

Aarhus Convention - WGP25 – PPIF session - 26 April 2021

Oral intervention from the floor – Earthjustice

- I would like to thank the Chair of the PPIF session for the work done under her leadership during the period that is ending here. I would also like to thank France for its continued support of this work and we look forward to its continued support in the next period.
- Let me, at this point in our work on PPIF, share a more methodological look at what our work can contribute. One of the difficulties in implementing 3.7 is that the Aarhus Focal Points of the Parties are rarely directly involved in directing the policies of these same Parties for the relevant forums (or fora, in a correct Latin formulation).
- Therefore, we have to address 3 different situations:
 - 1) The Parties' strategies in well-identified fora. This is what we have been most successful in moving forward on, although there is still some way to go. The most convincing example is at UNFCCC. At the beginning of each COP, Aarhus and Escazu Parties are invited to meet and exchange on the COP issues relating to the 3 pillars. This allows climate experts to get up to date with the obligations of 3.7 and consider strategies to be developed together. The next COP in Glasgow at the end of the year is particularly topical with the renewal of the ACE program of work. It would be very useful in the next period to take stock of this experience, to see how to further improve its impact and to explore other forums that could benefit from a similar joint working method of the Parties in Aarhus and Escazu.
 - 2) We also looked at cross-cutting issues, which are worked on by several forums simultaneously and unfortunately rarely jointly, such as greenhouse gas emissions, emerging technologies, the SDGs, etc... The issues related to the 3 pillars are essential for the achievement of the objectives that the States and the fora concerned set for. It is impossible to formulate coherent and relevant policies if the freedom of information or participation in environmental matters is incomplete for any of them. Therefore, it will be very useful to explore in the next period the working method(s) that will best allow the Parties in Aarhus (as required by 3.7) and Escazu to develop adequate strategies.
 - 3) Finally, we are seeing the arrival of hot topics, for which there is not really yet an adequate forum to deal with as required by the vital environmental issues for the planet. This is the case, for example, of entire ecosystems or biomes, such as forests, or certain technologies, such as some forms of geoengineering or nanotechnology. No appropriate forum means no global coherent policy, no information at the necessary scale, no participation

possible, but very real risks or damages. It is now urgent to address this dimension of the implementation of 3.7.

- Finally, I would like to thank the Secretariat, as well as the Bureau, and this is addressed to all the members of each of them, for the determination shown to allow us to move forward despite the disruption caused by the current global health crisis.
- This "spontaneous" speech from the floor in this session was, in fact, written and submitted in advance. The current exceptional context explains this, but we would like to recall that an essential part of the value of the discussions in the Convention bodies has been precisely the spontaneity of the exchanges, from which progress in the implementation of the Convention was able to emerge. It is essential that this spontaneity be preserved for the good of the Convention and the environmental policies of all Parties.
- Thank you for your attention.