Public participation under Article 7

Working Group of the Parties
Thematic Session on Public Participation
Geneva, 26 June 2019
Key legal requirements

- Plans and programmes
- Cross-reference to Art.6.3, 4 and 8
- Principle of „early public participation”
- Reasonable timeframes
- Decision-making processes – „relating to the environment”
- Procedural elements
  - Identification of the public which may participate
  - „having provided necessary information”
    - Notification
    - Public access to „all relevant information”
  - Due account taken of the results
- Policies
Key systemic challenges

• Insufficient framework
  – Lack of procedures or public participation only within SEA
• Not all plans and programmes covered (for example environmental inspection plans or nature conservation programmes)
• No systemic approach to „identification of the public which may participate”
• No reasonable time-frames for all phases
• Lack of effective notification
• Insufficient public access to „all relevant information” (sometimes only SEA Report)
Key positive trends

- Public participation in screening and scoping in SEA procedures
- Mandatory public participation for plans and programmes not requiring SEA
- Clear minimum time-frames for separate phases
- Elaborated requirements for notifying the public
- Electronic accessibility of all documents
Key systemic actions to be taken by Parties to improve the situation

• Assuring possibilities for public participation in case of all plans and programmes „relating to the environment”
• Introducing mechanisms to assure reasonable time-frames
• Elaborating a systemic approach to „identification of the public which may participate”
• Enhancing access to „all relevant information”