



Preparing the plan of action

Information note by the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee



February 2022

Introduction

- In each of its decisions concerning the compliance of individual Parties adopted at its seventh session, the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) has requested the Party concerned “to submit a plan of action, including a time schedule, to the Committee by 1 July 2022” regarding the implementation of the recommendations in the decision concerning the Party concerned's compliance.
- To assist Parties to prepare their plan of action, the Committee held an open session at its seventy-third meeting (online, 13-16 December 2021) to provide guidance and to answer any questions Parties may have had regarding the form and content of their plan of action.
- This information note is prepared as a follow-up to the Committee's presentation during the open session at the seventy-third meeting taking into account the comments and questions received from Parties, communicants and observers at the open session.

Purpose of the plan of action

- The plan of action is meant to be a practical planning tool to assist each Party concerned to implement the recommendations set out in the MOP decision concerning its compliance by the deadline set out in the decision.
- It is for each Party concerned to prepare its plan of action in a form that will ensure that, bearing in mind the Party's particular circumstances and the specific requirements of the MOP decision concerning its compliance, it will be able to implement the recommendations set out in the decision in full by the stated deadline.
- Given the short time until the deadline of 1 October 2024 by when all recommendations in the MOP decision must be fully met, the Party concerned should commence its work on the various measures it proposes to take to implement those recommendations in parallel with preparing its plan of action.

Plan of action: Key elements

A. Description of the process by which the plan of action has been prepared

- How was the public informed about the preparation of the draft plan of action? (e.g., a notice on the Ministry's website)
- What opportunities did communicants, observers and other members of the public have to comment on the draft plan of action? (e.g., an opportunity to submit written comments or to take part in information sessions).
- How has the public been informed about the availability of the text of the plan of action once finalized? Is the plan of action available on the Ministry's website?

B. General character of the measures that will be needed to implement the recommendations in the MOP decision

- Do any of the recommendations require a fundamental change to the legislative framework or administrative or judicial practice of the Party concerned?
 - If so, which recommendations specifically would require such a fundamental change? Please indicate the relevant sub-paragraphs of the MOP decision (see [here](#) for the MOP decisions).
- Is there a common issue that recurs in several of the recommendations in the MOP decision which could be addressed through a particular change in the legislative framework or administrative or judicial practice of the Party concerned?
 - Which sub-paragraphs of the MOP decision does this common issue concern?
 - What can be done to ensure that the recommendations in these sub-paragraphs are implemented consistently and collectively (e.g., by introducing a law that addresses each of these recommendations at the same time)?

C. Detailed plan of action

For each recommendation:

1. **Insert the exact wording of each recommendation from the decision of the Meeting of the Parties**
 - E.g. “In paragraph X(y) of decision VII/8x, the Meeting of the Parties recommends the Party concerned to ...”
 - The decisions of the Meeting of the Parties on the compliance of individual Parties to the Convention are available [here](#).

2. **Short description of the measure(s) proposed by the Party concerned to implement each recommendation and how each measure will contribute to doing so**
 - Will legislative amendments be required to fulfil the recommendation, and if so, which laws will need to be amended? Will a new law have to be prepared so as to meet the recommendation in full?

 - Will regulatory and administrative measures need to be taken to fulfil the recommendation, and if so, what will those measures include?
 - E.g., will it be necessary to issue administrative instructions to a particular public authority to ensure that it complies with the recommendation?

 - What practical measures will be taken to implement the recommendation?
 - E.g., will guidance be prepared for public officials or members of the public?

 - What, if any, training will need to be carried out to meet the recommendation?
 - To whom will training be provided? E.g.:
 - Public officials working in particular government agencies or departments?
 - The judiciary and public prosecutors?
 - The police and state security services?
 - What is the target number and geographical distribution of trainees (e.g., nationwide or a specific region)?
 - What subjects will the training cover?
 - How will attendance at the training be promoted or encouraged?

3. Outline of the main steps that will need to be taken to implement the proposed measure(s), including the timeframe by when each step is expected to be completed

- What steps will be involved in ensuring that the proposed measures can be fully completed by 1 October 2024 (the deadline for the final progress report of the Party concerned)?
- By what date will each step need to be completed in order to meet this timeframe?
- Who within the government will have the lead responsibility for completing each of these steps?

4. List of the different government departments and other actors whose involvement will be needed in order to implement each of the above steps and a short explanation of what their involvement will be

- Which specific actors from the following will need to be involved:
 - Which ministries, state organs and government agencies at the national/state level?
 - Which regional/subnational government departments and agencies?
 - Which local authorities?
 - Which other actors, if any?
- In brief, what will the role of each actor be?

5. Final date by which it is expected that the implementation of the recommendation will be completed

- IMPORTANT: All measures that the Party concerned intends to take to implement the recommendations in the MOP decision must be completed by, and reported upon in, the Party concerned's final progress report due on 1 October 2024.
- If the Party concerned is under a conditional caution pursuant to paragraph 37 (f) of the annex to decision I/7, the relevant measures must be fully completed, and reported to the secretariat, before 1 October 2023.

Plan of action (template)

A. Description of the process by which the plan of action has been prepared	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How the public was informed about the process of preparing the draft plan of action</i> • <i>The opportunities that communicants, observers and the public had to comment on the draft plan of action</i> • <i>How the public has been informed about the availability of the text of the plan of action once finalized</i> 	
B. General character of the measures that will be needed to implement the recommendations in the MOP decision	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Whether any of the recommendations will require a fundamental change to the legislative framework or administrative or judicial practice</i> • <i>Whether there is a common issue that recurs in several of the recommendations in the MOP decision</i> 	
C. Detailed plan of action	
Recommendation	
Proposed measures to fulfil recommendation	
Outline of the steps necessary to implement the proposed measures	
Actors involved	
Final date by when implementation of recommendation will be completed	

Looking forward: Party concerned’s progress reports

- Each MOP decision requests the Party concerned to “provide detailed progress reports to the Committee by 1 October 2023 and 1 October 2024 on the measures taken and the results achieved in the implementation of the plan of action and the recommendation(s)”.
- It is expected that the Party concerned’s progress reports will thus closely follow the structure of the plan of action.
- The Committee may hold an open session for Parties at its 78th meeting (March 2023, tbc) to provide guidance on preparing their progress reports.

Time schedule for this intersessional period

13-16 December 2021	Committee’s 73 rd meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information session for Parties on preparing their plan of action.
15-18 March 2022	Committee’s 74 th meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open session for Parties to ask questions regarding the substance of their draft plan of action.
1 July 2022	Deadline for submission of Parties’ plans of action
13-16 September 2022	Committee’s 76 th meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee will commence its review of the plans of action.
13-16 December 2022	Committee’s 77 th meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee will, where needed, discuss the plan of action with the Party concerned in open session.
March 2023 (tbc)	Committee’s 78 th meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee may, if needed, hold an open session for Parties on the preparation of their progress reports.
1 October 2023	Deadline for Party concerned’s first progress report
Spring 2024	The Committee prepares its progress review of the Party concerned’s progress to implement the MOP decision concerning its compliance.
1 October 2024	Deadline for Party concerned’s final progress report
Spring 2025	The Committee prepares its report to the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties.