Public access to environmental information

Introduction to the work of the Task Force on Access to Information

Geneva 2013
Overview of the presentation

- Framework for advancing the implementation of the Convention’s first pillar
- Mandate of the Task Force
- Proposed substantive scope of the future work
- Further steps
Framework for advancing the Convention’s implementation

- Objectives I.7 and III.2 of the Convention’s Strategic Plan 2009-2014 and framework for its implementation
- Convention’s Work Programme for 2012-2014
- Recommendations on the more effective use of electronic information tools to provide public access to environmental information adopted through decision II/3 of the Meeting of the Parties
Mandate of the Task Force

- Set out in decision IV/1 of the Meeting of the Parties on access to information
- Terms of reference:
  - Exchange of information, experiences, challenges and good practices with focus on the identified substantive issues
  - Identify capacity-building needs, barriers and solutions
  - Monitor and support the implementation of decision II/3
  - Monitor relevant technical developments
  - Contributing to further developments of the Aarhus Clearinghouse and PRTR.net
- The activities will be based on the results achieved by the Task Force on Electronic Information Tools
Proposed substantive scope of the further work

- Presented in the document “Public access to environmental information: possible priorities for the work” (AC/TF.AI/Inf.3)
- Identified on the basis of the synthesis report, national implementation reports and the Compliance Committee findings
  - the document AC/TF.AI/Inf.2 with overview of the Convention’s implementation
Issues to be given particular priority

- The scope of environmental information and public access to environment-related information available to public authorities other than those responsible for environmental protection (e.g. land administration authorities);
- Providing sufficient environmental information with regard to products;
- Access to environmental information and copyright protection;
- Protection of a legitimate economic interest through protected by law confidentiality of commercial and industrial information related to the environment and the public interest served by disclosure of such information;
- Access to raw data and primary statistical data related to environmental information.
- Improving dissemination of priority categories of information in accordance with decision II/3 adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its second session.
Further steps

- Second meeting of the Task Force (Geneva, 16-17 December 2013)
- Discussion of the future directions for the work in this area at the next meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Convention (Geneva, 19-21 June 2013) and the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!