

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

Sixth meeting

Geneva, 10-11 February 2016

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

SUMMARY OF THE KEY OUTCOMES IN RELATION TO “OPEN QUESTIONS” OF THE SURVEY ON THE USE OF THE MAASTRICHT RECOMMENDATIONS

**This summary provides complementary information to the presentation of the secretariat
of the results of the survey**

Question 2. Please briefly indicate the future plans regarding the translation of the Recommendations into relevant national and local languages: Some states, like Georgia, Montenegro, Spain, Croatia are planning to translate Recommendations into the national languages. For some states, English is national language, or easily understandable. Some countries speak other UN official languages, as Russian and French. Other states cannot afford translation due to the budget constraints.

Question 4. If the Recommendations are not used for designing the legal framework on public participation in environmental decision-making in your country, please provide the reasons: In most of countries the Recommendations are used for designing the legal framework. Among those which responded NO, the majority stated that the legal framework on public participation is already shaped.

Question 6. Future plans: Several countries, including Montenegro, Croatia, Serbia, **have future plans** for the use of Recommendations for designing the legal framework. Ireland is currently in a process of using the Recommendations as a basis for **National Guidelines** which will be tailored to the Irish context.

Question 7. Are there any references to the Recommendations in the national legislation in your country: Montenegro and Kazakhstan have references to the Recommendations in the national legislation related to environmental protection and environmental impact assessment.

Question 8. Future plans in relation to Question 7: most Parties stated that there is no common practice to make reference to the soft law.

Question 9. Are the Recommendations distributed to public officials in your country at national (ministerial) level: among the reasons for non-distribution of Recommendations,

Parties named absence of translation into national language/s, lack of capacity and *consideration that posting of the Recommendations on the website of the Ministry is sufficient.*

Question 10. Future plans in relation to Question 9: mainly website of the ministry responsible for environmental protection. Croatia is planning to send Recommendations by email. However, majority of Parties do not have any particular plans how to distribute Recommendations.

Question 11. Are the Recommendations distributed to public officials in your country at subnational (provincial) or local (municipality) levels: among the reasons for non-distribution, Parties named the same reasons as for the national level (absence of translation, lack of capacity and consideration that placement of the Recommendations on the website of the Ministry is sufficient). One Party stated as the reason *insufficient information-sharing arrangements* and low-awareness at the subnational and municipality level.

Question 12. Future plans in relation to Question 11: similar to national level, most Parties plan to publish Recommendations on the Ministry website.

Question 13. Are trainings organized for public officials on the use of the Recommendations in your country at national (ministerial) level: Austria presented website (www.partizipation.at) which become an information hub for public participation matter and serves as knowledge portal. It also informed about the development of "Public participation Manual" which provides information on public participation procedures. Furthermore, the website lists also examples of good practices for public participation in different areas. France stated that the *Institute for training in the field of environment might* use the Maastricht recommendations as a useful tool for training programme for representatives of public authorities at national and local levels.

Question 14. If the trainings were not organized for public officials on the use of the Recommendations at national (ministerial) level please provide the reasons: lack of financial resources was named as a main reason.

Question 15. Future plans in relation to Question 14: most countries do not have any plans for trainings. Spain is planning to conduct courses through the CENEAM (Center for Environmental Education). Kazakhstan is planning trainings in 2016 with Aarhus centres. Ireland considers to have one day workshop.

Question 16. Are trainings organized for public officials on the use of the Recommendations in your country at subnational (provincial) or local (municipality) levels: among the reasons why the training were not organized, the most often were mentioned lack of financial resources and lack of cooperation between central and local authorities.

Question 17. Future plans in relation to Question 16: Great majority of Parties do not have any future plans.

Question 19. Are the Recommendations distributed to non-government organizations and private sector involved in decision-making on environmental matters in your country at national level: the most common reason for not distribution of Recommendations is absence of the translation. *The posting of the recommendations on the ministry website is considered as sufficient for this purpose by most Parties.*

Question 20. Future plans in relation to Question 19: some Parties are planning to post Recommendation on the ministry website and Aarhus centres. Croatia is planning to distribute Recommendations via "Zeleni forum" (website for organizations involved in environmental matters) and via business associations for private sector involved in decision-making on environmental matters. Spain is planning to distribute them through the Advisory Council for the Environment (CAMA). Armenia - via NGOs network and Aarhus centres.

Question 21. Are the Recommendations distributed to non-government organizations and private sector involved in decision-making on environmental matters in your country at subnational (provincial) or local (municipality) levels: same reasons were listed as for national level (absence of translation, availability at ministry website).

Question 22. Future plans in relation to Question 21: similar to the national level (posting on the website of the ministry). Romania is planning to post Recommendations on the website of the Local Environmental Protection Agencies, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration, local administrative and public authorities.

Question 23. Are trainings on the use of the Recommendations organized for the non-government organizations and the private sector in your country: lack of financial resources is the main reason for not conducting trainings.

Question 25. Future Plans in relation to Question 23: majority of Parties do not have any plans for trainings.

Question 27. If the public authorities do not use the Recommendations for procedures of public participation in environmental decision-making at national level, please provide the reasons: most common reasons are absence of translation and lack of awareness.

Question 28. Future plans in relation to Question 27: The most common is to use Recommendation for the future development of national legislation.

Questions 29-31: similar answers as were provided for national level (see Question 27 in relation to subnational (provincial) or local (municipality) levels).

Question 33. If the public authorities do not raise awareness about the existing of Recommendations for the general public, please provide the reasons: the most common

reasons are lack of capacity, absence of translation, no mandatory scheme for awareness raising in relation to the Recommendations.

Question 34. Please briefly indicate the future plans for raising awareness about the existing of Recommendations for the general public: posting on the website of the Ministry. Austria, Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Albania are planning to raise awareness in the framework of workshops and events on related issues. Ireland, as part of the National Guidelines, will be encouraging public authorities to make the public more aware of the Recommendations. Kyrgyzstan and Albania, among other tools, are also planning to use mass media.

Question 35. Are there any mechanisms for raising awareness about the Recommendations among public that is difficult to reach (e.g. vulnerable and/or marginalized groups) in your country: Most Parties did not specify the clear reason for the absence of any mechanisms. Poland stated that many of the Polish NGO's are small organisations and sometimes it is difficult to reach them out.

Question 36. Please indicate the target groups for raising awareness about the Recommendations among public that is difficult to reach: most Parties did not specify the target groups. Among those which were identified are population in rural and remote areas, children, youth, women, local communities, marginalized groups, , small NGOs, individuals, private sector, municipalities.

Question 37. If the there are no mechanisms for raising awareness about the Recommendations among public that is difficult to reach please provide the reasons: the common reasons are lack of capacity and absence of instructions

Question 38. Future plans in relation to Question 37: only few Parties indicated some future plans but without any specifi information.

Question 39. Are there any challenges in relation to the promotion and use of the Recommendations in your country: named challenges were lack of resources, lack of awareness and quite legalistic text of the Recommendations for the general public to understand.
