

**Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums
(Fourth meeting, Geneva, 6 July 2009)
Agenda item 6**

Outline proposal for future outreach to interested international forums

Prepared by the Chair

1. Through paragraph 2(a) of decision III/4 of the Meeting of the Parties, Parties requested the Task Force to continue outreach to interested international forums, but in a more focused way, e.g. through joint workshops, on a bilateral or limited multilateral basis, or by inviting representatives of interested international forums to attend meetings of the Convention bodies.
2. Bearing in mind the recognition in decision III/4 that the first priority in respect of the implementation of article 3, paragraph 7 in the current intersessional period should be on assisting the Parties to do so, it is proposed that the majority of the work on future outreach would take place in the period following discussion at the fifth meeting of the Task Force in 2010, although some preparatory work may be begun earlier.
3. Possible future outreach might include:
 - (a) The first level of possible future outreach might be to invite representatives of one or more of the other UNECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) or other interested international forums to attend a meeting of an Aarhus Convention body.
 - (i) The representatives could be invited to make a presentation at either the fifth meeting of the Task Force or the twelfth meeting of the Working Group.
 - (ii) The representatives would each be invited to share examples of good practice and challenges on access to information and public participation in their forum.
 - (b) The second level of possible future outreach might be to organise a joint workshop of representatives of one or more of the other UNECE MEAs and/or representatives of international forums dealing with a particular theme or a cluster of themes, (e.g. water, development projects), to exchange good practices and challenges in promoting access to information and public participation.
 - (i) This workshop might be held in late 2010, back to back with the meeting of the fifth meeting of the Task Force.

- (ii) The purpose of the workshop would be to provide a forum in which a small number of forums working on related or complementary themes could come together to exchange good practices and challenges on promoting access to information and public participation.
 - Examples of related or complementary themes might include forums concerned with water, energy, infrastructure projects, development finance, environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment.
 - (iii) The workshop would be designed so as to build upon the outcomes of the consultation process carried out by the Task Force in the last intersessional period by exploring more deeply the themes of most relevance to the invited forums.
 - (iv) The workshop would be a mixture of presentations and discussion groups, with greater emphasis on the latter.
 - (v) The workshop might have 50-70 participants, to include:
 - Representatives of invited international forums (secretariat, governments, other stakeholders)
 - Aarhus Convention Parties, including their focal points in the invited international forums
 - Experts of the PPIF Task Force
 - Civil society
 - Academia
 - (vi) The envisaged outcomes from the workshop would include:
 - A report of the workshop, to be submitted to the thirteenth meeting of the Working Group for its consideration.
 - The foundations for a network of interested representatives of international forums for ongoing exchanges of good practices and challenges on promoting access to information and public participation.
- (c) The third level of possible future outreach might be to further develop the network of interested representatives of international forums following the workshop and to establish an ongoing platform for exchange, either electronically and/or with periodic meeting.