



Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

- Aarhus Convention -

Twenty-eighth session of
ECE Committee on Environmental Policy
Geneva, 1-3 November 2023

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Aarhus Convention Introduction

ENVIRONMENT

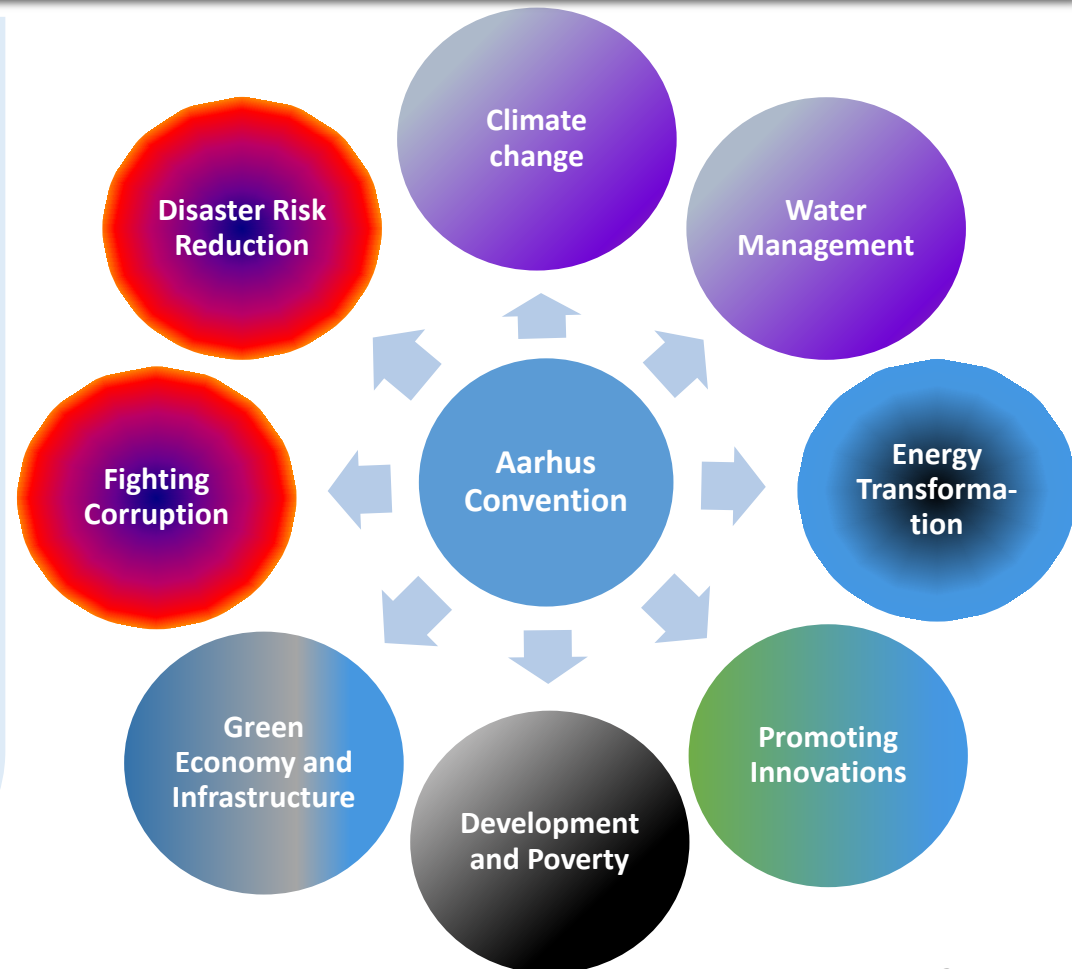


Get Information

- **Adoption:** 1998, Aarhus, Denmark
- **Entry into force:** 30 October 2001
- **Parties:** 47 Parties (*world's lowest and highest GDPs; range of political and legal traditions; environmental activities and issues e.g., mining, oil and gas exploration, water pollution and shortages, nuclear and renewable energies, desertification*)
- **Accession:** Global - any UN Member State
- **One Protocol:** Protocol on PRTRs
- **Amendment on GMOs**

Participate

Seek Justice





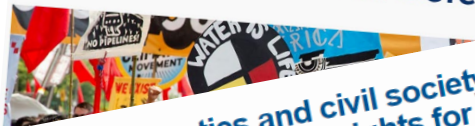
Aarhus Convention Developments and achievements

ENVIRONMENT

25 October 2021



Aarhus Convention Creates Mechanism to Better Protect Environmental Defenders



Aarhus Convention Parties and civil society push forward actions to uphold environmental rights for all

Aarhus Convention > Environment > Sustainable Development >

Guinea-Bissau accedes to the Aarhus Convention, opening new horizons for environmental democracy in Africa and worldwide

2. War in Ukraine and implementation of the Convention

Timing: Monday 26 June, 10.10–10.40 a.m.

Representatives of Ukraine will be invited to share challenges facing their country, and will be invited to respond to questions raised by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and any other relevant issues. Parties may wish to make statements, as appropriate.

Uzbekistan furthers its commitment to good governance, healthy environment and sustainable development

23 June 2023

After 25 years of the Aarhus Convention, States' compliance with environmental rights obligations matters more than ever

26 June 2023

- **Built authorities' capacities** to provide information and apply public participation and access to justice procedures; ensure no discrimination; and safety of environmental defenders
- **Built judiciary capacities** on access to justice
- **Enhanced transparency and public participation** in international decision-making
- **Fostered dialogue** among authorities, technical experts, NGOs and other stakeholders
- **Advisory services to countries** in and beyond the region and to international organizations
- **Facilitated political commitments** – Geneva Declaration and 30 decisions adopted in 2021
- **Recommendations, guidance material** and online information platforms



Aarhus Convention Lessons and challenges



ENVIRONMENT

- Access to information, public participation and access to justice
- universal principles guiding action and providing spill-over effects on other sectors
- Provides a platform to share experiences and address challenges in achieving environmental dimension of SDG 16 and other Goals
- Need to promote the Convention's obligations in SDG decision-making
- It is cheaper and resource efficient to engage the public in decision-making from the outset rather than pay to remedy the effects of unsustainable decisions
- Public confidence in governmental decisions is also critical for promoting peace and security
- Need for protection of environmental defenders
- Need to foster effective inter-ministerial and intra-ministerial cooperation mechanisms
- A benchmark for other processes and standards setter for other regions and in other sectors
- **Capacity-building:** partner organizations have a significant role
- Need to ensuring sustainability of Aarhus Centres as a platform to promote multi-stakeholder dialogue

THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION



THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE



THE RIGHT TO JUSTICE





Aarhus Convention Plans and prospects



ENVIRONMENT

- Continue providing effective platforms to share good practices and address the challenges, build authorities' and judiciary capacities, and make joint commitments

Promote

- Inputs to the follow-up and review of implementation of the Goals, in particular Goal 16 in 2024
- Importance of measurable indicators of environmental dimension of SDG 16 and other relevant SDGs
- Understanding of benefits of public engagement
- Accession of interested Member States
 - to drive development of national legislation and practice;
 - help countries to implement Agenda 2030, especially SDG 16
- Political support to pursuing international decision-making using Convention's principles and approaches
 - in particular transparency and effective public participation



**ENVIRONMENT**

Thank you!



Nino Tkhilava
Aarhus Convention
UNECE