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

Working Group of the Parties

Fifteenth meeting
Geneva, 3–5 September 2012
Item 1 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the fifteenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 3 p.m. on Monday, 3 September 2012*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.

* As part of the accreditation procedures for delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to complete the registration form available on the Convention website (www.unece.org/env/pp/practical.htm), and to transmit it to the Convention secretariat no later than two weeks before the meeting — namely, by 15 August 2012 — by e-mail (public.participation@unece.org). Delegates applying for financial support should submit the registration and the financial support forms no later than 20 July 2012. 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 2682.
3. Substantive issues:
   (a) Access to information;
   (b) Public participation in decision-making;
   (c) Access to justice;
   (d) Genetically modified organisms.
4. Procedures and mechanisms:
   (a) Compliance mechanism;
   (b) National implementation reports;
   (c) Implementation Guide;
   (d) Capacity-building and awareness-raising.
5. Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic
   Commission for Europe region.
6. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums.
9. Preparations for the fifth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties:
   (a) Future strategic plan;
   (b) Evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention;
   (c) Assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions;
   (d) Hosting of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
10. Other business.
11. Adoption of outcomes.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

   Timing: Monday, 3 September, 3–3.10 p.m.

   The Working Group will be invited to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document.¹

2. Status of ratification of the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant
   Release and Transfer Registers

   Timing: Monday, 3 September, 3.10–3.15 p.m.

   The secretariat will provide the Working Group of the Parties with an overview of the
   status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Convention on

¹ All documentation for the session will be made available on the following website:
http://www.unece.org/acwgp15
Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), the amendment to the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments concerning ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with respect to these instruments in their respective countries. The Working Group is expected to take note of these developments.

3. **Substantive issues**

   (a) **Access to information**

   **Timing: Monday, 3 September, 3.15–4 p.m.**

   The Working Group will consider relevant activities since the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties (Chisinau, 29 June–1 July 2011). Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and may offer further guidance on the planned activities.

   **Documentation**

   Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

   (b) **Public participation in decision-making**

   **Timing: Monday, 3 September, 4–5 p.m.**

   The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about the outcomes of the second meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation, which is to be organized in cooperation with the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Geneva, 6–8 June 2012). It will also be briefed on the progress achieved in developing recommendations on public participation in decision-making on environmental matters and in collecting case studies on the subject. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and may offer further guidance on the planned activities.

   **Documentation**

   Report of the second meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/4)

   Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

   (c) **Access to justice**

   **Timing: Monday, 3 September, 5–6 p.m.**

   The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about the outcomes of the fifth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice (Geneva, 13–14 June 2012) and of the subregional Central Asian meeting “Implementing the Aarhus Convention today: Paving the way to a better environment and governance tomorrow” (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 22–23 May 2012), including the training for judiciary. The meeting is being jointly organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and by the Organization for Security and
Cooperation in Europe. Delegations will be invited to provide additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to take note of this information and may offer further guidance on the planned activities.

Documentation
Report of the fifth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/5)
Report of the subregional Central Asian meeting “Implementing the Aarhus Convention today: Paving the way to a better environment and governance tomorrow” (AC/WGP-15/Inf.1)
Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

(d) Genetically modified organisms
Timing: Tuesday, 4 September, 10–10.30 a.m.
The Working Group will consider relevant developments in this area since the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties and will discuss the issue of ratification of the amendment.

Documentation
Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

4. Procedures and mechanisms

(a) Compliance mechanism
Timing: Tuesday, 4 September, 10.30–11 a.m.
The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the recent meetings of the Compliance Committee. The Working Group is expected to take note of this information and take note of the election of a new member of the Compliance Committee.

Documentation
Reports of the Compliance Committee’s thirty-third to thirty-seventh meetings (ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2011/6; ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2011/8; ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2011/10; ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2012/2; and ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2012/5)
Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

(b) National implementation reports
Timing: Tuesday, 4 September, 11–11.15 a.m.
The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat regarding the status of submission of national implementation reports since the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
(c) Implementation Guide

Timing: Tuesday, 4 September, 11.15–11.30 a.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat regarding the progress made with respect to preparing the second edition of The Aarhus Convention: An Implementation Guide.2

(d) Capacity-building and awareness-raising

Timing: Tuesday, 4 September, 11.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations on capacity-building activities carried out since the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties, including the implementation of the Communication Strategy and the outcomes of the seventh capacity-building coordination meeting (Geneva, 15 June 2012). The Working Group is expected to take note of the developments, as well as relevant needs for capacity-building, and may offer further guidance on the future work in this area.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

Report of the seventh capacity-building coordination meeting (AC-WGP-15/Inf.2)

5. Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

Timing: Tuesday, 4 September, 12.30–1 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the report on the mission to Mongolia (Ulan Bator, 25–26 April 2012) which was organized at the invitation of the Government of Mongolia following its expression of interest in acceding to the Convention. The Working Group is expected to take note of any additional information on initiatives taken by Parties or stakeholders to promote the Convention beyond the ECE region.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

6. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums

Timing: Tuesday, 4 September, 3–6 p.m.

A thematic session will be organized in the format of panel presentations followed by an interactive discussion.3 The session will address, inter alia, the promotion of the principles of the Convention in the lead up to and at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (20–22 June 2012, Rio de Janeiro) and will explore future steps and initiatives to promote the universal application of the Convention’s principles.

2 United Nations publication, Sales No. Sales No. E.00.II.E.3.
3 The programme for the session will be made available on the website in due course.

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 10–10.30 a.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of the report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014, prepared by the secretariat, taking into consideration the discussion under the previous agenda items.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

8. **Financial matters**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 10.30–11 a.m.*

The Working Group is expected to take note of information on the financial and human resources situation in the secretariat. Delegations will be invited to provide information on their expected contributions to support the implementation of the current work programme. The Working Group will be invited to take note of this information and consider the issue of stable and predictable funding in order to ensure the smooth implementation of the work programme.

**Documentation**

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2009–2011 and 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/3)

9. **Preparations for the fifth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties**

(a) **Future strategic plan**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 11–11.45 a.m.*

The Working Group is expected to discuss and approve a draft proposal by the Bureau on the preparation of the Strategic Plan 2015–2020. The Working Group will also take note of the information regarding plans for the preparation of the report on the status of implementation of the current Strategic Plan.

**Documentation**

Note on the preparation of the Strategic Plan 2015–2020 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/6)

(b) **Evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 11.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.*

The Working Group is expected to discuss and approve a draft proposal by the Bureau on the preparation of an in-depth evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention.

**Documentation**

Note on preparation of an in-depth evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/7)
(c) **Assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 12.30–1 p.m.*

The Working Group of the Parties is expected to discuss and approve a draft proposal by the Bureau on the preparation of an assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions.

*Documentation*

Note on preparation of an assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2012/8)

(d) **Hosting of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 3–3.30 p.m.*

The Working Group will consider possible proposals by Parties willing to host the fifth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties.

10. **Other business**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 3.30–3.35 p.m.*

Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

11. **Adoption of outcomes**

*Timing: Wednesday, 5 September, 4.30–5 p.m.*

The Working Group will discuss and approve the outcomes of its fifteenth meeting.

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4 There will be a break between the consideration of items 10 and 11 to prepare the list of outcomes and decisions for approval.