



“The Escazú Agreement: moving towards a more resilient and sustainable future in the Caribbean”

Seminar for Public Officials from the CARICOM region

Marriott Dadeland Hotel (Le Mirage Conference Room) - Miami, 16 September 2024

The seminar is organized by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in partnership with the Secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the World Bank-Human Rights, Inclusion and Empowerment Trust Fund

Background

On 4 March 2018, in Escazú, Costa Rica, the first regional treaty on environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean was adopted under the auspices of UN ECLAC as Secretariat. Stemming from the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and inspired by the tenets of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the UN ECLAC “Escazú Agreement” aims to guarantee the full and effective implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean of the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in the environmental decision-making process and access to justice in environmental matters, and the creation and strengthening of capacities and cooperation, contributing to the protection of the right of every person of present and future generations to live in a healthy environment and to sustainable development.

Placing equality at the core of sustainable development and striving to “leave no one behind”, the agreement intends to support countries in building national capacities and stepping up partnerships based on the broad stakeholder engagement, allowing transitioning to more transparent, participatory and inclusive societies. It is also an enabler and driver of coherent policies and approaches for the 2030 Agenda at all levels and the implementation of key multilateral environmental commitments, such as the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, CBD and the Global Biodiversity Framework. The agreement has been highlighted as a valuable tool for people-centered and nature-based solutions by the UN Secretary-General and acknowledged by the United Nations Economic and Social Council by means of its resolution E/RES/2021/31 of 22 July 2021.

Open to the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the treaty entered into force on 22 April 2021. Since then, three Conference of the Parties have been held (2022, 2023 and 2024) and a Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance been installed. The Agreement has 16 Parties, of which 8 are from the CARICOM region (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines). In addition, two CARICOM countries are also signatories (Haiti and Jamaica).

Objectives

Held on the occasion of the CARICOM/OECS and CCCCC preparatory conferences for COP16 of the CBD and COP29 of the UNFCCC, this workshop will seek to provide a general overview of the regional agreement and its synergies with the 2030 Agenda and Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including UNFCCC and CBD, as well as take stock of the implementation of such access rights in the CARICOM region and foster an exchange between Parties and non-Parties from the Caribbean, with a view to advance the implementation of access rights and support ratification and implementation processes of the Escazú Agreement in the subregion.

The **objectives** of the seminar are:

- to raise awareness on the Escazú Agreement and its synergies with the 2030 Agenda, MEAs and other international processes
- to examine the state of the art of implementation of access rights in the Caribbean sub-region
- to present the experience of Caribbean Parties in the ratification and implementation of the Regional Agreement
- to discuss the benefits and opportunities to join the Regional Agreement

Participants

The workshop is intended for public officials from Ministries of Environment and Foreign Affairs of Caribbean Parties and non-Parties to the Escazú Agreement attending the precops. The assistance of key officials involved in the ratification and implementation processes will also be encouraged.

Preliminary agenda

MONDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2024	
9:00 – 9:10	Welcome remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Diane Quarless, Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean</i>• <i>Dennis Zulu, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Jamaica and the Bahamas</i>
9:10 – 10:15	The Escazú Agreement: achieving sustainable development with equality (Introduction and context, content, current status and future developments) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Carlos de Miguel, Officer-in-charge, ECLAC Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division</i>• <i>David Barrio Lamarche, Legal Officer, ECLAC Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division</i>

	Q & A / Discussion with participants
10:15 – 10:30	Health break
10:30 – 11:30	<p>Synergies with the 2030 Agenda, Multilateral Environmental Agreements including UNFCCC and CBD and other international processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Carlos de Miguel, Officer-in-charge, ECLAC Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division</i> <p>Q & A / Discussion with participants</p>
11:30 – 12:30	<p>Institutional support provided under the Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance: mandate and functions <i>Rita Joseph-Olivetti, member of the Committee to Support Implementation and Compliance</i> • Clearinghouse/Observatory, Regional Public Mechanism and Implementation Guide <i>David Barrio Lamarche, Legal Officer, ECLAC Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division</i> <p>Q & A / Discussion with participants</p>
12:30 – 2:00	Lunch
2:00 – 3:00	<p>The Caribbean in the negotiation of the Agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kishan Kumarsingh, Head MEA Unit, Ministry of Planning and Development, Trinidad and Tobago</i> <p>Ratification and accession processes in the Caribbean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hon. Maureen Payne, Parliamentary Secretary for Legal Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda</i> <p>Q & A / Discussion with participants</p>
3:00 – 4:15	<p>National implementation of the Agreement in Caribbean Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadmaps and implementation plans in light of COP decision III/1 <i>Danielle Andrade, Jamaican attorney-at-law, consultant ECLAC-World Bank</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiences of Parties and subregional institutions <p><i>Hon. Kerryne James, Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy, Grenada</i></p> <p><i>Saul Cruz, Director, National Biodiversity Office, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Climate Change, Belize</i></p> <p><i>Kate Wilson, Legal Officer, Department of Sustainable Development, Saint Lucia</i></p> <p><i>Chamberlain Emmanuel, Head of Environmental Sustainability Division, OECS</i></p> <p>Q & A / Discussion with participants</p>
4:15 – 4:30	Health break
4:30 – 5:00	<p>Partnerships for implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Simon Springett, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Barbados and the OECS</i> <i>Amrikha Singh, Programme Manager, Sustainable Development, CARICOM Secretariat</i> <i>Andrea Brusco, Deputy Regional Director, UNEP</i> <i>Todd Howland, Chief, Development, Economic and Social Rights Branch, OHCHR (video)</i>
5:00 – 5:15	Open dialogue on priorities, challenges and opportunities for the Caribbean
5:15 – 5:30	<p>Key outcomes, next steps</p> <p>Closing remarks</p>