

Aarhus Convention
23rd Working Group of the Parties (WGP 23)
(Geneva, 26-28 June 2019)
Contribution by the EU and its Member States

Agenda item 3(b): Access to information

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat and the Chair of the Task Force on Access to Information for its work to date.

The EU and its Member States welcome the outcomes of the Thematic session on access to information, which was held during the 22nd Working Group of the Parties (19-21 June 2018) in Geneva. The discussions held with this occasion showed the importance of this subject for Parties, partner organizations and other stakeholders and highlighted their attention and progress made for the effective implementation of access to information pillar of the Convention.

We also welcome the interactive exchange of information in which Parties, NGOs and other stakeholders shared their experience in regard to the implementation of articles 4 and 5 and other relevant provisions of the Aarhus Convention.

We acknowledge the importance of facilitating effective public access to environmental information in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 16, and in particular target 16.10 (Public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms), and to contribute to the implementation of the other Goals and targets, specifically Goals 3 (Good health and well-being), 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and 12 (Responsible consumption and production).

We encourage the active dissemination of environmental information through the use of modern digital technologies for implementing the Aarhus Convention.

We also encourage the Parties, as well as the stakeholders to continue to submit case studies on electronic information tools and to populate the Aarhus Clearinghouse with the relevant resources.

In relation to the upcoming 6th meeting of the Task Force on Access to Information under the Aarhus Convention (Geneva, 2-4 October 2019), we welcome its preparations, pursuant to Decision VI/1 of the Meeting of the Parties on promoting access to information.