

REPORT

on implementation of the recommendations made to Turkmenistan under Decision V/9I on compliance by Turkmenistan, adopted at the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

(Maastricht, Netherlands, 30 June and 1 July 2014)

Decision V/9I on compliance by Turkmenistan, adopted at the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters ('the Convention') at Maastricht, in the Netherlands, on 30 June and 1 July 2014, **recommended Turkmenistan**, as a Party to the Convention, **to organize meetings (e.g. round tables, workshops or conferences) with broad public participation, open to all members of the public** and dedicated to:

- a) sharing experiences in activities carried out by associations, organizations and groups promoting environmental protection in the Party concerned;
- b) ensuring the consistency of the national legal system of the Party concerned with the obligation set out in article 3, paragraph 4, of the Convention;

In the light of these recommendations, in 2015 the Ministry of Nature Protection of Turkmenistan, with the participation of the Turkmenistan Aarhus Centre, organized a series of round tables, seminars and workshops for representatives of public associations, organizations and groups. Representatives of government environmental and other organizations and of local executive agencies of both central and local government also participated in the meetings. In the course of the year, meetings were held in Ashgabat (8 and 19 November), in the provincial capitals Balkanabat (2 October), Dashoguz (23 April), Mary (9 June) and Turkmenabat (19 May) and in Turkmenbashi (26 November).

These meetings were dedicated to sharing experiences in activities carried out by associations, organizations and groups promoting environmental protection. Overall, more than 200 people took part in these events.

At the meetings, a significant amount of time was allocated to issues of implementing the provisions of the Aarhus Convention in national environmental and other legislation, including the issue of public access to environmental information during the preparation of environmentally significant decisions and the issue of access to justice in environmental matters. At the meetings, participants were informed about new environmental legislation adopted in recent years; Turkmenistan's new Act on Public Associations (2014) and its differences from the 2003 Public Associations Act, previously in force, were also discussed.

The meetings were conducted by highly qualified specialists from the Ministry of

Nature Protection and staff of the Turkmenistan Aarhus Centre; in addition, representatives of public associations and government organizations were invited to speak at the meetings, informing the audience about their environmental protection activities and inviting the public to take part in these. A great deal of assistance was provided by the Environmental Information and Resource Centres established in Turkmenistan's provinces with financial support from the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat.