



Follow-up to an MEA Meeting

If you have represented your country in a multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) negotiations meeting, you will need to report back and to consider the next steps. A written report or summary, even when it is not required, can be very helpful, especially for another colleague attending the next MEA meeting.

Reporting back

When reporting back, you should remind yourself to focus on what the readers need to know, not on what you know. The outcomes of the meeting on your country's priority issues and the required next steps are the most important points.

A report-back could include:

- a summary of the main developments at the MEA meeting;
- an overview of country and country group positions on the main issues; and
- an analysis of the negotiations on the priority issues for your country, in particular what actions your country might need to take now.

You may need to inform other government departments or implementing agencies about the meeting outcomes. After an MEA meeting it may also be helpful to meet with stakeholders, for example non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or industry

organizations, to inform and discuss the outcomes of the meeting, or provide a report for them.

What does your country need to do in follow-up?

It is important to consider the implications of decisions or recommendations adopted at the conference and whether your country needs to take actions to implement the meeting outcomes.

For example, did the meeting take decisions that mean your country needs to make changes to how it is implementing the MEA? Should there be changes to technical guidelines or to legislation? If that is the case, who needs to be informed to start making the changes? Are there deadlines to take into account?

You should also report on any follow-up actions that have been requested of Parties as a result of the negotiations. For example, have Parties been invited to make written submissions on issues that are important for your country? What are the deadlines for submissions? These can be found within the decisions themselves and, under some MEAs, can also be found on the official website.

Will other meetings, such as technical meetings or expert workshops, take place under the MEA as a result of the meeting you attended? Should your country

nominate an expert to participate in one of these meetings? Did countries in your region discuss any follow-up meetings? Will the next meeting include ministerial participation? Will any informal consultations be held prior to the next meeting? Will your country's key agenda items continue at the next session (this should not be taken for granted)? Was anyone from your country or region elected as an officer for any negotiating body?

Using the opportunity to learn

It may also be useful to make note of how you or the negotiating team prepared and how you worked during the meeting,

which could provide important lessons for next time. This kind of post-negotiations evaluation is helpful for professional and personal development and does not need to be complicated. For example, you could ask yourself: what went well? Why did it go well? What could you or the team do differently next time? Did you learn something from other negotiators? Did you make useful contacts with other negotiators, particularly those from your region? It is always best to prepare your evaluations and reports soon after the meeting, when the negotiations are still fresh in your mind.

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