



**16th Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (WGP 16) (Geneva,
19 – 21 June 2013)**

Agenda Item 8(a): Draft Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020

Contribution by the EU and its Member States and Croatia

- (1) The EU and its Member States and Croatia welcome the development of the draft strategic plan and the opportunity to comment on this draft.
- (2) The prioritisation of the goal of securing effective implementation of the Convention by Parties during the period 2015 – 2020 is supported by the EU and its Member States and Croatia.
- (3) New thematic challenges to be addressed should be within the scope of the Convention and have targets which mainly relate to the primary goal of securing effective implementation of the Convention.
- (4) The reflection of a selection of options for assisting the promotion of the principles of the Convention and Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration amongst countries outside the UNECE region is welcomed. We particularly support the encouraging of States outside the UNECE region to replicate the Convention or implement its principles as an efficient and effective way to increase its impact, while allowing such States to facilitate any necessary local or regional variations.
- (5) Further elaboration is requested on what is envisaged under a number of specific indicators / activities / measures listed in the Framework for implementation, namely:
 - Objective 1.1 – the development of “a participatory intersectoral and multi-stakeholder mechanism to monitor progress in implementation of the Aarhus Convention”
 - Objective 1.2 – the establishment of a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of decisions of the compliance committee at a national level
 - Objective 1.3 – the rationale for the inclusion of this objective in the Strategic Plan, given that Decisions I/8, II/10 and III/5 set out detailed reporting requirements.
 - Objective 1.7 – the rewarding of proactive officials

- Objective 1.9 – the relevance of the indicative measure suggested of carrying out research studies on the impact of civil society’s contribution to environmental management, green economy and sustainable development to meeting the goals of the Aarhus Convention.

(6) We would request that the Strategic Plan should take into account the necessary financial resources for the goals contained therein.

(7) While recognising that national focal points do fulfil various important roles in relation to the implementation of the Convention, the last sentence of paragraph 10 seems to expand the role of national focal points inappropriately by attributing them responsibilities for the implementation, including monitoring, of the Strategic Plan.

(8) We request that the introductory text on Focal area III: Development should revert to text used in the previous Strategic Plan, i.e. to read “.. Parties will endeavour to implement ...” rather than “Parties will implement...”.

(9) Finally, it is suggested that consideration be given to a mid-term review of the strategic plan 2015-2020 at MOP6, focusing on the progress indicators included in the draft strategic plan. Such a review would facilitate the preparation of the next strategic plan.