

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

Working Group of the Parties

Twenty-second meeting

Geneva, 19–21 June 2018

Item 12 of the provisional agenda:

**Thematic session on promotion of the principles
of the Aarhus Convention in international forums**

**Promotion of the principles of the Convention on Access to Information,
Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in
Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) in international forums¹**

Provisional programme for the thematic session

to be held on Thursday, 21 June 2018, from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Laura Michel

Introduction

Timing: 9.30–9.35 a.m.

The chair of the session will introduce organisation of work during the thematic session and the main topics for discussion. The thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in international forums will include: (a) panel presentations and round table discussion on the international decision-making on chemicals and waste under the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Chemical Conventions (Basel², Rotterdam³, and Stockholm⁴ (BRS) Conventions), the Minamata Convention on Mercury and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). In addition, the Working Group will consider the progress made with regard to items discussed at the previous thematic sessions. This includes: (a) climate-related processes with the focus on lessons learnt from the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-23) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and preparations for COP-24; (b) stakeholder engagement in the United Nations Environment Assembly and the UNEP access to information policies; (c) Sustainable Development Goals-related (SDGs) processes; and (d) International Financial Institutions-related (IFIs) processes. The Working Group may also address crosscutting issues related to international decision-making (e.g., hosting of an international event; identification of the public).

¹ This document was not formally edited.

² Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.

³ Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.

⁴ Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

I. Promotion of the Convention's principles in international decision-making on chemicals and waste

Timing: 9.35–11.40 a.m.

This item will be organized in the format of a panel presentation and round-table discussion. The Chair will also present the results of a survey circulated among the Aarhus national focal points to collect information on the involvement of the public in international decision-making in the context of the processes under the BRS Conventions, the Minamata Convention and SAICM.

The Working Group will consider in this regard a number of issues, including:

- a) How Aarhus Parties are involving public in preparing documents for the COPs and their preparatory meetings.
- b) How Aarhus Parties facilitate participation of the public in related meetings (e.g., lessons learnt from the previous COPs; future plans).
- c) What kind of actions do Aarhus Parties take to increase transparency and to strengthen effective public participation in order to be in line with the list of criteria included in paragraph 15 of the Almaty Guidelines on promoting the principles of access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in international forums dealing with matters relating to the environment, both in the preparatory process and during the COPs?
- d) How the host countries for the COPs promote the Convention's principles in relation to the organization of the Conferences (e.g., lessons learnt from the previous COPs; future plans).
- e) Whether rules of procedure and practices for BRS Conventions, Minamata Convention and SAICM and for their subsidiary bodies are in line with the Almaty Guidelines.
- f) How the secretariats of the BRS Conventions, the Minamata Convention and SAICM facilitate public participation through logistics or other arrangements.

(i) BRS Conventions

Timing: 9.35–10.30 a.m.

Panellists:

- *Ms. Susan Wingfield*, Programme Officer, Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
- *Ms. Enkelejda Malaj*, Head of Agreements, Cooperation and Assistance, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy of Albania
- *Mr. Martin Skalsky*, Representative of the European ECO Forum and Arnika

(ii) Minamata Convention

Timing: 10.30–11.10 a.m.

Panellists:

- *Ms. Stéphanie Laruelle*, Programme Officer, Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury
- *Ms. Tatiana Tökölyová*, National Focal Point to the Aarhus Convention, Directorate of Environmental Policy, Ministry of Environment of Slovakia
- *Ms. Elena Lymberidi-Settimo*, Representative of the European ECO Forum and Project Manager “Zero Mercury Campaign”, European Environmental Bureau

(iii) SAICM

Timing: 11.10–11.40 a.m.

Panellists:

- *Mr. Usman Tariq*, Associate Programme Management Officer, Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) secretariat
- *Mr. Matthias Wolf*, Policy officer, International Chemical Safety, Sustainable Chemistry Division, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany
- *Mr. Yves Lador*, Representative of the European ECO Forum and Earthjustice

Documentation⁵

Results of the survey for Parties (AC/WGP-22/Inf.6)

Note on the rules of procedure and practices of the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions (AC/WGP-22/Inf.7)

Note on the rules of procedure and practices of the Minamata Convention on Mercury (AC/WGP-22/Inf.8)

Note on the rules of procedure and practices of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) (AC/WGP-22/Inf.9)

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2015-2017 and 2018-2021 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2018/4)

Promoting the application of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in international forums (Almaty Guidelines; ECE/MP.PP/2005/2/Add.5)

Additional information and documentation regarding

- **Basel Convention:** <http://www.basel.int>,
Rules of Procedure:
<http://basel.int/TheConvention/ConferenceoftheParties/RulesofProcedure/tabid/2281/Default.aspx>
- **Rotterdam Convention:** <http://www.pic.int>,
Rules of Procedure:
<http://www.pic.int/TheConvention/ConferenceoftheParties/RulesofProcedure/tabid/2877/language/en-US/Default.aspx>
- **Stockholm Convention:** <http://chm.pops.int>,
Rules of Procedure:
<http://chm.pops.int/TheConvention/ConferenceoftheParties/RulesofProcedure/tabid/2411/Default.aspx>
- **Minamata Convention:** <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/>, Rules of Procedure (draft):
http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Portals/11/documents/meetings/COP1/English/1_3_e_rop.pdf
- **SAICM:** <http://saicm.org/>, SAICM texts and resolutions of the International Conference on Chemicals Management:
http://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/Documents/saicmtxts/New%20SAICM%20Text%20with%20CCM%20resolutions_E.pdf

11.40–11.50 a.m. Coffee break

⁵ Background information on work area on promoting the principles of the Convention in international forums is available from: <https://www.unece.org/env/pp/ppif.html>

II. Update on items considered at the previous thematic session

Timing: 11.50–12.20 p.m.

The Working Group Chair will consider crosscutting issues and updates on the promotion of the Convention principles in international forums with the focus being on:

- a) Lessons learnt from COP-23 to the UNFCCC and preparations for COP-24.
- b) Stakeholder engagement in the United Nations Environment Assembly and the UNEP access to information policies.
- c) The promotion of the principles of the Aarhus Convention throughout implementing and monitoring implementation of SDGs.
- d) The promotion of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in IFIs processes.

Written statements on the above items will be made available online on the meeting's web page, as received by the secretariat: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47188>

III. Concluding remarks by the Chair of the thematic session

Timing: 12.20–12.30 p.m.

The Chair of the thematic session will make concluding remarks.
