Economic Commission for Europe
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

Eighth meeting
Geneva, 8–9 October 2018

Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the eighth meeting:

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on Monday, 8 October 2018*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.
2. Ensuring effective public participation.
3. Protection of persons exercising their rights in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.
5. Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters.
6. Any other business.
7. Closing.

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3 This document was not formally edited.

* As part of the accreditation procedures for meetings at the United Nations Office at Geneva, delegates are requested to register online before 30 September 2018 through the following link: https://uncdb.unece.org/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=a2r2a1. Participants requiring a personal invitation letter for visa purposes should click on the “visa required” option and register for the meeting as early as possible, taking into account the period required to obtain the visa. Participants applying for financial support should register before 20 August 2018 and submit the completed financial support form to the secretariat by email (public.participation@un.org) before the same date. On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website, http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html). In case of difficulty, please contact the Convention secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 2650.
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 extraordinary session (30 June 2010) (ECE/MP.PP/2010/2/Add.1, decision EMP.II/1)². The mandate was further extended in time by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention through decision VI/2 (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1)³ adopted at its sixth session (Budva, Montenegro, 11–13 September 2017). Paragraph 11 of decision VI/2 sets out the issues to be addressed by the Task Force.

The present meeting aims to discuss items of a systemic nature on ensuring effective public participation, namely: (i) meaningful and early public participation; (ii) the availability of all relevant documents to the public; (iii) effective notification and time frames for public participation; and (vi) ensuring that greater account is taken of the comments from the public in the final decisions, and ensuring the appropriate provision of feedback on how the public’s comments have been taken into account in the decisions.

The Task Force will also discuss issues related to the protection of persons exercising their rights in conformity with the provisions of the Convention and will hold a thematic session on product-related decision-making and chemicals. In addition, the meeting will provide an opportunity to share experiences on the use of the Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters (ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.2).

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 2017 national implementation reports⁴, the Synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Convention⁵, the Aarhus Convention Implementation Guide⁶, the Maastricht recommendations on promoting effective public participation in decision-making in environmental matters⁷, and relevant Compliance Committee findings of a systemic nature.

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

Timing: Monday, 8 October, 10–10.10 a.m.

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

2. Ensuring effective public participation

Timing: Monday, 8 October, 10.10 a.m.–1 p.m.

Participants will be invited to consider the full chain of decision-making procedure based on the Maastricht Recommendations (with respect to articles 6, 7 and 8, of the Convention) and to address the following issues: (i) meaningful and early public participation; (ii) the availability of all relevant documents to the public; (iii) effective notification and time frames

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² The text of the decision (ECE/MP.PP/2010/2/Add.1) is available from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/emop2010.html#/
³ The text of the decision (ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1) is available from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop6_docs.html.
⁷ ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.2; available from http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/mop5_docs.html#/
⁸ All documentation for the meeting will be made available on a dedicated web page on the Convention’s website https://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/ppdm8.html.
for public participation; and (vi) ensuring that greater account is taken of the comments from 
the public in the final decisions and ensuring the appropriate provision of feedback on how 
the public’s comments have been taken into account in the decisions.

3. Protection of persons exercising their rights in conformity with the provisions of the 
Convention

Timing: Monday, 8 October, 3–6 p.m.

Participants will be invited to discuss the issue of protection of persons exercising their rights 
in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.

4. Thematic focus: chemicals- and product-related decision-making

Timing: Tuesday, 9 October, 10.00 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–3.30 p.m.

Participants will be invited to share good practices and experiences on two interrelated 
subjects, namely: chemicals and product-related decision-making.

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

Timing: Tuesday, 9 October, 3.30–4 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.

6. Any other business

Timing: Tuesday, 9 October, 4–4.05 p.m.

7. Closing

Timing: Tuesday, 9 October, 4.05–4.15 p.m.