



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic 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

#### Sixth session

Budva, Montenegro, 11–13 September 2017

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

#### Adoption of the agenda

### Provisional agenda for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties

To be held at the Splendid Conference and SPA Resort, Budva,  
Montenegro, starting at 9 a.m. on Monday, 11 September 2017\*

## I. Provisional agenda

#### Preparatory segment

1. Opening of the preparatory segment.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Finalization of pending documents.

#### General segment

4. Opening of the general segment.

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\* The sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention will be held back to back with the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (15 September 2017). A joint High-level Segment under the auspices of the two Meetings of the Parties will take place on 14 September 2017. A provisional agenda for the High-level Segment will be provided as a separate document. More information will be made available in due course on a web page dedicated to the two sessions ([http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhusmop6&prtrmopp3/main.html#](http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhusmop6&prtrmopp3/main.html#/)).

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5. Status of ratification of the Convention and the amendment to the Convention.
6. Substantive issues:
  - (a) Access to information, including electronic information tools;
  - (b) Public participation in decision-making;
  - (c) Access to justice;
  - (d) Genetically modified organisms.
7. Procedures and mechanisms facilitating the implementation of the Convention:
  - (a) Reporting mechanism;
  - (b) Compliance mechanism;
  - (c) Capacity-building.
8. Promotion of the Convention and relevant developments and interlinkages:
  - (a) Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region;
  - (b) Promotion of the Convention's principles;
  - (c) Synergies between the Convention and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other partners;
  - (d) Global and regional developments on issues related to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;
  - (e) Update on United Nations Environment Programme initiatives on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters.
9. Programme of work and operation of the Convention:
  - (a) Implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017;
  - (b) Future work programme;
  - (c) Financial arrangements.
10. Report on credentials with regard to the Convention's Parties.
11. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau.
12. Date and venue of the seventh ordinary session.
13. Any other business.

## II. Annotations

The Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will hold its sixth session from 11 to 13 September 2017 in Budva, Montenegro. The session will be split into a preparatory and a general segment. The preparatory segment will be held on Monday, 11 September, starting at 9 a.m. The purpose of the preparatory segment is to finalize any pending documents that may be required. Late afternoon and evening are reserved for the finalization and translation of possible revised documents and for coordination meetings. The general segment will start on Tuesday, 12 September at 10 a.m.

Discussion on all agenda items will be held in plenary. Representatives of Parties and stakeholders with extensive relevant expertise, who can offer positive experience in furthering implementation of the Convention and address common challenges in relation to the items for discussion, will be invited to deliver introductory keynote statements during the general segment, opening the discussion on those agenda items.

Each agenda item, where relevant, contains a list of documents to be considered for the discussion under that item. Documents for action (e.g., approval or adoption) are clearly denoted as such, while other documents intended to facilitate the discussions are labelled as background documents. In addition to documents addressing particular issues or themes, two documents produced by the secretariat will provide relevant background information for many of the items to be considered in the general segment and will therefore not be repeated after each item as background documentation unless specifically under consideration. These are:

(a) A synthesis report on the status of implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/2017/6);

(b) A report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/2017/3).

In addition, individual national implementation reports, which are available from the Convention website,<sup>1</sup> may also provide useful background information for a number of the agenda items.

## **Preparatory segment**

*Timing: Monday, 11 September, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–5.30 p.m.*

### **1. Opening of the preparatory segment**

The Chair of the Meeting of the Parties will open the preparatory segment.

### **2. Adoption of the agenda**

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to adopt the agenda for the sixth session as set out in the present document.

## **Documentation**

*Text for action*

Provisional agenda for the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2017/1)

### **3. Finalization of pending documents**

Delegates will be invited to finalize any pending documents that may be required.

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<sup>1</sup> See [http://www.unece.org/env/pp/reports\\_implementation\\_2017.html](http://www.unece.org/env/pp/reports_implementation_2017.html).

## **General segment<sup>2</sup>**

### **4. Opening of the general segment**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 10–10.15 a.m.*

A high-level official of Montenegro will deliver a welcoming address.

The Chair of the Meeting of the Parties will open the general segment.

### **5. Status of ratification of the Convention and the amendment to the Convention**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 10.15–10.25 a.m.*

The secretariat will inform the Meeting of the Parties about the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Convention and the amendment to the Convention.<sup>3</sup> It will also provide information about any declarations made by the Parties upon the deposit of their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Delegates from States or regional economic integration organizations not yet party to the Convention or the amendment to the Convention will be invited to report on their plans to ratify, accept, approve or accede to those instruments.

### **6. Substantive issues**

#### **(a) Access to information, including electronic information tools**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 10.25–11 a.m.*

The Chair of the Task Force on Access to Information will present highlights of the Task Force's activities since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (Maastricht, the Netherlands, 30 June–1 July 2014).

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to take note of these activities and address challenges. The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on promoting effective access to information.

#### **Documentation**

##### *Text for action*

Draft decision VI/1 on promoting effective access to information (ECE/MP.PP/2017/8)

##### *Background documents*

Report of the Task Force on Access to Information on its third meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2015/3)

Report of the Task Force on Access to Information on its fourth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2016/3)

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<sup>2</sup> All decisions provisionally adopted during the general segment will be formally adopted at the joint High-level Segment (14 September 2017). The formal closure of the sixth session will also take place at the joint High-level Segment.

<sup>3</sup> Information on the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession is available from <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/ratification.html>.

Report of the Task Force on Access to Information on its fifth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/4)

**(b) Public participation in decision-making**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 11.20 a.m.–12.10 p.m.*

The Chair of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making will present highlights of the Task Force's activities since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the work undertaken, address challenges and provide direction for further work in this area.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on promoting effective public participation in decision-making.

**Documentation**

*Text for action*

Draft decision VI/2 on promoting effective public participation in decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/2017/9)

*Background documents*

Report of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making on its fifth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2015/4)

Report of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making on its sixth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2016/4)

Report of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making on its seventh meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/5)

**(c) Access to justice**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 12.10–1 p.m.*

A representative of the judiciary will be invited to deliver a keynote address.

The Chair of the Task Force on Access to Justice will present highlights of the Task Force's activities since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the work undertaken, to address challenges and to provide direction for further work on access to justice issues.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on promoting effective access to justice.

**Documentation**

*Text for action*

Draft decision VI/3 on promoting effective access to justice (ECE/MP.PP/2017/10)

*Background documents*

Report of the Task Force on Access to Justice on its eighth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2016/11)

Report of the Task Force on Access to Justice on its ninth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/6)

Report of the Task Force on Access to Justice on its tenth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/2017/5)

**(d) Genetically modified organisms**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 3–3.40 p.m.*

The Chair of the second joint round table on public awareness, access to information and public participation regarding living modified organisms/genetically modified organisms will report on activities related to genetically modified organisms since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Parties, signatories and other stakeholders will be invited to provide information on activities relating to the implementation of the Convention with respect to genetically modified organisms and/or the application of the amendment to the Convention regarding public participation in decisions on the deliberate release into the environment and placing on the market of genetically modified organisms.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the work undertaken, to address challenges and to consider possible further work in this area.

**Documentation**

*Text for action*

Draft decision VI/5 on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PP/2017/12)

*Background documents*

Report of the second joint round table on public awareness, access to information and public participation regarding living modified organisms/genetically modified organisms (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2017/8)

**7. Procedures and mechanisms facilitating the implementation of the Convention**

**(a) Reporting mechanism**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 3.40–4.30 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the implementation of the Convention on the basis of national implementation reports submitted by the Parties and the synthesis report prepared by the secretariat. It is also expected to take note of any reports submitted by signatories and other States not Party to the Convention, and reports prepared by international, regional and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Parties will be invited to discuss the main trends, challenges and solutions emerging from the reports. They will also be invited to discuss the experience gained in the procedure for compiling reports, including with regard to the involvement of NGOs and other stakeholders in the process, and to decide upon possible ways of improving the process in the future.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on reporting.

**Documentation***Text for action*

Draft decision VI/7 on reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PP/2017/14)

**(b) Compliance mechanism**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 4.30–5.30 p.m.*

The Chair of the Compliance Committee will report on the Committee's activities since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties and present any findings and recommendations of the Committee with respect to compliance by specific Parties.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to take note of the Committee's report, including any general recommendations contained therein and any findings and recommendations of the Committee with respect to compliance by specific Parties, and to consider, revise as necessary, and provisionally adopt draft decisions on compliance issues. In addition to a draft decision on general issues of compliance, Parties will consider a number of supplementary draft decisions concerning specific cases of non-compliance.

The Meeting of the Parties is also expected to elect the Compliance Committee members.

**Documentation***Text for action*

Draft decision VI/8 on general issues of compliance (ECE/MP.PP/2017/19)

Supplementary draft decisions concerning specific cases of non-compliance (to be determined)<sup>4</sup>

*Background documents*

Report by the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PP/2017/40)

Membership of the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2016/9)

Supplementary reports concerning specific cases involving compliance matters (to be determined)

**(c) Capacity-building**

*Timing: Tuesday, 12 September, 5.30–6 p.m.*

The secretariat will report on some of the main capacity-building activities undertaken during the intersessional period to promote more effective implementation of the Convention and the measures taken to coordinate the various activities through the capacity-building coordination framework. International and regional organizations engaged in capacity-building activities will be invited to elaborate on those activities. Representatives of Governments and organizations will be invited to share their views on outstanding needs for capacity-building.

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<sup>4</sup> Supplementary draft decisions and supplementary reports concerning specific cases involving compliance matters will continue to be finalized in the period leading up to the session. It is therefore not possible to cite a complete list of such decisions or reports at the present time.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the activities undertaken and provide feedback on the activities and guidance on the direction of future activities.

### **Documentation**

#### *Text for action*

Draft decision VI/5 on the work programme for 2018-2021 (ECE/MP.PP/2017/12)

#### *Background document*

Report on capacity-building (ECE/MP.PP/2017/7)

## **8. Promotion of the Convention and relevant developments and interlinkages**

### **(a) Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 10–10.30 a.m.*

The secretariat will report on requests for accession by non-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) States submitted to the Meeting of the Parties, as relevant.

Parties, signatories and stakeholders will be invited to provide information on activities related to the promotion of accession to the Convention by States from outside the ECE region.

### **(b) Promotion of the Convention's principles**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 10.30–11.15 a.m.*

One or more representatives of stakeholders will be invited to deliver a keynote address on the promotion of the Convention's principles.

The Chair of the thematic sessions on promotion of the Convention's principles in international forums, held in the framework of the meetings of the Working Group of the Parties, will report the highlights of the relevant activities in this area since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Parties, signatories and other stakeholders will be invited to provide information on activities relating to this work area.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the work undertaken, address challenges and provide direction for further work on promoting the Convention's principles.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums.

### **Documentation**

#### *Text for action*

Draft decision VI/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/2017/11)



(c) **Synergies between the Convention and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other partners**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 11.25 a.m.–12.10 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review information provided by the secretariat and representatives of other multilateral environmental agreements and other partners on ongoing or planned activities, and to explore ways of further promoting synergies between the Convention and other multilateral environmental agreements.

(d) **Global and regional developments on issues related to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 12.10 p.m.–12.30 p.m.*

Parties, signatories, other States and other stakeholders will be invited to provide information on ongoing or planned activities related to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review the information provided.

(e) **Update on United Nations Environment Programme initiatives on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 12.30–1 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties is expected to review information provided by the United Nations Environment Programme about its initiatives on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters and to explore ways of promoting synergies with the relevant activities under the Aarhus Convention.

**9. Programme of work and operation of the Convention**

(a) **Implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 3–3.40 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to review, on the basis of reports prepared by the secretariat, the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017, and the use of funds contributed for the period 2015–2017.

**Documentation**

*Background documents*

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/2017/3)

Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the Convention's work programme for 2015–2017 (ECE/MP.PP/2017/4)

(b) **Future work programme**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 3.40–4.20 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on the work programme for 2018–2021.

It is expected that Parties, signatories and other interested States will have informed the secretariat in advance of the meeting of their intention to contribute to the financial resources of the Convention.

The secretariat will report on the information received to the Meeting of the Parties and delegations will be invited to provide any supplementary information.

#### **Documentation**

*Text for action*

Draft decision VI/5 on the work programme for 2018–2021 (ECE/MP.PP/2017/12)

#### **(c) Financial arrangements**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 4.40–5.20 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider and provisionally adopt a draft decision on financial arrangements.

#### **Documentation**

*Text for action*

Draft decision VI/6 on financial arrangements under the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/2017/13)

### **10. Report on credentials with regard to the Convention's Parties**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 5.20–5.30 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to approve the report on credentials, presented by the officers in accordance with rule 17 of the rules of procedure (ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.2, annex).

### **11. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 5.30–5.40 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties is expected to elect a chair and two vice-chairs from among the representatives of the Parties present at the meeting in accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure. It is also expected to elect the remaining members of the Bureau from among the representatives of the Parties in accordance with rule 22, paragraph 1 (b), of the rules of procedure.

NGOs established for the purpose of, and actively engaged in, promoting environmental protection and sustainable development are expected to appoint a representative to attend the meetings of the Bureau, as observers, in accordance with rule 22, paragraphs 2 and 4, of the rules of procedure.

### **12. Date and venue of the seventh ordinary session**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 5.40–5.50 p.m.*

The Meeting of the Parties is expected to make a preliminary decision with respect to the date and venue of its seventh ordinary session. Parties and prospective Parties are invited to consider hosting the meeting and to inform the secretariat in advance of any proposals they may intend to make in this regard.

**13. Any other business**

*Timing: Wednesday, 13 September, 5.50–6 p.m.*

Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

**III. Organization of work**

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Item no.</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<b>Preparatory segment</b>		
<i>Monday, 11 September</i>		
9 a.m.–1 p.m.	1	Opening of the preparatory segment
	2	Adoption of the agenda
	3	Finalization of pending documents
1–3 p.m.		Lunch break
3–5.30 p.m.	3	Finalization of pending documents ( <i>continued</i> )
<b>General segment</b>		
<i>Tuesday, 12 September</i>		
10–10.15 a.m.	4	Opening of the general segment
10.15–10.25 a.m.	5	Status of ratification of the Convention and the amendment to the Convention
10.25 a.m.–3.40 p.m.	6	Substantive issues
10.25–11 a.m.	6 (a)	Access to information, including electronic information tools
11–11.20 a.m.		Coffee break
11.20 a.m.–12.10 p.m.	6 (b)	Public participation in decision-making
12.10–1 p.m.	6 (c)	Access to justice
1–3 p.m.		Lunch
3–3.40 p.m.	6 (d)	Genetically modified organisms
3.40–6 p.m.	7	Procedures and mechanisms facilitating the implementation of the Convention
3.40–4.30 p.m.	7 (a)	Reporting mechanism
4.30–5.30 p.m.	7 (b)	Compliance mechanism
5.30–6 p.m.	7 (c)	Capacity-building

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Item no.</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>Wednesday, 13 September</i>		
10 a.m.–1 p.m.	8	Promotion of the Convention and relevant developments and interlinkages
10–10.30 a.m.	8 (a)	Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region
10.30–11.15 a.m.	8 (b)	Promotion of the Convention's principles
11.15–11.25 a.m.		Coffee break
11.25 a.m.–12.10 p.m.	8 (c)	Synergies between the Convention and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other partners
12.10–12.30 p.m.	8 (d)	Global and regional developments on issues related to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development
12.30–1 p.m.	8 (e)	Update on United Nations Environment Programme initiatives on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters
1–3 p.m.		Lunch
3–5.20 p.m.	9	Programme of work and operation of the Convention
3–3.40 p.m.	9 (a)	Implementation of the work programme for 2015–2017
3.40–4.20 p.m.	9 (b)	Future work programme
4.20–4.40 p.m.		Coffee break
4.40–5.20 p.m.	9 (c)	Financial arrangements
5.20–5.30 p.m.	10	Report on credentials with regard to the Convention's Parties
5.30–5.40 p.m.	11	Election of officers and other members of the Bureau
5.40–5.50 p.m.	12	Date and venue of the seventh ordinary session
5.50–6 p.m.	13	Any other business