

23.06.2022

Georgia

Thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in international forums

The Government of Georgia supports the public, such as NGOs and experts, to participate in international forums by including them in the official delegations of the country.

One of the recent good examples how the principles of the Aarhus Convention were promoted in international environmental forums is the Climate COP 26, held in October-November 2021 in Glasgow.

First step was to inform the public properly and adequately about the Climate COP before the conference, at the early stage:

In order to provide the public with the information about the Climate COP 26 in advance to the meeting, with the initiative of the Government of Georgia, namely the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia (MEPA) and with support of the British and Italian Embassies in Georgia, the conference was held in Tbilisi in October 2021. The aim of the conference was to inform broad audience and all stakeholders, including representatives from the government, international organizations, NGO and private sectors, and experts about the planned events and activities, the issues to be discussed, Georgia's attitudes, priorities and concrete steps towards the topics under the Climate COP 26 and Georgia's input to the conference. To give more flexibility to the participants during the COVID 19 pandemic period as well as share information more effectively and purposefully, the conference was held in a hybrid format and was split into three different panels (with the panel discussions), such as: I – Climate COP 26 priorities, II - Climate Change and migration, and international processes, and III - Role of private sector in green finance.

Next, it was very important to keep the public informed and involved in the Climate COP activities during the meeting through active provision of the relevant and interesting information:

During the Climate COP 26, Georgian delegation presented in Glasgow was preparing information and press releases permanently along with weekly summaries about the events and placed and disseminated through the official web-site of MEPA and its Facebook page as well as through other NGO web pages, e.g. NNLE Climate Basics.

The final main topic was to inform the public on the outcomes of the Climate COP:

After the conference, complete information was prepared on Georgia's activities under the Climate COP 26, including conducted meetings and negotiations, the new initiatives that were undertaken by the country, etc. In December 2021, MEPA organized a meeting in online format intended to report on the Climate COP 26 outcomes, where representatives of various public institutions, local governments, international organizations, NGOs, scientific and private sectors were participated. The meeting had an interactive format and discussions were held about the activities carried out by Georgia, country's initiatives and their final results, as well as other

new initiatives presented at the Climate COP 26 which Georgia joined to, and the final outcomes of the conference.

Furthermore, together with the local NGO - the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN), through the National Climate Platform, MEPA organized another meeting dedicated to the results of the Climate COP 26.

Additionally, MEPA participated in 3 rounds of meetings organized by NGO networks (Greens Movements, Climate Basics) aiming at reporting on the Climate COP 26 outcomes, including decisions taken, Georgia's negotiations and activities.

Despite there was no physical public participation from Georgian side in the Climate COP 26, mainly because of the COVID 19 pandemic and related rules and restrictions, the Government of Georgia ensured that the public, who was interested in the conference was duly informed in advance of the meeting, had regularly updated information during the conference, and was reported about Georgia's input to and the outcomes of the Climate COP 26.