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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on
Access to Information, Public Participation
in Decision-making and Access to Justice
in Environmental Matters

Working Group of the Parties

Seventeenth meeting

Geneva, 26–28 February 2014

Item 8 (a) of the provisional agenda

Other substantive preparations for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Agenda of the fifth session

Draft provisional agenda for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention

Prepared by the Bureau

Summary

The present document is being submitted in view of the Working Group's mandate to prepare the sessions of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.15, para. 2 (a)). The document, prepared by the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, sets out a draft provisional agenda for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, to be held in Maastricht, the Netherlands, from 30 June to 2 July 2014. An outline of the draft agenda (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/13)¹ was considered by the Working Group of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting (Geneva, 19–21 June 2013). The Working Group requested the Bureau to prepare a draft provisional agenda for the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties on the basis of that outline and in the light of the comments made at the meeting, for submission to the Working Group at its seventeenth meeting for consideration, revision and approval (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2013/2, para. 66),² and asked that the draft be distributed to Parties and stakeholders for comments. The document was so circulated, but no comments were received.

¹ Available from <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/wgp16.html>

² Idem.

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The Bureau reviewed the document at its thirty-second meeting (Geneva, 2–3 December 2013) and is submitting the present draft for the further consideration of the Working Group, which is expected to approve the document at its seventeenth meeting and submit it to the Meeting of the Parties for its consideration at its fifth session.

I. Introduction

1. The fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP-5) to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will be held from 30 June to 2 July 2014 in Maastricht, the Netherlands, at the invitation of the Government of the Netherlands. The session will be preceded on Sunday, 29 June, by the meetings of the Compliance Committee (scheduled for a full day, with the possibility of continuing in parallel with MOP-5, as needed), the Bureau (morning), and the Working Group of the Parties (afternoon). The Compliance Committee, the Bureau and the Working Group of the Parties will consider, respectively, any possible open issues, as appropriate.
2. MOP-5 will consist of a General Segment and a High-level Segment. The general segment will take place on Monday, 30 June, and on Tuesday, 1 July.
3. MOP-5 and the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (MOPP-2) will be held back to back, with a joint High-level Segment in the middle, on Wednesday, 2 July.
4. The High-level Segment will target high-level officials, including ministers, vice-ministers, State secretaries, other heads of delegations and special guests, and its thematic session will be dedicated to the themes to be addressed in the Maastricht Declaration.³
5. The High-level Segment will be chaired by a high-level official of the host country and will have the format of a panel discussion involving ministers, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders with strong expertise in the theme of the session, followed by a general debate. The session will provide input to the work on the future sustainable development agenda following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (Rio+20 Conference), and setting and implementing relevant Millennium Development or future Sustainable Development Goals.
6. The envisaged allocation of time for MOP-5 and MOPP-2 and the associated meetings is set out in the table below.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Convention/Protocol body</i>
Sunday, 29 June (9–11 a.m.)	Convention Bureau
Sunday, 29 June (full day)	Convention Compliance Committee (could continue in parallel with MOP-5, as required)
Sunday, 29 June (12–4 p.m.)	Working Group of the Parties to the Convention ^a
Monday, 30 June (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOP-5
Tuesday, 1 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOP-5, Protocol Bureau and Protocol Compliance Committee (could continue in parallel with MOP-5, as required)

³ See the draft outline of the Declaration contained in document ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2014/L.8. This document will be posted on the Working Group's web page for its seventeenth meeting (<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/aarhus/wgp17.html>) as soon as it becomes available.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Convention/Protocol body</i>
Wednesday, 2 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	Joint High-level Segment under MOP-5 and MOPP-2
Thursday, 3 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOPP-2
Friday, 4 July (10 a.m.–6 p.m.)	MOPP-2

^a The Working Group of the Parties to the Convention could also start in the morning of that day, if required. Late afternoon/evening is reserved for the finalization, translation and photocopying of possible revised documents, as well as for possible coordination meetings.

7. Side events can take place outside the working hours of the formal sessions of the Meetings of the Parties (during lunch breaks, and before or after MOP-5 and MOPP-2). A registration form and more detailed time allocation for side events will be made available in due course.

II. Agenda items and timing

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Item</i>
Monday, 30 June	
10–10:15 a.m.	1. Opening of the session
10:15–10:20 a.m.	2. Adoption of the agenda
10:20–10:40 a.m.	3. Status of ratification of the Convention and the amendment to the Convention
	4. Substantive issues
10:40–11:10 a.m.	(a) Access to information, including electronic information tools
11:10–11:30 a.m.	**Coffee break** (<i>allocation of time for coffee breaks to be decided at a later stage</i>)
11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.	(b) Public participation in decision-making
12:15–1 p.m.	(c) Access to justice
1–3 p.m.	**Lunch**
3–3:30 p.m.	(d) Genetically modified organisms
3:30–4:30 p.m.	5. Procedures and mechanisms facilitating the implementation of the Convention
	(a) Reports on the status of implementation of the Convention
4:30–5:30 p.m.	(b) Compliance mechanism
5:30–6 p.m.	(c) Capacity-building

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Item</i>
Tuesday, 1 July	
	6. Promotion of the Convention and relevant developments and interlinkages
10–10:30 a.m.	(a) Accession to the Convention by States from outside the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region
10:30–11:10 a.m.	(b) Promotion of the Convention's principles in international forums
11:10–11:30 a.m.	**Coffee break**
11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.	(c) Global and regional developments on issues related to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development ^a
12–12:10 p.m.	(d) Update on United Nations Environment Programme initiatives on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters
12:10–12:30 p.m.	(e) Synergies between the Convention and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and organizations
	7. Programme of work and operation of the Convention
12:30–1 p.m.	(a) Implementation of the work programme for 2012–2014
1–3 p.m.	**Lunch**
3–3:40 p.m.	(b) Strategic Plan for 2015–2020
3:40–4:40 p.m.	(c) Work programme for 2015–2017
4:40–5:20 p.m.	(d) Financial arrangements
5:20–5:30 p.m.	8. Report on credentials with regard to the Convention's Parties
5:30–5:40 p.m.	9. Election of officers and other members of the Bureau
5:40–5:50 p.m.	10. Date and venue of the sixth ordinary session
5:50–6 p.m.	11. Any other business
Wednesday, 2 July	Joint High-level Segment under MOP-5 and MOPP-2
10–10:30 a.m.	1. Opening ceremony for the High-level Segment
10:30–10:35 a.m.	2. Report on credentials with regard to the Protocol's Parties
10:35–11:30 a.m.	3. Thematic session
11:30–11:50 a.m.	**Coffee break**

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Item</i>
11:50 a.m.–1 p.m.	3. Thematic session (continued)
1–3 p.m.	**Lunch**
3–4:10 p.m.	4. Discussion and adoption of the Maastricht Declaration.
4:10–4:55 p.m.	5. Review and adoption of decisions of MOP-5
4:55–5 p.m.	6. Closure of the meeting

^a Time allocation is subject to decision on the theme of the high-level segment.
