

DRAFT POCKET GUIDE

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draft not for citation¹

This pocket guide aims to assist Governments to develop and implement legislation and procedures for effective access to information and public participation regarding living modified organisms (LMOs)/genetically modified organisms (GMOs). It highlights the benefits, systemic challenges and priority areas regarding procedures and tools in support of the effective implementation of:

- Article 23 on public awareness, education and participation, including access to information, concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of LMOs of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; and
- The UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) in the context of LMOs/GMOs, including its amendment on public participation in decisions on the deliberate release into the environment and placing on the market of genetically modified organisms (GMO amendment).

The guide was developed pursuant to the outcomes of the [second joint round table on public awareness, access to information and public participation regarding LMOs/GMOs](#), organized under the auspices of the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, in Geneva, from 15 to 17 November 2016.²

The joint round table was organized pursuant to [decisions II/1³](#) and [V/6⁴](#) of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention. These decisions recognized the need, *inter alia*, for cooperation between the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, with a view to maximizing synergies and avoiding the duplication of effort. The joint round table was also organized further to decisions [BS-II/6⁵](#), [BS-II/13⁶](#) and [BS-VII/6⁷](#) of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

The Aarhus Convention's aim to promote access to information and public participation is closely related to Article 23 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which addresses access to information in the context of public awareness and participation in decision-taking on LMOs. Collaboration among the Parties to both instruments has strengthened capacities in this regard.

Background

The concept of "public access to information" refers to the notion that the public has a right to access information held by public institutions. The right to information is a fundamental human right enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements. In the environmental field, the most relevant agreements and declarations in this regard include: *Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, *the Aarhus Convention (in particular Articles 4 and 5)* and *the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (Article 23)*.

In the context of biosafety, public access to information is key to building public confidence in the biosafety regulatory system. It helps to improve the quality of decisions regarding LMOs/GMOs and the measures designed to identify and address potential environmental and human health risks associated with LMOs/GMOs.

¹ This draft document is made available to the meeting of the joint global roundtable on LMOs/GMOs, to be held from 16 to 18 December 2019, as a basis for providing input. The draft will be further developed taking into account the input provided during the meeting.

² More information on the meeting is available online at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=42179>.

³ See https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/eia/meetings/Decision_II.1.pdf.

⁴ See <https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2011/eia/decision.V.6-I.6.e.pdf>.

⁵ See <https://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/default.shtml?id=10784>.

⁶ See <https://www.cbd.int/decision/mop/default.shtml?id=10791>.

⁷ See <https://www.cbd.int/decision/mop/default.shtml?id=13353>.

“Public participation” is a broad concept underpinned by the notion that those who are interested in and affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the process of making such a decision and to have their views, interests or concerns heard and taken into account. The term encompasses the processes, mechanisms and practices through which the public or representatives of the public are engaged and provided with the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making by expressing their views, opinions, needs or concerns.

As with access to information, the right to public participation is affirmed in various international and regional instruments and declarations, including: *The 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Environment (Principle 10)*, *the Aarhus Convention (in particular articles 6, 7, and 8)*, *the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making for Sustainable Development*, *the Convention on Biological Diversity (Art.14(1)(a))*, and *the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (Article 23)*.

Introduction

This guide consists of three parts describing: (1) benefits; (2) systemic challenges; (3) priority areas in relation to promoting access to information and public participation in LMO/GMO matters. The first section describes the benefits of providing effective access to information and public participation in decision-making. The challenges section highlights issues countries may come across when seeking to advance on public participation and access to information. The section addressing priority areas describes ways to improve access to information and public participation to better implement the Aarhus Convention, its GMO amendment and the Cartagena Protocol provisions.

The guide is based on the experience of implementing the Aarhus Convention (including the Lucca Guidelines, Implementation Guide and Checklist of key measures etc⁸), the Cartagena Protocol’s e-learning modules on access to information and public participation regarding LMOs as well as on reports from joint Aarhus Convention/CDB meetings and events on public access to information and public participation regarding LMOs/GMOs.

Promoting access to information and public participation in decision-making on LMO/GMO matters

1. Benefits

Effective access to information concerning LMO/GMO matters and public participation in related decision-making has a number of benefits for governments and stakeholders. The following are some of the key benefits:

a) Increased public awareness and understanding of decision-making processes regarding LMOs/GMOs

Promoting access to information increases public awareness and understanding of the decision-making process regarding potential imports, deliberate release/intentional introduction into the environment, placing on the market and contained use of LMOs/GMOs. This can lead to:

- Increased public access to information through effective and objective awareness raising and educational campaigns regarding LMOs/GMOs (also in a wider context of biotechnology applications) can lead to improved understanding of and interest in complex technical, social and political issues when Governments and stakeholders make decisions regarding LMOs/GMOs;
- Improved access to information for public understanding of the decision-making process and authorities’ responsibilities regarding LMOs/GMOs can enhance the engagement of different target groups in public participation; and
- Improved awareness through access to information can allow the public to seek clarification about the LMOs/GMOs for which decisions are to be made as well as other issues relevant for decision-making.

⁸ See chapter on 5 on Resources

b) Enhanced trust, better quality of decisions, accountability and better governance

Promoting access to information and public participation enhances trust, accountability, the quality of decisions and improves governance. In addition:

- Increased public awareness through access to information on the rights, risks and benefits related to LMOs/GMOs enables a transparent discussion between the public, public authorities, businesses and other stakeholders;
- Effective public participation in decision-making concerning LMOs/GMOs leads to increased understanding of the public's concerns, expectations and needs. It broadens the government's knowledge and expertise required for decision-making processes and enables governments to ensure better quality decisions that take into account the concerns of the public;
- Public participation and contributes to transparency in decision-making and can improve understanding of issues related to LMOs/GMOs and, therefore, increase the public's trust and confidence in government decision-making processes;
- Public participation can build trust, engender a spirit of cooperation between the government and the public and increase public confidence in the regulatory and decision-making processes concerning LMOs/GMOs; and
- Public participation can enable the public to scrutinize government institutions and hold them accountable for their decisions and actions.

c) Improved relationships between decision-makers and the public, and among different stakeholders

Promoting public participation improves relationships between decision-makers and the public, and among different stakeholders with different public representatives and interest groups. In addition:

- Improved relationships between decision-makers, the public, and among different stakeholders through public participation can contribute to collaboration in the decision-making process regarding LMOs/GMOs;
- Public participation brings together different public representatives and interest groups that can identify and defuse potential future conflicts or opposition to government decisions or actions. It can also safeguard against misunderstandings and potential risks due to civil disobedience; and
- Public participation facilitates exchanging information and gaining better understanding of and appreciation for stakeholders' points of view, interests, values and concerns. Providing such an opportunity for participants to look at all sides of the issue can reduce the likelihood of conflicts or resistance to decisions after decisions are taken.

d) Enhanced smooth implementation and improved legitimacy of decisions

Public participation eases implementation and increases legitimacy of decisions. This is for example because:

- Decisions taken with effective public participation can create trust among stakeholders and ease their implementation, which contributes to improved environmental governance; and
- Effective public participation enables the Government to identify and take into account externalities that might otherwise be overlooked. It helps with acceptance of the decision and avoids public unrest.

e) Economic gains and improved sustainability

From an economic perspective, it is cheaper and more resource-efficient to engage the public in decision-making from the outset rather than resolving issues that could have been avoided had the public been engaged early and effectively. Further:

- Effective public participation in decisions relating to LMOs/GMOs helps contribute to decisions that are more acceptable, more sustainable and less harmful to the environment and human health, as participation enables the views of the population, NGOs and other interested stakeholders to be addressed. Consequently, this may lead to cost savings.

2. Systemic challenges

A number of systemic challenges may prevent effective public participation and access to information concerning LMO/GMO matters. The following are some key challenges.

a) Lack of understanding and insufficient awareness of means for accessing information and participating in decision-making

- Lack of understanding and insufficient support by decision-makers and other stakeholders of procedures and means for access to information and public participation in decision-making regarding LMOs/GMOs;
- Governments' and other stakeholders' low levels of understanding of, or interest in, biosafety issues and LMOs/GMO-related matters results in limited incorporation of public inputs into decisions on LMOs/GMOs by decision-makers;
- Inadequate governmental, inter-departmental and cross-sectoral cooperation can lead to limited public participation (e.g., involvement of civil society non-governmental organizations, businesses, scientific community and the general public) in the decision-making process regarding LMOs/GMOs;
- Limited support to provide impartial and balanced information regarding the benefits and risks/challenges of introduction of LMOs/GMOs (e.g., through public debates and other methods);
- Limited understanding of scientific and technical issues as it is often not communicated in a simplified and understandable but still factually correct manner for the general public, in particular indigenous peoples, local population and specific target groups (e.g., farmers, women and youth); and
- Other social factors affecting the success of efforts to provide public access to information and involve the public in decision-making that are influenced by the prevailing social, cultural, economic, political and legal context (e.g., public literacy levels, the languages spoken, the number of marginalized groups and the level of civil society engagement).

b) Limited financial, technical and human capacity and resources

- Limited financial, technical and human resources may be obstacles to ensure effective public participation in decision-making and access to information;
- Insufficient expertise and experiences in implementing the provisions of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Aarhus Convention and its GMO Amendment;
- Technological factors, such as internet access and connectivity, negatively affect the effectiveness of public access to information processes; and
- Limited capacity and resources to make available information in local languages or through traditional methods (e.g., local meetings) for local communities (e.g., farmers) and involvement of vulnerable and marginalised groups).

c) Low quality and insufficient publicly accessible information

- Low quality and insufficient publicly accessible information prevent efficient facilitation of procedures for access to information. Governments may not be committed to managing active disclosure of information and/or address public requests for information in a timely and adequate format even with international standards such as the Aarhus Convention's Lucca Guidelines and national frameworks and agreements such as those related to Freedom of Information laws;
- The quality of available data on LMOs/GMOs is often incomplete, not timely, difficult to find or not presented in an easily understood way; and
- Information is not broadly shared with the general public, stakeholders and decision-makers.

d) Inappropriate application of confidentiality

- Due to confidentiality rules, information may not be made available;
- There may be no consideration of public interest when applying grounds for refusal to provide access to commercial information and information protected by intellectual property rights;
- There may be no established standard for confidential information or exceptions to disclosure; and
- Inappropriate application of standards and criteria for confidential information and intellectual property rights may negatively affect access to information.

e) Lack of procedural clarity

- Due to the lack of clarity on legal and administrative procedures, provisions on access to information and public participation are not implemented effectively;
- Lack of detailed procedures on effective public participation (e.g., identification of the public which may participate; early, adequate and effective notification; reasonable timeframes; access to all relevant information; commenting on proposals; due account to be taken of public participation; prompt notice of decisions);
- Biased selection of stakeholders or insufficient participation of some stakeholders in decision-making processes, including women, vulnerable and/or marginalized groups (e.g., indigenous peoples and local communities that have limited access to the Internet), the private sector, farmers' unions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- Public comments are perceived as a right to veto, while they are actually meant to assist public authorities to make an informed good quality decision; and
- Insufficient incorporation of outcomes of public participation in decisions regarding imports, deliberate release, placing on the market or contained use of LMOs/GMOs.

3. Priority areas

Public awareness and access to information are pre-requisites for effective public participation. For this reason, in addition to having frameworks in place for effective public participation in the decision-making process, governments need to establish legal frameworks and procedures on access to information regarding LMOs/GMOs in order to facilitate access to information in a timely and effective manner. Awareness-raising and education are intrinsically linked with access to information and therefore support for these issues benefits access to information and public participation.

In developing enabling frameworks for access to information and public participation, priority areas listed below, may be considered.

a) Make information easily accessible

Making information easily accessible supports proactive steps to disseminate all relevant information in a timely and effective manner.

- Authorities should provide the public with clear and objective information to improve the understanding of decision-making processes as well as with the factual basis, including possible alternatives, and/or the decisions proposed by the government regarding LMOs/GMOs;
- Authorities should actively collect and disseminate information to the public, including:
 - National policies, legislation and guidelines related to LMOs/GMOs;
 - Simple, non-technical explanation of the types of LMO/GMOs-related activities regulated and covered by the national regulatory framework, e.g., via registers and databases;
 - Simple, non-technical summaries of the notifications/applications for import of LMOs/GMOs into the country, their deliberate release/intentional introduction into the environment, placing on the market or contained use and the decisions made by the public authorities;
 - A list of LMOs/GMOs approved for placing on the market/use in the country, including for deliberate release/intentional introduction into the environment, for direct use as food or feed, or for processing, or for contained use;
 - Information on the effects of deliberate releases/intentional introduction of LMOs/GMOs into the environment, including information on the results of monitoring their effects on the environment;
 - Information on methods of protection if any risk arises for the environment and/or human health regarding LMOs/GMOs;
 - Information in cases of unintentional releases or transboundary movements regarding LMOs/GMOs likely to have significant adverse effects and appropriate response measures, including emergency measures, to be taken;
 - Information on products consisting of LMOs/GMOs or containing LMOs/GMOs, including through labelling of products;
 - In the event of any imminent threat to the environment and/or human health of activities with LMOs/GMOs, all information which could enable the public to take measures to prevent or mitigate harm arising from the threat and is held by a public authority is disseminated immediately and without delay to members of the public who may be affected; and
 - Contact points to obtain further information on LMOs/GMOs matter.

b) Provide information upon request

Providing information upfront or upon public request in an appropriate and timely manner enhances access to information. Authorities could for example:

- Set up and maintain a help desk, information center or other facility to handle information requests related to LMOs/GMOs;
- Designate a staff member (or staff members) to be responsible for receiving and responding to requests for information access—facilitating request forms, providing advice on effectively making requests for

information, transferring requests to other public institutions, creating files for requests and reviewing information prior to its release;

- Set timelines for providing information upon request, including reasonable timeframes for acknowledging the requests, for gathering the information, for extensions under certain circumstances, for applicants to appeal to an information commission and for informing the public of any delays (e.g., due to extensions or appeal procedures);
- Set criteria for charging a reasonable amount for the costs associated with processing the information requested (e.g., costs for reproducing and sending the information);
- Ensure consideration of the public interest when applying grounds for refusal in relation to commercial information and intellectual property rights;
- Establish national standards for confidential information and exceptions to disclosure in line with provisions of the Aarhus Convention (particularly article 4, paragraphs 3 and 4); GMO amendment and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (particularly Article 21) to determine confidential information;
- Maintain a list of criteria for confidential information and a list of information that should not be confidential in line with paragraphs 3 and 4 of article 4 of the Aarhus Convention, the GMO amendment, and in line with paragraph six of Article 21 of the Cartagena Protocol, as appropriate; and
- In case a member of the public considers his or her request for information was improperly or unjustifiably denied, make an effective appeal process available that:
 - Protects those seeking appeals from being penalised, persecuted or harassed (in line with article 3, paragraph 8 of the Aarhus Convention); and
 - Protects those appealing from unfair consequences (in line with article 9 of the Aarhus Convention).

c) Use media and various communication tools to reach target audiences

Making use of media and a combination of available communication means to reach a variety of target audiences is essential because awareness is interlinked with access to information. Authorities could for example:

- Base communication plans on surveys to ascertain the exact needs for certain communication channels and to enhance the engagement of target groups (e.g., politicians, policymakers, scientists, academics and members of the media);
- Set up a system for disseminating information online that effectively promotes awareness and access to information (e.g., e-learning tools, file hosting services, online public service announcements, mobile phone features, social media, e-governance tools, e-mail, websites, audio-visual materials, e-list servs and text messages (SMS) for mobile phone notifications);
- Set up offline dissemination systems to target groups that have no or limited internet access (e.g., guides, information through NGOs, information events, newspapers, television, radio, field visits, marketplaces, local information centers, universities, schools, libraries, help desks, reports and publications, Radio/TV programmes);
- Use events and celebrations, such as the International Day for Biodiversity on 22 May, for campaigns to raise awareness, provide education and improve access to information; and
- Use slogans or simplified outreach materials, including T-shirts and audio-visual materials, that can make it easier for the public to understand issues.

d) Promote public participation in the decision-making processes regarding LMOs/GMOs

Promoting public participation in decision-making processes regarding LMOs/GMOs includes the following elements: collecting information, identifying key interested parties and the public concerned, identifying timelines for activities, allocating resources, establishing a team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, prepare a detailed plan for each participation activity, and developing a framework for monitoring and evaluating the process.

To ensure effective procedures, use the model for public participation in decision-making by following these eight steps:⁹

1. Identify key interested parties and the public concerned
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2. Prepare and ensure timely, adequate and effective notice (*includes the proposed activity; the nature of possible decisions; the public authority responsible for making the decision; the public participation procedure envisaged (including time frames and opportunities to participate)*)
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3. Set and ensure reasonable time-frames when all options are open (*early public participation, when all options are open is a precondition for effective public participation. "Reasonable timeframes" means allowing sufficient time for informing the public and for the public to prepare and participate effectively in decision-making*)
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4. Ensure effective access to all necessary information (*access to all information relevant to the decision-making process, free of charge and as soon as it becomes available*)
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5. Ensure procedures to enable those interested and concerned to provide comments and be heard (*to submit any comments, information, analyses or opinions they consider relevant to the proposed activity, in writing or, as appropriate at a public hearing or inquiry*)
↓
6. Ensure that due account is taken of public participation (*the competent public authority must ensure that due account is taken of the outcome of the public participation*)
↓
7. Ensure prompt notice of decision (*those interested and concerned must be promptly informed of the decision. The text of the decision must be made accessible, along with the reasons and considerations on which it is based*)
↓
8. If conditions are revised, repeat as appropriate (*If the public authority reconsiders or updates the conditions for the activity, the above steps with requirements should be applied again as appropriate*)

Public participation tools and procedures may include:

- Public meetings held in government buildings (e.g., town/city hall meetings) to hear the public's opinions on different issues;
- Advisory bodies (e.g., advisory committees, commissions or councils), consisting of public representatives, to offer advice for assisting the government in making informed decisions;
- Public hearings required by law to exchange views, find solutions and incorporate the outcomes of the hearings into final decisions on LMOs/GMOs;
- 'Training-of-trainers' workshops for relevant stakeholders, such as local public representatives and NGOs; and
- Citizens' juries for citizens' groups to make non-binding, legal recommendations on different issues.

⁹ See Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Environmental Decision-making for details, available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41803&L=0>.

e) Make use of or develop guidance materials

Making use of existing guidance materials or developing new materials based on international standards supports establishing procedures and tools for access to information and public participation. Existing guidance materials that could be used include:

- The Aarhus Convention's Maastricht Recommendations and the Lucca Guidelines to use as a practical tools for conducting effective public participation and access to information procedures, such as promoting an early notification system regarding imports, deliberate release/intentional introduction into the environment, placing on the market and contained use of LMOs/GMOs, sufficient timeframes for public inputs, and taking due account of the outcome of the public participation;
- The CBD's Biodiversity E-learning Platform modules on access to information and public participation regarding LMOs/GMOs to enhance skills and knowledge on these procedures. The module, includes recommendations on developing a strategy and/or plan on access to biosafety information and public participation;
- The joint Checklist of Key Measures for Ratification and Implementation of the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in the context of LMOs/GMOs and the Note on Tools and Resources to Support Implementation of the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol in the context of LMOs/GMOs;
- The communication plan template provided on the Biosafety Clearing-House, including a media advice, in raising awareness and promoting access to information; and
- The resources, good practices and media clippings available on the Aarhus Clearinghouse on Environmental Democracy related to LMOs/GMOs.

f) Collaborate with different stakeholders to help overcome lack of resources and capacities

Collaborating with different stakeholders may help to overcome a lack of resources and capacities and contribute to coordinating approaches on the development of access to information and public participation procedures. Collaboration can be achieved through:

- Strengthening cooperation and good communication between public authorities, NGOs, private section and academia on LMO/GMO issues through appropriate mechanisms (e.g., advisory bodies, national gene banks);
- Increasing financial resources and strengthening human capacities and resources among governments, researchers and other stakeholders (e.g., local, national and international networks, commissions and associations) through training and other initiatives on the importance of informing the public and ensuring public participation;
- Strengthening coordination and cooperation between national focal points of the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;
- Making use of Aarhus Centres, if available, or other relevant organisations, to strengthen capacities of authorities to effectively promote access to information and public participation in LMO/GMO issues thereby assisting Parties to ratify the GMO amendment and implement the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol in the context of LMOs/GMOs;
- Encouraging countries outside the ECE region to accede to the Aarhus Convention and/or to make use of the Lucca Guidelines and the Maastricht Recommendations as tools for developing legislation and procedures for effective access to information and public participation in the context of LMOs/GMOs;
- Promoting regional (e.g., the Asian Biosafety Clearing House Family and the European Network of GMO Laboratories) and international networks to share benefits and good practices; and

- Inviting the Global Environment Facility and other donors to provide eligible Parties with dedicated financial resources to facilitate effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety's programme of work and the Aarhus Convention in the context of LMOs/GMOs.

4. Contacts

Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

Secretariat

Environment Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Palais des Nations, Av. de la Paix 10

1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

E-Mail: public.participation@un.org

Website: www.unece.org/env/pp

Convention on Biological Diversity (for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety)

Secretariat

World Trade Centre, 413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800

Montreal QC H2Y 1N9, Canada

E-Mail: secretariat@cbd.int

Website: www.cbd.int

5. Resources

- **UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters** (Aarhus Convention) and its Amendment on GMOs, <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/welcome.html>
- **The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety**, <http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/>
- **Lucca Guidelines** on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice with Respect to Genetically Modified Organisms, <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/gmos.html>
- **Maastricht Recommendations** on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters, <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41803&L=0>
- **Checklist of Key Measures** required for Ratification and Implementation of the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in the context of LMOs/GMOs and, <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/gmo/GMO-Checklist-AarhusConvention-CartagenaProtocol.pdf>
- **Tools and Resources to Support Implementation** of the Aarhus Convention and the Cartagena Protocol in the context of LMOs/GMOs, <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/gmos.html>
- **Modules on Access to Information and Public Participation regarding LMOs**, <https://scbd.unssc.org/course/index.php?categoryid=9>
- **Reports from the joint CBD/Aarhus Convention round tables on access to information and public participation regarding LMOs/GMOs**, <https://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/conventions/public-participation/meetings-and-events.html#/>
- **Aarhus Clearinghouse on Environmental Democracy**, <https://aarhusclearinghouse.unece.org>
- **Aarhus Convention National Implementation Reports** by Parties, <https://apps.unece.org/ehlm/pp/NIR/index.asp>
- **Biosafety Clearing-House**, <https://bch.cbd.int>
- **Biosafety Information Resource Centre (BIRC)**, <http://bch.cbd.int/database/resources/>
- **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety National Reports**, <http://bch.cbd.int/database/reports/>
- **Programme of work on public awareness, education and participation** concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of LMOs, 2011-2015, http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/cpb_art23_pow.shtml
- **Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety 2011-2020**, http://bch.cbd.int/protocol/issues/cpb_stplan_txt.shtml

- **Online discussions on access to information,**
https://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art23/pa_forum2012.shtml
- **Online discussions on public participation,**
http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_art23/pp_forum.shtml

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