



UNECE Subregional Workshop: “Capacity building for the Aarhus Clearinghouse Mechanism and Electronic Information Tools”

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Aarhus Convention Secretariat, in partnership with the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), will host a subregional workshop on “Capacity building for the Aarhus Clearinghouse Mechanism and Electronic Information Tools” on **8–9 March 2007**. The workshop will be held at the REC headquarters in **Szentendre, Hungary**.

The first in a proposed series of capacity-building workshops on electronic access to information, the workshop is intended for designated experts from UNECE Member States (except Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries*) and civil society organizations. The aim of the workshop is to:

- Provide training to officers preparing, managing or contributing to national nodes of the Aarhus Clearinghouse Mechanism, and
- Promote implementation of the “Recommendations on the More Effective Use of Electronic Information Tools to Provide Public Access to Environmental Information” adopted by the Parties to the Aarhus Convention in decision II/3 (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 27 May 2005).

Participants in the workshop will gain hands-on experience with the set of new content management tools being implemented in the Aarhus Clearinghouse Mechanism.

The goal of the Aarhus Clearinghouse is to facilitate, through the use of electronic tools, the useful sharing of national and international information related to access to information, public participation and access to justice in an efficient, simple and well-structured manner. Parties, Signatories and other interested States are invited to develop a national node of the Clearinghouse Mechanism that provides legal and practical information on issues related to the Convention at the national level and is linked to the ***Aarhus Clearinghouse for Environmental Democracy*** (<http://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org>). Other stakeholders are invited to submit relevant information to the Clearinghouse and share their experience with facilitating electronic access to environmental information.

The workshop particularly targets the South-East European countries. Attendance expenses from these countries will be covered through financial support being provided to REC by the Convention Secretariat. Countries with more extensive experience in the provision of electronic information on the environment are encouraged to attend the workshop to share their experience and learn about the Clearinghouse upgrades.

The language of the workshop will be English.

For more information, please contact Mr. Michael Stanley-Jones, Aarhus Convention Secretariat, at: michael.stanley-jones@unece.org.

* A second workshop for EECCA countries, to be held in English and Russian, is planned for mid-2007.