



## Economic and Social Council

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### 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

##### Sixteenth meeting

Geneva, 19–21 June 2013

Item 8 (d) of the provisional agenda

**Preparations for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties:  
agenda of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties**

### **Outline of the agenda of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters**

**Prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureaux of the  
Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol on  
Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers**

#### *Summary*

The outline contained herein was prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureaux of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (the latter was consulted on the organization of work, see section II) in order to facilitate discussion by the Working Group of the Parties on preparations for the Convention's fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP-5) and the Protocol's second session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOPP-2), which will be held back to back. The document was prepared on the basis of decision IV/6 on the work programme for 2012–2014 (see

ECE/MP.PP/2011/2/Add.1),<sup>1</sup> adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to Convention at its fourth session.

The outline aims to facilitate the Working Group's discussion on the organization of work and agenda of MOP-5. There will be an open-ended consultation among national focal points and stakeholders on the agenda of MOP-5 after the sixteenth meeting of the Working Group. The Bureau is expected to revise the draft document thereafter in the light of the comments received and to submit it to the seventeenth meeting of the Working Group for consideration, revision and approval and subsequent submission to the Meeting of the Parties for consideration.

The Protocol's Bureau will submit the suggested organization of work for MOPP-2, prepared in the light of the outcomes of the meeting of Convention's Working Group of the Parties, as well as the provisional agenda for MOPP-2 to the Protocol's Working Group of the Parties at its third meeting (Geneva, 20–21 November 2013) for approval and subsequent submission to MOPP-2 for consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Available from <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/mop4/mop4.doc.html>

## I. Dates and Venue

1. At its fifteenth meeting (3–5 September 2012), the Working Group of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) decided that the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (MOP-5) and the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (MOPP-2) should be held back to back. In addition to this decision, in identifying a suitable dates for the meetings the secretariat took into account its experience in organizing previous sessions of the Convention's Meeting of the Parties (e.g., timing for the European Union Environment Council, holidays in May and June, deadlines for the preparation of formal documents), and held consultations on the subject with the Chairs and the Bureaux of the two respective bodies.

2. As a result, the week of 29 June to 4 July 2014 is reserved for MOP-5 and MOPP-2 and the related preparatory meetings, to be held back to back. The Government of the Netherlands has offered to host the events.

## II. Organization of Work

3. The proposed allocation of time for MOP-5 and MOPP-2 and the associated meetings is set out in the table below.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Convention/Protocol body</i>
Sunday, 29 June (9–11 a.m.)	Convention Bureau
Sunday, 29 June (full day)	Convention Compliance Committee (could continue in parallel with MOP-5, as required)
Sunday, 29 June (12–4 p.m.)	Convention Working Group of the Parties <sup>a</sup>
Monday, 30 June (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOP-5
Tuesday, 1 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOP-5, Protocol Bureau and Protocol Compliance Committee (could continue in parallel with MOP-5, as required)
Wednesday, 2 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	Joint high-level segment under MOP-5 and MOPP-2 <sup>b</sup>
Thursday, 3 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOPP-2
Friday, 4 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOPP-2

<sup>a</sup> The Convention Working Group of the Parties could also start in the morning of that day, if required. Late afternoon/evening is reserved for the finalization, translation and photocopying of possible revised documents, as well as for possible coordination meetings.

<sup>b</sup> Subject to the decision of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol, a thematic high-level segment could be organized jointly by both Meetings of the Parties. If there is no high-level segment, MOPP-2 could start on Wednesday afternoon and conclude by 4 p.m. on Friday, 4 July.

### III. Elements of the agenda

4. For MOP-5 it is suggested that: (a) the agenda should be, in general, similar to the agenda of MOP-4, with the exception of items that might not require further discussion (e.g., the implementation guide, reporting requirements); (b) the agenda should cover all substantive areas of work under the Convention and new issues that are currently under discussion by the Working Group (e.g., the future strategic plan); and (c) discussions should address good practices, achievements, lessons learned, challenges and obstacles in relation to implementing the Convention. Representatives of Governments and stakeholders could be invited to deliver the keynote addresses under specific agenda items (similarly to MOP-4). If Parties decide to hold a high-level segment, they may wish to consider organizing a thematic session on a subject which would: (a) attract high-level participation; and (b) be relevant/linked to emerging issues in a global context. A concise (no longer than two and a half pages), theme-specific joint declaration (i.e., with the Protocol's Parties) could be developed for consideration by high-level officials at the segment.

5. Thus, the MOP-5 agenda could include the following items:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Status of ratification of the Convention, the amendment to the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.
4. Substantive issues:
  - (a) Access to information, including electronic information tools;
  - (b) Public participation in decision-making;
  - (c) Access to justice;
  - (d) Genetically modified organisms;
  - (e) Public participation in international forums.
5. Procedures and mechanisms facilitating the implementation of the Convention:
  - (a) Reports on implementation;
  - (b) Compliance mechanism;
  - (c) Capacity-building.
6. Promotion of the Convention and relevant developments and interlinkages:
  - (a) Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region;
  - (b) Awareness-raising;
  - (c) Synergies between the Convention and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements;
  - (d) Global and regional developments on issues related to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;
  - (e) Update on United Nations Environment Programme initiatives on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters.

7. Programme of work and operation of the Convention:
  - (a) Implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014;
  - (b) Strategic Plan for 2015–2020;
  - (c) Work programme for 2015–2017;
  - (d) Financial arrangements.
8. Report on credentials with regard to the Convention's Parties.
9. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau.
10. Date and venue of the sixth ordinary meeting.
11. Any other business.

**Joint High-level Segment under MOP-5 and MOPP-2 (subject to the decision of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol)**

1. Opening.
  2. Report on credentials with regard to the Protocol's Parties.
  3. Thematic session (theme subject to the decision of the Convention and Protocol Parties).
  4. Discussion and adoption of the Declaration (subject to the decision of the Convention and Protocol Parties).
  5. Review and adoption of decisions of MOP-5.
  6. Closure of the joint High-level Segment.
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