

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

Excerpt from the addendum to the report of the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2021/2/Add.1)*

Decision VII/7 on reporting requirements

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

* Decisions were adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at the Joint High-level segment, held on 21 October 2021. For practical reasons, the adopted decisions are being issued in an addendum to the report of the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/2021/2/Add.1). The full text of addendum to the report of the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties is available in English, French and Russian from https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/Aarhus_Convention_MoP7

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/.. to ECE/MP.PP/2021/....

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 ten¹² 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;

Failure to submit reports

7. *Notes with regret* that Azerbaijan, Iceland, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Republic of Moldova, Sweden, Tajikistan and Ukraine¹³, 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.

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

¹² As of 22 July 2021.

¹³ As of 22 July 2021.