



Environmental democracy for sustainable societies

Side event to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2018

Organized by UN ECLAC in collaboration with Chile, Costa Rica, France, Italy, UNECE, UN ENVIRONMENT, and The Access Initiative

11 July 2018, 6:30 pm – 8 pm, ECOSOC Chamber (UN Conference Building)

DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENT

The world is facing several fundamental challenges, such as climate change and the depletion of natural resources, which require profound transitions towards sustainable development, including by ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, introducing a circular economy and minimizing release of pollutants. These challenges cannot be met by any actor alone. Promoting environmental democracy through the effective engagement of civil society, including NGOs, indigenous peoples, academia and other stakeholders, reinforces and complements the ability of governments to address these problems. The event will highlight and clarify the critical importance of rights to access to information, participation and justice (as enshrined in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration) for combating inequality and building sustainable and resilient societies. It will also show case concrete experiences on how the international community is jointly and proactively acting on these matters --from the recently adopted “Escazu Agreement” of the Latin America and the Caribbean countries to the Aarhus Convention, currently celebrating its 20th anniversary. During the event synergies and inter-linkages between promotion of environmental democracy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be presented.

PROGRAMME

***The event will be moderated by Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean*

6:30 – 6:40 pm	OPEN ADDRESS Promoting sustainable and resilient societies through the effective application of Principle 10 <i>Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</i> <i>Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</i>
6:40 – 7:30pm	PANEL DISCUSSION (5 minutes each) Background and reasons for the regional initiative on Principle 10 in Latin America and the Caribbean <i>Representative of Chile</i> Escazu Agreement: Future steps <i>Representative of Costa Rica</i> Aarhus Convention and Sustainable Development Goals <i>Representatives of France and Italy</i> Challenges faced by Caribbean countries on Principle 10 application and opportunities open by the Escazu Agreement on capacity building and cooperation <i>Representative of Trinidad and Tobago</i> How binding instruments can enhance the opportunities for civil society to get engaged in implementing the 2030 Agenda <i>Representative of The Access Initiative</i> Plans of UN Environment to assist Principle 10 application at regional and national level <i>Representative of UN Environment</i>
7:30 – 7:45 pm	Questions & answers
7:45 – 8pm	Concluding observations by moderator