

The Aarhus Convention, Human  
Rights and Responsible Business  
Conduct :  
A French Perspective

1-What is the Problem ? The Challenges of RBC and the Environmental Democracy.

2-How to Address it ? A French Toolbox

3- Does it Work ? Some Preliminary Takeaways

# 1-The Challenges of environmental democracy and Responsible Business Conduct

n°1 : How to build trust around deeply divisive and politicized issues.

N°2 : RBC : How to bring together four different communities : Human Rights Defenders, Environmental Activists, Business, Science.

N°3 : How to Change the mindset ? New Role for the Government/State : from regulation to facilitation (sharing information, explaining, organizing consultations, mediating).

## 2-How to address the problem ? The French Toolbox

- No one-size-fit-all : we have experimented many different fora, different formats, roles, rules, structures, timelines.

-but two of them stand out regarding RBC :

\*The National Platform for RBC/SCR : key contribution to 2017 French due diligence law and EU due diligence directive.  
Also consulted on Draft International Instrument on Business and Human Rights

\* The National Contact Point for OECD National Action Plan :  
mediation/access to justice

### 3-Does it work ? Some Preliminary Takeaways

-Trust building exercise is always hard, painful, lengthy, and vulnerable....

-But can also be surprisingly constructive, pragmatic, creative and rewarding. Help bridge the gap between different communities. Outliers with extreme views are not influential.

- ...So now environmental democracy is at the forefront of political democracy...

- Still a long way to go : Human Rights and Business : key challenge of this century