

Economic Commission for Europe

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

Seventh session

Geneva, 18–20 October 2021

Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda

Procedures and mechanisms facilitating the implementation of the Convention:

Reporting mechanism

~~Draft d~~Decision VII/7 on reporting requirements

~~Prepared by the Bureau~~ [Adopted, as amended at the meeting]

Summary

The present 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 decision on reporting requirements. The document was prepared on the basis of decisions I/8, II/10, III/5, IV/4, V/8 and VI/7 on the same subject, adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its first to sixth sessions. The revisions are of editorial and factual nature only.

The document was submitted to the Working Group of the Parties at its twenty-fifth meeting (Geneva, 3 May and 7 and 8 June 2021) for consideration and approval in view of its mandate to “make such proposals and recommendations to the Meeting of the Parties as it considers necessary for the achievement of the purposes of the Convention” (ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.15, para. 2 (d)). At this meeting, the Working Group approved the draft decision on reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2021/19) and requested the secretariat to submit it to the Meeting of the Parties for consideration at its seventh session.

The Meeting of the Parties,

Recalling its decisions I/8,¹ II/10,² III/5,³ IV/4,⁴ V/8⁵ and VI/7⁶ on reporting requirements,

Recalling also the mandate of the Compliance Committee set out in paragraph 13 (c) of the annex to decision I/7⁷ on the review of compliance,

Having considered the reports submitted by Parties and the synthesis report⁸ prepared by the secretariat pursuant to paragraphs 1 to 5 of decision I/8,

Having also considered the reports of the Compliance Committee⁹ and its supplementary reports,¹⁰

Acknowledging the usefulness of national implementation reports, as valuable input to the work of task forces, capacity-building activities, environmental performance reviews and other review programmes,

Considering that the reporting procedure as set out in decisions I/8, II/10 and IV/4, including the revised reporting format as set out in the annex to decision IV/4, the procedure regarding translation of the reports as set out in paragraphs 14 to 16 of decision IV/4 and the decision to discontinue submission of hard copies of the reports to the secretariat, as set out in paragraph 11 of decision VI/7, should continue to apply for the next reporting cycle,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the implementation reports submitted by more than half of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters pursuant to paragraphs 1 to 4 of decision I/8;

2. *Welcomes* the synthesis report prepared by the secretariat pursuant to paragraph 5 of decision I/8;

3. *Also welcomes* the reports submitted by stakeholders¹¹ pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision I/8;

4. *Considers* that these reports provide a valuable overview of the status of implementation of the Convention, as well as help to identify significant trends in and challenges to implementation, which will help to guide future activities;

Timely submission of reports

5. *Notes with concern* that ~~ten~~^{fourteen}¹² Parties that submitted reports did not do so within the deadline indicated in decision II/10;

6. *Reiterates its encouragement* of Parties to start the preparation of national implementation reports in future reporting cycles sufficiently in advance of, and at the latest nine months before, the deadline for submission of the reports to the secretariat set out in decision II/10, with a view to ensuring meaningful public consultation on the reports at the national level;

¹ ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.9.

² ECE/MP.PP/2005/2/Add.14.

³ ECE/MP.PP/2008/2/Add.7.

⁴ ECE/MP.PP/2011/2/Add.1.

⁵ ECE/MP.PP/2014/2/Add.1.

⁶ ECE/MP.PP/2017/2/Add.1.

⁷ ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.8.

⁸ ECE/MP.PP/2021/6.

⁹ ECE/MP.PP/2021/44 and ECE/MP.PP/2021/45.

¹⁰ ECE/MP.PP/2021/46 to ECE/MP.PP/2021/60.

¹¹ Available from <https://unece.org/2021-reports-international-regional-and-non-governmental-organizations>

¹² ~~As of 22 July 2021.~~

Failure to submit reports

7. *Notes with regret* that Azerbaijan, ~~Iceland, Italy,~~ Malta, Netherlands, Republic of Moldova, ~~Sweden, and~~ Tajikistan ~~and Ukraine~~¹³, all of which were Parties to the Convention at the time of the deadline for submission of the implementation reports, failed to submit reports for the current reporting cycle;

8. *Calls upon* each of those Parties to submit its national implementation report to the secretariat by 1 December 2021, for subsequent consideration, inter alia, by the Compliance Committee;

Public consultation

9. *Welcomes* the fact that all Parties that submitted reports prepared their reports through a process involving consultations with various governmental agencies as well as civil society;

10. *Encourages* Parties to ensure transparency and public consultation during the process of the preparation and submission of the reports;

Preparation of reports for the next session of the Meeting of the Parties

11. *Requests* the secretariat to circulate to all Parties and relevant stakeholders a formal reminder of the reporting requirements, including guidance on the preparation of the reports, as well as the proposed timing and confirmation of the date for the submission of the reports to the secretariat in accordance with decision II/10, paragraph 9, at least one year in advance of the next session of the Meeting of the Parties.

¹³ ~~As of 22 July 2021.~~