



UNITED NATIONS



Ministry of the Presidency
Department of Environment

The Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean: towards the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

Seminar for Public Officials

Draft Agenda

Venue: [TBC] Georgetown, Guyana

9 November 2018

Duration: 9:00am -12pm

The seminar is organized by the Government of Guyana and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC)

Summary and objectives

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 technical 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. It is also the world’s first treaty to include specific provisions on environmental human rights defenders. Placing equality at the core of sustainable development and striving to “leave no one behind”, the regional agreement will contribute to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The agreement opened for signature on 27 September 2018 at United Nations headquarters in New York, coinciding with the Annual General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly. The Co-operative Republic of Guyana was one of its first signatory countries.

Given its strong commitment and experience with environmental access rights, Guyana is specially well placed for the implementation of the regional agreement. The present seminar will seek to provide a general overview of the regional agreement and its synergies with the 2030 Agenda and environmental multilateral agreements, as well as take stock of the implementation of such access rights in Guyana in view of the possible ratification process of the Escazú Agreement.

The **objectives** of the seminar are:

- to raise awareness on the Escazú Agreement and its synergies with the 2030 Agenda and other international processes
- to examine the state of the art of implementation of access rights in the region with a particular focus on the Caribbean sub-region
- to review the Guyanese internal framework in the context of the Regional Agreement to support the ratification process

9:00 – 9.30

- Opening and welcome by Guyanese authority [TBC] and UN ECLAC

9.30-10.30

- The Escazú Agreement:
Context and synergies with the 2030 Agenda, Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international processes [UN ECLAC]
Content, implications and future steps [UN ECLAC]
- Q & A / Discussion with participants

10:30 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 12:00

- Status of environmental access rights in the region, with a focus on the Caribbean [UN ECLAC]
- Overview of environmental access rights in Guyana [TBC Guyana expert/government officer with support by UN ECLAC]
- Q & A / Discussion with participants