



Justice & Environment
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AGM – a place and time to set goals

Justice and Environment (J&E) has a long history of holding its Annual General Meetings (AGMs) in one of the countries where our members are seated. This year we decided to celebrate Croatia's accession to the European Union by holding our AGM in the lovely seaside town of Opatija.

We dedicated a full day to discussing the outcomes of our survey on public awareness of the Aarhus Convention and EU Environmental Law. The results are quite alarming: it seems that neither the Aarhus Convention nor the environmental law of the EU is sufficiently known by the public let alone its impacts and proper use in guaranteeing rights of the public and promoting sustainable development.

You can read more about our findings here: <http://www.justiceandenvironment.org/>.

We also dedicated time to design our 2014 Work Plan and create a strategy centered on 3 major topics: Aarhus Convention, Climate Change, and Energy & Environmental Liability. Soon we will publish our Work Plan on our website giving you the chance to read about our planned actions and events in detail.

Take a look at our photos taken at the AGM here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/justiceandenvironment/>

Do you think land use planning is participatory? – read our newest study

Land Use Planning – a decision-making process making a lasting impact on our environment and our lives.

Ideally, this process involves thorough planning and negotiations, where the public can express its standpoint and can make sure its comments are taken into due account when making the decision.

But is it really happening as such?

Find it out for yourself by reading our newest legal analysis on public participation and land use planning, available on our website: <http://www.justiceandenvironment.org/files/file/2013/Land%20use%20planning%20and%20access.pdf>

The study covers six EU countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia. It contains a comparative analysis, six country studies and recommendations of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee on land use planning.

We stand up for the right of the public – Our appeal against the Commission

J&E has always paid great attention to the development of access rights (to information, to justice, and participation in decision-making) in environmental matters. This time our reaction is triggered by a decision of the European Commission endorsing the list of energy-related PCIs (Projects of Common Interest).

PCIs should ensure a more connected energy infrastructure of the Union, thereby providing a better access of energy sources to the grids and a better distribution of energy. The 248 PCIs include cross-border pipelines, overhead cables, stationary facilities to transfer oil, gas, electricity, etc.

While we know that securing energy for Europe is a priority, we believe that it should be done in a participatory and transparent way. And we believe that this time, when the Commission adopted its Delegated Regulation (EU) last Oct 14th amending Regulation 347/2013/EU on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure as part of the PCIs, there was no proper public participation in the preparatory process.

And what did we do about it?

We lodged a 'Request for Internal Review' against this Regulation at the Commission to make sure that the decision-making process complies with the Aarhus Convention and the respective EU law on public participation. Should our request remain unheard, we are willing to defend the public's right to participate at the Court of Justice of the EU.

Conference on human rights and environment – J&E had a say

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) with the Danish Institute for Human Rights held its 13th Seminar focusing on "Human Rights and the Environment" in Copenhagen.

Established in 1997 by the participating governments of Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), ASEF promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. The 13th informal seminar aimed at giving an overview on and discussing the connections between human rights and the environment.

J&E was represented at this meeting and we took part in the working group on climate change and human rights where we discussed whether climate change should be addressed under human rights regimes. The ideas of common but differentiated responsibilities in Europe and Asia, as well as the climate change's impacts on indigenous and local communities were also on the table.

Read our meeting report [here](#).

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