

Support to the Aarhus Convention and the PRTR Protocol: The REC Activities in 2012

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REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

REC's Participatory Governance Topic Area: Current Objectives

- Assisting in putting participatory governance into practice in the field of environmental and sustainable development matters
- Supporting public access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice
- Strengthening and enabling the key players of participatory governance
- Targeting public authorities responsible for practical implementation of international, EU and national legislation, operators and the judiciary
- Supporting CSOs to enable and improve their knowledge, skills, capacities, infrastructure and viability and involvement in decision-making on environmental and sustainable development issues



REC's Participatory Governance Topic Area

Tools:

- Legislative and institutional support, capacity building for key environmental stakeholders
- Experiences sharing on best practices
- Integration in different sectors including water, waste, as well as energy, transport, climate change, sustainable consumption and production etc.
- Facilitate dialogue among different key actors at international, national and local levels
- Assistance to CSOs by granting, capacity building, strengthening networking and their viability



Capacity Building to Put the Aarhus Convention into Action: Ongoing Activities

- Strengthening regional cooperation on environmental governance through participatory and informed decision-making and implementation processes (funded via ENVSEC initiative)
- Capacity Building to Put the Aarhus Convention into Action and Support Development of PRTR Systems in Selected SEE Countries (Germany)
 - Developing and implementing a capacity building programme for officials and NGOs at local level to integrate and apply **public participation in decision-making on EIA or SEA**
 - Set up planned public participation process, including public hearings, linked with concrete decision-making processes
 - Provide training and follow-up coaching
 - Prepare practical toolkit on how to plan and implement public participation during decision-making



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Capacity Building to Put the Aarhus Convention into Action: Ongoing Activities

- **Increase the awareness and build the capacities of judges, prosecutors, ministry officials and NGOs** in order to understand and implement the **access to justice requirements of the Aarhus Convention**, stimulate communication between institutions and stakeholders
 - Interactive trainings for the judiciary on AC, related EU directives, national and international environmental legislation in cooperation with the judicial training centers
 - Roundtable meetings for legal professionals and NGOs in selected countries to discuss barriers and how to remove or reduce them
 - Facilitate NGO strategy meetings via trainings
 - on access to justice issues



Capacity Building on the PRTR Protocol: Ongoing Activities

- Assist environmental agencies in **setting up and operating PRTR systems** and preparation for the ratification of the PRTR Protocol in line with the E-PRTR requirements
- Build awareness and understanding of operators and NGOs about their role and actions, responsibilities and benefit
 - Supporting implementation of PRTR Protocol (legal, institutional and technical requirements), multi-stakeholders meetings to discuss the necessary developments (FYR Macedonia, Serbia)
 - Awareness-raising and training on the use of PRTR and PRTR reporting (BiH, Kosovo, as defined by UNSCR 1244, MN)
 - Organizing dialogue between authorities and operators to improve the reporting process, guidance materials (Serbia)
 - Pilot activities in selected countries (Albania, FYR of Macedonia)



Integrating Public Participation in Decision-making in Different Sectors

Implementing Aarhus Convention in Nuclear Issues:

- Implementing Public Participation Approaches in Radioactive Waste Disposal (Czech Rep, Romania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) - FP7
- European roundtables on AC on radioactive waste management, 2010, on Access to expertise and capacity building, 2011, implications of Fukushima, 2012
- National roundtables: facilitating the Hungarian roundtable and assist in other countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Ukraine)

Water Scarcity and Drought (WATER CoRe): Effects of Climate Change on Water Management (Interreg IVC)

- Exchange experience and to transfer know-how and good practices between 7 European partner regions
- Strengthening the interregional cooperation between politicians, policy-makers and technical experts
- Providing a digital platform in to disseminate information, measures and strategies and policy recommendation
- Good Practice Handbook, Guide and E-learning Module
- REC as Regional Focal Point



Strengthening Civil Society



Increasing CSO viability:

- Assistance to CSOs to assess internal performance and design organisational development plan to increase capacities
- Internal assessment (on strategic leadership, organisational processes, human resources, financial resources, infrastructure, etc.) in participatory manner, strengthen staff skills

Providing grants for

- developing internal capacities
- strengthening public participation and impact on decision-making at national/local levels
- networking and cooperation among CSOs

Capacity building enabling actions to raise awareness, change in behavior towards sustainable lifestyle, cooperative approaches and public participation to influence decision-making, play watchdog role more efficiently

Projects

- Technical assistance for NGO Grants and Partnership Block Grants (Slovenia)
- Civil Society Support in 7 SEE countries: SECTOR SEE, follow-up in Albania and Serbia
- Striving for Sustainability: SECTOR Eastern Europe (Belarus and Moldova)



Thank you for the attention!

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