



Visegrad Countries Catch Up in Environmental Legal Infrastructure

[Brussels, June 2, 2014] – Justice & Environment, the leading green law group for the civil society in the EU established a legal advisory facility called Visegrad 4 Aarhus Centre.

The V4 Aarhus Centre is similar to other, existing such centres, to date operated by the OSCE in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia as well as in South East Europe, or by civil society in Brussels. However, until today there has been no such advisory service dedicated to providing legal assistance in cases relating to public participation in environmental matters specifically in the V4 region.

Csaba Kiss, Coordinator of Justice and Environment, commented:

“Until today, there was a painful gap that members of the public and civil society organizations in the Visegrad Countries had no single, regional level legal service centre for getting legal help in participatory questions in cases that affect the environment.

It is to be warmly welcome that J&E, whose members have been instrumental in providing legal help to citizens and NGOs for many years in their respective countries, have now joined their forces and raised this service to a higher level.”

The V4 Aarhus Centre started its operation on 2nd June and will be available for the citizens of the European Union with special regard to Visegrad Countries’ citizens. Cases in which legal advice can be obtained must relate to problems of public participation in environmental planning or permitting and must not aim at the exploitation of natural resources or the avoidance of environmental liability. Legal advice will be provided in English, Czech, Hungarian, Polish and Slovak languages respectively.

At the same time, the V4 Aarhus Center has opened its social media platform where questions and comments can be submitted to J&E as well as information will be available on newsworthy activities and events.

The founding and operation of the V4 Aarhus Center was made possible by the generous support of the [International Visegrad Fund](#).

Notes to editors:

1. The Aarhus Convention is an international convention of the UNECE region on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters. [More info](#)
2. OSCE is the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.
3. V4 Aarhus Center social media platform:
<https://www.facebook.com/justiceandenvironment>

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