

Improvement of Government Environmental Information Disclosure Based on NIMBY

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Keywords: Environmental, Information Disclosure, NIMBY

Abstract: Since the “Environmental Disclosure Rules (Trial)” published, the government's environmental information disclosure has made great progress, and the environmental information interaction between the government, enterprises and the public has become more and more smooth. From the perspective of practice, the government's environmental information disclosure has gradually emerged with new features, mainly reflected in the profound changes in the relationship between government environmental information disclosure participants, the continuous surge in public government information disclosure requirements, and the new media technologies to continuously. However, in recent years, the "NIMBY" incidents of waste incineration power generation plant and PX projects have emerged, reflecting the problems still existing in the system design and implementation of the government environmental information disclosure. At the level of system design, there are problems such as proactive disclosure, multi-head disclosure, etc.; at the implementation level, there are problems in the disclosure of information disclosure, lack of supporting interpretation, and pledge of commitment. This paper analyzes the environmental "NIMBY" problem cases of these problems, discusses the reasons for the environmental "NIMBY" problem caused by the lack of design and implementation of the government environmental information disclosure system, and proposes corresponding work suggestions to optimize and improve the environmental information.

1. Introduction

The "Environmental Disclosure Rules (Trial)" has achieved remarkable achievements since its implementation in 2008. It is an important way for the public to obtain environmental information, effectively satisfying the public's rights and greatly safeguarding the public's supervisory power [1]. However, in recent years, environmental "NIMBY" problems [2, 3] (which means a characterization of opposition by residents to a proposed development in their local area) such as waste incineration power plants and PX petrochemical projects have increasingly highlighted the problems that local governments and relevant departments have in the government environmental information disclosure work.

At present, the State Council has begun to amend the "People's Republic of China Government Information Disclosure Bill," and the Ministry of Ecology and Environment is simultaneously revising the "Environmental Disclosure Rules (Trial)". This paper analyzes the new characteristics of government environmental information disclosure, analyze the problems reflected by the local government and relevant departments in the government environmental information disclosure work based on NIMBY, and make some recommendations for optimizing the system design and implementation.

2. Characteristics of the government's environmental information disclosure work in the new era

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that China has entered a new era in the report of the 19th CPC National Congress, and the main contradictions of society have been transformed into contradictions between the people's growing needs for a better life and the development of inadequate imbalances [4]. In general, the government's environmental information disclosure work in the new era faces the following characteristics:

(1) The social relations between the government, enterprises and the public have undergone profound changes, and the concept of information disclosure has become deeply.

Practice has proved that the government's open information has become an important way and means for the public to understand the changes in environmental information. In this process, the social relations between the government, enterprises and the public have been continuously transformed, and gradually transformed from the government-led, enterprise cooperation, public awareness to the government supervision, enterprise consciousness, and public supervision.

(2) The demand for citizens to actively obtain government environmental information has surged, and the pressure of government faced increasing significant.

According to the data released by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment in recent years, the number of applications for information disclosure has increased significantly compared with the 2009 "Environmental Information Disclosure Rules (Trial)". In 2009, there were only 68 cases, up to 776 in 2018, an increase of more than 10 times (We also compiled the pieces of information disclosure applications in some key province which showed in Figure1). In addition, the number of administrative reconsiderations and administrative litigations which people dissatisfied the content of information disclosure is also increasing day by day.

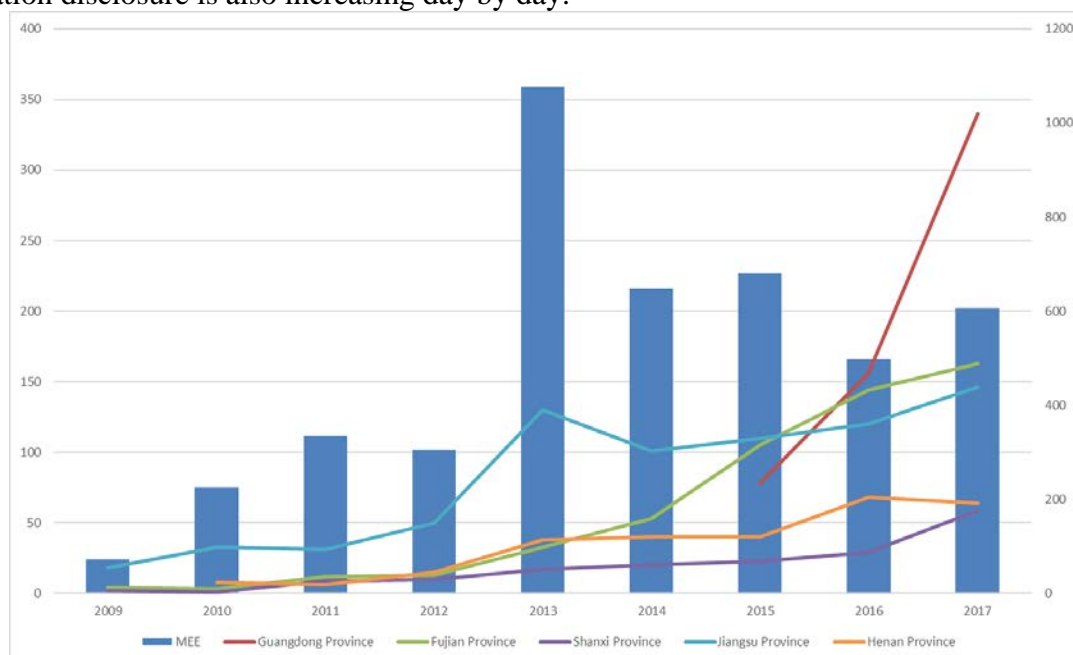


Figure 1. The pieces of environmental application of MEE and some key provinces

(3) The new media era changes the way the public obtains information, which requires government information disclosure to be faster, more accurate, and more effective.

The information dissemination of new media era has obvious advantages such as wider dissemination, rapider dissemination, and stronger information interaction. Because the methods for public access to information are wider in all sectors of society, any voice of department, organization and individual may be concerned by the public which means little carelessness will cause public doubt. At the same time, the difficulty of distinguishing between true and false information in the new media era due to the low cost of rumors, it is easy to mislead the public's perception of the

government and form a negative paradox.

3. The problems of government environmental information disclosure based on the “NIMBY”

In recent years, the national waste incineration plant has grown from less than 100 incineration plants to nearly 240, and the current mainstream technology of waste incineration power generation can also meet the needs of waste incineration disposal. However, one of the important reasons that hinder the construction and operation of domestic waste incineration power plants is the problem of "NIMBY". We have counted the case of "NIMBY" of domestic waste incineration power generation plant (showed in Table1) and analyzed the main problems in the government's environmental information disclosure work, which reflected by the environmental "NIMBY" problem are as follows:

Table 1.The cases of "NIMBY" of waste incineration power generation plant in recent years.

Year	Name of the waste incineration plant	Type of conflict
2011	Beijing Gao'an Waste Incineration Plant	Offline
2017	Changting County Environmental Health Comprehensive Service Project	Online
2017	Jiujiang Waste Incineration Power Generation Project	Offline
2018	Anshan City Domestic Waste Incineration Power Generation Project	Offline
2018	Yongchun County Domestic Waste Incineration Power Generation Project	Offline
2018	Zhengzhou Western Domestic Waste Incineration Power Plant	Offline
2018	Huanggang City Urban Domestic Waste Incineration Power Generation Project	Offline
2014	Xiangtan Domestic Waste Incineration Power Generation Project	Offline
2018	Xinyi Green Energy Environmental Power Generation Project	Offline
2018	Guangxi Guigang Municipal Solid Waste Incineration Power Plant Project	Offline
2018	Bobai County Domestic Waste Incineration Power Generation Project	Offline

(1) Proactive disclosure not timely leading to miss the opportunity.

After the "NIMBY" problem occurred, the local government departments paid insufficient attention to this situation. They did not analyze the causes of the "NIMBY" problem in time and studied countermeasures. As a result, the government environmental information disclosure was lagging behind, the passive disclosure situation was more obvious, and the best response opportunity was missed.

(2) The form of information disclosure affects the effect.

In order to promote the project landing, some local governments often urge the completion of the preliminary procedures of the project as soon as possible. The project construction party has to follow the relevant information disclosure requirements for EIA (environmental impact assessment), and has to publish EIA information. Based on this, individual local governments also acquiesced in this kind of behavior, thus burying the "NIMBY" hidden danger.

(3) The multi-head disclosure makes contradictions.

The government information disclosure shows like "a hundred schools of thought contends" but "self-defeating", and the environmental information published by different departments is in conflict with each other, which tends to exacerbate conflicts.

(4) Defects in the information disclosure trigger legal risks.

The information is vague, the key information is inaccurate, and on the other hand, the content published before and after is inconsistent. This leads to the inability of the public to obtain accurate information, which is not only easy to trigger legal risks of administrative litigation, but also makes it easier confused for the public. They will question the reasons why the government did this.

(5) The lack of interpretation of information lead to the breeding of negative rumors.

Some governments did not formulate supporting guidance when they actively disclosed environmental information, which led to misunderstanding of the public content, and some people used ulterior motives to spread rumors which will influence the public image of the government.

(6) Easy promise loss credibility of public.

In order to promote the smooth construction of the project, some local governments have publicly

promised to solve historical environmental problems or give other preferential policies. This is an important reason for the mass incident. After the construction of the project, the local government did not honor the previous promises which making the residents thought that they have been deceived.

In fact, many environmental "NIMBY" projects reflect the problems of local government disclosure in environmental information, reflecting the need to improve the design and implementation of government environmental information disclosure systems. It can be seen that it is imperative to optimize the design of government environmental information disclosure system and the implementation of strict work.

4. Suggestion

Practice has proved that only by continuously optimizing the system design and strictly implementing, it can we better achieve the purpose of publicizing government environmental information. It is through proactive response and frank and open disclosure that government information can be disclosed between the governments. The link of information exchange is stronger and the key to improving the credibility of the government.

(1) Improve the system design.

Indeed, we need to reduce the confusion caused by the long-term disclosure and meet the public's need to obtain environmental information. The first is to explore multi-departmental decision-making environmental information disclosure mechanisms to effectively reduce the phenomenon of fragmentate disclosure. Second, forming an open chain of government environmental information disclosure based on the combination of application disclosure and active disclosure. The third is to institutionalize the interpretation and enhance the acceptance for public of environmental information.

(2) Strengthening safeguard measures.

The first is to effectively improve the government's ability to disclose environmental information and reduce content defects. The second is to strengthen the pressure transmission, and strictly prevent the government's making promises. The third is strengthen the supervision and assessment to constrain behavior.

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