

Aarhus Convention
25th Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (WGP 25)
(Geneva, 7-8 June 2021)

– Contribution by the EU and its Member States –

Agenda item 9(g): Draft decision VII/... on the work programme for 2022–2025

The EU and its Member States welcome the revised draft of the work programme 2022-2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2021/8).

We emphasize that the proposal in annex III takes into account our request for prioritizing activities and exploring the use of digital platforms for meetings under the auspices of the Convention to the extent possible, while noting the challenges and limitations that digital platforms have.

We also welcome the inclusion of a thematic discussion on different substantive issues at each meeting of the Working Group of the Parties.

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 supports a 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.

In light of the above, we can approve the current proposal for a draft work programme 2022-2025 and we would ask the Bureau, with the assistance of the Secretariat to prepare the work programme for final decision making at MoP 7.