

The Aarhus Convention Reporting Mechanism

**National reporting on implementation
of the Aarhus Convention**



The Aarhus Convention

- UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters
- Adopted in 1998
- One of the five Environmental Conventions administered by UNECE
- Open to accession by non-ECE countries

Provisions on Reporting – Art.10 par.2

- Keep under continuous review the implementation of the Convention on the basis of regular reporting by the Parties
- Review the policies for and legal and methodological approaches to access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, with a view to further improving them

Decisions on Reporting

- **Decision I/8 on Reporting Requirements (2002)**
- **Requests Parties to submit report on**
 - a) **The legislative, regulatory or other measures taken to implement the provisions of the Convention**
 - b) **Their practical implementation**
- **in accordance with the format set out in the annex to this decision**
- **in advance of next meeting of the Parties**

Decisions on Reporting

Parties are further requested to:

- **Submit an updated version in advance of each MOP – followed up by Decisions II/10 and III/5**
- **Prepare reports through a transparent and consultative process involving the public**
- **Submit reports to secretariat electronically and on paper**
- **In one of the official languages of the Convention, as well as in the language(s) of the Party**

Decisions on Reporting

- **Decision I/8 further requests the secretariat to prepare a synthesis report for each meeting of the Parties summarizing the progress made and identifying significant trends, challenges and solutions**

Reporting Format

- **In form of a questionnaire**
- **Only concerns articles of Convention for national implementation**
- **Each article dealt with through separate set of questions**
- **Revised format under preparation to incorporate amendment to Convention**

Experiences so far:

- Two reporting cycles since Decision I/8
- First cycle: 26 reports (30 Parties) = 87%
- Second cycle: 35 reports (41 Parties) = 85%
- Valuable information provided
- Positive developments in legislative frameworks and practical implementation
- Challenges to implementation identified

Challenges

Practical:

- Late submission of reports
- Processing reports through UN system
- Translations
- Resources
- Public consultation process criticized

Conclusion

- Despite challenges, Parties decided at their third meeting (June 2008) to continue current reporting practice
- Reporting mechanism provides valuable input into Convention's review process of implementation
- New electronic database under construction to make information more easily accessible