

Distr.: General
17 April 2025

Original: English

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-ninth meeting**

Geneva, 2–4 July 2025

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda**Annotated provisional agenda for the twenty-ninth meeting**

**To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on
Wednesday, 2 July 2025**

Introduction

The twenty-ninth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties will be held in Geneva, on 2–4 July 2025.

Working hours:

- Wednesday 2 July, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m.
- Thursday 3 July, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m.
- Friday 4 July, 9.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m. and 2.30–5.30 p.m.
- Lunch breaks: 1–3 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday; and 12.30–2.30 p.m. on Friday
- Coffee breaks (time permitting)

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification.
3. Substantive issues:
 - (a) Access to information;
 - (b) Public participation in decision-making;



- (c) Access to justice.
- 4. Procedures and mechanisms:
 - (a) Capacity-building and awareness-raising;
 - (b) Compliance mechanism:
 - (i) Compliance Committee;
 - (ii) Special Rapporteur on environmental defenders;
 - (c) Reporting mechanism.
- 5. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums:
 - (a) Thematic session;
 - (b) Future work.
- 6. Other substantive preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties:
 - (a) Agenda of the eighth session;
 - (b) Work programme for 2026–2029;
 - (c) Financial arrangements under the Convention;
 - (d) Declaration.
- 7. Thematic session on genetically modified organisms.
- 8. Implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025, including financial matters.
- 9. Promotion and interlinkages with other regions and global processes.
- 10. Practical preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
- 11. Other business.
- 12. Adoption of outcomes.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 10–10.10 a.m.

The Working Group of the Parties under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will be invited to adopt the agenda for its twenty-ninth meeting, as set out in the present document.¹

2. Status of ratification

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 10.10–10.20 a.m.

The secretariat will provide the Working Group with an overview of the status of ratification, acceptance, approval and accession with respect to the Aarhus Convention, the amendment thereto and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. Delegations will be invited to report on any recent or anticipated developments concerning ratification,

¹ All documentation for the meeting will be made available on a dedicated web page on the Convention's website (<https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/twenty-ninth-meeting-working-group-parties-aarhus-convention>).

acceptance, approval or accession with respect to these instruments in their countries. The Working Group is expected to take note of these developments.

3. Substantive issues

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 10.20 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

(a) Access to information

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 10.20–11 a.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the ninth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Information (Geneva, 7–8 November 2024) and recent developments with regard to electronic information tools. Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information regarding relevant developments. The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on promoting effective access to information, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

Documentation

Report of the Task Force on Access to Information on its ninth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/3)

Draft decision on promoting effective access to information (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/11)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

(b) Public participation in decision-making

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 11–11.45 a.m.

The Working Group of the Parties will be informed about the outcomes of the eleventh meeting of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making (Geneva, 12–13 December 2024). Delegations will be invited to contribute additional information on relevant developments. The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on promoting effective public participation in decision-making, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

Documentation

Report of the Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making on its eleventh meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/4)

Draft decision on promoting effective public participation in decision-making (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/12)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

(c) Access to justice

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 11.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the sixteenth meeting of the Task Force on Access to Justice (Geneva, 18–19 February 2025). Delegations will be invited to provide additional information regarding relevant developments in this area. The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on promoting effective access to justice, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

Documentation

Report of the Task Force on Access to Justice on its sixteenth meeting (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/5)

Draft decision on promoting effective access to justice (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/13)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

4. Procedures and mechanisms

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 12.30–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m.

(a) Capacity-building and awareness-raising

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 12.30–1 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations on capacity-building activities carried out since the Working Group's twenty-eighth meeting (Geneva, 2–4 July 2024). The Working Group is expected to take note of the developments and to discuss the future work in this area.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

(b) Compliance mechanism

(i) Compliance Committee

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 3–4.15 p.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the outcomes of the recent meetings of the Compliance Committee and other relevant matters since the twenty-eighth meeting of the Working Group of the Parties. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

(ii) Special Rapporteur on environmental defenders

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 4.15–5.40 p.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the activities of the Special Rapporteur on environmental defenders and other relevant matters since the Working Group's twenty-eighth meeting. The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

(c) Reporting mechanism

Timing: Wednesday, 2 July, 5.40–6 p.m.

The Working Group will be informed about the status of submission of national implementation reports. The Working Group will also be invited to consider and approve the

draft decision on reporting requirements prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

Documentation

Draft decision on reporting requirements (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/16)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

5. Promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, 10 a.m.–12.45 p.m.

The item will be comprised of a thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Convention in international forums and a discussion on the future work in the next intersessional period.

(a) Thematic session

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, 10 a.m.–noon

The format of the thematic session will be a panel discussion, followed by a general discussion. In line with decision VII/4 on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/2021/2/Add.1), adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session (Geneva, 18–21 October 2021), and the Note by the Chair of the thematic session on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums on possible future directions for the work (AC/WGP-28/Inf.4),² the session in 2025 will focus on forums dealing with such topics as deforestation, degradation of forests and the environmental effects of agriculture, land use and land-use changes. The provisional programme for the thematic session will be made available on the meeting web page in due course.

(b) Future work

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, noon–12.45 p.m.

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums, prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

Documentation

Provisional programme of the thematic session on the promotion of the principles of the Aarhus Convention in international forums (AC/WGP-29/Inf.1)

Draft decision on promoting the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/14)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

² Available at <https://unece.org/environment/documents/2024/04/informal-documents/note-chair-thematic-session-promoting-application>.

6. Other substantive preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, 12.45–1 p.m. and 3–6 p.m., continued, as required, on Friday, 4 July, 11 a.m.–noon

(a) Agenda of the eighth session

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, 12.45–1 p.m.

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft provisional agenda prepared by the Bureau for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Geneva, from 17 to 21 November 2025, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session. The session will include a joint high-level segment with the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers on 21 November 2025.

Documentation

Draft provisional agenda for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/10)

(b) Work programme for 2026–2029

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, 3–4 p.m.

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on the work programme for 2026–2029 prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

Documentation

Draft decision on the work programme for 2026–2029 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/8)

(c) Financial arrangements under the Convention

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, 4–4.45 p.m.

The Working Group will be invited to consider and approve the draft decision on financial arrangements under the Convention prepared by the Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

Documentation

Draft decision on financial arrangements under the Convention (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/9)

(d) Declaration

Timing: Thursday, 3 July, 4.45–6 p.m.

The Working Group will be invited to consider a draft declaration on advancing public rights to tackle the triple planetary crisis in the face of geopolitical tensions, prepared by the Bureaux of the Meetings of the Parties to the Convention and the Protocol. The Working Group will be invited to mandate the Convention's Bureau to finalize the draft declaration in cooperation with the Protocol's Bureau, with a view to its submission for consideration and adoption by the Parties to both instruments at the joint high-level segment.

Documentation

Draft declaration on advancing public rights to tackle the triple planetary crisis in the face of geopolitical tensions (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/15)

7. Thematic session on genetically modified organisms

Timing: Friday, 4 July, 9.30–11 a.m.

The format of the thematic session will be a panel discussion, followed by a general discussion. Topics for discussion will be based on the outcomes of the Fourth Joint Aarhus Convention and Convention on Biological Diversity Round Table on Public Awareness, Education, Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice regarding Living Modified Organisms/Genetically Modified Organisms. The provisional programme for the thematic session will be made available on the meeting web page in due course.

Documentation

Provisional programme of the thematic session on genetically modified organisms (AC/WGP-29/Inf.2)

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

Report on the Fourth Joint Aarhus Convention and Convention on Biological Diversity Round Table on Public Awareness, Education, Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice regarding Living Modified Organisms/Genetically Modified Organisms (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2024/6)

6. Other substantive preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties (*continued as required*)

Timing: Friday, 4 July, 11 a.m.–noon

The Working Group will be invited to consider, as needed, any open issues in relation to the following subjects discussed under item 6: (b) Work programme for 2026–2029; (c) Financial arrangements under the Convention; and (d) Declaration.

8. Implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025, including financial matters

Timing: Friday, 4 July, noon–12.30 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025, prepared by the secretariat, taking into consideration the discussion under the previous agenda items. Each Party representative will be invited by the Chair to notify the Working Group of their planned financial contributions.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

Report on contributions and expenditures in relation to the implementation of the Convention's work programme for 2022–2025 (ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/7)

9. Promotion and interlinkages with other regions and global processes

Timing: Friday, 4 July, 2.30–2.50 p.m.

The Working Group is expected to take note of the information provided by the secretariat and delegations regarding promotion of the Convention in other regions, including regarding accession by States not members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

Documentation

Report on the implementation of the work programme for 2022–2025
(ECE/MP.PP/WG.1/2025/6)

10. Practical preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Timing: Friday, 4 July, 2.50–3.10 p.m.

The secretariat will provide information on practical preparations for the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties.

11. Other business³

Timing: Friday, 4 July, 3.10–3.15 p.m.

Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

12. Adoption of outcomes

Timing: Friday, 4 July, 3.50–5.30 p.m.⁴

The Working Group will consider and approve the outcomes of its twenty-ninth meeting.

³ There will be a break between 3.15 and 3.50 pm to prepare the list of outcomes and decisions.

⁴ With a view to ensuring equal opportunities for English-, French- and Russian-speaking delegations and reducing the amount of paper used for printing the draft report, the meeting will result in a list of decisions and outcomes that will be projected onto the screen before the close of the meeting, and presented by the Chair verbally, thereby allowing for interpretation. The list will be distributed to participants by email after the meeting.