

6th Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention
(Budva, 11-13. september 2017)
Agenda item 6(b): Public participation in decision-making

Norway

Norway takes this opportunity to thank the Bureau and the Chair of the Task Force on Public Participation for the draft decision, the report of the Task Force and its work to date.

We thank Italy for its leadership of the Task Force and for their offer to continue to lead it. We appreciate the work undertaken by the Task Force on public participation. We believe that the Task Force has an important role, since the exchange of information and best practices helps pinpoint main obstacles that need to be tackled and solutions that can be implemented, and thus contributes to effective public participation in accordance with the Convention.

As stated in the preamble of the draft decision, effective public participation plays a critical role in the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Access to environmental information combined with public participation in decision-making enlightens the decision-making process with views and knowledge from different perspectives. This contributes to broaden and increase knowledge about the status of the environment, the impact on the environment of human activities and the consequences of the impact for the environment and the people living in it. With increased knowledge, decision-makers can take better account of the environmental impact and thus contribute to reduce the impact. Reduced impact contributes to better protection and improvement of the environment and thus to protect the health and wellbeing of the people living from and within the environment and thus being affected by the status of the environment.

We therefore welcome the draft decision and the actions for improvement of public participation that it entails.