

Programme

Friday, 9th	
18h	Reception to participants; dinner
Saturday, 10th - GENET General Assembly	
9:00—10.45	NGO introduction round (<i>who's who, but not what we're doing - that's later</i>) Approval/changes to the agenda Short report from the board on GENET's activities 2008/2009
10.45—11.15	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:15—13.00	Coordinator report on GENET's activities and finances Membership issues: new members, proposal update of membership fees, change statutes regarding membership process
13:00 —14.30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30 - 16:30	NGO round: what each NGO is doing/focused on; collaboration proposals, problem solving requests, etc What we want GENET to be and to do; what were the successes and failures of the network
16.30—17.00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
17:00—19:00	Working Groups: what was tried, problems encountered, new ideas to make it work, new roles for GENET Other topics...
19:30	<i>Dinner</i>
Sunday, 11th - Seminar	
9:00—10.45	Introduction to Aarhus convention & Almaty amendment
10.45—11.15	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:15—13.00	Ratification processes of the Aarhus Convention and its GMO/Almaty ammendment in the EU member states and rest of Europe
13:00 —14:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30 - 16:30	Access to information & public participation: difficulties encountered by individuals and NGOs, finding solutions — open space for discussion
16.30—17.00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
17:00—19:00	Access to information & public participation: difficulties encountered by individuals and NGOs, finding solutions — open space for discussion

Seminar — background info

Public participation in decision making - The Aarhus Convention and the Almaty amendment on GMOs

GENET board thought that it would be interesting and important to have a seminar about the Aarhus Convention and the Almaty amendment on GMOs.

Participation and access to information are both crucial aspects for our work. Additionally, this is a good time for these issues, since the EU had ratified the so called GMO/Almaty amendment of the Aarhus Convention (AC) in 2008, and so the member states should be in their own ratification processes.

The implementation of Aarhus Convention and the ratification of this amendment have the potential to change the way governments think of public participation and could have a special impact on the specific case of decision-making regarding genetic engineering.

The majority of the NGOs is not aware or knowledgeable of the importance of this Convention and it is therefore important to inform and mobilize them so they can then start the discussions on their countries over this important subject and get involved in the processes of implementation and ratification.

Independently of the fact that this amendment will change anything for our work (and we believe that at least for some GENET members and friends, it may be quite a revolution), this ratification process on the national level could nevertheless be a good opportunity to launch a discussion over the issue of participation.

GENET is the respective network in Europe when it comes to Aarhus/ Almaty and during this seminar it should be discussed whether or not the Aarhus Convention might be an interesting tool for (at least some) NGO/ GENET members. This seminar is also an opportunity for an in depth and protected exchange of experiences in the fields of access to information and public participation and the analysis of what could be covered in the national Aarhus/ Almaty implementation that is not yet part of the EU legislation or non-EU members national legislation.

For general information:

<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/gmo.htm>

<http://www.gmo-free-regions.org/food-democracy-april-2009/workshops/workshop-a1.html>



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