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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

Twenty-sixth meeting

Geneva, 22–23 June 2022

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-sixth meeting

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on
Wednesday, 22 June 2022

Introduction

The twenty-sixth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties and the third extraordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties will be held back-to-back in Geneva, on 22–24 June 2022.

Working hours:

- Wednesday 22 June, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m. (Twenty-sixth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties)
- Thursday 23 June, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–3.45 p.m. (Twenty-sixth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties)
- Thursday, 23 June, 4–6 p.m., and Friday, 24 June, 9.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m. and 2.30–5.30 p.m. (Third extraordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties)
- Lunch breaks: 1–3 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday; 12.30–2.30 p.m. on Friday
- Coffee break: 3.45–4 p.m. on Thursday

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification.
3. Substantive issues:



- (a) Thematic session on access to information;
 - (b) Public participation in decision-making;
 - (c) Access to justice;
 - (d) Genetically modified organisms.
4. Procedures and mechanisms:
 - (a) Compliance mechanism;
 - (b) Reporting mechanism;
 - (c) Capacity-building and awareness-raising.
 5. Accession by non-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States and other relevant developments and interlinkages related to the promotion of the Convention.
 6. Next ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties.
 7. Implementation of work programmes for 2018–2021 and for 2022–2025, including financial matters.
 8. Thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums.
 9. Other business.
 10. Adoption of outcomes.

II. Annotations

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 10–10.15 a.m.

The Working Group of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will be invited to adopt the agenda for its twenty-sixth meeting, as set out in the present document.¹

2. Status of ratification

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 10.15–10.30 a.m.

The secretariat will provide the Working Group with an overview of the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Aarhus Convention and the amendment thereto. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments concerning ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with respect to these instruments. The Working Group is expected to take note of these developments.

¹ All documentation for the session will be made available on a dedicated web page on the Convention's website (<https://unece.org/info/Environmental-Policy/Public-Participation/events/365937>).

3. Substantive issues

(a) Thematic session on access to information

Timing: Wednesday, 22 June, 10.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

A thematic session on access to information will be organized in the format of an interactive panel discussion followed by a general discussion. The subjects for discussion are based on decision VII/1 on promoting effective access to information (ECE/MP.PP/2021/2/Add.1),² adopted by the Convention's Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session (Geneva, 18–21 October 2021), and the key outcomes of the work of the Task Force on Access to Information. The Working Group will be invited to focus its discussion on advancing public access to environment-related product information, including on: (a) public access to product information and digitalization; (b) public access to product information and measures against greenwashing; and (c) means to encourage operators to inform the public (eco-labelling, eco-auditing, environmental, social and governance solutions). The detailed programme for the thematic session will be made available on the meeting web page in due course.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

Provisional programme of the thematic session on access to information (AC/WGP-26/Inf.1)

(b) Public participation in decision-making

Timing: Wednesday, 22 June, 12.30–1 p.m.

The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about recent activities and future plans regarding public participation in decision-making. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments in this area. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and consider the planned activities.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

(c) Access to justice

Timing: Wednesday, 22 June, 3–3.30 p.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the recent activities and future plans in this area. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and consider the planned activities.

Documentation

Report on the meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/3)

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

² Available under the “Post-session documents” tab at https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/Aarhus_Convention_MoP7

(d) Genetically modified organisms

Timing: Wednesday, 22 June, 3.30–3.50 p.m.

The Working Group will consider the issue of ratification of the amendment to the Convention providing for public participation in decisions on the deliberate release into the environment and placing on the market of genetically modified organisms and relevant activities since the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments in this regard. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided and consider the planned activities.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

4. Procedures and mechanisms

(a) Compliance mechanism

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 3.50–4.30 p.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the recent meetings of the Compliance Committee and other relevant matters since the seventh Meeting of the Parties. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

(b) Reporting mechanism

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 4.30–4.35 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations on the status of submission of national implementation reports since the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

(c) Capacity-building and awareness-raising

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 4.35–5.10 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations on capacity-building activities carried out since the seventh Meeting of the Parties and may discuss future work in this area.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

5. Accession by non-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States and other relevant developments and interlinkages related to the promotion of the Convention

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 5.10–5.40 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations regarding accession to the Aarhus Convention by non-United Nations Economic Commission for Europe member States and promotion of the Convention in other regions, as well as to consider future activities in this area.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

6. Next ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 5.40–5.50 p.m.

The Working Group will be invited to consider the possible dates and venue of the eighth ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties. Parties are invited to consider hosting the session and to inform the secretariat in advance of any proposals they may intend to make in this regard.

7. Implementation of work programmes for 2018–2021 and for 2022–2025, including financial matters

Timing: Wednesday 22 June, 5.50–6 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the reports by the secretariat on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and for 2022–2025 since the secretariat's report to the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties and on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of these work programmes, taking into consideration the discussion under the preceding agenda items. Delegations will be encouraged to notify the Working Group of their planned financial contributions.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the Convention's work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/5)

8. Thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums

Timing: Thursday 23 June, 10 a.m.–12.50 p.m.

A thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums will be organized in the format of an interactive panel discussion followed by a general discussion. The topics for discussion are based on decision VII/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/2021/2/Add.1), adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session, and the outcomes of the previous thematic sessions. The current session will focus on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international decision-making on: (a) plastics (e.g., with regard to marine environment and air pollution); and (b) a legally binding instrument on business and human rights, covering States' obligations with regard to the responsibility of business actors under their jurisdiction. Additional topics will include updates on subjects considered by the Working Group of the Parties at its twenty-fifth meeting (Geneva (online) 3 May and (hybrid) 7–8 June 2021), namely, promotion of the principles of the Convention in processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the focus on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and in international forums in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The detailed programme for the thematic session will be made available on the meeting web page in due course.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programmes for 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2022/4)

Provisional programme of the thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in international forums (AC/WGP-26/Inf.2)

9. Other business

Timing: Thursday 23 June, 12.50–1 p.m.

Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

10. Adoption of outcomes

Timing: Thursday 23 June, 3–3.45 p.m.³

The Working Group will discuss and adopt the outcomes of its twenty-sixth meeting.

³ With a view to ensuring equal opportunities for English-, French- and Russian-speaking delegations and saving paper, the meeting will result in a list of key decisions and outcomes that will be projected onto a screen before the close of the meeting. The key decisions and outcomes will be presented by the Chair verbally, thereby allowing for interpretation. The lunch break on Thursday will allow for finalization of the list, which will be distributed to participants by email after the meeting.