



The Aarhus Convention Reporting Mechanism National Implementation Reports: Experiences and Lessons learned

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Aim of presentation is to share experience and lessons learned from previous reporting cycles

- Legal basis of the reporting obligations and the role of the Compliance Committee
- Lessons learned from previous reporting cycles
- Challenges and practical issues during the preparation
 - Process and timing
 - Content and format





Through reporting the implementation of the Convention is kept under continuous review

The Convention – art.10 par.2

The Parties shall:

- Keep under continuous review the implementation of the Convention **on the basis of regular reporting by the Parties**
- Review the policies for and legal and methodological approaches** to access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, with a view to further improving them.



Reporting requirements have been further elaborated through MOP decisions

MOP decisions

- **Decision I/8** (2002): main process and format followed up by:
- **Decision IV/4** (2011): revised reporting format for the 2014 reporting cycle

New in 2014

- Compliance with last MOP recommendations on issues arising from compliance matters considered by the Compliance Committee

Recommended in 2011

- PPIF
- GMO amendment





Role of the Compliance Committee is to monitor, assess and facilitate the implementation of reporting

- Decision I/7 on review of compliance paragraph 13(c)
 - The Committee shall monitor, assess and *facilitate* the implementation of and compliance with the reporting requirements under article 10, paragraph 2, of the Convention
- Guidance issued in 2007: still relevant

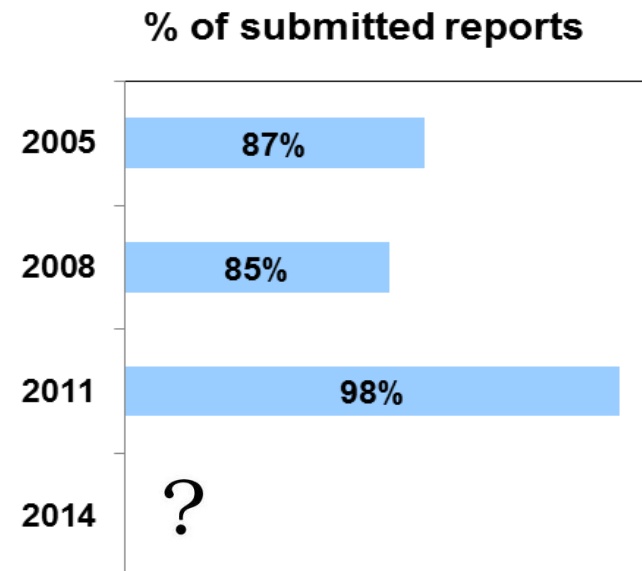


In 2011 reporting cycle almost all Parties submitted the report

Past reporting cycles – number of reports received

- Three reporting cycles since establishment of reporting mechanism (decision I/8)

- First cycle (2005): 26 reports
- Second cycle (2008): 35 reports
- Third cycle (2011): 43 reports
- Fourth cycle (2014)
 - (46 Parties) = ?%



Overall experience with reporting is positive...

General experience with reporting

- Valuable information provided
- Positive developments in law and practice highlighted
- Difficulties in the implementation identified



... but practical challenges remain for the preparation of NIRs



Main challenge is to engage the public in the consultation process already at the beginning

Challenges: Process and timing

- Public participation process criticized as not having been effective and meaningful from the start of the process
- Reports were submitted after the deadline, some after the MOP



Our recommendation is to hold two public consultations during report preparation process

Recommendation: Process and timing

- Start as early as possible
- Identify stakeholders (working groups and the general public)
- Provide publicly available drafts in national language
- Two public consultations
 - First: on possible content of the report, before the first draft
 - Second: for comments, to incorporate in a subsequent draft



Reports should avoid merely listing the instruments, without providing official interpretation and practice

Challenges: Content and format

- Some reports do not provide adequate and clear answers to the questions
- Some reports do not follow the format
- Lack of information on the practice
- Not user friendly for the reader:
 - Long list of instruments without practical information on official interpretation and practice
 - Information provided in answer to a different question
 - No cross-referencing





Reports should provide new information, account for practical implementation and focus on areas of difficulty

Challenges: Content and format

- Stick to the format - annex to dec. IV/4
- Consult Compliance Committee guidance document
- Clearly identify **new information** **Work in track changes**
 - new laws, official interpretation, guidance to the public
- Provide information on **practical implementation**
 - practical measures, administrative circulars and institutional arrangements, capacity building, budgetary allocations
- Address all questions but focus on **areas of difficulty**





Contact & additional information

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<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/reports.html>

