

Agenda item 8: Promotion of the Convention and other relevant developments and interlinkages
28th Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention
Geneva, 2-4 July 2024

I merely wish to echo my appreciation for the efforts to promote the Convention in the Mediterranean region coordinated by Water and Environment Support and in particular through the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development.

I have had the honor to participate as part of this team as an expert trainer in my personal capacity. And I really have to say it has been one of the most promising and fulfilling activities I have been involved with throughout my career. States – non-Parties to the Convention – come with curiosity, with challenges, with questions, but also with a rich experience of their own. I see enormous potential for benefits. For them, as newcomers to the Aarhus Convention, but also for us, who can learn from and profit from their participation.

For those engaged in this project, who might be in the room, or just listening remotely, I say thank you and congratulations for your work. I am truly proud to have been part of this team, lead by Professor Scoullos, and supported by incredible staff. Thank you to Greece, who has been hosting these efforts, and I think is strategically, uniquely well placed to do so. Thank you to the EU, for its critical support, and thanks to the UNECE and many other bodies who have demonstrated yet again that their excellence is not limited to the day-to-day compliance and implementation issues, the WGPs, Bureau meetings, the MOPs, but is always looking to be a bright and positive influence throughout the world.

And for those who are not Parties, or are but still struggle with implementation, I can only recommend looking into this project, perhaps starting with a question to the secretariat, as I really cannot think of a better practice example regarding the promotion of the Convention and its developments and interlinkages than this one.

Thank you.