



Aarhus Convention
24th Working Group of the Parties (WGP 24)
(Geneva, 28-29 October 2020)
- Statement by the EU and its Member States on Agenda item 7 (a)

Agenda item 7 (a): Future work programme

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Bureau and the Secretariat for preparing additional background documents regarding the issue of a rapid response mechanism to deal with cases related to article 3, paragraph 8, of the Aarhus Convention in follow up to the request by the EU and its Member States.

The EU and its Member States welcome the clarifications provided by the Bureau. The information on concrete cases of violations of Art. 3 (8) of the Convention illustrates the situation in the countries that are parties to the Aarhus Convention.

We recognize that environmental human rights defenders face increasing threats, violence and other safety problems as a result of their work and we fully support efforts to protect human rights defenders, including environmental human rights defenders, and to ensure respect of their fundamental rights. Therefore, the EU is interested in discussions on a possible mechanism to better respond to cases where environmental human rights defenders are penalized, persecuted or harassed in any way for their peaceful work promoting and exercising their human rights.

The EU and its Member States will further assess the different options presented at a later stage, based on the discussions during this Working Group and the additional information provided by the Bureau and the Secretariat.
