

**Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums  
(Fourth meeting, Geneva, 6 July 2009)  
Agenda item 3**

**Outline proposal for workshop**

Prepared by the Chair

<b>Title</b>	<b>“Good practices and challenges: Sharing experiences of promoting the application of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in international forums”</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To provide a forum in which Aarhus Parties, civil society and academia can exchange good practices and challenges with respect to the implementation of article 3, paragraph 7 of the Aarhus Convention</li><li>• To compile case studies of good practice to assist the preparation of a compendium of such case studies (Decision III/4, paragraph 2(c))</li></ul>
<b>Date</b>	February – April 2010
<b>Duration</b>	1.5 days
<b>Venue</b>	Geneva
<b>Chair</b>	Etienne Ballan, Chair of the Task Force on Public Participation in International Forums
<b>Participants</b>	50-70 participants to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aarhus Convention Parties (including both Aarhus focal points and focal points for other international forums dealing with the environment and/or those involved in intra-and inter-ministry coordination)</li><li>• PPIF Task Force experts</li><li>• Representatives of civil society</li><li>• Representatives of academia</li></ul>
<b>Format</b>	A mixture of presentations and discussion groups
<b>Languages</b>	English, French and Russian
<b>Documentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decision II/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (Almaty Guidelines)</li><li>• Decision III/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums</li><li>• Analysis of the reporting on article 3, paragraph 7 in the 2008 National Implementation Reports, prepared by secretariat, including annexes.</li></ul>

## Indicative themes

### 1. **Good practices and challenges regarding internal coordination within and between government ministries**

Indicative examples of actions taken include:

- Translating Guidelines into national language and disseminated to relevant government bodies
- Adopting an internal regulation on NGO participation in government delegations
- Internal consultation within relevant ministries to inform them of the Guidelines
- Internal consultation with relevant officials to exchange experience on the application of the Guidelines

### 2. **Good practices and challenges to promote access to information at the national level regarding international forums**

Indicative examples of actions taken include:

- Publication of international agreements in national language
- Informing public about MEAs and international environmental obligations
- Website to inform NGOs and stakeholders on the status of international negotiations on environment and sustainable development

### 3. **Good practices and challenges to promote public participation at the national level with respect to international forums**

Indicative examples of actions taken include:

- Direct public participation schemes, such as public events, public consultations and citizens conferences
- Including NGOs on delegations
- Regular consultations with civil society to develop government positions
- Involving civil society in follow-up meetings
- Financial support to assist NGOs to participate in meetings of international forums
- Commissioned research into implementation of article 3, paragraph 7 by government officials

4. **Good practices and challenges to promote the principles of the Convention in the processes of other international forums, including in forums that do not deal solely with environmental matters**

Indicative examples of actions taken include:

- Submitting proposals for extending Aarhus principles to MEAs
- Suggested an international forum dealing with the environment at the ministerial level be open to all interest groups
- Promoting transparency and participation in international forums that do not deal solely with environmental matters, e.g.:
  - Aid organizations
  - World Trade Organization

5. **Good practices and challenges to promote the principles of the Convention in the substantive output of different international forums**

Indicative examples of actions taken include:

- Providing funding for independent study and practical guide on public participation in the context of MEAs
- Lead country in international forum which carries out its work plan *inter alia* through strategic partnerships between government, civil society and private sector
- Including requirements for public information in a technical standard prepared by an international forum
- Providing funding for international forum to carry out capacity-building work on electronic environmental information services

**Outcomes**

- Report of workshop
- Chair's Summary
- Compendium of case studies of good practices on promoting public participation in international forums