



ECLAC

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Second [virtual] Meeting of the Working Group on capacity-building and cooperation created in the Plan of Action to 2014 of the Declaration on the application of principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

[This document has not been subject to editorial review]

MINUTE – SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

1. BACKGROUND

The Plan of Action to 2014 for the implementation of the Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean established two Working Groups in order to advance in the achievement of a regional instrument:

- i) Working group on capacity-building and cooperation;
- ii) Working group on access rights and the regional instrument.

The Plan of Action mentions that all signatory countries may participate in the working groups, in which they may be represented by their focal points or by a representative appointed by them. Non-signatory countries of the region may participate as observers in these meetings of groups formed by signatory countries. Each group will elect at least one coordinator and an alternate from among the government representatives and stakeholders that will participate according to modalities set forth in the Plan of Action.

In the Second meeting of focal points of the Declaration, held in Guadalajara in April 2013, Colombia and Jamaica assumed the coordination of the working group on capacity-building and cooperation. The objective of the group defined in the Plan of Action is to make a proposal to intensify regional and international cooperation with regard to training and financing needs and operations, both for the public sector and for the public in general.

The first virtual meeting of the working group on capacity-building and cooperation was held the 9th of August 2013, it was agreed that the coordinators would produce a proposal of activities for 2014, which will be submitted for consideration to the signatory countries at the Third Meeting

of the Focal Points designated by the Governments of the signatory countries of the Declaration (Lima, 30-31 of October). It was also agreed that this proposal would be available for the participants of the group and on the webpage of the Declaration two weeks prior to the meeting.

The next paragraphs describe the proceedings and conclusions of the second virtual meeting of the Working Group. Attached to this document is a list of participants, in Annex I.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEETING

The meeting started with a brief welcome from the Delegate of Colombia, who, as coordinator of the group, also explained the objectives of the meeting and the working methodology. Then she gave the floor to Derrick Oderson, Facilitator of the Regional workshop on the implementation of Principle 10 in the Caribbean, held in Trinidad and Tobago on September 16-17, 2013 and organized jointly by ECLAC, UNEP, UNITAR and WRI-TAI.

Results of the Regional workshop in the implementation of Rio Principle 10 in the Caribbean Region

The workshop focused on reviewing the state of implementation of the Bali guidelines in the region. The main challenges detected as far as access to environmental information is concerned were to broaden the right to environmental information; the enactment of freedom of information acts by all the countries of the region; to collect, transform and disseminate periodical environmental information and dealing with non-written requests and legislative gaps. The limitations detected in participation were the participation of indigenous peoples; language constraints and the adequate timing and response to the issues raised by the public. Lastly, the challenges faced in the access to justice were the cost barriers of undertaking legal action; the lack of enabling legislation and the little public awareness of the existing one; and the lack of training in environmental matters of judges and attorneys.

In accordance to these findings, the needs of the Caribbean region were agreed to be: institutional strengthening; enhancement of regional cooperation and ratification of multilateral environmental agreements; training and education of public officers, NGOs and individuals; capacity-building in the best ways to disseminate information and channels of public participation; removal of economic constraints to undertake legal actions and changes in the need to undertake proof of damage for injunction in environmental issues.

After the presentation, the Delegate of Jamaica added that during the workshop, as co-coordinator of the Working Group, she presented the objectives of the Working Group established in the Plan of Action to 2014 adopted in Guadalajara.

Then, the Delegate of Colombia thanked Mr. Oderson for the presentation and highlighted the importance of raising knowledge capacity and generating spaces for education in the rights of access in the region. Then she offered the floor to the participants.

Dialogue with the participants on the priorities of the region in capacity-building and cooperation

The Delegate from Chile underlined the need that the group arrive with a clear vision to Lima and urged the focal points to participate in the proposal so that at the Lima meeting, conclusive agreements can be achieved.

The Delegate from Ecuador highlighted the importance that his country gives to sharing experiences with other countries of the region; especially on how countries handle environmental conflicts. He also remarked on the need to include at the meeting in Lima a space for discussion, debate and exchange of experiences in order to allow the acknowledgement of the best legal and institutional practices regarding Principle 10 and advance towards a regional agreement.

Then, the Representative of the Secretary of Environment of the Government of the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina, referred to the activities of the Secretary regarding public participation environmental conflict-solving through the programme: Programa de conformación de una Red de Responsables y Facilitadores Ambientales de los Municipios y Comunas. The programme can be consulted at the following link:

[http://www.santafe.gob.ar/index.php/web/content/view/full/112861/\(subtema\)/112857](http://www.santafe.gob.ar/index.php/web/content/view/full/112861/(subtema)/112857)

A participant from Costa Rica highlighted that, having seen the results of the workshop in the Caribbean, it is very important to define what is meant by “best practice”, making special mention that it is not only the advances in the formulations of laws, but also the advances on how these laws are applied. She suggested emphasizing this in the recommendations that are aimed at identifying best practices (understood as the application of the available laws and institutional frameworks) that can be replicated in the region.

There was a consensus on the need to build capacities regarding the rights of access in the region, reaching not only the governments but also the public in general, with an emphasis in the three rights of access and their integration, particularly in the identification of the best practices.

The Delegate of Colombia highlighted the importance of identifying target people who can replicate and proliferate knowledge so as to achieve the full implementation of Principle 10 and also mentioned the importance of involving academia in this process in order to disseminate and promote the rights of access in Latin America and the Caribbean. She also mentioned the intersectoral table of the Government of Colombia to advance in these matters.

The importance of generating spaces for dissemination within judicial power both in environmental matters and access rights was also highlighted.

3. AGREEMENTS

The working group reached the following agreements.

- The Technical Secretariat will send the participants and upload to Quickr a form to send contributions to the proposal to be presented by the coordinators in the Third Meeting of the Focal Points. The deadline for the reception of contribution will be October 11, 2013.
- On October 16, 2013 the draft proposal that contemplates the challenges in capacity-building and cooperation detected by the Working Group and that sets priorities to 2014 for the application of Principle 10, will be disseminated.

Anexo I / Annex I

LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES / LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Países signatarios de la Declaración / Signatory countries of the Declaration

ARGENTINA

Otros participantes:

- Brenda Mariana Pangrazi, Secretario de Embajada, Dirección General de Asuntos Ambientales, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto
- Leonardo Vera, Secretaría de Medio Ambiente del Gobierno de la Provincia de Santa Fe

CHILE

Punto Focal / Focal Point

- Constance Nalegach, Ministerio de Medio Ambiente

COLOMBIA

Punto Focal / Focal Point

- María Angélica García, Segundo Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores

ECUADOR

Punto Focal / Focal Point

- Mario Ruales, Asesor para asuntos Ambientales, Ministerio Coordinador del Conocimiento y Talento Humano

JAMAICA

Punto Focal / Focal Point

- Princess Gordon-Commock, Documentation/Information and Access Service Director, Ministry of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change

MÉXICO/MEXICO

Punto Focal / Focal Point

- Dámaso Luna, Director General Adjunto para Temas Ambientales de la Dirección General para Temas Globales, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

Otros participantes:

- Alfa María Ramos Herrera, Directora de Normas de Participación Social, Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

- Belén Helena de Buen Richkaraday, Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales.
- Miguel Molina, Subdirector de Asuntos Internacionales de Acceso, Dirección General de Asuntos Internacionales, Instituto Federal de Acceso a la Información y Protección de Datos

PANAMÁ/PANAMA

Punto Focal / Focal Point

- Lineth Arcia, Dirección de Protección a la Calidad Ambiental, Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente

Otros participantes:

- Linesel Saavedra, Abogada, Oficina de Asesoría Legal, Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente

PARAGUAY

Otros Participantes

- Cristhian Pascottini, Director de planes y políticas sectoriales, Secretaría Técnica de Planificación
- Mario Ruiz Diaz, Director General, Secretaría Técnica de Planificación.
- Marta León, Técnica de la unidad ambiental, Secretaría Técnica de Planificación.

PERÚ

Punto focal / Focal point

- José Félix Pinto-Bazurco, Asesor legal de la Dirección de Medio Ambiente del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores del Perú

Otros participantes

- Pablo Salamanca, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores del Perú
- Sonia Gonzales, Ministerio del Ambiente del Perú

B. Miembros del Público / Memembers of the Public

- Daniel Barragán, Centro Ecuatoriano de Derecho Ambiental – CEDA
- Naira Bonilla, Ambiente y Sociedad
- Gloria Olimpia Castillo, Comunicación y Educación Ambiental SC
- Karetta Crooks, Communications & Advocacy Officer Saint Lucia National Trust, St Lucia
- Laura Giménez, Fundación para el Desarrollo de Políticas Sustentables – FUNDEPS
- Patricia Madrigal, Cooperativa Autogestionaria de Servicios Profesionales para la Solidaridad Social R.L. – Coope Solidar R. L.

- Derrick Oderson
- Andrea Rodríguez, AIDA-Américas, Chile
- Juan Carlos Villegas

C. Secretaría / Secretariat

Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL) / Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

- Carlos de Miguel, Jefe de la Unidad de Políticas para el Desarrollo Sustentable, División de Desarrollo Sostenible y Asentamientos Humanos/Head of the Policies for Sustainable Development Unit, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division
- Valeria Torres, Oficial de Asuntos Económicos, División de Desarrollo Sostenible y Asentamientos Humanos/Economic Affairs Officer, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division
- Guillermo Acuña, Asesor Legal y Jefe de Protocolo, Oficina de la Secretaria de la Comisión/Legal Advisor and Chief of Protocol, Office of the Secretary of the Commission
- Marcos Orellana, Consultor, División de Desarrollo Sostenible y Asentamientos Humanos / Consultant, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division
- Amie Figueiredo, Oficial de Asuntos Económicos, División de Desarrollo Sostenible y Asentamientos Humanos / Economic Affairs Officer, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division
- Paula Chamas, División de Desarrollo Sostenible y Asentamientos Humanos / Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division