Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

**Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-Making**

**Fifth meeting**


Item 1 of the provisional agenda

**Opening and adoption of the agenda**

**Annotated provisional agenda for the fifth meeting**

To be held in Salle XII, Palais des Nations, Geneva starting at 10 a.m. on Monday, 23 February 2015

**I. Provisional agenda**

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.

2. Obstacles, challenges and good practices in relation to public participation in decision-making:
   (a) Identification and notification of the public concerned;
   (b) Early public participation;
   (c) Role of private actors and project developers;
   (d) Due account of comments and outcomes of public participation.

3. Innovative practices of public participation in decision-making.

4. Aarhus Good Practice online database.

5. Thematic focus: climate change-related decision-making.

6. Other business.

7. Closing.
II. Annotations

The Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-Making was established, and the mandate laid down, by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention at its resumed second extra-ordinary session (30 June 2010) (ECE/MP.PP/2010/2/Add.1, decision EMP.II/1). It was further extended by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention through decision V/2 adopted at its fifth session (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 30 June and 1 July 2014). Decision V/2 sets out the issues to be addressed by the meeting at paragraph 11.

The present meeting aims to discuss the main obstacles to effective public participation, exchange good practices to address those obstacles, identify innovative practices to facilitate more effective public participation, and convey a thematic session on climate change-related decision-making.

The Task Force continues its work based on the outputs delivered at the previous meetings. The background material for the meeting will include compilation of relevant information derived from 2014 national implementation reports, the Synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Convention, the Aarhus Convention Implementation Guide, the Maastricht recommendations on promoting effective public participation in decision-making in environmental matters, and relevant Compliance Committee findings of a systemic nature.

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

Timing: Monday, 23 February 10.00 a.m. – 10.10 a.m.

The Task Force will be invited to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document.

2. Obstacles, challenges and good practices in relation to public participation in decision-making

Timing: Monday, 23 February 10.10 a.m. – 18.00 p.m.

This session aims to identify the main obstacles and challenges to effective public participation in all types of decision-making within the scope of articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Convention at the national, provincial and local levels, including barriers to participation for non-governmental organizations, the general public and marginalized groups. The session also aims to exchange good practices to address the main obstacles to the full implementation of the second pillar of the Convention, including, inter alia, the different types of “decisions” and “decision-making” covered by the Convention and the implications for public participation of different decision-making methods. The session also aims to identify further needs in relation to the subjects.

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2 The text of the decision is available from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html
3 Available at http://www.unece.org/env/pp/reports_trc_implementation_2014.html
6 (ECE/MP.PP/2014/8).
7 Lunch breaks will take place from 13.00 to 15.00. Coffee breaks might be held around 11.00 and 16.00, if time permits.
8 All documentation for the meeting will be available from http://www.unece.org/tfppdm5
(a) Identification and notification of the public concerned
Participants will be invited to identify the main obstacles to identification and notification of
the public concerned and also to exchange good practices to address these.

(b) Early public participation
Participants will be invited to identify the main challenges in regard to early public
participation when all options are open, and to exchange good practices to address these.
Discussion under this agenda item is expected to address also such subjects as decision-making
with regard to private contracts and multiple decision-making processes/tiered decision-making.

(c) Role of private actors and project developers
Participants will be invited to discuss the role of private actors and project developers in
carrying out public participation procedures, and also to exchange information about good
practices.

(d) Due account of comments and outcomes of public participation
Participants will be invited to identify the main challenges in regard to taking due account of
comments and outcomes of public participation, and also to exchange information about good
practices to address these.

3. Innovative practices of public participation in decision-making
Timing: Tuesday, 24 February 10.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.
Participants will be invited to share examples of innovative practices that facilitate more
effective public participation without entailing additional significant financial or human
resources on the part of public authorities.

4. Aarhus Good Practice online database
Timing: Tuesday, 24 February 11.00 a.m. – 11.15 a.m.
Participants will be informed about progress in the development of the Aarhus Good
Practice online database and will be invited to contribute to populating it.9

5. Thematic focus: climate change-related decision-making
Timing: Tuesday, 24 February 11.15 a.m. – 17.40 p.m.
This session aims at discussing challenges and sharing experiences with regard to climate
change-related decision-making.

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9 Available at http://www2.unece.org/aarhus-good-practices
6. **Other business**

*Timing: Tuesday, 24 February*  
17.40 p.m. – 17.45 p.m.

Delegates wishing to propose issues under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

7. **Closing**

*Timing: Tuesday, 24 February*  
17.45 p.m. – 18.00 p.m.

The Chair will summarise key outcomes of the meeting and will close it.

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