



AARHUS CENTRES

Wide spectrum of engagement

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- Aarhus convention was ratified in Montenegro on 15/07/2009
- In force since 08/08/2009
- Three Aarhus Centers were founded (Podgorica, Nikšić, Berane) with support of OSCE Mission to Montenegro, through program ENVSEC (Environment and Security)
- First report on implementation of Aarhus convention in Montenegro was written – 2011 (Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism)

Aarhus Convention in Montenegro



- First Aarhus center was founded in Podgorica (capital city) within the Environmental Protection Agency on April 15, 2011;
- Second Aarhus Center was founded in Nikšić (territorially the largest municipality in Montenegro) as organizational unit of Environmental Movement OZON (Non governmental organization) on October 11, 2011;
- Third Aarhus Center was founded in Berane within the Regional office of Environmental Protection Agency (the only one in Montenegro) on Ecological country Day, September 21, 2012;

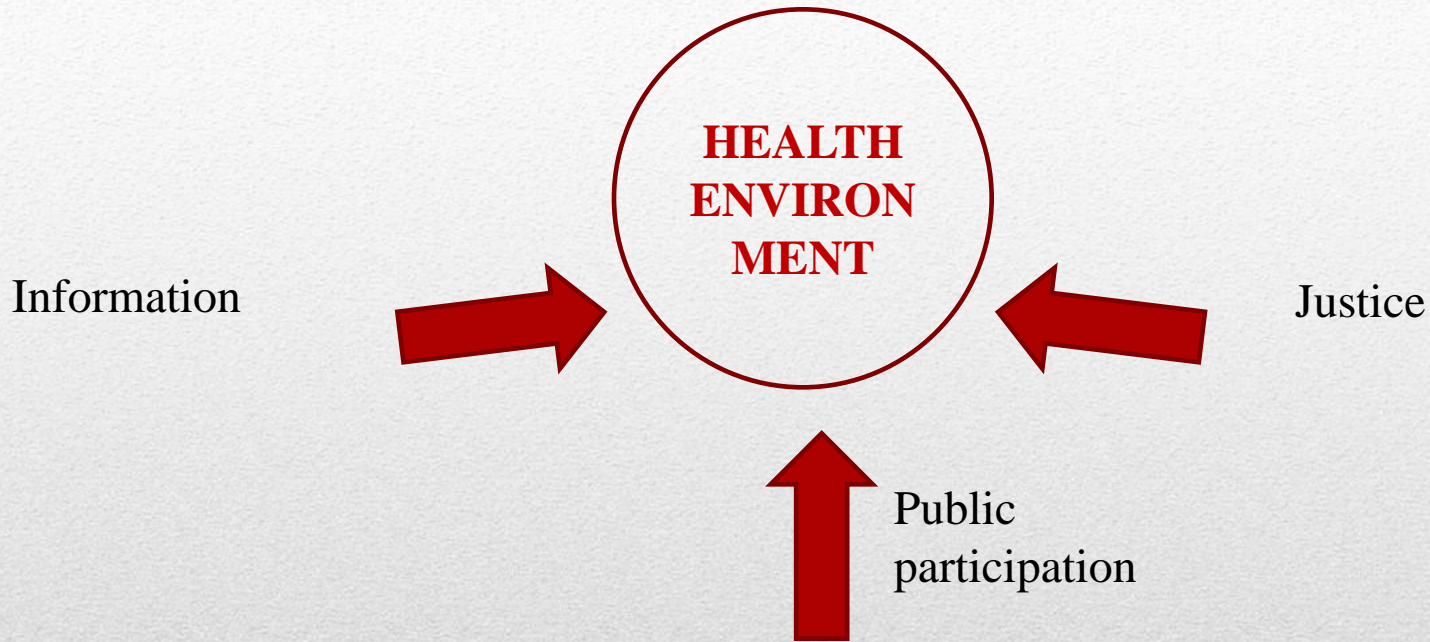
Aarhus centres Montenegro



- The essence of Aarhus Convention provides a wide range for different activities with an aim of it's successful implementation,
- It's three pillars (information, public participation and justice) are true guides to where to direct the activities in order to obtain the desired results,
- In the same manner, it's order indicates the need for increasing the level of attention of institutions and interested public

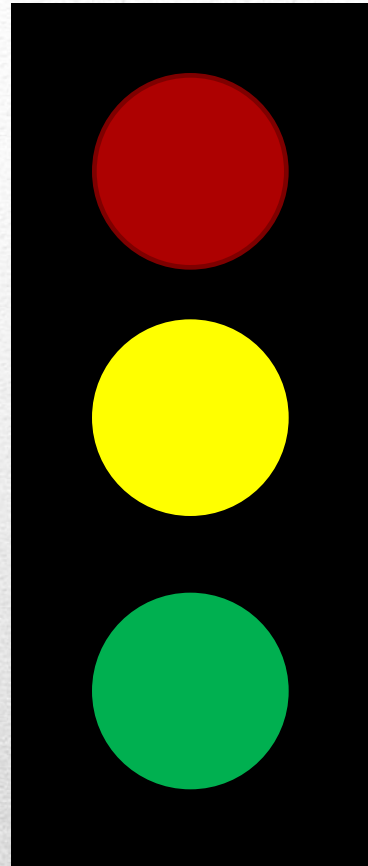
Wide spectrum of engagement





Three guides towards the same goal





Justice

Public participations

Information

Traffic light effect



- The need for a different approach especially on different levels (pillars) in order to obtain the desired goal, was the main argument for establishment of Aarhus centers in different organizations;
- Environmental Protection Agency is the state authority, while Environmental Movement OZON is civil sector organization which works on national level;
- In that way, civil society is included in implementation of Aarhus convention, and for the first time the public function was delegated to an NGO;

Montenegro experience



- The same goal that these institutions have, a health environment, provides the opportunity for a wide range of activities, which is very important if we take into account some limiting factors in individual cases,
- Environmental Protection Agency as state authority is referred to official institutional communication so there is space for non-institutional actions, alternative methods which can be implemented by Environmental Movement OZON and which are the part of democratic process like citizens' initiatives, petitions, referendum, performances etc.;
- If one institution doesn't want to provide the insight to Environmental Movement OZON or obstructs the process, Environmental Protection Agency can gain the required information;
- With the change of levels (pillars) there is a growing need for the use of all democratic methods and Aarhus center model, which is part of state authorities and civil society organizations, is particularly evident in the positive context;

Montenegro experience



- Good cooperation between Aarhus centers is particularly important, which requires daily communication and joint planning;
- Exchange of experiences is also important, because right here parallels can be drawn and the way to improve implementation of Aarhus convention could be found;
- Quality of cooperation between Aarhus centers is reflection of relations between authorities towards the civil sector and on that model it could be shown what is the impact of public on decisions concerning environmental matters;

Montenegro experience



- Aarhus centers Montenegro are jointly planning and implementing most activities, taking into account the equality of all three convention pillars;
- We are proud to say that Aarhus centers in Podgorica and Nikšić were repeatedly pointed out as example of good practice by authorities and civil society organizations. This was confirmed in Progress Report on Montenegro's EU integration process which was done by European Commission;

Montenegro experience



- In the part of implementation of first pillar of Aarhus convention – information, joint internet presentation of network of Aarhus centers was made www.arhuscentri.me , through which the information about public debates, public calls, different events concerning environment is spread;
- In cooperation with local authorities, contact persons for implementation of Aarhus convention will be chosen and their contacts will be known to public;
- We will mention e-group List of media of Aarhus centers mediji@arhuscentri.me which contains addresses of journalists who report about environmental matters, which has significantly improved cooperation with media;

Montenegro experience

Information



- When talking about public participation in decision making (second pillar) it is very important to emphasize that Aarhus centers Podgorica and Nikšić were included in organization of several public debates for laws and other important projects;
- We will mention Amendments to the law on the assessment of environmental impact, Law on non-ionizing radiation and among projects Public debate on Environmental Impact Assessment for wind farm on Krnovo and license for storage of radioactive waste in Podgorica;

Montenegro experience

Public participation



- Third pillar of Aarhus Convention in Montenegro is proved to be the weakest, which testifies Report on the work of the courts and public prosecution where you can see that judicial authorities do not have sufficient sensibility when it comes to the area of environment;
- We can mention Aarhus center Nikšić as a positive example, which found interested law office through the public call, that wants to work on implementation of Aarhus convention, in the part of administrative proceedings for which is specialized;

Montenegro experience Justice



- We have suggested to establish council of Aarhus centers in Montenegro, which would have advisory role, because we are aware of the need for constant improvement in implementation of Aarhus convention and inclusion of greater number of institutions and experts in that process;
- Signing of an Agreement on cooperation in the implementation of Aarhus Convention is also planned between Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism, Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Movement OZON and OSCE Mission to Montenegro . With it the institutional support would be improved

Montenegro experience



- Working group was suggested to draft an action plan for work of Aarhus centers in Montenegro, for the period 2013-2015;
- In that period the focus will be on overcoming the obstructions which have been noticed in practice and on free legal help;
- Also, establishment of international network of Aarhus centers is planned and also first regional Aarhus center (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Montenegro);

Montenegro experience





**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**

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