Aarhus principles in international decision-making on chemicals and waste

Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

Martin Skalský/ Arnika & European ECO Forum

22 Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention
Geneva / June 2018
Chemical and waste conventions

1. **Basel (1989)**
   (transboundary movement of waste)

2. **Rotterdam (1998)**
   (hazardous chemicals & pesticides)

3. **Stockholm (2001)**
   (persistent organic pollutants)

Public information and participation:
- Previously, different rules for each convention
- Since 2017: Joint COP, unified rules

Majority of the parties to BRS are not parties to the Aarhus Convention.
Stockholm Convention

- **Article 10**: Public information, awareness and education
  - Information, public participation, awareness, training, education, using mass media
- **Article 6**: Pollutants Release and Transfer Registry (PRTR)

Similar provisions are contained in the Minamata Convention
Space for public participation

1. Preparatory meeting prior to the COP (EU Competent Authorities & ordinary regional meetings of the countries)
2. Participation in inter-sessional expert working groups

Constraints:
- Preparation of the COP agenda in the EU is closed (in CEE Region, CSO mostly can participate)
- Participation at regional meetings depend on the region (EU, JUSSCANZ – closed for CSOs, other regions – more open)
Participation of CSOs at the COP

- Attend the COP with no restrictions as observers
- Make statements (after the parties)
- Majority of the working groups
- No Conference Room Papers with particular proposals (SAICM only)
- Final decision is upon the parties

Constraints:
- Some parties strive to restrict CSOs participation from time to time
- CSOs not officially registered in their country cannot obtain long-term observer status
SC National Implementation Plans

- In developing countries, implementation framework depends on supporting inter-governmental organizations (UNIDO, UNDP)
- Level of participation of CSOs varies from country to country

Particular projects:
- Public participation depends on implementing agency (UNIDO, UNDP, etc.)
- CSOs should be involved much more (technologies selection, communication, etc.)
Conclusions

- CSOs can influence the decisions through participation in expert working groups
- CSOs can participate at the COP and raise their suggestions
- Setting agenda of COPs and regional meetings are rather closed to the public
- Participation in development of NIPs and particular projects not actively supported in many countries

Aarhus Compliance mechanism/Committee is unique – is not established in other conventions.
Thank you for your attention!

Martin Skalský
martin.skalsky@arnika.org

Arnika – Citizens Support Centre
Delnicka 13, 170 000 Prague 7
The Czech Republic

More information:
http://arnika.org/en
http://www.eco-forum.org