

Cooperation between the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement to promote the protection of access rights and of environmental defenders

ONLINE SIDE EVENT

Organized by the Guta Environmental Law Association, CIEL, EarthJustice, EarthRights, EEB and ECLAC

Friday, 15 October 2021 | 15:00-17:00 | Geneva time

During this side event we exchange views and identify areas for cooperation to build synergies between the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement, in order to maximize the protection of the public's access rights and of environmental defenders under these instruments, and support the implementation of the Escazú Agreement.

Background: The Parties and stakeholders of the Aarhus Convention warmly welcomed the important milestone of entry into force of the Escazú Agreement, on April 22, 2021. The first Conference of Parties of the Agreement is planned for April 2022. During different Aarhus events it was raised that a more strategic and systematic cooperation would be beneficial between the two international agreements.

The European Parliament also adopted a resolution on May 19, 2021 on the effects of climate change on human rights and the role of environmental defenders on this matter, in which, among others, in par. 21, "Calls on the Commission, in particular to initiate a programme in support of the Escazú Agreement, with the aim, inter alia, of assisting state parties in ratifying and implementing the Agreement, assisting civil society in engaging with the Agreement and contributing to its implementation, and providing support for the voluntary fund established under the Agreement".

Invited audience: Parties and Signatories of the Aarhus Convention and of the Escazú Agreement, CSOs and other stakeholders promoting the implementation of Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement, potential donors.

The event will be moderated by Ms. Magdolna Tóthné Nagy, Co-Executive Director, Guta Environmental Law Association.

Registration for the event

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qaGth6FUQsGODw9antvLNA

Zoom link for the event

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84840048981?pwd=Zm8xUngrME8zQm9jUGpzYTAvZGgvZz09>

Passcode: **847322**

PROGRAMME

Opening

- **Ms. Magdolna Tóthné Nagy**, Co-Executive Director, Guta Environmental Law Association (5 minutes)

Keynote address

Benefits and opportunities from the Escazú Agreement for Saint Lucia and the Caribbean

- **Hon. Shawn A. Edward**, Minister for Education, Sustainable Development, Innovation, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Saint Lucia (8 minutes)

Opportunities for cooperation between the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement:

The vision from the Secretariats

- **Mr. Zaal Lomtadze**, Deputy Director, Environment Division, UNECE (7 minutes)
- **Mr. Carlos de Miguel**, Secretariat of the Escazú Agreement, Chief, Policies for Sustainable Development and Human Settlement Division, UN - ECLAC (7 minutes)

Opportunities for cooperation: Vision from the Parties

- **Ms. Camila Zepeda**, General Director for Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico (7 minutes)
- **Mr. Alex Winstone**, Policy Advisor, Environmental Governance Team, Natural Environment, Trees and Landscapes Directorate, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, UK (7 minutes)
- **Ms. Charlotta von Troil**, Senior Ministerial Adviser, Legislative Affairs, Unit for International and EU Affairs, Ministry of the Environment (7 minutes)

The future of the Escazú Agreement: Challenges and opportunities

Civil society agenda for the first COP: Implementing the Escazú Agreement and empowering civil society

- **Ms. Danielle Andrade**, Elected Representative of the Public (7 minutes)

Protecting environmental defenders in Latin America and the Caribbean

- **Dr. Yesid Blanco**, Environmental Defender, CRY for Jaguar, Colombia (7 minutes)

Implementing the access to information and justice pillars of the Escazú Agreement

- **Mr. Tomas Severino**, Cultura Ecológica, Mexico (7 minutes)

The experience of the Aarhus Convention: Some key areas for cooperation

Lessons of developing and operating the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee

- **Mr. Jonas Ebbesson**, Chair of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee (7 minutes)

Learning about the Rapid Response Mechanism and what it could offer to protect environmental defenders (to be adopted at the MOP7 of the Aarhus Convention)

- **Mr. Yves Lador**, EarthJustice (7 minutes)

Opportunities for Parties and stakeholders of the Aarhus Convention to further promote the application of the principles of the Convention in international forums in regular and close cooperation with the Escazú Agreement (Aarhus Convention Art. 3.7 and Escazú Agreement Art. 4. 10)

- **Mr. Sebastien Duyk**, CIEL (7 minutes)

Discussion, questions and answers, and interventions by other participants (15-20 minutes)

Concluding remarks and closing

- **Ms. Magdolna Tóthné Nagy**, Co-Executive Director, Guta Environmental Law Association (3 minutes)

