

Aarhus principles in international decision-making on chemicals and waste

Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

Martin Skalský/ Arnika & European ECO Forum

22 Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention
Geneva / June 2018



Chemical and waste conventions

① **Basel (1989)**

(transboundary movement of waste)

② **Rotterdam (1998)**

(hazardous chemicals & pesticides)

③ **Stockholm (2001)**

(persistent organic pollutants)

Public information and participation:

- Previously, different rules for each convention
- Since 2017: Joint COP, unified rules

Majority of the parties to BRS are not parties to the Aarhus Convention.

Stockholm Convention

- **Article 10:** Public information, awareness and education
 - Information, public participation, awareness, training, education, using mass media
- **Article 6:** Pollutants Release and Transfer Registry (PRTR)

Similar provisions are contained in the Minamata Convention

Space for public participation

- ① Preparatory meeting prior to the COP (EU Competent Authorities & ordinary regional meetings of the countries)
- ② Participation in inter-sessional expert working groups

Constraints:

- Preparation of the COP agenda in the EU is closed (in CEE Region, CSO mostly can participate)
- Participation at regional meetings depend on the region (EU, JUSSCANZ – closed for CSOs, other regions – more open)

Participation of CSOs at the COP

- Attend the COP with no restrictions as observers
- Make statements (after the parties)
- Majority of the working groups
- No Conference Room Papers with particular proposals (SAICM only)
- Final decision is upon the parties

Constraints:

- Some parties strive to restrict CSOs participation from time to time
- CSOs not officially registered in their country cannot obtain long-term observer status

SC National Implementation Plans

- In developing countries, implementation framework depends on supporting inter-governmental organizations (UNIDO, UNDP)
- Level of participation of CSOs varies from country to country

Particular projects:

- Public participation depends on implementing agency (UNIDO, UNDP, etc.)
- CSOs should be involved much more (technologies selection, communication, etc.)

Conclusions

- ★ CSOs can **influence the decisions** through participation in expert working groups
- ★ CSOs can **participate at the COP** and raise their suggestions
- ★ **Setting agenda of COPs and regional meetings** are rather closed to the public
- ★ Participation in **development of NIPs** and particular projects not actively supported in many countries

Aarhus Compliance mechanism/Committee is unique – is not established in other conventions.

Thank you for your attention!

Martin Skalský

martin.skalsky@arnika.org

Arnika – Citizens Support Centre

Delnicka 13, 170 000 Prague 7

The Czech Republic

More information:

<http://arnika.org/en>

<http://www.eco-forum.org>



a toxics-free future

