



Aarhus Centre in Greece

A case in Progress:

A MEPIELAN's Initiative

15 November 2023, Athens, Greece

Presented by: Professor Evangelos Raftopoulos,
Director, MEPIELAN Centre, <https://mepielan.gr>

Introduction

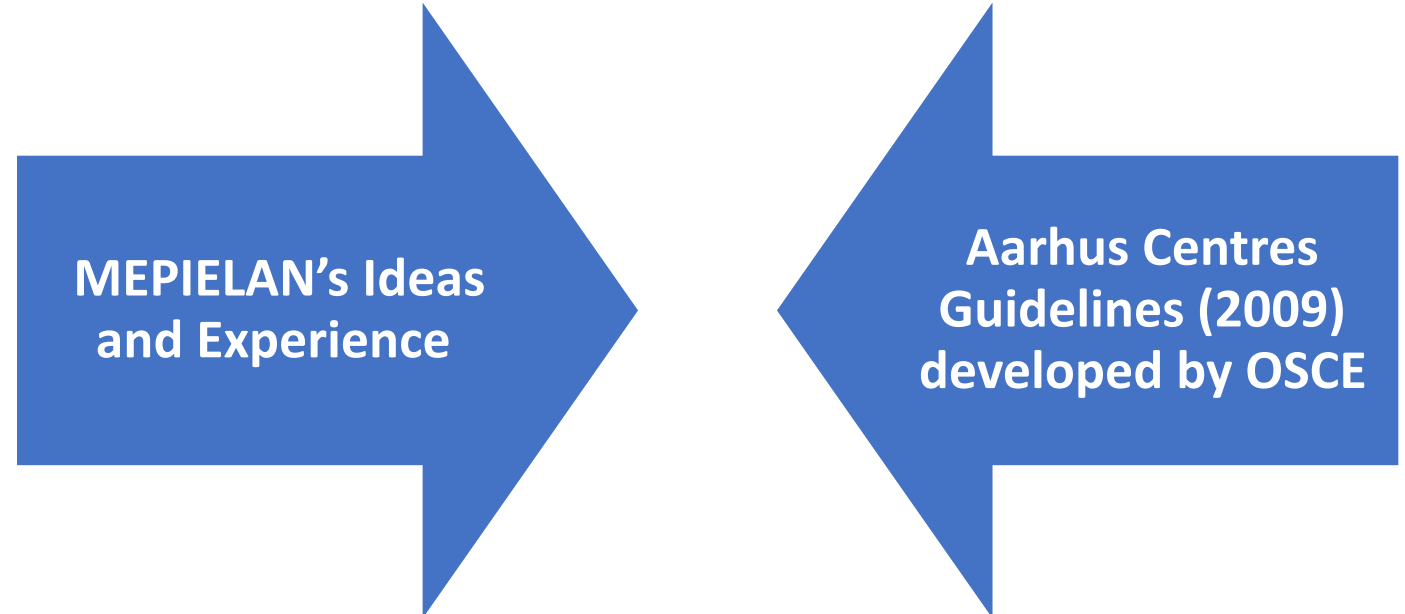


**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

❑ 3 Pillars on the development of an Aarhus Centre in Greece (MAC), hosted by MEPIELAN:

1. *The institutional set up*
2. *The geographical focus*
3. *Specific work area.*

❑ 2 Interrelated Approaches:



❑ “Aarhus Centres *are really different in history and in institutional set-ups.*” **(Contextuality)**



PART 1: Institutional Set-Up



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

- ❑ The **Aarhus Centre in Greece** will be **hosted by MEPIELAN Centre** as an NGO-based Aarhus Centre (namely **MAC**), independent from government, established by decision of the MEPIELAN Centre, and operating as an OSCE Project.
- ❑ **Providing a bridging element** between government agencies, relevant international organizations, academic institutions and civil society → Built institutionally, through the Governing Board of the MEPIELAN Aarhus Centre and accomplished by establishing a Steering Committee based on the principles of relational representation, inclusiveness and transparency.
- ❑ **A Steering Committee** will guide and supervise the activities and operations of the MAC, reviewing progress in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention at all levels and in all processes.
- ❑ **The President of the MEPIELAN Centre** shall perform the functions of the **Director of the MAC**, appoint the staff and be responsible for the operation and administration of the Centre in accordance with the decisions of the Steering Committee.
- ❑ **A seven-member Advisory Committee** consisting of personalities of international academic and scientific stature, political and social commitment, and recognised leadership in the field of environmental protection and environmental democracy will assist the Steering Committee.



PART 1: Institutional Set-Up



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

□ **A Steering Committee** consists of 11 members:

1. 2 Representatives of MEPIELAN Centre
2. Representative of OSCE
3. Representative of the Ministry of Environment and Energy
4. Representative of the UNECE Secretariat of the Aarhus Convention
5. Representative of the UNEP/MAP Secretariat
6. Representative of Local Government
7. Representative of the EPLO
8. Representative of a network of NGOs
9. Representative of the Judiciary
10. Parliamentarian



PART 2: Geographical Focus



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

- ❑ *MAC operates as **a national Aarhus Centre with regional scope** with focus on the **Mediterranean and the Balkans**.*
- ❑ *Regional scope of MAC's function emanates from its **recognized international role under the umbrella of OSCE and UNEP/MAP**.*
- *Two specific directions:*
 1. *Official registration and participation in the OSCE Aarhus Centres Network → potential involvement in the framework of the OSCE project in SE Europe and in the OSCE Mediterranean platform*
 2. *As a UNEP/MAP Partner, engaged in the promotion of MEPIELAN's completed project "Mediterranean Accession Agenda to the Aarhus Convention" → strengthening of participatory environmental governance in the Barcelona Convention system & fostering the cross-cutting application of the Aarhus Convention*



PART 3: Specific Work Areas



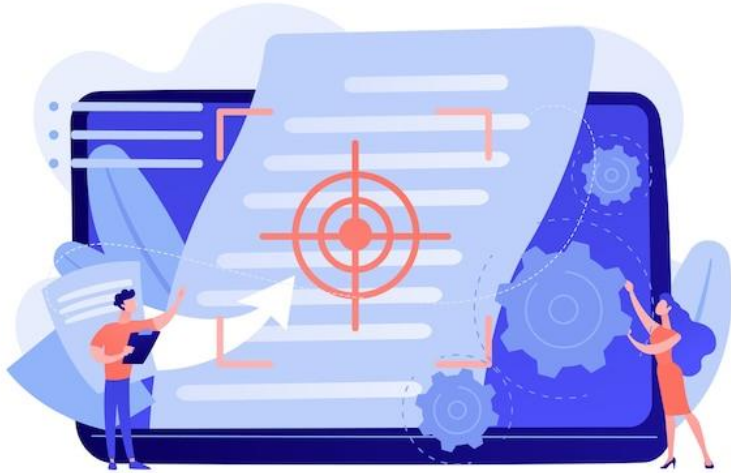
**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

□ MAC Dualistic Function

- Oversees and supports the implementation of the Aarhus Convention at the national level, its application in international forums (international environmental decision-making process, international organizations when dealing with environmental matters) and its cross-cutting operation to conventional environmental regimes (MEAs).
- Operates as a twinning partner for the promotion of the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the Barcelona Convention system in two directions:
 1. Giving flesh to the latter's framework provisions on public information, public participation and access to justice and promoting a relational approach
 2. Advancing the accession of the Mediterranean Countries to the Aarhus Convention.

The Centre will develop its activities based on the **complementary relationship between implementation and innovation in a collaborative framework**.

- ✓ Addressing the various "gaps", challenges and pressing needs for enhanced participatory environmental governance at all levels



PART 3: Specific Work Areas



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region



- ☐ Supporting the effective implementation of Activities listed in Annex I in a transboundary context
- ☐ Supporting the building of negotiating capacity for the effective promotion of Aarhus Principles and Procedures in international decision-making processes
- ☐ Enhancing Public Participation through Environmental Governance-by-Dialogue
- ☐ Promoting the connection of Citizen Knowledge with Science – Operating as a Hub of participatory environmental knowledge
- ☐ Promoting the Implementation of the Aarhus Convention in the Barcelona Convention System for the Protection of the Mediterranean
- ☐ Providing an International Hub to Promote the Public Trust Approach to Environmental Governance, Reinforcing the Aarhus Convention
- ☐ Providing an Online Platform for the Protection of Environmental Defenders



PART 3: Specific Work Areas



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region



- ❑ **Developing Strategic Partnerships**
- ❑ **Promoting Energy Democracy and Energy Justice in consistency with the Aarhus Convention**
- ❑ **Specific Thematic Support Activities**
 - Performing Activities that Support Access to Information
 - Performing Activities that Support Public Participation
 - Performing Activities that Support Access to Justice



For more information about MEPIELAN:



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region



Visit our Website

info@mepielan.gr
evanraft@gmail.com



and follow us on Social Media





Thank you
for your attention
and keep up with
our latest news!

WES-MED.EU

