



---Aarhus Convention & Escazú Agreement Lunch Briefing---

International Instruments on Public Participation in Environmental Governance and Relevance to the Paris Agreement Implementation and the COP-25

Monday 2nd Dec., 14:00-15:00 (light lunch will be provided prior to the event)
COP-25 Venue/IFEMA, Meeting Room 15

"Civil society is to a great extent the only reliable motor for driving institutions to change at the pace required."

IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C

The Paris Agreement stressed the importance of access to information and public participation for effective climate policies, a commitment paralleled existing obligations of parties to promote procedural rights in environmental governance and echoed the findings of the IPCC providing empirical evidence that participatory policies lead to more effective and resilient climate actions. On the other hand, recent events such as the stark increase in deforestation in several States from the Amazon Basin have provided evidence that the weakening of land rights and indigenous peoples' collective rights resulted in further damage to ecosystems critical to combatting climate change effectively.

Through their ratification of the Aarhus Convention or their adoption of the Escazú Agreement, 71 UNFCCC parties across Europe, Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean have committed to promoting access to information, public participation and access to a judicial in their respective policies related to the environment. These states are consequently well positioned to champion the promotion of the principles through the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The briefing will be opened for countries involved in these regional processes.

Objectives:

This briefing will seek to support these Parties by discussing recent updates from both regional instruments – including regarding the progress made across the Latin American and Caribbean region towards ratification and the entry into force of the Escazú Agreement. The briefing will also address the role that the COP-25 might play to support the integration of access to information and public participation in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, including in the context of specific agenda items to be discussed at the COP.

As Parties are expected to complement the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement with the adoption of guidance on Article 6 as well as to intensify the enhancement and updating of their Nationally Determined Contributions, COP-25 offers a timely opportunity to promote the principles of the Aarhus Convention & Escazú Agreement.

Format:

The briefing will be organized under Chatham House rules as a one-hour-long event organized at the conference venue. A panel with short presentations will be followed by a short discussion among the participants to the briefing. A short briefing note synthesizing these inputs will be distributed during the briefing.



Programme:

- Welcoming and Introduction by a representative of Uruguay
- Welcoming thoughts by Hafida Lahouiel, Director of Legal Affairs, UNFCCC Secretariat
- Update on the Aarhus Convention process, incl. the 2019 working group of parties, Fiona Marshall, Secretary to the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee, Aarhus Convention Secretariat, UN Economic Commission for Europe (video intervention)
- Update on the Escazú Agreement: update on the Escazú Agreement process and the first meeting of the signatories, Joseluis Samaniego, Director of the Unit of Policies for Sustainable Development, UN-ECLAC
- Intervention by Prof. David Boyd, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment: Importance of procedural rights for the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement
- Intervention by a civil society speaker on progress towards the entry into force of the Escazú Agreement
- Intervention by a civil society speaker: opportunities to promote public participation in key aspects of the SBs50 agendas

Discussion

Catering:

Take-aways lunch boxes as well as coffee will be provided to the participants of the briefing in front of the Meeting Room 15 starting from 13:30.