



**Eighteenth meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention
(Maastricht, 29 June 2014)
Agenda item 3(c): Maastricht Declaration**

Contribution by the EU and its Member States.

After the constructive dialogue that took place during the WGP17 we suggest the following amendments to the text of the draft Declaration in order to improve and clarify the political messages that it should convey:

- Title: we realize that transparency constitutes a driving force not only for the environmental governance but also for enhancement of environmental consciousness. Taking into consideration this, we would like to contribute with the following suggestions for the title of the declaration in the place of the word “multivitamin: “driving force” or preferably “Transparency as the backbone for environmental democracy”
 - In paragraph 4 we request the addition of the phrase “*as expressed in article 1 of the Convention*” after the phrase “with the right to a healthy and favourable environment” that was added during the WGP17. The abovementioned wording links the content of this paragraph to article 1 of the Convention as it is understood by the EU And makes the message clearer.
 - In paragraph 6 we request the amendment of the phrase where two sets of brackets remain after the discussion during the WGP17, trying to achieve a compromise solution that remains within the scope of the Convention, in the following way: “*Openness and transparency not only create a foundation for sustainable development leading to an attractive investment climate, but may also be relevant to policies to tackle inequality and poverty by ensuring that all persons are provided with environmental information and can engage meaningfully in environmental decision-making that affects them.*”
 - In paragraph 8 we draw the attention to a typing mistake: “environmental damages” should be replaced by “environmental damage”.
 - The first sentence of Paragraph 10 gives a wrong message as far as the compliance mechanism is concerned. The purpose of the mechanism is to promote and improve compliance of the parties rather than to “contribute to the mediation and resolution of conflicts between public and governments. Therefore, we suggest the addition of the words “*among others*” in order not to overestimate one aspect of the purposes of the compliance mechanisms.
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