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ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR EUROPE

Environment Division
Bureau 332
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

Phone: +41-22-917 3294
Fax: +41-22-917 0634
E-mail: public.participation@unece.org
Website: www.unece.org/env/pp

9 August 2012

Ms. Lieselotte Feldmann
Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forests,
Environment and Water Management
General Environmental Policy Dept./
EU Affairs Environment
Stubenbastei 5
1010 Vienna, Austria

Dear Ms. Feldmann,

Re: Communication to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee concerning compliance by Austria with provisions of the Convention in connection with access to justice in criminal proceedings regarding the contravention of national environmental law (ACCC/C/2011/63)

We are writing to inform you that the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee will discuss the substance of communication ACCC/C/2011/63 at its thirty-eighth meeting (Palais des Nations, Geneva, 25-28 September 2012).

The discussion of the above communication is currently scheduled for Wednesday, 26 September 2012, **starting at 10:30 am and concluding by 4.30 pm.**

In accordance with chapter IX of the annex to decision I/7 of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, both parties are entitled to participate in the discussion on the subject matter of the communication, though not in the preparation or adoption of any findings, measures or recommendations of the Committee.

According to the Committee's normal practice, the discussion of the communication, which will be held in open session, will be interspersed with at least one closed session in which the Committee will begin the process of preparing draft findings. It is envisaged that the first part of the discussion in open session will take the following form:

- introduction by the Chair;
- opening of the discussion by the curator for the case;
- concise presentations by the communicant and by the Party concerned, including possible joint proposals;
- questions from Committee members, responses from the Party concerned and the communicant;
- comments from other observers at the invitation of the Chair;
- final comments by the communicant;
- final comments by the Party concerned.

During the second part of the discussion (i.e. following the closed session), the Committee may pose additional questions to you or the communicant, or invite reactions to any tentative conclusions it has reached. Further details concerning the timetable for the discussions during the day will be provided nearer the time.

Should you or any other representative(s), as appropriate, wish to attend the meeting, the attached registration form should be completed for each participant and sent to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, attention of Ms. Maricar de la Cruz (public.participation@unece.org), by **11 September 2012**.

The Committee has indicated that the meeting should not be used as an occasion to introduce substantial amounts of information that could or should have been provided to it at an earlier stage, unless this is unavoidable (e.g. because it concerns very recent developments). Should you wish to present any (further) substantial written material related to the matter, you should take into account that where such information is received less than two weeks before the scheduled meeting, it is doubtful whether the Committee would be able to take it into consideration when it is discussing the matter, even where the information is provided in English.

Please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat if you require any further information concerning the meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Aphrodite Smagadi
Secretary to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee

cc: Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva
Josef Unterweger, Vier Pfoten – Stiftung für Tierschutz gemeinnützige Privatstiftung, Austria

Enc: Registration form for the thirty-eighth meeting of the Compliance Committee