



REC Statement at MoP-5

Agenda item 5 (c) Capacity-building

The Regional Environmental Center expresses gratitude for the preparation of the Report on Capacity Building. The Report on Capacity Building reflects the ongoing support of the REC to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention through multi-country capacity building programmes in the EU, the region of South Eastern Europe and the EECCA. Capacities should be systematically and comprehensively built and the respective programmes developed and implemented in a transparent and participatory manner in close cooperation with the country partners. Their needs have to be periodically assessed on country level and capacity building measures accordingly designed. This requires a broader, multi-stakeholder dialogue in addition to and follow-up of national implementation reports. Support should be offered to communities at different levels, the CSOs and the judiciary. A combination of technical assistance and capacity building methods have proved to yield a long-lasting impact through roundtables, trainings, local language guides and training materials, grants and pilot projects. These capacity building activities are reflected in the report and also in the capacity building matrix.

Thanks to the donor community, particularly Austria, Finland, Germany and Sweden, the REC in cooperation with the partner countries has been, inter alia,

- supporting in the region of South Eastern Europe enhancing of the quality of public participation via trainings for officials and NGOs in EIA, SEA and urban planning procedures, developing public participation toolkits in local languages, roundtables on the access to justice, trainings for judges in cooperation with the judicial training centers and CSOs;
- in the regions of Eastern Europe and South Eastern Europe developing and delivering trainings for CSOs on the three pillars of the Aarhus Convention and providing grants for CSOs;
- in the region of Eastern Europe and Southern Caucasus integrating capacity building assistance in different fields and facilitating public consultations in water management;
- in the EU, promoting the implementation of participatory approaches in radioactive waste management;
- in a cross-regional context, facilitating public consultations on EBRD's social and environmental policies, as well as energy strategy.

The REC is participating in the capacity building coordination meetings in an effort to find synergies and avoid overlaps. The potentials of this cooperation could be further enhanced in the future by jointly mobilizing resources for projects under the Aarhus Convention that support the implementation of the Work Programme for 2015-2017 and the Strategic Plan for 2015-2020.



Special thanks are due to the partner countries in these regions, the respective Aarhus Focal Points, officials of the environment ministries and justice ministries, partner organisations and institutions, independent experts as well as to the Aarhus Convention Secretariat.