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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on
Access to Information, Public Participation
in Decision-making and Access to Justice
in Environmental Matters

Working Group of the Parties

Thirteenth meeting

Geneva, 9–11 February 2011

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the thirteenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on Wednesday,
9 February 2011*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification of the Convention, the amendment to the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.
3. Substantive issues:
 - (a) Public participation in international forums;

* As part of the accreditation procedures for delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to complete the registration form available on the Convention website (www.unece.org/env/pp/practical.htm) and to transmit it to the Convention secretariat no later than two weeks before the meeting — namely, by 26 January 2011 — by e-mail to the following address: public.participation@unece.org. On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on the UNECE website, <http://www.unece.org/stats/unog.e.html>). In case of difficulty, please contact the Convention secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 2682/2685.

- (b) Access to justice;
 - (c) Electronic information tools and the clearinghouse mechanism;
 - (d) Public participation in decision-making;
 - (e) Genetically modified organisms.
4. Procedures and mechanisms:
- (a) Compliance mechanism;
 - (b) National implementation reports;
 - (c) Reporting requirements;
 - (d) Implementation Guide;
 - (e) Capacity-building.
5. Promotion of the Convention:
- (a) Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region;
 - (b) Awareness-raising activities and communication.
6. Programme of work and operation of the Convention:
- (a) Implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014;
 - (b) Work programme for 2012–2014;
 - (c) Possible expert/advisory service under the Convention;
 - (d) Financial matters.
7. Preparations for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties:
- (a) Declaration;
 - (b) Future Strategic Plan;
 - (c) Agenda of the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties;
 - (d) Practical arrangements for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
8. Other business.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group will be invited to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document.

2. Status of ratification of the Convention, the amendment to the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

The secretariat will provide the Working Group with an overview of the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Convention on Access

to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), the amendment to the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments concerning the ratification, acceptance, approval, and accession with respect to these instruments in their respective countries. The Working Group is expected to take note of these developments.

3. Substantive issues

(a) Public participation in international forums

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to public participation in international forums; preparations for the sixth meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums (Geneva, 23–24 February 2011); and about the follow-up to the outcomes of the previous meeting of the Task Force. Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to: (a) take note of this information; (b) discuss possible future work in this area; and (c) consider the draft decision on the subject with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.1)

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Report of the fifth meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/3)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

(b) Access to justice

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to access to justice and the fourth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice (Geneva, 7–8 February 2011). Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to: (a) take note of this information; (b) discuss a possible future work in this area; and (c) consider the draft decision on the subject with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on promoting effective access to justice (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.2)

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Report of the Task Force on Access to Justice on its third meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2010/6)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

(c) Electronic information tools and the clearinghouse mechanism

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to this subject, the outcomes of the subregional workshop on electronic information tools (Skopje, 25–26 November 2010) and work related to the Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy. Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to: (a) take note of the report; (b) discuss possible future work in this area; and (c) consider the draft decision on the subject with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on access to information (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.3)

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Report of the subregional workshop on electronic information tools (Skopje, 25–26 November 2010) (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/4)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

(d) Public participation in decision-making

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the first meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (Geneva, 25–26 October 2010) and the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to this subject. Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to consider the report of the first meeting of the Task Force, including a proposed workplan of the Task Force, with a view to its eventual submission for consideration by the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Report of the first meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/5)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

(e) Genetically modified organisms

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the joint Aarhus Convention/Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety workshop on public awareness, access to information and public participation regarding living modified organisms/genetically modified organisms, which took place in conjunction with the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (Nagoya, Japan, 8–9 October 2010), and the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to this subject. Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to take note of this information and discuss a possible future work in this area, based on the proposal outlined in the draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014.

Documentation

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Report of the joint Aarhus Convention and Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety workshop on public awareness, access to information and public participation regarding living modified organisms/genetically modified organisms (Nagoya, Japan, 8–9 October 2010) (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/6)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

4. Procedures and mechanisms**(a) Compliance mechanism**

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the recent Compliance Committee meetings. The Working Group is expected to take note of this information and take note of the paper on election of the members of the Compliance Committee.

Documentation

Draft decision on the Work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Note on election of the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/7)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

(b) National implementation reports

The Working Group will be informed about the status of submission of national implementation reports and progress in preparing the synthesis report. Delegations will be invited to comment on their experiences with the preparation of the national implementation reports. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided.

(c) Reporting requirements

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to reporting requirements. The Working Group is expected to take note of this information and to consider the draft decision on reporting requirements with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.4)

(d) Implementation Guide

The Working Group will be informed about progress made with respect to preparing an updated version of *The Aarhus Convention: An Implementation Guide*.[†] The Working Group will be invited to take note of this information.

[†] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.II.E.3.

(e) **Capacity-building**

The secretariat will report on capacity-building activities related to the Convention, including the outcomes of the capacity-building coordination meeting (Geneva, 7 December 2010). Delegations will be invited to report on capacity-building activities carried out since the previous meeting of the Working Group (Geneva, 30 June–2 July 2010), and to provide information on capacity-building needs. The Working Group will be invited to take note of the various developments and activities as well as the needs described, and to discuss possible future work in this area, based on the proposal outlined in the draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014.

Documentation

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

5. Promotion of the Convention

(a) **Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region**

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to accession to the Convention by States from outside the UNECE region. The secretariat will report on the developments in this area. Delegations will be invited to provide additional relevant information. The Working Group is expected to: (a) take note of the developments; (b) discuss possible future work in this area; and (c) consider the draft decision on accession to the Convention by States from outside the UNECE region with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.5)

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

(b) **Awareness-raising activities and communication**

The secretariat will inform the Working Group about progress made in developing a communication strategy and its activities aimed at raising awareness about the Convention. Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on awareness-raising activities and other relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to: (a) take note of the information provided; (b) discuss possible future work in this area; and (c) consider the draft communication strategy with a view to its eventual submission for consideration at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6).

Overview of the implementation of the Work Programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

Informal document: Draft Communication Strategy (PP/WGP-13/Inf.1)

6. Programme of work and operation of the Convention

(a) Implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014

The secretariat will present an overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014. The Working Group will be invited to take note of the information provided.

Documentation

Overview of the implementation of the work programme for 2009–2011, including in relation to the Strategic Plan 2009–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/8)

(b) Work programme for 2012–2014

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to the work programme for 2012–2014. The Working Group will be invited to consider the draft decision on this topic with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.6)

(c) Possible expert/advisory service under the Convention

The Working Group will be invited to consider a note on the country-specific expert/advisory service (assistance mechanism) prepared by the secretariat.

Documentation

Informal document: Note on the country-specific expert/advisory service (PP/WGP-13/Inf.3)

(d) Financial matters

The secretariat will provide information on the financial and human resources situation in the secretariat. Delegations will be invited to provide information on their expected contributions for 2011. The Working Group will be invited to take note of this information and provide guidance on how to ensure a stable staff situation in the secretariat. The Working Group is expected to consider the draft decision on financial arrangements prepared by the Bureau with the assistance of the secretariat, with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on financial arrangements (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.7)

Informal document: Note on the financial situation regarding activities under the Aarhus Convention in 2010 and 2011 (PP/WGP-13/Inf.2)

7. Preparations for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties

(a) Declaration

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to a Declaration. The Working Group will be invited to consider whether it wishes to develop a declaration with a view of its eventual consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties, and if so to discuss substantive aspects of the declaration, as well as a timeline and modalities for its preparation.

Documentation

Informal document: Outline of the Declaration (PP/WG-13/Inf.4)

(b) Future Strategic Plan

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to the Future Strategic Plan. The Working Group will be invited to consider the draft decision on the subject with a view to its eventual submission for consideration and adoption at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Draft decision on strategic planning (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.8)

(c) Agenda of the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the twenty-sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention in relation to the agenda for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties. The Working Group will be invited to consider and agree on the draft provisional agenda for the fourth session, taking into consideration the outcomes of the discussions under other items on the Working Group's agenda.

Documentation

Draft provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2011/L.9)

(d) Practical arrangements for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties

The Republic of Moldova, as host country for the fourth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties, and the secretariat will report on preparations for the session, including the practical arrangements. The Working Group will be invited to take note of this information.

Documentation

Informal document: Note on major milestones in preparations for the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties (PP/WG-13/Inf.5)

8. Other business

Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.
