



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

Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-Making

Seventh meeting

Geneva, 15-16 December 2016

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventh meeting¹

To be held in Salle XII, Palais des Nations, Geneva
starting at 10 a.m. on Thursday, 15 December 2016

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda
2. Thematic focus: decision-making for sustainable development
3. Obstacles, challenges and good practices in relation to public participation in decision-making related to changes to or extensions of existing activities; and in a transboundary context
4. Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters
5. Other business
6. Closing

¹ This document was not formally edited.

II. Annotations

The Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-Making was established, and its mandate laid down, by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention at its resumed second extra-ordinary session (30 June 2010) (ECE/MP.PP/2010/2/Add.1, decision EMP.II/1).² The mandate was further extended by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention through decision V/2 (ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.1) adopted at its fifth session (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 30 June and 1 July 2014).³ Decision V/2 sets out the issues to be addressed by the Task Force at paragraph 11.

The present meeting aims to discuss the main obstacles to effective public participation, exchange good practices to address those obstacles in relation to public participation in decision-making related to changes to or extensions of existing activities and public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context; share experiences linked to the implementation of the Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters (ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.2); and convey a thematic session on decision-making for sustainable development.

The Task Force continues its work based on the outputs delivered at its previous meetings. The background material for the meeting will include relevant information derived from the 2014 national implementation reports,⁴ the Synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Convention,⁵ the Aarhus Convention Implementation Guide,⁶ the Maastricht recommendations on promoting effective public participation in decision-making in environmental matters,⁷ and relevant Compliance Committee findings of a systemic nature.

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

Timing: Thursday, 15 December 10 – 10.05 a.m.

The Task Force will be invited to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document.⁸

2. Thematic focus: Decision-making for sustainable development

Timing: Thursday, 15 December 10.05 a.m. - 1 p.m.

This session aims to discuss challenges and share experiences with regard to public participation in decision-making for sustainable development.

Presentations

- Summary analysis of the results of the regional survey on the planning, implementation, follow-up and review of the sustainable development goals in relation to public participation.

Mr. Jose Palacin, Sustainable Development Unit, UNECE

- Public participation under the Aarhus Convention and stakeholders' involvement in decision-making related to sustainable development.

Mr. Jerzy Jendroska, Member of the Compliance Committee of the Aarhus Convention

- Public consultations on developing a strategy for sustainable development for the Walloon Region.

Mr. Michel Amand, Department of Sustainable Development, Wallonia, Belgium

Discussion

² The text of the decision (ECE/MP.PP/2010/2/Add.1) is available from [http://www.unece.org/env/pp/emop2010.html/](http://www.unece.org/env/pp/emop2010.html#/)

³ The text of the decision (ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.1) is available from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html

⁴ Available at <http://apps.unece.org/ehlm/pp/NIR/index.asp>

⁵ ECE/MP.PP/2014/6; available from: [http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html/](http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html#/)

⁶ 2nd edition, 2014; available from <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35869>

⁷ ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.2; available at [http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html/](http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html#/)

⁸ All documents for the meeting will be available from <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=42573#/>

Presentations

- The role of participatory democracy in relation to sustainable development in Switzerland.

Ms. Elena Trigo, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland

- Systemic challenges and good practices in relation to public participation in decision-making on plans, strategies or policies related to sustainable development.

Ms. Nana Janashia, Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN)

- Challenges and good practices in relation to public participation in decision-making on sustainable development in Armenia.

Mr. Galust Nanyan, Ararat Aarhus Centre

Discussion

Lunch 13.00-15.00

3. Obstacles, challenges and good practices in relation to public participation in decision-making related to changes to or extensions of existing activities; and in a transboundary context

<i>Timing:</i>	<i>Thursday, 15 December</i>	<i>3 – 6 p.m.</i>
	<i>Friday, 16 December</i>	<i>10 a.m. - 12 p.m.</i>

This session aims to identify the main obstacles and challenges to effective public participation in: (a) decision-making related to changes to or extensions of existing activities and; (b) in decision-making in a transboundary context, including barriers to participation of non-governmental organizations, the general public and marginalized groups. Participants will be invited to consider a number of issues in the specific context of (a) and (b), namely early public participation when all options are open; the availability of all relevant documents in the required languages to the public; effective notification and time frames for public participation; ensuring greater account is taken of the comments from the public in the final decisions and the provision of feedback on how the public's comments have been taken into account in the decisions. The session also aims to exchange good practices on the subject matter and to identify further needs in relation to the subjects.

<i>Timing:</i>	<i>Thursday, 15 December</i>	<i>3 – 6 p.m.</i>
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(a) Changes to or extensions of existing activities

Participants will be invited to identify the main obstacles to early public participation when all options are open; the availability of all relevant documents in the required languages to the public; effective notification and time frames for public participation; ensuring greater account is taken of the comments from the public in the final decisions and the provision of feedback on how the public's comments have been taken into account in the decisions related to changes or extensions of existing activities.

Presentations

- The Convention's provisions on public participation in relation to changes to or extensions of existing activities

Mr. Jerzy Jendroska, Member of the Compliance Committee to the Aarhus Convention.

- Armenia's experience in terms of legislative framework, obstacles, achievements, further improvement for public participation in decision-making related to changes and extensions of existing activities

Mr. Khachatur Khachatryan, Ministry of Nature Protection, Armenia.

- Challenges and good practices in relation to public participation in decision-making related to changes to or extensions of existing activities.

Ms. Olha Melen-Zabramna, Environment-People-Law NGO

Discussion

(b) decision-making in a transboundary context, including barriers to participation of non-governmental organizations, the general public and marginalized groups

*Timing: Thursday, 15 December 4.30 – 6 p.m.
and Friday, 16 December 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

Participants will be invited to identify the main challenges in regard to early public participation when all options are open; the availability of all relevant documents in the required languages to the public; effective notification and time frames for public participation; ensuring greater account is taken of the comments from the public in the final decisions and the provision of feedback on how the public's comments have been taken into account in the decisions with a transboundary impact. Participants will be invited to exchange good practices in lifting barriers to participation of non-governmental organizations, the general public and marginalized groups.

Presentations

- The Convention's provisions on public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context.

Mr. Jerzy Jendroska, Member of the Compliance Committee to the Aarhus Convention

- Lithuanian experience regarding obstacles for public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context.

Ms. Eglė Paužuolienė, Ministry of Environment, Lithuania

Discussion

Timing: Friday 16 December 2016 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Presentations

- Experiences of public participation in EIA procedure for the Kostolac Thermo Power plant.

Ms Sabina Ivanovic, Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Serbia

- WECF's experience in public participation in decision-making in a transboundary context.

Ms. Anke Stock, Women in Europe for a Common Future,

Discussion

4. Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters

Timing: Friday, 16 December 12.00 p.m. – 12.40 p.m.

Participants will be invited to share good practices and experiences on the use and implementation of the Maastricht Recommendations and discuss existing challenges. A survey will be organised prior to the meeting in order to facilitate the discussion on this item.

Presentations

- Summary analysis of the results of the survey on the use of the Maastricht Recommendations.

Mr. Theodore Koukis, Aarhus Convention secretariat

- Maastricht Recommendations' implementation prospects in Romania.
Ms Elena Dumitru, Permanent Mission of Romania to UN Office at Geneva

Discussion

5. Other business

Timing: Friday, 16 December 12.40 – 12.45 p.m.

6. Closing

Timing: Friday, 16 December 12.45 – 1 p.m.
