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КОМИССИЯECONOMIC 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

Task Force on Access to Information

Second meeting

Geneva, 16 and 17 December 2013

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Approval of the key outcomes of the meeting

Key outcomes¹

As agreed by the Task Force on Access to Information at its second meeting

Item 1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

1. The Task Force adopted the agenda as set out in the document AC/TF.AI-2/Inf.1/Rev.1.

**Item 2. Public access to environmental information in the specific sectors:
sharing good practices, identifying gaps and overcoming challenges**

2. The Task Force:

(a) Took note of the experiences, including existing challenges, shared by Albania, Armenia, France, the European Union, the Republic of Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine in providing public access to environmental information in the area of land management and spatial planning, agriculture sector as well as water supply and wastewater treatment sector;

(b) Encouraged Parties, Signatories and other interested States to stimulate authorities responsible for land administration, spatial planning, agriculture, water management and health issues, to provide a wider access to environmental information, in particular to the priority types of information (as provided in decision II/3) that should be made available on-line;

(c) Noted that the following issues would need further consideration by the Task Force: timely and full access to information related to complex decision-making procedures such as spatial planning, product-related environmental information, information on pesticides used in crop spraying and on other issues relevant to the agricultural sector, information on water supply and

¹ This document was not formally edited.

wastewater discharge at the provincial and local level, in particular in the rural areas, statistical information related to environmental matters;

(d) Highlighted the need for providing timely and adequate response to the requests by the public on access to environmental information.

Item 3. The current use of electronic information tools in the Convention's implementation: taking stocks of experiences

3. The Task Force:

(a) Took note of the preliminary summary report on the assessment of the implementation of the Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties on electronic information tools (Decision II/3) (AC/TF.AI-2/Inf.2) and its accompanying document (AC/TF.AI-2/Inf.2/Add.1) and agreed to provide comments on the report by 17 January 2014;

(b) Requested the secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Task Force to prepare a template to share good practices in using mobile applications, e-participation tools and other technical developments as an instrument for putting into practice the Convention's provisions, including through public-private partnerships;

(c) Recognized the benefits of implementation of Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS), "e-government" strategies and open government data initiatives for advancing the implementation of the first pillar of the Convention and its other provisions;

(d) Welcomed the cooperation with the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment through exchange of information on relevant matters and requested the secretariat to explore further opportunities for collaboration in the future.

Item 4. The Aarhus Clearinghouse: the role of national nodes in its development

4. The Task Force:

(a) Stressed the important role of national nodes in the development and further population of the Aarhus Clearinghouse;

(b) Recognized the need to further upgrade the Aarhus Clearinghouse mechanism to bring it align with the recent technological developments and called upon interested countries and organizations to support this initiative;

(c) Called on Parties, Signatories and other interested States to continue developing a national website with information related to the nationwide implementation of the Convention, which will serve as the national node of the Aarhus Clearinghouse;

(d) Took note of the revised Guidance for National Nodes of the Aarhus Clearinghouse (AC/TF.AI-2/Inf.3);

(e) Invited Parties, Signatories, other interested States and stakeholders to provide their comments to the secretariat by 10 March 2014 on the revised Guidance for National Nodes of the Aarhus Clearinghouse (AC/TF.AI-2/Inf.3).

Item 5. Activities under other international forums dealing with access to environmental information

5. The Task Force:

(a) Took note of the information provided by the representatives of United Nations Division for Public Administration and Development Management, United Nations Initiative on Global Spatial Information Management and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Developments;

(b) Stressed the need for continuing cooperation between national focal points for different forums dealing with access to environmental information with effective engagement of non-governmental organizations, Aarhus centres and other stakeholders.

Item 6. Building capacities in providing access to environmental information: identifying needs and looking for synergies

6. The Task Force:

(a) Took note of the capacity-building needs and initiatives taken place at the regional, subregional and national levels, as presented by the Armenian Aarhus Centre and other delegations;

(b) Encouraged Parties and organizations to share the training material and the outcomes of the capacity-building projects on their websites and through the Aarhus Clearinghouse to allow for their wider use.

Item 7. Future work on access to information

7. The Task Force took note of the draft decision on access to information (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2014/L.3).

Item 8. Approval of the key outcomes of the meeting

8. The Task Force:

(a) Thanked the speakers for their presentations;

(b) Agreed on outcomes presented by the Chair at the meeting, as contained in the present document, and requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, to finalize the meeting report and incorporate these outcomes.