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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 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the sixteenth meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on
Wednesday, 19 June 2013*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification of the Convention and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.
3. Substantive issues:

* 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 (<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/wgp16.html>), and to transmit it to the Convention secretariat by no later than 3 June 2013 by e-mail (public.participation@unece.org). Delegates applying for financial support should submit the registration and the financial support forms by no later than 6 May 2013. 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 2650. The meeting will be held back to back with the sixth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice under the Convention (Geneva, 17 - 18 June 2013).

- (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) Capacity-building and awareness-raising;
 - (c) Preparation of national implementation reports for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
 5. Accession by non-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe States and promotion of the Convention's principles in other regions.
 6. Implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014, including financial matters.
 7. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums.
 8. Preparations for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties:
 - (a) Future strategic plan;
 - (b) Functioning and implementation of the Convention;
 - (i) Evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention;
 - (ii) Future work programme;
 - (c) Financial matters;
 - (i) Assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions;
 - (ii) Future financial arrangements under the Convention;
 - (d) Agenda of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties;
 - (e) Hosting of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
 9. Other business.
 10. Adoption of outcomes.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 10–10.10 a.m.

The Working Group of the Parties under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will be invited to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document.¹

¹ All documentation for the session will be made available on the following website:
<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/wgp16.html>.

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

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 10.10–10.15 a.m.

The secretariat will provide the Working Group with an overview of the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the 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: Wednesday, 19 June, 10.15–10.45 a.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the first meeting of the Task Force on Access to information (Geneva, 7–8 February 2013) and about recent developments with regard to electronic information tools. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and to discuss possible future activities in this area, including in the next intersessional period.

Documentation

Report of the first meeting of the Task Force on Access to Information (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/5)

Note by the Chair of the Task Force on Access to Information (AC/WGP-16/Inf.1)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

(b) Public participation in decision-making

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 10.45–11.30 a.m.

The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about the outcomes of the third and fourth meetings of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (Geneva, 29–30 October 2012, and Luxembourg, 12–13 March 2013, respectively). 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 to discuss possible future activities in this area, including in the next intersessional period.

Documentation

Report of the third meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/4)

Report of the fourth meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/6)

Note by the Chair of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (AC/WGP-16/Inf.2)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

(c) Access to justice

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 11.30 a.m.–12.15 p.m.

The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about the outcomes of the sixth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice (Geneva, 17–18 June 2013). 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 to discuss possible future activities in this area, including in the next intersessional period.

Documentation

Note by the Chair of the Task Force on Access to Justice (AC/WGP-16/Inf.3)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

(d) Genetically modified organisms

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 12.15–12.30 p.m.

The Working Group will consider relevant developments in the area of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) since the fifteenth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (3–5 September 2012). Delegations will discuss the issue of ratification of the Convention's GMO amendment. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and to discuss future activities in this area, including in the next intersessional period.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

4. Procedures and mechanisms

(a) Compliance mechanism

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 12.30–1 p.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the recent meetings of the Compliance Committee and other relevant matters. The Working Group is expected to take note of this information and to discuss future plans in relation to strengthening implementation of the decisions of the Meeting of the Parties regarding non-compliance.

Documentation

Reports of the Compliance Committee on its thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth and fortieth meetings (ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2012/8; ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2012/10; and ECE/MP.PP/C.1/2013/2)

Membership of the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/11)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

(b) Capacity-building and awareness-raising

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 3–3.45 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 last meeting of the Working Group. The secretariat will report on the outcomes of the survey on the Communication Strategy (ECE/MP.PP/2011/2/Add.2).² The Working Group is expected to take note of the developments and to discuss the future work in this area.

Documentation

Outcomes of the survey on the Communication Strategy (AC/WGP-16/Inf.4)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

(c) Preparation of national implementation reports for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 3.45–4.45 p.m.

The secretariat will demonstrate how to use an online reporting tool and provide answer any questions regarding Parties' reporting obligations for the next session of the Meeting of the Parties.

5. Accession by non-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe States and promotion of the Convention's principles in other regions

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 4.45–5.30 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations regarding promotion of the Convention in other regions.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

6. Implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014, including financial matters

Timing: Wednesday, 19 June, 5.30–6 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014, prepared by the secretariat, taking into consideration the discussion under the previous agenda items. Delegations will be encouraged to notify the Working Group of their planned financial contributions.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/3)

² Available from
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/prtr/docs/2011/ece.mp.pp.2011.2.add.2_eng.pdf.

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

Timing: Thursday, 20 June, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

A thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums will be organized in the format of panel presentations followed by interactive discussions. The agenda for the thematic session will be developed in close cooperation with the country leading this area of work and the Chair of the thematic session.³

Documentation

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

8. Preparations for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties

(a) Future strategic plan

Timing: Thursday, 20 June, 3–4 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to consider a draft strategic plan for 2015–2020 prepared by the Bureau under the leadership of the Chair.

Documentation

Draft Strategic Plan for 2015–2020 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/7)

(b) Functioning and implementation of the Convention

Timing: Thursday, 20 June, 4–5 p.m.

(i) Evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention

The Working Group is expected to consider the in-depth evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention prepared by a consultant.

Documentation

In-depth evaluation of the current functioning and implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/8)

(ii) Future work programme

The Working Group is expected to consider the draft elements of the work programme for 2015–2017 prepared by the Bureau.

Documentation

Draft elements of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/12)

³ The programme for the session will be made available on the website in due course.

(c) Financial matters

Timing: Thursday, 20 June, 5–6 p.m.

(i) Assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions

The Working Group is expected to consider the assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions prepared by a consultant.

Documentation

Assessment of the current interim scheme of contributions (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/9)

(ii) Future financial arrangements under the Convention

The Working Group of the Parties is expected to consider draft elements of possible financial arrangements under the Convention prepared by the Bureau.

Documentation

Draft elements of possible financial arrangements under the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/10)

(d) Agenda of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Timing: Friday, 21 June, 10–11 a.m.

The Working Group of the Parties will consider draft elements of the agenda for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties prepared by the Bureau.

Documentation

Outline of the agenda of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties of the Aarhus Convention (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/13)

Note on the preparatory timeline for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (AC/WGP-16/Inf.5)

(e) Hosting of the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Timing: Friday, 21 June, 11–11.30 a.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the proposal by the Netherlands to host the next session of the Meeting of the Parties and will consider report by the Bureau on the matter.

9. Other business

Timing: Friday, 21 June, 11.30–11.35 a.m.

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

10. Adoption of outcomes

Timing: Friday, 21 June, 12.15–1 p.m.⁴

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

⁴ There will be a break between the consideration of items 9 and 10 to prepare the list of outcomes and decisions for approval.