



The Rio Summit's Principle 10 and its Implications

A number of developing countries and countries with economies in transition have initiated processes of strengthening public participation schemes, following the adoption of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration in 1992 at the Earth Summit.

Public Participation:

Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level.

Principle 10

Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.

See all [27 Principles of the Rio Declaration](#)

Principle 10 promotes public participation in environmental decision-making and access to information and justice in environmental matters. Some countries committed to the implementation of Principle 10 have pointed to the challenges of implementing its public participation provisions (such as lack of skills and resources) and called for the development of training and capacity building programmes in this area.

Programme facilitating the implementation of Principle 10 should facilitate the exchange of experiences in the area of public participation, develop practical and flexible guidance and training material to assist countries in making informed choices regarding desired participation processes, and support skills building for governmental and other decision-making officials.

Recognising the importance of this issue, Paragraph 128 of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation, 2002 states:

"Ensure access, at the national level, to environmental information and judicial and administrative proceedings in environmental matters, as well as public participation in decision-making, so as to further principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, taking into full account principles 5, 7 and 11 of the Declaration."

Multilateral agreements supporting access to information, participation, and justice in environmental decision-making help to advance national level implementation of Principle 10 in member countries:

- [Aarhus Convention](#) (1998)
- [Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Sustainable Development Decision-Making](#) (2001)
- [Dublin Declaration](#) (2000)
- [MalmEDeclaration](#) (2000)
- [WSSD Johannesburg Plan of Implementation](#) (2002)



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