

**Statement of OEKOBÜERO – Alliance of the Austrian Environmental Movement on the behalf of the European ECO Forum regarding item 7(b): Slovakia’s implementation of MOP decision VI/8i and general issues of compliance**

*7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters*

One of our tasks as NGOs is to be critical. And some mean this and/or it is understood purely in the negative sense. That we only complain about what is problematic.

Let me just say that many of us, myself included, understand our role rather differently. To be critical, to my mind, means to be thoughtful, acknowledge also those things that worked well and the people who helped make those positive developments possible.

In this regard Slovakia is a bit of a stand-out at this MOP and has been during this last intersessional period.

And rightly so. Slovakia undertook the necessary steps to fulfil its MOP decision stemming from Budva.

For that reason alone we would speak up and welcome Slovakia’s efforts. But we also want to speak up now because during the course of the implementation, Slovakia engaged well with the Committee, the secretariat, the communicants and observers. Provided timely and helpful answers, legislation, and translations. Simply said: They were engaged. That was noticed by all involved and should be reflected in the report of this meeting. That should truly serve as a model as to what is needed from all Parties.