

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

Working Group of the Parties

Twenty-eighth meeting

Geneva, 2–4 July 2024

Item 7 (c) of the provisional agenda

Preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Note on the preparatory timeline for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention and the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

prepared by the secretariat¹

This document outlines an indicative preparatory timeline for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention, the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs and their associated meetings, suggested to be held back-to-back in October/November 2025 respectively. The timeline is prepared on the basis of a similar note drafted for the previous sessions of the Meetings of the Parties.²

Table 1

Activity	Tentative deadline
Submission of Aarhus Convention National Implementation Reports and Protocol on PRTRs National Implementation Reports	1 February 2025 (recommended), <i>a guiding note circulated by the secretariat on 23 February 2024</i>
Launch of the UNECE web pages dedicated to the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (AC MoP-8) and fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs (PRTRs MoPP-5) respectively, containing information on online registration	March-April 2025
Launch of a host-country website on practical arrangements for AC MoP-8 and PRTRs MoPP-5, which will be linked to the relevant UNECE AC MoP-8 and PRTRs MoPP-5 web-pages	March-April 2025
Mailing of invitation letters by UNECE and opening of online registration	April-May 2025

¹ This document was not formally edited.

² This document is aligned with the Note on the preparatory timeline for PRTRs MoPP-5 (document PRTR/WG.1/2023/Inf.1) prepared by the secretariat for 10th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties (Geneva, 27-28 November 2023) available from <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/tenth-meeting-working-group-parties-protocol-prtrs>

Registration	
(a) for delegates from non-governmental organizations (NGOs):	
Online registration and submission of the requests for financial support	1 June 2025
Submission of registrations to the European ECO-Forum by the Aarhus Convention and Protocol on PRTRs secretariat	10 June 2025
Submission of a proposal from the European ECO-Forum to the Aarhus Convention and Protocol on PRTRs secretariat on the composition of NGOs delegation and on provision of financial support to NGOs	25 June 2025
(b) for other delegates eligible to apply for financial support:	
Submission of official nomination letters for delegations together with online registration and requests for financial support to the Aarhus Convention and Protocol on PRTRs secretariat	10 June 2025
(c) for all other delegates:	
Submission of official nomination letters for delegations and online registration	25 June 2025
Submission of credentials to the Aarhus Convention and Protocol on PRTRs secretariat	To facilitate the procedure of verification of credentials, Parties to the Convention and to the Protocol are invited to submit the credentials of delegates or a copy of the credentials to the secretariat before 1 September 2025. Those Parties that submitted a copy of the credentials should present their originals to the secretariat before AC MOP-8 and PRTRs MoPP-5, on arrival at the meeting. It is strongly recommended that originals of the credentials should be submitted to the secretariat as soon as possible but no later than three hours before the opening of AC MoP-8 and PRTRs MoPP-5 respectively. More information will be provided in due course.

Official Documents³	
For AC MoP-8	
Initial discussion on draft decisions (except for decisions on compliance ⁴ and, as relevant, possible decision(s) on environmental defenders) and on draft provisional AC MoP-8 agenda, and on a concept of possible draft Declaration	28th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties, 2-4 July 2024
Pursuant to the outcomes of the discussions by the Working Group of the Parties, the Bureau prepares draft decisions (except for decisions on compliance and, as relevant, possible decision(s) on environmental defenders), draft elements for a possible Declaration and draft provisional AC MoP-8 agenda, to be distributed to national focal points and stakeholders for comments	Autumn 2024-early 2025
The revised, as appropriate, taking into account the comments received, draft decisions (except for decisions on compliance and, as relevant, possible decision(s) on environmental defenders), draft elements for a possible Declaration and draft AC MoP-8 agenda are considered by the Bureau and submitted to the Working Group of the Parties	Early 2025
Discussion on and approval of draft decisions (except for decisions on compliance and, as relevant, possible decision(s) on environmental defenders) and of provisional AC MoP-8 agenda, discussion on possible draft Declaration	29th meeting of the Working Group of the Parties in 2025, dates tbc
Finalization of the provisional AC MoP-8 agenda and other official documents by the secretariat for submission to the editing and processing by the Documents Management Service of United Nations Office at Geneva <i>Documents will be uploaded on the AC MoP-8 webpage as soon as they become available</i>	March-August 2025 (<i>subject to the availability of documents</i>)
Discussion on and approval of the remaining draft decisions and of the draft Declaration, as required, and the adoption of documents	Preparatory segment of AC MoP-8 and Joint High-level Segment
Nominations for the Compliance Committee under the - Aarhus Convention - Protocol on PRTRs	

³ Please note that documents prepared in advance for AC MoP-8 and PRTRs MoPP-5 are divided into the following categories:

Category I (official documents for possible action, for instance agenda and decisions).

Category II (official background documents, for instance synthesis report).

Category III (other documents relevant to the agenda, for instance national implementation reports).

⁴ For timeline for the documents on compliance matter, see Table 2.

Submission of nominations for the Compliance Committee <i>(to the Aarhus Convention and Protocol on PRTRs secretariat)</i> ⁵	<i>A guiding note on nominations will be prepared by the secretariat in due course</i>
Dissemination of nominations for the Compliance Committee <i>(by the Aarhus Convention and Protocol on PRTRs secretariat)</i> ⁶	<i>A guiding note on nominations will be prepared by the secretariat in due course</i>

⁵ Nominations for the Committees should be sent to the secretariat in at least one of the official languages of the Convention/Protocol no later than 12 weeks before the opening of the MOPs. See paragraph 5 (a) of the annex to Decision I/7 (Review of Compliance) of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.8) and paragraph 5 (a) of the annex to Decision I/2 (Review of Compliance) of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (ECE/MP.PRTR/2010/2/Add/1). Deadlines for submission and distribution of nominations will be determined once dates for the MoP-8 and MoPP-5 are set.

⁶ The secretariat should distribute the nominations (including the curricula vitae) for the Committees at least six weeks before the opening of MOPs. See paragraph 5 (c) of the annex to Decision I/7 (Review of Compliance) in conjunction with rule 10 of the annex to Decision I/1 (Rules of Procedure) (ECE/MP.PP/2/Add.2) of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention; as well as paragraph 5 (c) of the annex to Decision I/2 in conjunction with rule 10 of the annex to Decision I/1 (Rules of Procedure) of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. Deadlines for submission and distribution of nominations will be determined once dates for the MoP-8 and MoPP-5 are set.

Table 2⁷
Decisions on compliance (indicative timing)

Timing	Follow up to MoP-7 decisions and MoP-7 requests on compliance	Decisions based on findings of non-compliance adopted since MoP-7 regarding which the Party concerned accepted the Committee making recommendations directly under para. 36(b) of the annex to decision I/7	Decisions based on findings of non-compliance adopted since MoP-7 regarding which the Party concerned did not accept the Committee making recommendations directly under para. 36(b) of the annex to decision I/7	Decisions based on findings of non-compliance adopted shortly before MoP-7
01.10.2024	Final progress reports are submitted by Parties concerned on MoP-7 decisions and MoP-7 requests on compliance.	Final progress reports are submitted by Parties on progress made to implement the Committee's recommendations		
01.11.2024 ⁸	Deadline for comments from communicants and observers on final progress reports submitted by Parties concerned.	Deadline for comments from communicants and observers on final progress reports submitted by Parties concerned.		
01.05.2025				Deadlines for adoption by the Compliance Committee of findings to be considered at MOP-8 (5 months before MOP-8)
01.05.2025			Resulting draft decisions on compliance start to be prepared by the Bureau	Resulting draft decisions on compliance start to be prepared by the Bureau
01.05.2025 – 30.06.2025	Committee adopts its reports to MoP-8 on MoP-7 decisions and requests (timing depends on nature of comments received from Parties, communicants and observers on draft reports)	Committee adopts its reports to MoP-8 on findings of non-compliance adopted since MoP-7 regarding which the Party concerned accepted the Committee making recommendations directly (timing depends on nature of comments received from Parties, communicants and observers on draft reports)		
01.05.2025 – 30.06.2025	Resulting draft decisions on compliance start to be prepared by the Bureau	Resulting draft decisions on compliance start to be prepared by the Bureau		

⁷ Table 2 contains information about decisions on compliance. Note that all dates related to the deliverables by the Committee are subject to the actual work of the Committee and its confirmation. Due to the deadline of 1 October 2024 for the Parties subject to MoP-7 decisions and requests concerning their compliance to submit their final progress report, it will not be feasible for the Bureau to prepare, and for the secretariat to finalise for editing and translation draft decisions on compliance if MoP-8 takes place earlier than late autumn 2025. As the exact date for MOP-8 is not yet known, the timeline is calculated for a MoP beginning on 1 October 2025.

⁸ This is an indicative deadline. The actual deadline will depend on the date that the Party concerned submits its final progress report, as it is the Committee's standard practice to give other Parties, communicants and observers four weeks to comment on each Party's final progress report.

Timing	Follow up to MoP-7 decisions and MoP-7 requests on compliance	Decisions based on findings of non-compliance adopted since MoP-7 regarding which the Party concerned <u>accepted</u> the Committee making recommendations directly under para. 36(b) of the annex to decision I/7	Decisions based on findings of non-compliance adopted since MoP-7 regarding which the Party concerned <u>did not accept</u> the Committee making recommendations directly under para. 36(b) of the annex to decision I/7	Decisions based on findings of non-compliance adopted shortly before MoP-7
01.07.2025- 01.08.2025	Draft decision on general issues of compliance starts to be prepared by the Bureau			
01.07.2025	Committee adopts its general report to MoP-8 (12 weeks before MoP, annex to decision I/7, para. 35)			
	Finalisation of draft decisions by the secretariat for submission to the editing, translation and processing by the Documents Management Service of United Nations Office at Geneva			
Preparatory and General Segments at MoP-8, (date tbc)	Discussion on and approval of draft decisions			
HLS of MoP-8 (date tbc)	Adoption of draft decisions and endorsement of findings of the Compliance Committee			