Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums

Promotion of the principles of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters
(Aarhus Convention) in international forums

Provisional agenda for thematic session
to be held Thursday, 20 June 2013, 10.00-13.00

10.00 – 10.10 Opening session
Welcome by Mr. Zaal Lomtadze, Chief of Section, Environmental Policy, UNECE
Opening remarks by Mr. Etienne Ballan, Chair of the thematic session

10.10 – 10.50 Session 1: Follow up from the previous thematic session:
Recalling the outcomes of the thematic session held during the fifteenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (Geneva, 3-5 September 2013), this session will discuss:

- Update on progress by Parties to develop national action plan to systematically promote the principles of the Convention in all international forums dealing with matters relating to the environment in which they take part (overview by Chair)

- Update on establishment of High Level Political Forum by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Speakers:
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (written statement)
- Ms. Joanna Cornelius, on behalf of European ECO Forum

- Update on civil society engagement in the processes of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Documentation:
- Arrangements for intergovernmental meetings, Note by the Executive Secretary to the UNFCCC, paras. 29-35

Speakers:
- Secretariat to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (written statement)
- Mr. Sébastien Duyck, on behalf of European ECO Forum
Session 2: The new United Nations Environment Assembly

Recalling the commitment made by Parties at the fifteenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to take concrete actions to actively promote the principles of the Aarhus Convention in the upgrading of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), this session will consider concrete actions that Parties might take to effectively act upon this commitment, in particular with respect to the further development of paragraphs 5(e), 7 and 17 of decision 27/2 of the UNEP Governing Council.

Documentation:
- Decision 27/2 of the UNEP Governing Council, paras. 5(e), 7 and 17

Speakers:
- Mr. Philippe Ramet, Chef du Bureau, Ministère de l’Ecologie, de l’Energie, du Développement Durable et de l’Aménagement de Territoire, France
- Mr. Alexander Juras, Chief, Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch, United Nations Environment Programme
- Ms. Gita Parihar, on behalf of European ECO Forum

Session 3: Policy reviews by international financial institutions

Recalling the commitment made by Parties at the fifteenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to identify possible concrete actions that Parties might take, individually or collectively with other Governments, to promote the principles of the Aarhus Convention in the processes, policies and projects of the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the European Investment Bank, this session will consider ways that Parties might effectively act upon this commitment in the context of the policy reviews currently being undertaken by those institutions.

Speakers:
- Ms. Elizabeth Smith, Senior Stakeholder Engagement Advisor, Environment and Sustainability Department, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- Ms. Adina Relicovschi, Senior Environmental Expert, Environment, Climate and Social Office, European Investment Bank
- Ms. Selina Jackson, Special Representative to the United Nations and the World Trade Organization in Geneva, World Bank
- Mr. Petr Hlobil, International Affairs Director, CEE Bankwatch
- Ms. Mara Silina, on behalf of European ECO Forum

Closing session: The way forward

The Chair will discuss possibilities for future work under the Convention on public participation in international forums. Parties and observers will have the opportunity to reflect on the Chair’s proposals.

Documentation:
- Note by the Chair of the thematic session on public participation in international forums (AC/WGP-16/Inf.5)