

Basic information	
2006/0113(CNS) CNS - Consultation procedure Decision	Procedure completed
Environment: access to information and justice, public participation, amendment to the conclusion of the Aarhus Convention Subject 3.70.16 Law and environment, liability	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		KORHOLA Eija-Riitta (PPE-DE)
	Committee for opinion		Appointed
	JURI Legal Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		CORREIA Fausto (PSE)
			13/07/2006
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meetings	Date
	Environment	2773	2006-12-18
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Environment	DIMAS Stavros	

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
20/06/2006	Legislative proposal published	COM(2006)0338 	Summary
05/09/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
10/10/2006	Vote in committee		Summary
11/10/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A6-0336/2006	

14/11/2006	Decision by Parliament	T6-0474/2006	Summary
14/11/2006	Results of vote in Parliament		
18/12/2006	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
18/12/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		
29/12/2006	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2006/0113(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 300-p2/3-a1 EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 175-p1
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/6/38463

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE376.733	21/09/2006	
Committee opinion	LIBE	PE378.734	05/10/2006	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A6-0336/2006	11/10/2006	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T6-0474/2006	14/11/2006	Summary
European Commission				
Document type	Reference		Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2006)0338 		20/06/2006	Summary

Additional information		
Source	Document	Date
National parliaments	IPEX	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Environment: access to information and justice, public participation, amendment to the conclusion of the Aarhus Convention

2006/0113(CNS) - 20/06/2006 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to approve, on behalf of the Community, the Aarhus Convention on public participation in decision-making on genetically modified organisms (GMO's).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

CONTENT: the UN/ECE Aarhus Convention on access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice in environmental matters was approved by the Community in February 2005. The purpose of this proposed Council Decision is to approve an amendment to the Convention which concerns provisions relating to GMO's.

There are a number of legislative instruments, either in the process of being approved, or which have been approved, which affect this proposal. They are:

- Council Decision 2005/370/EC on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Community, of the Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. (Please refer to CNS/2003/0249)
- Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release into the environment of GMO's (Please refer to COD/1998/0072); and
- Regulation 1829/2003/EC on genetically modified food and feed. (Please refer to COD/2001/0173).

In 2002 the first meeting of Parties to the Convention established a Working Group on GMO's, with a mandate to identify and develop potential options strengthening the existing Aarhus provisions. Given that the EU has adopted stringent legislation regarding GMO's (Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release into the environment of GMO's and Regulation 1829/2003/EC on genetically modified food and feed), the Council instructed the Commission to ensure that any amendments adopted by the Parties to the Convention should be consistent with relevant Community legislation – particularly on the deliberate release into the environment and placing on the market of GMO's.

At the second meeting of the Working Group on GMO's, it was agreed that the Convention's amendment should make obligations relating to public participation in GMO decision-making more specific. As a result, the Convention's amendment is fully compatible and full in line with EU legislation. There will be no need to modify or alter EU legislation already in force.

The successful Community coordination during the negotiation process should be similarly ensured with regard to the conclusion of the amendment to the Aarhus Convention, with a view to permitting the deposit, as far as possible simultaneously, of the instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval by the Community and the Member States. The Commission urges the few Member States, who have not yet ratified the Convention, to step up their efforts to that end. The Community should now approve the amendment to the Convention.

Environment: access to information and justice, public participation, amendment to the conclusion of the Aarhus Convention

2006/0113(CNS) - 14/11/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Eija-Riitta KORHOLA (EPP-ED, FI) approving the conclusion of an amendment to the Aarhus Convention.

Environment: access to information and justice, public participation, amendment to the conclusion of the Aarhus Convention

2006/0113(CNS) - 18/12/2006 - Final act

PURPOSE: to approve, on behalf of the Community, an amendment to the Aarhus Convention on public participation in decision-making on genetically modified organisms.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2006/957/EC on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Community, of an amendment to the Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters

CONTENT: this Decision approves on behalf of the Community the amendment to the Aarhus Convention concerning public participation in decision-making on genetically modified organisms.

The Aarhus Convention entered into force on 30 October 2001, and the Community approved the Convention on 17 February 2005, in accordance with Council Decision 2005/370/EC.

The second meeting of the Parties, held in May 2005, adopted an amendment to the Aarhus Convention making more specific the obligations placed on Parties with regard to public participation in genetically modified organism (GMO) decision-making processes. Relevant Community law governing GMOs, and in particular Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms and Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 on genetically modified food and feed, incorporates provisions for public participation in decision-making on GMOs, consistent with the amendment to the Aarhus Convention.

The amendment to the Aarhus Convention has been open for ratification by Parties since 27 September 2005. The Decision provides that the EC and Member States which are Parties to the Aarhus Convention shall endeavour to deposit as soon as possible, and not later than 1 February 2008, their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval of the amendment.