

## **Decision II/8**

### **Decisions adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol**

#### **Good practice recommendations on public participation in strategic environmental assessment**

*The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment,*

*Recalling* its decision I/4 on public participation in strategic decision-making, and decision V/9–I/9 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment on the adoption of the workplan,

*Recalling also* decisions II/3 and III/8 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the guidance on public participation in environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context,

*Convinced* that public participation forms an essential part of strategic environmental assessment,

*Noting* that for many Parties, the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) contributes to the strengthening of public participation in their implementation of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment,

*Aware* of the recommendations on promoting effective public participation in environmental decision-making prepared under the Aarhus Convention (ECE/MP.PP/2014/8),

*Having considered* the outcome of the workshop on public participation in strategic decision-making organized jointly with the task force on public participation under the Aarhus Convention (Geneva, 29–30 October 2012) in accordance with the Protocol and with article 7 of the Aarhus Convention,

*Aware* of the benefits of synergies and continuous cooperation with relevant bodies under the Aarhus Convention to ensure the consistent application of the relevant provisions under the two treaties,

1. *Recognizes* the need for guidance to assist competent authorities and the public in organizing effective public participation in strategic environmental assessment;

2. *Welcomes* the development of draft good practice recommendations by a consultant to the secretariat, the Bureau and the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment, taking into account the feedback received at the joint workshop and the outcomes of consultations of stakeholders under the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Aarhus Convention;

3. *Recognizes* that these recommendations also reflect the provisions of the Aarhus Convention;

4. *Endorses* the Good Practice Recommendations on Public Participation in Strategic Environmental Assessment set out in document ECE/MP.EIA/SEA/2014/2;

5. *Recommends* that the Parties take into account the contents of the Good Practice Recommendations when applying the Protocol;

6. *Calls on* Parties to distribute the Good Practice Recommendations to national authorities, experts on strategic environmental assessment, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders and to support them in ensuring public participation in strategic environmental assessment;

7. *Invites* Parties to provide information to the Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment on the usefulness of the Good Practice Recommendations and any suggestions for their future development;

8. *Also invites* Parties and non-Parties to provide further examples of good practice to the Convention secretariat to be made available on the Convention website;

9. *Proposes* that the Good Practice Recommendations be used in the capacity-building activities included in the workplan.