

- 1. Please provide any comments on the Guidelines, in view of your forum's own processes, activities and particular characteristics.**

*The United Nations Forum on Forests - UNFF is a subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations - ECOSOC, so the rules of procedures which apply to the Forum are those directed to functional commissions of ECOSOC. Therefore, the guidelines do not apply directly to the work of the Forum.*

*However, since UNFF is the only subsidiary organ of ECOSOC with universal membership, the signatories of the Aarhus Convention are members of UNFF and can, in this manner, influence the work of the Forum by introducing proposals in accordance with the guidelines.*

- 2. Does your forum have any formalized rules or procedures concerning access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters? If yes, please provide an overview.**

*The rules of procedure of ECOSOC functional commissions guide the work of the Forum. Moreover, the participation of major groups as defined in Agenda 21 follow specific rules and regulations of the United Nations regarding the participation of non-governmental actors.*

*Documents and reports of UNFF are public documents, widely available in the Forum's website.*

*The work of the Forum does not involve issues of justice in environmental matters.*

- 3. Does your forum have any non-formalized practices concerning access to information, public information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters? If yes, please provide an overview.**

*The Secretariat of the Forum tries very hard to increase and enhance the participation of non-governmental actors in the work of UNFF, including through the financing of travel of representatives of major groups to its meetings.*

- 4. Are there any current or future work plans of your forum that may affect the extent of or modalities for access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters? If yes, please provide an overview.**

*During its seventh session, the Forum will decide on a Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all kinds of forests and on its next Multi-Year Programme of Work, which should reflect the spirit and the letter of the draft resolution forwarded by UNFF6 to ECOSOC that calls for the promotion of the active participation and empowerment of all forest-related stakeholders.*

- 5. In particular, what kind of challenges, if any, has your forum encountered with regard to access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters (for example, low involvement of civil society, or practical difficulties in managing public participation)? If appropriate, please provide a description underlining those experiences you think could be most useful to consider when reviewing the relevance and practicality of the Almaty guidelines.**

*The rules and regulations of the United Nations regarding the participation of non-governmental actors can be interpreted in a broader or more restrictive manner depending on the individual Member State's point of view on the matter. This has the potential either to enhance or to curtail the participation of major groups in official meetings.*

*The Almaty guidelines are as relevant and practical as signatories of the Aarhus Convention want them to be. As mentioned before, UNFF has universal membership, so among its Member States are all signatories of the Aarhus Convention, which can take the Almaty guidelines into account when making proposals during UNFF negotiations.*