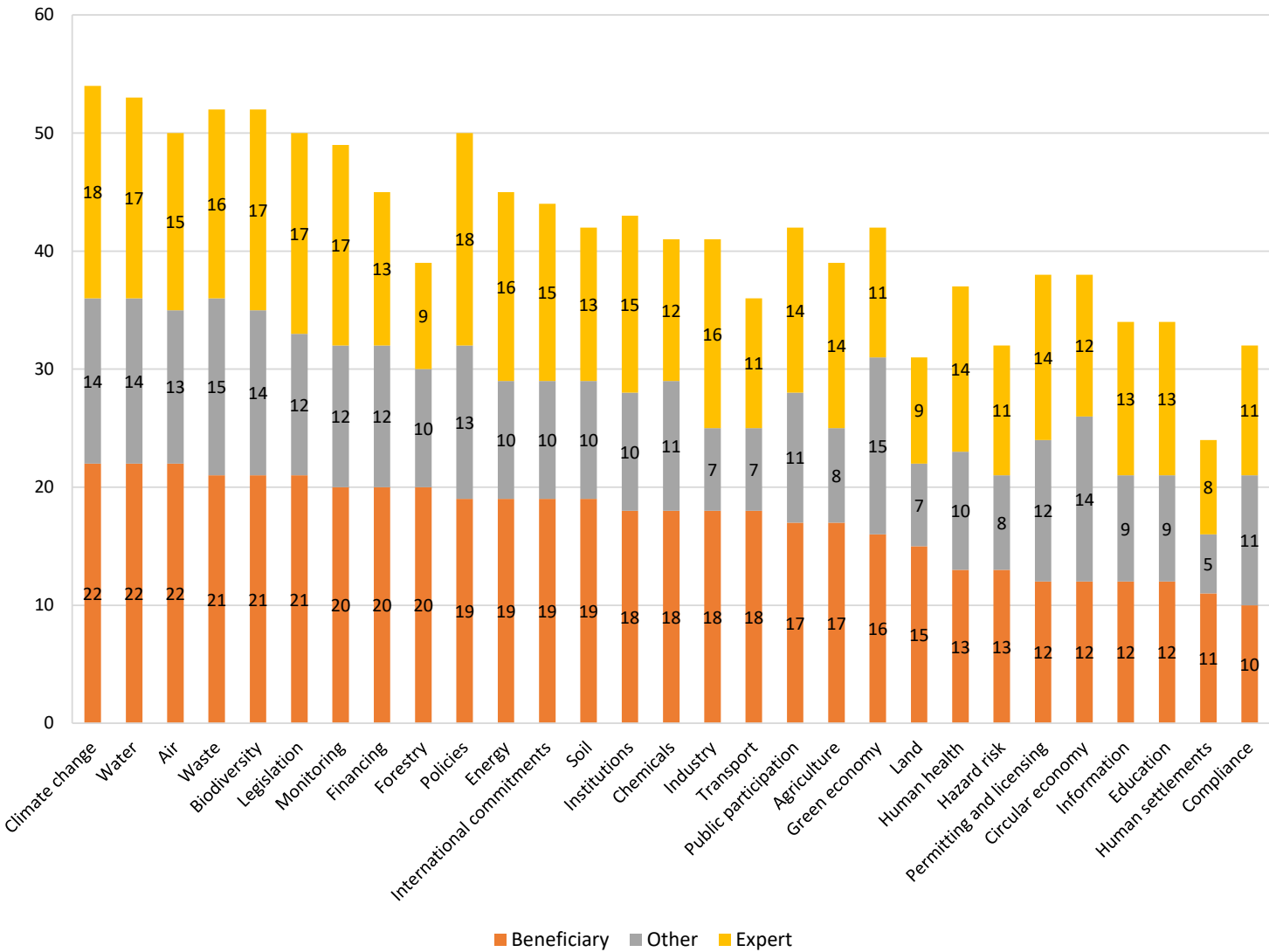


Figure 3.b: What themes are important for an EPR?



II. EPR chapters

A. Background

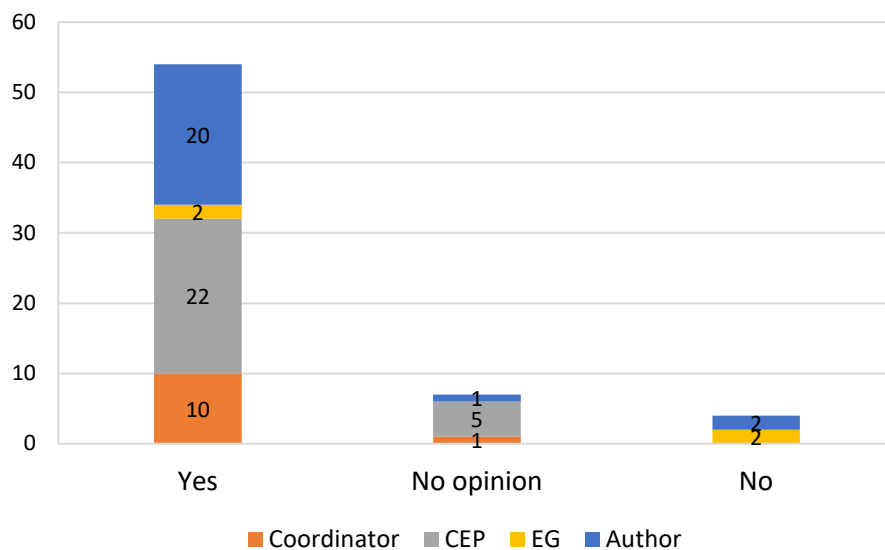
16. The questions regarding EPR chapters aimed to collect views on priority chapters and modalities of their selection for an EPR. The document on the Fourth Cycle of EPRs states that the structure of the Fourth Cycle of EPRs will largely remain the same as for the Third Cycle, with some adjustments, if deemed necessary to rationalize the use of the EPR report. A suggested structure of Fourth Cycle reviews is included in the document with the understanding that it can be adapted to the needs of each country under review. The Fourth Cycle of EPRs also foresees a nexus approach, which is still under development and was therefore not covered by the survey. The Expert Group on EPRs proposes to streamline the EPRs, including by reducing the number of chapters in an EPR.

B. Survey results

17. Respondents were asked whether some chapters should be mandatory for an EPR. 54 respondents answered in the affirmative, 4 answered in the negative, and 7 expressed no opinion on the matter.

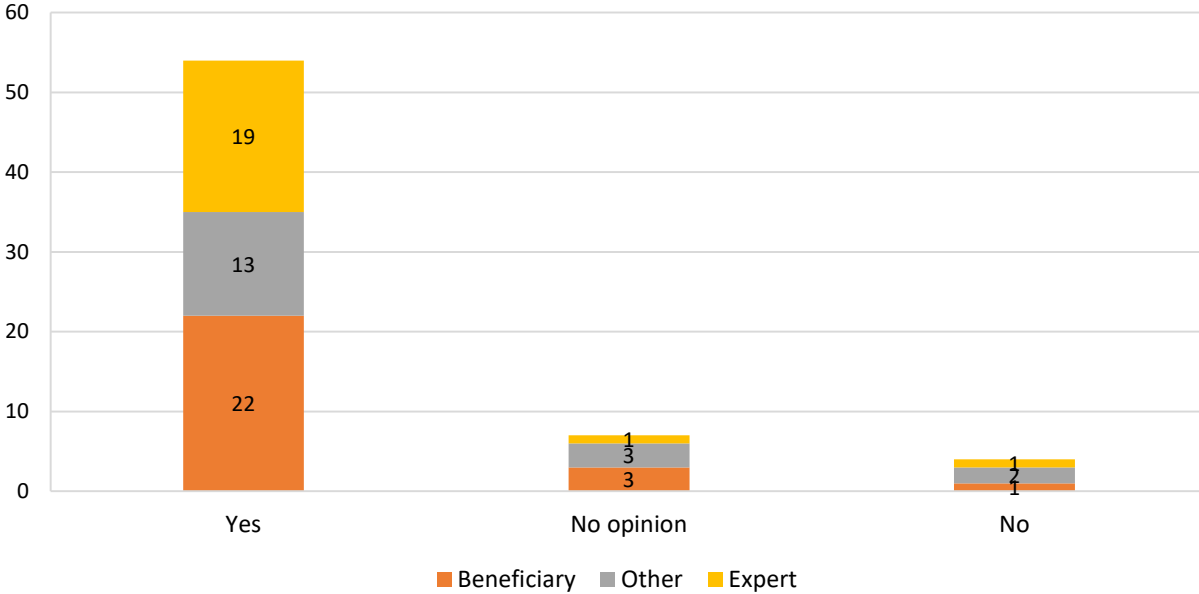
18. As illustrated in Figure 4.a, of the 54 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 10 are national coordinators of EPRs, 22 are CEP Members or observers, 2 are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and 20 are chapter authors. Of the four respondents who answered in the negative, two are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and two are chapter authors. Of the seven respondents who expressed no opinion, two are national coordinators of EPRs, four are CEP Members or observers and one is a chapter author.

Figure 4.a: Should some chapters be mandatory for an EPR?



19. As illustrated in Figure 4.b, of the 54 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 22 are from beneficiary countries, 13 are from other member States and 19 are experts. Of the four respondents who answered in the negative, one is from a beneficiary country, two are from other member States and one is expert. Of the seven respondents who expressed no opinion, three are from beneficiary countries, three are from other member States and one is expert.

Figure 4.b: Should some chapters be mandatory for an EPR?



20. The respondents who answered in the affirmative to the previous question were asked to select from a list the chapters that should be mandatory for an EPR. Figure 5.a illustrates the list of chapters, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each chapter. Figure 5.b shows the list of chapters, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each chapter.

21. All respondents were asked to select from a list wider than the previous one the chapters that are important for an EPR. Figure 6.a illustrates the list of chapters, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each chapter. Figure 6.b shows the list of chapters, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each chapter.

22. Respondents were asked to share their views on the content of a streamlined and consolidated EPR, while keeping in mind that the number of chapters of a given EPR might be limited by the in-kind and financial resources available for the EPR. Respondents were asked to select one or more options from a list. Figure 7.a illustrates the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each option. Figure 7.b shows the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each option.

Figure 5.a: What chapters should be mandatory for an EPR?

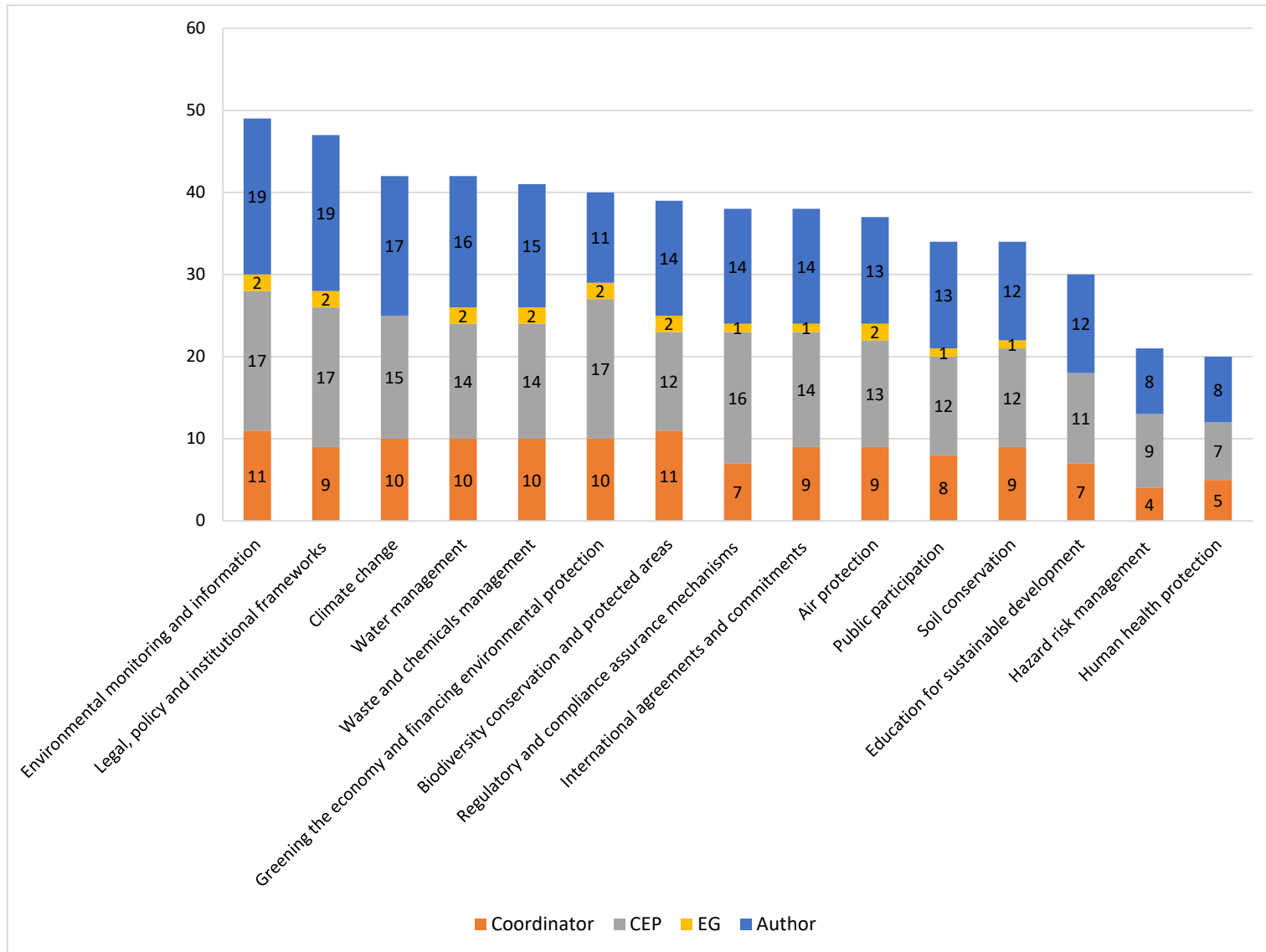


Figure 5.b: What chapters should be mandatory for an EPR?

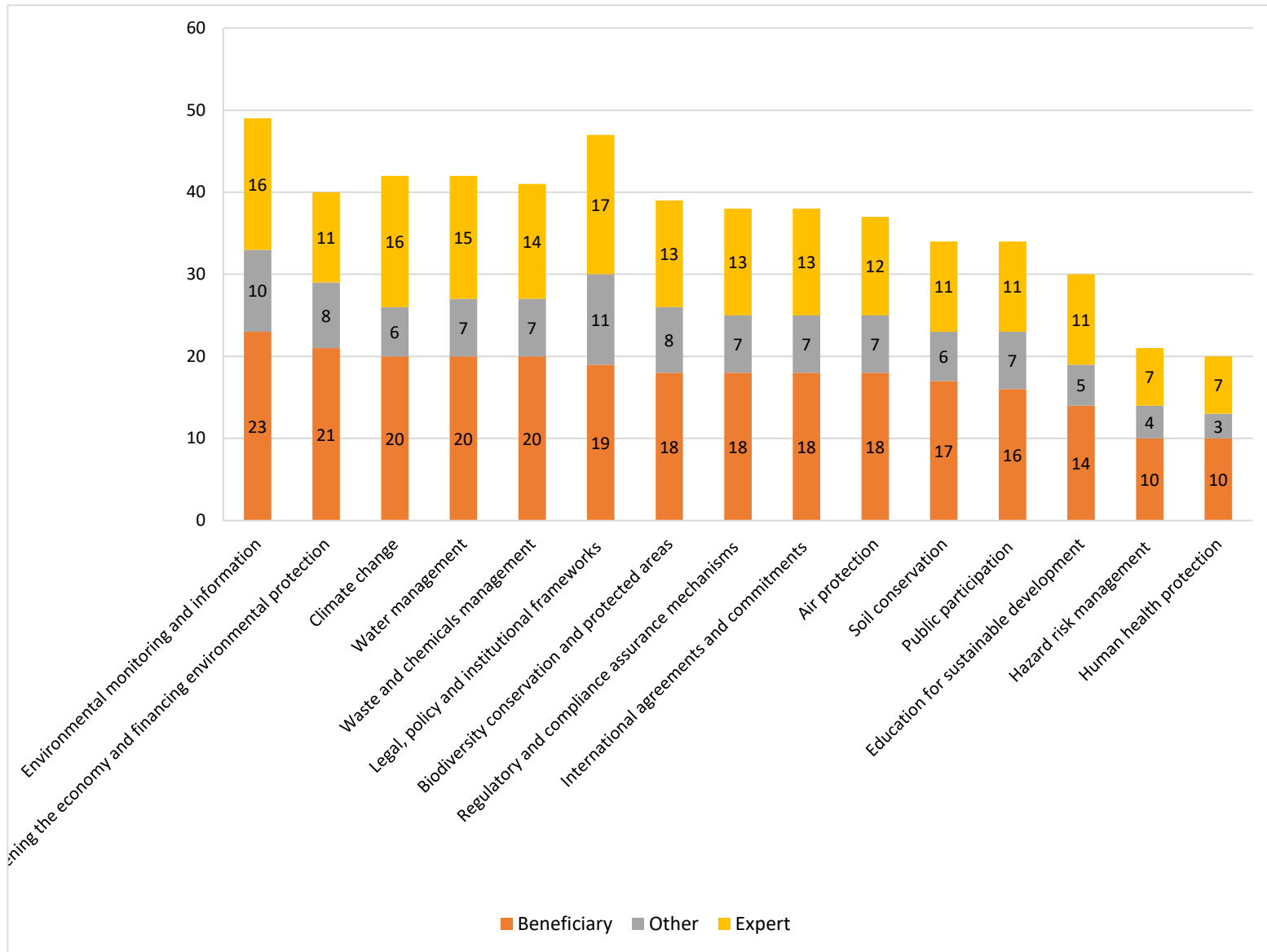


Figure 6.a: What chapters are important for an EPR?

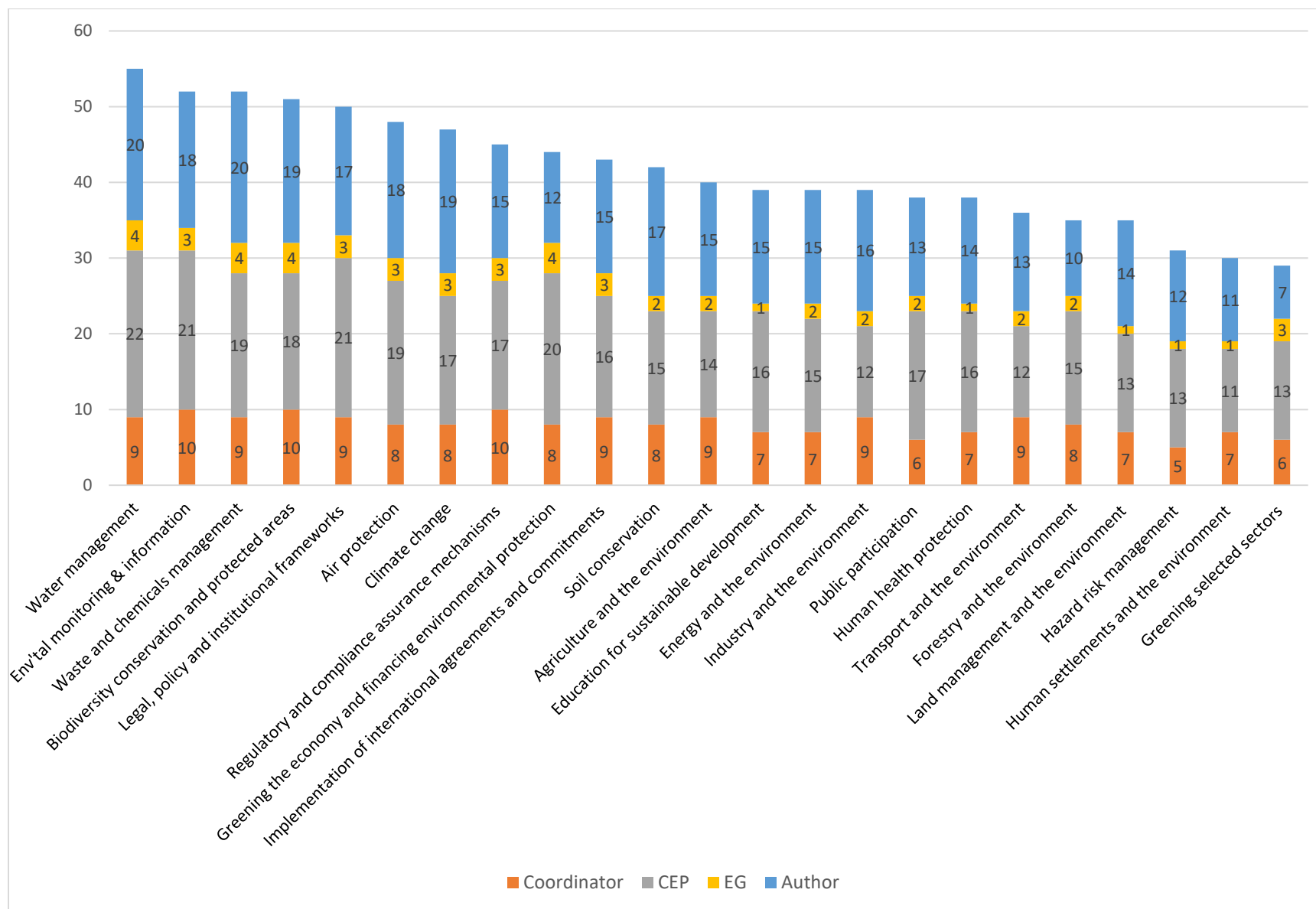


Figure 6.b: What chapters are important for an EPR?

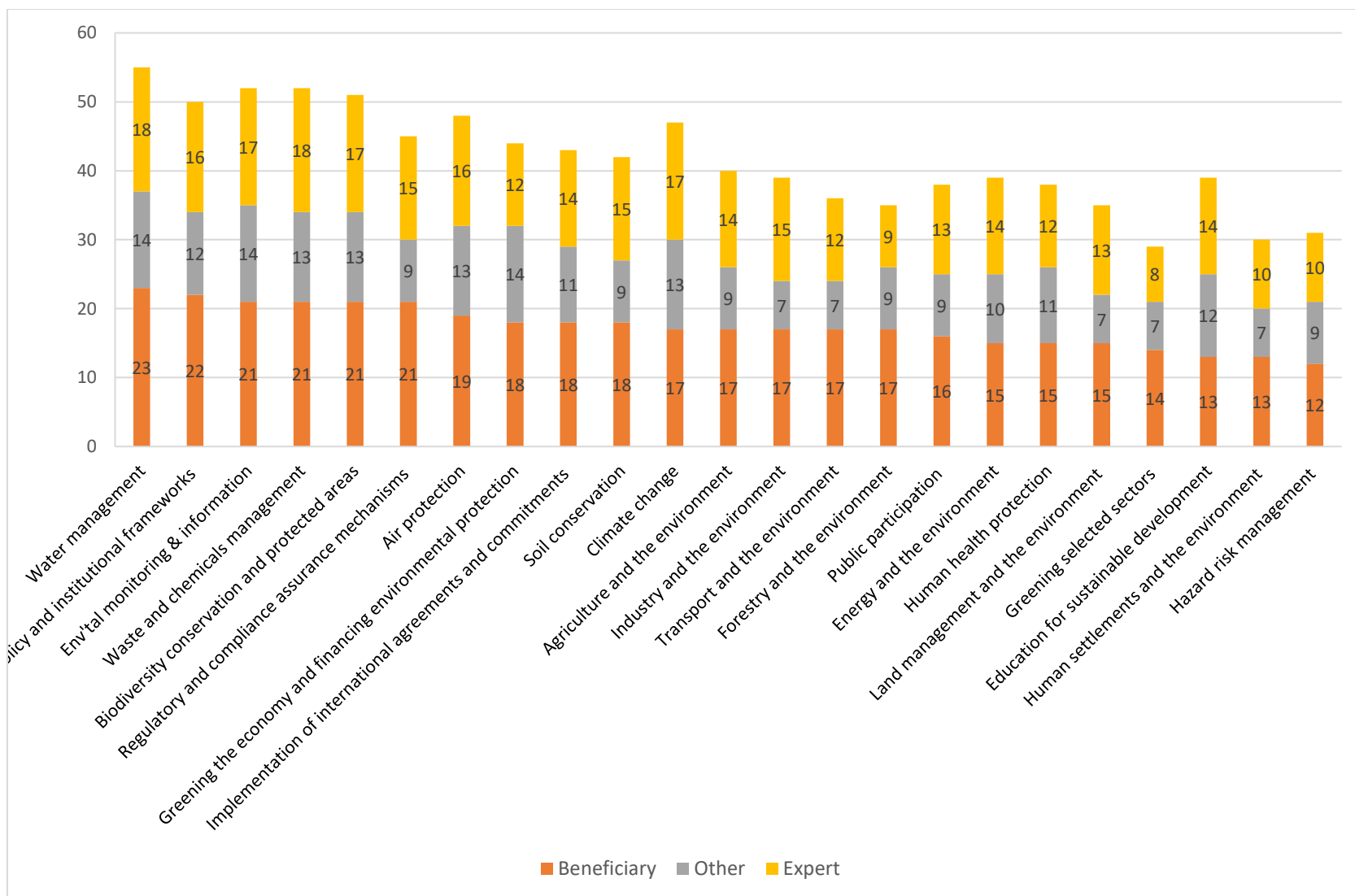


Figure 7.a: Views on the content of a streamlined and consolidated EPR.

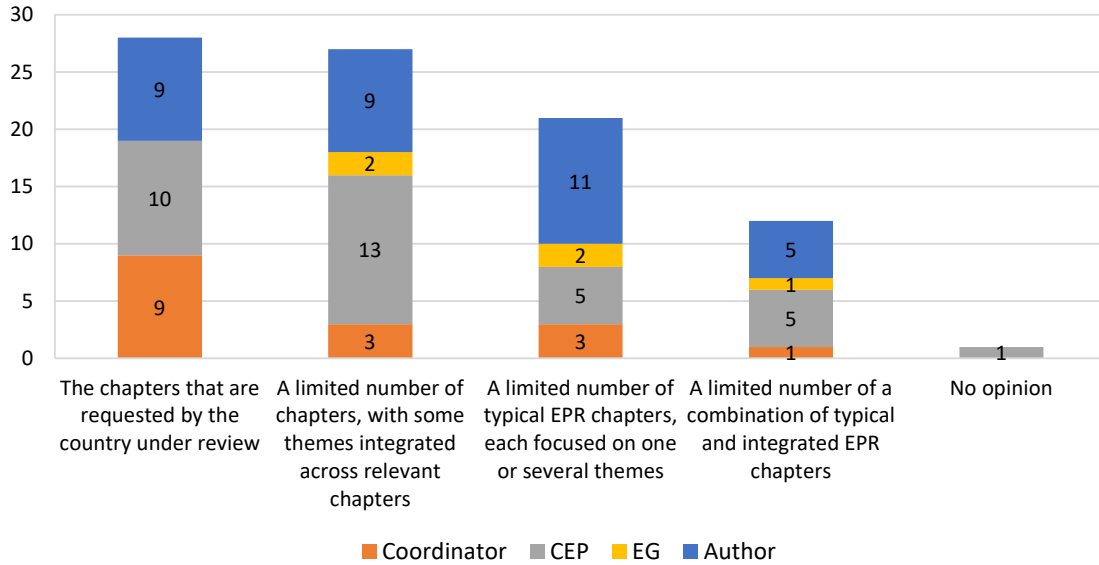


Figure 7.b: Views on the content of a streamlined and consolidated EPR.

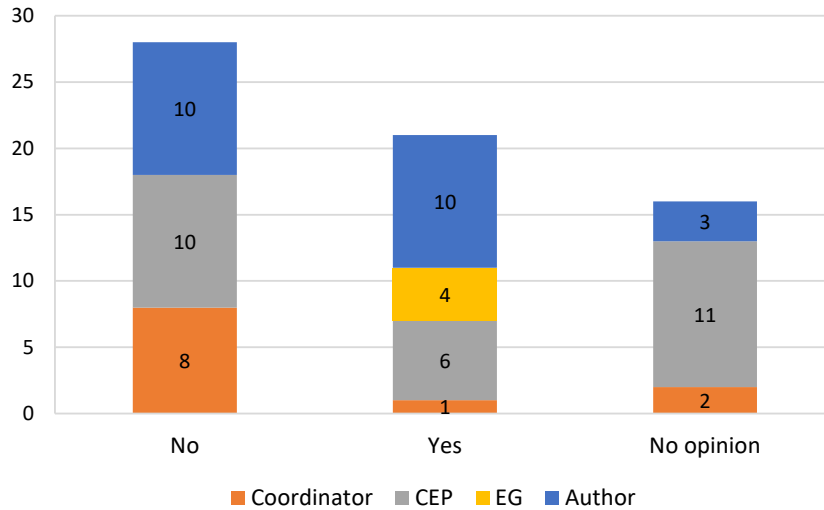


23. Respondents were asked whether there should be a numeric limit on the number of chapters in an EPR. 21 respondents answered in the affirmative, 28 respondents answered in the negative, and 16 respondents expressed no opinion on the matter.

24. As illustrated in Figure 8.a, of the 21 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 1 is a national coordinator of an EPR, 6 are CEP Members or observers, 4 are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and 10 are chapter authors. Out of the 28 respondents who answered in the negative, 8 are national coordinators of EPRs, 10 are CEP Members or observers and 10 are chapter authors. Out of the 16 respondents who

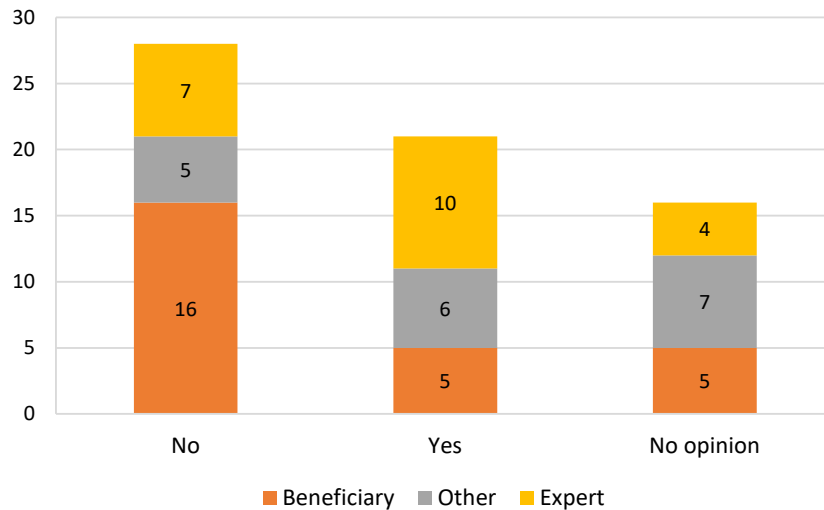
expressed no opinion on the matter, 3 are national coordinators of EPRs, 10 are CEP Members or observers and 3 are chapter authors.

Figure 8.a: Should there be a numeric limit on the number of chapters in an EPR?



25. As illustrated in Figure 8.b, of the 21 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 5 are from beneficiary countries, 6 are from other member States and 10 are experts. Out of the 28 respondents who answered in the negative, 16 are from beneficiary countries, 5 are from other member States and 7 are experts. Out of the 16 respondents who expressed no opinion on the matter, 5 are from beneficiary countries, 7 are from other member States and 4 are experts.

Figure 8.b: Should there be a numeric limit on the number of chapters in an EPR?



26. The respondents who answered in the affirmative to the previous question were asked to indicate how many chapters an EPR should comprise. Respondents were asked to select one option from a list.

Figure 9.a illustrates the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each option. Figure 9.b shows the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each option.

Figure 9.a: How many chapters should an EPR comprise?

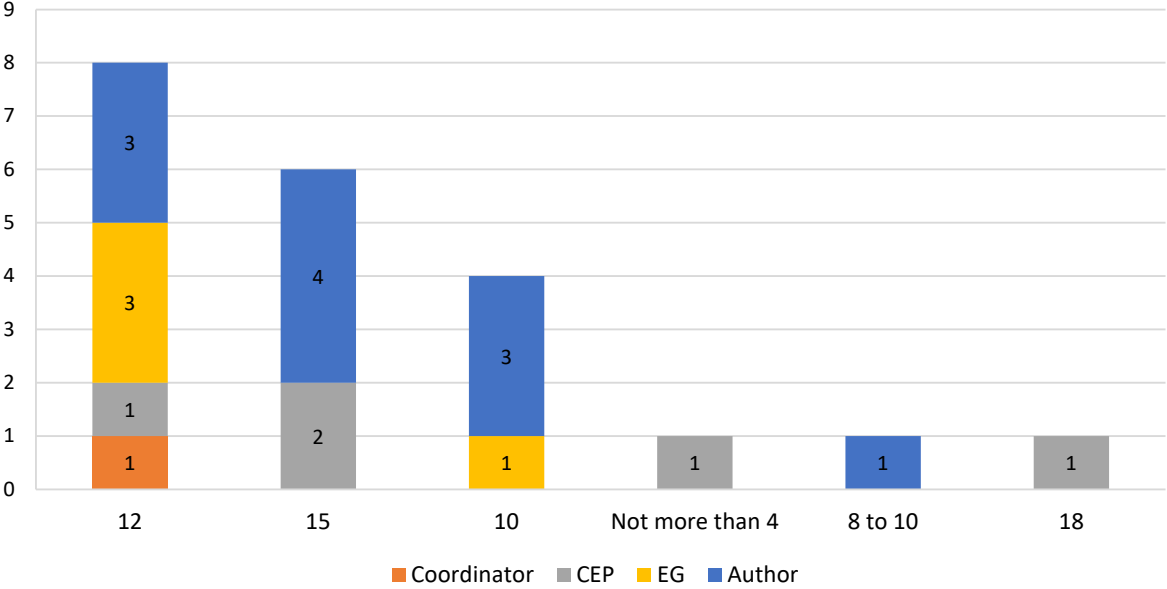
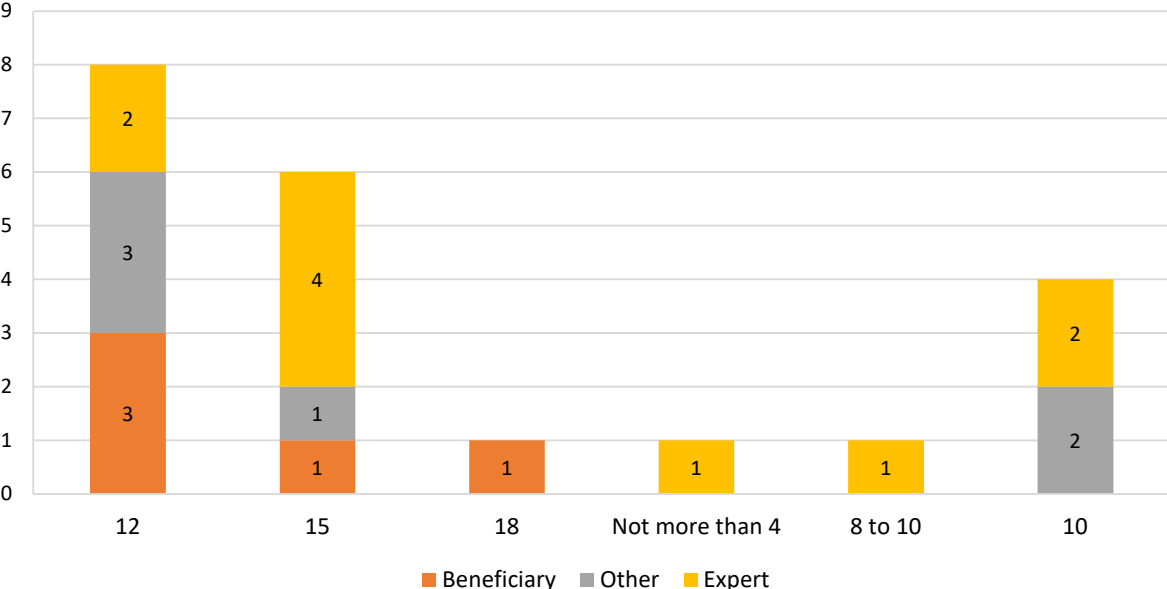


Figure 9.b: How many chapters should an EPR comprise?



27. All respondents were asked to share their views on how chapters for an EPR should be selected. Respondents were asked to select one option from a list. Figure 10.a illustrates the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each option. Figure 10.b shows the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each option.

Figure 10.a: How should chapters for an EPR be selected?

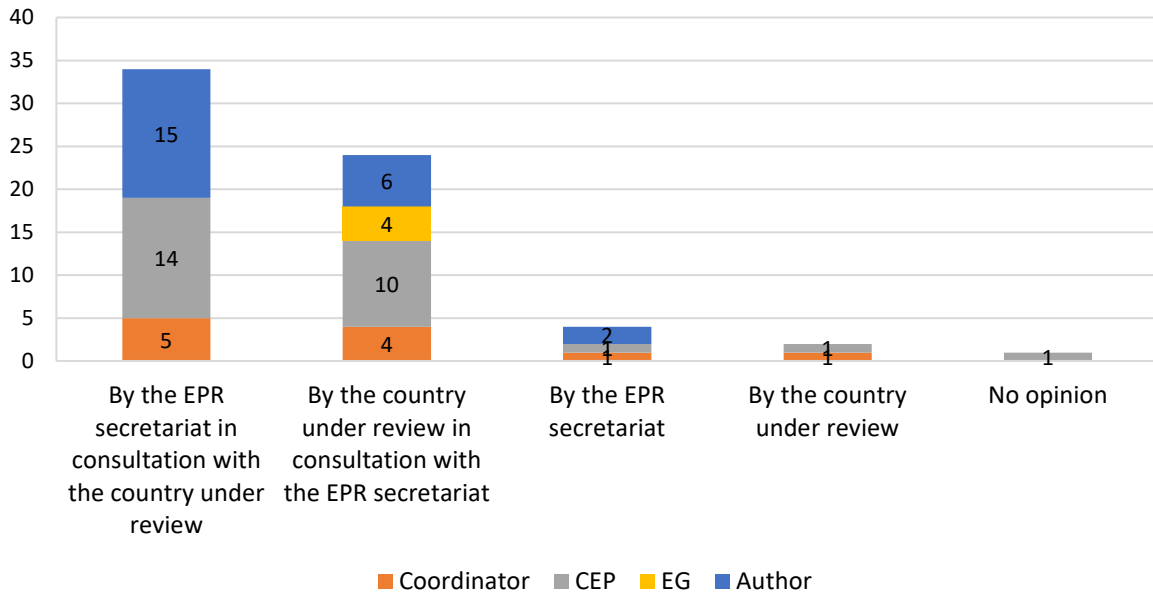
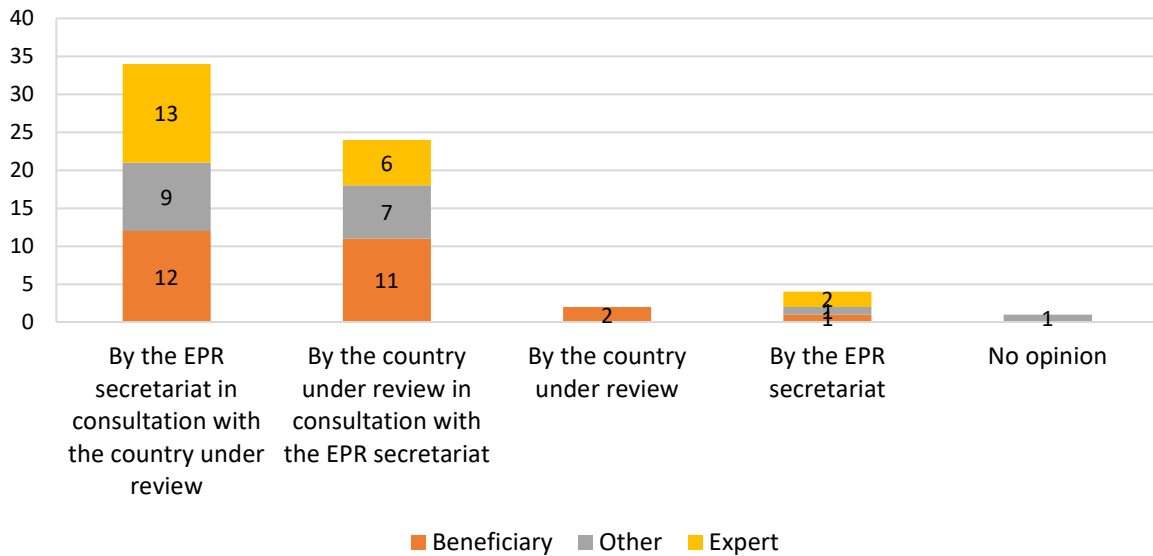


Figure 10.b: How should chapters for an EPR be selected?



28. Respondents were asked to share other ideas on chapters they might have deemed important for an EPR. Fourteen respondents shared their ideas.

- Some respondents focused on the selection of chapters. One national coordinator of an EPR suggested that chapters should be selected to highlight a country's environmental policy and its limitations. Another national coordinator of an EPR wrote that the chapters should be selected with the consensus of the parties. One chapter author highlighted the importance of agreeing with the country reviewed on the aims of the EPR and the most appropriate chapters. Another chapter author suggested that the selection of chapters should be made using information and assessments of the situation, progress and needs of the country reviewed. Another chapter author proposed thinking in advance about some sets of chapters that could be appropriate and proposed to the country reviewed. Another chapter author expressed the view that, in principle, the country reviewed makes the first choice of what the scope of the EPR should be. However, since some topics are interrelated and may even overlap, it would not be a completely rigid choice. In addition, it would be essential that the EPR Secretariat helped the country concerned with the choice, clarify interrelationships and dependencies between the various topics and chapters, and highlight the benefits of the outcomes of an EPR for the country reviewed, in order to guide the scope of the EPR, which could eventually become wider.
- Some respondents suggested considerations to include or rethink in chapters. One CEP Member or observer proposed including concrete examples of how to possibly implement some measures. One national coordinator of an EPR highlighted the importance of recording the recommendations from the previous EPR documents that were implemented and to audit those that were not implemented, with an explanation as to why they were not implemented. Another national coordinator of an EPR expressed the view that the use of some SDG Indicators, too artificial to provide valuable information and measure the country's performance (progress, or the lack thereof), should be re-considered, especially Indicators that cannot easily be interpreted, or directly linked to the country's performance. Example: Indicator 15.4.2 (Mountain Green Cover Index), which data aggregation method does not allow to differentiate between e.g., close canopy high growing stock temperate broadleaf mountain forest and poor mountain grassland or cropland in arid areas. Moreover, Indicator 15.4.2 automatically discriminates countries with high (thus barren) mountains harbouring remains of glaciers (natural features not resulting from the environmental performance of a country) versus countries having low or medium-high mountains, but with some vegetation cover (regardless of whether rainforest or poor cropland).
- One chapter author proposed transparency and consumption patterns as possible additional chapters.
- One chapter author suggested that sector chapters such as transport, agriculture, energy, forestry and the domestic-international interface could be taken up in the media and pollution management chapters.

III. EPR assessment, conclusions and recommendations section

A. Background

29. The survey aimed to collect views on the section “Assessment, conclusion and recommendations” at the end of an EPR chapter and on enhancing the implementation of EPR recommendations. The document on the Fourth Cycle of EPRs contains provisions related to the implementation of EPR recommendations, including enhancing ownership and the implementation rate by the reviewed countries, organizing national and regional workshops and other events, engaging United Nations Country Teams and helping reviewed countries to promote bankable recommendations. In addition, the Nicosia Ministerial Declaration encourages countries to develop roadmaps for implementing EPR recommendations. The Expert Group on EPRs proposes to reduce the number of EPR recommendations to boost their implementation rate during a period of about 5-7 years after the release of EPR publication.

B. Survey results

30. Respondents were asked to share their views on the concluding assessment at the end of an EPR chapter. Respondents were asked to select one option from a list. Figure 11.a illustrates the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each option. Figure 11.b shows the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each option.

31. Respondents were asked to share their views on conclusions (chapeau to the recommendation) and recommendations of an EPR chapter. Respondents were asked to select one or more options from a list. Figure 12.a illustrates the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each option. Figure 12.b shows the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each option.

32. The respondents who selected the option that “the number of recommendations per chapter should be limited” were asked to indicate the maximum number to include. Two respondents indicated a maximum of three recommendations; three indicated a maximum of five recommendations; one indicated a maximum of five to six recommendations; two indicated a maximum of six recommendations; one answered that it is difficult to indicate a maximum number, and rather proposed to consider identifying priority/core recommendations; one did not express an opinion on the matter.

Figure 11.a: Views on the concluding assessment at the end of an EPR chapter.

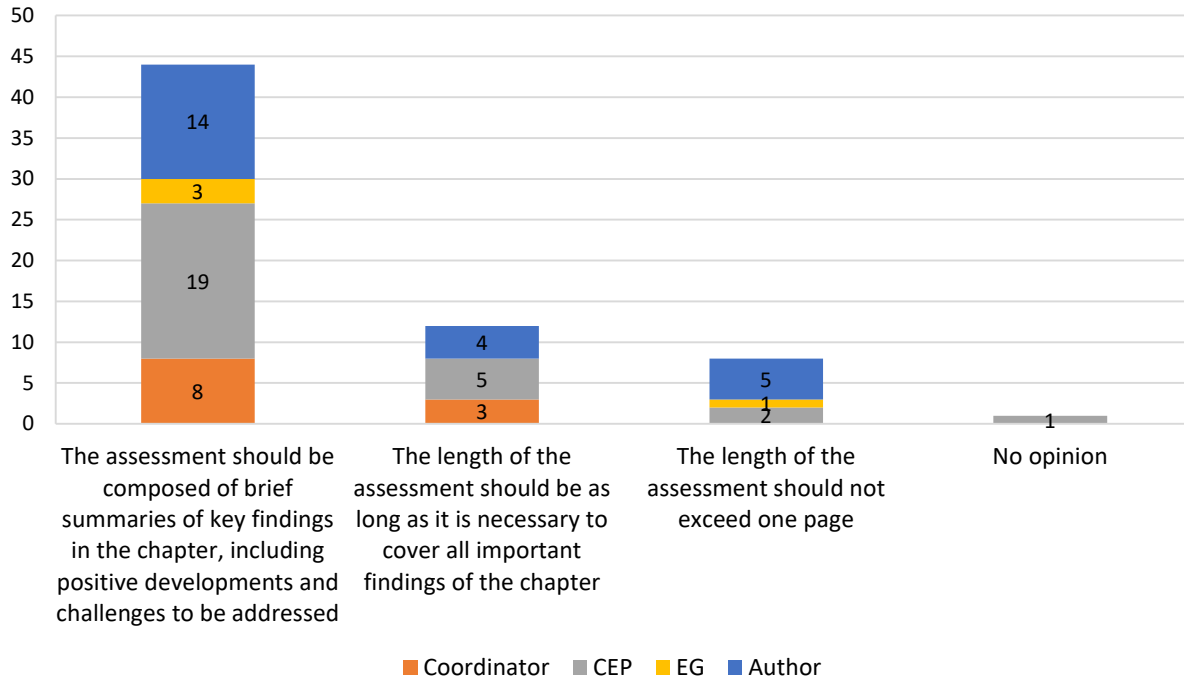


Figure 11.b: Views on the concluding assessment at the end of an EPR chapter.

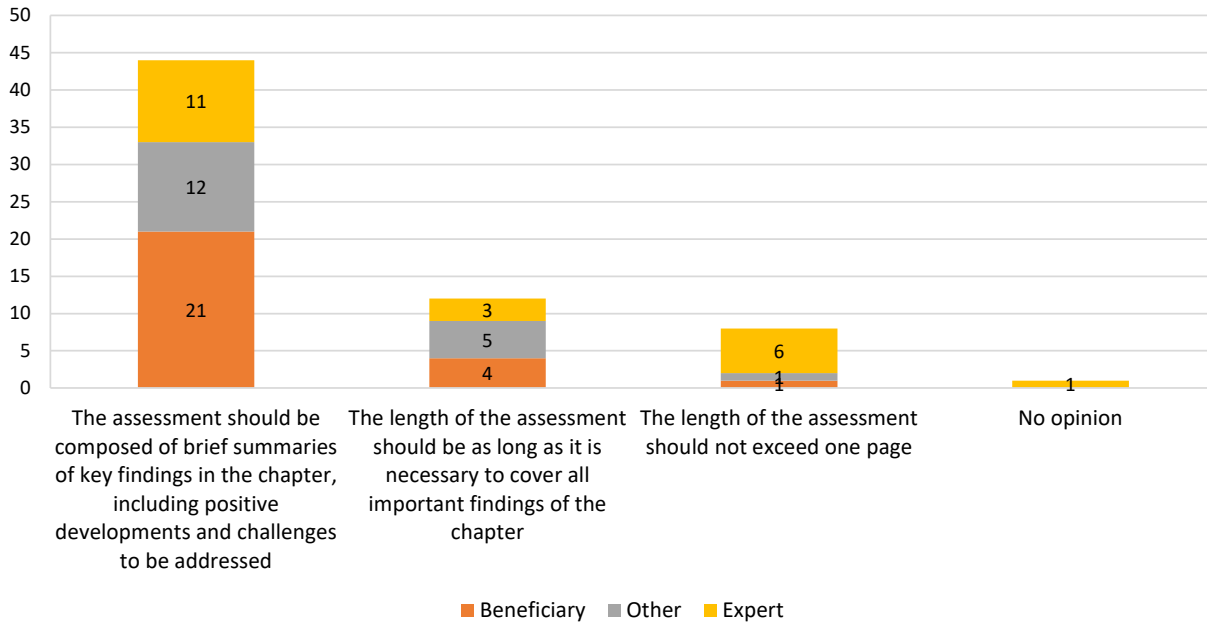


Figure 12.a: Views on conclusions and recommendations of an EPR chapter.

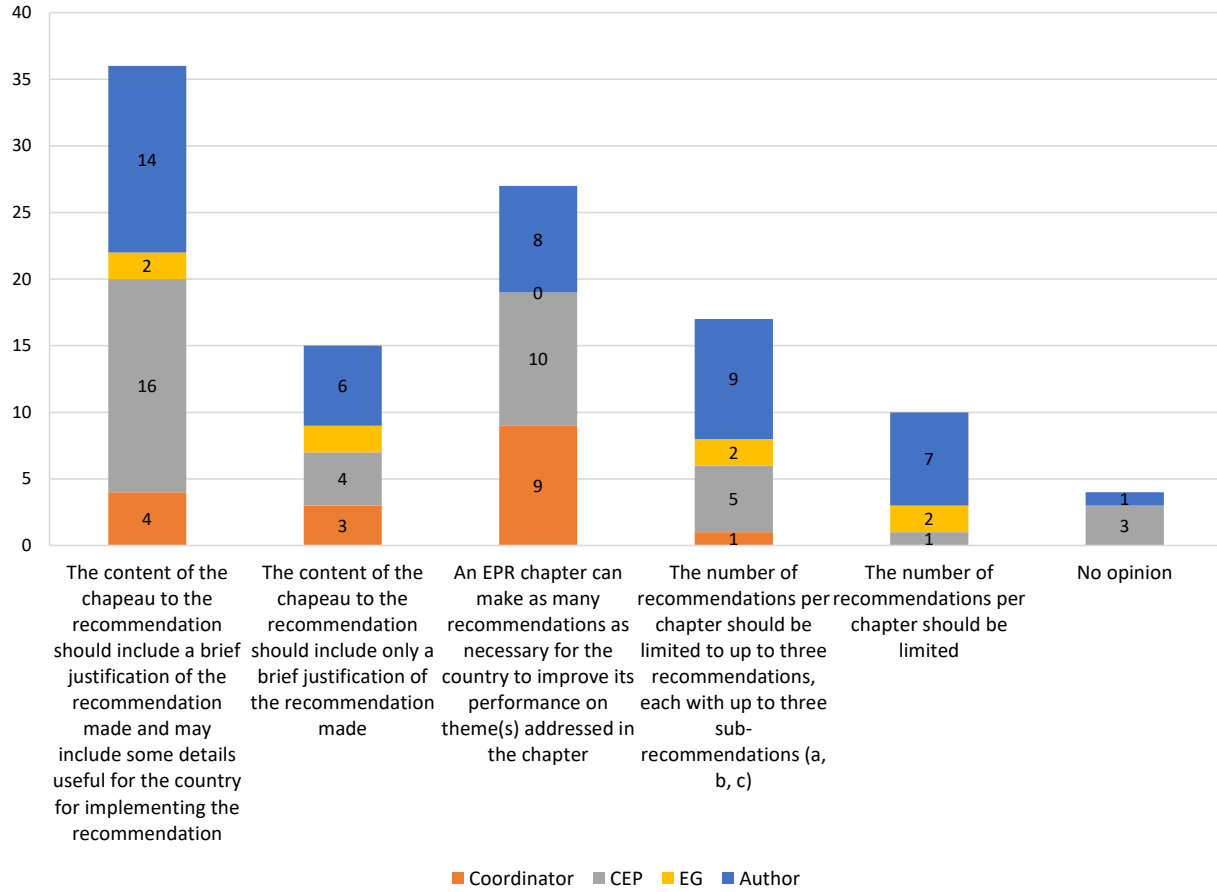
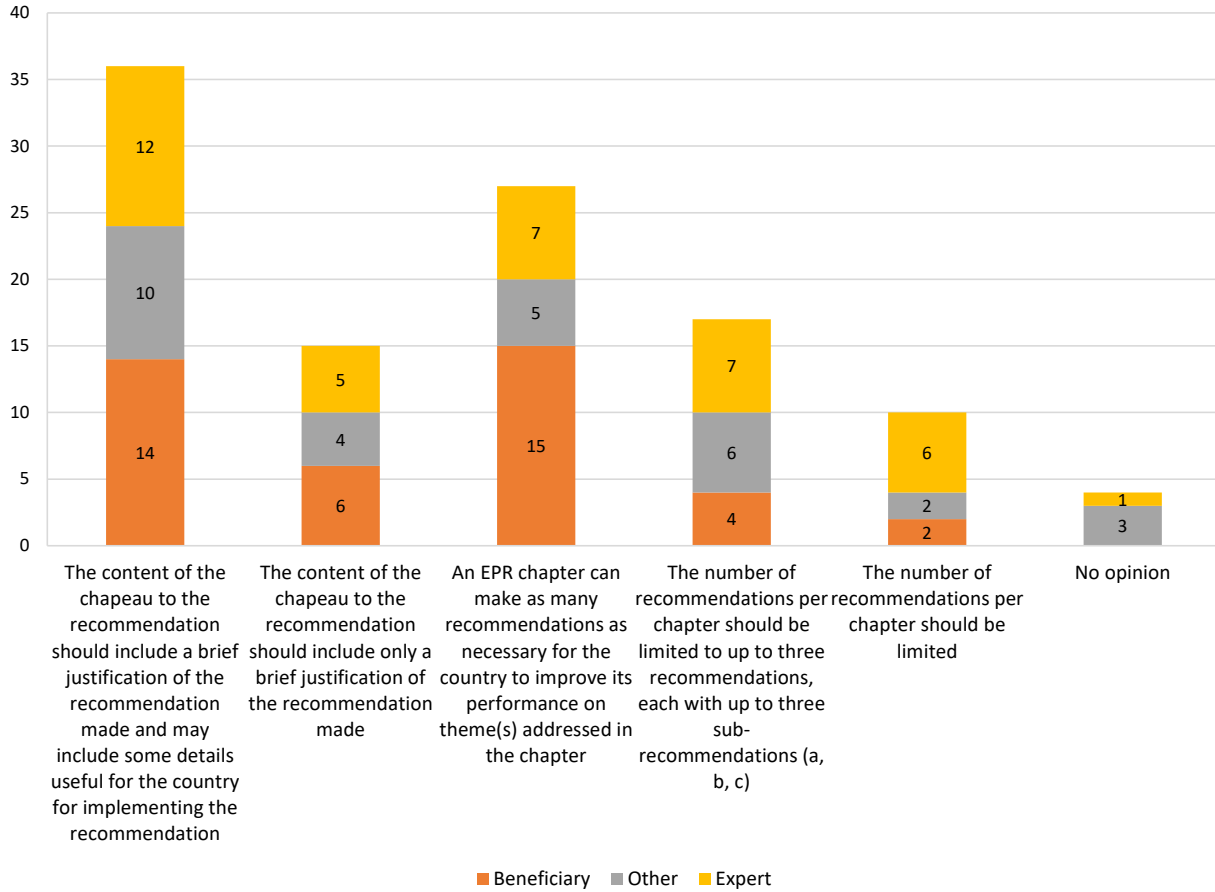


Figure 12.b: Views on conclusions and recommendations of an EPR chapter.



33. Respondents were asked to share their views on assessing the status of implementation of recommendations of the previous EPR of the country under review. Respondents were asked to select one or more options from a list. Figure 13.a illustrates the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each option. Figure 13.b shows the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each option.

Figure 13.a: Views on assessing the status of implementation of recommendations of the previous EPR of the country under review.

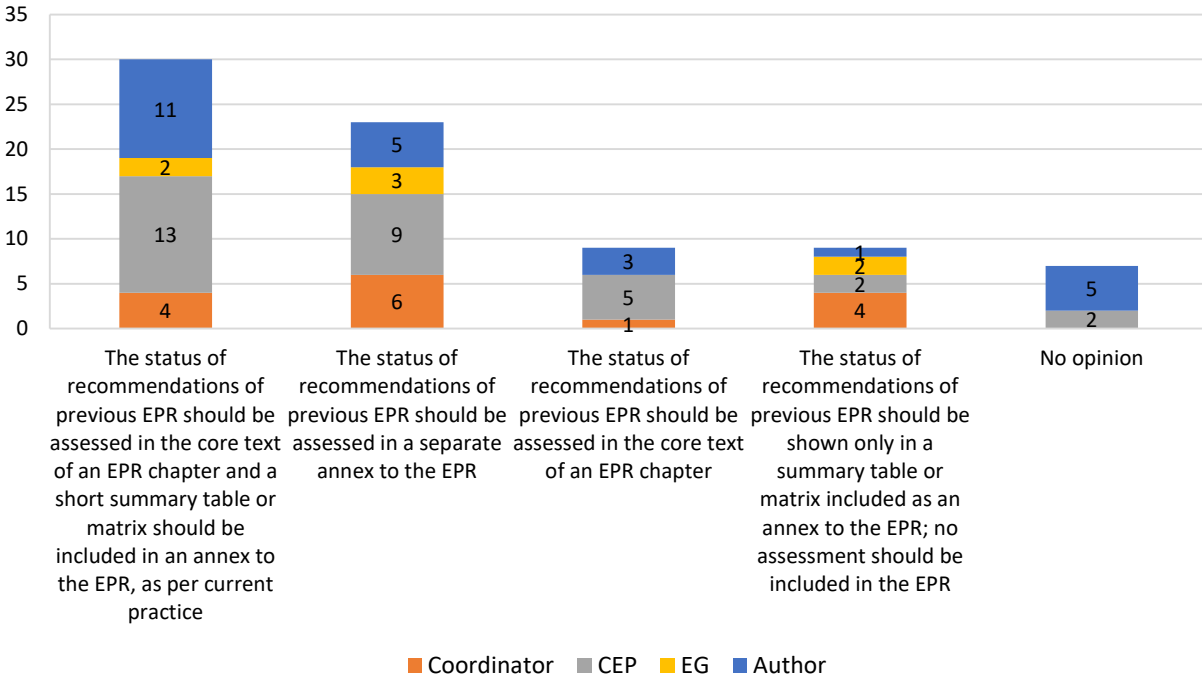
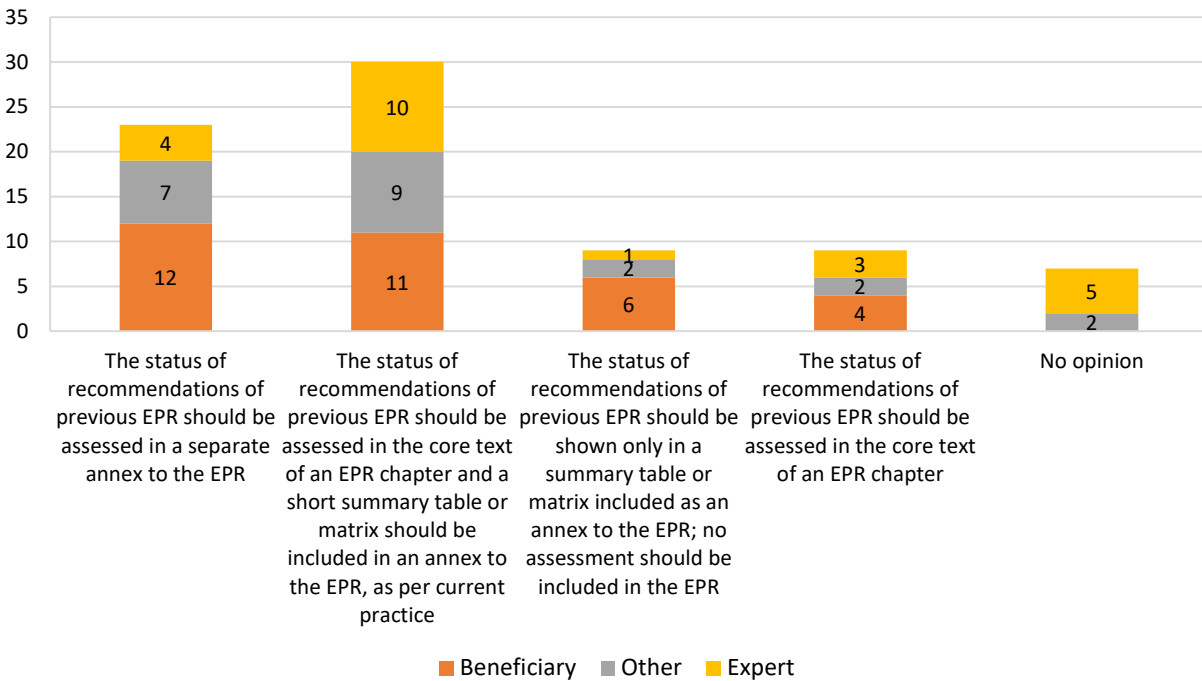


Figure 13.b: Views on assessing the status of implementation of recommendations of the previous EPR of the country under review.



34. Respondents were asked to share their views on country roadmaps for implementing EPR recommendations as a mechanism for timely, coordinated and coherent action to implement EPR recommendations. Respondents were asked to select one or more options from a list. Figure 14.a illustrates the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of national coordinators of EPRs, CEP Members and observers, Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and chapter authors who selected each option. Figure 14.b shows the list of options, the total number of respondents that selected them and the number of beneficiary countries, other member States and experts who selected each option.

35. Respondents were asked whether the reviewed country should identify bankable or fundable EPR recommendations with a view to co-finance their implementation through project-based activities. 26 respondents answered in the affirmative, 2 respondents answered in the negative, and 37 respondents expressed no opinion on the matter.

36. As illustrated in Figure 15.a, of the 26 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 7 are national coordinators of EPRs, 8 are CEP Members or observers, 2 are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and 9 are chapter authors. The two respondents who answered in the negative are CEP Members or observers. Of the 37 respondents who expressed no opinion, 5 are national coordinators of EPRs, 16 are CEP Members or observers, 2 are Members of the Expert Group on EPRs and 14 are chapter authors.

37. Figure 15.b shows that, of the 26 respondents who answered in the affirmative, 12 are from beneficiary countries, 5 are from other member States and 9 are experts. Of the two respondents who answered in the negative, one is from a beneficiary country and one is from another member State. Of the 37 respondents who expressed no opinion, 13 are from beneficiary countries, 13 are from other member States and 11 are experts.

Figure 14.a: Views on country roadmaps for implementing EPR recommendations as a mechanism for timely, coordinated and coherent action to implement EPR recommendations.

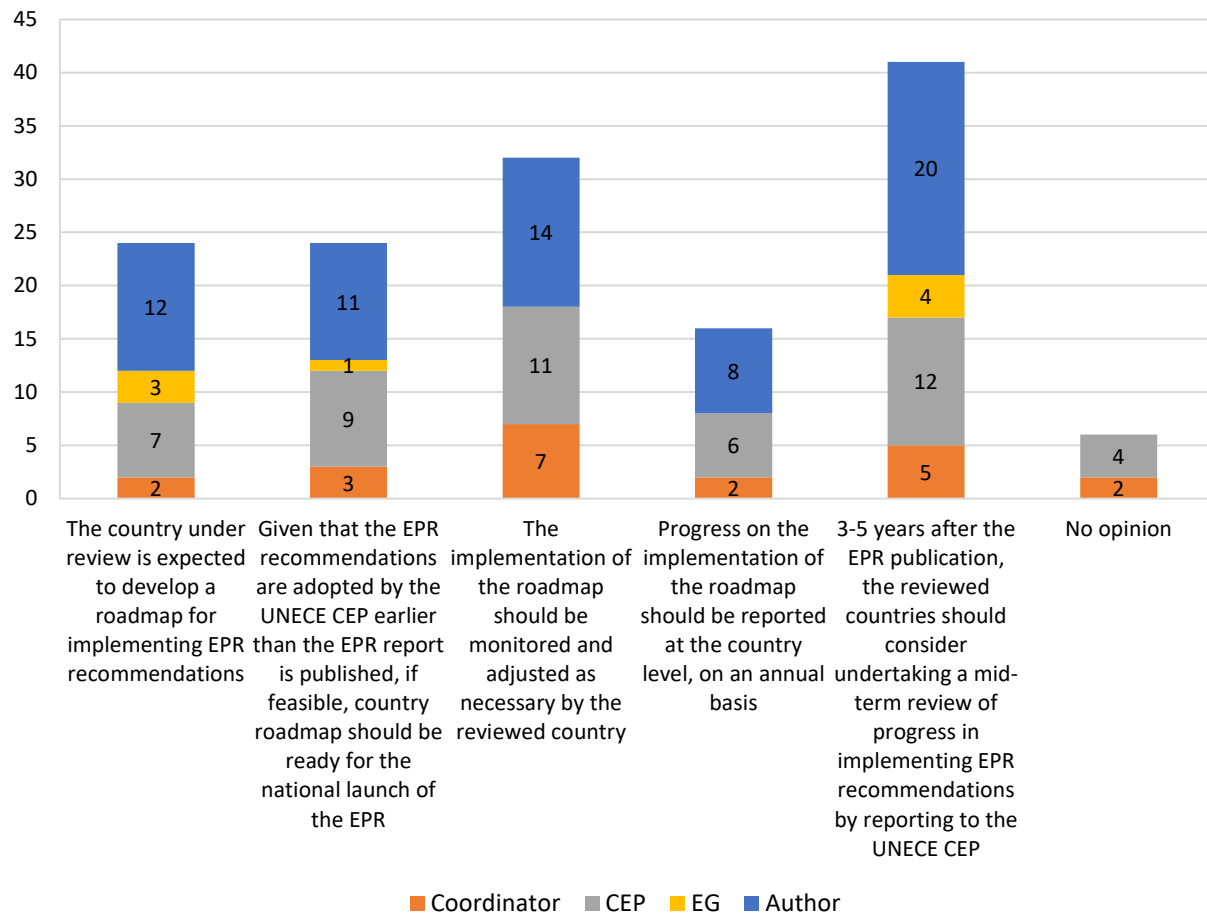


Figure 14.b: Views on country roadmaps for implementing EPR recommendations as a mechanism for timely, coordinated and coherent action to implement EPR recommendations.

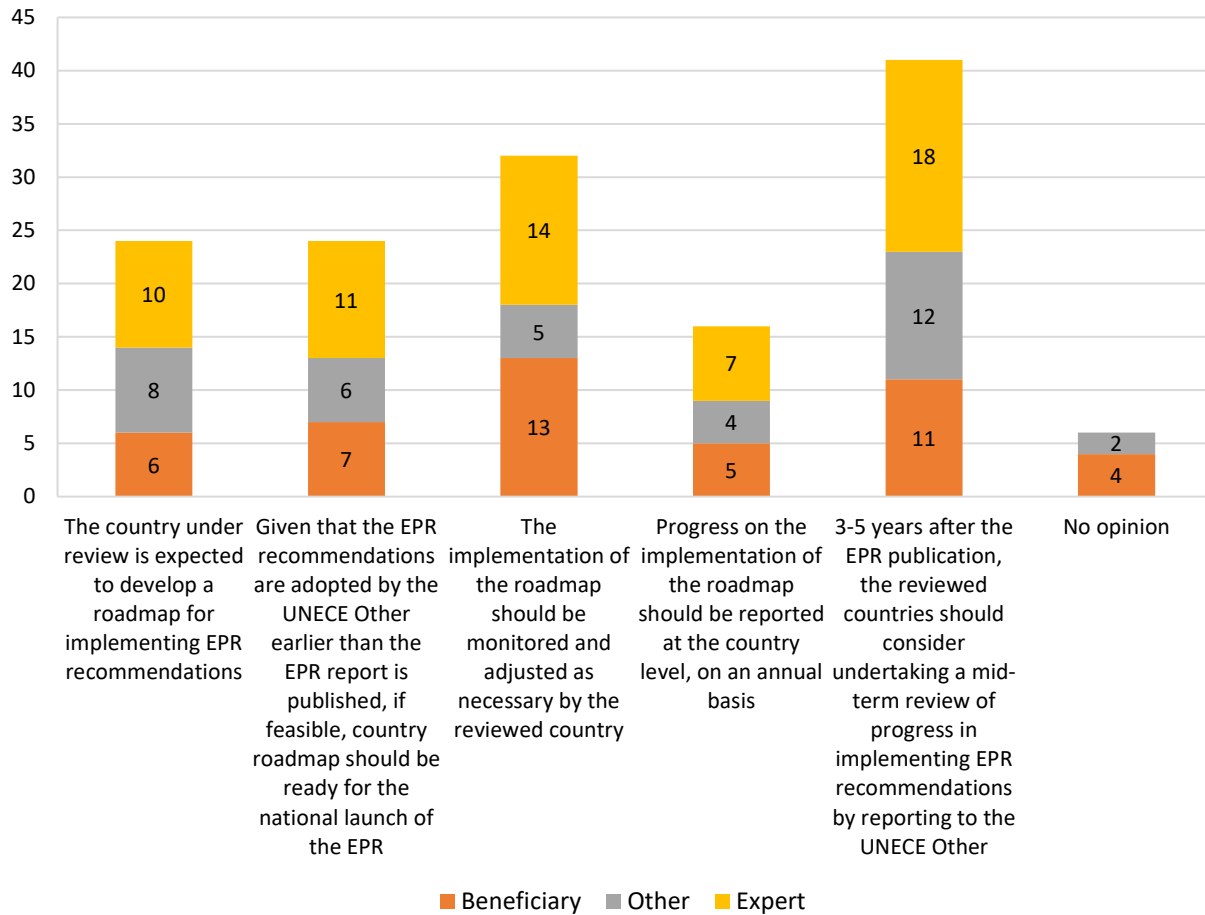


Figure 15.a: Should the reviewed country identify bankable or fundable EPR recommendations with a view to co-finance their implementation through project-based activities?

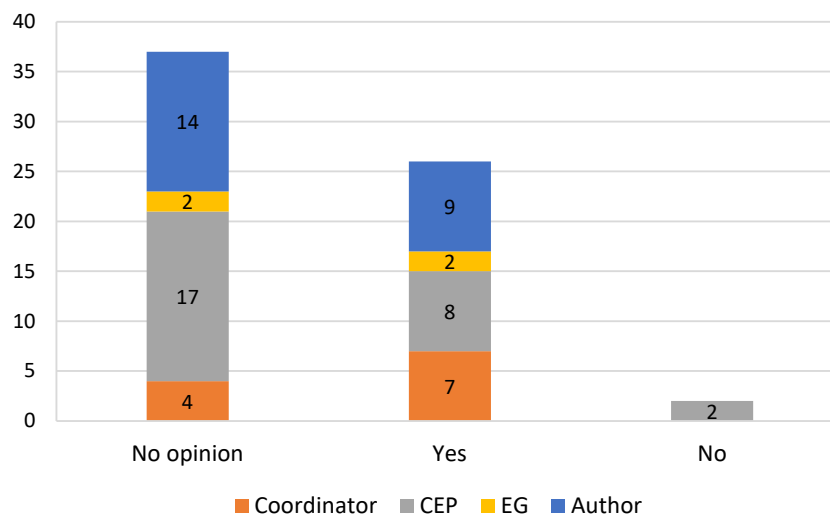
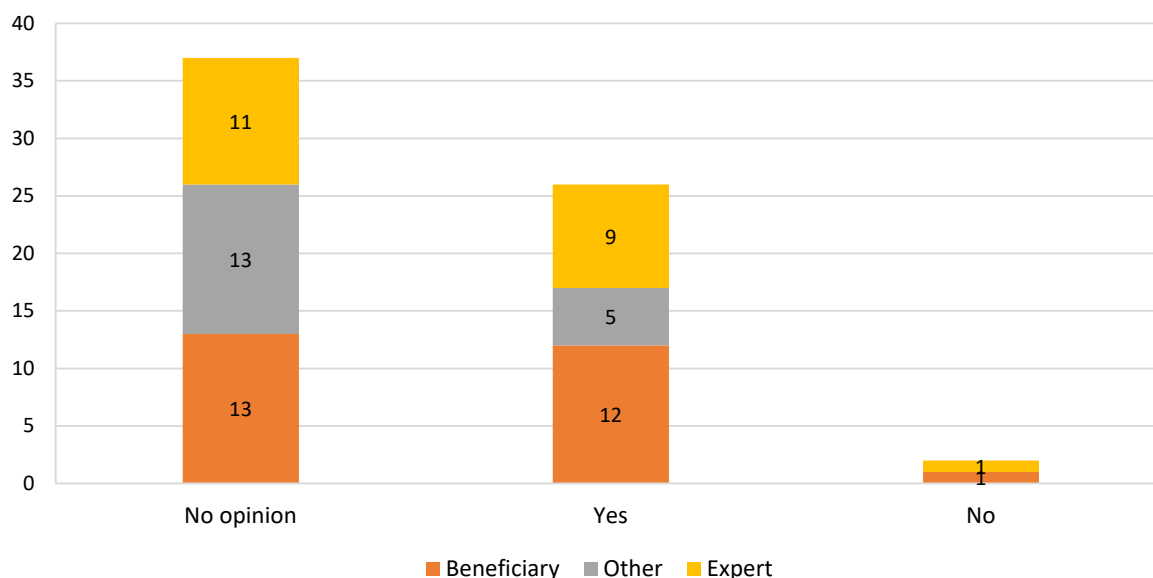


Figure 15.b: Should the reviewed country identify bankable or fundable EPR recommendations with a view to co-finance their implementation through project-based activities?



38. The respondents who answered in the affirmative to the previous question were asked to share their ideas on how to make such recommendations attractive for donors. Nineteen respondents shared their ideas.

- One national coordinator of an EPR, one Member of the Expert Group on EPRs and one chapter author suggested linking recommendations to bankable projects for their implementation. One national coordinator of an EPR, one Member of the Expert Group on EPRs and two chapter authors suggested drafting recommendations in accordance with the priorities of relevant donors. One national coordinator of an EPR suggested preparing relevant projects in cooperation with faculties and other relevant institutions, forming working groups depending on the theme to which the activity identified in the recommendation refers. One CEP Member or observer proposed reaching agreements with major donors, IFIs, etc. that a certain portion of the funds earmarked for the country under review should be allocated to finance the implementation of the EPR recommendations.
- Some respondents highlighted the role of the country reviewed. One CEP Member or observer expressed the view that the countries reviewed should know which priorities the donors have in their country and how the recommendations should look like. Two chapter authors suggested that the countries reviewed should highlight or submit for review to donors certain recommendations, in an effort to mobilize resources for their implementation. Another chapter author expressed the view that the UN should be impartial and not play a role in referring a country to a specific donor. According to the respondent, the text should show, as a result of the review, that some topics are crucial to achieving specific goals and also that research shows that finances are insufficiently adequate or allocated differently. If the recommendation is drafted in such a way that the chapeau and other text show that external funding is needed, that should be enough for the country to base an initial project proposal on it. The recommendation could also be worded to make

it clear that specific external expertise is needed to implement the recommendation. In other words, the wording of the recommendation could give the country a direction towards some kind of support. In the chapter author's opinion, it should be limited to that.

- Some respondents focused on the content of the recommendations. One CEP Member or observer and one Member of the Expert Group on EPRs suggested that recommendations should focus on concrete problems and indicate local financial possibilities and economic instruments. One CEP Member or observer and one chapter author proposed highlighting the positive social, economic and environmental impacts of the implementation of recommendations. One chapter author suggested that the recommendations should emphasize the strengthening of institutions and regulatory bodies, and, whenever applicable, mention links to innovation, capacity building and/or possible establishment of partnerships, such as private public partnerships.
- One national coordinator of an EPR suggested attracting experts with backgrounds in financial institutions.

39. The respondents who answered in the affirmative to the question *sub* para. 28 were asked to share their ideas on how to organize the promotion of such recommendations to the donor community. Twenty respondents shared their ideas.

- Various responses were similar or identical to the ones given to the previous question and will not be repeated.
- One national coordinator of an EPR, three CEP Members or observers, one Member of the Expert Group on EPRs and two chapter authors suggested organizing and involving donors in events, such as meetings, also in the country reviewed, workshops, seminars and information sessions, where recommendations, concepts, outlines and project proposals can be presented and discussed.
- One chapter author suggested that, at the international level, various fora and policy processes should be used to present and promote project proposals to donors. The same respondent suggested maintaining some capacity (within the EPR Programme) to assist countries in promoting recommendations to donors as a part of EPR follow-up.
- One chapter author suggested that the UNECE should enter into agreements with international donors to make the EPR recommendations a reference for their own programming.
- One CEP Member or observer and one chapter author suggested regularly sending EPRs to donors, international financial institutions and global environmental funds.
- One national coordinator of an EPR suggested that a summary of recommendations should be made available to the structures of each country in charge of cooperation in order to make them available to donors.
- One national coordinator of an EPR suggested prioritizing EPR reviews in the ECE member States on the matter of environmental challenges in the region. One chapter author suggested prioritizing recommendations.

40. The respondents who answered in the affirmative to the question *sub* para. 28 were asked to further share their ideas on how to involve international financial institutions in the process of implementation of recommendations. Fifteen respondents shared their ideas.

- Various responses were similar or identical to the ones given to the previous two questions and will not be repeated.
- One chapter author highlighted the importance of presenting projects that can make a significant contribution to solving a problem, professionalizing organizations, etc., since a project has even more added value when other countries can learn from it.
- One national coordinator of an EPR highlighted the importance of identifying priority areas as well as priority activities that should be undertaken within certain deadlines that also need to be determined, checking the availability of funds from relevant existing donors, and identifying what can be financed through grant funds, for which environmental activity it is necessary to take a loan, etc.
- One national coordinator of an EPR proposed suggesting to international financial institutions to be observers during the preparation period.
- One chapter author suggested making use of institution building instruments, such as TAIEX – Technical Assistance and Information Exchange or Twinning, a policy-driven instrument supporting institutional cooperation between public administrations in EU Member States and partner countries.
- One national coordinator of an EPR and one chapter author suggested that, within the framework of the partnerships with international financial institutions, the country reviewed should, as far as possible, aim for actions to implement the recommendations of its EPR.

IV. Additional feedback on other matters related to EPRs

A. Survey results

41. Respondents were asked to share any additional feedback on other matters related to EPRs that they might have considered important. Sixteen respondents shared additional feedback.

- Some respondents focused on the implementation of recommendations. One CEP Member or observer expressed the view that EPRs should be done to ensure compliance and implementation of all environmental agreements, legislation and policies, and it should never be seen as a “tick the box” exercise. One Member of the Expert Group on EPRs expressed the view that priority themes/chapters in the review should be chosen by the country. In that way, there would be less chapters and recommendations, but enhanced support for their implementation. One chapter author expressed the view that the analysis, conclusions and recommendations should be fact-based and relevant for the country reviewed. Another chapter author suggested that UNECE should link and enter into specific agreements with regional organizations of which countries under review are members for the following up of recommendations. Example: Mediterranean countries benefit from an integrated monitoring system (IMAP) for the Mediterranean “good environmental status” set up under the Barcelona Convention system.

- Some respondents focused on the content and approach to preparing an EPR. One CEP Member or observer suggested that the chapters could be improved by adding some more “dynamic” content, such as boxes showing how to implement some specific points aiming at advancing countries’ performances with regard to the corresponding sector. Another CEP Member or observer suggested adopting a more streamlined approach when preparing the report (e.g., environmental topics *versus* sector), coupled with a more integrated approach. One national coordinator of an EPR suggested that EPRs should be accompanied by a summary that recalls the salient points of the environmental policy evaluation and the proposed recommendations for improvement.
- Two Members of the Expert Group on EPRs focused on the preparation of experts and junior staff, in particular through thematic trainings, and meetings or workshops to sensitize them to cross-cutting issues.
- One chapter author expressed the view that field visits to companies and institutions that (have to) implement environmental legislation can give a good impression of the compliance and enforcement practices in the reviewed country and should be promoted.
- One chapter author expressed the view that providing country responses to questionnaires by EPR experts, preferably prior to the country review mission, should be mandatory, since informing institutions indicated by EPR experts on the planned country review mission in advance is an indispensable pre-requisite for the success of such mission.
