



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC

The Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement): empowering societies for sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Seminar for members of the National Workers Union

Venue: on-line ([link provided to participants](#))

Saturday, 25 July 2020

Duration: 10:00am -1pm

The seminar is organized by the Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL) 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. Saint Lucia became one of the first countries to sign the Agreement and is currently undergoing its internal ratification process.

Given its strong commitment and experience with environmental access rights, Saint Lucia is especially 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 multilateral environmental agreements, as well as exchange views with the members of the National Workers Union in Saint Lucia 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 Saint Lucian internal framework in the context of the Regional Agreement to support the ratification process
- seek views of members of the Saint Lucia National Workers Union on the Regional Agreement

10:00 – 10:15 Opening and welcome

- Mr. Carlos de Miguel, Head, Policies for Sustainable Development Unit, UN ECLAC
- Ms. Silka Tobias, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Department of Sustainable Development, GOSL
- Mr. Johann M. Harewood, Secretary General, National Workers Union

10:15 – 11:15 The Escazú Agreement

- Context and synergies with the 2030 Agenda, Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international processes (Carlos de Miguel, Head, Policies for Sustainable Development, UN ECLAC)
- Overview of content, implications and future steps (David Barrio Lamarche, Environmental Affairs Officer, UN ECLAC)
- The public's role in promoting the early ratification and effective implementation of the Escazú Agreement (Karetta Crooks Charles, Communications & Advocacy Officer, Saint Lucia National Trust and alternate elected representative of the public)
- Q & A / Discussion with participants

11:15 – 11:30 Break

11:30 – 12:15 Environmental access rights in Saint Lucia and the Caribbean

- Status of environmental access rights in the Caribbean (Danielle Andrade, Attorney-at-law, Jamaica, and elected representative of the public)
- Overview of environmental access rights in Saint Lucia (Kate Wilson, Legal Officer, Department of Sustainable Development, GOSL)
- Q & A / Discussion with participants

12:15 – 12:55 Moving towards ratification and the effective implementation of the Escazú Agreement

- Gap analysis, priorities and opportunities for action
 - o Kate Wilson, Legal Officer, Department of Sustainable Development, GOSL
 - o Danielle Gordon, Multilateral Environmental Agreement Project Coordinator, Department of Sustainable Development, GOSL
 - o David Barrio Lamarche, Environmental Affairs Officer, UN ECLAC
 - o Carole Excell, Director, Environmental Democracy Practice, World Resources Institute
- Q & A / Discussion with participants

12:55-1pm

- Closing remarks